



ALASKA PET NEWS

STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.

A nonprofit charitable corporation dedicated to saving lives through spaying and neutering.

VOL. 11, NO. 1

FALL 2009

From the Director

Happy Holidays! Here is the latest STOP the Overpopulation of Pets newsletter. We were lucky to have Cindy Drake, one of our board members, write it and put it together for us. Although we haven't been putting out regular newsletters, we have, especially in this economy, been deluged with requests for help from needy pet owners. To help end the killing of healthy dogs and cats at Alaska's animal control centers, we have continued to provide our \$20 - \$40 spay/neuter vouchers to all who need the help to get their pets spayed. We are the only organization to provide this service statewide. As you can see from our veterinarian list, we have vets in Fairbanks, Valdez, the Kenai, the Mat-Su, and other areas to help serve those who need our support.

In 2010, we hope to pursue funding to provide a veterinarian who can travel to the villages to perform spay/neuter surgeries, a service which is badly needed.

Whether or not it is to STOP, if you can consider donating something this holiday season to a spay/neuter program or humane society, that will be a kindness that will be meaningful and pure. Although those who help support animal causes or who rescue homeless dogs and cats are not often or publically

praised or financially rewarded for their efforts, I wanted you to know how much I do appreciate what you are doing to help those who cannot help themselves.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, Lori Jo Oswald, Ph.D.

To Veterinarians

Would you like to participate in our STOP program?

There is no cost to you; we just pay a portion of spay/neuter costs for individual pet owners who apply for assistance through STOP. We



send them a voucher to bring to your office; you bill us monthly using our

simple billing form (or your own). If you are not comfortable billing, we can deposit \$500 with you to be used for STOP vouchers. Just contact our director, Lori Jo, at lori@alaskastop.org for more information.

What is Really in Our Pet's Pet food?

*By Cindy Drake-Whitehead
STOP Board Member*

As devoted pet owners, we give a lot of thought to what we feed our beloved pets. Should we feed them a well-known brand of food, or should

we splurge for that really expensive premium brand not sold in regular grocery stores? It can be hard to decide, especially when we don't have all of the facts. The information I am about to recount may sound far-fetched, ridiculous, and impossible even, but I assure you that the topic has been exhaustively researched. Ann N. Martin, author of *Food Pets Die For: Shocking Facts About Pet Food*, has researched the commercial pet food industry for almost two decades. What she has discovered is a virtually unregulated multi-billion dollar industry that will use almost any waste available to produce pet food. I feel compelled to warn you that the following may be very difficult to read, but knowledge is power, and I urge you to read on. By knowing the facts, you can decide what is best to feed your companion animal.



Ann Martin began her research in 1990

after her two dogs became ill. A veterinarian advised her to look into the dog food that she was feeding her pets. She soon learned of rendering plants, facilities that take waste from many industries and turn the

waste into bone and meat meal. Here is the shocking part. Waste that is rendered and turned into pet food includes condemned meat and materials from slaughterhouses, rotten meat from supermarket shelves (including the plastic and Styrofoam containers), restaurant grease and garbage, road kill, "4-D" farm animals (dead, dying, disabled, and diseased), deceased zoo animals, feces from animal feedlots, and euthanized dogs and cats. These ingredients are rendered into meat or protein meal in pet food.

Currently, pet food companies claim to have changed the practice and ensure all customers that the meat and bone meal that they buy from rendering companies contains no dog or cat remains. Author Ann Martin is not convinced; in fact, she is sure it still goes on. Pet food companies do not test the meat meal that they purchase before they use it for pet food. Then how can they be certain? Rendering plants are also often located very near pet food making facilities, and often times, the rendering plant owns the pet food facility. How are we to be sure that companion animals are no longer used in commercial pet food when the industry has no testing and very few regulations?

Even if every pet food company is telling the truth about companion animals, pet food still contains the many other dubious ingredients listed above. Ann Martin has researched this subject for years and has corresponded with many governmental agencies in the U.S. and Canada, as well as many



commercial companies. In her book, she recounts the many different dangerous chemicals allowed in pet food, including sodium pentobarbital – the euthanasia drug used on companion and farm animals. Other chemicals commonly used in pet food include butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), propyl gallate, propylene glycol, and many, many more.

