



New On NCRAOA Website

Brochures & Handouts: New brochure *Finding a Lost Pet*, compiled from the wonderful suggestions of friends.

Reminder: among the brochures available for download is a one page handout on Toxic Plants and Household Items that are poisonous to your dog. A note on the flyer says “*What dogs will try to eat can be amazing. Keep your dog safe.*” Amazing is an understatement ~ and dogs are not the only animals that will ingest a phenomenal variety of items.

Veterinary Practice News and Eklin Medical Systems sponsored a “**They Ate What?**” contest resulting in some incredible cases and accompanying x-ray images.

A pet Samoyed, had been vomiting and not eating for four days. A gastronomy was performed and an incredible number of items were removed: one D-size, five AAA-size and 22 AA-size batteries—along with seven rocks, a plastic raccoon, a marble, two broken light bulbs with glass pieces, two metal machine parts and numerous staples. Not to worry, the dog made an excellent recovery.

A pet toad was taken to the vet after not eating for one week. A firm object was palpated which X-rays showed to be a 7/8 inch-long bolt. Under general anesthetic, the toad’s mouth was opened and a hemostat was gently guided into the stomach to remove the bolt.

An 8-year-old neutered cat was presented by owners as acting “strange”: he didn’t want to curl up on their laps and would hide under their bed. However, his appetite was normal and he otherwise seemed fine. Upon physical examination, the cat was shown to resist extension of his neck. A radiograph of the ventral dorsal views was taken. The owners’ missing wire candle lighter was discovered! A routine gastrotomy was performed and the cat made an uneventful recovery. The owners framed the candle lighter.

Summer Heartworm Prevention

The heartworm parasite is an actual worm that lives in the pulmonary vessels of the heart (vessels that carry blood to the lungs to pick up oxygen). A heartworm can grow to be up to 12 inches long, and if the infestation is severe enough can even live in the heart itself. As they increase in number, the worms begin to take up space in the heart and pulmonary vessels, causing high blood pressure, difficulty in breathing, and eventually death due to heart failure.

Heartworm is spread from animal to animal by mosquitoes. When the mosquito feeds on the blood of an infected animal, an immature form of the worm (called microfilaria) enters the mosquito. The microfilaria must then undergo an incubation period inside the mosquito during which the temperature outside must be constantly warm for several weeks.

The heartworm becomes infective inside the mosquito and is passed to a new host animal when the mosquito bites again. After entering the body the microfilaria takes up to five months maturing. During this developmental period the worms cannot be detected, so veterinarians recommend testing for heartworm every spring in case infection occurred the previous summer. Once the worms migrate to the pulmonary arteries, they grow and reproduce, releasing more microfilaria into the bloodstream. The cycle of infection starts anew when a mosquito bites this host animal and carries microfilaria to its next victim.

Signs of heartworm include coughing, fainting, fatigue, and difficulty breathing. Unfortunately, infected animals may have heartworm for several years before showing any sign of the disease, and when signs finally occur, the heart and pulmonary arteries are often so full of worms that treatment becomes very risky. The treatment for this disease can be just as taxing to the animal as the infection. The only treatment available for heartworm is a form of arsenic administered at doses designed to kill the worms but not the dog. Although this treatment is safer today than in the past, there is a risk that the animal may die during the treatment process.

The easiest way to keep your pet from getting this disease is to prevent infection using either once-a-month tablets, daily tablets, or an injection that lasts for six months. The preventatives act by killing the infective forms of the worm before they have a chance to develop into adults. Some form of the preventative should be used throughout the warm months of the year and can be purchased through a veterinarian.

No Taste for Sweets

Researchers at the Monell Chemical Senses Center, a nonprofit research institute based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, have discovered a genetic flaw in cats — a dysfunctional gene that prevents them from detecting sweets. Although sugar or related products like saccharine are added to many processed human foods and some nonfood items like toothpaste, manufacturers don't add sugar to cat food because it has no appeal to felines. The reason — cats can't taste it.

