



PAWS Act Provides Protections for Pets Threatened by Domestic Violence

BY: SAMANTHA BARTLETT, DVM

Domestic violence affects people from all walks of life. Many victims of domestic violence are women with pets, either their own or their children's beloved companion. Past research has shown that abusers don't stop at their domestic partner, but often focus their abusive behavior directly or indirectly on other members of the household.

The National Coalition against Domestic Violence (NCDV) has compiled a large number of statistics relating to all areas of domestic violence. According to NCDV, the majority of pet owners that checked into domestic violence shelters reported that their abuser threatened, harmed or killed their pet. Over half of victims in shelters have reported that they had to leave their pet with their abuser. Approximately half of victims and their children describe their pets as an important part of their emotional stability and state that their pets are key to helping them to adjust and recover from their experiences of abuse.

Although some programs have shelter or referral services for pets, the majority of programs are not set up to deal with the care of pets owned by victims of abuse. Because of this, many victims choose to stay in the home with their abusers because they cannot take their pets with them and they fear what will happen if they leave them behind. Others resort to extreme measures, such as living in their car with their pets for months at a time until an alternative living situation can be found.

In response to this trend, a piece of legislation known as the Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act was introduced help domestic violence programs provide shelter and housing assistance for companion animals in 2014. By doing so, this act will help protect women from further emotional trauma caused by potential danger to their pets and to help empower these women by elevating them from a victim to a protector and caregiver of their pet.

The PAWS Act was finally signed into law as a part of the Farm Bill in 2018. The PAWS Act broadens existing federal provisions for domestic violence victims to include their pets. The Act will create a \$3 million federal grant program to assist these victims in finding shelter for their pets. In addition, the Act will provide coverage of veterinary bills in restitution for domestic violence cases when a pet is abused. As part of the language of the act, the definition of stalking is amended to include "conduct that causes a person to experience a reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury to his or her pet." This also includes interstate protection for animals, meaning a person cannot cross state lines with the intent of harming a pet covered under a protection order.

Uptick in Pet Insurance Claims for Obesity-Related Conditions

BY: SAMANTHA BARTLETT, DVM

We all know that obesity is an epidemic in our pet population. As professionals in the veterinary field, we see evidence of this problem multiple times a day. It is estimated that one-third of pet dogs and cats in the United States is overweight. Nationwide Insurance conducted a retrospective study on pet insurance claims within the company for conditions related to obesity. The obesity trend has been documented by Nationwide for the past 8 years showing a 24% increase over this time period.

The study data reported 20% of insurance claims among Nationwide members were for conditions related to obesity in pets. The total cost of these claims was over \$69 million. Nationwide went further and sorted the claims in to the 10 most common conditions related to obesity in cats and dogs. Among these conditions for both species are liver disease, arthritis and orthopedic conditions, urinary/kidney disease, and heart disease.

All of this data suggests that pet owners do not understand the severe consequences of obesity on pet health and most likely do not know what an ideal body condition looks like. Education on both counts is key to battling this epidemic. While convincing a pet owner that their dog or cat is obese is a bigger challenge than one might think, it can pay off in the long run by creating a happier and longer-lived pet. Sometimes convincing an owner their pet needs to lose weight takes several repetitions over many visits.

Convincing a pet owner their pet needs to lose weight is only the beginning. Weight loss for pets is a collaborative effort between us and the pet's family. Everyone has to be on the same page for it to work. Researchers suspect that feeding habits play a big role in weight gain for pets. Respondents to a "better Cities for Pets" survey admitted that they give their pet food any time they beg for it (54%) and many admitted to overfeeding their pet to keep them happy (22%).



Researchers have estimated that most owners determine the quantity of food for their pet by guessing rather than actually measuring portions.

Based on that finding, one suggestion to help owners with weight loss for their pet include actually measuring portions based on calorie calculations by the veterinarian to ensure that they aren't overfeeding at each meal. Advise pet owners on low calorie treats or cut out treats entirely to avoid hidden calories that could be sabotaging their pet's weight loss effort. One way to do this is to eliminate table scraps from the diet. Educate owners that feeding guidelines on the bag are not necessarily appropriate for their pet's individual needs. Of course, beyond feeding, exercise also plays a role in weight loss. Encourage your clients to take their pets on longer or more frequent walks. Depending on the pet's overall healthy, you could even suggest a daily exercise schedule to help the pet lose weight and increase his overall health.

