

Noted from AVMA

Committee on the Human-Animal Bond

Dr. Gerrard Flannigan, Carolina Veterinary Specialists, Greensboro NC, serves on the Committee on the Human-Animal Bond representing veterinary ethology (animal behavior/instinct). The AVMA Committee on the Human-Animal Bond is expected to become more overarching in its objectives and less task orientated as part of a new plan approved by the Executive Board for the committee. According to the committee's new charge, the group "shall assist the profession in maintaining, fostering, and promoting human-animal relationships. The Committee shall investigate and interpret the positive and negative impacts of the human-animal bond on veterinary medicine, and shall serve as the principal source of related definitions, information, and recommendations for the AVMA."

Other committee members are:

Dr. Susan Ferraro, chair, Lincoln Park Dog and Cat Clinic, Chicago; representing small animal practice

Dr. John Hamil, Canyon Animal Hospital, Laguna Beach, Calif.; representing small animal practice

Dr. Robert Martin, Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, representing colleges of veterinary medicine

Dr. M. Hayden Sears, Duncan Island Ranch, Mapleton, Ore.; representing private clinical practice—predominantly equine

Dr. Robert Sager, Sage Trail Veterinary, Wilsall, Mont.; representing private food animal clinical practice

Dr. Cynthia Johnson, USDA APHIS, Fort Collins, Colo.; representing public health

Jennafer Glaesemann, Iowa State University, representing Student AVMA

Dr. Donald Stremme, Adventure Aquarium, Camden, N.J.; representing zoo/aquatic/wildlife medicine

<http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/dec08/081215o.asp>

Rabies and other public health policies revisited

The Executive Board has approved several recommendations from the Council on Public Health and Regulatory Veterinary Medicine.

A new policy titled Rabies was approved, and six other policies were rescinded that addressed specific aspects of rabies—Rabies Vaccination Procedures, Rabies Vaccine Administration, CDC Rabies Section Chief, Rabies Vaccination for Cats, Oral Rabies Vaccines, and Model Rabies Ordinance.

This overarching rabies policy now encompasses the previous policies. The new policy states that the AVMA endorses the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control developed by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians. Through its liaison representative, the AVMA council has had direct input in development of the compendium and subsequent revisions. The compendium is available from the NASPHV or the AVMA Scientific Activities Division.

As a guide for legislators and other government officials, the AVMA recommends the Model Rabies Ordinance. It is available from the Scientific Activities Division or by going to www.avma.org: click on Policy under the Reference bar, then on Rabies Policy.

The board approved a revision of the policy Shipment of Diagnostic Specimens, formerly titled Transportation of Hazardous Substances. The council had recommended that the title and internal references be revised so they are consistent with the issue the policy seeks to address—shipment of diagnostic specimens.

The revised policy concludes as follows: "Veterinarians are urged to review their methods of preparing diagnostic specimens and ensure that they are in compliance with all applicable guidelines and federal and state laws."

To be consistent with the issue at the center of another policy, the board approved the council's recommended revised policy Veterinary Opportunities in CDC Public Health Training Programs, superseding the policy CDC—Preventive Medicine Residency Program. The policy encourages the inclusion of veterinarians in programs that were once available only to physicians. The revision also strengthens the policy by providing for inclusion of other public health training programs offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The board approved AVMA participation in the Healthiest Nation Alliance, launched in April 2007. This initiative complements the AVMA's mission to improve animal and human health and advance the veterinary medical profession. The alliance was started by the CDC, the Association for State and Territorial Health Officials, and the National Association of County and City Health Officers. Its vision: to develop an integrated national system where all the participants value health and work together to achieve optimal health for all.

Relatedly, the board reaffirmed the policy Healthy People 2010, a decade-based national strategy to identify the most important opportunities for improving population health. Healthy People 2020 will eventually replace it. "The AVMA and the veterinary profession must poise themselves to continue to integrate veterinary contributions to human health and those of other medical professions," the policy states, in part.

The board discontinued the AVMA liaison relationship with the Zoonoses Education Coalition. The coalition was intended to be a group of diverse organizations partnering with the CDC to prevent zoonotic disease but was not successfully launched.

