



Our Mission:

We are committed to saving lives and reducing suffering of homeless dogs and cats through education, advancement of knowledge and shelter outreach.

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Shelter Watch



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From the Clinician's Desk

I just returned from an exciting meeting at Oregon Humane Society (OHS) in Portland, Oregon. With 24 of 27 North American veterinary schools represented, this PetSmart Charities sponsored event gathered veterinary college faculty and shelter veterinarians to discuss mutually beneficial models for collaboration. Since 2007, every Oregon State University (OSU) veterinary student has spent at least two weeks at the 22,000 ft² Veterinary Medical Teaching Facility at OHS, performing surgery and providing medical care.

In these financial times, both humane organizations and veterinary schools are struggling to meet their missions. Veterinary schools report declining caseloads in their teaching hospitals and greatly reduced government funding; shelters struggle to provide care and treatment for increasing numbers of animals with decreasing donation dollars. Deficits abound.

Simultaneously, innovative, formal collaborations like the OSU/OHS initiative are arising to educate students while providing exemplary care for homeless pets. Our Shelter Medicine Program and Cornell's collaboration with the local non-profit Shelter Outreach Services are two such programs. However, these initiatives are not truly cost-cutting for either organization. Teach-

ing takes time, as we like to say, and neither shelters nor schools are always the most efficient settings.

Nonetheless these programs are invaluable. They provide a future collective of veterinarians more skilled in high-volume case management, more experienced in primary care, and more empathetic to the plight of shelters and homeless pets. They provide homeless pets with medical care otherwise unavailable. Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dean of OSU's Veterinary College, said it best: "Shelter medicine programs should not be supplemental; they are core to the educational process. . . these programs simply must be resourced." Wise words, and progressive thinking.

Be seeing you at the shelter,

Elizabeth Berliner, DVM, MA



Selecting and Using Animal Control Gloves:

Mr. Bill Brothers, President, *Humane Services International*

In the April 2011 edition of *Shelter Watch* Dr. Kate Riley, writing on the subject of possible rabies exposure in shelters, alluded to the importance of animal protection gloves when handling potential rabies vector individuals. This month we'll explore some aspects of selecting and using animal protection gloves.

First, consider the timing. We often avoid wearing gloves because they interfere with our dex-

terity or we just don't stop to put them on. Obviously, you can't don gloves all the time but it is important to wear them when there's some chance they may be needed.

Second, consider the purpose. There are three: to minimize *pathogen transfer*; to prevent *penetration* of teeth, claws, and talons into our flesh; and to prevent *crushing* or tissue damage.

(Continued on Page 2)



Gloves using man-made materials can provide a good level of protection with only a modest loss of dexterity.

“Our goal in the shelter should be to train the dogs to perform behaviors that will help get them adopted”



Sitting politely at the cage front when people are visiting is a big plus!

Animal Control Gloves: (continued from Page 1)

Exam gloves do fine on the pathogen transfer issue but provide no penetration or crushing protection.

Crushing protection is usually provided by thick layers of padding or plates that help absorb or spread out the bite forces from a larger animal with strong jaw muscles. However, the padding or plate severely inhibits dexterity so these are only useful on larger animals in situations where protection is more important than dexterity -- such as in handling larger vicious dogs. Maxima gloves by ACES are a good example of heavily padded gloves.

Penetration protection - but without serious loss of dexterity - can be achieved by the use of flexible outer materials -- such as thin top-grain leather or flexible nitrile rubber -- lined by a material like Kevlar or Spectra. This combination will improve -- though not guarantee -- the chances of sharp things not getting through to skin. If teeth or claws do get through the gloves, they usually cannot penetrate deeply into tissue; skin scratches may result.

For penetration protection, top-grain leather has a tighter grain structure than split leather. Split leather is used in welder's gloves and is not a good choice for animal protection as it

has less resistance to penetration. Both Kevlar and Spectra help in penetration protection but, because they are a weave, do not guarantee that a sharp tooth tip will not get through. They do aid in ensuring that the tooth will not get through very much -- preventing deep penetration into flesh. ACES' Cat & Wildlife Gloves are good for handling cats, birds, and smaller animals where only penetration protection is needed.

As an alternative to leather, Bitebuster has developed gloves using all man-made materials - such as nitrile and Kevlar - that provide a good level of penetration protection (though minimal crushing protection) with only a modest loss of dexterity.

