Please Help Us
Make a Difference

4 ways to show your love for the animals:

1. **Sign up as a monthly donor. Join our P.A.W. Plan**
   - BC SPCA P.A.W. (Pre-Authorized Withdrawal) Plan members provide a stable source of funds for local branches through monthly gifts. Thanks to them, we are able to save the lives of animals like Duke, who needed more than $800 in emergency medical care after he was hit by a car. To join, fill out a P.A.W. Plan brochure (enclosed in this issue), call 1-800-665-1868 or 604-681-7271 or donate on-line at www.spca.bc.ca/help

2. **Donate On-line**
   - On-line giving is an easy and efficient way to ensure that your donation reaches animals in need. In addition to providing much-needed funds for the on-going care of animals in our shelters, on-line donations enable the BC SPCA to respond quickly to save animals like Duffy during disasters and cruelty seizures. During the devastating forest fires in the B.C. Interior last summer, the BC SPCA used on-line donations to fund emergency rescue and care for more than 3,300 injured and displaced animals. Donate on-line at www.spca.bc.ca/help

3. **In-Tribute Giving**
   - Tribute gifts are a special way to let someone know you are thinking of them, while helping the animals at the same time. Whenever you make a gift in memory or in honour of a person or pet, the BC SPCA will send a tribute card to the person or family member to acknowledge your thoughtfulness. Your In-Tribute gift goes to help local branches find loving homes for abandoned and abused animals like Trills, and give them the second chance they so richly deserve. For information on In-Tribute giving call 1-800-665-1868 or 604-681-7271 or visit www.spca.bc.ca/help

4. **Remember the BC SPCA in your Will**
   - Leave a legacy of caring and compassion for the animals in your will. The BC SPCA shelters more than 57,000 animals each year in aging facilities. Bequests will help us build up reserves so we can improve and replace facilities and improve shelter programs for animals like Pete. For information on leaving a gift in your will, please contact Eric Durack at edurack@spca.bc.ca or 604-647-1329, John Hoole (for Vancouver Island) at jhoole@spca.bc.ca or 250-388-7722, or visit www.spca.bc.ca/help

You can mail a donation to the BC SPCA, 1245 East 7th Avenue, Vancouver BC, V5T 1R1
If you have any questions about our charitable work, please contact us via e-mail at donations@spca.bc.ca or telephone 1-800-665-1868.
Charitable Tax # BN 11881 9036 RR0001
A Salute to the Volunteers

IN THIS EDITION OF AnimalSense, WE FOCUS ATTENTION on the critical role that volunteers play at the BC SPCA. From dog walking to fundraising to providing overall governance of the Society, more than 4,000 volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and it is they who help make it possible for us to continue to work in this wonderful field we call animal welfare.

One of the main reasons I get such great pleasure from visiting our 37 branches across this beautiful province is because it provides me with an opportunity to meet individuals who have so freely and unreservedly of their time because they care so deeply about the animals in our care. These encounters with our volunteers always leave me feeling inspired and ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

There are many volunteer roles that individuals can play at each of our branches. Some of those require direct hands-on contact with the wide variety of animals in our shelters, while others, just as importantly, require individuals blessed with skills and expertise in other areas.

Enjoy this edition of AnimalSense as much as we have enjoyed producing it. It is my sincere hope that it will inspire you to bring your own unique talents to bear by volunteering at your local SPCA shelter.

Sincerely,
Craig Daniell, Chief Executive Officer

SPCA Honors Local Hero

The SPCA has bestowed a special award of heroism on Maple Ridge resident Ken Johnson in recognition of an act of bravery that saved the lives of a woman and her canine companion earlier this year. Johnson was driving to work when he saw an oncoming car skid off the road and flip into a water-filled ditch. He quickly called 911 and hurried to the submerged car to help.

After several unsuccessful attempts under the murky water he managed to free the female driver and pull her to safety. The driver Cindy Mueller was grateful to be alive, but frankly exclaimed that her beloved dog Buddy, a sweet giant Rottweiler-Lab cross, was still trapped in the submerged car. Johnson immediately went back into the ditch to help Buddy, but the normally docile dog had found an air pocket at the back of the car and fought furiously against the stranger who was trying to pull him back under water to the front of the car. Johnson was badly bitten several times but despite the pain he went back underwater again and again until he was able to free the distraught dog.

Both Cindy and her dog are fine today, thanks to the compassion of a stranger who put himself at risk to help others.

Johnson is the first recipient of the BC SPCA Kevin Anderson Award of Heroism, named in honor of 29-year-old White Rock resident Kevin Anderson, who was tragically struck and killed by an oncoming car in February 2002 while rescuing a frightened dog.

Sincerely,
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BC SPCA Briefs

Gentle Giants Get New Homes

There is a happy ending for 28 English mastiffs seized in July from a breeding operation north of Kamloops. SPCA animal protection officers seized these gentle giants, who weigh up to 90 kilograms (200 pounds) each, because of filthy and dangerous housing conditions and because of untreated injuries and medical conditions. Following the seizure, the mastiffs were cared for at the Vernon SPCA, where they received emergency veterinary treatment for their injuries. In late August, they were transferred into the care of two highly reputable rescue groups who specialize in the care and rehoming of mastiffs. Thanks to these two organizations, the dogs will receive further veterinary care and will be spayed and neutered before being adopted into carefully pre-screened homes.