According to Dr. Joseph Brand, Monell's associate director and professor of biochemistry at the University of PA, the receptor that enables an animal to detect sweet stimuli, including artificial sweeteners, is the product of two different genes. The research, reported in the July 2005 inaugural issue of the journal *Public Library of Science, Genetics* found that one of those genes is not expressed.

As to whether cats were carnivores first and lost the ability to discern sweets through lack of use of the specific receptors or whether the receptors were dysfunctional, causing cats to become obligate carnivores, is a mystery of evolution. "It seems likely to me that an individual pre-cat had a mutation in one of its sweet receptors, resulting in that individual not being able to taste sweet, and thereby altering its food choice," explains Dr. Brand. "Lacking this receptor must have put the animal at a competitive advantage, and the mutation was passed on."



Obesity in Dogs and Cats

One of every four dogs and cats in the Western world is obese, according to a 2003 report from the National Academy of Sciences. Researchers compiled the 450-page report after reviewing 25 years of scientific papers on cat and dog nutrition. "Like humans, dogs and cats that are obese run a higher risk of developing diabetes, heart disease or other problems," according to the report.

The report sets new dietary guidelines for dogs and cats, including specific nutrient requirements for protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, fiber and additives.

One study done by a pet-food company, he said, showed that dogs on reduced diets lived two years longer than "free-fed" dogs that ate as much as they wanted. The solution is to reduce the amount of food given to pets (no more table scraps!) and to increase their exercise.

Not surprisingly, the \$35.9 billion pet-supplies-and-services industry is pumping out all sorts of low-fat/low-calorie chow and weight-loss strategies for its four-legged consumers.

"Fitness Unleashed! A Dog and Owners' Guide to Losing Weight Gaining Health Together" written by veterinarian Marty Becker of Bonners Ferry, Idaho, and medical doctor Robert Kushner, a professor of medicine at Northwestern University near Chicago, aims to help both dogs and their owners.

"Many of us have shared our generous (food) portions and inactive routines with our pets," writes Becker, who is a regular contributor to ABC's "Good Morning America." "Centuries of species' self-preservation have left most dogs with a strong desire to consume any edible bite they can find. They've historically survived as scavengers. ... Many will eat as much and as often as you'll let them."

Is your pet too fat?

- ✓ **Rib check:** Place both thumbs on your pet's backbone and run your fingers along his rib cage. If you can't easily feel his ribs with slight pressure, he's probably overweight.
- ✓ **Profile check:** Take a look at your pet from the side. If he's at the proper weight, you should see a clearly defined abdomen.
- ✓ **Overhead check:** Stand directly over your pet while he's standing up. You should see a clearly defined hour-glass shape; if not, he's too heavy.
- ✓ **Warning signs:** There are pads of fat over the hips and base of the tail, he waddles while walking, he finds it difficult to move or is short of breath.

PAWS

May 26 marked the one year anniversary of Senator Santorum's introduction of PAWS. The possibility still exists that PAWS could be attached as a rider rather than stand on it's on for a vote. Also worth noting is the absence of the many opposition statements sent as part of the record for the November subcommittee hearing. The statements have yet to be published. Thirty-three NC animal related groups have officially opposed PAWS and are listed on the NCRAOA website.

Wake Forest University School of Medicine

White Blood Cells from Cancer-Resistant Mice Cure Cancers in Ordinary Mice

Released: Wed 03-May-2006, 17:25 ET

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Newswise — White blood cells from a strain of cancer-resistant mice cured advanced cancers in ordinary laboratory mice, researchers at Wake Forest University School of Medicine reported today.

“Even highly aggressive forms of malignancy with extremely large tumors were eradicated,” Zheng Cui, M.D., Ph.D., and colleagues reported in this week’s on-line edition of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

The transplanted white blood cells not only killed existing cancers, but also protected normal mice from what should have been lethal doses of highly aggressive new cancers. “This is the very first time that this exceptionally aggressive type of cancer was treated successfully,” said Cui. “Never before has this been done with any other therapy.”