For most shelters, two or more different types of gloves are recommended for the varying circumstances you'll encounter. A good blend of crushing and penetration protection is in ACES' Resistor Gloves, which are well padded everywhere except the front of the hand, giving some crushing protection and increased dexterity. These would still not afford enough dexterity for handling small animals.

Most importantly, be sure purchased gloves are returnable or exchangeable if they aren't the correct size or just don't feel comfortable.

Resources:

ACES - www.animal-care.com

Bitebuster - www.bitebuster.com

Training for Adoption: Ms. Kelley Bollen, MA, CABC

When we think of training dogs we think of the basics – sit, down, stay and come. But in the shelter environment, maybe these aren't the most important things to work on. Our goal in the shelter should be to train the dogs to perform behavior that will help them get adopted. If a dog is jumping up on the cage front barking, a potential adopter may pass them right by. If the dog jumps all over the potential adopter when he is taken out of the room for a visit, they may opt to see a calmer dog. If the dog pulls a potential adopter down the road when they take him for a walk, they may come back, arm muscles sore, and ask to walk a more

polite dog. So it seems that this is where we should concentrate our efforts – sit politely at the cage front when people are visiting, don't jump up on them when you come out of the cage, and walk without pulling when on a walk.

To accomplish the first goal – sit at the cage front when people come up to the kennel - staff should expand their “click for quiet” exercise (discussed in a previous article) to “click for quiet sit”. Walk up to the dog's kennel and if he is quiet and sits – click and treat. If he jumps up or barks – simply walk

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Training for Adoption: (continued)

away. This should be done daily by multiple people so the dogs generalize that the best strategy when people come up to the cage is to sit.

The next game we play with the dogs (and training should be considered a game) is “Four on the floor to open the door”. This means that whenever anyone attempts to open the kennel door to take the dog out, he is only leashed up and taken out if he has all four feet on the floor (a sit would be fine too). If he jumps up - the person should say “oops” and shut the door – wait a few seconds and then try again. Soon the dog will learn that they only get out for a walk if they don’t jump up.

Staff and volunteers should also work to teach the dogs that jumping up on people at any time is unacceptable. To accom-

plish this goal, all jumping should result in the cold shoulder – simply turn and ignore the dog for a few seconds when he jumps up. This technique removes the potential reinforcement for the jumping – your attention.

Lastly, teach the dogs to walk politely without pulling. To accomplish this goal, walkers should be taught that a tight leash should stop them dead in their tracks – just turn to stone, without saying a word, and wait – and when the dog slackens the leash, start walking again. For some dogs, a front-clasping harness or headhalter may be necessary to assist with this no-pull training.

Calm polite dogs get adopted – it’s that simple. And first impressions are important. So let’s put our efforts into the training that matters to the potential adopters and get the dogs into forever homes.



Teaching dogs to walk politely on leash is an important behavior.

“The use of Expanded TNR—extending TNR to include stray cats brought to some shelters—has been adopted by some shelters to save lives.”

Expanded TNR: Should Shelters Change Their Management of Community Cats?

Dr. Mike Greenberg

Trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs have existed for decades. Greater community buy-in, standardization of protocols, and some very tangible successes have contributed to their expansion over the past 10-15 years as a humane and effective means of controlling free roaming cats trapped in traditional TNR programs. Numerous variations in TNR program design exists, with some targeting only feral cats brought to shelters. With this approach, feral cats are neutered and returned to the areas where they were captured. In the past several years, a similar model has been suggested for the management of stray cats brought to shelters as well. While often used synonymously, feral and stray animals differ significantly. Feral cats are, by definition, unsocialized to humans. In contrast, stray cats are free-roaming cats that are owned, were previously owned (but are now lost or missing), or

they have been abandoned by their owner. They may or may not be friendly to humans, and they may be fed (but not owned) by people in the community. Regardless of their origins, millions of stray cats are living outdoors with no attachment to a single human household.

Through several large studies on “community” cats (all outdoor cats in a community -- both feral and stray), Dr. Julie Levy of the University of Florida has estimated that there are ~ 90 million community cats in the US, only 2% of which are sterilized, and that these cats produce over 80 million kittens annually. In contrast, estimates suggest that there are roughly 90 million owned cats in the US, but ~85% are sterilized, producing some 20 million kittens annually. While these numbers are only estimates

Continued on back page



TNR is a humane and effective means of controlling free-roaming cats populations.

