

TODAYS Animal News

May/June 1983



The Official voice of the Animal Health Foundation

TODAYS Animal News

May/June 1983

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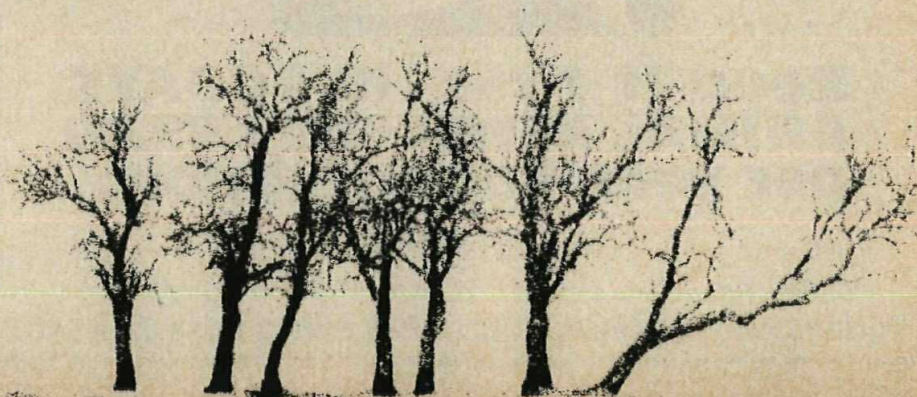
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DIET & the aging pet . . .



FEEDING THE OLDER DOG OR CAT

Determining the proper diet for older animals presents a continuing challenge to both the pet owner and the veterinary practitioner. The desire to improve the life of an older dog must overshadow the idea that age is relentless and cannot be changed. Aging, of course, will continue but the process can be changed and slowed. Nutrition is one of the factors of aging that is very important and that can readily be improved.

Older animals often have diseases that require special diets. Every animal over seven years of age should have a thorough yearly physical examination, often including laboratory tests. Without the knowledge gained from these examinations there can be no basis for diet correction and little can be done to keep the aging process under control.

Dogs and cats with kidney disease require special attention to dietary protein, vitamins and minerals. Heart disease requires an entirely different diet and obesity still another.

The principles of good nutrition must be followed for animals of all ages, but the quality of foods becomes more important with every passing year. Some older animals do not digest or absorb their food as well as they once did. Meat and milk provide easily digested protein, while animal fats give flavor and energy. Vegetable oils provide essential oils for a good coat and general good health. Cereals supply bulk for regular bowel habits as well as supplying vitamins, minerals, and energy. All of these foods must be fresh and wholesome to produce a good diet. Vitamin supplements are very useful for all ages, but especially for the oldsters. Absorption of vitamins decrease markedly with age. There are many supplements available. Ask your veterinarian which one will be best for your old friend. There are many choices and many needs to be met.

Don't feed poor quality foods. Your veterinarian may recommend a prepared diet or may offer a recipe that you can use at home. A careful evaluation of our pet's life and health is the best first step toward diet change and good nutrition.

What you can do

Unfortunately, many older folks on fixed incomes even find it hard to relate to the \$100 veterinarian bill for the care of a pet.

If you don't have it, and don't know where you are going to get it, even a hundred dollars is an impossible dream.

It's hard to appreciate spending millions of dollars for space exploration or to develop a new agricultural program for some country that you have never heard of. It's really hard when you can't scrape up the few dollars needed to help your pet that may be your only friend and companion in this world.

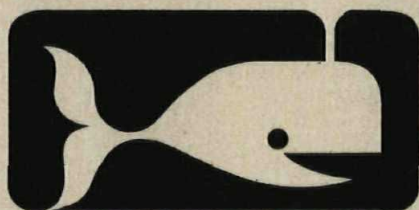
That's where the Animal Health Foundation would like to help. For only a few dollars they can provide essential veterinarian care for the pets of the elderly who have no other sources of income. These dollars sometimes make the difference between losing or keeping the only companionship of some of our needy, older citizens.

Living alone is tough. Living on a fixed low income is tough. But, the love, affection and companionship of a pet can make each day rich and rewarding.

Would you like to help? Donations to the Animal Health Foundation go a long way, because concerned veterinarians also help with donations of their time and service. We're concerned with helping make life worthwhile for these pet-owning senior citizens. Millions of tax dollars have already gone to lavish space programs. We are only asking for a few down-to-earth dollars to life here. Your contribution, small or large, can make the difference between a lonely solitary existence or a life warmed by the loving companionship of a pet.

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IN THE NEWS

FINALLY AN ANSWER TO "Scotty Cramp" Solving the mystery . . .

Until recently scotty breeders, owners and veterinarians have been puzzled by a rare affliction called "scotty cramp." But now a veterinarian at Washington State University's School of Veterinary Medicine has discovered the chemical that induces "scotty cramp" in Scottish Terriers.

Dr. Kenneth Meyers found a "relationship exists" between serotonin, a chemical found in the terrier's system that transmits certain signals to the nervous system. When the level of serotonin drops, cramps are induced. In some scotties, these cramps can cause collapse, or they may curl into a ball, and standing or walking are nearly impossible since the muscles are pulled taut. The cramps are often triggered by excitement, either physical or mental, fear or a stressful situation.

The key to the research is a drug called methylsergide which inhibits the release of serotonin. Scotties who have a weakness for "scotty cramp" will be affected when the drug is administered, those free of the trait (probably a recessive gene) will not go into cramps.

By using methylsergide as a test on Scottish Terriers, the inherited weakness can be bred out of a line by mating only those terriers who test negative with methylsergide.

Meyers believes the "scotty cramp" is a "minor mutation" that may have unwittingly been caused by some early breeders of scotties. Terriers affected lead normal lives and make good pets, but they should be sheltered from over-excitement and stressful situations.

For rent (no pets!)

People looking for rented apartments or homes face a vacancy rate of one or two percent in many parts of the country, particularly in more popular states in the Sunbelt, or Florida or California. If they happen to be owners of a cat or dog, the vacancy rate is probably half that amount.

"No pets" is a common brace of words found in classified listings of apartments and homes for rent. Everything else might sound ideal, but those two words shut off a lot of opportunities for people who are often desperate for a home.

What can be done?

Mainly, it's a matter of educating landlords that not all pets urinate on expensive carpets, claw furniture or fancy molding to shreds, bark all day when the owner's gone, tear around the apartment like demented, four-legged zanies, or attack any other dog or cat (or human) that comes within their range.

... NO PETS ALLOWED


It's a fact that pet owners who have spayed or neutered animals, keep up their pet's vaccination timetables and provide plenty of exercise to larger pets, are probably A-1 tenants as well. A sense of responsibility to pets is a clear indication of a sense of responsibility to someone else's apartment or home. The problem is convincing a potential landlord of this fact.

Many pet owners are willing to provide a "pet insurance" deposit up front, just to reassure the landlord. Or they introduce the pet to the landlord, feeling that a personal demonstration of pet behavior is better than any verbal reassurances from the owner.

Veterinarians can play a role in this business, too. A letter of reference testifying to the pet's good traits and the owner's sense of responsibility can swing a lot of weight. In many cases, especially with elderly people, a small cat or dog is the only companion the owner has. A recommendation from the physician testifying to the psychological need for the pet could sway even the most obstinate landlord.

It's the old story of irresponsible pet owners spoiling the scene for others. All it takes is one bad experience with an unruly dog a tenant and the "no pets" wordage goes in the ad. After all, most landlords are pet owners themselves.

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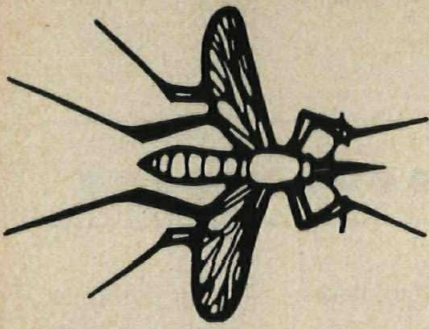
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Probing the parasites •



LOUSY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS...

Lice make lousy friends and neighbors. They should not be allowed to associate with your pets. Dogs, cats, horses, cattle, goats, sheep and birds all have at least one kind of louse to plague them. Some suck blood (not on cats and birds) but most are chewing and biting lice that eat skin scales, feathers and debris found on the skin. Their entire life cycle is found on the host so it's not hard to get rid of them. Transmission is almost entirely by direct contact between animals.

Their eggs, called nits, are attached firmly to the hair or feathers. Most insecticides are quite effective for lice control. Cats with lice should be examined by a veterinarian as it is unusual to find a healthy cat with lice.

Mites and ticks belong to the same class of animals as do spiders. There are many mites (over 50 kinds) that live on our domestic animals. They are tiny creatures and most can only be seen with a microscope. They generally feed on blood, tissue juice, and the dead cells of skin and feathers. These little mites cause lots of itching problems that need to be diagnosed by a veterinarian and then special measures taken to insure cures. A few of the common diseases caused by mites are ear problems (ear mites), demodectic mange, sarcoptic mange (scabies), and scaly legs and face of birds.

Ticks are animals related to mites but are free living. That is, they do not spend their entire lifespan on the host. Ticks feed by sucking blood and, when full, drop off to lay their eggs in protected hiding places like cracks in wood. If you have a tick problem consult your veterinarian. There are many varieties and their control will depend on the type found on your pet.



LOUSE

FLEAS: How do you control them?

Life is easy for a flea. They have simple needs. They just want to be warm and have lots to eat. Unfortunately both of these needs are supplied by our pets.

Adult fleas breed and lay their eggs on our pets. These eggs later fall off the animals and hatch. On your furniture, the baseboards, your rugs, or maybe the bedding of your pet. The resulting larvae feed, molt and become adults ready to breed again. This can take place in only a few weeks.

The larval stage is usually found in the pet's bed or some other protected spot and should be one of the important targets of control. Using a hormone-like chemical, which prevents the development of the larvae into adults, combined with control of the adults using insecticides, will eventually eliminate fleas from garden and homes. The trick is to stay ahead of their breeding cycle. Most insecticides lose their potency in seven days. And without this control, the flea population will recover rapidly.

Each household has its own special problems that require professional attention. Check with your veterinarian to be sure you are using the right products at the right time.

INTERNAL PARASITES

Worms: There are many internal parasites that most people never see or hear of. There are others that every pet owner is or should be aware of. The most common ones are roundworms (that all puppies have worms is an old saying that is very close to being the truth), hookworms, whipworms, heartworm, and tape worms. (Ringworm is not a worm). Others infect the lungs, kidneys, liver, urinary bladder, stomach, esophagus, skin and eyes.

All of these worms are serious parasites and all require medications to rid the animal of the adult worms. Then measures must be taken to prevent reinfection. Their life cycles can be very complicated. However, most are effectively treated or prevented. Every puppy, and in some areas, every adult animal should be checked for parasites at least once a year.

Protozoa: One celled animals (protozoa) that infect the intestines cause diarrhea. Some of these infections can be transferred from the pet to humans or vice versa. Persistent diarrhea will alert your veterinarian to look for these parasites. One of these, toxoplasmosis, will be discussed in detail in a future article in Today's Animal News.

Heartworm odds improve

According to statistics pulled together by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) about 95 percent of dogs afflicted with heartworm disease (dirofilariasis) can be expected to recover, if they are treated in time. Dogs that fall victim to parvovirus have a recovery rate now of nearly 80 percent, says AAHA.

