

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 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.

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BC SPCA
SPEAKING
FOR
ANIMALS

www.sPCA.bc.ca FALL 2004 \$2.95

AnimalSense

**HONOURING OUR
VOLUNTEERS**

**BEWARE OF
PET STORE PUPPIES**

OTTER ODYSSEY

HAPPY ENDINGS

**OUT OF THE
HUTCH AND
INTO YOUR
HEART - RABBIT COMPANIONS**



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 give 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

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Thanks to animal lovers in 31 B.C. communities, this year's *Paws for a Cause ... Walk for the Animals* was the largest fundraising event for animals in need in B.C. history.

BC SPCA briefs

SPCA HONOURS 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 frantically explained that her beloved dog Buddy, a large Rotweiler-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.



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 turns out she accidentally applied a permethrin-based dog flea product instead of the cat flea product.

Premethrin is a topical insecticide effective for killing fleas. Considered safe for dogs at concentrations of between 45 and 65 per cent, permethrin-based dog formulations can kill cats. Some cat guardians mistakenly believe simply reducing the dose will not 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 maximize your cat's chance of survival.

Bottom line: Carefully read the labels on your flea products and use only 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 insecticide permethrin. These products are available through your veterinarian and are highly effective and safer.

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



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.

Crown 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.

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briefs

A NEW HOME FOR JEFF

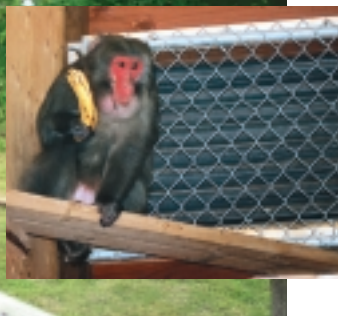
Nearly two years after being rescued in a high-profile SPCA cruelty investigation, a Japanese snow monkey named Jeff was transferred from the Surrey SPCA shelter, where he has been living, to his new home at Parc Safari in Hemmington, Quebec. The award-winning facility, south of Montreal, houses more 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 enormous price of keeping exotic animals in captivity — both 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 nearly \$100,000, including the construction of indoor-outdoor enclosures needed to house Jeff and the other primates during their stay at the Surrey shelter.

SHOP SPCA

If you are looking for that purr-fect gift, look no further than the BC SPCA's new on-line store, Shop SPCA. Shop SPCA features a variety of items for both two- and four-legged customers, including shirts, fleece vests, briefcases, dog collars, bandanas, the 2005 SPCA calendar and other fun products. Proceeds from Shop SPCA go to help animals in need throughout B.C. To shop online today, visit www.sPCA.bc.ca.



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 horrific conditions were seized, also resulted in a court-ordered ban. The Sproat Lake couple pled guilty to causing distress to animals and received a five-year ban on owning or keeping animals.

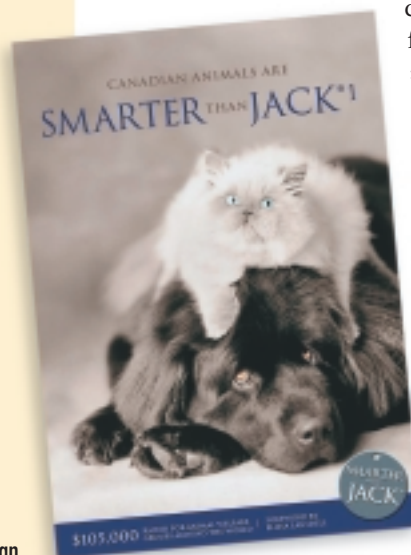
The SPCA seized hundreds of dogs last year in a province-wide crackdown on puppy mills — operations where dogs are bred for profit with little or no regard for the animals' physical or psychological health.

SMARTER THAN JACK

IF YOU ENJOY READING AND love to help animals, check out a new heart-warming book entitled *SMARTER than JACK*. The book contains 91 true tales of amazing

animals in Canada, including the story of Petra, (pictured at top right) one of the badly-neglected Lhasa Apsos seized from a puppy mill by the SPCA in Port Alberni in 2003.

