

Noted from AVMA

Three veterinary colleges will collect cancer specimens from dogs for a central tissue repository in Maryland as part of the National Cancer Institute's new Canine Comparative Oncology Genomics Consortium. The samples will help advance research on cancer in dogs and will enhance efforts to learn more about cancer in humans.

Veterinary centers will collect the tissue and blood samples from companion dogs as part of diagnostic or surgical work-ups. The consortium will make samples from the collection available to researchers by application, subject to a scientific review process to ensure the best use of tissues. Cancer samples will include osteosarcoma, lymphoma, and melanoma.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Colorado State University, and The Ohio State University won the initial bids to collect tissues. The consortium ultimately expects to recruit a total of 10 sample providers, with a goal of collecting samples from 3,000 dogs with cancer over the next three years.

Chronic Pain in Cats

North Carolina State University is one of the few places in the world studying chronic pain in cats, specifically osteoarthritis.

The Integrated Pain Management Service (IPMS) at NCSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital offers a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic services to clients whose animals are suffering pain such as cancer pain and osteoarthritis.

Chronic pain management is a rapidly expanding field of study in veterinary medicine. Pets, like people, are living longer due to advances in veterinary care, but with this longevity, pets sometimes have to confront chronic pain associated with disease such as osteoarthritis and cancer.

In line with the greater interest in treating pain, several pharmaceutical companies have produced new drugs in recent years, giving veterinarians more options in treating pain. These new drugs, as well as procedures and drug combinations evaluated at NCSU, are utilized where appropriate. However, the IPMS employs as many non-drug treatments as appropriate for the individual. Such treatments are physical therapy, radiation, neurosurgical procedures, acupuncture and massage, depending on each animal's needs.



Diet for the relief of osteoarthritis pain in cats

In January, 2007 NCSU Comparative Pain Research Laboratory began a clinical investigation using a specially formulated diet to help control osteoarthritis in cats. In collaboration with a well known pet food company, NCSU is recruiting indoor cats over the age of 8 years old to participate in a 10-week food trial for osteoarthritis.

Cats must have “slowed down” or be “mobility impaired”, according to their care-giver. Potential candidates will be screened for osteoarthritis with a complete orthopedic examination and radiographs. Subjects enrolled into the study receive blood work & urinalysis at three time points, and food for 10 weeks if accepted into the study. Qualifying cats are required to eat only the food provided by a reputable pet food company. They are required to wear a 17-gram accelerometer attached to their collar that will measure their activity.

Winter pet care

To prevent winter weather from becoming a health hazard there are a few basic precautions every pet owner can take. An annual check-up with the veterinarian upon the onset of winter is a good idea. Necessary booster inoculations can be given, and medications renewed.


Outdoor pets should have a dry, warm, roofed enclosure with an above-ground floor and bedding to protect them from inclement weather and low temperatures. Water bowls should be monitored frequently, and if ice has formed, it should be replaced with fresh water. Recently there have been commercially available heaters for bowls that will prevent ice from forming.

House dogs enjoy romping in the snow with families and it can be an exhilarating experience for both owner and dog if some precautions are taken. During very cold weather owners should always accompany dogs outdoors, supervise their play, and take them back indoors at the same time they return. Dogs should then be briskly toweled dry and feet should be carefully checked for possible snow and ice ball accumulation in pads.

Ageing cats and dogs may be more adversely affected by cold and damp so it is important that they are monitored more closely and kept in a protected area, heated, if possible. There are now many products that are safe and readily available to provide for heating in or under a pet's bedding if the shelter itself is unheated.

To prevent hypothermia small pets should be allowed outdoors only for a very short time, and always under supervision.

All too often outdoor cats seeking a warm shelter will find refuge under the hood of a recently parked car. If you live in a neighborhood that cats frequent, do check before you turn on the engine. Every year spilled antifreeze is responsible for the deaths of many pets. Its sweet smell and taste are especially attractive to dogs and cats. Please make sure that your vehicle does not leak this poisonous substance. Promptly wipe up any spills you see in your garage or driveway.

Responsible owners know that pet care is important all year round. During the winter, however, it may become a matter of life and death. Take a few easy precautions. Keep your pet healthy and alive. 