Finally, encouraging owners to bring their pet in for bi-weekly or monthly weigh-ins provides a feeling of a team approach and allows you and your staff to provide encouragement at milestones are met. By actually being able to see the progress with weigh-ins and being made accountable to the veterinary staff, owners are encouraged to keep up their efforts and to feel they have a much bigger involvement in their pet's health and well-being.

Lyme Disease Incidences in Dogs Increasing

BY: SAMANTHA BARTLETT, DVM

The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) published a scientific article on prevalence of Lyme disease, caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, in the United States. The article, entitled A large-scale spatio-temporal binomial regression model for estimating seroprevalence trends, concluded that canine Lyme disease is rising in prevalence along with increased incidences of human cases and that prevalence in dogs is on the rise in non-endemic states, which suggests an increased risk to humans in these areas. The study was published in *Environmetrics*, the official journal of The International Environmetrics Society.

The researchers collected data from IDEXX laboratories on 16 million serologic Lyme tests conducted on dogs in veterinary clinics from January 2012 until December 2016. This data was then used to infer that exposure risks are increasing in areas of prevalence and also to determine areas where tick population is increasing. The rate of increase was greater in known regions of high Lyme incidence including Maine, West Virginia, Virginia, and northern Minnesota and Wisconsin. Increasing trends are also seen as far south as North Carolina and Tennessee; areas where Lyme disease has traditionally been considered non-endemic. Other areas of increasing trends include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. The prevalence of Lyme disease in endemic areas of the New England is stable.

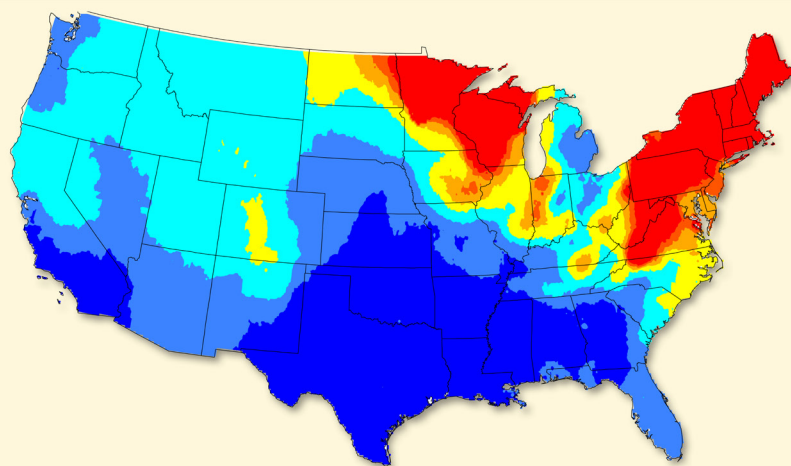
In areas that a significant change of canine prevalence has been identified, there have not been reports of significant incidence in humans. However, the canine data can be used as a sentinel for risk to humans. West Virginia, Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio are currently at the leading edge of this expanding territory. These regions were also noted to have increasing reports of ticks.

As these territories expand, humans and dogs are at greater risk when exposed to ticks when traveling in areas of growing incidence. Being aware of the growing incidence of Lyme disease will with diagnosis of any dog that may be exhibiting clinical signs and hopefully will increase testing on a routine basis. Tick prevention is vital to the control of Lyme disease. Educating pet owners also helps in control of this disease. Ticks are not just in wooded areas, but also in communities where wildlife share space. CAPC recommendations include regular screening in dogs, and year-round tick protection in dogs and cats.

CAPC provides monthly forecasts for Lyme disease and maps that show prevalence based on canine testing. These maps can be used to determine exposure risks across Canada and the United States. The CAPC maps can be accessed at petsandparasites.org. The monthly forecasts are published on petdiseasealerts.org.