Heartworm disease has been around longer. Originally occurring along the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf State regions for many years, it has spread to almost all mosquito-infected areas of the country in the past 10 years. The disease is spread by mosquitoes which have bitten infected dogs — usually stray or unwanted animals. The mosquitoes suck out blood containing the larvae of adult heartworms and later, when the larvae become infective, transmit them when biting healthy dogs. Within six months, up to 200 worms, some as long as 14 inches, can develop in the blood of a dog's heart and adjacent blood vessels.

Difficult breathing, coughing and weight loss are heartworm symptoms. Unlike parvovirus, it is a slow progressive disease, not always easily noticed. If not detected and controlled with proper treatment, it can lead to congestive heart failure and death.

Throughout the United States veterinarians now recommend annual heartworm testing. It is absolutely necessary to have a heartworm test prior to using the preventative medication.

A few drops of blood is all that's necessary for a heartworm screening test which is very accurate. If the dog shows heartworm symptoms or has visited a known heartworm problem area, additional tests may be recommended before a preventative program is started.

Even dogs which are on year 'round preventative medication should be periodically checked. Being human, people sometimes forget to give their dogs the medication and sometimes pets spit out the medication.

To avoid heartworm and parvovirus contagion, the AAHA urges dog owners to discuss vacation plans with their veterinarian. That way, owners might avoid health threats that may await their pets in new locations.

While preventative measures are cutting the incidence of both diseases, heartworm is proving to be more stubborn. It is going to be a problem as long as there are millions of stray and unwanted dogs that are carriers of the disease.

THERE'S A SNAKE IN THE LIVING ROOM!

Rebecca Norris

One's first encounter with a snake may be as unplanned as being bitten by one while hiking, finding one in your living room, or reading about one in the Bible where snakes are depicted as being evil creatures. These experiences obviously don't do much to curb one's fear of snakes, and topped with the fact that snakes are odd looking creatures, it is no wonder that many people avoid snakes whenever they can. Snakes can be fascinating animals to study and observe, however, when one knows a bit about their habits and characteristics.

When people think of snakes, they usually envision a long evil looking serpent with a forked tongue. The snake's tongue is not used for "stinging" as some people seem to think, however, but rather is used for smelling and tasting. A sample of air is collected on the tip of the tongue and is quickly withdrawn into the snake's mouth. When it comes in contact with the Jacobson's organ on the roof of the mouth, the smells and tastes are interpreted by the brain.

If one is not scared off by the tongue of a snake, he still has to contend with the snake's array of needle sharp teeth. These teeth are sharp and curve back towards the rear of the mouth. They are occasionally used for biting, but their main function is to aid this reptile in holding his prey; not to chew it as is the popular belief. Venomous snakes have a pair of fangs in the front or back (in the case of rear-fanged

snakes such as the coral snake) of the mouth, in addition to their regular teeth. These fangs are retracted but come forward when the snake strikes. Venom, which is stored in poison sacks contained on each side of the head, is then injected into the victim through grooves in the fangs.

Snakes are legless reptiles, usually long with slender bodies that are covered with overlapping scales. These scales give the reptile a slippery (not slimy) feeling when it is wet. Snakes also have an intricate network of muscles that cover their ribs. This allows the reptile to move on level ground, climb trees, and surprisingly enough, swim with ease and fluid grace. The lung of a snake (it has only one) extends two thirds of the length of its body. The intestines and other digestive and reproductive organs are also stretched out along the snake's length.

The snake, a rather primitive animal along with lizards, some birds, and many amphibians, has not developed the complicated structures such as a muscular tongue, grinding teeth, and strong jaw muscles that are needed for the chewing of his food. Instead, the snake swallows his prey whole, and can then go for several weeks without food. This method of feeding is made possible by a combination of unique adaptations that have evolved over millions of years. The snake's jaw is specially constructed so that it can be unhinged to aid in swallowing large

prey, and the skin around the neck can also expand, being very elastic. Even the trachea of the snake is adaptable and is capable of protruding a short distance out of the snake's mouth. In this way, the animal can spend a long time to swallow its prey without suffocating.

As they grow, snakes periodically shed their skins. When they are young they may shed their skins as often as every two weeks, but adult snakes often only shed three or four times a year. In rattlesnakes, a new segment is added to their "rattle" every time they shed, which may be several times a year. Thus, contrary to popular belief, the number of segments does not tell how many years old the snake is, but tells how many times it has shed its skin. When any snake prepares to shed, a fluid is secreted between the old skin and the new layer forming underneath. This milky fluid is apparent when the snake's skin becomes dull, and when the fluid appears under the eye caps, causing temporary blindness for a day or two. In a few more days the whitish tissue paper-like skin loosens on the snake's head, and by rubbing his body against rough stones and to some extent by muscle contractions, the skin, complete with the two eye coverings, is permanently discarded. The shedding process helps to rid the snake of ectoparasites such as mites, in addition to showing off his shiny brand-new skin.

SNAKE IN THE LIVING ROOM!

Snakes, strict carnivores, feed in three main ways. Garter snakes and their kin simply catch their prey (usually large insects, frogs, fish, or small rodents) and swallow them whole. Egg-eating snakes such as the Indian Egg Eater, swallow an egg and crack the shell by constricting their muscles or pressing their bodies to a tree trunk. They then extract the yolk and regurgitate the shell which is broken into many pieces but is still attached to its membrane. Poisonous snakes strike their prey (rodents and other small animals) and paralyze or kill them with potent venom. The last method of restraining and eating prey is by constriction. The Boa Constrictor, who feeds on quite large animals, uses this

method. The animal is first cornered or bitten and many coils of the snake are thrown over it. The snake then slowly tightens some coils while resting others, and then relaxes the first. In this way he doesn't tire easily. When constricting, the snake does not break the animal's bones, nor does he crush vital organs as some people think. He merely keeps the lungs from expanding and the prey dies from asphyxiation.

Reproduction in snakes may be viviparous or ovoviparous, depending on the species. Garter snakes and ribbon snakes, for example, bear their young alive, while the European water snake lays eggs. Gestation in garter snakes is about three months, and as a

general rule, the larger the species of snake the longer the period of gestation. Snakes spend their lives along (except for some species that hibernate in large colonies) but find a mate during the breeding season. The female takes no care of the numerous young, which are totally independent from birth.

Now that you know considerably more about the habits and characteristics of snakes, these fascinating creatures will probably not seem so frightening. In fact, many people think twice when they hear "old wives tales" about snakes, and no longer judge snakes with suspicion, superstition, and dislike. As the saying goes, "ignorance is the root of all evil", and to change one's feelings from fear to curiosity, and from dislike to admiration, will open up new doors in man's relationship with this amazing reptile — the snake.

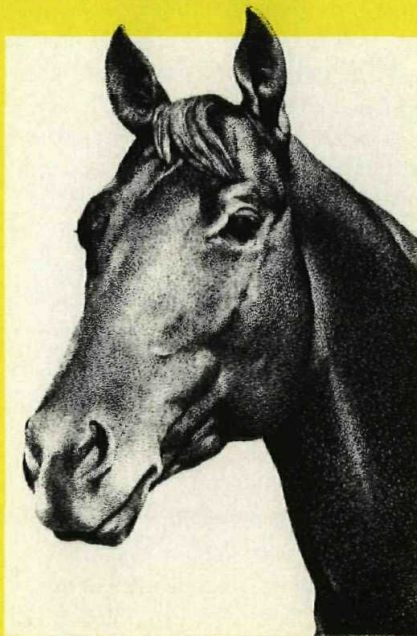
EQUINE STRANGLES-

NOT AS BAD AS IT SOUNDS...

"Strangles" sounds like a fearsome disease to the non-horse person or the owner of new horse. But it's really not all that bad, despite the connotations of a horse gasping for breath with unseen hands around its throat.

Caused by a bacterium called *Streptococcus equi*, strangles bears a resemblance to the human ailment popularly called "strep throat." The bacteria attack the upper respiratory passages, producing numerous small abscesses. The first sign of strangles are reluctance to drink, slight fever, and later a reluctance to swallow due to the pain in the throat. The many tiny abscesses mature quickly and drain and the strep infection passes on to the lymph nodes. In the vast majority of cases antibiotics control the disease at this point and healing occurs without further damage. The whole process takes about two or three weeks.

In some horses, a variation called "bastard strangles" takes place and abscesses develop in various parts of the horse's body. This form of strangles can take months before it is beaten back.



There is some evidence that "bastard strangles" is caused by too quick a dosage of penicillin. The penicillin rapidly destroys strep bacteria, but if given too heavily and too soon, the horse is unable to build enough immunity to fight back the bacteria with its own antibodies.

Strangles is a highly contagious disease and spreads rapidly in corals and barns. Fatalities from it are low, unless secondary complications set in or the bastard form

attacks vital organs. Once established on a ranch, it can affect new horse added to the herd. Horses once recovered can develop an immunity to it. They may go through another attack, but it is a relatively mild one.

Treatment involves no exercise, dry stalls, cleaning of any purulent discharges from the nose or mouth, regular checking of temperature, and penicillin. The penicillin should continue at least a week after the abscesses have stopped draining and the temperature has returned to normal. External abscesses can be treated with warm compresses and draining, once they have reached maturity.

Strangles is usually introduced into a herd by the addition of another horse. Once a horse is recognized as infected, it should be isolated from the others and the rest of the herd should be vaccinated. Routine vaccination shots with yearly boosters are recommended. The horse must be at least 10 to 12 weeks of age before any vaccination will provide immunity.

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Rights of lab animals . . .



Lisa Knopf

The battle looms . . .

Animal welfare groups are enlisting the aid of monkeys and doo-eyed cocker spaniels in a campaign to reform the way laboratory animals are treated.

The groups have been pushing legislation in Congress to strengthen the existing federal laws aimed at ensuring the proper treatment of laboratory animals. House and Senate bills would require labs receiving federal funds to set up animal care committees to monitor the experimental use of animals; set standards for the animals' care and treatment; and provide awards to researchers who develop alternatives to animal experimentation.

Both proponents and opponents are gearing up for a fight in the next Congress.

Many researchers fear the real goal of the legislation is halting the use of animals in scientific research. Rep. George E. Brown Jr., D-Calif., a co-sponsor of the House Bill, says it is intended to provide "innocuous encouragement" for researchers to improve the care and treatment of animals.

Some welfare advocates, such as the Humane Society of the United States, also make that point, although they believe that in many cases alternatives could—and should—be found to using experimental animals. When animals are

used, these groups say, their comfort should be taken into account and a federally enforced system to keep tabs on researchers using animals should be enacted.

Millions of research animals

Researchers say the legislation would be too costly, replacing a voluntary system with a mandatory one. Animal lovers have been showering members with letters supporting the bill, House aides say. The issue is an emotional one. Some groups send out press releases marked by pictures of cuddly looking rabbits, and stage demonstrations protesting inhumane treatment of animals.

Every year, 60 million to 100 million animals are used in various biological research programs, according to Dr. Michael Fox, scientific director of the Humane Society. Animals, including monkeys, pigs, dogs, cats, rats and mice, are used in everything from high school biology classes to medical school labs and pharmaceutical, cosmetics and pesticide company testing facilities.

The federal government supports a large portion of the research, primarily through grants to medical school, university and other laboratories. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) provides the largest chunk of money: \$3.4 billion in fiscal 1982 for health research and de-

velopment out of a total \$5 billion for all federal research support, according to NIH. Private companies, including chemical and cosmetics firms, also devote about \$3.4 billion a year to research and testing.

Are controls inadequate?

Most lab animals are used for biomedical research, safety testing or for educational purposes. They are used for surgical experiments and research into diseases, which frequently involves injecting them with various organisms. Psychologists also use animals to test responses to various stresses and to make other psychological evaluations.

