



## March, 2011

### **PUPS 2011 Introduced**

Once again federal legislation has been introduced to license, regulate, and inspect dog breeders. Long time HSUS supporter and ally, Rep. Jim Gerlach (PA), has introduced H.R. 835, the federal Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety (PUPS) Act. The bill appears identical to PUPS 2010 and has been assigned to the House Agriculture Committee. PUPS breaks the traditional USDA/APHIS regulation of dog breeders selling at wholesale and begins for the first time to regulate breeders selling dogs from private residences. The legislation considers a breeding female as an intact female 4 months or older. Anyone having an interest in one breeding female where collectively 50 offspring are sold within a year would be subject to regulation. There are no exemptions for co-ownerships, leases, placing retired breeding dogs, or for rescue organizations. As of this writing a Senate version has not been introduced. NCRAOA will post updates as needed for this bill.

### **SB 2 Chamberlain's Law**

Sen. Don Vaughan (Guilford) and Sen. Eric Mansfield (Cumberland) introduced SB 2 Chamberlain's Law. The bill was referred to Judiciary II. SB 2 decreases the current standard requiring proof of "intent" in order for an animal cruelty charge to be filed to proof of simple recklessness. Playing the "emotion card" the bill is named for a dog in Guilford County that was abandoned and left to die. Abandonment is currently punishable under NC Statutes:

#### **§ 14-361.1. Abandonment of animals.**

Any person being the owner or possessor, or having charge or custody of an animal, who willfully and without justifiable excuse abandons the animal is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. (1979, c. 687; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 967, s. 2; 1989, c. 670, s. 3; 1993, c. 539, s. 241; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

It could be construed as logical to address the current misdemeanor penalty for abandonment; however SB 2 fails to do so. Instead SB 2 needlessly interferes with well-established principles for the determination of proof required to file animal cruelty charges replacing it with something subjective and interpretative. SB 2 should be opposed. NCRAOA will post updates as needed.

### **Hope for Dogs Suffering From Common Health Ailments**

*By Kelley Weir. Morris Animal Foundation Animal News Volume 11.1*

One of the fascinating aspects about the studies Morris Animal Foundation supports is how they address the ailments that affect pets most. Although the Foundation often provides support for research on the heavy hitters in the disease world, such as cancer, kidney disease, heart disease and others, animal health scientists also turn to the Foundation for funding to research less devastating yet common health issues—the ones that account for most veterinary visits.

For dogs in the United States, some of the top concerns are associated with skin conditions and the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, and both health issues have been topics of recent studies supported by Foundation funding. These problems may cause symptoms such as “hot spots” or notable skin infections, excessive itching, vomiting or diarrhea.

### **An easy pill to swallow to diagnose GI disorders**

Many animal lovers have been there before: it’s late at night and they are cleaning up yet another mess on the carpet. Dog owners may think the dog is doing this on purpose, but vomiting and diarrhea are common among dogs and often associated with altered gastrointestinal motility, which is difficult to diagnose. Dr. Pedro Boscan and his team from Colorado State University recently began studying a novel, noninvasive, wireless sensor capsule developed to easily evaluate gastrointestinal motility disorders in a home environment. Researchers hope to test more than 70 healthy dogs to find out more about gastric emptying, small and large bowel transit time and other patterns.

Dr. Boscan hopes the results will establish for the first time the normal gastrointestinal transit parameters for dogs of different sizes in a nonstressful home environment. Once normal gastrointestinal transit parameters are determined, the information and technology could help veterinarians better diagnose gastrointestinal problems while dogs are at home rather than at the clinic—ultimately cutting costs and discomfort to the patient and, likely, the owner.

### **Scratching the eternal itch**

Another common reason for veterinary visits is the dog with the never-ending itch. According to the Banfield Applied Research and Knowledge Team, which analyzed health data from more than 1.7 million dogs in 2009, dermatitis—inflammation that causes itching—is one of the top 10 diagnoses in dogs of all ages. Over the years, Morris Animal Foundation has funded a number of studies to address common skin allergies and issues.

For example, a study at North Carolina State University looked at whether hydroxyzine, one of the drugs most commonly used to treat atopic dermatitis in dogs, provides an antihistamine effect and, if so, what the appropriate dose is for dogs.

Atopic dermatitis is the second most common allergic skin disease in dogs, and antihistamines are among the most commonly prescribed treatments, but their effects haven’t been validated in dogs. Researchers successfully determined that hydroxyzine produces an antihistamine effect and that dogs should receive a twice-daily dose, rather than the previously standard prescription of three times a day.