Animal Counsel has laid charges against the owner of the mastiffs under both the Provincial Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act and the Criminal Code of Canada. If convicted, the owner faces up to six months in jail, a maximum $2,000 fine and a prohibition on keeping animals.

WARNING: READ FLEA PRODUCT LABELS CLOSELY

“Felix suddenly began shaking and bouncing around the room,” recalls Felix’s guardian of the moments after putting flea medication on her cat. It turned out she accidentally applied a permethrin-based dog flea product instead of the cat flea product. Permethrin is a topical insecticide effective for killing fleas. Consider safe for dogs at concentrations of between 45 and 65 per cent, permethrin-based flea formulations can kill cats. Some cat guardians mistakenly believe simply reducing the dose won’t affect their cats. Not true. Signs of toxicity, which can show up within minutes of application, include tremors and seizures. Immediately bathing the cat in a mild dishwashing detergent and prompt veterinary attention will minimize your cat’s chance of survival.

Bottom line: Carefully read the labels on your flea products and only use species-appropriate products. If in doubt, please consult your veterinarian about the proper use of any flea-control product. Fortunately, there are alternatives for both cats and dogs that are not based on the insekticide permethrin. These products are available through your veterinarian and are highly effective and safe.

Luckily for Felix, her guardian was able to rush him to an emergency vet and within a few days of treatment he was fully recovered.

Felix, a 7-year-old male, was able to recover with the help of a different product.
PORT ALBERNI PUPPY BREEDERS RECEIVE LIFE-TIME BAN ON KEEPING ANIMALS

A PORT ALBERNI couple has received a lifetime ban on owning animals in a cruelty case involving 28 badly neglected Lhasa Apso dogs. SPCA animal-protection officers seized the dogs from the couple’s breeding operation in 2003.

The dogs were kept in tiny plastic crates, too small to allow some of them to stand or even sit up. They were underweight, grossly matted with their own excrement and urine and several had untreated dental and medical conditions at the time of the seizure.

“We are very pleased with this outcome to the investigation and trial,” says Shawn Eccles, the BC SPCA’s chief animal-protection officer. “We have to send a strong message to British Columbians that it is not acceptable to inflict harm on animals and to profit from their pain through puppy mill-type breeding operations.”

A second case investigated by the Port Alberni SPCA, in which 36 Lhasa Apsos in horrid conditions were seized, also resulted in a court-ordered ban. The Sprout Lake couple pled guilty to causing distress to animals and received a five-year ban on owning or keeping animals.

The SPCA seized hundreds of dogs last year in a province-wide crackdown on puppy mills – operations where dogs are bred for profit with little or no regard for the animals’ physical or psychological health.

SHOP SPCA

If you are looking for that purr-fect gift, look no further than the BC SPCA. The Society’s new on-line store, Shop SPCA, features a variety of items for both two- and four-legged guardians. “The Kaslo primate case has cost the BC SPCA more than $1 million in terms of animal suffering and in the actual cost of rescuing and relocating the animals seized from neglectful guardians,” the Kaslo primate case has cost the BC SPCA more than 18 months of arduous work to find an accredited facility willing to accept Jeff. “We’re delighted that he will finally get the ongoing care and enrichment he needs and deserves,” says Craig Daniell, CEO of the BC SPCA, “but this case highlights the importance of ensuring that public enforcement is an option in cases like this one.”

Nearly two years after being rescued in a high-profile SPCA cruelty investigation, a Japanese snow monkey named Jeff was transferred from the Surrey SPCA shelter, where he has been living, to his new home at Port Safari in Hemmington, Quebec. The award-winning facility, south of Montreal, houses more than 90 different species of animals, including an existing colony of Japanese snow monkeys.

Jeff is the last of more than 100 exotic, farm and domestic animals seized from a Kaslo, B.C., property in November 2002 to get a permanent home. Four other primates, also seized in the case, were transported to the Wild Animal Orphanage in San Antonio, Texas, last March, but Jeff could not accompany the others across the U.S. border because of his status on an endangered-species appendix.

It took the SPCA more than 18 months of arduous work to find an accredited facility willing to accept Jeff. “We’re delighted that he will finally get the ongoing care and enrichment he needs and deserves,” says Craig Daniell, CEO of the BC SPCA, “but this case highlights the importance of ensuring that public enforcement is an option in cases like this one.”

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WHEN JENNIFER AND HER HUSBAND began thinking about adding a puppy to their family, they narrowed their choice down to three preferred small breeds. “We felt a small dog would be a better fit for our lifestyle and I did research on the Internet to find out which breed had the characteristics that would be the best match for us,” she says. Jennifer’s research had the couple leaning toward the purchase of a pug and they were intrigued to see an adorable pug puppy for sale that very week in a trendy pet store near their home in Vancouver.

“I had seen investigative news shows on television about puppy-mill dogs being sold through pet stores in malls, so I was wary of that, but this was a very high-end store in a good retail area and I just assumed it was a reputable business,” says Jennifer. “The store owner claimed to be a broker who sold puppies from only the best of breeders. Looking back I realize that I was seeing what I wanted to see and hearing what I wanted to believe.”

HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGY IN THE WINDOW?

