


EASE NEWS



ENVIRONMENTAL ANIMAL SANCTUARY AND EDUCATION
THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE **FRIENDS OF EASE**

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Editorial

A warm hello to our Friends and welcome to another issue of EASE News.

This edition contains news of our new Preparing for Pet Loss programme as well as a host of other articles, from news stories to animal-related reports and a very moving writing entitled 'How Could You?'

We are pleased to also include a new section on Book Reviews, with the first review being offered by an EASE Friend, Freni Chinoy .

I hope you enjoy reading this summer newsletter.

MELINDA HILL
EASE PROJECT MANAGER

A modern-day Aesop's fable – wisdoms of a donkey

One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided that as the animal was old and the well needed to be covered up anyway, it just wasn't worthwhile retrieving the donkey. He invited all his neighbours to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then to everyone's amazement he quietened down. A few shovel-loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well.

He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up. As the farmer's neighbours continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon,

everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

The moral of the story is that life is going to shovel all kinds of dirt on us all. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a stepping stone; we can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping and never giving up...



EASE Pet Bereavement Support

The EASE Pet Bereavement Support Service has undergone a major review over the last few months, as mentioned briefly in our last newsletter. We recognise that it is good practice for charitable and voluntary organisations to regularly reappraise the services they offer, and to check out what other organisations are doing and find the overlaps and gaps in services. In recent times we have become increasingly aware that whilst there are other pet bereavement support opportunities available nationwide, there appears to be no service that specifically covers anticipated pet loss, especially loss through reasons other than death.

Our Pet Bereavement Counsellor, Angela Garner, has offered support in anticipated loss over the years as the need has arisen, which she has done alongside the many requests for general pet grief counselling. She believes that supporting people prior to, during and after pet loss gives people a deeper settlement which assists with the inevitable journey through grief. However, in order to offer this type of service effectively, Angela feels this will need to become her main focus. Subsequently we are about to launch a new and refined service entitled:

The EASE Preparing for Pet Loss programme

The following is an excerpt from the new text regarding this service on the EASE website:

The EASE Preparing for Pet Loss programme is an email service for people who anticipate the loss of a beloved pet. We offer free support prior to, during and after expected loss.

Pet loss may be anticipated because of terminal illness, increasing old age, euthanasia, or indeed any long-term or permanent separation due, for example, to the break-up of a relationship or other causes.






When we deeply care about our companion animals they become part of the family, and the thought of losing them or facing permanent separation for any reason is devastating. At EASE we recognise how important it is to prepare for the impending loss of a much-loved pet, and believe that everyone should have the chance to openly discuss the many emotions, worries and concerns that such a difficult time presents.

Our trained and experienced Pet Bereavement Counsellor, Angela Garner, offers a confidential and friendly circumstance where a person can begin to journey towards settlement and quiet acceptance.

Angela says: *“I know from personal experience and from my work supporting many people through pet loss how painful and difficult this journey can be. Everyone should have access to understanding and support, and I believe that if the person is as best prepared and as settled as possible it helps both the carer and the companion*

animal at the point of separation. Settlement is so important, and this comes through being able to talk and think things through, such as how to cope with the different emotions that arise.”

Although EASE will no longer be able to give general pet bereavement support, we will continue to offer a broad range of support literature which is available to read or download from our website. This includes five Support Sheets which have been reviewed and updated, and which are presented in a simple format to ensure they are easy to read and access.

-  'When the time comes to say goodbye' – a guide to after-death services for pet-owners
-  'Blemie's Will' – by Eugene O'Neill
-  'Coping with pet euthanasia'
-  'Supporting a friend through pet loss'
-  'Coping with guilt in pet bereavement'

Angela reports: *“We have received very positive feedback over the years on the EASE Pet Bereavement Support Service, and it is heartening to know that so many people have been helped through this traumatic and difficult time. However, as I do this work on a voluntary basis and my time is limited, I need to regularly look at how I can best offer an effective service to the people who turn to EASE for help.*

I feel very optimistic about launching the EASE Preparing for Pet Loss Programme, and am particularly pleased to open up the area of pet loss to include any anticipated permanent loss through separation. This is really important as loss can take many forms. Also, I'm sure that the range of updated Support Sheets that are available on the website will continue to be of benefit to people.”

We will, of course, continue to monitor this new service and will report back to the EASE Friends in the next newsletter on how things are progressing.



Best of friends!

Just like his Labrador friends, he wags his tail, fetches sticks, and rolls on his back to have his tummy tickled. But the hooves and mane give away his real identity – he's a SHETLAND PONY!