The board referred back to the council a recommendation to revise the policy Importation and Interstate Movement of Exotic and Native Wildlife, to emphasize a science-based process. Dr. Cook said the proposed revision "implies we're not concerned about movement unless there's a problem, but we are."

<http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/jan09/090101oo.asp>

Changes - CFA Legislative

Permission to cross post

December 31, 2008. For almost 12 years I have been a consultant to the Cat Fanciers' Association as CFA Legislative Coordinator. I am pleased to announce that George Eigenhauser will assume this position on January 1, 2009. He has been part of the CFA Legislative Group, serving as CFA Legislative Information Liaison since 2004. George will now have overall responsibility for CFA's public affairs activities and be the spokesperson for CFA on legislative matters. He will prepare guidance on our positions, suggest opposition points, post CFA Alerts and present our views on legislative issues to lawmakers and their aides. He will also begin reviewing the Federal and State bill introductions selecting those for CFA monitoring or action in the upcoming state sessions.

We count on our strong and educated grassroots force to effectively maintain CFA's opposition to local, state and federal laws we consider detrimental to the breeding of pedigreed cats, harmful to unowned/freeroaming/feral cats or negative toward pet ownership in general. I am grateful for the wonderful response from cat fanciers during my years as Legislative Coordinator, and we will need your support even more in the upcoming year.

Our Legislative Network Liaisons around the country and CFA Regional Directors should primarily communicate with George on all matters related to legislation. George will work with the dog registries, federations and clubs, numerous individual dog fanciers, the pet industry, other cat associations and the many animal related organizations with whom we have cooperated for over 18 years on mutual goals related to fair and sensible animal laws, improved shelter management, data keeping and humane treatment of feral cats.

George lives near Sacramento, the California State Capitol, and he is an attorney. He is an active breeder of Maine Coon cats and an elected member of the CFA Board of Directors. With over 28 years of experience in public affairs he became involved in feline legislative issues in 1981 when he was appointed to the San Diego County Animal Control Advisory Committee. He served on this board during the 80's and was chairman for several years. In 1992 he became active in CFA legislative concerns helping to defeat cat licensing in San Diego County. He also was instrumental in establishing and providing funds, through the San Diego Cat Fanciers, for the "feral cat management team", which evolved into the San Diego Feral Cat Coalition, one of the first trap/neuter/return programs in the United States. As CFA Legislative Information Liaison, George has written extensively about legislative issues and has responded to numerous questions sent to the CFA website or posted to the CFA list. George also serves as a representative for CFA on the National Council for Pet Population Study and Policy.

In January I will move into the position of CFA Legislative Information Liaison, concentrating my efforts on communication and articles related to public affairs issues. Sharon Coleman remains CFA Legislative Legal Analyst. The CFA Legislative Group was established by the CFA Board of Directors in 1997 and the three of us work as a team to determine strategy and successfully address difficult public affairs challenges.

We welcome your help in assuring a smooth transition as George takes the lead in 2009. His email address is geigenhauser@allmail.net

Joan Miller
CFA Vice President
Chair, CFA Legislative Committee
JMillerArt@aol.com

PIJAC Appoints President

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Board of Directors of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) is pleased to announce Pamela Stegeman, formerly Vice President of the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), has been named President. The newly created position of President reports directly to the Board of Directors and is part of a new organizational structure and key component of a four-year growth plan to ensure PIJAC's independence and continuity. Ms. Stegeman, who will train with Marshall Meyers, is responsible for providing leadership to the Board of Directors in the development of long-term strategic plans, ensuring that the Board is informed on the conditions and operations of the Council.

Ms. Stegeman joins PIJAC after eight years with the GMA where she created marketing, sponsorship, and government outreach systems and led her team to become a primary resource in the consumer goods industry for knowledge, advocacy, and global issue leadership. Her previous experience includes positions with Procter & Gamble, Colgate Palmolive and Sprint. Ms. Stegeman holds a B.A. in Government from Hamilton College in New York and an M.B.A. from Cornell University.