Expanded TNR: (continued from Page 3)

(and may be lower), the reality does not change – free-roaming community cats are the greatest contributors to the homeless feline problem.

Redemption rates are notoriously low for stray cats, and a high percentage are euthanized. “Expanded” TNR, extending TNR to include stray cats brought to shelters, has been adopted by some shelters to save lives. Expanded TNR programs challenge the notion that “nothing is worse than living on the street” for stray, as well as feral cats.

In these programs, many stray cats bypass the shelter’s holding and adoption channels, are surgically sterilized, and then returned to the area or neighborhood from which they came. Advocates for this approach argue that entering the shelter system usually poses a greater risk of dying than living on the streets, that some of these cats are owned and will return home, and that they will occupy a niche that could be occupied by un-neutered animals. Critics argue that stray cats are apt to be hit by cars, starve, be ravaged by parasites, predate on wildlife or their return may be in violation of local ordinances. Similarly, by not giving owners a chance to recover their cats and neutering them, the owners are deprived of the op-

portunity to locate their cat and have a say regarding its sterilization.

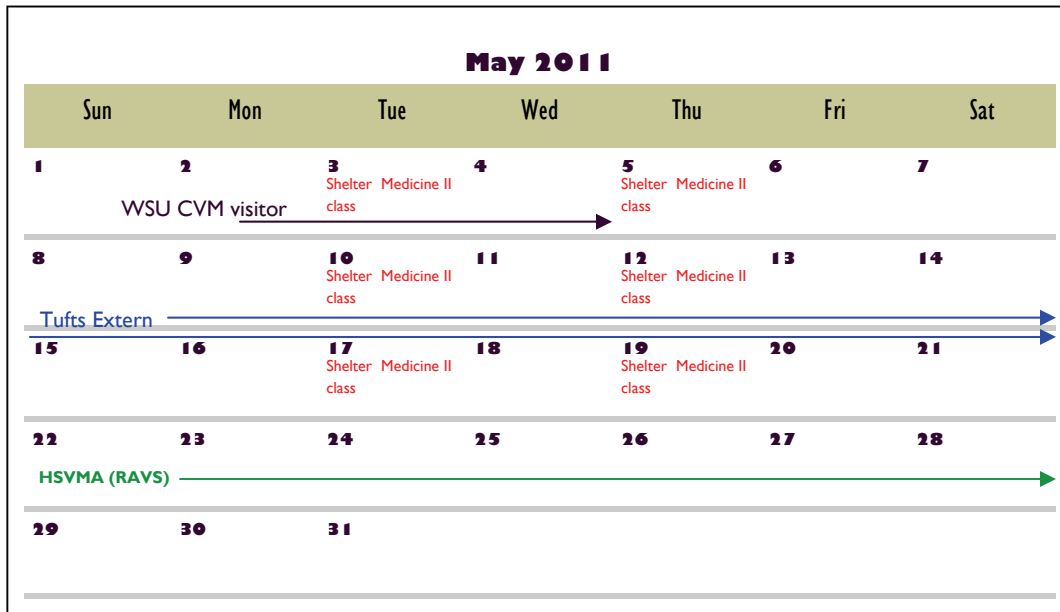
Of course, not all stray cats entering a shelter are appropriate for expanded TNR. Kittens, apparently unhealthy cats, those with identification and declawed cats are some of the animals that are inappropriate for TNR, and are best handled through traditional shelter channels of holding and adoption. One of the most well established TNR program for stray cats is Feral Freedom, a program that began in Florida in 2008 as a partnership between Jacksonville Animal Care and Protective Services, the city’s municipal shelter, and First Coast No More Homeless Pets, a spay-neuter facility. In less than 2 years, the program increased the shelter’s adult cat live release from 7% to over 70%. This community has established a unique collaboration and the results of this program are being watched closely by humane and other constituencies.

For more information, visit the following links:

<http://network.bestfriends.org/10078/news.aspx>

<http://tinyurl.com/4r9kdqg>

Events Calendar



Cornell University
College of Veterinary Medicine
Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program



Maddie's® Shelter Medicine Program is underwritten by a grant from Maddie's Fund®, The Pet Rescue Foundation (www.maddiesfund.org), helping to fund the creation of a no-kill nation.