Eight-week old Rory picked up his canine traits after he was befriended by dogs at the Essex Horse and Pony Sanctuary in Pitsea.



Rory was rejected by his mother after he was born. After arriving at the sanctuary he became ill and spent all his time being nursed in the office – attracting the interest of Labradors Alfie and Millie, owned by the stable manager.

Shetland ponies are herd animals by nature, learning by copying other ponies. If they are placed with another animal, they will copy them – so Rory has ended up with canine traits along with his equine traits, and canine friends along with his equine friends!



World Watch 1

Researchers from the psychology department of St Andrews University have found that chimpanzee-like bonobos enjoy playing social games with human playmates.

The bonobos behaved in many similar ways to our children during these games. They were interested in the joint activity, rather than just in the play objects, and used gestures to encourage reluctant partners to play their part.

The researchers conclude that 'shared intentionality', the ability to understand and share intention with other individuals, is not a uniquely human characteristic.

Many pet owners already know that dogs and cats play in a similar way with humans, but this research marks another formal indicator that there may be far less of a gap between human and animal consciousness than science has previously allowed.

PROPERLY TRAINED, A MAN CAN BE A DOG'S BEST FRIEND

COREY FORD

World Watch 2

Under new legislation in Switzerland, dog-owners will have to pay for courses in the theory and practice of dog-ownership. Swiss residents will need to pass formal examinations in order to be allowed to keep any type of dog.

The new laws also take a firm line on animal welfare in other ways, insisting that 'social species', including guinea pigs and budgerigars, must be kept in groups of two or more because of the suffering induced by solitude.

The Swiss laws are part of a welcome global trend towards legislation concerning kindness to animals.

The Dangers of Wildlife Products on Ebay

Practically anything can be bought on eBay. Shopping on eBay is quick, easy and anonymous, and often offers bargain prices. However, for some time now online trading has revealed a more disturbing side. More and more live animals and animal products, and in many cases endangered species, are being offered for sale.

EBay sees itself as the largest online marketplace worldwide. With 33 national subsidiaries, eBay provides a global online marketplace where 'practically anyone can trade practically anything'. IFAW (the International Fund for Animal Welfare) found thousands of offers on eBay advertising banned wildlife items. In particular, users can find a whole range of jewellery and art objects made from ivory, as well as products made of tortoise shell. Tiger products (paws, tails) or wildcat furs also cropped up frequently.

Most eBay country sites contain guidelines asserting that trade in live animals or products made from protected species is illegal, but the rules in each country differ markedly. Even if the rules clearly prohibit such transactions, there is still no way to stop the dealers from promoting their wildlife products.

IFAW demands more responsibility from website operators. In order to get information about a website's policies, users must search for them specifically or be proficient and patient in 'clicking their way through'. Such guidelines must be positioned more prominently and be easier to find. Ideally there would be a warning which would appear automatically when relevant terms such as 'ivory' are entered into the eBay search engine.

Furthermore, auctioneers such as eBay should have more forthright mechanisms for reporting illegal wildlife sales. Every user should also have a way to report illegal products. Currently this is only possible for eBay members and remains a complex process. As a rule there are still no penalties for illegal wildlife trade, and when confronted, illegal offers often just disappear rapidly from the websites.

IFAW has already contacted eBay in Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Australia, Canada, China and eBay Headquarters in the USA to offer its assistance in helping to tighten this enforcement. Some eBay country offices are open to discussing these options, while others still ignore the wildlife trade issue. Only eBay Germany has taken steps

forward to keep their site clean of illegal ivory products.



In excess of 100 million registered users alone use eBay as a trading platform. The hunt for bargains on the Internet is becoming increasingly popular, but unfortunately this includes the online hunt for animals. For this reason Internet users must also act more responsibly. IFAW has created five simple rules of conduct to help you protect endangered species online:

- 🐾 Write an e-mail to eBay and draw attention to any dubious offers you come across. Banned products are advertised every day on eBay. Demand that eBay remove illegal wildlife offers from the auction site immediately.
- 🐾 Obtain information about the origins of products that involve the death of wild animals. Learn more about the trade in live animals and the cruelty and suffering that is associated with it. Share your knowledge with friends and family and make them aware of this important issue.
- 🐾 Keep your eyes open when surfing the Internet! If you come across online offers on the Internet dealing in wildlife products or live protected animal species, then you should report these activities to your national authorities.
- 🐾 Don't buy wild animals or wildlife products online. Consumer demand is what drives the wildlife trade. The sale of endangered animals will only stop when there are no buyers. Make a conscious buying decision. The only sure way to act is to not participate in this trade.
- 🐾 Set a good example: dispense with wildlife products! Wildlife should not be considered as commodities to be traded. Regardless of whether an item was a souvenir, a gift or an heirloom, do not resell it. Send these products to IFAW who will use them as part of its PR work or collect them as evidence. Protect endangered species!