In addition to the new President position, the role of President of the Board, currently served by Elwyn Segrest of Segrest Farms, has been re-named Chairman of the Board, and Mr. Meyers, PIJAC's Executive Vice President and General Counsel, is now CEO and General Counsel. Mr. Meyers will continue leading PIJAC's government affairs activities. www.pijac.com

Update on NAIS

USDA backs-off premises registration requirement

Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:32 PM by Bob Meyer

R-CALF USA says the USDA has withdrawn a directive requiring premise registration for producers engaged in interstate commerce and who participate in any one of the dozen or more federally regulated disease programs. R-CALF CEO Bill Bullard says, "It's an acknowledgement by USDA that they do not have the authority to implement mandatory animal ID as they attempted to do in their September memo." That September memo, "Memorandum 575.19 mandated premises registration under the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) for producers engaged in interstate commerce and who participate in any one of the dozen or more federally regulated disease programs." R-CALF sent a formal letter to USDA demanding a retraction of the memo on the grounds the national animal ID program is supposed to be voluntary. USDA retracted the directive on December 22nd.

There are states which have mandatory premises registration, Bullard says this does not affect them, "This deals specifically with the federal government's authority," whereas state laws will have to be challenged on a state level. Bullard says there are a number of challenges to state laws either filed or in the works and R-CALF has submitted affidavits in support of some of those producers. <http://tinyurl.com/7q684n>

AVMA urges veterinarians to support National Animal Identification System

December 18, 2008. Schaumburg, Ill. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is showing its strong support for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) by urging veterinarians to actively participate in the system and utilize the new Veterinarian's Toolkit.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (USDA-APHIS) *Veterinarian's Toolkit* is an online resource developed by veterinarians for veterinarians. It provides a myriad of information including a detailed guide to how NAIS works and resources to help communicate its importance and benefits to producers.

"The AVMA fully supports a national livestock identification system. This toolkit will help ensure that both veterinarians and producers are on the same page when it comes to protecting our nation's livestock," says Dr. Ron DeHaven, Chief Executive Officer of the AVMA. "We're asking veterinarians, particularly those working with livestock, to become involved in the NAIS program, to register their own hospitals in addition to their premises and animals, and also to encourage their clients to register their animals and premises. No one carries more credibility with animal owners than veterinarians."

Aging Pets Bolster Revenue for Pet Industry

Longer-living pets could turn out to be unlikely business heroes during the current economic downturn, as consumers continue to spend big bucks on pharmaceutical and over-the-counter medications for their animal companions, predicts a new report.

“The U.S. Market for Pet Medications: Prescription and Over-the-Counter Remedies as Consumer Products,” published by Packaged Facts, a division of MarketResearch.com (New York), says the market is expected to continue to boom.

“Pets are living longer because their owners are taking better care of them, both medically and nutritionally,” said Tatjana Meerman, publisher of Packaged Facts. “Even more important perhaps, longer lives mean ever stronger emotional bonds between pets and their owners, and thus an increased willingness among pet owners to do whatever it takes to keep their pets healthy and happy for as long as possible.”

In 2007, the pet medication market was just shy of \$5 billion, inclusive of sales through veterinarians, retailers and Web sites, which reflects an 11 percent increase over 2006, according to the report. The pet medications market will reach \$8.6 billion by 2012, according to Packaged Facts projections.

“An aging pet population is driving the pet health care boom in the United States, a trend Packaged Facts predicts will become the most important overall pet market driver within the next five years,” the report states.

Double-digit sales gains should continue into the foreseeable future as pharmaceutical companies move full-force into the segment, adapting human technologies and developing pet-specific ones, according to Packaged Facts.

“Even in a market that has historically fared well during times of recession, the staggering financial pressures facing U.S. consumers as of fall 2008 could create opportunities for value-positioned OTC and private-label pet products, both in pet specialty stores and in trip-saving formats such as supercenters and price-shaving outlets such as club stores,” the report says. “Suggesting that consumers may indeed be receptive to such a switch, even purchasers of Frontline—a premium-priced and nationally advertised professional brand—are more likely than adults overall to agree a lot that OTC store brands work just like advertised brands (at 33 percent versus 31 percent), and to disagree a lot that the most expensive medications are usually the best (41 percent versus 36 percent).” <http://www.petage.com/>

Stem Cell Therapy for the Canine Athlete

By Sherman O. Canapp Jr., DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVS

Soft tissue injuries and osteoarthritis are common conditions afflicting canine athletes due to the forces placed on their joints and the repetitive nature of agility. Microtrauma to tendons, ligaments, and articular surfaces of joints can occur and can create an environment for osteoarthritic changes. Once the degenerative cascade of this condition is initiated, its progression can be insidious. Therapies have focused on treating the symptoms or slowing the progression of this debilitating disease. Stem cell therapy may not only treat symptoms and slow the disease, but it also could help to induce repair of the underlying damage that initiated the cascade. Regenerative stem cell technology gives new hope for extending the careers and improving the quality of life of the canine athlete.

