



New On NCRAOA Website

Brochures & Handouts: New brochure *Summer Pet Care*; a comprehensive list of summer care tips.

Your New Cat Or Kitten

Most cats can be understandably timid around new people and in new environments. To make their adjustment easier on you both, confine your new cat to a room (your bedroom is ideal) that you will be in a lot for the first several days. This will give him a smaller and not so threatening place to adjust to at first and he will also have to interact with you. Because he is confined to one room, you will be able to keep a closer eye on him. There are fewer places to run and hide and you can ensure that he is eating properly. Make sure that you have "cat - proofed" this room (and the rest of the house) removing string, yarn, feathers, plastic bags – anything that a cat can ingest and be injured by.

This process of acclimation is even more important if you have a resident cat! This will allow both cats to smell and check out each other in a non-threatening manner. If you were to just drop the new cat into the house, your older cat would perceive him as invading his territory and try to drive him out. Let both cats talk to each other under the door and smell each other on you. Later, they can have "supervised visitation." Let the older cat in the room while the new one explores the house. They can then have face to face contact in the room for a few minutes a day. This may seem like a lot of effort, but it will help them to adjust to each other.

As he adjusts to you and his new home, you can let him have more and more time out in the house. Gradually, he will make himself at home. Please take your new cat to your veterinarian as soon as possible for a thorough examination. This will give your vet a baseline reading of your cat's health and he will already have seen him and have his records in the event that he does become sick.

LITTERBOXES

A cat should have easy access to his litter box. If he has to travel two flights of stairs or go through some other type of maze, he may decide to seek out an alternative – such as the corner of a room or the sofa. It should also be large enough for your cat to move around in. Covered varieties have the advantage of both keeping odor down and keeping litter in.

Use whatever type litter your cat prefers and seems comfortable with. Do note that traditional clay litters create a certain amount of dust that will accumulate in the area (and possibly your cats' lungs. Pine pellet litter is lightweight, you use a much smaller amount of it than the clay variety, it seems to control odor much better, and doesn't leave a clay residue all over everything in the room. A Berber-style mat in front of the box will catch most loose litter that your cat tracks out. Other varieties of litter include crystals that absorb urine, wheat granules, and newspaper pellets. Whatever type you choose, make sure that you use enough for the cat to cover his waste with.

Canine Epilepsy Study

Investigations under way at North Carolina State University are examining the role genetics plays in canine epilepsy, which might also reveal clues about how the disease works in humans.

A pair of studies involving Dr. Karen Munana, associate professor of neurology at NC State's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), will explore why some dogs respond poorly to seizure medication.

Approximately 5 percent of all dogs suffer from seizures, and a large percentage of these dogs have an inherited form of epilepsy that causes recurring seizures. While veterinarians have made progress in treating epilepsy in dogs, about one-third of epileptic dogs don't respond to medication. The epilepsy is more prevalent in certain dog breeds, but veterinarians still don't know the underlying cause of the disease.

After gathering blood samples from dogs that do and do not respond to anti-epilepsy drugs, the scientists will analyze the genetic material for 30 different genes to determine whether an epileptic dog's genetic makeup might influence their response to seizure medication.

Dr. Munana and her colleagues are also calling upon the general public to assist in the research projects. Dog owners of rough or smooth-coated collies, Shetland sheepdogs, Australian shepherds – or any dog that has been diagnosed with epilepsy and is being treated for seizures – who are interested in participating in the studies may contact study coordinator Julie Osborne at julie_osborne@ncsu.edu or 919-513-6812 for additional information.

Canine Cancer Research

Cancer is the leading cause of death in humans under the age of 85, as well as the leading cause of disease-related death in dogs. Both genetic and environmental factors have major effects on the occurrence of cancer. Dogs and people are susceptible to many of the same types of cancer and factors such as incidence, age of onset, location, progression, and outcome of many cancer types are similar.

Dogs have shorter generational life spans, extended pedigrees with detailed family histories, and more homogeneous genetic backgrounds. This provides a unique opportunity to study the origin and behavior of cancer. The information obtained by studying cancers of dogs will contribute to designing strategies for prevention and treatment of cancer in both dogs and people.

After completing the dog genome sequencing project, the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT and collaborators are now working on identifying disease genes predisposing to cancer. Identification of such genes could lead to carrier testing, a better understanding of the disease, and long term better treatments for the disease in both dogs and humans. More information can be found at: www.broad.mit.edu/mammals/dog.

