



FIREPAW

Newsletter

Winter, 2005

THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH
AND EDUCATION PROMOTING ANIMAL WELFARE



Vol. V, Issue 1



Animals already get it. We teach people.



January 20, 2005

News & Special Announcements

FIREPAW goes to Hollywood...

FIREPAW principals have accepted an invitation to present their work on Companion Animal Renters at the 2005 Summit: THE HEALING POWER OF THE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND: COMPANION ANIMALS & SOCIETY, June 2nd, 3rd and 4th 2005 in Hollywood, California. The highlighted themes include: Understanding the roles of Service/Emotional Support Animals; Animals and Human Health; Accommodation Issues for Disabled Animal Owners (Housing, Public, Legal Assistance) and the Evolution of Human-Animals Support Services (HASS) organizations. Check the PAWS web site www.pawssf.org for the latest conference updates. For questions and more information, please contact Conference Co-Chairs Andrea Brooks (abrooks@pawssf.org) or Steve Wayland (swayland@pawsla.org).

Reaching out to Professional Audiences...

This past autumn FIREPAW principals completed a scientific article based on Tier I of the Companion Animal Victims Study (CAVS) entitled, "Silent Victims of Domestic Violence: Attitudes, Perceptions and Behaviors Regarding the Family Pet in Violent and Non-Violent Families." The article has been submitted to a scientific journal in the psychological-sociological fields. Also completed...requested revisions for an article on the Companion Animal Renters Study submitted to a scientific journal in the animal-human relations arena.



Reaching out to the mainstream...

a newspaper article was recently published featuring FIREPAW's Companion Animal Renters Study & Program. Written by Phil Arkow, an influential leader in the animal welfare arena, the piece, entitled, "Statistics favor the pet-friendly rental" appeared in his column, "Pet Pals" in the November 6, 2004 edition of New Jersey's Courier Post.

Working to reduce unwanted companion animals...

FIREPAW conducted several special projects as well as continuing ongoing consulting projects and data analysis for Maddie's Fund on nationwide programs to decrease overpopulation and reduce euthanasia for unwanted companion animals. Recent work with Maddie's Fund included reaching several important milestones: (1) conducting an analysis across programs that demonstrates statistically for the first time that spay/neuter programs are associated with lower intake, (2) established a method to estimate the size of the cat and dog population for communities, (3) created a White Paper for Maddie's Fund regarding the best method to measure shelter success. All three of these milestones are innovations that are new to the animal welfare field. Pending approval the findings will be submitted for both scientific and mainstream publications. Stay tuned for more details.

more news on page 9

Editorial

Guest Commentary

PETCO & PETSMART: Animal Welfare Advocates - Or Antagonists?

[Excerpt*]

by Denise Kelly, Founder and Director, Avian Welfare Coalition (AWC)

Over the years, two giant retail chains, PETCO and PETSMART, have made some genuine contributions to the cause of animal welfare. By refraining from the sale of dogs and cats, these chains have helped curb pet overpopulation.

What's more, PETCO and PETSMART have extended an open door policy to rescue groups by allocating space in their stores for pet adoption programs and providing funding from their charitable arms to support spay/neuter programs. Of course, the two chains have capitalized on these positions, reaping goodwill and publicity among the animal welfare community and the public at large - publicity that has undoubtedly contributed to the growth and financial success of both companies.

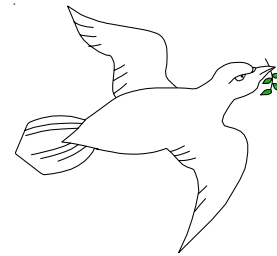
Unfortunately, PETCO and PETSMART's policy regarding animals other than cats and dogs is less humane. These chains have made the situation worse for exotic birds, reptiles, rabbits, and other small mammals by mass marketing them in increasing numbers. For those who are dealing with abandoned or relinquished animals of this sort, many of them originally sold through PETCO or PETSMART, the picture isn't as rosy.

