

PAWPRINTS

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Welcome to the second year of PAWPRINTS. I am grateful to our sponsor, Merial, and also to the American Veterinary Medical Association for the ongoing determined commitment to reach people who have pets. I hope you find PAWPRINTS interesting and informative.

Our PAWPRINTS guarantee: *Love your pets, and they will love you back*

About the Editors

Steve Dale – Editor-in-Chief. The 2002 AVMA Humane Award winner. Steve is a contributing editor for *USA Weekend*, and the author of *My Pet World*, syndicated in over 100 newspapers by Tribune Media Services. He's heard on *Pet Central* Saturday nights, 7:30 p.m. heard on WGN radio (or www.wgnradio.com). His syndicated radio shows are *Steve Dale's Pet World* and *The Pet Minute with Steve Dale*. Steve's also a TV regular appearing on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *National Geographic Explorer* and various Animal Planet shows. He lives with his Devon Rex cat Roxy; Lucy, a miniature Australian Shepherd; Chaser, a Brittany, and Cosette, a Northern blue-tongue skink. Steve's website is www.petworldradio.net.

Margaret H. Bonham – Editor. An award winning pet book author; her current titles include *The Complete Guide to Mutts*, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Labrador Retrievers* and *Introduction to Dog Agility*. She lives in Colorado, where she's 'owned' by several Alaskan Malamutes, Alaskan Huskies, a German Shepherd dog and a cat. Margaret's website: www.shadowhelm.net

Stand up Against Meaningless Death: Adopt a Cat for Life



By Steve Dale

“Adopting a cat from a shelter is a profound act, a stand for life and a stand against a meaningless death,” says Diane Leigh, co-author of *One at a Time: A Week in an American Animal Shelter*, (No Voice Unheard: Santa Cruz, CA, 2003; \$16.95).

According to the Humane Society of the United States, at least six to eight million cats and dogs enter shelters annually. About 70 per cent of all cats in shelters are ultimately euthanized.

“But it doesn't have to be that way,” Leigh says. “They come into the shelter one at a time, so they can be saved one at a time.”

“For people who have never had a cat in their life, they don't understand,” says Annemarie Lucas, supervisor of special investigations at the American

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and a host of “Animal Precinct” on Animal Planet. “Cats are every bit as affectionate as dogs. And they will be your friend for life.”

Since shelters mostly have kittens, and they're generally adopted, welcoming an adult cat into your life may save a life.

“Rambunctious kittens aren't for everyone,” says Lucas. “Kittens are curious babies who can get themselves into big trouble. So, families who are never at home and can't supervise might be better off with an adult. Kittens are energetic and do crazy things, and some older people, in particular, may say ‘been there, done that,’ and might be better off with a more laid back adult.”

“Adopting any cat frees up cage space,” adds Leigh. “Every nine seconds there's an animal who

dies in a shelter.” The best thing you can do is to adopt a new friend for life. Having a cat is a responsibility.

Still, cats actually don't ask all that much of us. Their box requires scooping and the litter requires changing. “Of course, they need food and water,” adds Leigh. “They also need play time. Most of all, what they need is our love. Of course, if you adopt any pet – you get at least twice as much of that love back in return.”

To learn more about adopting cats, check out www.freshstep.com or www.iams.com; both of these companies are involved in campaigns to support adoption. Also check out, www.asPCA.org.



Annemarie Lucas with a kitty on her lap during a national satellite TV tour.

Cats are Underdogs among Veterinary Researchers

“The Morris Animal Foundation is a not-for-profit organization which has long funded research to advance the health and well-being of wild animals with whom we share our planet, as well companion animals with

whom we share our homes. Dr. Patricia Olson, executive director at Morris, noted that investigators submitted 142 proposals to study canine health issues this past year, but only 27 proposals were offered to learn

about diseases or health issues affecting cats.

“I can't tell you why cats are being overlooked, but they are,” says Olson. “There are more

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Cats are Underdogs among Veterinary Researchers

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cats than dogs, but it's like they're second class citizens. I'm very concerned, because we need to do so much for cats. It's not as if there is a shortage of feline diseases that need to either be prevented or treated. We're stewards for all animals, cats included."

Olson is encouraging clients to speak up for cats and tell their veterinarians, particularly those who are at veterinary teaching institutions, to submit proposals to learn more about feline health.



Cats are the most popular pet and yet researchers tend to overlook them.

—Photo by Viki Farrow

Indeed, very recent feline studies funded by Morris have led to further understanding of several medical issues, including a drug which has promise to help cats with acute kidney failure. Also, the cause of hyperthyroidism, a very common disease among senior cats has, until now, been unknown – but researchers are now learning about cellular abnormalities which may cause the disease.

"This is a wonderful opportunity," says Olson. "We're just looking for veterinary investigators to take advantage of it."

— Steve Dale

MERIAL MUSINGS



Fleas don't have to Bug Pets; Follow Guidelines for Flea Control

Fleas are like lots of bugs, they're only a problem when you see them. Fleas are one of the most common health problems facing pet owners. They're more than merely annoying and disgusting; they can be a health risk. Some pets can become allergic to fleas and the little buggers can transmit disease.