In Their Own Words

With the massive funding and lobbying force behind HSUS, teams of attorneys, campaign contributions to sympathetic legislators, the ability to entrench their animal rights ideology in universities across America, and enormous outpouring of propaganda to the public through the media - it is imperative that animal owners, legislators and the general public learn to thoroughly examine and understand animal related legislation proposed at all levels of government.

"Even granting that we face greater harm than laboratory animals presently endure if research on these animals is stopped, the rights view will not be satisfied with anything less than total abolition. The practice remains wrong because unjust. "If abandoning animal research means that there are some things we cannot learn, then so be it.... We have no basic right...not to be harmed by those natural diseases we are heir to." **Tom Regan, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, NCSU, The Case for Animal Rights 1983.**

"I draw the line at "reproductive rights" for domesticated animals (including humans), under the circumstances. If it were up to me, there would be no "domestic" animals, by which I mean there would be no slavery, no animal property, no "pets". **Karen Davis, Founder-United Poultry Concerns. Interview-Animal Liberation Website**

". . . we believe that it would have been in the animals' best interests if the institution of "pet keeping"—i.e., breeding animals to be kept and regarded as "pets"—never existed. "This selfish desire to possess animals and receive love from them causes immeasurable suffering, which results from manipulating their breeding, selling or giving them away casually, and depriving them of the opportunity to engage in their natural behavior. Their lives are restricted to human homes where they must obey commands and can only eat, drink, and even urinate when humans allow them to." **Animal Rights Uncompromised website: PETA on 'Pets'**

A movement that seeks abolition must have veganism as a baseline principle and should not have as its "mainstream" position that we can be "conscientious omnivores" who can "consume with compassion." **Professor Gary L. Francione, Rutgers School of Law, Abolition of Animal Exploitation: The Journey Will Not Begin While We Are Walking Backwards**

"I regard myself as an advocate of animal rights -- as a part of the animal rights movement. That movement, as I conceive it, is committed to a number of goals, including: the total abolition of the use of animals in science; the total dissolution of commercial animal agriculture; the total elimination of commercial and sport hunting and trapping." **Tom Regan, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, NCSU, The Case for Animal Rights 1983.**

"If we took animals seriously, we would stop treating them as our resources, as our property. But that would mean an end to bringing nonhumans into existence so that we can use them for food, clothing, vivisection, or any other purpose, including for companionship." **Professor Gary L. Francione, Rutgers School of Law, Animal Rights and Domesticated Nonhumans**

"The hellish reality of animal existence cannot fundamentally change until we create a seismic cultural shift that replaces the notion of animals as property with a radically alternative concept, such as animals as persons." **Stephen Best, Associate Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at the University of Texas El Paso, Legally Blind: The Case For Granting Animals Rights**

Breeder Licensing and Mandatory Spay/Neuter

Mandatory spay/neuter laws are promoted by groups who claim it will end euthanasia of animals. These groups claim that breeders and pet shops are to blame for animal abandonment. These groups promote the animal rights agenda. As the end goal of animal rights is to abolish breeding of companion animals, they need to draw a straight line between breeding and euthanasia, whether or not the logic used to make a case is flawed or the information presented is inaccurate.

Mandatory spay/neuter and breeder licensing laws fail because they target and punish responsible and caring breeders, pet owners, and feral/stray cat caretakers.

MSN and breeder licensing do not impact the people who are the problem, irresponsible pet owners. If a pet owner fails to spay or neuter their dog or cat and then fails to prevent accidental pregnancies does anyone really believe these people would be aware of breeder licensing and obtain one?

Breeding restriction legislation is an inefficient use of government resources, as responsibility cannot be legislated.

The Cat Fanciers Association writes: “Animal licensing does not ensure, nor provide for, public health and safety. Licensing is a deterrent to caregiving and responsibility for animals. Those who are either afraid of, or who can not afford, permits, fees, and fines, will not admit ownership, stop caregiving, or abandon their animals. Clearly this outcome is against the stated goals of ensuring public welfare.”