Breeds being studied are: Akita, American Cocker Spaniel, Boxer, Bullmastiff, Chinese Shar-Pei, Chow Chow, English Cocker Spaniel, English Springer Spaniel, Flat-Coated Retriever, German Shepherd, Giant Schnauzer, Golden Retriever, Greyhound, Labrador Retriever, Leonberger, Mastiff, Miniature Poodle, Miniature Schnauzer, Pointer, Pug, Rottweiler, Scottish Terrier, Standard Poodle, Standard Schnauzer, and Toy Poodle.

Researchers at the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT are looking for samples for the following projects:

For each of the below diseases researchers need blood samples from affected dogs as well as blood samples from healthy older (6 year old) dogs.

Mammary tumors

Researchers: Kerstin Lindblad-Toh Broad and Elizabeth McNeil, U. Minnesota

Focus: English Springer Spaniel

Additional breeds included: German Shepherds, Cocker Spaniels and Boxers

Please contact: Dog-info@broad.mit.edu

Melanoma

Researchers: Kerstin Lindblad-Toh Broad and Phil Bergman, Animal Medical Center, NY

Breeds included: ALL including Scottish Terriers, Cocker Spaniels, Black Labrador Retrievers, Rottweilers, Chow Chows, and Pugs

Please contact: Dog-info@broad.mit.edu

Lymphoma

Researcher: Kerstin Lindblad-Toh, Broad

Focus: Golden Retrievers, Boxers

Additional breeds included: Cocker Spaniel, Rottweiler, Akita, Flat-Coated Retriever

Please contact: Dog-info@broad.mit.edu

Mast cell tumors

Collaborators: Kerstin Lindblad-Toh, Broad and Cheryl London, UC Davis

Focus: Pugs and Chinese Shar-Pei

Additional breeds included: Pit Bull Terrier, Labrador Retriever, Golden Retriever, German Shepherd, Cocker Spaniel, Boxer

Please contact: Dog-info@broad.mit.edu

Researchers at the AMC Cancer Research Center and University of Colorado Health Science Center are looking for samples for the following projects:

Lymphoma

Researchers need samples from any dog that has an AKC registration number. Eligible dogs will undergo standard of care treatment and provide blood samples as well. Availability of 2 or more unaffected relatives that are 6 years old is desirable. They also would encourage people who have dogs that are related to study subjects that are affected to participate. Owners of all dogs will be asked to fill out a follow-up questionnaire.

Hemangiosarcoma

Researchers need blood samples from affected dogs for a study to map susceptibility genes. In some cases, samples may be applied to the development of a diagnostic test for hemangiosarcoma. Eligible dogs must have an AKC registration number. Owners of all dogs will be asked to fill out a follow-up questionnaire.

Visit www.modiolab.org for additional information on these programs.

The Mosquito Wars

Americans spend about \$200 million a year just on repellent sprays and insecticides . . . and the bugs keep coming. Humans have been swatting at mosquitoes for millennia. American Indians used to smear themselves with bear fat, as a barrier to bites. In 1804, Lewis and Clark, on their great exploratory trek to the Pacific, complained non-stop about mosquitoes in their journal entries. Later, during the Civil War, soldiers used "smudge pots" to create smoke they thought would drive mosquitoes away. (It didn't work.)



Here is a short list from the American Mosquito Control Association of home remedies that do not work:

- Put dish soap in a plate with water, and if mosquitoes even get near it, they drop dead (wrong)
- Citrosa geraniums ~ Unless you crush the leaves to extract the oil, the plants will just look nice in your garden.
- Avon Skin-So-Soft lotion: It has ingredients considered "weakly" repellent, but mostly it just smells better than products containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), considered the most effective mosquito repellent.
- Purple Martins ~ The Martin supposedly can eat 2,000 mosquitoes a day. Or at least that's the claim of the growing number of manufacturers of purple martin birdhouses. In fact, mosquitoes amount to only about 1% of the birds' diet.
- Eating garlic and taking Vitamin B-1 ~ Nope, but may make you healthier

Traditional folklore remedies many times are found to lead nowhere following scientific research. However, one remedy may hold hope of providing some relief without all the worries of DEET and other harsh chemicals.

Scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture-Agriculture Research Service housed at the National Center for Natural Products Research at the University of Mississippi have isolated compounds in the American beautyberry plant, *Callicarpa americana*, that may keep biting insects away.

Charles Cantrell, an ARS chemist in Oxford, and Jerry Klun, an ARS entomologist in Beltsville, Md., confirmed that the natural remedy wards off biting insects, such as ticks, ants and mosquitoes: "I've rubbed the leaves on my arms, and it works," Cantrell said.

Three repellent chemicals were extracted during the 12-month study. The research concluded that all three chemicals repel mosquitoes known to transmit yellow fever and malaria. Mosquitoes carrying the West Nile virus were not tested as part of the study.

There are barriers, however, to producing the repellent for mass consumption. The product must be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency, which may cost millions of dollars, and a cost-effective manufacturing procedure must be found.

While you are busy spraying, swatting and itching, remember the mosquito wages war on your pet as well. As many as 30 species of mosquitoes can transmit heartworms. Win at least one battle in the mosquito war ~ protect your pet with heartworm preventive medicine.

AVMA Breaks Negotiations with HSUS

In a unanimous decision, AVMA's Executive Board scrapped plans to send a joint letter to Congress supporting issues mutually endorsed by HSUS. Quoted in DVM magazine, Executive Board Chairman Dr. Bud Hertzog said the deal breaker was HSUS' support of an Arizona ballot initiative to ban sow gestation stalls, a move that crosses many allied veterinarians. "HSUS is helping underwrite the cost of the Arizona swine referendum, so I think there was reluctance on part of the majority of the board to sign any statement with them," he says. "I'm sure there will be individual issues we can work with them on, but as far as having any joint statement, I don't think that's a possibility."

This position is a complete reversal to the groundwork laid by AVMA President Henry Childers, who also testified on behalf of HSUS at the Senate Subcommittee hearing last November in support of the HSUS/Senator Santorum PAWS bill. Childers expressed disappointment that partnering with HSUS on some common agendas was rejected: "I'm very disappointed that it's ended this way. It doesn't look like HSUS and AVMA will be working together in this capacity in the future."

Photo Competition

The **Wildlife in North Carolina 2006 Photo Competition** is underway. The competition, aimed at encouraging appreciation for North Carolina wildlife began June 1st. Entries will be accepted online through September 15th. There are categories for birds, reptiles, mammals, wild plants, landscapes, and special categories for youth photographers.

Winners will be selected by a panel comprised of staff of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, The News and Observer of Raleigh, UNC-CH School of Journalism and professional wildlife photographers. Winning photographs will be published in the January 2007 issue of *Wildlife in North Carolina* and will be exhibited at the Museum and at other science museums and wildlife centers across the state in 2007.



For contest rules and specific information visit <http://www.ncwildlife.org/>

Think Before Donating

Most of us treat our pets like family and care deeply for the well being of all animals. We want to give generously to charities that benefit animals; however, be careful to choose organizations that best serve your belief and intention.

There is a tremendous difference between animal welfare organizations and animal rights organizations. Animal welfare means providing food, shelter, love and responsible care for an animal's entire life, often involving hands-on work. Animal rights organizations today include extreme views that seek to eliminate animal ownership, and mostly campaign to fund causes rather than direct care.

For example, some people still believe that because of its name the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) operates and funds local shelters. This is not the case, as HSUS is an advocacy group. If you want to donate money to assist and shelter animals, you should donate locally.

Before making charitable donations to animal-related causes, thoroughly investigate and understand both the issue and the programs or ideals that your donation will support. Will your donation go directly to help animals or will it be used for administrative costs and campaign funds? Don't be fooled by slick advertising and emotional appeals.

Before you donate make sure your money supports a cause that meets your approval.

H 2098 Protection of Animals

The bill passed the House June 30 (concurrence between House/Senate versions) and was presented to the Governor's office July 5th. The bill, nicknamed the "hog/dog bill", amended the current dog fighting law to include baiting and fighting between a dog and any other animal. The vague language left the meaning open to interpretation as to exactly what activities were still exempt and what activities would be considered animal cruelty and subject to Class H Felony charges.