Since 1966, laboratories using animals have been required to register with the Agriculture Department (USDA) and to submit to periodic unannounced inspections. The law also established minimum requirements for housing, feeding, watering, sanitation and veterinary care. Laboratories that violated the act were subject to criminal penalties.

But animal welfare groups have complained for years that the federal monitoring system is inadequate. Animals continue to be abused and there is no effective system of oversight at the laboratories themselves, the groups charge.

Their concerns were fueled by a September 1981 incident involving an NIH-funded lab in Silver Springs, Md. The incident involved the Institute for Behavioral Research, where scientists housed monkeys in unsanitary cages and threw them food so that it landed in excrement pans below the cages, according to Alex Pacheco, a former volunteer at the institute. When the animals were seized by police, they had open wounds, and had gnawed their paws to the bone after having had their nervous systems numbed for lab experiments, the Washington Post reported.

USDA had inspected the lab last year, and the institute had assured NIH that its facilities were adequate. After the disclosures, NIH terminated the grant.

continued on next page

A new set of rules

The proposed House bill would require federally funded labs using research animals to be accredited; labs would have 10 years to upgrade their facilities. The legislation would also require labs to set up animal care committee whose members would include one veterinarian and one individual from outside the institution. The committee would monitor the use of animals and inspect facilities at least twice a year. No lab could receive a federal grant unless it justified pain to animals in terms of its research goals and withheld anesthetics from animals only for scientifically necessary reasons.

Most animal welfare advocates concede that animals are often essential for successful biomedical research. But they believe the animals' living conditions and treatment during experiments often are severely substandard. Researcher representatives generally discount tales of extreme mistreatment of animals. "The vast majority of those stories are handed from one person to the next and are embellished upon," said Bill Samuels of National Society for Medical Research.

Even the most diehard animal welfare advocates admit that a dilemma exists. As Donald J. Barnes, director of the Washington office of the National Anti-vivisection Society, put it, although animals "deserve the same sort of rights humans have," experiments that might cause discomfort have the "possibility of adding to our knowledge."

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ANIMALS IN THE NEWS...

A GRIM DISCOVERY OF BODIES

Dogs dumped on canal...

A surveyor walking along a wilderness canal near Florida's famed Everglades Park came across a horrifying sight: dozens of bodies of rotting dogs, some dumped on the edge of the canal, some floating, bloated, in the water.

Sheriff deputies from Boward County were called and 214 canine corpses were counted. The dilemma was handled in short work when South Florida Animal Cremations Co. was called. They sent out a crew to pick up the carcasses which were taken to a nearby landfill and bulldozed under with tons of residential garbage.

Newspapers got wind of the story and it soon attracted national attention. This led detectives from Pembroke Pines Police Department to wonder where the dogs came from.

Didn't they have collars or dog tags? The crew at the animal cremation company didn't know, they just had the dogs buried found and discovered 16 more bodies that had been missed when the initial discovery was made. Most of these dogs did have collars and tags, and they all came from Palm Beach County Humane Society.

Shocking cremation incident...

Officials at the humane society were horrified when they heard dogs euthanized at their shelter were those dumped along the canal. They told police all their euthanized animals were removed from their shelter by, guess who, South Florida Animal Cremations... the same company that rushed to the aid of police when the corpses were first discovered.

Police learned that the cremation company was closed six months before the incident because it was cited for improper cremation facilities and sub-standard smoke emission control. Yet the company was allegedly making pickups from humane societies, including Palm Beach.

The ironic part of the macabre

incident is that the company can only be cited on misdemeanor charges, such as improper animal disposal, putting "deleterious" matter into a public water way, and violating litter laws.

Veterinarians and animal shelters in the area now work with a cremation firm much further away.

By Judson Snyder

Changes in petfood labels

SIMPLIFIED LABELS

The Pet Food Institute has petitioned the Food and Drug Administration for permission to simplify labels. Basically, the FPI wants to use "collective" names instead of listing each individual item.

For example, "processed animal products" would take the place of animal liver, animal liver and glandular meal, animal blood, spray dried blood meal, conventional cooker-dried or flashdried casein, dried meat solubles, meat meal, meat and bone meal, and sodium caseinate on pet food labels. Other ingredients besides animal products would apparently remain the same.

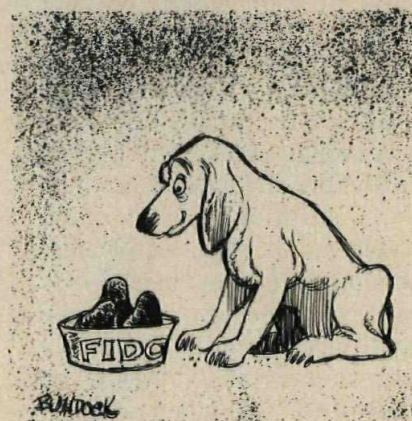
PFI spokesmen say "collective" labels would still give petfood manufacturers flexibility, for they could purchase ingredients to make the proper nutritional mix as prices vary, without changing the label each time. Prices would stabilize and the consumers would benefit because of more efficient use of animal by-products.

Comments on the proposed changes were handed in before the March 21 deadline, but there's no timeline for FDA response.

Quick quiz: What breed was once called the Jones Terrier?

Answer: The Norwich Terrier, which has now been divided into two breeds, the Norwich and the Norfolk Terrier.

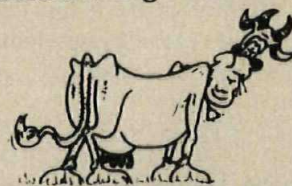
NEW PRODUCTS



Avo-Derm is a new idea in dry dog food, from Breeders Choice, timed to hit the market just when many dogs are itching and scratching the worst. The manufacturer says "Avocado meal is a unique product prepared from ripe California Avocados, which contain a perfect balance of polyunsaturated and saturated fats. Avocado meal also contains octosanol, natural vitamin E and lecithin. Lecithin is a natural phospholipid containing unsaturated fats, choline and has been used for many years as a coat conditioner for dogs.

Avo-Derm will be available in many pet shops and feed stores this summer. The Avo-Derm and Coat Conditioning Diet comes with a 100 percent guarantee from the manufacturer

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THOSE WINTER RAINS MAY MEAN INCREASE IN ENCEPHALITIS

Unusually heavy rains in most parts of the nation this past winter have meant unusually heavy population growths in mosquitoes. This, in turn, means a strong possibility of a higher rate of equine encephalitis, according to veterinarian Dr. Harold Kjar of the Auburn University Extension Services in Alabama.

"People wait until an outbreak, or until they see their friend has a sick horse," said Dr. Kjar. He likens this to the old adage of locking the barn door after the horse has fled.

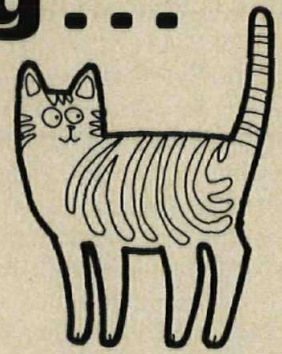
In 1982, eastern equine encephalitis, a virulent form when compared to western equine encephalitis, reached epidemic proportions in eastern and southern states. It was also discovered that southern states had the highest ratio of unvaccinated horse. With two rainy seasons in a row, the outlook for another outbreak of EEE is grim.

The mosquito acts as the middle man in equine encephalitis. They take the blood of infected horses and easily transfer the virus to a healthy horse. In epidemics, the fatality rate is often nine out of ten horses.

Oddly enough, western equine encephalitis or WEE, has lessened over the years for some reason. It was not common last summer, said Dr. James Pearson of the USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa. Some researchers say more through vaccination procedures in areas where WEE is prevalent might have contributed to its downward slide.

Vaccination against both forms stems the disease, but yearly inoculations are needed.

Coping with Cat spraying . . .



Urine spraying by cats is probably one of the blackest marks against felines, at least in the eyes of fussy homeowners. This hereditary habit can be eliminated in the vast majority of cases by providing a serene home life free of stress and other feline intruders. Spaying and neutering combined with a good home usually eliminates spraying by both male and female cats.

But there's always the intractable one. The cat that will spray and mark up all sorts of vertical landmarks, both indoors and out. Now these stubborn cases of individualistic behavior can be further treated.

The method is classed as a last resort. It's depriving the cat of a sense of smell. Cats always smell the preferred location before they anoint it from the other end. So researchers tried to eliminate spraying before the urge to do so became strong.

They succeeded in seven out of eleven and all four female cats were classed as unregenerate sprayers. All of them were spayed or neutered.

The operation itself is simple and has little risk.

All of the cats operated on showed no major personality change, neither did the loss of smell affect their eating habits. Oddly enough, a "remarkable" increase in affection to their owners was shown in seven of the cats, accord-

ing to veterinarians at the U of California Davis veterinary school. Twelve of the cats ate normal amounts as they did prior to surgery. Two of them developed greater appetites, and two became "finicky" eaters.

All of the cats were followed closely (as to behavior changes) from six months to two years following surgery.

DEPT. OF INTERIOR LOGO

For years, the symbol of the U.S. Dept. of Interior has been highlighted by a buffalo facing to the left. But Secretary of the Interior James Watt ordered his own design with the buffalo facing right. One of Watt's aides opined it might be reflecting the secretary's political stance.

Jay Hair, of the National Wildlife Federation, said: The fact that he didn't replace the buffalo with a bulldozer indicates at last, James Watt may be moderating his view toward wildlife.

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GROOMING OLDER CATS . . .

SPECIAL NEEDS FOR THE SENIOR CAT . . .

By Marilyn McPherson Levin

Every pet cat needs assistance in tending its coat, but the senior cat has a particular need. The digestive tract of your older cat is less able to cope with large amounts of hair, and without grooming help hairballs will become an increasing problem. Since shedding never stops entirely for any cat, and with indoor cats in particular tending to shed all year long, daily brushing of both shorts and longhairs is important.

Grooming the coat of your older cat also has a host of additional benefits beyond hairball prevention. Pesty fleas and ticks can be spotted before they get out of hand. Serious changes in your pet's body can be discovered early. External growths and swellings as well as internal problems can be noted and called to your veterinarian's attention. Our simple technique also includes a beneficial massage of the rear legs – the first place your cat's added years will reveal themselves.

If your senior cat is one of the fussy customers who isn't receptive to combing or brushing, it's probably because his body has become sensitive to brisk handling. You'll find, however, that even the most particular senior will come around when you begin using your grooming tool in a more sensitive manner. Puss will also enjoy the increased hand stroking in this new approach to coat care.

TOOLS

Have at hand a good steel comb with rounded teeth, brush, pet or baby shampoo, chamois glove, cotton swabs, mineral oil, and alcohol, along with blunt-edged scissors. Your pet may not have need of more than comb and brush, but you'll understand the use of these additional items as we continue. I refer to a comb throughout the instructions, since I use a comb for my calico who has mid-length hair. Generally, a brush is recommended for shorthairs and a comb for longhairs.

A NEW GROOMING EXPERIENCE

Place Puss in a standing position at a height comfortable for you. Grooming in the same place helps establish a routine. Be sure the table or bench has firm footing for your pet. If hair is snarled or matted, take care of that first by cutting or working it out with your fingers. Never try to comb or brush a tangle of hair.

With one hand under Puss's chin, comb with the other from forehead over the top of head to nape of neck. Do not scrape teeth of comb against skin but angle comfortably. Repeat several times checking for fleas as you work. If you spot an infestation, dipping the comb in alcohol will cut down on the population, but spray or powder – perhaps a flea shampoo – may be needed.

