



November 2010

Kathryn Smith named Animal Control Officer of the Year

Kathryn Smith, Lead Officer at Craven County for Craven County, was named Animal Control Officer of the Year by the NC Animal Rabies Control Association (NCARCA).

Each summer, the Board of the NCARCA sends to all animal control agencies and shelters in the state a request for nominations for several state-wide awards, including ACO of the Year. After the nomination period has closed, the Board members review the nominations individually, and then discuss them as a group. The members then vote on the individual to be selected.

Kathryn is dedicated to working for the benefit of animals on multiple levels, including networking with rescue and participating in the NC Department of Correction New Leash on Life program. Kathryn is also a cofounder and valuable board member of NCRAOA.

NCDA&CS Companion-Animal Welfare Study

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is conducting a study of companion-animal welfare, and the public will have the opportunity to provide input. The General Assembly authorized the study during the 2010 legislative session. The study will focus on current laws and regulations pertaining to the welfare of dogs and cats; the oversight of public and private animal shelters; the state's spay/neuter program; the scope of commercial breeding operations; and the protection of consumers who purchase companion animals, and options to reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats that are euthanized in the state each year. In addition to contacting animal advocates, law enforcement and other groups with an interest in companion-animal welfare, the department scheduled three listening sessions in Jamestown, Winterville, and Asheville to gather public input.

The public may also submit written comments to animalwelfarestudy@ncagr.gov or by mail to:

Animal Welfare Study Comments
c/o NCDA&CS Animal Welfare Section
1030 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-1030

Results of the study will be submitted to the General Assembly early next year. Animal owners and breeders are encouraged to submit comments to NCDA. More information is available on the NCRAOA website:

<http://www.ncraoa.com/alerts.html>

Missouri Proposition B Passed Primarily by Urban Voters

Missouri animal owners lost the battle to defeat Proposition B which would set new standards and ownership limits on the dog breeders already regulated by the state. Prop B passed with just 51.6% of the votes with HSUS and their anti-dog breeder allies spending \$4.3 million dollars on propaganda to support the measure.

Missouri Ruralist reports that Missouri lawmakers, in both the House and Senate, said they would support efforts by dog breeders and agricultural groups to repeal or dilute Proposition B, the so-called "Puppy Mill Prevention Act," passed by voters Nov. 2. "We will start working on that issue immediately," said Senator-elect Mike Parson, whose district includes more than 150 licensed breeding operations. The next legislative session begins Jan. 5.

Proposition B, which will put new restrictions on state dog breeders, passed by substantial margins in urban areas, but failed in 100 of the state's 114 counties. Overall, it got 51.6% of the vote. However, licensed breeders and virtually all of the state's agricultural groups strongly opposed it saying it will force legitimate breeders out of business while doing nothing about unlicensed breeders.

Ag groups also argued passage of the measure – strongly backed by the Humane Society of the United States and other animal rights groups --- was just the first step as these groups move on to try and regulate animal agriculture out of business.

While lawmakers are generally wary of overturning measures passed as ballot proposals, the narrow margin by which it passed and the opposition from rural areas could represent a mandate for change, according to Rep. Tom Loehner, chairman of the House Agriculture Policy Committee was quoted as saying legislators are discussing options with ag groups and legal advisors.

Sources: Livestock Marketing Association; Missouri Ruralist

Guilford County Passes Restrictive Animal Ordinance

Guilford County Animal Control's ordinance has recently been changed to include an annual inspection of High Volume Breeders and High Volume Retailers starting January 1, 2011.

The County has now successfully discriminated against owners of 7 or more intact female dogs. These owners will be subjected to inspection, rigorous standards, and theoretical requirements to provide visual and social enrichment for the dogs. The owner of 7 intact female dogs must also hire staff as the County believes it is not possible for one person to single-handedly care for 7 dogs.

The newly enacted ordinance also authorizes Animal Control personnel to inspect premises at any time, without notice, without a complaint, without cause, and without a warrant. Anyone who owns less than 7 or owns more than 7 dogs that are spayed/neutered does not have to meet the lengthy requirements.

The final version has yet to be posted on the Guilford County website. There is an "FYI" posted on the Animal Control website, "We understand that this change may be confusing and would like to answer any questions you may have regarding this ordinance change. For answers to any questions, please contact Scott Greene, Manager at 336-641-5990 or sgreene0@co.guilford.nc.us

Animal Welfare Group Sues Albuquerque

A local animal welfare group is suing the City of Albuquerque claiming the city is violating its own animal ordinance. The Alliance for Albuquerque Animals suit claims the city's comprehensive animal regulations, the Heart Ordinance, calls for 62 kennel workers and there are now just 28.

The group's attorney said that the ordinance was written specifically talking about how many workers should be at the kennels so in the event of an economic downturn, the animals would not suffer. The group is concerned animals are being euthanized quicker because of a lack of workers.