Forecasted Prevalence of Lyme Disease

2018





Millennials May Be More Open to Pet Insurance Than Older Pet Owners

BY: SAMANTHA BARTLETT, DVM

Millennial pet owners view their pets as akin to having children, as many Millennials are waiting later to have children. Although a large number of Millennials are renters, many that do buy houses cite their pet as one of the factors driving them to purchase rather than rent. These pet owners are also more likely to plan vacations around their pets and make home cooked meals for their pets.

A study conducted in 2018 by Liberty Mutual Insurance found that Millennials are more likely to own pets and are more likely to have health insurance for those pets than GenXers and Baby boomers. The survey found that 57 percent of Millennials own a pet and 31 percent of those pet owners have pet insurance. This study also indicates that Millennial pet owners are more likely to sacrifice their own health care to cover the costs of care for their pets. In short, Millennials are the largest group of pet owners and are driving the pet care market in demand for health care and spending.

Because of this young generation of pet owners, pet insurance policies grew by 17% last year and the number of claims has increased dramatically. These owners are seeking the best health care they can attain and are more likely to spend larger amounts of money on products that are more ecologically friendly and better for their pet's

overall health and development. These owners also realize that catastrophic events occur for which they may not be able to afford out of pocket and also that aging pets require more costly care. These owners are far more willing to spend money to save their pets and prolong lives than they are to euthanize.

Pet insurance is a \$774 million industry and includes a dozen major companies. Nationwide, the biggest pet insurance provider, estimates that almost 50% of fortune 500 companies offer pet insurance as an employee benefit. Many employers are offering pet insurance benefits to entice potential employees to join the company. The average premium costs about \$600 per year. As pet owners seek more advanced treatment and expect longer life spans of their pets, insurance will become increasingly important to managing the costs of health care.

On the veterinary aspect, owners with pet insurance are more willing to come to the vet and spend more money per visit than those without insurance. As health care providers, we can help drive this growing trend by helping to educate owners on the benefits of having insurance for their pet and by making it easy for claims to be filed, whether it is doing it through the clinic or filling out claims forms and providing records in a timely and convenient manner.

MARCH CE

Speaker: Dr. Lisa Stehno-Bittel
Topic: Regenerative Medicine Approaches to
Management and Treatment of Canine and
Feline Diabetes
Date: Thursday, March 21st, 2019
Time: 6:30 – Dinner/Registration
7pm – Presentation
CE: 2 Hours

Location: Hereford House (Leawood)
5001 Town Center Drive
Leawood, KS 66211
Fee: No fee to attend this event, but RSVP
is required by Feb. 28th. Current
membership dues cover all CE.

Sponsor:



Dr. Stehno-Bittel has spent over 25 years of her research career searching for a replacement for daily insulin injections for pets and people. She has 55 publications in scientific journals and has received more than \$9 million in grant funding for her research. In 2012, she and Dr. Karthik Ramachandran licensed their patents from the University of Kansas Medical Center and started Likarda, where she serves as President. The focus of Likarda is to replace daily insulin injection for dogs and cats with a cell-based therapy. She has received numerous awards for her research, teaching and entrepreneurship, and Ingram's Magazine named her One of 50 Kansans You Should Know.

ABOUT THE TALK: Transplantation of pancreatic islets has been examined in humans for decades as a putative “cure” for diabetes. Fraught with limitations, islet transplantation is still rarely indicated over exogenous insulin therapies, which have advanced significantly (for humans). Current treatments for diabetic pets, however, are outdated, burdensome, and provide only partial glycemic control, leading to frequent complications and comorbidities. Conversely, cell-based therapies for diabetes have the ability restore natural glycemic function for several months to years with a single injection of cells. Furthermore, canines have been and are still used extensively in research for human application of these therapies with promising results, yet access to these treatments is essentially non-existent for pets and their owners. This presentation examines the history and progress of cell-therapies for diabetes, the limitations preventing their use in companion animals, and strategies to overcome these limitations. Specific topics include the use of advanced biomaterials and bioprocessing for immunoprotection and cell delivery, and the current status of stem-cell derived islet surrogates as a scalable and renewable source of therapeutic cells/tissues.