Next, place left hand on underside of kitty in a supportive hold which also keeps him from walking, and comb back and sides of coat. Comb very gently over bony spinal area keeping your eyes peeled for small growths – especially around the rump. Using a comb, you'll be able to feel when you comb over a small lump or lesion. Move on to the tail resting it in the left hand combing with right. Fleas are fond of this area, so be on the lookout if your cat has been outdoors.

Gather the hair on your cat's sensitive underside by hand. Using the left and right hands alternately, stroke up from tummy on each side. Loose hair will gather on back, and you can pick it up with your comb. Rhythmic stroking will also provide a gentle exercise for Puss's stomach and intestines.

Move on to chin and bib area working in the same way. From behind, simply stroke with flat hands from chin and chest to back of neck. Alternate or do both sides at once. Pick up accumulated hair with comb.

Finally, while your pet stands or even crouches – place a hand on

each upper rear leg, and gently massage in circles for 30 seconds or so. This area is often frail – sometimes stiff – so make your touch a loving one. For special occasions finish up your grooming with a chamois glove. The glove will pick up the few remaining loose hairs and add a beautiful sheen to your pet's coat.

EARS

While you're near Puss's ears, take a good look inside. If there is a buildup of dark wax, use a cotton swab with a small amount of mineral oil or alcohol and wipe out the wax gently. If you see black specks resembling coffee grounds, your cat may have ear mites. Take her to the veterinarian immediately for proper medication. Mites are nuisance to the cat and should never be ignored.

BECOME FAMILIAR

When your hand is on Puss's underside move it gently about and become familiar with the feel of your pet's anatomy. Do not probe, but simply feel as you would with your own body. Any undue tenderness or suspected swelling should be reported to your veterinarian. Loose folds of skin are common on the underside of many older cats and do not necessarily indicate a problem.

THE QUESTION OF BATHING

Most cats do an excellent job of keeping clean without soap and water. However, if Puss has gotten into some kind of mess such as grease or oil, you may have to give him a bath. Have a couple of terry-cloth towels at hand and soap quickly avoiding the face. Use tepid water to rinse. Towel dry, then use a hand blower. Comb the fur while damp, and if your pet is permitted outside do not allow it for 3 or 4 hours. Cats catch cold very easily.

If Puss was sprayed by a skunk, bathe first with soap and water then follow with a tomato juice rinse. Pour on the juice straight, wait a couple of minutes and rinse out. NEVER use gasoline, kerosene, paint remover or like solutions on your cat's coat. Cut out small accumulations of tar or paint with a scissors. A single treat at the end of any grooming procedure will soften the whole experience for your pet.

CARING FOR YOUR AGING PET

Our old friends . . .

Time waits for no man . . . or for his pets. The aging animal, no matter what species, has problems that are related to the passage of time. Deteriorating organs and increased vulnerability to diseases and environment cause the oldsters pain and discomfort.

Veterinarians are being called upon to keep these old friends comfortable more frequently than ever. As their lives change the qualities of an older pet become more precious. These lovely older animals continue to improve the quality of our lives, even though they may be more difficult to care for. Their trust, affection and loyalty continue to be part of their personalities.

There is no single cause of aging and no one knows exactly what the processes are, but the results are obvious. The older animal's physical condition and general health reflects the care and attention that the animal has received during its lifetime. Good nutrition, freedom from parasites, protection from injury and from disease by vaccination are exceedingly important in survival and in determining the quality of old age. Dogs, in general, live about 12 to 13 years, cats perhaps a bit longer. Small dogs can expect a longer life than large ones. None of these rules apply to the individual, however. One may live twenty years, and another only a few. But whatever the final age, it always seems too short.

The healing processes slow down with age. It has been estimated that for every five years of life it takes an additional full day for the healing of wounds. But, with each passing year there is a marvelous increase in awareness and understanding of our needs by our pets. For these reasons, many pet owners are no longer willing to euthanatize an old old animal just because of age and are increasing the demands for better health care for them.

Life long care, good nutrition, freedom from injury and disease, and prompt medical attention in time of need all greatly lengthen the useful, pain-free life of our pets.

GROOMING OLDER DOGS

You DO brush or comb your hair every day, don't you? Well, then, how about the same consideration for pets Regular grooming becomes even more important as your pet gets on in years.

Older animals move around less, their coats often lack skin oils and they groom themselves less often. This all leads to skin problems. Long haired animals' coats become choked with retained dead hair (and assorted debris) which can form tight, painful mats. Fleas and ticks and lice just love these old or sick animals because they are in little danger of grooming.

Every dog should be inspected and groomed daily, and most especially the older dog. They deserve our attention and we may as well make it useful and pleasurable. Lots of brushing and liberal use of flea powder or sprays will keep that coat soft, clean, and best of all, free of itching bugs. And another bonus for you is that you can drastically reduce the frequency of baths. This grooming will also bring to your attention lumps, bumps and tumors that may be growing, sores and cuts that heal so much more slowly in older ones, and toenails that are no longer wearing off with inactivity.

Be certain that your old friend is always clean and dry. Letting his coat remain wet for long periods can also start some bad skin problems. Give him his favorite treat after every grooming session. Treats at the right time can make a not so good time better, and a good time becomes a very special one. With a little planning daily grooming can be a rewarding time for both you and your pet!



EASY RECIPE FOR SLIMMING YOUR PET . . .

Withholding food from the obese dog is much easier said than done. When the reduced portion of food is gone and your pet looks longingly at the empty food dish, and then at you . . .

But there are some painless methods of weight reduction, and here are some ideas that will help you to accomplish the goal and still provide your pet with what appears to be an ample amount of food in his bowl:

Substitute. Every second or third day substitute some of the fattening foods with others that have a low calorie count.

Remember that kibble is the equivalent of potatoes and bread in the diet of your pet. If you were on a diet would you eat potatoes and bread? Of course not. Well, it is the same thing for your overweight dog. But you can continue to provide the bulk of food by substituting things like low calorie cottage cheese, cooked egg whites, and cooked vegetables.

This way, your pet still gets the same amount of bulk food, but with fewer calories. A serving of chopped, cooked celery has almost no calories at all. However, since a dog doesn't have the dental equipment to masticate vegetables like a sheep or cow, your will want to cook the vegetables first.

When cooking the vegetables you can make them more appealing by adding generous amounts of herbs (not spices). Remember that, unlike humans, the appearance of the food

■ continued next page

HOW OLD IS OLD?

The tempo of passing time differs greatly with different breeds and sizes of dogs. But, generally speaking, the bigger the breed the shorter the lifespan. This graying mastiff is about 10 years old, the noble vizsla is starting to show her years at eight, the Pembroke Welsh corgi shows even fewer signs of age at 15, and this small mixed breed is still going strong at about 16. Some toy breeds, like the chihuahua, may live for 20 years or more. The oldest recorded dog is an Australian cattle dog reputed to have lived to be 27-years old.

Some breeds just show the signs of advancing years more rapidly than others.

"Silver threads among the gold" doesn't always mean that your pet is old. Humans relate gray hairs directly with advancing age, but it isn't always the same thing with dogs. Some dogs just gray earlier than others. This senior citizen golden retriever is masked with gray, but many goldens start to display gray hairs at four years of age.

Early graying can be inherited, and some breeds of dogs are deliberately bred to turn gray at an early age. The Kerry blue terrier, for example, must turn from a rich black to gray (or blue) by the time it is a year and half old in order to win in dog shows. And, by contrast, Australian cattle dogs are born white and make the transition to rich red or blue colors while they are still young puppies.

The coat of a Scottish terrier may be flecked with gray, but it has little to do with the age of the dog. Scotty breeders call it brindle and consider it be very attractive.

So, don't let a few gray hairs fool you. Unlike people, they don't always indicate the age of an animal.



Bundock photo

Golden retriever by Callea

The aging dog . . .

TOENAILS

Long toenails are often a serious problem for the older dog. Reduced activity allows nails to grow even longer. If they get caught on something they can break or tear, causing the dog great pain and a quick trip to the veterinarian.

Nature designed the dog to walk on the pads of its feet and overly long toenails interfere with the way the dog walks and stands. Instead of strong, tight feet those long toenails can cause the feet to spread and become weak.

Toenails originally helped dogs scrabble through rough terrain and rocks to hunt for food and dig. But today's easy life doesn't do the same job. Most of our dogs now live on polished floors, carpets and smooth lawns. And toenails just keep growing, just like your fingernails and toenails.

But you don't have to resort to the painful process of having the long nails of your pet chopped off. You can accomplish the same short nails, painlessly, by just spending a few minutes every day or two with a hand file. Filing the nails is a much slower process, but it is also painless.

The chore can be accomplished with a regular carpenter's concave file, or even human-type emory boards for smaller pets. The trick is to do them often.

If you sit down with your dog and quietly file away as you watch TV in the evening you'll be surprised at how easily you can get those ugly toenails shortened without hurting your pet. Concentrate on the sides and top part of the nails. These are the hard "armor plated" parts. The bottom of the nail is rather pulpy and will wear by itself.

The time spent with regular foot care is well spent. In addition to getting your pet "up on his toes" you can catch foxtails, thorns and other foreign objects before they become problems. Short nails help make for healthy feet and the bonus for you is that they won't be scratching you and your clothing and furniture.



TIPS ON CARING FOR THE AGING PET

BY Ilka Ford
California Veterinary
Medical Association

The process of aging effects our pets in much the same way as it affects ourselves. Just as we must make adjustments in our daily routine as we get older, so does "Fido". There are a number of things to keep in mind concerning the older pet. Many times a few simple measures taken by you will enable "Fido" to live a longer and fuller life.

Exercise is good for an old pet but in small doses. There should be shorter periods of play and longer periods of rest. Exercise improves circulation, aerates the lungs, improves elimination, and helps keep down body weight.

It has been observed that 80 percent of dogs over eight years of age have kidney diseases. Such damage generally develops slowly, over the years as the result of aging and of various diseases suffered by the dog. The early problems generally go unnoticed and lead, in time, to loss of general kidney function. The kidneys function to regulate the internal body environment. Every 30 minutes, the kidneys filter your pet's total blood volume; ridding the blood of unwanted harmful chemicals. Since there is such a high incidence of kidney ailments in older pets, fresh drinking water should be available at all times. Drinking large amounts of water may enable your pet to compensate for his ailing kidneys. Pets with kidney disease are frequently put on special diets by your veterinarian.

OTHER PROBLEMS

Various forms of cancer are common in older pets such as skin tumors and mammary tumors. Deafness and impaired vision are also common.

As an animal ages, cataracts often develop, impairing vision. Cataract is a clouding of the normally transparent lens in the eye. As the condition progresses, the pupil looks hazy, then milky, and finally, can be pearl white. Since the loss of vision usually comes on gradually, assuming the pet remains in the same surroundings, he often is able to adjust quite well. Pets may be blind and the owner unaware of the difficulty because the pet has adapted his senses of hearing and smell to aid in getting around.

Stiffness and pain in the joints and muscles may affect older pets, particularly following a rest period. Arthritis of the hips and spine is frequently seen in large breeds of dogs as they become older.

Heart disease is quite often encountered in aging pets. Dental problems that lead to more serious medical problems are frequent in older pets and some demand medical attention.

WHAT TO DO?

When detected early, many conditions can be stabilized and your pet will be able to live a more comfortable and active life. In many of the diseases seen in older pets, curative measures are not available. In many of the diseases seen in older pets, curative measures are not available. However, many degenerative processes can be slowed down and an animal's life can be comfortably prolonged by proper medical management.