Is it time for animal advocates to step back and consider the bigger picture as to what impact PETCO and PETSMART's policy of selling live animals will have down the road?

The Issues: A Question of Ethics and Responsibility.

Both PETCO and PETSMART sell a variety of exotic animals - tropical birds, reptiles, hedgehogs, snakes, lizards, sugar gliders, and many small mammals - that, regardless of their size, are still

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FIREPAW

THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROMOTING ANIMAL WELFARE

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Animals already get it. We teach people.

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Research Update

Guardian-Owner Study: Pet owners score low on caring



FIREPAW, Inc., recently conducted a study on the controversial “owner” versus “guardian” issue. The study was funded by California-based In Defense of Animals, well known for spearheading the Guardian Campaign, a movement to change terminology for pet-keeping from “owner” to “guardian”. The study focused on measuring the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of those animal caregivers who consider themselves “guardians” and those who consider themselves their pets’ “owners”. The results of the national study showed that compared to other groups, pet owners scored significantly lower on the treat

ment of and caring for their pets, their attitudes about their pets, and their beliefs about companion animals in general. The results of this research study statistically demonstrated distinct differences between pet owners and guardians in terms of the way they thought about and behaved toward their companion animals. Additionally, there emerged statistically significant differences between these two groups in their responses to the perceived benefits and shortcomings of changing terminology from companion animal “owner” to “guardian.” Additional insights were uncovered for those animal caretakers “on the fence”, reporting that they considered themselves to be *both* “owners” and “guardians” (reported here as “Hybrids”). FIREPAW President Dr. Pamela Frank said, “We know historically that language affects our perceptions and eventually, behavior. From this perspective the results are promising for companion animals living in the U.S.”

More research on page 10

Summary of Findings: Treatment of Companion Animals

Treatment	Owners	Guardians	Hybrids
Spay-neuter at least one of their pets	69.1%	92.6%	95.5%
Lost a pet in the past two years	30.9%	15.5%	11.4%
Register their pets	67.3%	91.8%	94.6%
Relinquished a pet due to personal or family problems	33.8%	18.6%	27.3%
Identification for pets (ID tag, tattoo, microchip, etc.)	55.9%	69.9%	79.5%
Permit pets to live indoors with the rest of the family	76.5%	97.4%	97.7%
Celebrate pets’ birthdays	26.5%	61.7%	56.8%
Give gifts to pets	48.5%	80.8%	77.3%
Include pets’ names on greeting cards w/ other family members	29.4%	69.4%	65.9%
Include pets’ pictures in family photo album	65.6%	93.6%	87.8%
Takes pets along on family outings, walks, picnics, vacations, etc.	52.9%	76.2%	79.6%
Show affection towards pets more than once a day	38.2%	65.8%	63.6%

Summary of Findings: Attitudes about the family pet

Attitude	Owners	Guardians	Hybrids
Satisfied with their pets	82.4%	95.3%	90.9%
View their pets as full-fledged members of the family	86.8%	99.0%	100%
View their pets as property	80.9%	10.4%	52.3%
Attached to their pets	76.5%	99.0%	100%
Identify with their pets/can relate to their pets	70.6%	96.9%	95.4%

All results were statistically significant

For a copy of the full Summary Report of the Guardian-Owner Study contact the authors at: Info@firepaw.org.

Education Update



Using research to persuade change...

FIREPAW responded to several requests from colleagues across the U.S. to provide statistical analysis and expert documentation in a variety of animal welfare cases, including a hearing in the Midwest concerning new laws on pet overpopulation and low-costs spay-neuter programs.

Educating the public...

As part of FIREPAW's commitment to conduct public awareness educational campaigns FIREPAW staff member Joanna Sinclair tabled at Farm Sanctuary's Walk for the Animals event, Washington Park, Albany, NY, this past October, 2004. We are grateful for Joanna's enthusiasm in handing out literature and talking with the public about animal welfare issues and cruelty-free living options.