The original studies on the cancer-resistant mice – reported in 2003 – showed that such resistance could be inherited, which had implications for inheritance of resistance in humans, said Mark C. Willingham, M.D., a pathologist and co-investigator. “This study shows that you can use this resistant-cell therapy in mice and that the therapy works. The next step is to understand the exact way in which it works, and perhaps eventually design such a therapy for humans.”

The cancer-resistant mice all stem from a single mouse discovered in 1999. “The cancer resistance trait so far has been passed to more than 2,000 descendants in 14 generations,” said Cui, associate professor of pathology. It also has been bred into three additional mouse strains. About 40 percent of each generation inherits the protection from cancer.

The original group of cancer-resistant mice, also described in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, successfully fought off a range of virulent transplanted cancers. “Now we know that we can take white blood cells from this strange mouse and put them into a normal mouse and these cells will still kill cancers,” said Willingham, professor of pathology and head of the Section on Tumor Biology. “This is therapy in a mouse that does not have this magical genetic inheritance.”

The transplanted white blood cells included natural killer cells, and other white blood cells called neutrophils and macrophages that are part of the body’s “innate immune system.” This system forms a first line of host defense against pathogens, such as bacteria.

Cui and Willingham said the research produced many other surprises. For one thing, if a virulent tumor was planted in a normal mouse’s back, and the transplanted white blood cells were injected into the mouse’s abdomen, the cells still found the cancer without harming normal cells. The kind of cancer didn’t seem to matter.

A single injection of cancer-resistant macrophages offered long-term protection for the entire lifespan of the recipient mouse, something very unexpected, they said.

“The potency and selectivity for cancer cells are so high that, if we learned the mechanism, it would give us hope that this would work in humans,” said Cui. “This would suggest that cancer cells send out a signal, but normal white blood cells can’t find them.”

Cui said the findings “suggest a cancer-host relationship that may point in a new therapeutic direction in which adverse side effects of treatment are minimal.” The next steps include understanding the molecular mechanism. “The real key is finding the mutation, which is an ongoing investigation in collaboration with several other laboratories,” said Willingham.

The primary support for the research came from the Cancer Research Institute, a New York based group founded to foster the science of cancer immunology, on the premise that the body's immune system can be mobilized against cancer. The research also had support from the National Cancer Institute and the Charlotte Geyer Foundation.

Animal Activists Convicted Of Trespassing

SHAC president Pamelyn Ferdin and her husband, Animal Liberation press officer Jerry Vlasak will be sentenced on June 22 after being convicted yesterday of trespassing in connection with demonstrations against a Los Angeles Animal Services employee. The charges stem from a protest in June 2004 near the Hollywood home of David Dilberto, director of field operations for the Department of Animal Services.

A Los Angeles County jury convicted Vlasak, 49, and Ferdin, 48, for one count each of targeted trespassing. Ferdin was also convicted of trespassing. A city ordinance prohibits demonstrations within 100 feet of a residence.

While these are misdemeanor charges, the prosecution sends a clear message to activists in Los Angeles that illegal acts will not be tolerated. “Free speech is a right, one of the most treasured rights in this country, said City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. “But as the verdict in this case shows, there are limits to the exercise of that right.”

Ferdin and Vlasak are co-founders of Los Angeles Animal Defense League which has been conducting a long-term vicious campaign against the staff of the Los Angeles Animal Services Department.

“The entire staff of the Animal Services Department is gratified with this conviction,” said Ed Boks, the department’s general manager. *AMP News Service Digest*

Town of Holly Springs Revised Animal Control Ordinance

Very simple additions to the ordinance spell out the requirements for outside pets to have adequate shelter and sanitary conditions. Town Attorney, John Schifano, stated “It requires people to use some common sense on how to keep animals outside, also prohibits them from being kept in certain confined spaces such as underneath houses ...”