The city contends that animals are being cared for properly and that euthanasia rates have dropped significantly since 2005. A city spokesperson stated they did not think the city can be ordered to have 62 workers if there are no funds to pay for them.

The 68-page Heart (Humane and Ethical Animal Rules and Treatment) Ordinance was passed by city council May, 2006. The onerous regulations included mandatory spay/neuter, intact animal permits, multiple animal permits, limited litter permits, along with care and grooming requirements for all animals. Animal services budget was increased \$255,000 the first year to accommodate beginning goals to lower shelter euthanasia.

Under the Heart Ordinance, the city provides low cost spay/neuter services. Shelter intake in 2006 was reported to be 27,779 dogs and cats.

During Spay Day USA promotions Mayor Richard Berry unveiled 2009 statistics showing an alarming number of dogs and cats flooding City animal shelters and overtaxing shelter resources. The mayor called on pet owners to be more aggressive about sterilizing dogs and cats. According to data generated by the City of Albuquerque's Animal Welfare Department, 26,674 animals entered City shelters.

Cesar Millan's Dog Denied Entry into Canada

When his famous dog, Daddy, passed away last year the famous Dog Whisperer trained "Junior" to be his new sidekick. They travel from town to town rehabilitating dogs and training people.

The Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario, Canada recently told Dog Whisperer Cesar Millan that he was welcome in the province for a press tour, but that his pit bull was not. In 2005, under the Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario banned pit bulls, Staffordshire bull terriers, American Staffordshire terriers, and included a clause targeting dogs that are substantially similar in physical appearance to these breeds.

After the five year ban on pit bulls the number of dog bites has not decreased. According to a study conducted by the Toronto Humane Society, the number of dog bites in the province has changed little since the pit bull ban was enacted.

People who owned pit bulls before the ban were permitted to keep their dogs, but had to ensure they were neutered or spayed, and muzzled and leashed in public at all times. The act also gave judges the right to order a dog put down if it bit or was involved in an attack.

According to Toronto's Humane Society records, there were 5,428 dog bite reports in 2005, the year the ban came into place, and about 5,345 bites were recorded last year. The statistics make it clear the five-year ban has not made an impact on dog bite prevention.

The following states all have laws that prohibit local governments from enacting breed-specific legislation or have statements saying that BSL may not hold up in court: California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.

Voters Approve Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish

Voters in Tennessee, Arkansas, and South Carolina voted overwhelmingly to include constitutional amendments to protect hunting and fishing as state constitutional rights. Tennessee's Amendment received 90 percent of the vote, followed by South Carolina with 89 percent and Arkansas with 82 percent. Ten other states already have such a right. Georgia passed a similar measure in 2006, and Alabama in 1996.

More Shelters Turn Away Strays

USA Today reports that a growing number of private animal shelters are not accepting strays as they fill up with animals abandoned because their owners cannot afford to keep them. The shelters are reaching capacity because more people who are losing jobs or homes are abandoning their cats and dogs, Burney says. Animals are dropped off by the owners or picked up on the street by the public or animal control officers.

The article noted policy changes at the following shelters:

- The Delaware County SPCA in Media, Pa., will end in July its contracts with 46 municipalities to take strays found in their communities. By 2012, the shelter plans to become a no-kill facility, meaning it will euthanize only dangerous animals or those too sick or injured to survive.
- The Humane Society of North Central Arkansas ended its contract with the city of Mountain Home on Monday. The Humane Society got \$1,500 a month to care for strays, but the number of strays kept increasing. In October, the number of strays arriving had more than doubled to more than 50.
- Since October, the Louisiana SPCA will go out to get strays only if they are injured or have attacked someone. The shelter handles animal code enforcement for New Orleans. The city cut the shelter's budget from \$2.3 million to \$2.1 million and proposes to cut it to \$1.5 million next year.

AZ Ag Launches Registry to Help Abandoned Horses

The Equine Rescue Registry, run by the Arizona Department of Agriculture, was approved by the Legislature in 2009 after lobbying from the Arizona Horse Council and the equine rescue community to set up a public list of reputable organizations.

Applicants for the registry must be nonprofit organizations and provide a veterinarian's affirmation that they meet health and safety standards.

Horse rescues are in high demand right now, as many owners can't pay the \$3,000 to \$6,000 a year required to care for a horse.

One-third of the 2,000 plus stray livestock calls received by the department every year on average are for horses. The Department of Agriculture said the registry will help reduce instances of horses being turned loose by owners when they become too much of a burden.

By law the department has seven days to locate an owner for any stray livestock. If one can't be found, the department may auction off the animals. Hunt said the registry provides quality places to keep stray animals while livestock officers search for an owner or new home.