Classifieds

Send your classified ads to: Wanda Geis, PO Box 12468, Shawnee Mission, KS 66282-2468, or email them to classifieds@kcvma.com. Ads must not be over 100 words in length. Classified ads will be run at the sole discretion of the editor and may be edited for content.

February 25, 2019

Full or Part-time Doctor Desired, GREAT WORK LIFE BALANCE (45 HOUR WORK WEEK) SALARY STARTING AT 100K PER YEAR PLUS BONUSES. ANGEL'S VET SAVANNAH, MO. RESUMES TO lsmschoogys@yahoo.com

February 18, 2019

Do you want to be at a practice where you are part of a team? Do you want an environment where you can grow as a veterinarian? Turner Animal Hospital is a busy 2 doctor small animal practice in the beautiful and affordable Kansas City area. We are currently looking for a veterinarian.

We have state of the art equipment such as Digital X-ray, Idexx In-house lab, In-house Urine Culture, A brand new Idexx Sedivue, Cryotherapy, and Cornerstone Practice Management Software. We currently only see canine and feline patients. If you have a strong interest in exotics we would be open to treating exotics.

We value continuing education for all of our staff members and currently have staff member who is Fear Free Certified and our practice manager is a Certified Veterinary Practice Manager.

Compensation depends on experience with a raise of up to \$5,000 and a bonus for outstanding performance at the end of 12 months. The position also comes with a generous benefit package including:

- * \$2,000- \$2,500 Salary Bonus for first year if Fear Free Certified
- * Health Insurance Stipend (\$200-\$400 a month)- can also be used for dental, vision, or life
- * Reimbursement for: Professional Organization Dues, Licenses, Liability Insurance, and Continuing Education
- * Scrub/White Coat Allowance
- * 2 weeks PTO.

Please Reply to our Practice Manager, Tara at turneranimalhospital@gmail.com

February 15, 2019

Platte Woods Animal Hospital is looking for a full-time Associate Veterinarian to work 35-40 hours per week. We are family owned and operated clinic in the Kansas City Northland area. We are a long established, busy, and AAHA accredited small animal practice. Our ideal candidate would enjoy practicing in a well-equipped, fast paced practice with very experienced staff. We offer in-house laboratory, full body digital x-rays, digital dental x-rays, therapeutic laser therapy, ultrasounds, and soft tissue surgery. Our practice moved into a new state of the art facility 1 ½ years ago and has experienced strong growth. Interested applicants should email their resume to pwah5901@gmail.com

February 18, 2019

The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City is currently seeking an energetic and enthusiastic part-time veterinarian to join our team. Our 501 c3 non-profit organization operates a public service veterinary clinic targeting underserved/low income populations. We offer a range of services to our public clientele including wellness care, management of acute and chronic disease, dentistry, radiology and surgical services. Our clinic also provides veterinary service at KCK Animal Services and for our own shelter's pets. Come help us save and improve the lives of animals and in the Greater Kansas City area! Mentorship for new graduates is available. Please send resume and/or CV submissions to walker@hsgkc.org

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February 8, 2019

Gage Animal Hospital, a premier, well-established, two veterinarian small animal practice in Topeka, Kansas, is rapidly growing and is seeking to add one full-time associate veterinarian and one half-time associate veterinarian. Half-time associate veterinarian position offers extremely flexible hours (88 hours per month, but no weekly minimum hours). Gage Animal Hospital is a collegial fast-paced environment in a spacious, well-equipped facility. Generous benefits, including 401k, vacation and other leave, and paid continuing education. Live in Topeka, or an easy 30 minute commute from Lawrence. Candidates with two plus years of experience with basic surgical skills and willingness to learn additional surgery as well as new graduates with a desire to learn surgical skills will be considered. GAH offers a very competitive starting salary (\$85,000-\$90,000), commensurate with experience.

Call us to schedule a visit, tour our hospital, learn about our unique practice model and our contributions to our community, as well as career opportunities. Phone: 785-272-8876 | Email: gageanimalhosp@aol.com.