The ordinance reads - Prohibited acts. All animals shall be kept and treated under sanitary and humane conditions and it shall be unlawful for any person to engage in one or more of the following acts:

Failing to provide adequate feed, water and shelter or failing to maintain the animal in a clean and healthy environment. All animals, unless otherwise indicated in this chapter, shall be given adequate feed,

adequate water and adequate shelter. Examples of shelter that is not adequate include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Underneath houses, outdoor steps, decks or stoops, or underneath motor vehicles;
- b. Inside metal barrels or cardboard boxes;
- c. Shelters prone to flood;
- d. Shelters surrounded by debris, obstructions or impediments that may endanger animal;
- e. Confinement of the animal in storage rooms, sheds or other buildings without windows and proper ventilation.
- f. Outside in direct sunlight without adequate shade so as to endanger the animal's health.

Preparing For Emergencies

Homeland Security and Animal Groups Encourage Americans to Include Their Pets When Preparing for Emergencies

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
Contact: 202-282-8010
May 31, 2006

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security today announced a joint effort with the American Kennel Club (AKC), the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to encourage pet owners to prepare for emergencies. The Department's Ready Campaign and these animal health and welfare organizations developed a new brochure that highlights the key steps pet owners should take to prepare themselves and their animals.

"Tragedies like Hurricane Katrina serve as a serious reminder that emergency preparedness is important for all members of households, including pets," said Homeland Security Under Secretary George Foresman. "We are pleased to partner with these important animal organizations to encourage Americans to take action to prepare for emergencies and consider the needs of their pets in that process." The new brochure suggests making a pet emergency supply kit including food, water, medicines and medical records, collar with ID tag, a leash or harness, and a picture of the pet with its owner. It also recommends having an emergency plan and learning which shelters in their area or along their evacuation route will allow pets in the event of an emergency. In addition, the brochure urges pet owners to be informed and know about the types of emergencies that can happen where they live.

"It's important to consider your pets in your emergency plans," said animal expert and nationally syndicated radio host Warren Eckstein. "Pets rely on their owners for food, water, and shelter. Remembering your pets in your emergency plans can help minimize their stress and increase their odds of survival in an emergency."

According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, 63 percent of U.S. households or approximately 69.1 million homes have a pet. The likelihood that these Americans and their animals will survive an emergency depends largely on the individual emergency planning done today. Through its Ready Campaign, Homeland Security encourages all Americans to get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the types of emergencies that can happen and their appropriate responses.

For a free copy of the new emergency preparedness for pet owners' brochure, or for more information about emergency preparedness for individuals, families and businesses, visit www.ready.gov, or call 1-800-BE-READY.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security promotes individual emergency preparedness through the Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps as part of a broader national effort conducted by the Department's Preparedness Directorate. Ready is a national public service advertising campaign produced by The Advertising Council in partnership with Homeland Security. The Ready Campaign is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. Individuals interested in more information about family and business preparedness can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive a "Get Ready Now" brochure. Citizen Corps, Homeland Security's grassroots effort, localizes preparedness messages and provides opportunities for citizens to get emergency response training; participate in community exercises; and volunteer to support local first responders. To learn more and to get involved, contact your nearest Citizen Corps Council by visiting www.CitizenCorps.gov.

Beyond Animal Welfare – The Animal Rights Movement

One would think the difference between animal welfare and animal rights would be simple to understand. The average person thinks of animal welfare with a common sense approach that people should be kind to animals and that animal cruelty is wrong. A stronger, more principled level would allow for use of animals and would detail standards and practices. All agree that animals have a "right" to be treated humanely and compassionately and that people have a "moral" obligation to provide welfare for animals.

What begins to make the issues unclear for many is the animal rights viewpoint which makes deeper political and philosophical claims about the status of animals.

Animal rights is a radical social movement that attempts to include species of animals within human moral interpretations. The basic belief is that animals should no longer be regarded legally or morally as property or as resources for human use. To accomplish this animal rights advocates believe either a change in legal status is needed or animals should outright be regarded as persons.