In the report *Pet Food Ingredients Revealed!* by Dr. Lisa Newman and Mike Adams, the authors analyzed and rated the ingredients of 448 popular pet food products sold in the United States and organized them by frequency. The authors state,

"...most popular pet food products are made with extremely poor quality ingredients. ... pet food is a dumping ground for meat byproducts unfit for human consumption. ... The huge rise in diabetes and cancer in dogs and cats over the last two decades, for example, is almost entirely due to the toxic ingredients commonly used in pet food and pet treats."



The report urges consumers to read ingredient labels and to not be fooled by claims of "natural" or "wholesome."

So what should we be feeding our beloved companion animals?

The authors of both works agree that we should serve home-prepared meals for our pets as often as possible. In *Food Pets Die For*, Ann Martin states that home-prepared meals should consist of a variety of meats, eggs, rice if desired, and vegetables for dogs, and a higher-protein diet (approximately 2/3 meat) for cats. Martin provides easy-to-prepare human-grade recipes for both dogs and cats at the end of her book.

You can prepare a meal specifically for them, or if you have plenty of meat scraps (and some vegetables if desired) left over from your own meal, your pet would be very grateful for your offering. Domesticated dogs evolved side-by-side with humans, often feeding on the scraps and carcasses we threw out. It is a natural feeding pattern for them.

Tom Lonsdale, a veterinary surgeon and author of *Work Wonders: Feed Your Dog Raw Meaty Bones*, stresses that dogs need to be fed good quality fats and proteins, which is their natural diet in the wild. Dogs have no need for carbohydrates and find the fillers in most commercial dog foods to be very difficult to digest. These fillers – grains, corn, soy, wheat, even sawdust – cause weight gain and

diseases in dogs and cats. A vast majority of pet foods, even “premium” ones, are stuffed with these fillers because it makes the dog food much cheaper to produce. Lonsdale stresses that bones should be fed to your pets raw for maximum nutrition and safety. Cooked bones may splinter and cause harm. The size of the bones also matter – the larger, the better. Tiny poultry bones may become a choking hazard and should be avoided.

For the times when preparing a meal is not practical, have on hand a premium and **trusted** commercial pet food from a specialty store. The pet food should state that it contains no wheat, soy, corn, or other suspect fillers. Ask questions and make sure the store employee is very knowledgeable about the products the store sells. Two popular brands of holistic, grain-free commercial pet food are Innova Evo and Canine Caviar (there are others to choose from.) Both are expensive, but if the bagged food is just used as a supplementation to table scraps and raw meaty bones, than the bag of food should last a while.



If you would like to research this vital topic further, many books and reports have been written about the pet food industry. Some sources include *Raw Dog Food* by Carina Beth MacDonald, *Work Wonders: Feed Your Dog Raw Meaty Bones* by Tom Lonsdale, *Dog eat dog & cats? Fur flies as charges of canine cannibalism*

and willful malnourishment roil pet industry by Jack Neff, *Pet Food Politics: The Chihuahua in the Coal Mine* by Marion Nestle, *Not Fit for a Dog!: The Truth About Manufactured Dog and Cat Food* by Michael W. Fox, and numerous other reports and books.

It may seem strange to feed your pets food that you would eat instead of standard commercial pet food. Pet food has been a staple in our lives for decades, and we have all been trained to think that only experts could possibly understand the complex nutritional needs of our dogs and cats. Think back to what people fed their animals before commercial pet food was widely available. People fed their pets table scraps, leftovers, and bones and meat. Companion animal diseases and ailments have increased over the years (same for humans!), and most can be attributed to poor food quality and lack of exercise. Luckily, we have a lot of control over these two areas and have the power to better the lives of our beloved pets.

Pups on Parole

*By Cindy Drake-Whitehead
STOP Board Member*

A humane society in Las Vegas, Nevada has developed a wonderful program to help traumatized and abused dogs regain their trust in humans and have a chance at adoption. Heaven Can Wait Sanctuary, a 501(c)3 charitable organization, established **Pups on Parole**, a program that pairs unwanted and unadoptable dogs with women sentenced to two different correctional facilities in Nevada.



Female inmates at Jean Correctional Facility and Southern Nevada Correctional Facility apply to the prison and to Heaven Can Wait to have the chance to rehabilitate a rescued dog. Dogs with behavioral problems live in the prison cells with their new handlers. The women open up their hearts and their lives to the live-in dogs. They share their time, energy, and their small living space with the hopes of saving the lives of their companions. A strong bond grows between each inmate and dog, all the while the inmate knowing that the goal is to move the dog on to a permanent, loving home.