Putting it in writing....

Drs. Pamela and Joshua Frank continued their work throughout the autumn and winter on their books. A total of five books focusing on various aspects of animal issues will serve to fulfill FIREPAW's public education objectives. Over the past several months they have written queries, sample chapters, chapter outlines and book proposals, and researched agents and publishers for submissions of these nonfiction books. They are currently working on the advice of a literary agent to make these books commercially viable.

Expert Corner

Winterizing Your Dog

By Jody Diehl, Certified Trainer and Behavior Counselor



Old Man Winter is really starting to blow. As you hunker down and get your home, car and wardrobe ready for the onslaught let's think about ways to keep your dog safe and comfortable, too. In cold weather adequate shelter is a necessity for dogs. It is best to keep your dog indoors if the temperature dips below 20 degrees. Shorthaired dogs, puppies and elderly dogs should be kept in if the temperature goes below 40 degrees. Don't forget that wind chill makes it colder than actual thermometer readings. Dogs left out in the cold too long can get frostbite and hypothermia just as humans can. Signs of frostbite are discoloration of the frozen area (often the tail, ears or feet), pale or blue colored skin, lack of pain or sensation at the affected area, or extreme pain as the area warms up. Signs of hypothermia can be decreased heart rate, dilated pupils, shivering, stupor or unconsciousness.

If your dog must be outside for any amount of time make sure she has a doghouse with plenty of clean, dry bedding. The doghouse should be large enough for her to be able to sit and lay down comfortably but small enough to hold in her body heat. The floor should be a few inches off the ground so the cold and damp can't seep into the bedding. The door should be covered with a waterproof material and face away from the wind.

In the house make sure your dog has a nice, comfy spot that is dry and away from drafts. Use blankets or dog beds on cold, uncarpeted surfaces like tile. This is especially important for old, arthritic dogs. Groom your dog regularly. A well-groomed coat is better insulation. You might want to consider a sweater for shorthaired dogs. Towel or blow-dry your dog when she gets wet from rain or snow. Carefully trim excess hair around toes and footpads.

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Literary Corner Speciesism



By Joan Dunayer
Reviewed by Joshua Frank

In Speciesism Joan Dunayer distinguishes herself from other animal rights advocates by arguing that Singer, Regan, Wise, Francione, and more or less every other prior author on the subject have not taken their stance on animals quite far enough. For example, she differs with Francione (who eschews any welfarist measures and is generally considered on the more extreme end of animal rights advocacy) in arguing that non-human animals have not just a right to life but every other applicable right including a right to property, and that the punishment for killing a nonhuman should be the same as that for killing a human.

Dunayer also goes further than most animal advocates in terms of which animals should possess these rights. Dunayer extends the same rights as human beings not only not only to vertebrates, but to insects, and any other invertebrate with a nervous system including corals and flatworms. According to Dunayer, all these creatures and more are “sentient” or “conscious, capable of experiencing thoughts or feelings”. In defense of this proposition some interesting research is discussed on the abilities of invertebrate animals to learn and to react to pain. However, the issue of sentience and just what is experienced by these animals is much more complex and open to interpretation than it is presented in the book. Unfortunately, though Dunayer repeatedly states that sentience is the only valid criteria for rights, little in the way of an argument is presented to support this conclusion. Using sentience as a sole, universal, yes/no criteria is not an unreasonable position to take, but it does require more justification since she uses this stance to attack the conclusions of many prominent animal rights philosophers who have complex and nuanced arguments.