Most recently, two of the Foundation’s veterinary student scholars studied skin infections related to bacteria or disease. Katherine Doerr, a student at the University of Florida, looked at atopic dermatitis. This type of dermatitis is chronic and usually worsens with age. Affected dogs develop recurrent skin and ear infections that decrease their quality of life. Humans with atopic dermatitis exhibit defective permeability of the skin, which increases their risk for sensitization to allergens. Doerr studied the skin barrier in beagles, a breed particularly prone to atopic dermatitis, to determine whether these dogs experience a similar condition. If the skin-barrier function proves to play a key role in atopic dermatitis, the information could be used to develop future treatments that prevent allergic sensitization in dogs.

Doerr compared diseased and healthy canine skin cells at very high magnification and detected structural differences between the two samples. She learned that atopic dermatitis causes cellular changes that are more pronounced with secondary inflammation. By knowing the structural differences between the diseased and healthy skin cells, it is hoped that new therapies can be developed to reduce the severity of the disease in affected dogs.

Laura Eberlein, who will finish veterinary school this year at the University of Tennessee, studied canine bacterial skin infections caused by *Staphylococcus*. Determining the best way to treat skin infections has become increasingly difficult because many infections are now resistant to antibiotics. Her research focused on genomic DNA sequencing of *Staphylococcus* to better understand why bacteria are resistant to antibiotics

and to establish a beginning point to reverse this problem. Eberlein was able to sequence large portions of the genome and found several genes responsible for resistance and other regions that shed light on how resistance is spread between individual bacteria.

Her research is a ray of hope for owners with dogs affected by persistent and chronic skin infections. Studies like these will help veterinarians better manage chronic conditions in dogs, increasing their quality of life and keeping them healthy. ■

## **UK: Dog Control Bill Set to Repeal BSL**

Over 10,000 people called for it; the country's leading animal welfare and veterinary organisations, charities and local authorities fought for it; and Members of the House of Lords supported it when they voted to move Lord Redesdale's Dog Control Bill on to its final stage in the Lords.

The Bill proposes to replace failed dangerous dog legislation with a new law that would repeal breed specific legislation, introduce Dog Control Notices, and apply to both public and private places. Constructed by the Dangerous Dogs Act Study Group (DDASG), the Dog Control Bill is continuing its path through the legislative system after being tabled by Lord Rupert Redesdale as a Private Members Bill in 2010.

Following the success of the Committee Stage of the Bill, Lord Redesdale commented:

"The Dog Control Bill quite rightly focuses on the other end of the lead - the dog owners themselves - and I am delighted that it has passed to the next stage. By introducing preventative measures, such as dog control orders to dogs of any kind, I believe we can go a long way towards protecting the public and ensuring responsible dog ownership for the benefit of all."

Subject to passing the Report Stage, the Bill will then move to the House of Commons. The final Report Stage in the House of Lords will take place approximately two weeks from today's Committee Stage.

In support of the Bill, [DDASG launched a petition](#) which has now received over 10,000 signatures. DDASG believes in the principle of deed not breed, representing animal welfare, local authorities and veterinary professional organisations which include Battersea Dogs Home, The Blue Cross, British Veterinary Association, Dogs Trust, the Kennel Club, Mayhew Animal Home, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Wandsworth Borough Council and Wood Green Animal Shelters.

*Source: British Veterinary Association*

## **Hunting Rights Pass Kentucky Assembly**

Lawmakers in Kentucky moved Friday to give hunting and fishing rights protection under the state constitution, hoping to head off a feared push by animal rights groups.

Legislation calling for an amendment to the state Constitution sailed through the General Assembly. State Rep. Tommy Turner, R-Somerset, said he expects Kentucky voters to overwhelmingly ratify the proposal when it goes on the ballot in November 2012.

The House voted 94-1 for final passage of the measure and the bill now goes to Governor Steve Beshear.

Kentucky is the latest in a long line of states that have passed or are considering right-to-hunt measures to head off feared hunting bans. States with those measures in place include Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. *Source: Outdoors News & Information*

# Are Veterinarians “Real” Doctors?

By Sandra M. Grant, DVM - Lake Wheeler Veterinary Hospital

Recently I was at a dinner party where one of the other guests, a non-practicing medical doctor, made the comment to me that he does not feel that Veterinarians are “real doctors”.

I have heard this comment quite a few times over the many years I have worked in the field of Veterinary Medicine. I replied, “Why is it you think this?” His response was, “Well you work on animals not people,” which I felt certain would be his answer.