Each inmate in the program meets twice a week with Heaven Can Wait trainers to ensure proper handling techniques. Cesar Milan, host of *The Dog Whisperer* on the *National Geographic Channel*, portrayed the **Pups on Parole** program on his TV show. He personally trained the staff of Heaven Can Wait Sanctuary and the handlers at the correctional facilities to have confidence and patience with the dogs in their care.

Life in prison may not seem to be an ideal place for a dog, but the benefits are tremendous. The dogs learn not only basic obedience training, potty training, and proper leash walking; they also regain their

trust of humans and have a real chance to heal from their past traumas. The dogs are also not the only ones to thrive. The women in the program derive a sense of accomplishment through responsibility for another life, they have an opportunity to love and be loved in return, and they gain valuable skills for employment after their release. By the time many of these women have finished serving their sentences, they have become experienced handlers of behaviorally challenged dogs.



What an experience for both dog and inmate. The dogs

arrive unwanted and misbehaving. The women find companionship and discover that they are needed and do have worth. The dogs, rehabilitated and trusting, move on to find forever homes. **Pups on Parole** is an amazing program that **works**. This program should serve as a model and be reproduced wherever possible.

Factory Farming Laws



By Cindy Drake-Whitehead
STOP Board Member

Although farm animals like cows and pigs are not commonly considered companion animals, it's still uplifting to hear about improvements in their

living conditions. Two states have mandated significant changes in their animal husbandry laws.

The governor of Michigan recently signed legislation that bans battery cages for egg-laying chickens, veal crates for calves, and stalls for pregnant pigs. The new law requires that animals must have enough room to freely turn around and to extend their limbs. Farmers will have three years to comply with the veal crate restrictions and 10 years to comply with the rules for pregnant pigs and egg-laying hens.



California has become the first state to ban painful tail docking of dairy cows. Tail docking involves amputating up to two-thirds of the tail, usually without anesthetic. This new law takes effect on January 1, 2010. Last year, Californian voters passed *Prop 2, The Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act*, which extends the same freedoms to veal calves, egg-laying hens, and pregnant sows as seen in the new Michigan law. California's farmers have until 2015 to fully upgrade their livestock housing.

These changes are good news, but only a few states have similar laws and the living conditions of factory-farmed animals is still horrifying. If at all possible, purchase your meats, dairy, and eggs from small family farms that practice humane and sustainable animal husbandry. This not only ensures proper animal treatment, you will also spend your money in your local

community supporting local businesses. Voting with your dollar is very powerful. You may also consider reducing your intake of animal products or becoming a vegetarian.

Myths and Facts about Spaying and Neutering

Reprinted by permission of The Humane Society of the United States.

MYTH: My pet will get fat and lazy.

FACT: The truth is that most pets get fat and lazy because their owners feed them too much and don't give them enough exercise.

MYTH: It's better to have one litter first.

FACT: Medical evidence indicates just the opposite. In fact, the evidence shows that females spayed before their first heat are typically healthier. Check with your veterinarian about the appropriate time for these procedures.

MYTH: My children should experience the miracle of birth.

FACT: Children are unlikely to see this happen as animals prefer to give birth in seclusion. Adding additional

MYTH: But my pet is a purebred.

FACT: So is at least one out of every four pets brought to animal shelters around the country. There are just too many dogs and cats—mixed breed and purebred.

MYTH: I want my dog to be protective.

FACT: Spaying or neutering does not affect a dog's natural instinct to protect home and family. A dog's personality is formed more by genetics and environment than by sex hormones.

MYTH: I don't want my male dog or cat to feel like less of a male.

FACT: Pets don't have any concept of sexual identity or ego. This is a human trait, and animals do not suffer emotional distress because of neutering.

MYTH: But my dog (or cat) is so special, I want a puppy (or kitten) just like her.

FACT: A dog or cat may be a great pet, but that doesn't mean her offspring will be a carbon copy.

Even professional breeders rarely get a litter with all the desired characteristics, so getting a carbon copy is unlikely unless you pay for cloning!

MYTH: It's too expensive to have my pet spayed or neutered.

FACT: The cost of spaying or neutering depends on the sex, size, and age of the pet, your veterinarian's fees, and a number of other variables. Shop around as there is great variability for the charges. Most importantly, it's a very small price to pay for the health of your pet and the prevention of the births of more unwanted pets.

MYTH: I'll find good homes for all the puppies and kittens.

FACT: You may find homes for all of your pet's litter. But each home you find means one less

home for the dogs and cats in shelters who need good homes. Also, in less than one year's time, each of your pet's offspring may have his or her own litter, adding even more animals to the population. The problem of pet overpopulation is created and perpetuated one litter at a time.