Dunayer also takes a hard line stance against any non-abolitionist welfare measures and even against using statements that hint of speciesism in support of rights for specific animal groups such as great apes. Dunayer argues that measures to improve animal

welfare (such as eliminate battery cages while allowing continued egg production) perpetuate animal exploitation. This argument is repeated throughout the book as if it is self-evident without sufficient discussion. But it is a very complex and undecided sociological question whether welfare measures retard or accelerate the time frame for abolition. My bet is that the countries that have the most welfare measures in place, not the least, will be the first to reach abolitionist goals because caring and compassion begets caring and compassion regardless of the philosophical slant. Furthermore, if there is any doubt about which is better long-term, a strong case could be made to adopt measures that help real live animals now. In her arguments on this topic Dunayer seems more focused on consistency of principals than on the suffering of the animals themselves.

Many readers will probably take issue with portions of *Speciesism*. But the very strength of Dunayer’s book is that it does, in fact, encourage debate. It is thought-provoking and well documented. This is not a book to give to people as their first introduction to animal rights or animal issues, however. This book is more likely to frighten than convert the novice audience. But for people who already have a strong concern and background with animals, regardless of their precise philosophy, Dunayer’s book will leave you thinking and debating many questions and for that reason, it is worth reading.

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## Dr. Rat

By William Kotzwinkle  
Reviewed by Joshua Frank

Dr. Rat is one of those little gems of a book that somehow managed to fall through the cracks. This novel was originally published in 1971. However the first time I found out about it was in 2002 at the table of a small publisher I had visited after speaking at a national animal rights conference.

This novel is like nothing else I have ever read. It is a surreal tale from inside an animal laboratory told from the perspective of a rat. Yes, a rat. But not just any

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## Animal Law

### Animal Rights Law Funding

Game show host Bob Barker has given a \$1 million donation to create an animal rights law endowment. Barker, who often advises viewers to spay or neuter their pets, said he hoped the endowment would encourage more law students to get involved in protecting animals. The Bob Barker Endowment Fund for the Study of Animal Rights Law will pay for teaching, research, seminars and lectures. Mr. Barker, a strict vegetarian, lives with two rabbits.



### Animal Laws Nationwide

Some 23 states now allow enforceable pet trusts, in which people set aside money in their will for the care of their pet. More than 40 states have felony-level charges that virtually ensure jail time for serious offenders. Some 40 law schools now offer courses on the topic of granting legal rights to animals.

### Animal Abuse Reporting

According to the Animal Legal Defense Fund, a 23-year-old nonprofit group, the number of reported cases involving animal abuse, cruelty or neglect nearly *tripled* from 1996 to 2000.

### New California Animal Laws— AB2479/ Live-animal markets

Under the law, the animal must be killed before it is butchered and holding facilities must meet certain standards to insure they are more tolerable for the animals. And... **SB1520/Force-feeding of birds** -This is the “foie gras” law that stops the force-feeding of fowl to swell their livers. Some animal advocates are very pleased with the law while others are distressed that the law doesn’t become operative until July 2012 and in the meantime it forbids pending actions to stop the force-feeding and prohibits new civil or criminal actions. The result according to those opposed is continued cruelty and a ban against legal action for several more years.

### Revised New York Animal Law

S.173-A, increases penalties when an animal struck by a vehicle is a guide, service or hearing dog actually engaged in aiding or guiding a person with a disability. This increased penalty takes into account the considerable expense of training service dogs as well as the potential danger to the disabled person left at the scene of an accident without the aid of his or her guide, hearing or service dog.

## Animal Well-Being

### Paralysis in Dogs Reversed

Dogs with paralyzed hind legs regained the ability to walk after getting a shot of a chemical cousin of antifreeze that helped repair nerve cells in their damaged spinal cords. In the study 19 dogs were injected with polyethylene glycol, or PEG — a nontoxic liquid polymer composed of long strings of the same type of molecules found in antifreeze. The treatment only worked on dogs given the injections within about three days of their injury. Some dogs not given the injections eventually walked again, but those getting the new treatment had a dramatically higher recovery rate. The study’s findings appear in the December issue of the *Journal of Neurotrauma*. For more information visit the Purdue Center for Paralysis Research: <http://www.vet.purdue.edu/cpr/>