January 29, 2019

Cedar Ridge Animal Hospital is seeking an Associate Veterinarian to join our team. The position could be Full Time or Part Time. Cedar Ridge Animal Hospital is a full-service small animal practice in Independence, MO. We provide preventive care, medicine, dentistry, surgery (elective, non-elective w/some orthopedic) and boarding. We have an In House Idexx Laboratory, gas anesthesia, anesthesia monitoring, and a Companion Therapy Laser. We believe in providing high quality care to our patients in a caring and fun environment. We treat our patients and clients like family. Our established clientele appreciates our compassionate environment and the education we provide to help them be a partner in their pet's care.

Cedar Ridge Animal Hospital provides a cozy family environment. A great opportunity for an experienced veterinarian or a new graduate. An interest in surgery is a plus! Potential for a future leadership role within the practice. We currently see dogs and cats but would welcome an opportunity to grow the practice by expanding to include exotics or other individual interests.

Contact: Dr Cassie Cure 816-833-1300 | Email: drccure@comcast.net

January 21, 2019

Spay and Neuter Kansas City seeking full time Veterinarian to join our team! Great atmosphere, rewarding work environment, great support staff and very competitive salary/benefits package. Send resume to michelle@snkc.net to schedule a meet and greet and tour. For more information on our organization and full job description visit snkc.net and look under "About SNKC" for all job opportunities.

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January 7, 2019

Raymore Veterinary Center is a small animal practice in Raymore, MO, a suburb just south of Kansas City, MO. We currently have two full time and one part-time veterinarians. Our hospital is growing rapidly and we are in need of additional veterinarians. Our hospital has been established in our community for more than 15 years. We treat each patient and their family as our own family. We have a seasoned and experienced staff, because Raymore Veterinary Center is a great place to work! Our team is progressive and dedicated to constant improvement. We have an RVT on staff, as well as great relationships with area specialists. We have gone above and beyond to provide the absolute best care for our patients and their families.

Raymore is about 20 minutes from downtown Kansas City, with easy interstate access to downtown, The Plaza, Westport and all of the other great areas of Kansas City.

Raymore Veterinary Center offers:

- Generous compensation package
- Flexible work schedule
- Continuing education allowance
- In-house Idexx laboratory equipment, digital radiographs, IM3 dental unit, laser surgical unit.
- Easy referral to multiple 24-hour emergency and specialty facilities in the area.
- We have a caring and supportive staff and you will work side-by-side other veterinarians daily. We foster a strong collaborative work environment.
- Beautiful, updated and CLEAN facility. We have four exam rooms, a separate surgical suite. Our treatment area is spacious with a dental table and a treatment tables in addition to runs and cat-friendly condos for our patients!

We are flexible and would welcome full or part time applicants of any experience level.

Contact Shane Brookshire, DVM (MU '97) or Ashley Baker, DVM (KSU '09) for more information. 816-331-2626 or raymorevc@gmail.com

January 2, 2019

Blue Springs Animal Hospital & Pet Resort is seeking a full time veterinarian for our AAHA award-winning small animal hospital in Blue Springs, MO, a suburb of Kansas City. Excellent mentorship and learning opportunity for new/recent graduates working with an exceptional team of doctors. Our doctors and staff are "family" and we strive for a positive, fun, and supportive work environment. State of the art 12000 sq ft facility, 10+ doctors, 50+ staff, advanced orthopedic and soft tissue surgery, ultrasound, echocardiography, video endoscopy, digital radiography, chemotherapy, wellness, internal medicine, dermatology, cardiology, canine reproduction. General practice plus referrals provides an opportunity to learn and develop your areas of interest. Competitive salary and benefits including health insurance, retirement plan, and paid CE. View our website at www.bluespringsanimalhospital.com. Contact Dr Nikki Stark 816-229-1544 or email drstark@bluespringsanimalhospital.com. We have digital XR, digital dental XR, a new IM3 dental, and in-house lab equipment with upgrades on the way. Benefits include a 401K program, paid continuing education, supplemental insurance, paid holidays, personal days and a personal pet discount. Our employment application and information about our hospital can be found at: <http://westwoodanimalhospital.com/front-page/forms-2/job-application-form/>