By Carolyn Holbert
STOP Board Member



We humans may love the holidays, but they can be fatal to our pets. October, November, and December are months of terrible danger to our pets. We will start with Halloween. Terrible things happen to pets during this time. Make sure all pets are inside during the night the youngsters are Halloween trick-or-treating,



especially black pets, to avoid the heartbreak of hideous "pranks." Pets can escape the house during all the excitement and be at risk from cars and from pranksters. Even the foil wraps on candies can cause internal injuries if swallowed - the foil can be like a razor as it is swallowed and ingested. Keep all candies and their wrappers in a secured place.



Thanksgiving can be just as dangerous to your pet. All those juicy cooked bones can kill your dog or cat, and alcoholic beverages and rich desserts can be harmful or toxic to pets. Poultry bones are especially bad for pets as they can splinter and cause choking or even puncture stomachs or intestines.

Christmas is the big daddy of holiday dangers. Two of the popular plants, mistletoe and poinsettias, are toxic to pets, especially cats. Chocolate is toxic to dogs. The bows on packages can choke pets, and if swallowed, can cause severe intestinal injury due to obstruction. Many holiday ornaments are painted with or made with toxic substances. Metal ornament hangers can puncture mouths and internal organs. And, like Thanksgiving, all those rich holiday delights can cause harm to your pets. That innocent glass of spiked eggnog could kill Spike!



Note: Sopmegraphics provided courtesy of Paw Prints and Purrs (www.sniksnak.com)

Thank you to our STOP board members and other volunteers for helping STOP save the lives of Alaska's animals by working so hard to prevent pet overpopulation and the killing of healthy, adoptable pets at Alaska's animal controls. And thank you to our donors, without whom we couldn't do any of the work we do! You are the best!



BOARD MEMBERS

- Bonnie Baize
- Carolyn Holbert, Ph.D.
- Cindy Drake
- Claire Buza
- Gregory Drummond
- Lori Jo Oswald, Ph.D.

STOP 2008 PARTICIPATING VETERINARY CLINICS (2008)

DOUGLAS:
DOUGLAS ISLAND VETERINARY SERVICE
4001 NORTH DOUGLAS HWY.
P O BOX 240031 .
DOUGLAS, AK 99824
PHONE: (907) 463-5377

EAGLE RIVER/ANCHORAGE:
RAVENWOOD VETERINARY CLINIC
11525 OLD GLENN HWY
EAGLE RIVER, AK 99577
PHONE: (907) 694-9665

FAIRBANKS:
ANIMAL HOUSE VETERINARY SERVICES
2702 PEGER ROAD
FAIRBANKS, AK 99709
PHONE: (907) 479-0467 & 907-479-2800

How You Can Help STOP Help Dogs & Cats in Alaska

- Hold a garage sale, and donate the proceeds to STOP!
- Volunteer for our fundraising committee.
- Ask your company about matching funds. Some, such as BP, even match volunteer hours with cash donations!

CHENA RIDGE VETERINARY CLINIC
720 CHENA RIDGE RD.
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701
PHONE: (907) 479-0001

MT. MCKINLEY ANIMAL HOSPITAL
800 COLLEGE RD.
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701
(907) 452-6104

KENAI:
KENAI VETERINARY HOSPITAL
10976 KENAI SPUR HWY
KENAI, AK 99611
PHONE: (907) 283-4148

SEWARD ANIMAL CLINIC
PO BOX 2368
SEWARD, AK 99664
PHONE: (907) 224-5500

SOLDOTNA ANIMAL HOSPITAL
PO BOX 1439
42479 STERLING HWY.
SOLDOTNA, AK 99669
PHONE: (907) 270-7851

TWIN CITIES VETERINARY CLINIC, INC.
44066 KALIFORNSKY BEACH RD.
SOLDOTNA, AK 99669
PHONE: (907) 262-4581

KODIAK:

Donate online or by sending a check to STOP, P.O. Box 4083, Palmer, AK 99645

Make donation canisters (or call us for some), and ask at your favorite stores if they will let us put one on the counter! Check at your office as well.

Ask your office if they can sponsor a fundraising day for STOP – perhaps a parking lot sale of used items, equipment, etc.