MSN and breeder licensing fail to address the problem of pet retention. It is undisputable that the number one reason for owner turn-ins at shelters is related to pet behavior or health problems, or the owner’s lack of time or ability to care for the pet.

The emphasis must be placed on pet retention if animal control and shelter intake is to be lowered. Those pets relinquished had an owner who chose not to keep them. Voluntary sterilization of pets should be encouraged with communities offering free/low cost sterilization for pets from low income families, preferably through the veterinary community.

Conference speaker, Gary Patronek-Tufts University, said if we continue to push spay and neuter laws as the answer to a problem of pet retention, “there may not be enough puppies to satisfy future demand.”

Pet welfare, control of pet populations, and safety for pets and citizens is a community responsibility. Success is dependent on community awareness and support; coercive, confrontational legislation is counterproductive. A well written leash law that prevents dogs roaming at large, while allowing responsible owners to work, train, and exercise their dogs off-lead is needed for all communities and should be enforced. Programs to educate the public about responsible ownership and responsible breeding practices should also be implemented.

Punitive legislation is not a quick fix to solving animal problems in the community and working toward responsible ownership.



Where Do I Start ~ When I Need Help Training My Puppy or Dog

By Linda Tilley

Few people begin their lives with a new dog or puppy expecting to fail. Unfortunately, failure is often the result. Our shelters are full of dogs that started their lives with hope and promise but become lost, unruly, not housetrained, disobedient and the like. Often these things happen because of misinformation in regard to what is normal behavior for dogs, bad advice and lack of training. That dog, acquired with all the best intentions, will not become the perfect pet without training and a real commitment from its owner.

There are several things a new owner must realize about forming a rewarding relationship with their pet. Often we look at dogs as if they feel about things the same way we do. They don't. They only react as dogs. Basically, a dog is going to do what reinforces it the most. Reinforcement

can come in positive as well as negative forms. Once we accept the fact that dogs are dogs, we can look at their behavior from a different perspective. I don't mean that we accept their behavior because they are dogs and let them do as they please. We have to train them and set rules.

A dog wants a leader. If you don't fill that position then the dog will be forced to accept the role. Often a dog will develop problems because they don't want to be in charge but accept the role because no one else has. When a dog knows what to expect they are more relaxed and confident in their owners. Most dogs will never outgrow problem behaviors without help. The problems just escalate and multiply. The dogs are then either neglected, abandoned or turned in to shelters.

Once we make the decision to bring one of these wonderful creatures into our lives we must make the commitment to making it work. Once a dog enters the "throw away system" it is very hard for them to find their forever home. If you don't solve the problem behaviors then the dog will probably, eventually, be abandoned, mistreated, turned in to a shelter or die.

Some owners seem to always have wonderful dogs and some owners seem to have problem dogs. Sometimes there is a mismatch as to the owner's lifestyle and expectations and the dog they have picked. No matter what the problems, they can be improved or solved with training. Often what is needed is the advice of an experienced obedience instructor.

Instructors come with all kinds of training methods "guaranteed to solve all your problems." It is the owner's responsibility to pick the instructor best suited for their dog's needs. If you want to compete with your dog in obedience trials then you may need to find an instructor with an extensive competition background. If you want to find someone to help you build a good relationship with a family dog, look for an instructor specializing in pet dog training.

The majority of people just want a dog with good manners that behaves well at home and in public. The majority of people need a pet dog instructor. Pet dog instructors come with all kinds of methods "guaranteed to solve all your problems." Nothing can be guaranteed in dog training because everything depends on so many things: Temperament, breed/mix, age of the dog; previous experience, commitment of the owner; method and experience of the instructor; and sometimes, believe it or not, whether the sun is shining or the day is cloudy.



A good instructor will: put both the owner and dog at ease; have many ways of teaching each exercise; will answer questions with answers that make sense; will not be heavy handed and rough with your dog, nor will they require you to be; will not "guarantee" the solution of all your possible needs, but will give a realistic opinion of what expectations can be met; will be available; will listen; will have good people skills; will admit when they don't know the answer but will find out for you; has a good working knowledge of canine behavior; will be able to make quick decisions about changing something that isn't working; will put the dog in the position to make the right choice and quickly reinforce that choice; has good timing and observation skills and knows when to quit training if the dog becomes overly stressed.