If the cost is measured in animal suffering, the SPCA says the price in some B.C. pet stores is too high.
Jennifer’s story is not uncommon, says SPCA animal protection officer Eileen Drever. “The sad reality is that some pet stores claim to deal with reputable breeders, but they actually get their stock directly from puppy-mill operators or through brokers who act as agents between puppy mills and pet shops,” says Drever. “The motivation is pure profit. Some of these puppies sell for upwards of $1,800 and, as far as these operators are concerned, the greater number of animals they can sell the better. The welfare of the animals is the least of their concerns.”

Drever says this greed-motivated partnership between unscrupulous breeders and certain pet store owners results in animals who are overbred, inbred, denied medical care and kept in substandard breeding conditions in order to maximize profits. “Certainly the people who think they are buying healthy animals from these pet stores are being deceived, but the real victims are the animals who are being mistreated and abused in order to keep the money flowing.”

Last year, the SPCA seized hundreds of mistreated dogs from puppy-mill operations around the province. A typical puppy-mill dog is kept in inhumane conditions without proper food, water, grooming, sanitation, medical care or socialization. Females are bred as frequently as possible and often siblings are bred together to maximize the number of litters being born.

“The SPCA can do its best to shut down these operations, but as long as there is a market for these small-breed puppies in pet stores and through newspaper and Internet ads, new puppy mills will keep springing up,” says Drever. “This is big business in B.C. and the worst part is that many well-meaning people purchase animals from pet stores and adver-sitement not realizing that they are keeping the cycle going.”

Jennifer, who ended up purchasing the baby pug from the Vancouver store, says she was asking all the right questions. “I had a whole list of things I wanted to know about, including the name of the breeder, if papers were available, what the bloodlines were and the details of the puppy’s medical history.” She says she answers the questions she received at the time put her mind at ease, but in retrospect she realizes she was deceived. “The owner told me that the dog came from a breeder in Edmonton who bred quality purebred bloodlines and that every puppy was guaranteed. He said papers were available, but that it didn’t make sense for me to pay to register them since I just wanted the puppy as a family pet.” The owner also told her that there was no history of any medical problems in the puppy’s bloodlines.

After paying a hefty $1,200 for the puppy, Jennifer soon discovered the pug had an existing eye problem that required ongoing medication and possibly surgery. “I reported this to the store owner so that he could contact the breeder in Edmonton to let her know about the problem. He wouldn’t give me the breeder’s last name, but he assured me that he would inform her right away,” she says. By this time, though, Jennifer was suspicious and she checked Internet listings for the breeder’s first name, which the store owner had mentioned in earlier discussions. “I also made some phone calls to find her and I couldn’t find any record of a breeder in Alberta by that first name.” Jennifer says she then told the store owner that she had changed her mind and would like to see the registration papers for the dog. The store owner, who had initially assured her that the pug was a purebred and that papers were available, then admitted that the dog was not registered. “He told me that the breeder hadn’t registered that particular litter since they were going to be sold as household pets. This was a complete about-face of what he originally told me and it didn’t make any sense to me. If the dogs really came from a reputable breeder, they would have papers and it seems unlikely that a breeder would second-guess who would be buying the dogs and for what purpose.”

Sonny Allison, communications manager for the Canadian Kennel Club, points out that, under the Canadian Animal Pedigree Act, it is a federal offense to advertise or sell an animal of a recognized breed as a purebred, as registered or as eligible to be registered, if it is not. “There is no way to verify the territorial registration records in a number of countries and regions of the world. According to Allison, there are 25,000 registered breeders in Canada who are members of the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC), but only 4,000 of them have papers on file. “That is why we are trying to get those papers on file and we are working with the provincial and federal governments to establish a regulation in the breeding industry to put an end to the problem of puppy mills.”

Buyer Beware

Unscrupulous breeders and animal brokers count on the public’s lack of knowledge about puppy-mill operations to keep themselves in business. You can avoid supporting the puppy-mill industry by taking the following steps when purchasing a pet:

• **DO** adopt a pet from your local animal shelter. There are thousands of wonderful animals who need a loving home.

• **DO** contact the Canadian Kennel Club (www.ckc.ca) if you are buying purebred to ask about a breeder’s member status with the CKC and to request information about a Breed Club in your area that can refer you to a reputable breeder.

• **DO** ask to see the litter registration papers for the puppy you are buying. Remember that a dog must be registered to be considered a purebred.

• **DO** check for references from other customers.

• **DO** insist on seeing all veterinary records.

• **DO** make sure you see where the dogs are kept and bred. Check how many dogs are kept on the property, how frequently they are bred and how long they stay with their mother and siblings for socialization. Insist on seeing the puppy’s parents.

• **DON’T** buy a dog from a pet broker – a middleman who sells dogs from an unseen breeder.

• **DON’T** buy puppies or kittens from a retailer (unless the store hosts a satellite adoption centre for the SPCA or a local rescue group).

• **DON’T** take a puppy or kitten home before you have paid the full price. If your pet is not purebred, then by definition it is considered to be a non-purebred dog.” Allison says that under federal law any seller who claims a dog is a purebred is required to provide registration papers at no additional cost to the new owner within six months of the date of sale. Unfortunately, few buyers know about the legislation and often fall prey to misinformation and slick persuasion from pet-store staff.

Both the Canadian Kennel Club and the BC SPCA oppose the sale of dogs in a retail environment for a variety of animal-welfare reasons and because of the lack of accountability about where the puppies come from. One exception in the BC SPCA’s case is Petcetera, stores which do not buy and sell dogs through puppy brokers but instead host satellite adoption centres where people can adopt homeless cats and dogs from the SPCA and other humane societies.