A Brief History of Regenerative Therapy Research

Veterinary research into the use of regenerative cells and adult stem cell therapy began just this decade. Roger Smith of the Royal Veterinary College in England helped pioneer the movement by developing a technique in 2002 for extracting equine stem cells from the horse's own bone marrow, growing them in a laboratory for about three weeks, and then injecting them into the injured limb.

Meanwhile, in the U.S., veterinarian Robert Harman was also developing a therapy for equine orthopedics, using regenerative cells and stem cells extracted from the fat tissue of the horse. Vet-Stem, his company based in Poway, California, has been offering the treatment since 2003. Since then more than 3,000 horses have had therapy with cells processed by Vet-Stem. Conditions treated include tendon and ligament injuries, both acute and chronic, osteochondral defects, and osteoarthritis.

Multiple studies confirmed efficacy with a majority of horses treated returning to full performance level following treatment. In 2005, Vet-Stem and selected clinics began treating dogs with tendon and ligament injuries and osteoarthritis. Results of the first peer-reviewed, double-blind, multicenter study for canine osteoarthritis using regenerative and stem cells, sponsored by Vet-Stem, appeared in *Veterinary Therapeutics* Winter 2007 (Vol. 9, #4) and demonstrated decreased discomfort and improved function in patients that received Vet-Stem regenerative cell therapy.

What Are Stem Cells and How Do They Work?

A stem cell is characterized by its ability to divide and create another cell like itself and by its potential to become many different types of cells. Cells that have already committed to becoming muscle, bone, or any other tissue are unchangeable. Stem cells, by contrast, retain change possibility. There are two broad types of mammalian stem cells: **Embryonic stem cells:** Found in a developing embryo, embryonic stem cells are intended to form a whole animal and have unlimited potential of development into any type of tissue. **Adult stem cells:** Found in most adult tissues, adult stem cells act as a repair system for the body, replenishing specialized cells and maintaining the normal turnover of regenerative organs, such as blood, skin, or intestinal tissues. Adult stem cells are also multipotent, meaning the cells have the potential to differentiate themselves to become various types of cells. These adult cells are believed, however, to be limited to developing only into cell types related to the tissue from which the stem cell originated. In human medicine, ethical and legal debates surround the use of embryonic stem cells for research and therapy; such controversy does not exist with the use of adult stem cells. Adult stem cells have been used for years to successfully treat leukemia and related bone and blood cancers through bone marrow transplants.

Almost all veterinary research and use has focused on adult stem cells, specifically mesenchymal stem cells, derived from bone marrow or adipose tissue (fat). Mesenchymal stem cells have the potential to form a variety of cells including fat, cartilage, bone, tendon and ligament, and muscle. Another property of mesenchymal stem cells is that they can be banked and frozen for future use. Mesenchymal stem cells maintain their functionality when thawed, which allows for future use. The cells can also be cultured, meaning they can be grown within a medium.

Obtaining Canine Stem Cells

In dogs, the stem cells and other regenerative cells are obtained from subcutaneous adipose tissues. Adipose tissue is a preferred source in dogs over bone marrow for several reasons including ease of access, high-yielding mesenchymal stem cell count as compared to bone marrow, and the fact that fat is a renewable source. The stem cells along with a mix of other regenerative cells within the adipose tissue are isolated and then injected directly into the injured tissue, joint and/or intravenously. These cells are always obtained from the intended recipient (autograft), eliminating the risk of rejection and disease transmission.