Shortly after being adopted into a loving home, Petra repaid her new guardian, Anne Porter, when the normally docile dog's frantic barking alerted Porter that a serious fire that had broken out in the house. The publishers of *SMARTER than JACK* are donating \$6 from every book (which retails for \$17.95) to the BC SPCA and \$3 to the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies if the books are ordered through CFHS at 1.888.678.CFHS (or online at www.cfhs.ca). The books make great Christmas gifts and proceeds will help the SPCA rescue more animals like Petra.



SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS

MORE THAN 500 YOUNG people from around the province participated in SPCA-sponsored camps this summer. The camps, which took place from Vancouver to Dawson Creek, offered kids from 7 to 13 years of age the opportunity to learn about responsible animal care and to become ambassadors for humane, animal-friendly communities. "The camps provide a fun atmosphere to share important messages with kids about empathy, respect and compassion for all creatures," says Craig Naherniak, general manager, humane education. "Our activities are aimed at improving animal welfare and helping young people to understand how humans, animals and the environment are all interconnected." Hands-on experience with animals, field trips, guest speakers, games, drama and crafts are some of the types of activities used to reinforce humane themes.



SPCA VIDEOS WIN INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

Two media ventures produced by the BC SPCA have recently won international awards. A video produced by the Society's manager of animal welfare Nadine Gourkow on *The Emotional Life of Cats* won an Award of Excellence from the Latham Foundation, a California-based leader in the production and distribution of humane education materials. The educational video is part of a comprehensive cat management program developed by Gourkow, which also includes an assessment tool to monitor the welfare of shelter cats and a cat management/enrichment manual.

A series of television ads produced by the BC SPCA to promote the adoption of shelter animals was also recognized internationally. The ads won the prestigious Cannes Award for best international ad in the *Appeal* category. The week-long advertising show is held each year in Cannes following the world-famous film festival and features entries from top ad agencies around the world. The adoption ads were produced pro bono for the BC SPCA by the Palmer Jarvis DDB agency.



WHERE'S THE BEEF?

PAINTED RIVER FARM IS THE FIRST BEEF FARMER TO BE CERTIFIED under the SPCA Certified labelling program. Located on Barnston Island, between Surrey and Pitt Meadows, Painted River Farm's cattle are born and raised on the Island, free of hormones and steroids as per BC SPCA Standards. Launched in 2002, the SPCA Certified program assures consumers that food products bearing the program label comply with BC SPCA-developed farm animal welfare standards. The goal of the program is to promote the humane treatment of farm animals and to provide an opportunity for consumers to make humane food choices. Visit www.sPCA.bc.ca/farm/paintedriver.asp to learn more about Painted River Farm and where to buy its products.

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.

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.”



Buyer Beware

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

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). Resist the urge to *rescue* an animal from a pet store — this only puts more money in the wrong pockets. Instead, call your local SPCA so that an official site inspection can be carried out.
- **DON'T** keep silent. Be an advocate to stop the suffering of puppy-mill dogs by discouraging friends from purchasing dogs in retail settings.

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 advertisements not realizing that they are keeping the cycle going."

Jennifer, who ended up purchasing the baby pug from the Vancouver pet store, says she thought 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 the answers 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 bloodline.