Early detection and early treatment are essential for best results. If you suspect your pet is having difficulty, seek prompt medical attention. A preventative examination every six to twelve months in the aging pet is well advised.

OTHER PARASITES

Parasitic Infestation (Otocariasis)

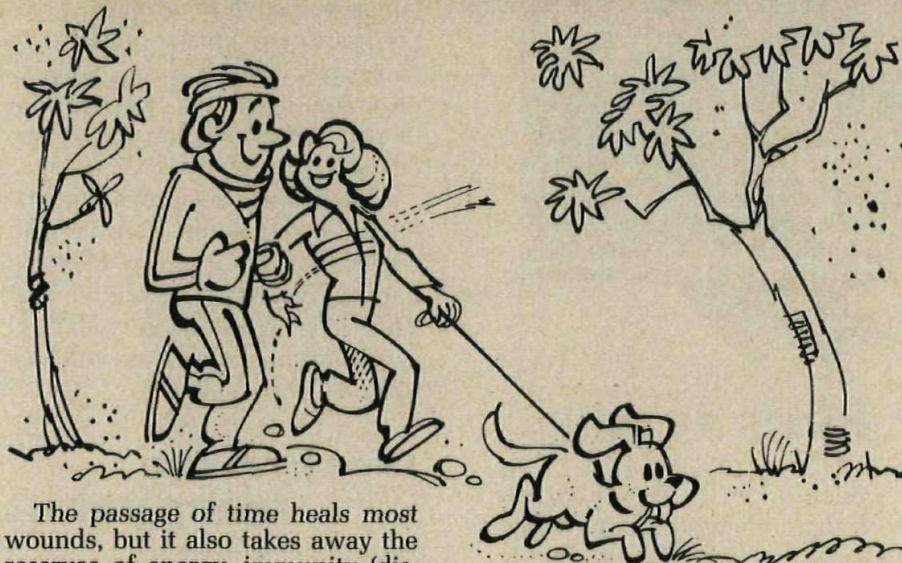
The term "ear canker" found in books on animals usually refers to the appearance of the wax in the mite-infested ears of dogs and cats. This wax is dark in color and crumbles into small chunks. The material may contain microscopic mites and their eggs. These mites once established in the ear can become very numerous. They can cause a variety of symptoms from mild irritation to vomiting and convulsions. Mites usually take 3 to 4 weeks to develop from egg to an adult.

To identify the presence of mites in the external ear canal part of the dark wax is taken from the ears and examined under the microscope. Finding eggs or nymphs or adults in the ear warrants treatment.

The mites cause irritation of the delicate lining of the ear canal. The wax glands of the ear become larger and secrete more wax which becomes crusty and dark. Because of this inflammation, there is or can be a secondary invasion by bacteria fungus. The animal may mutilate or scar the ear flap in an attempt to scratch the irritation. This can produce blood blisters (hematomas) or infection of the ear flap (pinna) which can spread down the ear.

Mites are generally transmitted from animal to animal. If you have more than one animal, it would be advisable to treat them all at the same time to prevent reinfection with mites.

Exercise and the aging pet . . .



Jogging with your dog

The passage of time heals most wounds, but it also takes away the reserves of energy, immunity (disease resistance), muscle strength and lung and heart capacity. The increasing lack of response to the demands of stress is characteristic of the aging process. Some of these changes are preventable, or at least can be reduced or delayed by proper diet, control of disease, healthful and clean environments and adequate exercise.

Food for use in the body, waste to be removed, oxygen, heat and even water are all carried through the body in blood vessels. Pumped along by the heart and helped along by other muscles of the body, the circulatory system is the essential transport of life. Without the properly functioning circulation system life cannot exist. Exercise is the single most important activity needed to continue and improve the efficiency of the heart and blood vessels.

The wear and tear of life weakens muscles and causes joint surfaces to become pitted and uneven. Moderate exercise keeps muscles firm and supple joints will move more freely and with less pain. Stiffness from inactivity can become crippling. Blood vessels must be elastic in order to expand and contract during the stresses of sudden exercise. Reflexes are kept sharp by constant use and interest is kept alive by variety.

The jogging craze can be good for our pets too but don't overdo it! Be sure that both you and your pet are in good condition before starting a new exercise program. Start slowly and build up exercise tolerance gradually, and watch for any sign that may say "Whoa there, slow down a bit, I'm getting tired."

If you aren't inclined to jog yourself you can choose any one of many alternate ways to exercise your pet.

With a little planning and training you can teach your dog to exercise alongside a bike or even a car. Many show dogs are kept in condition this way. Some of the larger breeds trot most easily at from seven to ten miles an hour and this can sometimes be too fast for a human to accomplish for any distance.

Remember that your dog won't be wearing any of the special footgear designed for human joggers. After exercise it will be a good idea to check the pads of the feet of your dog. It may take a little time for your pet to toughen up his feet. And, of course, dirt, sand or gravel surfaces are better for the feet of your pet than concrete or asphalt. And this type of exercise should always be done with your pet on leash.

If none of these programs fit your particular life style you can still accomplish some exercise for your pet with a good brisk walk in the park or even playing ball in the back yard. Any exercise is better than none. Keeping your dog fit may be a little extra work for you, but it may also help to keep you fit at the same time!

NEXT MONTH

JACQUIE MARIE VAUX, an unusual animal artist who shares her concern for animal life through her paintings. She puts animals on canvas to make a better world for real-life animals.

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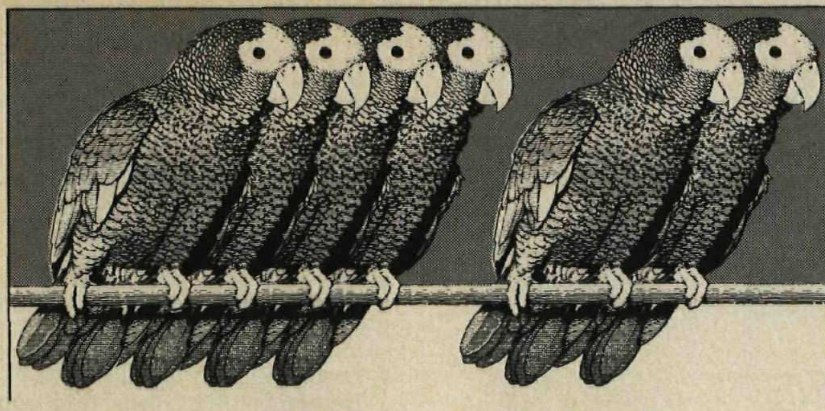
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Fine feathered friends . . . Birds as pets

Long John Silver's parrot followed him all over the world, on land and sea and, although Stevenson's tale was fiction, the behavior of parrots and their willingness to associate with people has caused the parrot to be accepted as part of our pet family. This image is further enhanced by television and pet shops. But would a parrot really be the proper pet for your household?

Birds make marvelous pets for many people. And there are so many kinds that it would seem that there just has to be one that is just right for you.

But not all parrots like people. Some can be very aggressive and also very destructive with their powerful beaks and claws, and can inflict some very painful bites. The gentleness of these beautiful birds, including the macaws, cockatoos, conures and others, does not always come naturally. It may take months of patient training and handling to produce a suitable pet. Don't expect to walk into your pet shop and buy a bird that will instantly be an easily managed pet.

Smaller birds, such as cockatiels and parakeets, can be similarly trained and make fine pets, but only with patience and training on your part.

The psittacine birds can be capable of some surprisingly loud noises, and even the chattering of small ones, like parakeets, can be heard a long way. Some people find their chattering quite disturbing. Large birds, like macaws, often screech and may not make ideal pets or good neighbors.

Canaries can be delightful pets with their melodic mating songs and bright colors. They are hardy, often live 10 to 12 years, and are easy to care for. Cages and other equipment can be highly decorative and, accordingly, expensive, but simpler and less expensive alternatives are also available. Food is inexpensive, but should always be fresh.

Small finches, like zebras or societies, are fun to have either singly or in flocks. They breed easily and are devoted parents. There are many types of finches that come in many bright colors. They are both beautiful to see and to hear.

Housing for these small birds can be a very attractive addition to any home.

If you want a bird to "talk" there is a wide variety from which to choose. Parrots, macaws, cockatoos, parakeets, cockatiels, ravens, crows and mynahs can all be taught to talk, with patience, understanding and repetition.

Wild birds can be tamed to a degree by supplying good things to eat and providing a degree of safety when they enter your environment. Some wild birds will become tame enough to eat from your hand. Good examples of this are the pigeons in parks and the birds at Acre Coeur, Paris, France.

Bird fanciers abound and almost any good-sized town will have local breeders. Pet shops and the yellow pages of your local telephone book will help you locate sources. Your local library can provide books about husbandry and the joys of keeping pet birds.

The growth of the bird fancy and the increasing number of birds in homes as pets has required veterinarians to pay greater attention to their medical needs. Surgical procedures and laboratory tests are conducted daily in some veterinary facilities.

Lonely people in small apartments, at rest homes and life care centers are often cheered by the happy, lively activities of birds. They can be small, inexpensive, easy to clean and care for, and be a sheer delight to many.

Diet and the aging pet . . .

continued from page 15

is not as important as the odor. If it smells appealing, chopped carrots can be just as attractive to your pet as prime rib. But any reducing program should include the advice of your veterinarian.

How fat is fat? Well, a guide rule of thumb is to look for a waistline on your pet. When you look down from above you should, if your pet is in good shape, be able to see a very slight indentation just behind the rib cage. If it bulges, your pet is probably obese and should start slimming down. Remember that obesity is one of the major contributing factors to health problems in the older pet!

If all else fails, your veterinarian can provide you with a specially prepared prescription diet called R/D. It is a complete food made just for weight reduction. But, however you accomplish it, getting the blubber off your pet may give it a longer happier, and more active life.

DOG OVERWEIGHT?

Our university-tested kit accurately predicts normal weights of medium and large mixed breed dogs.

Send \$4.35 ppd. to P. Pendergrass, Canine Associates, 6230 Troy-Frederick Rd., Tipp City, Ohio 45371.

Search for the Great American Dog . . .



Could this be the Great American Dog?

IN PURSUIT OF

CANINE CHARISMA . . .

What makes a great dog great? This question has puzzled man for centuries.

It could be the way a dog snuggles up and buries his wet nose in your face when you're feeling blue — or the faraway look that comes over him when he hears something that you can't. It could be the way he struts and lets you know that he thinks he's great . . . or the way he seems to be lost in thought (even though he is only trying to remember where he buried that bone.)

Some dogs are truly heroic, tracking down lost children and saving

the lives of avalanche victims. Others serve as eyes for the blind and ears for the deaf.

Clearly, greatness is in the eyes of the beholder. But whatever form greatness takes, that special something . . . that "canine charisma" . . . is what Purina Dog Chow dog food is looking for in a national contest called the "Search For the Great American Dog."

An independent judging organization will choose 500 semi-finalists, which will then be narrowed to five finalists. Criteria will be photogenic appeal as well as originality, charm and sincerity of the accompanying essay of about 100 words.

From there the judging will be handed over to the American public, voting on ballots appearing in major national newspapers.

The winning couple . . . the Great American Dog and its owner . . . will appear on two million packages of the dog food, and the grand prize also includes \$25,000; a luxury trip to New York City for the family and a one-year supply of dog food. And while in New York the honored guests will appear in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

All that's required to enter the Search is a snapshot of your dog with a member of the family, and 100 words describing why you think your dog is the Great American Dog, along with a weight circle from specially marked packages of Dog Chow.

