

## **Morris Animal Foundation Awards \$13 Million in Veterinary Research Grants**

October 28, 2009. Helping animals enjoy longer, healthier lives requires ongoing scientific animal health research to give veterinarians the tools they need to better diagnose and treat animals. Morris Animal Foundation, a world leader in supporting research to prevent, treat and even cure disease in companion animals, horses and wildlife, has committed to funding more than 200 animal health studies in 2010, with support for those studies totaling \$13 million over the next three years.

Funding will be provided to established researchers as well as new researchers, veterinary student scholars and veterinarians pursuing advanced study. Studies will take place at more than 60 of the world's most elite veterinary colleges, zoological institutions and scientific research centers.

The Foundation will support more than 50 canine health studies that will research blood and eye disorders, infectious diseases, orthopedic problems, pain management, early retirement of guide dogs and urinary problems. A number of cancer studies, funded by the nonprofit's Canine Cancer Campaign, will look at multiple aspects of canine cancer prevention and treatment.

The 24 feline health research studies address asthma, cancer, gastrointestinal problems, heart disease, kidney disease, pain management and urinary problems. A special fellowship project and three studies that look at transmission of upper respiratory infection in shelter cats are being funded by the Foundation's Happy Healthy Cat Campaign. The campaign will also support a major genetics project to be launched in 2010.

The selection of 17 equine studies involves equine health research into genetics, foal diseases, laminitis, infectious diseases and colic. In addition, the Foundation will provide significant funding for its Equine Consortium for Genetic Research, a group of the world's best equine researchers who are working on multiple collaborative projects to improve equine health through genetics.

An additional six health studies related to nutrition, genetics and infectious parasites will help llamas and alpacas. The Foundation is also the leader in wildlife health funding, with 42 studies designed to improve reproduction and nutrition and to decrease infectious disease in a host of animals, including anteaters, bears, birds, amphibians, elephants, primates, marine life, wolves, wild cats and many more.

In response to the growing shortage of veterinary scientists needed to improve animal health, Morris Animal Foundation designated \$3.1 million of the \$13 million toward training new scientists. More than 60 students will receive short-term grants through the Veterinary Student Scholars program,

which gives students interested in animal health and welfare the opportunity to work with a mentor on research projects and encourages them to consider a career in veterinary research.

The new Pfizer Animal Health-Morris Animal Foundation Veterinary Fellowships for Advanced Study provides annual funding for veterinary professionals to pursue advanced study that will lead to careers in research. Eight veterinarians entered the program in September 2009, and an additional four fellows will begin September 2010. Additional training programs are being funded at Colorado State University, Oklahoma State University and the University of Minnesota.

Individuals and groups have a unique opportunity to help animals through sponsorships of these studies. Co-sponsorships begin at \$3,000 per study. Sponsorship information is available at [www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/studies/sponsor-a-study](http://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/studies/sponsor-a-study), by calling 800.243.2345 or by e-mailing [sponsorship@MorrisAnimalFoundation.org](mailto:sponsorship@MorrisAnimalFoundation.org).

*Source: PR News Wire*

## **Bob Barker Donates \$1M for Animal Rights Professor**

Millionaire and former TV show host, Bob Barker, continues to aid and perpetuate the animal rights ideology. Barker donated \$1 million to Drury University to establish a professorship on animal rights that he hopes will lead to a full undergraduate degree program. Barker is quoted as saying he believes some students will become full-fledged animal rights activists as a result of this program. Last year, Barker gave the school \$1 million to establish the Drury University Forum on Animal Rights, which led to an undergraduate course on animal ethics.

Barker has also established endowment funds on animal rights law at eight law schools, including Harvard, Stanford and Duke.

## **Quote of the Week**

Two quotes this week, both by Wayne Pacelle, CEO of HSUS, continue to shed light on HSUS and the organization's true agenda.

Speaking at a hand-picked crowd of supporters at a Town Hall meeting in Los Angeles Pacelle told his audience, ***"We have to create a clamor for change ... You can get further with a kind word and a gun than a kind word alone."*** He attributed the latter quote to notorious gangster Al Capone, who seems like an odd inspiration for a supposedly peaceful movement. But animal-rights extremists are far from peaceful. *Source: The Center for Consumer Freedom October 30, 2009*

Pacelle is also quoted from his blog as saying, ***"Raising 10 billion land animals in the United States annually for food is simply not a sensible plan of action. The science is clear that a diet that is primarily plant-based is better for our personal health, and it's obviously better for animals and the environment."***

## San Francisco Cat De-claw Ban

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors City Operations and Neighborhood Services Committee today approved the proposed legislation introduced by Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi banning cat de-clawing in San Francisco. The legislation will go before the full Board of Supervisors next Tuesday, Nov. 3 for a vote.