First of all, don't blame yourself – if your pet has become infested with fleas it doesn't mean you're a bad housekeeper or that you have a "dirty house." This myth may have been brought about by the fact that fleas can and do reproduce in the carpet, furniture, and bedding in a home.

While it is true that there are some house-keeping tricks a person can do to help reduce the reproduction rate of fleas, there's little that can be done to prevent your pet's original infestation, that's unless you're faithfully using a safe and effective preventive that your veterinarian can provide.

Recently, a panel of leading experts published new guidelines on flea control. Here are six key points they believe are valuable to pet owners, with my comments:

1. **One flea can produce 2,000 eggs in her lifetime!** Obviously, anything you can do to keep those eggs from hatching is a good thing!
2. **95% of the fleas in your home are not in the adult stages, but other life stages (flea larvae and eggs) can live up to a full year.** Think tip of the iceberg...if you see one flea, there are potentially hundreds more in various life stages lurking on your pets and in your home. Continuous year-round protection against hatching adults will help to ensure your pet stays flea-free
3. **Flea-allergic pets must be aggressively treated.** Even one fleabite can cause severe discomfort to these pets.
4. **Pay attention to all the animals in the household.** A leading cause of "treatment failure" is not treating all pets.
5. **While pets can be reinfested at locations other than home, like parks, kennels, etc. effective flea control requires a focus on what is happening at home.** You can beat fleas by making your home "flea-proof."
6. **Flea control products must be used at the correct dosage and year-round.** Good medicine requires compliance.

You have the power to make fleas a non-issue for your pets. When used correctly, today's best flea control products, which are available through your vet, really do work.

— Scott Vande Griend, DVM

Iraqi Veterinarian says U.S. Vets Reopen Baghdad Zoo

Minneapolis, MN The Baghdad Zoo and its residents were an early casualty of the war in Iraq. Once the home to more than 600 animals, mortar rounds released many animals into the city who were ultimately either shot or starved to death. Damage to the

zoo's infrastructure was significant.

"The Americans have focused on this problem, and now they (have) solved this problem; they spent a lot of money and they fixed the zoo," said Dr. Bial Abdul Jabbar,

a veterinarian from Iraq, who attended the 142nd Annual American Veterinary Medical Association Convention and the 28th World Veterinary Congress at the Minneapolis Convention Center, July 16 through 20,

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FROM THE AVMA

Veterinarian of the Year Award



The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) honored Dr. H. Marie Suthers-McCabe with the 2005 Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year Award, at the 142nd Annual American Veterinary Medical Association Convention in Minneapolis, MN.

The award is one of veterinary medicine's highest honors, recognizing the outstanding work of veterinarians to protect and promote the human-animal bond. This award is named for the late Dr. Leo K. Bustad, long-time dean of Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine, and former president of the Delta Society – a Bellevue, Washington-based, not-for-profit organization which he helped to establish, promoting further understanding of the human-animal bond.

“The daily lives of each winner demonstrates the passion they feel about the importance of the connection between people and the animals with which we share our planet,” said Dr. Bonnie Beaver, president of the AVMA, as she presented Dr. Suthers-McCabe with the award. “Their devotion to

this field helps to keep alive Dr. Bustad's lifelong dedication, interest, teaching and scientific studies about the human-animal bond.”



Dr. H. Marie Suthers-McCabe wins the 2005 Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year Award.

“I am grateful for the support I have received that has allowed me to spread the word around the world regarding the important psycho/social impact animals have on our lives,” Suthers-McCabe said as she accepted the award.

Suthers-McCabe is an associate professor of Human-Companion Animal Interaction at the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and Director of the Center for Animal-Human Relationships. The Center works in tandem with the Medical College of Virginia and is the only facility of its kind doing joint research in human medicine.

In addition to Suthers-McCabe's work as an ambassador of the human-animal bond, she served as a veterinary medical officer with the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team-2 of the National Disaster Medical System at the World Trade Center disaster. She saw first hand how the presence of the search and rescue dogs brought comfort to exhausted workers and victims who had lost everything.

Iraqi Veterinarian says U.S. Vets Reopen Baghdad Zoo

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attended by a total of nearly 9,000 veterinary professionals.

Even under the regime of Saddam Hussein, the Baghdad Zoo was considered a safe haven where families could inexpensively spend a day. More than 1.5 million people visited the zoo annually.

Abdual Jabbar kept a low profile at the vet conference, although U.S. military veterinarians spoke about what veterinarians are doing to control disease outbreak in Afghanistan and Iraq, preserving and protecting the human food supplies worldwide and how vets work in tandem with the government on terrorism issues.

In one of many seemingly strange contradictions, being a veterinarian is considered an honored profession in Iraq, according to Abdual Jabbar. However, pet dogs are

hardly ever kept indoors and cats are nearly never considered pets. Livestock and zoo animals require veterinary care, but still there have for years been more vets in Iraq than there are available jobs for them.