While Jennifer says she could never part with the beloved pug she purchased, she admits she has learned some hard lessons about the pet trade. “I think part of the problem is that many people like myself are impulse shoppers. I was too impatient to wait until a litter became available through a breeder and the idea of being able to see an animal and interact in a convenient retail setting was very appealing,” she says. “What I learned is that there is a very high price for that instant gratification. I was so eager to believe all the assurances from the pet store because I had already fallen in love with that particular puppy. Unfortunately, I now have to live with the fact that I probably contributed to the abusive puppy-mill industry and that totally sickens me. If I can share my story and cause even one person to act differently when they see a puppy or kitten in a pet-store window I’ll feel that the lesson I learned wasn’t in vain.”
Every year, more than 4,000 volunteers help BC SPCA branches around the province provide care for nearly 60,000 animals in distress. From walking dogs and cleaning cat cages to organizing special events, our volunteers reach out to relieve suffering and to offer hope to animals whose lives have been devastated by human neglect and abuse.

On these pages we highlight the contributions of some of the amazing people we are proud to call our volunteers.

**Our Volunteer Heroes**

**Name:** Barb Goebel  
**Day Job:** Shaw Cable, Kelowna  
**Branch:** Kelowna  
**Started volunteering at the SPCA:** Eight years ago  
**Approximate number of volunteer hours:** About 1,000 hours each year — six days a week  
**Volunteer activities:** Making thank you calls to donors and sponsors, office administration, helping to socialize animals, cleaning kennels, arranging foster homes, feeding animals, volunteer orientations, dog walking.  
**Pet peeve or concern:** People who don’t take responsibility or care for their animals.

Koko was nearly nine years old, but she had so much love left to give and I was so happy that someone saw how special she was. My pets at home: Four cats — Carrot, Muffin, Coach and Pepper. They were my foster cats at one time, but I couldn’t give them up. I recently lost my much-loved Sheltie, Kelly, who died in August at the age of 15.

My pets at home: Two spoiled cats. Pet peeve or concern: People who don’t take responsibility or care for their animals.

I only have to look into their sad eyes once to be hooked … it doesn’t seem like work at all. I feel I am making the biggest difference for animals when: I am assisting with fundraising initiatives such as the annual Paws for a Cause Walk. My pets at home: Two seven-year-old chow/retiever cross named Bella from the Vancouver Shelter at our recent Paws for a Cause event and I made sure that I introduced her to as many potential new parents as possible. It’s all about networking. Pet peeve or concern: I am concerned about the backlash against pit bulls right now. What really irks me are irresponsible pet guardians who are giving certain breeds a bad name and making it difficult for responsible pet guardians with these same breeds to keep their pets. Pets are not a part-time hobby. They are a full-time responsibility, including training and obedience. If you commit to having an animal you need to be 120 per cent committed all the time. It’s all about education and being responsible.

**Name:** Christine Audette  
**Day Job:** Government worker, Ministry of the Attorney General  
**Branch:** Kelowna  
**Started volunteering at the SPCA:** Eight years ago  
**Volunteer activities:** Foster program coordinator. My role is to recruit and coordinate temporary homes for hundreds of animals each year until a permanent home can be found for them. Pet volunteer because: It makes me feel great to see animals getting the love and nurturing they need, first with a foster family and then in a permanent home. Some of these animals wouldn’t have much of a chance if it weren’t for our amazing and dedicated foster parents.

Best volunteer moment: My best moment and most memorable animal was the first dog I ever adopted out in 1997. It was a senior Shepherd-cross, named Koko, who had been at the shelter for more than two months. I volunteered every Saturday and although I spoke to many potential adopters about Koko, no one asked to take her out of her kennel or spend more time with her. Finally a couple came in and they decided she was the dog for them.

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2004 Volunteer of the Year Award

Each year, the BC SPCA honours the outstanding contributions of its volunteers through a provincial Volunteer of the Year Award. The 2004 co-winners, Erin Hay of Dawson Creek and Janet Shaw of Surrey, exemplify the dedication, compassion and commitment of our incredible volunteer core. We offer our congratulations and heartfelt thanks to these extraordinary young women.

Janet Shaw
Janet is described as a “woman who does it all,” by her colleagues at the Surrey SPCA. Since becoming involved with the Surrey Branch nearly six years ago, she has demonstrated a dedication and level of sacrifice for the animals that goes far beyond the call of duty. There are few jobs at the Surrey Shelter that Shaw has not rolled up her sleeves to help with. She has walked dogs, taken on the time-consuming role of dog-walk coordinator, organized numerous fundraisers and special events, offered ongoing orientation sessions and provided follow-up assistance for new volunteers. In 2003, when the Surrey Branch held its first Paws for a Cause fundraising walk, it was Shaw who spearheaded the event and made it a huge success. She coordinated the walk again this year and the 2004 Paws for a Cause event more than doubled the money raised in 2003. Janet Shaw’s willingness to give unselfishly of her time and skills has resulted in a better life for hundreds of abused and homeless animals in her community.