If passed, San Francisco will join West Hollywood and Norfolk, Va., in having bans that prohibit the de-clawing of cats unless medically necessary for the cat's welfare. Santa Monica, Los Angeles and Berkeley are considering similar legislation.

The ban needs to be approved before the year is up. On January 1, 2010, SB law SB 762 goes into effect restricting any California city or county from passing laws that prohibit licensed healthcare professionals from practicing their licensed specialty. The law covers veterinarians and cat de-clawing surgery.

Pam Runquist, director of veterinary advocacy of the Humane Society Veterinary Medication Association (HSVMA), of which there are 200 California members, also spoke out in support of the ban. Runquist said that there is legal precedent in California for a measure against this type of surgery, citing an existing state law banning tail docking of horses and a new law just passed and that goes into effect January 1 banning tail docking of cows.

Opposing the ban was Dr. Chris Cowling, speaking on behalf of the California Veterinary Medical Association, which represents some 6000 veterinarians around the state. Cowling expressed the CVMA position that the decision to de-claw a cat should be made by owners in consultation with their veterinarians.

*Source: The Examiner*

## MSN & Breeding Restrictions Revisited

Despite the fact Mandatory Spay Neuter (MSN) is a failed concept, advocates in numerous states, including North Carolina, continue to stir public opinion and press for ordinance changes.

Why is MSN a bad idea? To begin with MSN targets the wrong people – people who are already responsible and wish to breed dogs/cats – even if so-called exemptions are included in the legislation. MSN is a blanket law built on the false premise that reducing the source of animals equals reducing shelter intake.

There are no stories of success anywhere that MSN has been enacted. In fact, many municipalities have seen their intake and euthanasia rates increase following passage of such laws. In the early '90's when Fort Wayne, Indiana; San Mateo, California; and King County, Washington passed their animal control legislation, the punitive laws were hailed as a national model; however, they remain a dismal failure to this day.



Nathan Winograd, author of *Redemption*, notes in one of his many essays that if coercive legislation was effective then Long Beach CA, where MSN was carried to the extreme of a total breeding ban for 30 years, would have empty shelters or at least be No Kill. Yet Long Beach still handles thousands of animals thru animal control services every year.

Most professionals acknowledge benefits to spay/neuter of dogs such as decreased roaming, decreased risk of mammary, testicular and ovarian cancer, and population control in non-breeding animals. However, it is imperative to note the disadvantages of spaying or neutering may include diabetes, osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, prostatic adenocarcinoma, transitional cell carcinoma, urinary tract infections, urinary incontinence, autoimmune thyroiditis, hypothyroidism and hip dysplasia.

MSN ordinances do not consider the physiological differences between dogs and cats. The cats' reproductive physiology requires that they either be bred or spayed to remain healthy. An ill-conceived mandatory spay/neuter regulation could force a small cat hobbyist out of existence causing irreplaceable loss of genetic diversity and conceivably the extinction of entire breeds.

Mandatory spay/neuter ordinances are intended to deter and penalize pet owners. No matter how severe the punishment, free-roaming cats with no owners will continue to reproduce on the streets adding to the feral cat population. MSN laws have no impact on the unchecked reproduction of unowned/free-roaming/feral cats - the greatest reason for shelter euthanasia.

Spay/neuter must remain a decision between the veterinarian and owner and not a government mandate.

MSN and breeder licensing laws also fail to address the problem of pet retention. It is undisputable that the number one reason for owner surrender is related to pet behavior or health problems, or the owner's lack of time, knowledge 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. Pets that have been relinquished had an owner who chose not to keep them.

Passing breeding restrictions costs the public money in the form of administrative fees, burdens animal control to enforce an unpopular law, and takes focus away from needed duties dealing with strays, abandoned animals, cruelty cases, public education, and shelter adoptions.

Breeding restriction laws would limit the options of dog buyers. Options are important to prospective dog owners because it is important for them to choose dogs that will fit in well with their lifestyles in terms of size, grooming requirements, and exercise needs. The fewer choices available to potential owners, the greater the chance that the new dogs will not fit in well with their lifestyles and expectations.