### Canine ParvoVirus More Dangerous than Previously Thought

A new study has shown that canine parvovirus, an organism that can sicken and kill dogs, has undergone epidemic-like growth over the past 25 years. Experts hope the word will get out and that dog owners will vaccinate their puppies and dogs. Parvo, as it’s often called, was first identified in dogs in 1978. Even with treatment, it can prove fatal. Puppies are especially susceptible to parvo, with the peak infection period often occurring between the ages of 2 and 4 months. Symptoms include lethargy and diarrhea. It can be fatal. Experts recommend that pet owners vaccinate puppies with the parvovirus immunization at age 2 months, 3 months, and again at 4 months, and then annually. The study appears in the recent *Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences*.

## Animal Fun Facts

*Did you know that...*

- Prairie dogs are way chatty it seems. According to a Northern Arizona University biology professor and prairie dog linguist, prairie dogs are talking up a storm. They have different “words” to describe the types of people they encounter as well as for many other creatures. Prairie dogs, it is believed, communicate detailed information to one another about what animals are showing up in their colonies, and maybe even gossiping!



- Bats may be real lifesavers. Just ask the stroke victims being treated at a Louisville, Kentucky hospital who will benefit from the natural talents of the vampire bat. Researchers at the University of Louisville Hospital are studying whether the bats’ ability to drink the blood of an animal while preventing the blood from clotting might help control damaging strokes in humans. An experimental clot-busting drug modeled after bat saliva is currently being tested at the university.

- Lions may now have friends in high places. Officials of the government in Kenya said they will push for an international ban on trade in lion trophies and skins, expressing concern that the African lion is “under threat.” Neighboring Tanzania disagreed with the idea of a ban, citing potential loss of revenue from trophy hunters.

- Deer and raccoons — not wild turkeys, as many farmers believed— turn out to be the greediest crop-raiders. After two years of field work, a Purdue University team vindicated turkeys by showing that deer and raccoons caused 95 percent of the damage in the fields surveyed. Squirrels, groundhogs and other species, but not turkeys, inflicted the remaining damage.

- Homing pigeons have built-in magnets, it seems. Scientists believe they have now confirmed theories that homing pigeons are able to carry out their long-range navigational feat thanks to tiny magnetic particles in their upper beaks. During a recent experiment the birds suddenly lost this navigational ability when magnets were attached to their beaks or when their beaks were anesthetized.

*Sources: The Associated Press, The Courier-Journal*

## Animal-Related Events



**SUBMISSIONS  
REQUESTED:  
COUGAR STORIES**

<http://www.cougarfund.org/programs.html>

Cougar: A Collection of True Tales, Tall Tales, Folklore and Field Stories of AMERICA’S GREATEST CAT  
Edited by Cara Blessley Lowe and Marc Bekoff

### HUMANE EDUCATION SEMINAR

“Reaching Diverse Audiences” is the theme of the Seventh Annual Humane Education Seminar scheduled for Saturday, March 5, 2005, presented by The Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Presentations will address animal assisted intervention programs, different learning styles, distance learning opportunities, and compassion fatigue.

For further information about the seminar, visit the Web site at <http://www.ansci.uiuc.edu/events/companion/humane/>. Questions and brochure requests may be directed to Susan Helmink at 217-244-5141 or [susanh@uiuc.edu](mailto:susanh@uiuc.edu).

### ANIMAL WELFARE Scientific/Academic/ Professional CONFERENCES

THE INTERSECTION OF HUMANS AND OTHER ANIMALS/HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS, Animals & Society—American Sociological Society (ASA), August 13-16, 2005, Philadelphia, PA [www.asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org)

EXPLORING HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONS, International Society of Anthrozoology (ISAZ), July 11-12, 2005, Niagara Falls, NY  
[www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/CCAB/ISAZ.htm](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/CCAB/ISAZ.htm)

THE HEALING POWER OF THE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND: COMPANION ANIMALS & SOCIETY, June 2nd, 3rd and 4th 2005, Los Angeles, California  
[www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org)

## Strange But True Animal Stories

### - Mexico Recruits Cats to Fight Rats

...state officials say they hope to collect an army of 700 felines for a frontal attack on an isolated farm village with an estimated rat population of half a million.