The mechanisms by which these regenerative and stem cells initiate change within the body is complex. Chemical signals and pathways are created when an injury occurs that lead stem cells to the area of trauma. Mesenchymal stem cells release growth factors and cytokines and stimulate resident tissue stem cells. These cells have the ability to decrease pro-inflammatory mediators, increase anti-inflammatory mediators, reduce and/or reverse scar tissue formation, improve vascularity to the tissues, and block cell death. Further investigation is in process in both veterinary and human medicine to evaluate the use of adult stem cells for a variety of diseases, including, liver, kidney, heart, neurologic, and immune-mediated diseases. Results to date have been promising.

To learn more about regenerative veterinary medicine, visit www.vosm.org and www.vet-stem.com.

Winn Feline Foundation Welcomes Two New Board Members

Manasquan, NJ (December 15, 2008) -- Winn Feline Foundation President Susan Little, DVM, Diplomate ABVP (Feline), announces the election of Melissa A. Kennedy, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVM, and Vicki L. Thayer, DVM, Diplomate ABVP Feline, to the Winn Board of Directors.

Dr. Melissa Kennedy graduated from the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in 1983, and was a veterinary associate in private practice from 1983 until 1987. She studied comparative and experimental medicine at the University of Tennessee and was awarded a PhD from that institution in 1991. Dr. Kennedy subsequently completed a residency in microbiology at the University of Tennessee in 1993. She is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Microbiologists and is currently an Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Virology at the University of Tennessee, College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Kennedy is the recipient of many honors including the Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Award, University of Tennessee, 2007, and the UTCVM Distinguished Coughlin Professor, February 2007.

Dr. Vicki L. Thayer graduated from the College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University, in 1976, and has a 30-year background in feline medicine, surgery, and dentistry. She is board-certified in feline medicine by the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. Dr. Thayer is licensed in California, Oregon, and Washington. She has considerable leadership experience in organized veterinary medicine (American Veterinary Medicine Association; American Association of Feline Practitioners; Oregon Veterinary Medicine Association), as well as in community activities. She has published articles on feline retroviruses, with particular emphasis on clinical management.

The Winn Feline Foundation, the only international charity devoted solely to the advancement of feline health, welcomes Dr. Melissa Kennedy and Dr. Vicki Thayer to its Board of Directors. These professionals bring considerable expertise to Winn's efforts to improve, prolong, and enhance the lives of cats everywhere.

**Immunocontraception for the Humane Control of Feral Cats **

While surgical sterilization is an increasingly popular and humane method of controlling feral cat populations, it is expensive, labor-intensive, highly technical and limited in scale. The availability of a long-acting immunocontraceptive vaccine that could be administered in the field would be a powerful tool for humane cat population control. In a previous Morris Animal Foundation-funded study, the researchers tested a single dose of vaccine that was able to prevent pregnancy in 73 percent of female cats during the two-year observation period. The current study will allow the researchers to continue monitoring these cats until the full duration of immunity is determined. This vaccine has the potential to improve feline welfare by increasing access to humane population control options throughout the world. <http://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org>

No Heimlich for Horses

Ashley Mitek
Information Specialist, Office of Public Engagement
University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine

Wrapping your arms around a 2,000-pound Percheron, or even a 900-pound Arabian, might not be possible unless you are Hulk Hogan. Even at that, you might have a hard time locating your mare's belly button so you can place your hands slightly above it for compressions.

Unfortunately, even if you could do the Heimlich maneuver on your equine friend it probably would not help. That's because choke in horses is completely different than when a human chokes, at least from an anatomical perspective.

Dr. Eric Carlson, an equine intern at the University of Illinois Veterinary Teaching Hospital in Urbana explains that, "choke is an obstruction of the esophagus," not an obstruction of the windpipe when a human chokes. He goes on to note that it can be caused by several factors. "Feed impaction due to poor dentition or ravenous eating habits is the most common reason horses get choke," says Dr. Carlson. Foreign material such as apples and wood chips can also cause the problem.

While a child choking on a piece of hot dog may grasp their neck before turning blue, a horse presents differently. "Horse owners should look out for signs of excessive salivation, coughing, and food dripping from their nostrils," says Dr. Carlson.

If you suspect that your horse has choke, do not hesitate to call your veterinarian. In the meantime, Dr. Carlson recommends that you remove hay and water immediately to prevent worsening the problem. Although the animal can continue to breathe, "if left untreated, horses can get aspiration pneumonia, and the material lodged in the esophagus can cause mucosal damage and necrosis," notes Dr. Carlson.