I smiled and laughed and responded that must make his job easier than mine. He got a great belly laugh out of my reply and asked me in return why I felt this and I said, “You usually have the ability to speak to and receive a response from your patients and you only have to deal with one species-human. Veterinarians must become familiar with species from A-Z and relate all of that back to the human body (given that we know our bodies the best) and we must do this while using great intuition, read body language (sometimes that ability can mean life or death), gather thorough histories and perform thorough physical exams and all because our patients cannot speak our language and nor can we speak their language and many times owners will have brought their beloved pet in because it just is not acting right and have no specific reason. The ability to perform these duties can mean the difference between life and death for a pet.

Veterinary schools in this country are extremely limited in number and only allow for about 72 applicants to receive a slot per class, as opposed to medical schools that are in abundance. We are at times labeled “not real doctors,” though we work long hours to keep pets healthy. We do this with caring and hopefully grace.

We face dangerous situations every day, from our patients as well as some of our clients who have mental illness. Our patients can also carry Zoonotic diseases that humans can catch from animals. We are bitten, scratched, kicked, bled upon, pooped on, urinated on, and even have masses, cysts and abscesses rupture on us daily.

Veterinary general practitioners have to wear many “hats” and some of us have special interests and equipment that create more “hats” for us to wear.

General practitioners are as follows to their patients: behaviorists, counselors/psychologists, ultrasonographers, radiologists, groomers, infectious disease experts, parasitologists, gerontologists, dermatologists, allergists, chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists, physical rehabbers, phlebotomists, pathologists, nutritionists, theriogenologists, oncologists, ophthalmologists, proctologists, urologists, cardiologists, pharmacists, dentists, podiatrists, internal medicine/diagnosticians, toxicologists, anesthesiologists, and last but by far not least surgeons.

In Veterinary Medicine as in Human Medicine, there are board certified specialists in each of these fields, but general practitioners are expected to handle cases coming in the door that cover all these areas.

I do not know of any human general practitioner in modern day that does even a fraction of these duties and certainly not handle having to “change gears” from one room to the next where there is a dog in one room and a cat in the next, to a ferret, then beloved rat, then a bird and a snake. Yes we Veterinarians who enjoy seeing and treating exotics will have days that start just as this and continue for a full 12 hours.

I know a few Veterinarians who have saved lives in the war in the Middle East and other relatively recent wars when no medical doctor was within 100 miles to help. Veterinarians are real doctors and in fact we do earn a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine.

As Will Rogers very aptly said: “Vets are the noblest of the doctors, because their patients can’t tell them what’s wrong, the doctor has to reach...and he/she reaches with the heart. ■

## California Egg Farmers Ask to Join Lawsuit Seeking Proposition 2 Standards

SACRAMENTO, Calif., March 9, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The Association of California Egg Farmers ("ACEF"), a statewide industry trade association representing over 70% of California's egg farmers, filed an Application to Intervene today in the Superior Court of California, seeking to become a party in the lawsuit brought by JS West Milling Company against the State of California and the Humane Society of the United States. The lawsuit seeks clarity on what Proposition 2 requires for egg-laying hen housing systems.

Last December, JS West, one of California's leading egg farmers, filed a lawsuit in California's Superior Court in Fresno seeking a clear understanding on whether its newly constructed housing system meets the requirements of Proposition 2. The lawsuit seeks a determination of the specific types of housing systems because the law does not provide the exact size or dimension for an enclosure. The law also fails to state the number of hens that can occupy the enclosure, the density, or otherwise specify the furnishings within the enclosure. More specific information on housing standards is needed as soon as possible so California's egg farmers have sufficient time to fund and make the necessary changes to their facilities prior to the law going into effect on January 1, 2015.

"The JS West lawsuit is of great importance to the state's egg farmers who need clear guidance on how much space and what types of housing systems will be legal, and ACEF needs to be a party in that lawsuit," said Debbie Murdock, executive director of ACEF. She added, "Compliance requires the egg farmers to spend a significant amount of money on construction costs long before the law takes effect in 2015. Egg farmers will soon invest hundreds of millions of dollars on their facilities, and in doing so, they should not be forced to guess whether their new facilities will comply with Proposition 2." ACEF does not anticipate any opposition to its request to intervene in the JS West lawsuit.

*The Association of California Egg Farmers (ACEF) is a statewide industry trade association for California's egg farmers. ACEF serves as the voice for California egg farmers and an industry that is critical to the state's economy and food supply. The organization advocates for state policies affecting the industry and to ensure the continued production of fresh and affordable eggs that meet the food safety and animal care standards consumers expect. California's egg farmers produce nearly 5 billion eggs a year, providing a fresh, affordable source of food and making California the fifth largest egg producer in the country.*

### **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)



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. Permission granted to copy and distribute NCRAOA News and Views in its entirety as is.