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. "The

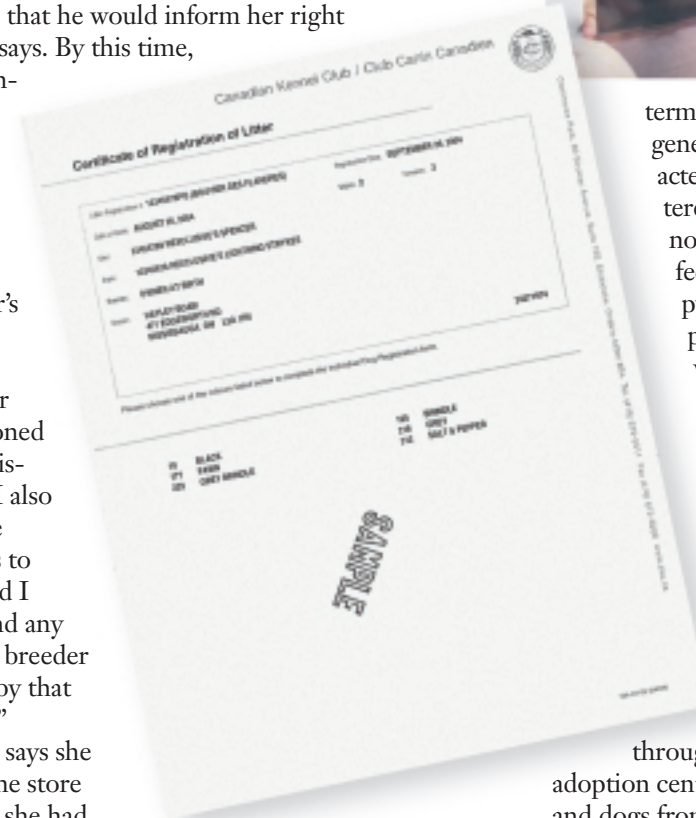
term 'purebred' refers to the confirmation of genetic background and adherence to breed characteristics," he explains. "If an animal is not registered, then by definition it is considered to be a non-purebred dog." Allison says that under federal law any seller who claims a dog is a purebred is required 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." ■



LINDSEY DONOVAN





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.

Name: Barb Goebel
Day Job: Shaw Cable, Kelowna
Branch: Kelowna
Started volunteering at the SPCA: Eight years ago
Approximate number of volunteers 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.
I volunteer because: I absolutely love animals and I love helping them in any way I can. The time you spend giving an animal happiness is returned a hundred-fold.

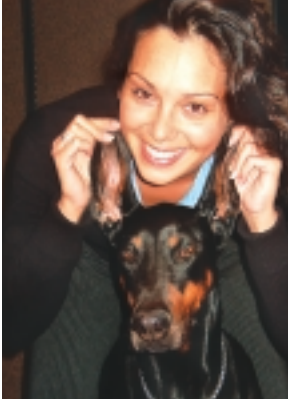
Best volunteer moment: The simple act of walking a dog gives me so much joy. To take a dog from the concrete jungle of its kennel and see the transformation as he or she experiences all the sights and sounds of the greenway is marvelous.
My pets at home: Two spoiled cats.
Pet peeve or concern: People who don't take responsibility or care for their animals. □



Name: Kara Kingston
Day Job: Public relations consultant
Branch: Vancouver/Burnaby
Started volunteering at the SPCA: Seven years ago. I started off as a dog walker and have been involved ever since.
Volunteer activities: Regional councilor, member of the Community Advisory Committee, assisting with special events and helping to raise awareness about SPCA programs and services through public relations and publicity.
I volunteer because: Volunteering at the SPCA just fits with who I am and what I am passionate about. Even though my day job involves a high level of communication with humans, I love the fact that my spare time can be dedicated to those who “cannot speak for themselves.” 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, Pet Photos with Santa or Dine with your Dog, because I know that all of the money we raise goes directly back to the shelter to help the animals. I believe every conversation I can use to educate someone about animal-welfare issues is a step in the right direction.
Best volunteer moment: The times I have been able to match a homeless animal with a new family. I walked a seven-year-old chow/retriever cross named Belle 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: Robert Anderson
Day Job: Artist
Branch: Wild ARC (Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre), Metchosin.
Started volunteering at the SPCA: Six weeks ago. When I saw an article in my local newspaper about the new manager of Wild ARC and the services the SPCA offers there I decided it was time to make a difference.
Approximate number of volunteer

hours so far: 160
Volunteer activities: Member of the Community Advisory Committee, community outreach displays, volunteer

recruitment, helping with cleaning and maintenance at the centre.
I volunteer because: Wild ARC has very skilled staff with expertise in wildlife rehabilitation. I enjoy doing the grunt work, such as washing food dishes and mopping floors because it frees the staff to do what they're good at.
Best volunteer moment: I recently helped to release some birds who had been in a pen at Wild ARC since they were hatchlings. To see these birds experience being outside and soaring through the air for the first time was very moving.
Pet peeve or concern: The government's consideration of a plan to issue business licences to capture raptors for use in falconry. □

Name: Christine Audette
Day Job: Government worker, Ministry of the Attorney General
Branch: Surrey
Started volunteering at the SPCA: Eight years ago
Volunteer activity: Foster program coordinator. My role is to recruit and

coordinate temporary homes for hundreds of animals each year until a permanent family can be found for them.
I volunteer because: It makes me feel great to see animals get-

ting 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.