Abolishing the property status of animals within the legal system is considered by many animal rights philosophers and advocates as the means to achieve their goal.

Professor Gary Francione (Rutgers School of Law) states "I argue that animals should have one right: the right not to be our property. Indeed, I argue that a "person" is any being who is entitled to this one right and all sentient beings should be regarded as "persons", or as holders of this one right not to be property. If we accepted that animals have this one right, we would be committed to abolishing animal exploitation because our use of animals for food, experiments, product testing, entertainment and clothing assumes that animals are nothing but property. If we accepted that animals have this one right, we would stop, completely, bringing domestic animals into existence."

Steven Wise (Animal Rights Law-Harvard Law School; former president Animal Legal Defense Fund; founder Center for Expansion of Fundamental [Animal] Rights) describes animal rights law as concerning whether any nonhuman animals should be entitled to legal rights, why, and if so, which ones.

In a SATYA interview Wise says, “We lawyers have no choice but to litigate using the statutes and case law that exist in order to help animals as well as we can. At the same time, some of us are trying to lay the intellectual foundation that will compel judges to make that shift from nonhuman animals as things to nonhuman animals as persons.”

The current property status of animals is generally considered the biggest stumbling block, and there are several routes discussed by animal rights groups as a means to overcome this and obtain animal-human equality. One is to elevate the legal “interests” of animals that are of special importance to people. For example, establishing pet trusts within the legal system and awarding large sums of money in veterinary malpractice suits demonstrating that certain pets hold more value to people than other owned property.

The legal system changes through the decision of judges or by legislatures enacting statutes. Viewpoints and values in society also influence changes in the law. Changing the language of the law, i.e. “owner” to “guardian” reflects a belief that animals are not property. The Guardianship Campaign initiated by In Defense of Animals founder Elliott Katz pledges “I believe that animals are not commodities or property to be bought, sold, disposed of, or discarded”. While being hailed as merely a means to allow people to express their deep commitment to their pets, in reality this language may legally remove ownership rights and have far reaching effects into other areas of law and government.

Those within the movement to establish personhood for animals believe they have the best chance of success by establishing personhood for great apes, including gorillas, chimpanzees and orangutans that resemble humans genetically and have demonstrated a high degree of intelligence.

The Great Ape Project has been joined in its effort by two US groups: the Great Apes Legal Project, run by the Animal Legal Defense Fund based in California, and the Center for the Expansion of Fundamental Rights [to animals] in Needham, Massachusetts. Worldwide, the movement includes the Jane Goodall Institute, the Chimpanzee and Human Communication Institute, the International Primate Protection League, and the Center for Captive Chimpanzees.

The group hopes to one day file a lawsuit in an ape’s name, perhaps protesting its life of confinement in a lab or zoo. The ape will then testify in sign language or using a voice synthesizer telling its story and claiming that it has legal rights, including a fundamental right to liberty.

Quoted in a New York Times article Professor William Reppy (Duke University Animal Law) says, “This is going to be a very important case.” “It has never happened before. An animal has never conversed with a judge.”

The goal is to make it intellectually uncomfortable for the legal system to continue to declare that animals lack legal rights because they are property. Personhood only needs to be established for one species and it can be carried down the line extending down to farm animals, pets, perhaps even lab mice.

Daniel T. Oliver in *Animal Rights: The Inhumane Crusade*, writes: “The animal rights movement is, quite simply, an animal non-use movement. Unlike traditional humane organizations, which seek to prevent cruelty and improve the treatment of animals, animal rights organizations seek to end the use and ownership of animals. Some people mistakenly believe that animal rights groups are just humane organizations that have gone overboard in their concern for animals – that they care so deeply for animals that they overlook human welfare. According to Oliver, “the animal rights movement will continue to harm both people and animals as long as Americans fail to understand its actual agenda.”

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