Erin Hay
Erin Hay first became involved with the South Peace Branch of the SPCA in Dawson Creek seven years ago as part of a high school special-needs class that visited the shelter to spend time with the animals. Hay immediately felt a close bond with the animals who needed her care and soon began going to the shelter on her own to help out. Since then, she has played a central and vital role in the daily operations of her local SPCA. Hay can be found helping at the shelter six to seven days a week, and in the past four years alone has put in nearly 3,000 volunteer hours. She cleans cat cages, walks dogs, helps with obedience training, participates in every special event that the branch sponsors and is eager to embrace any new task assigned to her. Erin Shaw has become well known in the community as an ambassador for the SPCA and her outstanding commitment to the animals is an inspiration to everyone she meets.

Otter Odyssey

Every blended family is special, but for orphaned river otters Tahsis, Sooke, Ucluelet and Jabber Jabber, life as a family unit is just one continuous ball of fun.

The baby otters, now playful and growing rapidly, were in serious condition when they were brought from different areas of the province to be raised together at Wild ARC, the BC SPCAs wildlife rehabilitation centre near Metetchin on Vancouver Island. The otters are among the more than 1,700 wild animals cared for at the SPCA facility each year.

“The first otter, a female named Tahsis, was 10 days old when she was admitted on May 7 with her ears and eyes still shut,” recalls Sara Dubois, manager of Wild ARC. “She had been alone for more than 48 hours and was in very poor condition, having been left behind when her mother was scared away from her den site near Mill Bay.” Ucluelet, a second female otter, was found in a Shawnigan Lake backyard on June 1, extremely weak and dehydrated.

On June 15, a third otter, a nine-week-old male named Sooke, joined the ladies after being transferred to Wild ARC from Island Wildlife Natural Care Centre on Saltspring Island. “Sooke is extremely defensive and has helped to make sure the other otters are wary of people, which is a good thing for their survival in the wild,” says Dubois. A fourth otter, named Jabber Jabber, was brought to Wild ARC on July 20 from Critter Care in Langley. “Jabber Jabber was already an expert at catching live fish, which was great amusement for staff and volunteers. “They absolutely love playing with the hose and swimming around in circles in the pool chasing each other’s tails,” she says. “One of their other favourite games is playing tug-of-war with a salmon. You can’t help but laugh when you watch them.” Dubois says Tahsis and Jabber Jabber are close friends and are quite outgoing, while Sooke and Ucluelet are more reserved around their caretakers. The otters will be cared for at Wild ARC until the spring of 2005, when they will be released into the wild together. During their lengthy stay at Wild ARC, the otters will move from a diet of specialized formula to regular meals of meat and massive amounts of fish, clams, and mussels.

“With four hungry mouths, the costs associated with their care will increase dramatically as the otters grow bigger,” says Dubois. Wild ARC is also trying to raise funds to build a larger, more specialized aquatic enclosure for orphaned and sick otters in future years. If you would like to help Tahsis, Jabber Jabber, Sooke and Ucluelet and other wild animals rescued by Wild ARC, please send donations to BC SPCA Wild ARC, 1020 Malloch Road, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9C 4G9.
WHEN SPCA OFFICERS FROM THE Shuswap branch responded to a cruelty complaint about neglected animals on a rural property outside of Salmon Arm, one of the dogs they rescued was a young, mixed-breed male named Rudy. When officers arrived Rudy was so badly emaciated he was a walking skeleton, hours away from death. The officers rushed the fragile dog to an emergency clinic where, against all odds, he lived through the night. Rudy was closely monitored for health problems associated with severe malnutrition and was fed one tablespoon of food per hour until his system could handle more. The SPCA cared for Rudy for the next three months and, finally, he was a healthy, rambunctious dog who is thriving in his new adopted home. The horrific experiences of his past did not break his spirit. He adores his new family, Peter and Iwona, and Rudy’s spirit. He is a happy, rambunctious, healthy, loving presence of his past did not break his spirit. He adores his new family, Peter and Iwona, and Rudy’s spirit. He is a happy, rambunctious, healthy, loving presence.

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SYDNEY

Six-week-old Sydney was a frail, hungry kitten in terrible pain when she was rescued from a Lower Mainland dumpster along with her sibling. In addition to the trauma of being abandoned in the trash, Sydney had a broken left hind leg, which badly needed emergency veterinary care. The SPCA hospital spent nearly $600 on Sydney’s treatment and placed her in a foster home where she would receive the rest and attention she needed to heal. Despite concerns that her leg might have to be amputated because of her restricted circulation, Sydney healed well and the energetic kitten was soon happily terrorizing her foster family’s two dogs. She is now out of her cast and has been permanently adopted by the family.

PEANUT BUTTER, SPUD AND JUNIOR

Peanut Butter, Spud and Junior were exploring their backyard property when a painful run-in with a porcupine left them covered in sharp porcupine quills. All three were injured, but Spud received the brunt of the encounter, with more than 1,000 quills embedded in her face and body, including 100 puncturing the inside of her mouth. The dogs’ owner refused to take them to a veterinarian for several days and when the three injured dogs were finally brought to the Chilliwack SPCA by a concerned third party, they were suffering from severe pain, infection and abscesses, as well as dehydration and hyperthermia. Thanks to the efforts of a local veterinarian and SPCA clinic staff who removed the quills and administered a series of antibiotics, the dogs have recovered and have all been adopted into new loving homes.