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.
Pet peeve or concern: The way that cats and small animals are still considered so disposable and how people don't spay and neuter their cats.
My wish for the animals: That every abandoned and surrendered animal would find a home with a family who is committed to their lifelong care. □



Name: Vicky Renneberg
Day job: Manager of the Employment and Co-operative Education Centre at the College of New Caledonia
Branch: North Cariboo District (Prince George)
Started volunteering at the SPCA: Four years ago
Approximate number of volunteer hours per year: Up to 1,000.
Volunteer activities: Provincial Board of Directors, member of the Community Advisory Committee.
I volunteer because: The SPCA is where my heart is. I feel I am making the biggest difference for animals when I can influence decision-makers, educate the public and serve as an advocate for issues relating to animal welfare.
Best volunteer moment: When we adopted our first puppy, Plato. He was the last of his litter and he was so distraught at being left alone at the shelter that he was flailing about, crying at the top of his lungs. We brought him home, fed him and nestled him into a pillow-filled cardboard box up against the humming refrigerator. Within seconds, he was

sound asleep. Looking at this helpless creature, I felt like I'd saved a life, fallen in love, and was preparing for eventual heartbreak, all at the same time.
That experience was the beginning of what feels like a “calling.” I have never felt more certain about what I needed to do and never questioned the need to do it. I believe absolutely in this cause and I believe just as surely that I truly can, and must, make a difference for animals. Thanks, Plato.
My pets at home: Plato, a Shar-Pei/ German shepherd-cross; Pepper, a border collie/husky mix, and Colt, who is half Shar-Pei and half “anybody's guess.”
Pet peeve or concern: People's inability to understand animals' potential, their limitations and the fact that they have feelings – both the physical and the emotional kind. ■



SPCA Volunteer Opportunities from A to Z

Adoption counselling & follow up
Brushing & grooming
Cat care
Dog walking
Exhibits & mall displays
Foster care
Fundraising
Governance & committee work
Graphic design
Helping with special events
Initiating contact with donors
Joining emergency rescue efforts
Kennel cleaning
Lobbying & advocacy
Mobile adoptions
Nurturing sick & injured animals
Office & administration
Publicity & marketing
Quiet time & socialization with fearful animals
Rabbit care
Rehabilitation & obedience training
Small animal care
Teaching humane education
Undertaking PR campaigns
Volunteer coordination
Volunteer drivers
Website management
Wildlife rehabilitation
Writing & newsletter production
X-citing third-party events to help animals
Yard work & shelter maintenance
So...

Zip to your local shelter to sign up today!

Your contribution will make a world of difference to animals in need. For more details on how you can help, please contact your local branch or visit www.sPCA.bc.ca.

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 SPCA's wildlife rehabilitation centre near Metchosin 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

Left: Tahsis at 10 days old – the day she was rescued. Below left: Time out for a snack. Below right: Chow down together.

because she has trained the other otters to catch their food,” says Dubois. “It is essential to raise young otters together so they learn how to act out their natural behaviours within their species.”

Dubois says the young otters provide plenty of

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-o-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. ■



HAPPY ENDINGS

RUDY

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, today, he is a healthy, rambunctious dog who is thriving in his new adopted home. The horrific experiences of his past did not break Rudy's spirit. He adores his new guardians, Peter and Iwona, and loves playing with his new German shepherd *brother* Walky.



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 300 puncturing the inside of her mouth. The dogs'

From left: On the mend, Sydney with her cast. Below, left: An emaciated Rudy is rescued. Below, right: Rudy today, fit as a fiddle and fully recovered.



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.

MAGNUM

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. Penticton 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. ■

From left: Damage from porcupine quills. Below: A recovered Peanut Butter with new friends: SPC Eileen Drever, Global TV's Deb Hope and SPCA president Mary Lou Troman. Above: Buck, the fallen deer. Top of the page: Magnum gets some well-deserved rest with a new guardian.

Photos by Gordon Dumka

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.

"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."