Abdual Jabbar worked as a director of a



Reopening of the Baghdad Zoo

— photo by Sgt. Mark S. Rickert
372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

commercial fishery: a fish vet in a desert country. Today, his job is to serve as a translator between Iraqi and American veterinarians.

While having a watchdog is “very important” in Iraq, Abdual Jabbar says dogs are considered too dirty to be indoor pets by the vast majority of Muslims, though some Christians do have indoor dogs. Most pet dogs spend their life in the family's yard or sometimes roaming nearby streets, but return to one family for meals.

Abdual Jabbar says as more Iraqis and Americans get to know one another on a personal level, trust and understanding will develop. He concedes he had preconceived notions of Americans, just as Americans have of Iraqis. “I am very good (impressed) when I get to know the people,” he says. “This will happen — and the people will matter more than the government.”

PAWPRINTS

Editor-in-Chief — Steve Dale
Editor — Margaret H. (“Maggie”) Bonham

Contributors —
 American Veterinary Medical Association
 Scott Vande Griend DVM,
 Merial District Manager

Email — merialpawprints@aol.com

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FEATURED WEBSITES:

American Animal Hospital Association — www.healthypet.org

American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine — www.acvim.org

American Association of Feline Practitioners — www.aafponline.org

American Veterinary Medical Association — www.avma.org

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals — www.aspc.org

Freshstep — www.freshstep.com

Good News for Pets — www.goodnewsforpets.com

Howell Book House — www.howellbookhouse.com

Iams — www.iams.com

Morris Animal Foundation — www.morrisanimalfoundation.org

Steve Dale's new site — www.petworldradio.net

Winn Feline Foundation — www.winnfelinehealth.org

World Wildlife Fund — www.worldwildlife.org

Have a Sense of Humor

The following is an excerpt from PawPrints editor Margaret H. Bonham's upcoming book, A Dog's Wisdom (Howell Book House: Hoboken, NJ, 2005, \$14.99). This is one of many vignettes in her book which illustrates the wisdom of canine companions.

Some experts say dogs can't experience complex emotions, but every dog owner knows this isn't true. I've seen very complex emotions, including humor, in dogs. In fact, Kiana had the most developed sense of humor of any creature I've ever known, dog or otherwise.

Kiana and I always played jokes on each other. One day

when she was young, I looked up at the ceiling. Naturally, she looked up. I caught her doing it and laughed and laughed. Kiana made a face, squinting her eyes at me with reproach. She knew I had gotten her good. Sometimes while watching television she'd catch me looking up at the ceiling and sneak a peak, only to find me laughing at her again.

Then one day I was sitting on the couch and Kiana looked up at the ceiling. Not thinking, I looked up and saw nothing. When I looked back at her, she wagged her head from side to side, the way I do when I laugh, her golden eyes gleaming with amusement.

After this, I realized I had created a monster. Kiana would look up at the strangest times and laugh at me when I looked. I had become the victim of my own joke!

Then, one day, she looked up. Sure she was planning a joke, I refused to look up. She looked up and then back at me. I didn't look. She looked up again.

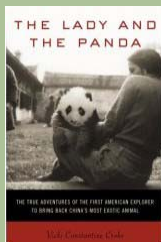
“Not going to work,” I told her. That's when the spider landed on my head.

— Margaret H. Bonham

www.shadowhelm.net

www.havingfunwithagility.com

Late Summer Reading



The summer is ending, but it's never too late for a good book. Here are two books from two famed authors.

The Lady and the Panda: The True Adventures of the First American Explorer to Bring Back China's Most Exotic Animal by Vicki Constantine Croke (Random House, New York, 2005; \$25.95). What a great summer adventure read! Back in the day, adventurers who traveled to far off places received the kind of press pro athletes do now. If the supermarket tabloids were published in the 1930's, Bill Harkness' death in Tibet — an attempt to be the first to return to America with a panda — would have been front page news.

Even more newsworthy was an announcement made by his

dress designer wife, Ruth, that she'd follow her late husband and make the same trip. The public laughed. After all, how could a fancy socialite succeed on an arduous journey while so many rugged adventurers failed?

As you're reading, you'll feel transformed — as if you're there. Croke's zeal for this story took her on the same adventure as Ruth, albeit about 70 years later. In a sense, the story only begins after Ruth returns to the States.

Croke is a superb journalist, offering copious sources; and she's a fine story teller. But clearly what jumps from these pages is an absolute passion for this story.

When Cats Reign Like Kings: On the Trail of the Sacred Cats, by Georgie Anne Geyer (Andrews McMeel Publishing, New York, NY, 2004; \$24.95). The author has interviewed Saddam Hussein, Fidel Castro,



A n w a r Sadat, all recent U.S. Presidents, and now, cat show judges.

The award winning journalist

describes the history of felines, and how they became domesticated. As any good reporter does, Geyer uncovers mysteries, such as little known international feline anecdotes. For example, in Myanmar, the Nga Phe Kyuang monastery trains cats with names like Leonardo DiCaprio and Ricky Martin to jump through hoops. In truth, cats have at times in history been revered some places in the world, but then at other times in history and in other places, cats continue to be reviled to this day.

—Steve Dale