MAGNUN

Magnum, a loving and gentle albino Great Dane, was shot three times in his head, neck and shoulders and left to die in the woods outside of Prince George after his guardian found the hearing-impaired dog too much trouble to keep. Miraculously, the seriously wounded dog survived and was spotted by a local resident who immediately called the SPCA. Magnum received more than 70 stitches to close his gaping wounds and lacerations and was treated for the severe dehydration he suffered as a result of his ordeal. The SPCA kept the injured dog safe and well cared for in a loving foster home while searching for a Great Dane rescue group who could help find Magnum a permanent home. Luckily, they were able to locate a group that not only specialized in the breed, but which had a specific mission to find nurturing homes for deaf Great Danes. Arrangements were made for Magnum’s trip from Prince George to Oregon, where he is now living happily.

BUCK

A 90-kilogram deer, who tumbled down a six-metre sinkhole north of Penticton, is unharmed and back in his natural habitat thanks to some local hikers, a conservation officer and the Penticton SPCA. The two-point buck was discovered at the bottom of the deep sinkhole at Sage Mesa by a group of hikers, who immediately called the SPCA for help. Pentiction branch manager, Patti Ward, says the deer was extremely agitated when the SPCA arrived. “He was frantically clawing at the sides of the hole, but was unable to make his way to the surface.” SPCA officers and a local conservation officer sedated the deer, who was then blindfolded and secured with ropes so that he could be pulled up a ladder to the surface of the sinkhole. Ward says the buck would have soon died from stress or from the heavy rains that fell if he had not been rescued immediately. Officers carried the deer to a location away from the sinkhole and stayed with him until the sedation wore off. ■

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Out of the Hutch, Into Your Home

Rabbits have come a long way. These good-natured and intelligent creatures are leaving their isolated backyard hutches and are staking a new claim as one of the fastest growing pet choices in homes, apartments and condos.

“They have wonderful and unique personalities and make excellent indoor pets,” says rabbit rescue volunteer Lisa Hutcheon. “They’ve often been overlooked or misunderstood as companion animals because they’ve been kept outdoors, away from the family.” She says owners of an indoor rabbit are much more in tune with their pet’s personality and needs, while backyard bunnies often fall victim to loneliness or neglect.

She says that, like every responsible pet guardian, a rabbit owner must be willing to make a long-term commitment. “A rabbit can live anywhere from 5 to 15 years, with the bigger breeds living longer than the smaller breeds.”

Rabbits do not make good pets for children under seven years of age. “Being prey animals, rabbits are always on guard and often find the attentions of young children to be more than they can handle,” she says. “They are also ground-loving creatures who prefer to be petted down at their own level, rather than being scooped up and carried about.”

While rabbits are growing in popularity, SPCA shelters still receive a large number of surrendered or abandoned bunnies, particularly after Easter when baby rabbits purchased as novelty gifts are dumped at shelters. “It’s distressing to see animals being purchased for their cuteness factor and then abandoned,” says Hutcheon. “It’s important for people to understand the qualities and welfare needs of a pet rabbit before they take it into their home.”

Diet
Rabbits are herbivores (plant eaters) and the mainstay of their diet should be hay. Fresh, green, fragrant Timothy hay is accessible all year through pet supply stores and rabbits should be allowed to consume as much as they want on a daily basis. In addition to hay, fresh vegetables such as parsley and broccoli can also be offered, but fruits should be offered only as a treat.

Dry or pelleted food should also be given to rabbits. Choose a pellet that is hay-based rather than alfalfa-based and do not overdo the feedings as pellets are calorie-dense and should not be given in unlimited amounts.

“Rabbits are crepuscular creatures, which means they are active during the early morning and again during the early evening,” says Hutcheon. “This makes them great pets for people who work a nine-to-five day.”

Around the home
A rabbit needs free time away from its cage – anywhere from three to five hours a day. Rabbits are easily trained to use a litter box and thus, many house rabbits enjoy round-the-clock privileges of running free. Spaying and neutering is absolutely essential for your rabbits to reduce or prevent certain cancer risks, negative hormone-related behaviors, aggressive behaviours, mood swings and, most importantly, overpopulation. Rabbits can have up to 12 litters a year, with upward of 40 offspring.

Rabbit-proofing
Rabbit owners willing to bring their pets into their homes must know how to safely rabbit-proof the environment. Rabbits tend to explore every nook and cranny of their new home and will find things they should not get into. Basic rabbit-proofing includes covering or hiding electrical cords, phone cords, certain houseplants and objects that can be chewed or could fall from a height.

Cleanliness and health
A rabbit will go through three to four molts a year, so grooming must be frequent. Owners should make sure the ears, eyes, teeth, feet and nails are maintained for cleanliness and watched for signs of disease or trauma. If a rabbit does not eat or use its litter box for more than a day, it must see a veterinarian immediately. It is important to locate rabbit-savvy veterinarians in your community.

Handling your rabbit
When picking up a rabbit, guardians should use two hands and support the animal’s hind end. It should be held close to the chest, with its back, bottom and rear legs securely supported. Children should be taught to sit on the floor beside the rabbit or have her placed in their lap while seated, rather than carrying her from a standing position. When first getting to know a rabbit, owners should approach it from the top of its head, rather than from the front. To gain her trust, they should sit quietly beside her, stroking her from the top of the head down along the back. Rabbits in the wild groom each other around the nose, ears and down the back, so this type of approach will be perceived as friendly.

If you would like more information on rabbit care, visit www.spca.bc.ca. Links to local rabbit rescue groups can also be accessed through the SPCA site.