Restricting breeders of purebred dogs will not make mixed breeds from the shelter more appealing to everyone no matter how politically correct shelter adoptions are marketed to be. An elderly woman living in an apartment looking for a small lap dog, is not going to adopt an 80 pound collie/shepherd mix from the shelter if local breeders are shut down by mandatory spay/neuter laws or excessive breeder permitting.

Preserving your right to own, breed and enjoy animals is YOUR responsibility. For more information contact [ncraoa@yahoo.com](mailto:ncraoa@yahoo.com)

## Microchips to the Rescue

A study published in the *Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association* ("Characterization of animals with microchips entering animal shelters," July 2009) determined that 7,704 microchipped animals entered 53 animal shelters between August 2007 and March 2008. Of this number, strays made up more than half (53 percent), with the remainder considered as owner-relinquished animals (41.9 percent) and other (5.1 percent).

The results showed that animal shelters were able to find the owners of three-fourths of stray dogs and cats with microchips. The success in finding owners was higher in dogs, animals that were purebred and animals that were spayed or neutered. Animal shelters had a much higher likelihood of finding an owner when the owner information was in the shelter's own database or registered with a microchip registry. The results emphasize the importance of the registration process in successfully reuniting pets and owners.

The study demonstrated the importance of scanning animals more than once, and the need for proper technique. Veterinary clinic staff should scan microchipped animals during each wellness examination to ensure the microchip is functional and has not migrated. The study also indicated the importance of personnel at animal shelters to scan owner-relinquished animals and verify ownership via a microchip registry. The person relinquishing the animal may not be the rightful owner.

Source: *Catwatch*. November 2009 <http://www.catwatchnewsletter.com>

## Grants for Feline Health Research Available



The nonprofit Winn Feline Foundation is calling for grant proposals for 2010.

Studies applicable to all cats are encouraged. The foundation is also interested in projects that address problems in individual breeds. In addition, the foundation has dedicated funds for research into feline infectious peritonitis and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

The application deadline is Dec. 14, 2009. The maximum grant amount is \$15,000, and awards will be announced in March 2010. Multiyear proposals totaling more than \$15,000 will not be considered. Additional funds may be available for breed-related studies.

Last year, the Winn Feline Foundation funded 12 grants totaling \$127,411 in areas such as feline infectious peritonitis, renal disease, diabetes, cancer, nutrition, genetics, and drug therapies

For more information about grant requirements, contact the Winn Feline Foundation at (856) 447-9787 or visit [www.WinnFelineHealth.org](http://www.WinnFelineHealth.org).

## HR3501 The Happy Act Introduced

Rep. Thaddeus McCotter (MI-11) introduced federal legislation to amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow a deduction for pet care expenses. For a pet that qualifies, the owner will be able to deduct expenses and medical care costs up to \$3,500 a year.

In these tight monetary times, this may sound like a boon to taxpayers. We urge careful consideration before jumping onto this bandwagon with support.

Allowing a \$3,500 deduction increases the potential of a dog's value. Animal rights attorneys are constantly testing the courts in this currently gray area for the purposes of increasing malpractice and emotional damages awards. Allowing deductions for dogs is one more step up the "they are family and should be in an elevated property status" ladder.

The "Happy Act", HR3501, is a "feel good" piece of nationwide legislation but we are concerned that this bill has the potential of eventually elevating animals to the same level as humans and sets a very dangerous precedent in equating animals with the seniors, the elderly and children, who currently are permitted to have deductions taken by their caregivers. This bill also creates the perfect backdrop for "guardianship" legislation in the future.

## 18th Annual Dog Olympics

Canine athletes and their human companions attended the 18th Annual Dog Olympics and helped raise more than \$2,500 dollars for eight area rescue groups participating in the event sponsored by the College of Veterinary Medicine Student Chapter of the American Animal Hospital Association (SCAAHA). The event attracted more than 500 people, eight rescue groups, and a record of 14 organizations with information booths.

Olympic gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded to 20 top competitors in events such as doggie limbo, musical sit, best beggar, best pet trick, Frisbee toss, doggie high jump, longest tail, wiener toss, "Roll over Beethoven," and the howling contest.

The "Olympic Village" included a microchip clinic sponsored by the Raleigh Kennel Club where some 550 dogs received free microchips. The American Kennel Club conducted an agility demonstration, sponsored a Canine Good Citizen Testing Program, and K-9 and other demonstrations were presented.

*Source: NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine News*

***Protecting your right to responsibly own and breed animals.***

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*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](http://www.ncraoa.com)*

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