A novel method of determining the final winner will be used, placing the voting in the hands of the public by way of a special toll-free telephone number.

Where is the Great American Dog? Well, it's out there somewhere . . . and your dog just might be the big winner!

SAVORING THE SMELL

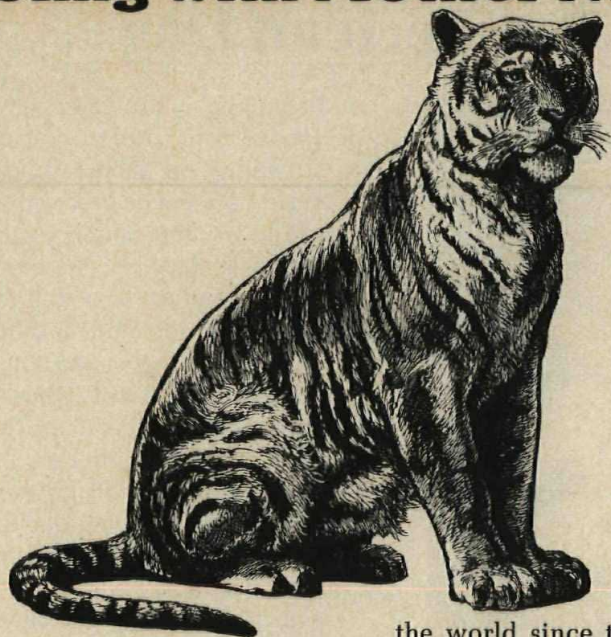
We've all seen cats sniff and smell something for seemingly a long time and then stand there with lips pulled back from their teeth into some sort of grimace. The mouth will be partially open.

Well, you can impress your friends by telling them that it's the *flehmen reaction*, and the cats are sending the odors back to their Jacobson's organ. That should gain you intellectual honors among your feline owning friends.

New, subtle or especially interesting odors are savored by cats, and the flehman reaction brings the odor back to the Jacobson's organ located in the roof of the mouth. This small pouch lined with receptor cells is connected to the brain and enables the cat to quickly identify the odor.

Cat's sense of smell is strong. Their olfactory organ is large for its size and the fine hairs inside the nostril are rich in nerve cells. Odors play a strong role in hunting, eating and sexual activities.

Fooling with Mother Nature...



A prime example of man trying to duplicate what Mother Nature does so well is the Siberian tiger. One of the five species of tiger left on this planet (the Caspian and Bali tigers are already extinct), Siberian tigers are favorites in every zoo, due to their large size and colorful coat. It's estimated there may be only 200 Siberian tigers left in their natural habitat in China and the Himalayan mountains. But there are probably more than a thousand in zoos around the world.

These tigers are willing breeders in captivity. What's more, they live 20 to 24 years in zoos, more than double their lifespan in the wild.

Therein lies the problem. Siberian tigers bred in zoos are unavoidably inbred animals, and along with this inbreeding comes a host of genetic problems, thanks to a small gene pool. Weaknesses, susceptibility to debilitating infirmities and behavior problems are rife in zoo-kept Siberian tigers. When three Siberian tigers were scheduled for euthanasia in the Detroit zoo, a tremendous outcry from the public was raised. It took a court order to have the ailing tigers euthanized.

The problems of keeping a healthy, stable population of Siberian tigers in zoos are enormous. Since the original tigers captured came from a relatively small stock of wild animals, and these animals have been inbred in zoos around

the world since then, the resemblance between a genuine Siberian tiger in the wild and ones seen in zoos, is lessening every year.

A start has been made to correct this problem. The Species Survival Plan (SSP) was discussed last year at the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens meeting at Rotterdam, Holland. The zoo directors were all in favor of adopting the SSP on a worldwide basis, for it would provide strict guidelines for genetic "purity" in captive animals.

But the SSP would mean zookeepers and zoo veterinarians would no longer have control of their own breeding program. They'd have to consult with an SSP office which would provide information and statistics on genetic guidelines for each species. To insure this goal of genetic purity, many existing animals would have to be euthanized to avoid further inbreeding and make room for animals with authorized genes.

This would mean another public outcry over "slaughtering innocent animals." The only solution on the horizon is a massive public education program on SSP, and public education programs have a tendency to reach only those who want to be educated.

The Siberian tiger is only a striking example of the problems man has in duplicating nature within zoo confines.

Judson Snyder.

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In these days of soaring prices it is always a surprise to get more of anything for less money! But that's what we are doing for you at *Todays Animal News*.

We have incorporated our old newsprint format into your new and enlarged magazine. The magazine will now be one third larger and come to you bi-monthly. It will contain even more timely stories, articles and pictures. It will provide additional space to bring you longer and more in-depth stories.

But the best part of all is that it isn't going to cost you any more. In fact, for a limited time we are offering you a chance to extend or renew your subscription at some very substantial savings!

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To the Editor

Dear Sir:

I know of no better place to discuss the following problem than in your magazine, in the hope that it might soon be discussed there, particularly since it allegedly is concerned with animal control problems.

It has been my observation that at least a certain number of homeless stray kittens (and presumably puppies, too) are "biters." I have discussed this with shelter people, who have told me that it is the owners themselves who produce the "biters" by "roughhousing" the animals while they are small, cute and can't bite very hard. But as they grow, the biting becomes hazardous, yet that is what the animals have been taught to do. I know of two instances of young kittens being rescued from the streets only to be rejected because they were "biters." In those cases, the animals were not thrown out into the streets again, but how many are.

I think it would be not only a public service, but a service to the welfare of animals to alert owners NOT to rough up kittens and puppies during play sessions, not permit their children to do so. It may be play to the owner, but it may bode ill indeed for the future of the animal.

Sincerely, Eleanor Seiling,
President, United Action for Animals, Inc.

Dear Reader:

While I have no doubt that kittens, or puppies can be made into "biters" by roughhousing, the biting done is an extension of their normal socialization and play process. Kittens and puppies in normal litters play much rougher with each other than most people do with their young pet. The bites and scratches, though not in anger, hurt nonetheless. (I can vouch for that.)

One problem with stray or wild kittens is that their previous history is unknown. Kittens that are raised without human contact are often incapable of becoming good pets for adoption regardless of the love given them. This may be part of the reason for homeless strays biting. I have one such cat in my household

(he would bite only if cornered and scared). Cats are by nature asocial (like mountain lions rather than African lions) and if not raised around people, dogs, children (note children may not be people to pets) may not choose their company.

Lee Thorne, DVM

HEARTWORM THERAPY DISPUTED

In recent months, several articles have appeared in popular magazines espousing the use of "new" drugs for heartworm prevention and treatment. Because of the so-called infallibility of the printed word, it is important to set the record straight.

Not only are these new treatments unreliable, but in some cases they may be injurious to the animal as well. One article recommended the use of piperazine as a heartworm preventative. Since the drug is cheap and safe to use, it could gain some popularity. I suspect this idea arose from the fact that piperazine is one of the breakdown products of diethylcarbamazine. However, research with piperazine has shown that it is not efficacious as a heartworm preventative.

Another article advocated the use of levamisole as a heartworm preventative. The author recommended that levamisole be given ten days out of each month. Because of the possible side-effects of this drug, this idea should definitely be discouraged.

It has also been written that a new non-arsenic drug is available for treatment against adult heartworms. At this point in time, I know of no such drug.

The current recommendation for prevention of heartworm disease is to administer diethylcarbamazine citrate 2-3 mlb daily from the start of the mosquito season until several weeks after the first killing frost.

Treatment for adult heartworms consists of injecting sodium caparsolate intravenously twice a day for two days.

Treatment for the larval stage of the heartworm should begin six weeks after the treatment for the adult worms.

Allan Paul, DVM



Dialogue

Dear Editor:

Enjoyed your article in Winter Issue, "They Never Warned Me." But there is an error by omission! Spaying before the first heat almost eliminates breast cancer, and if spayed before the second heat, the chances are still reduced. However, if the female has puppies or experiences more than two heats, spaying her will NOT reduce her chances of getting breast cancer. It does, of course, save her from any number of other illnesses, as does neutering a male at a younger age. Thank you.

Lily Stites,
Montgomery Village, CA.

Editor:

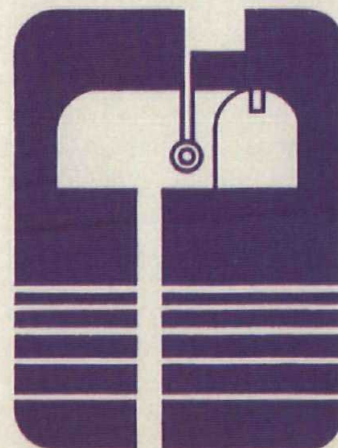
In reference to your July/August article... "Build Your Dog A Quonset Hut"... Where we live, steel barrels and metal, uninsulated housing for outside pets is illegal. They are extremely cold in winter and hot in summer. Wood is the recommended material to be used in doghouse construction.

Ruth Cummings, pres.
Bedford County Humane Society,
Bedford, Penna.

Dear Ruth:

A good point. You should enjoy the two pages of wooden doghouse plans in our Spring issue.

Editor.



THE VETERINARY FRONT

Update on trichinosis THE GARBAGE CAN SYNDROME

Although modern sanitary practices have drastically cut down on the incidence of trichinosis in humans (usually caused by eating infected, undercooked pork), veterinarians occasionally see a case of trichinosis in the cat. And there are probably a lot more cases of feline trichinosis that go undiscovered, since a homeless, scavenging cat is much more likely to contract the disease and become just another untreated feline casualty.

Trichinosis, caused by the parasite *Trichinella spiralis*, is a serious disease that calls for prompt medical attention. Symptoms are similar to several other feline gastrointestinal disorders: loss of appetite, vomiting, bloody feces, weakness, stiffening of the limbs and expressions of pain when handled. Symptoms can also resemble poisoning cases.

T. spiralis worms are easy to detect under a microscope and a cinch to diagnosis. Once discovered, treatment calls for a regimen of specific drugs, cortisone injections and life-support measures such as additional fluids. Cats treated in time usually recover in a few weeks, although there is a danger that the *T. spiralis* worms may be established in the muscles of the limbs.

Prevention is easier. Make sure your cat is well-fed and do not allow it to prowl at night among neighborhood garbage cans. The prowling cat is frequently portrayed emerging from a garbage can carrying a "prize." This may be funny in the comic strips and animated cartoons but in real life it may be deadly to the unsuspecting cat.

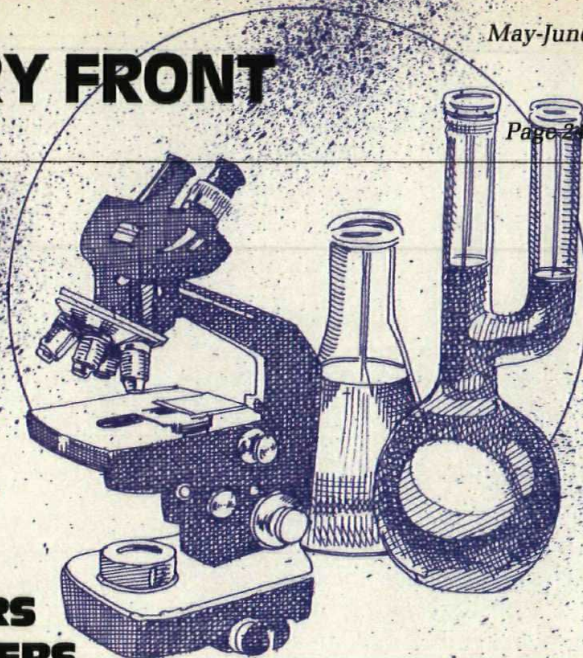
PET OWNERS IGNORE CANCERS

Most readers of Today's Animal News know that almost all animals can get cancer. Yet a recent survey indicated more than half of pet owners questioned did not realize that cancer is also a fairly common animal infliction. They were also unaware of the warning signs of cancer.