### - Bear ransacks kitchen, steals chocolate

...A paralyzed man in Aspen, Colorado, lay helplessly in bed for two hours while a 500-pound black bear known as "Fat Albert" went through his kitchen breaking dishes and looking for a tasty snack. "I had 4 pounds of chocolate...He ate it all ..."



### - Horse baptized for church funds

...A South African preacher baptized a thoroughbred racehorse called "Running Reverend" in front of his congregation in a controversial bid to raise church funds. Running Reverend will now be raffled for a 32 dollar ticket to raise funds for church buildings and an old age home. The raffle winner will earn a 49 percent stake in the horse, to be co-owned by the Eastern Cape racehorse breeders who donated the animal.

### - Who let the dogs out?

...The staff at Battersea Dogs Home in London were baffled after an apparent troublemaker released dozens of animals night after night, allowing them to raid the kitchen and cause chaos. It was only after video surveillance footage was studied that the culprit was revealed to be Red, a dog who had been brought to the London refuge as an emaciated stray several months earlier. Red had somehow learned to undo the bolt on his kennel, before then freeing a group of chosen companions for a raid on the kitchen

### - Beavers Make Dam Out of Stolen Money

...Beavers in Louisiana found a bag of bills stolen from a casino, tore it open and wove the money into the sticks and brush of their dam on a creek near Baton Rouge. The money was part of at least \$70,000 taken last week from the Lucky Dollar Casino in Greensburg, about 30 miles northeast of Baton Rouge.

Sources: Associated Press, Reuters, AFP

## Special Delivery

### ANIMAL TRANSPORTATION

Sky Ark has its tentative "Flex Route" now online. They are accepting input on this nationwide animal transport routing.

You can see this new routing system and also give your input via their web site. <http://www.skyark.org>

The mission of Sky Ark Inc. is to provide a private transportation service in a private motor home or aircraft to members for their qualified animals within the United States.



The animals are transported on Sky Ark's bus and aircraft. They transport animals or birds in need of health care, service/companion animals, and some rescued animals. Sky Ark also provides transport for wildlife to rescue centers or medical facilities. They also will help in national disasters to help in the relocation of animals.

Sky Ark does not consider animals or pets in any way as "Property" or "Cargo."

The only animals Sky Ark Inc does NOT transport are: Monkeys, Horses, and animals used in illegal activity or in research or from puppy mills.

## Animal Related Resources



### FEED RESCUED ANIMALS IN NEED

<http://www.theanimalrescuesite.com>

### WILDLIFE

[www.morebeautifulwild.org](http://www.morebeautifulwild.org)

### RAT RESCUE

<http://www.freewebs.com/shikasrattierescue>

### HORSE THERAPY VIDEO

[www.vetmed.wsu.edu/depts-pppp/PATH.asp](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/depts-pppp/PATH.asp)

### LOW-COST SPAY-NEUTER PROGRAMS—NY & VT

1-Faithful Friends Pet Rescue

EMAIL: [luvdobies4@msn.com](mailto:luvdobies4@msn.com)

2-<http://www.lovethatcat.com/stny.html>

### BOOK: Taming the Feral Cat

Author: Carrol Clancy

[www.oasisdelosgatos.org](http://www.oasisdelosgatos.org)



## Literary Corner

*continued from page 5*

rat...an insane rat with a serious case of Stockholm Syndrome. While all the other rats are trying to escape their torture, Dr. Rat is making careful scientific notations, trying to aid his captors in their important experiments.