There are wonderful instructors that will be able to help you form a rewarding, lifetime relationship with your dog. There are also bad instructors that can do horrible damage to you, your family, your dog and your relationship with that dog. Choose carefully the person you work with.

If someone tells you they are "certified" or "endorsed" then ask who certified or endorsed them. What training or testing did they have to go through to become certified or endorsed: Many wonderful instructors are not "certified or endorsed" by anyone. Ask how much and what type of experience they have and, perhaps, ask for references. Ask what type of method and equipment is used.

If you don't understand ask for more detail. Anyone can hang out a sign and say they are an instructor or dog trainer. There are no government standards for trainers or instructors. You must ask questions. Remember, the dog belongs to you. You are responsible for making sure the dog is safe. If, for any reason, you feel the training methods are wrong then it is your responsibility to protect your dog. Try talking about your concerns with the instructor or trainer. If you feel the training methods are harsh or not humane, then leave.

There is a difference between an instructor and a trainer. An instructor teaches you how to train your dog under their supervision. A trainer does the training themselves. Some people are both instructors and trainers. There are many types of instruction and training situations available. There are group lessons where you sign up for a series of lessons held in a group with other dogs and their owners.

Private lessons are available for those dogs that are too easily distracted or tense to be in a group class. Or whose owner needs the time flexibility a private instructor can arrange. Private classes are scheduled on an as needed basis or as a series of lessons.

In-kennel training or board and train are where a trainer takes your dog for an extended period of time and does the training themselves. Make sure there is a written agreement between you and the trainer explaining methods, expectations, price and length of time the dog is to be left, etc. Expect at least one session for the trainer to show you how to handle your dog when it comes home. A word of caution, there are good trainers and bad. If your dog isn't in your sight you can not be positive of the care your dog is receiving or the methods used in training. As far as prices: group classes are probably the least expensive, private classes are next and in-kennel/board and train can become very expensive.

Often all an owner needs is a little advice and guidance on which path to take with their new dog. Large problems are often not that large when discussed with an experienced instructor. Many dog/owner relationships have been helped for a lifetime by seeking the help of a good instructor before major problems surface.

Dogs are perfect! They are perfect at being just what they are -- dogs. It is our responsibility, when we take them into our lives and homes, to help mold them into the awesome companions they can become. Dogs and all they give to us are a gift to be treasured and cherished.

Linda Tilley is a Board Member of North Carolina Responsible Animal Owners Alliance (NCRAOA) and is endorsed by the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors (NADOI).

Treating Pain In Your Dog

Controlling your dog's pain is essential to his overall well-being. Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) are a class of drugs commonly used to control pain and inflammation in dogs. NSAIDs help many dogs lead more comfortable lives.

What are NSAIDs?

NSAIDs help to control signs of arthritis, including inflammation, swelling, stiffness, and joint pain. Inflammation—the body's response to irritation or injury—is characterized by redness, warmth, swelling, and pain. NSAIDs work by blocking the production of prostaglandins, chemicals produced by the body that cause inflammation. Some NSAIDs may also be used to control the pain and inflammation following surgery.

Your veterinarian may prescribe an NSAID to treat the pain of osteoarthritis in your dog or to control pain following a surgical procedure. Never give aspirin or corticosteroids along with an NSAID to your dog. NSAIDs should be approached cautiously in dogs with kidney, liver, heart and intestinal problems. Never give your dog an NSAID unless directed by your veterinarian.

Veterinary NSAIDs approved for use in dogs:

- ETOGESIC (etodolac)
- RIMADYL (carprofen)
- METACAM (meloxicam)
- DERAMAXX (deracoxib)
- PREVICOX (firocoxib)
- ZUBRIN (tepoxalin)
- NOVOX (carprofen)

When Giving Your Dog An NSAID, If You Notice Any of the Following Signs: Behavior Changes / Eating Less / Skin Redness, Scabs / Tarry Stool/Diarrhea/Vomiting - STOP the Drug & Call Your Veterinarian!

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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. **Your donations help us with the cost of printing and mailing flyers, brochures, and educational packets.**

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