Aside from feline leukemia (cancer of the blood), most animal cancers occur in the form of tumors. And most tumors occur in animals of "middle age" and above, or about seven to eight years in dogs and cats. Feline leukemia and bone cancer are the most common exceptions to this for they can affect young animals, too.

Dogs, cats, horses, birds, cattle and rodents are all susceptible to tumors. The most obvious sign is an abnormal swelling. But sores that refuse to heal, bad odors and unusual discolorations are also early signs. Researchers have been unable to pinpoint causes of cancer, but certain breeds of pets are predisposed to the disease. Possible factors also include food additives and environmental pollutants.

Like human cancers, early detection and treatment is the best assurance of a cure. Some of the signs to watch for in animal cancer are: unusual swellings anywhere on the body, sudden weight loss, chronic fatigue and listlessness, chronic bleeding or discharge from body orifices, lameness, bad odors and difficulty in swallowing and eating.



EVEN CATS GET BLACKHEADS

A fairly common problem in shorthaired cats are blackheads around the mouth or chin. These are merely clogged pores, similar to human blackheads, but if not treated they can lead to open sores and a stubborn infection.

Principal cause are food particles which clog pores. Long-haired cats are not as susceptible because the distance between the skin and the food particles is pretty well screened by hair.

Cats are fastidious, at least most of them, about washing their head after eating, but they can't do a completely thorough job. You try cleaning your face by licking an enlarged replica of a cat's paw and see how clean your face gets! A washcloth works much better, doesn't it?

You can wash away blackheads on a cat with a rough face cloth and warm water mixed with a mild soapy solution. Rinse the chin well with clear water so the cat does not ingest any of the soap.

Various ointments have been pressed into service to combat blackheads, but the cat seems to do a pretty thorough job of washing away ointments and salves. If the problem persists, check with your veterinarian. There are antibacterial powders which the cat will tolerate much better than ointments.

Dramatic increase in feline rabies . . .

CATS LEAD AS RABIES CARRIERS

Move over, dogs. Your reputation as the prime domestic carrier of rabies has been taken over by your furry friend, the domestic cat. According to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1981 for the first time ever, feline rabies surpassed canine rabies across the United States, and by a whopping 32 percent. 1982 stats aren't complete yet, but little change is seen.

In Texas alone, 1983 cat rabies cases are 91 percent higher than they were in 1981. Rabid cats outnumbered dogs by two to one. Not only that, in the last five years rabies in cats has climbed 147 percent in Texas.

The reason for this alarming rabies rate in Texas (and just about every other state) is that cat owners simply have not had their pets vaccinated. Of the approximately 38 million cats in the U.S., a bare four percent are inoculated against rabies, say CDC statisticians. Yet, Texas, like many other states, has a law on the books requiring feline rabies vaccinations once a year.

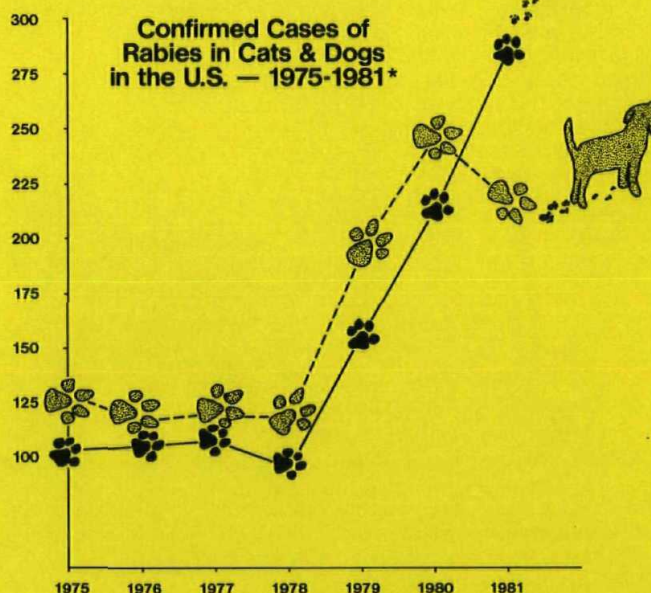
To bring this message across, Fromm Laboratories based in Grafton, Wisconsin, has started a consumer awareness program, using veterinarian Ellen White in radio and television talk shows across the nation, as well as print media interviews. She began her campaign in Milwaukee and is heading out from there.

"looking over audience questions I have received during radio and television talk shows, it's apparent that the majority of pet owners are unaware of the potential problem of rabies in cats," said Dr. White.

Cats are more vulnerable to rabies infections than dogs for several reasons: (1) lack of preventative vaccination is perhaps the major reason. (2) cat scratches that can infect humans with rabies are more

common than dog bites. (3) wild animals like skunks, raccoons, bats and foxes (major carriers of rabies in the wild), have a tendency to invade rural areas for food. (4) night-roaming cats frequently come in contact with these wild animals. (5) the feral cat population shows no sign of shrinking; and (6) the cat is a natural hunter and therefore more likely to come in contact with a rabid animal.

It's hoped that through such public education programs pushed by Fromm and Dr. White, cat owners will be made aware of the danger un-vaccinated cats pose to humans. Rabies is still a fatal, incurable disease if not checked in time. Once infected, the only way humans can avoid the deadly consequences, is through painful, expensive Pasteur injections . . . if the disease is caught in time.



*Based on statistics supplied by the Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Atlanta, Georgia. 1982 statistics not available.

SKIN GRAFTS

Techniques in human surgery are often pressed into use in animal surgery clinics, including skin grafts.

Dr. M. L. Horton, Fairborn, Ohio veterinarian, was presented with a cat that came out second best in combat with an automobile fan. The right rear leg and tail were both badly mauled; the leg could be saved, but the tail had to be amputated. But, before amputation, Dr. Horyon stitched the broken tail to the badly damaged leg which was nearly skinless.

The leg healed properly, thanks to the tail flesh skin graft, and the tail was amputated three weeks after the initial surgery. The cat was sent home with all four legs working properly and with a Manx-like tail.

Know your enemy, the flea !

LIFE CYCLE OF THE FLEA ON DOGS

(*Ctenocephalides canis*)

An adult flea may live without feeding for as long as 125 days. Adult flea finds a new host pet, and often jumps from pet to pet. Unless controlled it is possible for a flea to live on a host for as long as 2 years. The life cycle may be completed as quickly as three weeks.



Adult female flea finds a host pet.

Adult female feeds for 2-3 days, then begins laying hundreds of eggs. When your pet stretches, or scratches, eggs fall into carpeting, bedding, grass.



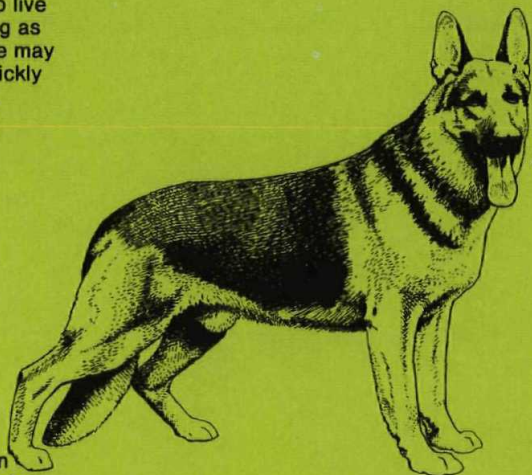
Eggs hatch in 1-2 days.



Larvae feed for 4-8 days on debris, then spin cocoons.



Depending on conditions, an adult flea may begin to emerge from the cocoon in as little as 5 days.



Courtesy of the American Cyanamid Company, makers of Proban

SCRATCH .. SCRATCH ... SCRATCH ...

What is more annoying than the sight and sound of your pet scratching away at fleas? Sometimes it seems as though fleas are indestructible. But take hope . . . they really aren't. But it will take a good battle plan and an understanding of your enemy to gain control of this problem.

However, sure-fire flea control is achievable. It's just a matter of establishing a program and using the right stuff at the right time in the right places.

Most insecticides for use on our

pets break down within about seven days and are no longer effective. That's good because it protects our environment and allows good control over possibly toxic substances. But, since this is so, they must be reapplied before their effectiveness is lost. Even a few days without this flea control allows the pests to retrench and a whole new crop of fleas will appear. Control measures must be continued for a long time. Fleas can live for months without feeding. It just won't work to use a "hit-and-miss" system.

Powders and sprays applied only on the pet won't do the job. You will have to do other areas where the fleas "hang out" when they are not on your pet. Some prime targets might be the carpets, baseboards, the bedding of your pet, and overstuffed furniture.

Flea collars and medallions usually will not be helpful until the flea problem is gone. Then they are useful in preventing the problem from reoccurring. Check with your veterinarian to see what he recommends for your area, for your pet, and your premises. Each household has its own particular problems.

POISON PLANTS AND PETS

Why is it some plants are poisonous to pets? For that matter, why is it some plants are poisonous. The second question is easy to answer.

Over the past tens of thousands of years, certain plants developed a self-defense mechanism by building up toxic chemicals in their leaves or stems. Apparently, they were getting tired of always being eaten by dinosaurs. And, later on, by other herbivorous animals.

Wild animals learned their lessons early on in the game. But cats and dogs are still learning . . . especially puppies who delight in biting into almost anything. Kittens are fussier about where they clamp their teeth.

There are lists and lists of poisonous plants. But don't depend on their accuracy. Some plants don't belong there and there are a lot more that do. The constant hybridization of plants also throws a shadow of doubt on these lists.

Plants that are poisonous have developed toxic elements called Secondary Plant Compounds, or SPC for short. They affect many animals, especially unknowledgeable canines. At the same time, a lot of herbivorous animals have developed a detoxification system in their own bodies which enables them to eat these plants with no after effects whatsoever. Dogs and cats do not have this detoxification mechanism. Yet they consume poison ivy leaves with no effect, but that's about all.

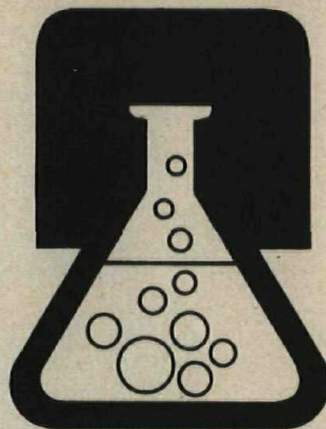
Puppies are always exploring with their mouths. This makes them prone to plant poisoning unless they're carefully watched outdoors and the home interior is properly "puppy-proofed." This means keeping house plants out of their reach. No need to determine if any or all of your house plants are poisonous — there's just no dietary need for chewing on house plants and a well-gnawed plant is not exactly a thing of beauty anyway.

Besides curiosity, other factors will lead to house plant damage by puppies and sometimes cats and kittens. Boredom, a change in surroundings (such as Christmas decorations . . . mistletoe and poinsettia plants are poisonous), being left alone for long periods, and plant neuroticism (which might be concealing an illness), can also lead to plant destruction by pets.

If you do suspect poisoning, immediate veterinary care is needed to expel or flush out the ingested material. In extreme cases life support measures are needed.

But all this trauma to both owner and patient can be avoided with common sense prevention.