Lisa Hutcheon is a volunteer with various Lower Mainland SPCA shelters. She has been specifically involved with small animals and can be reached at lisa@bcrabbits.org or 604.438.4366.
ANXIETY

SEPARATION ANXIETY

“I WAS ONLY GONE: 15 MINUTES and when I came back all the stuffing from my new couch was all over the living room,” says Mindy, an exasperated guardian of a Rotweiller-cross. Mindy’s story is a familiar one. Normally, dogs do fine being separated from their guardian for a few hours. However, dogs with anxious temperaments do not cope well when left alone. The behaviour is called separation anxiety.

Why do dogs destroy things when left alone? First of all, dogs are not punishing you for leaving them alone. They destroy things as a behavioural response to the emotional uneasiness they are feeling. They are insecure without you.

Dogs can experience various levels of separation anxiety from being just a little uneasy to excessive barking, whimpering or howling. Extreme anxiety drives some dogs to compulsive digging, destruction of household objects, inappropriate elimination, or attempts to escape from their yard or house.

Luckily, for most dogs, separation anxiety is fairly easily treated. But it does require patience and understanding of what triggers your dog’s anxiety. The basic theory is this: your dog needs to develop confidence that you will return. Otherwise, he may resort to stress-related behaviours. Treatment can take from a couple of weeks to several months if your dog experiences severe separation anxiety.

Do not muzzle, crate, tether or otherwise restrict your dog in an attempt to treat this problem. Doing so may keep him from being destructive, but will only make the anxiety worse, which could result in self-mutilation behaviour or stress-related illness. It is also best to not leave your dog in the place he usually feels anxious. If possible, take your dog to work, leave him with a pet-sitter or in dog daycare as you work on the treatment.

Before you start treatment purchase a few special toys to be used only when doing the hangout exercise (right). Consider purchasing a product called Dog Appeasing Pheromones on the Internet or from a veterinarian. Place your dog’s bed in the room in which he is most relaxed and remove all destructible items. Plug in the Dog Appeasing Pheromones, which relaxes dogs. Also, make a list of all the signals that normally make your dog anxious such as putting your shoes and coat on or picking up your keys.

THE HANGOUT EXERCISE

Phase 1
1. After a walk, take your dog to his favourite room, give the hangout toy and wait until he settles with the toy.
2. Say “Hangout” and casually leave the room for a few seconds. Leave the door open. Note: If he gets up and follows, you may need to start by going to the other side of the room and ignoring him for a few seconds.
3. Come back in, wait a few seconds, say “good hangout” and give him a pat. Do not over-praise.
4. You may now take away the hangout toy.
5. Repeat the hangout exercise until you are able to leave the room for about 10 minutes with the door closed and still have a relaxed dog when you enter the room.

Phase 2
Use the hangout exercise but now leave the house for a few seconds. Slowly increase to 30 minutes.

Phase 3
Once he is relaxed in Phase 2, you can add the things that normally stress your dog (picking up keys, putting your coat on, etc.) while repeating the Phase 1 hangout exercise. Add one cue at a time and keep the alone time to a few seconds. Implement Phase 2 with the cues. Slowly increase hangout time until your dog can spend four hours alone.

Mindy’s dog Tramp is now coping much better having successfully completed all three phases of the treatment.

“I throw a blanket over my couch for now. I think I’ll wait a bit before getting a new couch, just in case.”

WHEN JEANNINE WOODHOUSE, MANAGER OF the SPCA branch in Prince George, arrives early to open the shelter on a cold winter morning she is often greeted by a sad, but all-too-familiar, sight. Tied to the closed gate outside the shelter is a shivering dog, standing forlorn and abandoned in the cold morning. Nearby, a city maintenance worker makes a disturbing discovery in an industrial dumpster – a litter of newborn kittens cling helplessly to one another for warmth in the garbage, where they have been left to die.

The issue of pet overpopulation and abandonment is a grave concern in this northern city, where the overwhelming number of homeless animals places an incredible strain on the limited resources of staff and volunteers at the North Cariboo (Prince George) SPCA. “It’s heartbreaking because we take in thousands of beautiful, adoptable animals a week and simply aren’t enough homes for them here,” says Woodhouse. She points out that her shelter is the busiest in the province, receiving more than 5,000 surrendered, abused and abandoned animals each year.

Saves the lives of animals in Prince George and other locations around B.C. that have serious pet overpopulation problems is the goal of Pet Express, an exciting new project launched last month by the BC SPCA and the well-known pet store chain Petcetera. “Petcetera has made a generous donation to help us purchase two state-of-the-art transport vehicles that will enable us to bring homeless animals from the north, the Interior and other parts of the province down to our Lower Mainland shelters where they have a much greater chance of adoption,” says Craig Daniell, CEO of the BC SPCA.

“We believe the Pet Express vehicles will save hundreds, even thousands, of animals’ lives each year and we are very grateful to Petcetera for their support.”

Says Woodhouse: “This gives us new hope,” she says. “The steady stream of animals coming into our shelter is overwhelming at times, but it makes such a difference to know we can offer them a chance at a happy ending.”

Petcetera for their support.

“I am happy to be part of the Pet Express project.”

AnimalSense • Fall 2004

AnimalSense • Fall 2004
THE PREMIERE ISSUE OF BARK!, the BC SPCA’s magazine for kids, has hit the streets. The new 8-page magazine is part of the BC SPCA Kids Club membership package.