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.

objects that can be chewed or could fall from a height.

Cleanliness and health

A rabbit will go through three to four moults a year, so grooming must be

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.

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

Teach children to sit on floor when gently handling the rabbit.

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. ■





“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 Rotweiler-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, whining or howling. Extreme anxiousness 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 anxiousness. 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.

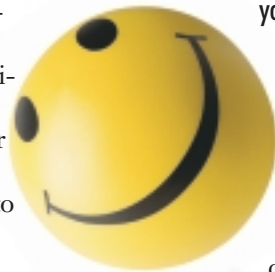
Phase 2

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

Phase 3

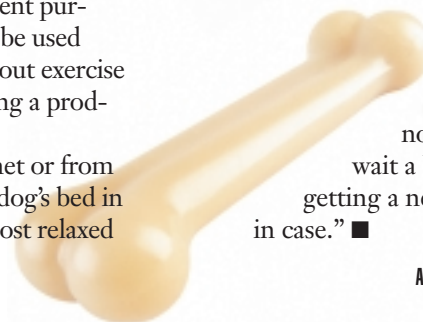
Once he is relaxed in Phase 2, you can add the things that normally stress your dog (picking up keys, putting your coat on, etc.) while repeating the Phase 1 *hangout exercise*. Add one cue at a time and keep the alone time to a few seconds. Implement Phase 2 with the cues. Slowly

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



Pet Express to the Rescue!



SPCA president Mary Lou Troman and Petcetera president and CEO Dan Urbani

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 and there 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.

Saving 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.”

Daniell says the vans will be in continuous use throughout the year, with one van transporting animals from outside the Lower Mainland and one vehicle used within the Greater Vancouver area to transfer animals between SPCA shelters and to Petcetera stores, which host SPCA adoption centres.

Dan Urbani, president and CEO of Petcetera, says his company is delighted to be part of the Pet Express project. “We strive to be a socially responsible business and this project fits in with our long-term commitment to work with the SPCA to help reduce the number of homeless animals in BC.”

Each Pet Express van can transport between 60 to 70 animals in roomy crates, with a temperature-controlled environment to ensure the animals are safe and comfortable at all times during travel.

Jeannine Woodhouse says the Pet Express project is welcome news for her overcrowded shelter. “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.” ■



Bark!



The BC SPCA Kids Magazine

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 ■



Our Feature Big Kid Member Alex Auld, Vancouver Canucks

Vancouver Canucks goaltender Alex Auld has teamed up with the BC SPCA in support of the BC SPCA Kids Club. Alex and his wife Melanie are proud guardians of three dogs – Chaw-Chee, Sanchez and Peanut and are also supporters of the BC SPCA.

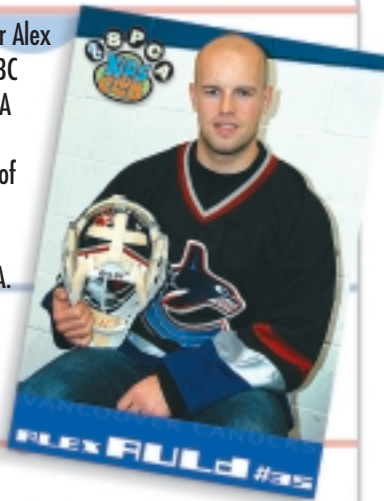
"We feel very strongly that, since animals don't have a say in what happens to them, they deserve the additional assistance. I want to help raise awareness about animal-welfare issues."

Alex is Big Kid member of the BC SPCA Kids Club and encourages kids to join the club.

Membership is for kids age 8-13 and is only \$15. The annual membership includes: a membership card, an activity sheet, a bone-shaped key chain, Bark! magazine and monthly e-Kids newsletters through email.

Hey kids! Sign up between November 1, 2004 and April 30, 2005 and receive a chance to win a jersey, lunch kit, souvenir stick or puck signed by Alex!

Winners will be chosen randomly on May 5, 2005, and will be contacted by phone or e-mail.



LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA?