Kotzwinkle does an admirable job of showing the horrors of the laboratory experiments and the absurdity of the “science”. But the most amazing achievement is his ability to insert enough humor into a narration of torture that it actually becomes bearable to go on.

Just as the book starts to border on repetition with the endless variations of painful experiments and useful results, Kotzwinkle introduces new elements that at times become surreal (yes, even more surreal than an insane rat “scientist”). But these elements work quite well and bring in a parallel plot that integrates other elements of human madness towards animals.

All the elements come together at the end to create a powerful effect. Hopefully, more people will decide to read this book and experience its power for themselves.



## News

*continued from page 1*

### Crossing disciplines...

FIREPAW’s Dr. Joshua Frank recently had an article accepted for publication entitled, “Technological Lock-In, Positive Feedback, and Research on Laboratory Animals” in the scientific journal *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics* (SCED). For more details please see the **Research Updates** segment of this newsletter.

## Expert Corner

*continued from page 4*

This will prevent snow and ice build up and cracked pads. Chemicals used to melt ice can irritate and burn footpads. Avoid areas that have been treated and be sure to wash and dry your dog's feet after a walk. Petroleum jelly or cooking spray will soften and protect the pads and prevent further cracking. You can also use dog boots in very cold weather. They look kind of silly but they work.

If your dog is very active or spends a lot of time outdoors feed her additional calories. It takes more energy in the winter to regulate body temperature. Fresh water is just as important in the winter as it is in the summer. Snow is not a substitute for water.

Leaving your dog alone in the car in the winter can be just as dangerous as doing so in the summer. It is too cold if the car is turned off and if the car is left on your dog is at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Avoid taking your dog into garages and parking lots. Antifreeze is extremely poisonous to dogs. Unfortunately, the smell is very attractive to dogs so they are drawn to it. If your dog ingests any amount of antifreeze get her to the vet's immediately.

Romps through the snow can be great exercise for your dog. Be careful, though, of letting her run on frozen lakes, ponds and rivers. She could slip and injure herself or fall through thin ice. Try to keep snow from piling up next to your fence. A packed snowdrift provides the perfect boost for a getaway. It's a good idea to snow blow the inside perimeter of the fence and a "potty" spot somewhere in the yard.

As the bitter winds howl outside your door, and your thoughts turn to burrowing under a blanket by the fire, remember that Snookums needs the same creature comforts that you do. Please, bring her inside to snuggle in with you.

*Jody Diehl is a Certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Counselor. She is the owner of Dog's Best Friend, a business dedicated to the prevention and treatment of behavior problems through the use of gentle and humane training techniques. For questions or comments or to learn more about her services please call 518-966-5684 or email [bestdog@mhcable.com](mailto:bestdog@mhcable.com)*

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## Research Update

*continued from page 3*

### The economics of laboratory animals...

FIREPAW Executive Director Joshua Frank, Ph.D. has a forthcoming article in the economic journal *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics* entitled, "Technological Lock-In, Positive Institutional Feedback, and Research on Laboratory Animals". The article focuses on research conducted on laboratory animals and the link between this endeavor and the growing body of economic literature on a concept called "lock-in" or "path dependence".

Lock-in is a relatively new concept. It explains why certain technological and production choices prevail in the economy even when they may be inferior to other choices in the long run. When growth paths for the economy diverge, random or arbitrary events can sometimes determine the long-term course of society. For example, the configuration of the typewriter keyboard (and now computer keyboard) with the top row of letters starting with "QWERTY" is arbitrary (rather than inherently superior to another configuration) yet persistent and difficult to change. The competition between beta and VHS videotape technology is another example of production getting "locked-in" to a path long-term based on relatively minor events.