Source: AZ Capitol Times

Dogs Reduce Stress in Kids with Autism

Specially trained service dogs may reduce stress in children with autism, according to a new study.

The results showed children with an autism spectrum disorder experienced a decrease in levels of the stress hormone cortisol after a service dog was introduced into the family. Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a range of conditions in which kids have trouble communicating and interacting with others, and behaving appropriately in social situations.

Previous research has shown these dogs can help autistic children in social situations and improve their daily routine. But the new study is the first to show the furry friends can have physiological benefits as well.

"Our findings showed that the dogs had a clear impact on the children's stress hormone levels," study researcher Sonia Lupien, a professor at the University of Montréal, said in a statement. "I have not seen such a dramatic effect before."

The dogs also improved the children's behavior, reducing the number of problems reported by parents.

The findings are published in the September issue of the journal *Psychoneuroendocrinology*.

Bringing in four-legged friends

Lupien and her colleagues measured the cortisol levels in the saliva of 42 children with an ASD. Normally, production of cortisol reaches peaks about 30 minutes after a person wakes up, a phenomenon known as the cortisol awakening response, and it decreases over the course of the day.

The children's cortisol awakening response was measured before, during and after the service dog was introduced. The dogs were specially trained to be obedient and remain calm even in chaotic environments.

In the two weeks before the dogs were brought in, the children's cortisol levels rose 58 percent during the first 30 minutes they were awake in the morning. But when the dogs were present, this awakening response was reduced to just a 10 percent rise. And when the dogs were taken away after four weeks, the cortisol awakening response jumped back up to a 48 percent increase.

Parents also reported a decrease in their child's problematic and disruptive behaviors, such as tantrums, when the dog was there. The average number of these behaviors dropped from 33, in the two weeks prior to the dog's presence, to 25 while the animal was part of the household.

Future work

The researchers noted that few studies have looked at cortisol levels in children, so the effect of the reduced cortisol on the child cannot yet be determined. However, studies in adults have linked increases in the hormone to increases in general stress, and decreases in the hormone to a positive mental state.

More research needs to be done on autistic children to figure out if these decreases in cortisol levels actually correspond to a change in a child's stress level, the researchers say. Earlier studies have found that autistic children are calmer and happier when a service dog is around, the researchers said.

Future studies should also examine why the dogs decrease cortisol levels. For instance, it could be that the dogs help children sleep better, which may have affected the cortisol levels, the researchers said.

"Introducing service dogs to children with ASD has received growing attention in recent decades," Lupien said. "Our results lend support to the potential behavioral benefits of service dogs for autistic children."

Source: <http://myhealthnewsdaily.com/autism-service-dogs-reduce-stress-cortisol-101019-0578/>

Identifying Feral Cats in Shelters

[Slater MR, Miller KA, Weiss E et al: A survey of the methods used in shelter and rescue programs to identify feral and frightened pet cats, J Feline Med Surg 12:592, 2010.](#)

At least 2.5 million cats enter animal shelters nationwide on an annual basis and at least half are free-roaming cats. Free-roaming cats are defined as any cat living part of the time outdoors. Animal welfare organizations must make disposition decisions on intake of millions of cats each year and it can be difficult to differentiate between feral cats and frightened socialized cats. This study's objectives were to learn about methods used to evaluate and categorize incoming cats, amount of time cats are held before assessment, and the level of cooperation between welfare agencies to minimize euthanasia of feral cats. The authors find no widely-accepted criteria or information-gathering guidelines among the responses collected. Only 15% of the 555 respondents had written guidelines. Many respondents indicated that time was the most important element of deciding if a cat was feral or not. Minimal holding times were highly varied, with 1-3 days cited as the most common holding time among all organizations, especially animal control programs. Approximately half the groups transferred feral cats to trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs at least occasionally. The results of the survey highlight the need for more research to develop focused standardized guidelines for determining feral status early in the shelter intake process. [VT]

Related articles:

[Wallace JL, Levy JK: Population characteristics of feral cats admitted to seven trap-neuter-return programs in the United States, J Feline Med Surg 8:279, 2006.](#)

California Animal Rights Activist Jailed for Stalking

(Reuters) – November 9, 2010

Kevin Richard Olliff, 23, pleaded no contest in March to stalking and conspiracy charges stemming from a campaign of threats and harassment against two UCLA scientists and an executive at POM Wonderful juice Co. He was sentenced on Tuesday to three years in prison.

A Los Angeles County grand jury indictment also accused Olliff and co-defendant Linda Faith Greene, 62, of claiming on the website of the Animal Liberation Front to have planted a bomb on the doorstep of a UCLA professor. Greene pleaded guilty to three counts of stalking and one count of conspiracy and was sentenced in April to five years probation.

Protecting your right to responsibly own and breed animals.

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the difference between animal welfare and animal rights – visit our website at www.ncraoa.com

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