Have a kid on your holiday shopping list? Sign them up for the BC SPCA Kids Club – a cool gift for animal lovers that will last throughout the year. To sign up visit www.sPCA.bc.ca/kids, pick up a sign-up form at any BC SPCA shelter or call 604.681.7271. Please allow two to three weeks for delivery. If your membership is a Christmas gift please send in your form and payment by December 6, 2004.

catSense Help! My cat is spraying in my house

by Nadine Gourkow

A MAJOR CAUSE OF SURRENDER of cats to animal shelters is urine spraying. It is normal behaviour for intact (unneutered) males to communicate with other cats about territory boundaries and to advertise their sexual status.

When an indoor neutered cat suddenly begins to spray, there may be a medical or psychological problem. The first step in solving this problem is a trip to the veterinarian to rule out the possibility of a urinary tract infection, stones, or cystitis. If hormonal or medical issues have been ruled out and the cat is still spraying, you can assume the problem is psychological.

Cats have specific environmental and social needs and are very sensitive to changes in their routine or in their home environment. Spraying may start when cats are feeling anxious as a result of new things or people in the house, a new cat in the neighbourhood who can be seen through a window, if their guardian is experiencing an emotional episode or if the cat has recently experienced a frightening event. Frustration also occurs when cats do not have enough opportunity to engage in normal cat behaviour.

To reduce spraying, a guardian should address the causes of anxiety and frustration in combination with the application of feline pheromones. The first thing to do is to purchase feline pheromone, (called Feliway) as a diffuser or spray bottle from your vet or from the BC SPCA Animal Hospital. Feliway is a chemical copy of the secretions left on objects where cats rub their cheeks. When a cat detects the presence of these pheromones, the result is a reduction in stress and an emotional calming. This leads to a significant reduction



in the cat's impulse to mark his or her territory with urine spraying or scratching behaviour. Place a feline pheromone Feliway diffuser in the room where the cat spends the most time or use the Feliway pheromone spray on items that the cat sprays on.

Your cat may stop spraying within a few days, but it is important to prevent a reoccurrence of anxiety or frustration in cats by providing them with toys that simulate hunting behaviour such as leaping, pouncing, stalking, batting and catching objects and carrying them away. Do not hand play, as a frustrated cat may bite or scratch when stimulated. Reduce anxiety by providing more areas where the cat can hide at will and/or can perch high up in corners. Soft classical music is also helpful in reducing stress in cats. Finally, place food bowls near the marked areas as cats do not spray and eat in the same place. If spraying continues, contact a behaviourist for a consultation. ■

Nadine Gourkow is the BC SPCA's manager of animal welfare.

appliedKnowledge New talent brings hope

by David Fraser

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL GOALS 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

continued on page 22



appliedKnowledge

continued from page 21

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 Willamette 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. This 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.

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 vigour-ousness. Males

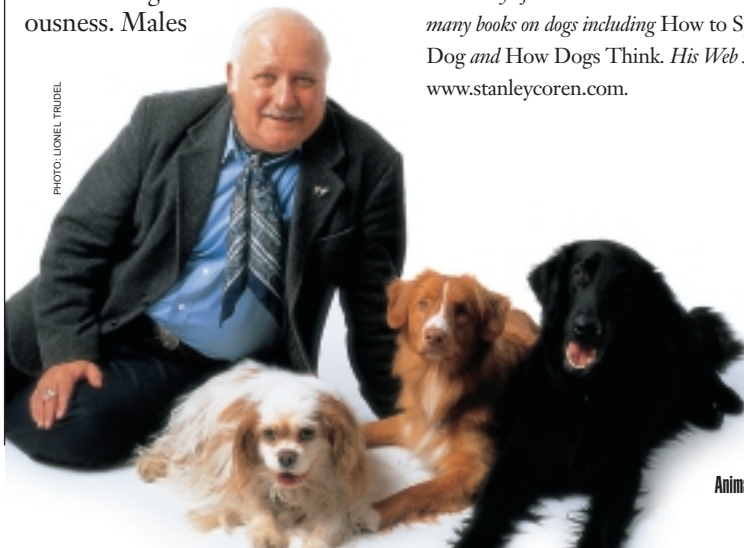
show higher activity levels and greater vigour. However, breed differences are much more important here, and I doubt that you will ever find a bulldog of either sex who is as active as an Irish setter.

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 Newfoundlands 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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