As far as what your veterinarian can do out in the field to help your horse, "the initial aim of treatment is to reduce the patient's anxiety level and allow esophageal relaxation," explains Dr. Carlson. This noninvasive method of trying to treat choke can be done with drugs that your veterinarian would commonly have in the truck.

In an ideal world, an endoscope, a flexible wire with a camera on the end, would be used to make sure that the animal is indeed choking. However, not all veterinarians will have access to a scope, and may choose to use a nasogastric tube, a flexible plastic tube that travels from the horse's nostrils to their stomach, to try and dislodge the obstructed material.

Dr. Carlson notes that, "if, after passing the nasogastric tube, the situation does not resolve, I lavage the esophagus with water." Hopefully with a combination of these treatments the obstruction will dissolve. However, if the obstruction is too great an esophagotomy can be performed. Such a procedure entails cutting into the horse's esophagus to remove the ingested material causing the problem.

To prevent choke, Dr. Carlson recommends making sure your horse has proper dental care. Also, if your horse tends to eat its food as fast as a lineman after a big game, go ahead and place a large rock in the feed pan to slow him down. <http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumns/index.cfm?function=showarticle&id=597>

Looking Ahead to a New Year

As our population grows and our state becomes increasingly urbanized, the need increases for animal owners, breeders, trainers and rescuers to monitor local government for ordinance changes and additions. Limit laws are in place in some areas and have been discussed in others by local municipalities and animal advisory boards. The North Carolina Appellate Court will be reviewing a limit law case this month. Zoning changes are also fairly commonplace and have the same potential to limit types or numbers of animals that can be owned. These changes affect everyone from owners to rescuers and must be enacted fairly.

We should be well aware that the ugly cry for mandatory spay neuter can be heard often across the state. NCRAOA continues to send out informational packets on the consequences of such punitive legislation.

Nearly all municipalities have meeting agendas and minutes online which allows citizens to stay informed of pending legislative issues. If not available, attend the meetings in person or form a small group to rotate attendance. If your county has an animal advisory board the meetings should be open to the public and can also be monitored. It is very easy, and sometimes seems part of human nature, for these boards to become more interested controlling what others do then working on common ground issues or public education. Who makes up the advisory board in your area? Is representation of animal interests balanced? If not, then find out how to apply for a position.

North Carolina now has a full-time HSUS state director who will be busy spreading slanted information and mobilizing anti-breeder, anti-hunter forces and visiting legislators at all levels of government with a professional, well-prepared animal rights agenda.

February 12 is Lobby Day at the NC General Assembly. HSUS will be there – do not let that be the only voice our senators and representatives hear.

NCRAOA has a wealth of information available on our website for download and distribution. Decide what topic you want to discuss with your legislators, make notes, be prepared and have information ready to leave with them. NCRAOA is presently working on additional flyers and trifold in preparation for Lobby Day.

New links, including case law, for breed specific legislation/breed have been added on the Licensing page along with a number of position statements opposing mandatory spay neuter. A public service message on shelter euthanasia is also available for download on the pet population page <http://www.ncraoa.com/petpopulation.html>

A new NCRAOA trifold is available in the download area. The shelter pet page now links to the legal bulletins “Animal Cruelty, Parts I and II: An Overview of North Carolina’s Civil Remedies” by Aimee Wall, UNC School of Government.

Watch our website for more updates and start preparing for Lobby Day!

Protecting your right to responsibly own and breed animals.

Join NCRAOA. See our home page for membership information and application

For more information on animal health, training, reports on pet issues, animal sheltering, or to learn the difference between animal welfare and animal rights – visit our website at www.ncraoa.com

North Carolina Responsible Animal Owners Alliance, Inc. (NCRAOA) is a statewide organization of animal owners and professionals dedicated to animal welfare, responsible animal ownership, and maintaining the rights of responsible citizens to breed and own animals. NCRAOA, a 501(c)3 organization, provides education and information to the public and supports reasonable and humane animal welfare laws. Permission granted to copy and distribute NCRAOA News and Views in its entirety as is.