Although bill sponsor, Representative Deborah Ross, dismissed questions from House members regarding any impact on hunting dogs, a last minute amendment from Senator Snow exempted hunters from the fighting/baiting provision. The Wildlife Commission stated the amendment also covered hunters for training situations which fall under WRC regulations. However, working dogs in areas not covered by WRC regulations for taking game would now be at risk. By exempting a single class of owners in a single activity a distinction is made that owners of dogs working in venues outside WRC auspices are subject to Class H Felony charges. Stock dog work, herding, open field coursing and earth dog work could easily be construed as baiting and subject the owner to felony charges.

Across the state, dog owners are outraged that their normal working dog activities are in jeopardy. With the strengthening animal rights movement today, laws have to be written absolutely clear so court interpretation is not needed. It is a poor move indeed for the NC legislature to pass a bill and let the courts sort out the meaning.

We Are Not Their Owners?

CFA Legislative Liaison, Joan Miller, reported this week that Imperial Beach, CA, will become the next city to accept the proposed change from owner to "owner/guardian" in their animal code:

"George Eigenhauser and I both spoke on behalf of CFA. George emphasized the need for plain language in the law; stressed that the use of "guardian" has no relationship to better care of animals. The concept of animal ownership is clearly understood by everyone regarding both responsibilities and rights. I expressed concern that the use of "owner/guardian" in law was not simply an innocuous change but the first step in the national campaign called "They are not our property - we are not their owners", a movement intended to transform the status of animals so they will eventually be granted legal rights. Many dog fanciers and veterinarians, representatives from the California Federation of Dog Clubs, Del Sur Kennel Club, the CVMA and the San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association strongly opposed the proposed terminology reiterating that this would create confusion among animal owners, regulatory agencies and veterinarians and could lead to litigation against the city."

Joan continues, “The Council said they received many letters opposing the change. It was apparent that legal reasoning, discussion of animal rights agenda or potential unintended consequences would not influence this council.”

Support came from numerous local pet owners. All of the supporters used emotional rationale saying they believed "guardian" would mean better care of pets and would raise awareness.

What difference does a word make?

The Guardianship Campaign is the creation of Dr. Elliot Katz, In Defense of Animals, who tells pet owners “Though updated legal language does not affect one’s legal rights, responsibilities and liabilities, the psychological and sociological impact of this change in language is advancing positive attitudes about animal care.” Far from benign, the campaign is better described by his following quote, "It is time we demand an end to the misguided and abusive concept of animal ownership. The first step on this long, but just, road would be ending the concept of pet ownership." Elliot Katz, President "In Defense of Animals," Spring 1997.

Would the pet owners who support steps to change ownership of animals be as supportive of the In Defense of Animals Vegan Campaign? The underlying principle is the same; both the Guardian and Vegan campaigns are driven by a philosophy that believes in non use of animals. The goal of the guardianship campaign is to shift the legal status of animals from property to personhood.

IDA claims that changing a simple word will help reduce exploitation, abuse, and abandonment of animals by their owners. In reality, replacing the word owner to guardian will not change how the majority of pet owners feel about their pets. Today, a relatively small percentage of the population does not care about their pets and changing one word will not alter their behavior. There are current laws that can be enforced to deal with those who mistreat or abandon animals.

Veterinarians worry that if pet guardianship were eventually defined along the same lines as guardianship for humans, then pet owners might be limited in choosing from among various health care options for their pets. In addition, veterinarians could be placed in the difficult position of trying to determine who is ultimately responsible for owners' decisions regarding patient care.

The AVMA opposes Guardianship. Their position was developed after a review of case law and court decisions, lengthy discussion among committee members, consultation with the American Veterinary Medical Law Association, and input from several AVMA entities: Legislative Advisory Committee, Animal Welfare Committee, Council on Veterinary Service, Judicial Council, Council on Public Relations, Animal Agriculture Liaison Committee, American Board of Veterinary Specialties, Council on Research, and Council on Education.

AVMA Policy: Ownership vs. Guardianship

The American Veterinary Medical Association promotes the optimal health and well-being of animals. Further, the AVMA recognizes the role of responsible owners in providing for their animals' care. Any change in terminology describing the relationship between animals and owners does not strengthen this relationship and may, in fact, diminish it. Such changes in terminology may decrease the ability of veterinarians to provide services and, ultimately, result in animal suffering.

Read more on ownership vs. guardianship at <http://www.ncraoa.com/Guardians.html>

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