“Bark! is a fun, engaging way to reach kids at an early age with messages about responsible animal care, animal facts, and how kids can make a difference for animals in their community,” says Iris Ting, BC SPCA education coordinator. The messaging in Bark! promotes empathy development, encourages critical thinking skills, and fosters respectful attitudes toward animals, people and nature.

Bark! is part of the SPCA’s comprehensive youth program. “The Kids Club is a way for kids to feel that their love of animals is shared by others,” says Craig Naherniak, general manager, humane education. “Sure, we want kids to take better care of their animals, but we also want kids to learn how animal issues effect their community – whether it is pet overpopulation, animal cruelty, how farm animals are raised or habitat loss that makes a species endangered.

“These are all interrelated issues because decisions people make everyday have an impact on animals – positively or negatively,” says Naherniak. “By understanding the effects of our actions we can make decisions that better adhere to our values.” Kids care about animals, yet they don’t always understand how they can make a difference in a meaningful and appropriate way. Bark! and the BC SPCA Kids Club materials are aimed at helping kids make the world a more caring and compassionate place while celebrating the human-animal bond.

O N E O F T H E O R I G I N A L G O A L S of the University of British Columbia’s Animal Welfare Program, created in 1997, was to provide post-graduate education for professionals in the field of animal welfare. It was a bit of an experiment. There are few similar programs worldwide, so we had little sense of how many students would apply or the kind of employment they would eventually find.

We quickly discovered the overwhelming level of student interest. Almost from the start we began receiving 100 to 200 enquiries for the three to four student positions we could accept per year. The constant challenge now is to avoid accepting more students than we can handle for the intense, one-on-one education that post-graduate degrees involve.

Seven years after the program’s launch, a sampling of the positions our graduates have secured gives us a snapshot of how the world of animal welfare is evolving.

In April, Cassandra Tucker, our first PhD graduate, was appointed as senior research scientist with the Animal Behaviour and Welfare Research Centre in Hamilton, New Zealand. Tucker’s thesis was on comfortable...
housing for dairy cattle. She will continue in New Zealand by finding ways to reduce stress and lameness in cattle.

In May, after completing an MSc thesis on wildlife rehabilitation in British Columbia, Sara Dubois was appointed manager of the BC SPCA’s Wild ARC wildlife rehabilitation centre near Victoria, a position Dubois describes as her “dream job.”

In August, Geoff Urton, who is winding up an MSc project to help farmers detect early signs of illness in cows, took a one-year position with the BC SPCA as coordinator of the Society’s farm-animal programs.

In September, after finishing a thesis on “replacing, reducing and refining” the use of animals in research, Cathy Schuppli began a post-doctoral fellowship at the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics at UBC, doing policy-related work on the use of animal and human subjects in biomedical science.

And, recently, Anna MacNeil Allcock, whose MSc thesis was on re-homing of pit bulls, returned to British Columbia as manager of the BC SPCA’s Sunshine Coast Branch, after a period as director of animal welfare at the Humane Society of the Williamette Valley in Oregon.

In the past, I think the humane movement was hampered by not having a source of professionals trained specifically in the field of animal welfare. As these bright and committed young people take up their positions, I am confident that they will accomplish great things for animals. ■

Dr. David Fraser heads the Animal Welfare Program at UBC. The program, initiated by the BC SPCA in 1997, identifies solutions to animal-welfare problems and encourages the application of the most up-to-date techniques for humane treatment of farm, wild and companion animals.

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**DogSense**

**Does Sex Really Matter?**

by Stanley Coren

When selecting a pet dog, many people fuss over the issue of the dog’s sex. However, many beliefs about sex differences in dogs are really extensions of our biases and beliefs about human sex differences. Perhaps the most common belief is that male dogs are more aggressive than female dogs. This comes from our belief that in humans women are nurturing, while men are war-like. This seems to be supported by the fact that, as in the case of humans, the sexes frequently differ in size and strength. Male dogs tend to be larger and up to 20 percent heavier than female dogs. This means that, if you have a male, there is more dog to handle, and, should dispute break out, he is apt to do more damage.

It is also true that sexually intact males will often snap at other sexually intact males and may show more dominance-related behaviors. However, when it comes to being watch-dogs, except for the size issue, males and females are generally equivalent.

Unfortunately, issues of aggression tend to get mixed up with simple activity level and vigor-ousness. Males show higher activity levels and greater vigour. However, breed differences are much more important here, and I doubt that you will ever find a bulldog of either sex who is as active as an Irish setter.

Another thing that you hear is that females are more loving and emotionally responsive than male dogs. Again, this is an extension of our societal stereotype that women have motherly emotions, as well as being warm and supportive. In dogs, breed is much more important than their sex in determining emotional stability. Thus, basset hounds, bulldogs or Newfoundland are fairly placid in most situations, while greyhounds, Chihuahuas and Dalmatians show many mood swings depending on the situation.

Actually, considerations having to do with the sex of your dog are much more a matter of human preferences and notions. One woman recently admitted to me that she has always had female dogs because “I don’t want some male dog leering at me as I dress and undress!”

Stanley Coren is a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia and author of many books on dogs including How to Speak Dog and How Dogs Think. His Web site is www.stanleycoren.com.

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Thank you to our other top pledge collectors

Kae Barker, Sunshine Coast; Pat Mitchell, Vancouver; and Shawna Wilian, Vancouver.