The article demonstrates how this same concept applies to animal research. Animal research appears to be "locked-in" as the preferred research method in certain fields. In other words, the preference for this type of research is based on historical accident and random events rather than due to the superiority of the methodology. The persistent presence of this type of research in society arguably has nothing to do with its usefulness or efficiency. For a copy of this article email: [DrJFrank@firepaw.org](mailto:DrJFrank@firepaw.org)

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Editorial

continued from page 2

essentially undomesticated and simply not suitable as household "pets." Whether captive-bred or trapped, these animals retain the same physical and psychological traits that have enabled them to survive in the wild. Many, therefore, suffer from captivity-related stress

and illness. Their needs are far more specialized than those of dogs and cats, and their behavior often becomes difficult to manage; consequently, they are more likely than other pets to be relinquished by caretakers.

The fact is the sale of exotic species through PETCO and PETSMART flies in the face of one of the humane movement's most basic philosophical precepts: wild animals belong in the wild. Moreover, popularizing exotic animals as "pets" inevitably leads to a marked increase in the legal and illegal poaching of these animals in their natural habitats.

How can we ever hope to garner support for the preservation of exotic and endangered animals in their native habitats when we allow the suffering of hundreds of thousands of those same species in the two largest pet store chains in the country?

There are fewer placement options for exotics. Most shelters and animal control facilities are not equipped to handle large numbers of these animals, and there are a limited number of qualified homes in which to place them. The result is overpopulation - at a more rapid pace than that of domestic animals, though the numbers themselves may be lower.

Additionally, the burgeoning exotic pet trade has led to a marked increase in the number of exotic birds, reptiles, and other non-native species being released here in the U.S. The presence of these animals increases the risk of disease transmission to our native species and can have other, more far-reaching effects on the environment.

Released birds, reptiles, rabbits, and other small mammals, while not as visible on the street as other strays, constitute a "hidden crisis." In truth, there are millions of these animals produced annually for the pet trade, and they are subject to the same abandonment and cruelty issues as cats and dogs.

Among the questions to be asked are: What effects will these factors have on the role of shelter and animal control organizations? How will such organizations, already overcrowded with cats and dogs, manage growing numbers of displaced exotics? How will qualified placements be determined? At what point and under what circumstances will animal control organizations consider euthanasia?

What additional facilities and funding will be required to house and care for exotics? Will shelters be prepared to offer the same housing and placement

services for these animals as they do for dogs and cats? If not, how will the public perceive these exclusions and how will it affect donor expectations?

Millions of dogs and cats are still being killed at shelters annually. While rescue groups are successful in adopting cats and dogs through PETCO and PETSMART, adoption rates would be significantly reduced if these groups were competing with the sale of puppies and kittens in the same store.

By the same token, would more dogs and cats be adopted if PETCO and PETSMART were not commercializing and selling other animals? Is it ethical at all to be promoting the sale of exotic animals while we've yet come to terms with the tragic pet overpopulation problem that sees millions of domesticated animals still being killed at shelters each year for the simple want of a good home?

It takes huge numbers of animals to stock their stores; satisfying the volume inevitably involves the equivalent of "puppy mills" for birds, reptiles, rabbits, ferrets, and other small mammals. Some animals that PETCO and PETSMART sell are shipped to locations unweaned. Animals unable to eat on their own are far more susceptible to illness and mortality, particularly when they undergo the stresses of a retail store environment; many others suffer irreversible trauma that results in behavioral problems.

In short, meeting bottom-line corporate profit goals is often at odds with the costly requirements of providing humane, quality housing and dietary and veterinary care to the animals in their stores. Animals are subjected to stress, neglect and even instances of cruelty all along the supply chain.

Can we afford to condone any mass production and distribution system that compromises the health, safety, and welfare of any animal?

*To read the entire article contact the author through the web site: www.avianwelfare.org.

A complete listing of articles on birds in the retail trade is at:

<http://www.avianwelfare.org/issues/marketing.htm>

<http://www.avianwelfare.org/issues/articles/ppadvant.htm>

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* Recognized by the American Anti-Vivisection Society's (AAVS) Winter, 2003 Magazine