THE VETERINARY FRONT



LOW SODIUM FELINE DIET

Cats troubled with urological problems, Feline Urological Syndrome or just plain FUS (an umbrella-like term for a variety of these urinary tract woes) now have a low sodium diet. Hills Pet Products of Kansas has a Prescription Diet Feline H/D with low levels of sodium and magnesium, both thought to play a role in the formation of urinary calculi. The canned food also is prescribed for cats with heart problems.

THOSE BULGING EYES

It's no time for self-diagnosis when a dog or cat owner notices one eye of his pet more prominent than the other. An obviously bulging eye is a danger signal indicating a large assortment of possible problems.

Foxtails have habit of migrating from between eyelids or even from the mouth, and setting up an infection behind the eye. Unaltered male cats can develop abscesses behind the eye. And, of course, there are varieties of injuries from shotgun pellets lodged in the area to losing incidents with automobiles; either can cause hemorrhage behind the eye and consequent protruding of the eye itself. Prominent eyes also signal certain ocular diseases, such as glaucoma. But by the time glaucoma has enlarged the eye there's scant hope of saving it.

Naturally, there are breeds of dogs such as pugs and Boston terriers who have naturally protruding eyes. This makes them susceptible to eye injuries because the natural bones of the skull do not provide some sort of protection as in other breeds. If you own one of these breeds, it's not a bad idea to check with your veterinarian on preventative measures to avoid eye problems.

PET CANCER RECEIVING SERIOUS STUDY

Cancer research on animals for the sake of humans is common, but the welfare of the animals themselves is the focus of an unusual anti-cancer program at Purdue University.

Launched three years ago, the program has depended on cooperation of some 100 Indiana veterinarians to provide referrals, biopsies and follow-up data for an animal tumor registry — the only one of its scope in the nation — and a clinical program in oncology, the study of tumors.

"We are elated over what's been happening in this," says Dr. Ralph Richardson of Purdue's School of Veterinary Medicine. "The input we've had so far has not only let us develop a comprehensive tumor-treatment program for animals but has also provided a solid data base for an animal tumor registry and potential spinoff benefits for the human cancer picture."

Richardson notes that the project comprises three elements: the tumor registry; treatment of animals — primarily dogs and cats — with tumors; and cancer research that is prompted by or aided by data from other parts of the program.

Veterinarians taking part in the project keep records on their tumor patients and provide diagnosis and follow-up care for the patients. In return, the school provides diagnostic services, continuing education relating to cancer, and treatment materials. The Purdue group also keeps track of each case after treatment, writing owners periodically to request information on the pet's condition.

Richardson remarks that a good picture is coming into focus in regard to what kinds of cancer are most common in pets. He adds that there is evidence that the causes of naturally occurring tumors are similar in humans and animals. Because of animal's shorter life span, he notes, cancer caused by environmental factors would appear sooner than in man and could represent an early-warning system to certain environmental problems.



NATURAL PERFUME GENTLY KEEPS KITTY/DOGGY OFF COUCH, KNEE. PROTECTS FEARFUL VISITORS. \$12.95, PET-HERBS, BOX 873, OAK PARK IL 60301.

Reports show poodles and shepherds slipping in popularity . . .

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHAT'S THE FAIREST DOG OF THEM ALL?

The results are in and again, for the 23rd consecutive year, Americans chose the poodle as the most popular dog. But there are signs that this could be the last year for the poodle to retain the lofty position.

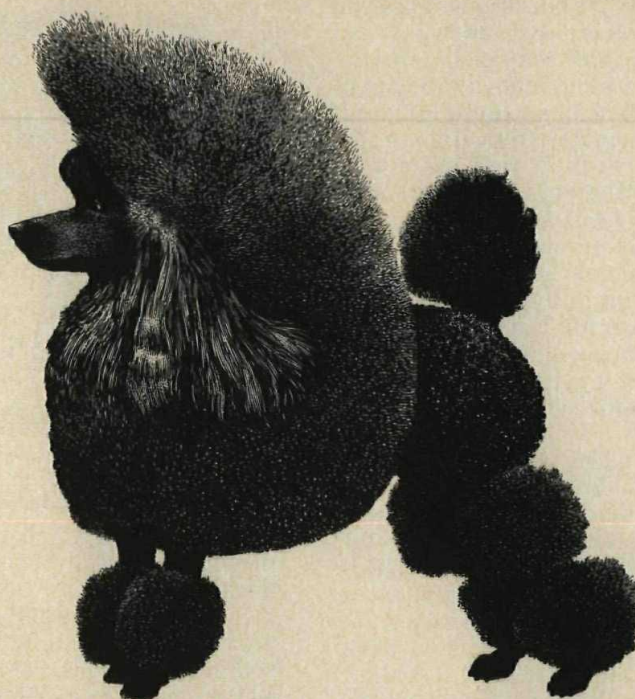
Popularity in this case is tabulated on the basis of how many new registrations were issued for each breed during the year. The American Kennel Club takes the pulse of the dog fancy annually and the statistics provide some interesting facts about purebred dog owners and breeders.

Dog breeders seemed oblivious of an economy that had slumped to almost depression depths, according to the report. New home building limped to a standstill and the auto industry almost braked to a stop in 1982, but dog breeders seemed unaware of the financial pinch. They registered a whopping 1,037,149 new purebreds. This was an increase of 3,300 dogs from 1981. And purebreds reflect less than half of the actual canine population in the U.S.

The "top ten" breeds remained pretty much the same in 1982, except for a couple of notable exceptions. Poodles and German shepherds appear to be slipping in favor.

Poodles actually slipped slightly in number last year, reducing their new registrations by almost five percent, while cockers crept closer by about four and a half percent. Handicappers see this trend pointing to the cocker finally overthrowing the 23-year-old reign of the poodle.

Of the ten most popular breeds only one actually tumbled from its ranking, and that was the German shepherd, sliding from third place to fourth. The drop in registrations was only about 500, but the Labrador retriever took over the spot with an impressive leap of almost 4,000 new registrations.



FADS OF DOG FANCY . . .

Cocker spaniels concluded 1982 with a total of 87,218 new registrations, only 1,432 behind the poodles. Assuming that this trend continues in 1983 the cocker spaniel is an easy heir to the throne once held by the poodle.

TOP TEN RANKINGS FOR 1982

1. Poodles 88,650
2. Cocker spaniels 87,218
3. Doberman Pinschers 73,180
4. Labrador retrievers 62,465
5. German shepherds 60,445
6. Golden retrievers 51,045
7. Miniature schnauzers 36,502
8. Beagles 35,548
9. Dachshunds 32,835
10. Shetland sheepdogs 30,512

But if you aren't inclined to follow the popularity trends and want a breed of dog that is less common you might want to consider the Sussex spaniel or the English foxhound. They both finished the year at the bottom of the list.

Although English foxhounds showed, on paper, a giant leap of 12 percent in registrations, they finished in the 125th place spot. Actually the increase was from a total of one new registration in 1981 to a total of 12 registrations in 1982.

WHAT MAKES A POPULAR DOG?

What makes one breed of dog soar in popularity while others slip away into obscurity? If you knew, and could predict it, you'd probably be rich and famous. Dog breeders would beat a path to your door, seeking your advice.

Breeders are left scratching their heads in confusion as they watch some breeds suddenly become in great demand while others, often very similar, fade out of favor. The reasons are usually there, but the predictability is impossible.

Scottish terriers and cairn terriers are fairly similar in appearance and about the same size, and both have non-shedding terrier coats. Millions have loved Dorothy's "Toto" in the Wizard of Oz, but few dashed out to buy a cairn. But many a Scotty found its way into American homes because of President Roosevelt's "Fala." Thousands of pictures and cartoons depicted the little terrier as the constant companion of the president, and everybody knew that Fala was a Scotty. But the beguiling cairn that went to Oz was a charming dog without identification.

FICKLE FADS OF DOG FANCY . . .

But movie dogs have had the strongest single influence in the popularity booms in dogdom. The dog may be portrayed in a manner that is really not typical of that breed, but John Q. Public doesn't stop to do any more checking. When he sees the enchanting Shaggy Dog on a late-night rerun he runs out to buy an Old English sheepdog.

He'll find out about the hours of grooming required later. No one is ever depicted struggling to get the mats out of Lassie's coat. And it is only after his cuddly puppy grows up that the new owner of his personal Lassie fills up the whole back seat of his tiny compact car.

Rin-Tin-Tin and Bullet never have serious health problems on the "silver screen" and thousands of German shepherds have been sold by either unknowing or uncaring breeders. In their haste to buy their own "wonder dog" the buyers seldom take time to seek out the established and reputable breeders. And, while the German shepherd has survived in popularity, despite the puppy mills, this has been the ruination of many breeds caught up in the popularity boom.

CELEBRITY DOGS . . .

Most breeders are thrilled to have a celebrity own a dog of their breed, but simple ownership alone doesn't do the trick. Most well-known figures have dogs, but there is often little or no association to which the public can relate. The weimaraner of President Eisenhower, the Kennedy Newfoundland, the Ford golden retriever made little changes in breed popularity. To capture the heart of a dog buyer the celebrity's dog must also be a celebrity. Team up Gary Moore with Clo the basset hound and you have instant success.

Several breeds have graced the Windsor Castle, but only the Pembroke Welsh corgi makes a strong identification with the royal family. Cartoons and news stories portray the corgi underfoot at state functions and occasionally keeping the palace guards in line with a good

nip in the ankle. Even portraits of the queen include a corgi or two. And an occasional litter of corgis have been born in those hallowed halls. The English people identify with the breed and the corgi continues to be one of the favorite breeds in England.

In recent years another factor for selection has entered the scene. A growing crime rate and decreasing confidence in our police protection has caused a great number of people to look for another form of home and business protection. Big, fierce, looking breeds are finding popularity. Overnight experts in guard dog training have popped up all over the country, often selling poorly trained, undependable "attack dogs" to unsuspecting buyers. In some cases the so-called protection dog is a bigger threat to the family than the possible burglar.



Top dogs . . .

Thousands of people buy dogs on impulse every year, only to discover that the choice of their pet couldn't have been worse. These same people may spend weeks in making the selection of a family car or TV set, but buy a dog on the strength of cute photo or watching a movie starring a trick dog. Unfortunately, it is the pet that pays the price for the unthinking decision. Most of them eventually wind up in shelters and dog pounds.

Only after that "darling" puppy has grown up to be too big, too nervous, too aggressive, too noisy, too expensive to maintain, too much work to groom does the new owner realize that it is completely the wrong dog for the wrong situation.

AVOIDING THE PITFALLS . . .

It is a real tribute so some breeds that are able to withstand the ravages of instant popularity and the overnight backyard breeders who exploit them. A couple of good examples are the poodle and German shepherd, who have continued to maintain many of their qualities despite the efforts of irresponsible mass puppy breeders. Perhaps the poodle has best survived the commercialization. In spite of everything it is still possible to own an attractive, physically and mentally sound poodle.

Who knows which breed of dog will take the fancy of dog buyers next? However the pendulum swings, you will be wise to be careful in your selection of your family pet. Every breed is right for someone, but the trick is to match the proper breed with your own special lifestyle. Ignore the whim of the moment and do some careful study of the characteristics of the kind of dog that is going to be an important part of your family.

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Trashing of animals . . .

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Most veterinarians see the only long term is education. In other words, "get 'em while they're young." A nation of youngsters already inculcated with the problems of pet surplus and the inherent cruelty of executing thousands of dogs and cats every year across the nation, will, in time, turn the problem around. But it will take years. And it may take marching every schoolchild through the experience of an ASPCA shelter or dog pound to reinforce the dimension of the problem.

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