GREAT & SMALL ANIMAL CARE CENTER
2100 MILL BAY RD.
KODIAK, AK
PHONE: (907) 486-1010

MAT-SU BOROUGH:
ALL CREATURES VETERINARY CLINIC
4360 SNIDER DR.
WASILLA, AK 99654
PHONE: (907) 376-7930

NORTH STAR ANIMAL HOSPITAL
840 SOUTH COBB STREET
PALMER, AK 99645
PHONE: (907) 746-7387

PALMER VETERINARY CLINIC
PO BOX 3329, MILE 39.5 GLENN HWY.
PALMER, AK 99645
PHONE: (907) 745-3219

VALDEZ:
VALDEZ VETERINARY CLINIC
321 EGAN ST.
VALDEZ, AK
PHONE: (907) 835-5280

BUSINESS SERVICES

- Wordsworth Writing, Editing, & Document Formatting Services, Palmer (745-5674)

Send articles and photos for our newsletter to petnews@alaskastop.org.

Ask your veterinarian to accept our vouchers. There is no cost to the veterinarian.

Two of our members send frequent donations, sometimes even monthly! Consider adding STOP to your calendar to send a donation every month! We so appreciate this kindness!



2009-10 SPAY-NEUTER ASSISTANCE APPLICATION



STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.
PO Box 230776 Anchorage, AK 99523 Web site: www.alaskastop.org



Fill out one form for each pet and mail to STOP at PO Box 230776 Anchorage, AK 99523 along with a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE). If no SASE is enclosed, we cannot not send you a voucher.

Pet Owner Name: _____

COMPLETE Mailing Address: _____

City _____ State AK Zip _____

Pet Owner Phone Number: Home _____ Work (or Cell) _____

Animal Name: _____ Cat _____ Dog _____ Breed: _____

Color: _____ Sex (circle): M / F Weight: _____ Pregnant (circle): Y/N

Rabies Current Y/N (Note: You will be responsible for paying for your pet's rabies shot at the time or before the spaying/neutering surgery if not current.)

For our records, where did you hear about our program? _____

Where did you pick up our application? _____

STOP the Overpopulation of Pets is dedicated to saving lives by preventing births of unwanted dogs and cats in Alaska. We will pay \$20-\$40 (depending on sex and species of animal) for spay/neuter requests; you will make your own appointment at the SPCA spay clinic or other participating veterinarian. After we receive this form and an SASE, we will send you a voucher that will cover \$20-\$40 of the spay/neuter costs for each pet (up to five pets per household). You will need to bring your voucher with you to the vet the morning of the appointment. The veterinarian must bill us directly for the amount on the voucher to be reimbursed; we cannot reimburse pet owners. All vouchers must be used within 60 days from issue date. Lost, stolen, or vouchers not used in 60 days will not be replaced. Wait until you receive your voucher to make your veterinary appointment. Thank you, and congratulations for making the right choice in getting your pet spayed or neutered. *Note: As of January 2005, Friends of Pets no longer allows any other vouchers, including STOP's, to be used with theirs.*

IF YOU DO NOT NEED FUNDING ASSISTANCE, CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN OR THE SPCA (907-562-2999) DIRECTLY TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT. .

Please help STOP continue our program by joining us today!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION TO STOP

If you can, please help us continue our spay-neuter program by donating to STOP.

Type of membership (annual fees):

_____ \$25 Regular _____ \$35 Family _____ Other donation amount

All donations are tax deductible. Membership is not required to receive a spay/neuter voucher.

Membership is for 1 year and includes a subscription to the *Alaska Pet News*. Mail donation to STOP

Donations, PO Box 230776 Anchorage, AK 99523, or include with your voucher apps to the above address

PLEASE HELP STOP SAVE LIVES!

STOP needs cash to pay for not only spay and neuter assistance, but the postage, paper, phone lines, copier costs, printing fees, and other office expenses related to carrying out our mission. We also want to rent an office space this year and pay a salary to our Director. We can't continue our mission without your financial assistance.

Tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated and always needed. Become a STOP member today and know that your financial assistance is going to a worthy life-saving cause. Join the many others who have helped.

Membership Application to Join STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.



Mail check to:
STOP
PO Box 230776 Anchorage, AK 99523
_____ \$25 Individual _____ \$35 Family
_____ \$100 Corporate _____ Other \$ _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

You have my permission to use my name in STOP literature and publications.

I wish to remain anonymous, please do not use my name in STOP literature and publications.

All donations tax deductible. STOP is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit corporation. Larger donations accepted.

STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.

PO Box 230776

Anchorage, AK 99523

www.alaskastop.org