A man in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA took out a \$7,000 full-page advert in a paper to present the following writing.

Some readers may find this writing upsetting, but it is offered here as a reminder to us all why we care about abandoned or unwanted animals. For us at EAST it is also a further spur to work towards having a sanctuary of our own to help alleviate the plight of pets in need.

HOW COULD YOU?

By Jim Willis, 2001

When I was a puppy, I entertained you with my antics and made you laugh. You called me your child, and despite a number of chewed shoes and a couple of murdered throw pillows, I became your best friend. Whenever I was bad, you'd shake your finger at me and ask 'How could you?' But then you'd relent and roll me over for a belly rub. My housebreaking took a little longer than expected, because you were terribly busy, but we worked on that together. I remember those nights of nuzzling you in bed and listening to your confidences and secret dreams, and I believed that life could not be any more perfect. We went for long walks and runs in the park, car rides, stops for ice cream (I only got the cone because ice cream is bad for dogs, you said) and I took long naps in the sun waiting for you to come home at the end of the day.

Gradually, you began spending more time at work and on your career, and more time searching for a human mate. I waited patiently, comforted you through heartbreaks and disappointments, never chided you about bad decisions, and romped with glee at your homecomings, and then you fell in love. She, now your wife, is not a dog person, still I welcomed her into our home, tried to show her affection and obeyed her. I was happy because you were happy.

Then the human babies came along and I shared your excitement. I was fascinated by their pinkness, how they smelled, and I wanted to mother them too. Only she and you worried that I might hurt them, and I spent most of my time banished to another room, or to a dog crate. Oh, how I wanted to love them, but I became a prisoner of love. As they began to grow, I became their friend. They clung to my fur and pulled themselves up on wobbly legs, poked fingers in my eyes, investigated my ears, and gave me kisses on my nose. I loved everything about them and their touch because your touch was now so infrequent, and I would defend them with my life if

need be. I would sneak into their beds and listen to their worries and secret dreams, and together we waited for the sound of your car in the driveway.

There had been a time, when others asked if you had a dog, that you produced a photo of me from your wallet and told them stories about me. These past few years, you just answered yes and changed the subject. I had gone from being 'your dog' to just a dog, and you resented every expenditure on my behalf.

Now, you have a new career opportunity in another city, and you and they will be moving to an apartment that does not allow pets. You've made the right decision for your family, but there was a time when I was your only family.

I was excited about the car ride until we arrived at the animal shelter. It smelled of dogs and cats, of fear, of hopelessness. You filled out the paperwork and said 'I know you will find a good home for her'. They shrugged and gave you a pained look. They understand the realities facing a middle-aged dog, even one with papers. You had to prise your son's fingers loose from my collar as he screamed 'No Daddy! Please don't let them take my dog!' And I worried for him, and what lessons you had just taught him about friendship and loyalty, about love and responsibility, and about respect for all life. You gave me a goodbye pat on the head, avoided my eyes, and politely refused to take my collar and lead with you. You had a deadline to meet and now I have one too. After you left, the two nice ladies said you probably knew about your upcoming move months ago and made no attempt to find me another good home. They shook their heads and asked 'How could you?' They are as attentive to us here in the shelter as their busy schedules allow.

They feed us, of course, but I lost my appetite days ago. At first, whenever anyone passed my pen, I rushed to the front, hoping it was you, that you had changed your mind that this was all a bad dream. Or I hoped it would at least be someone who cared, anyone who might save me.

When I realised I could not compete with the frolicking for attention of happy puppies, oblivious to their own fate, I retreated to a far corner and waited. I heard her footsteps as she came for me at the end of the day, and I padded along the aisle after her to a separate room. A blissfully, quiet room. She placed me on the table and rubbed my ears, and told me not to worry. My heart pounded in anticipation of what was to come, but there was also a sense of relief. The prisoner of love had run out of days. As is my nature, I was more concerned about her. The burden, which she bears, weighs heavily on

her, and I know that, the same way I knew your every mood. She gently placed a tourniquet around my foreleg as a tear ran down her cheek. I licked her hand in the same way I used to comfort you so many years ago.

She expertly slid the hypodermic needle into my vein. As I felt the sting and the cool liquid coursing through my body, I lay down sleepily, looked into her kind eyes and murmured ‘How could you?’ Perhaps because she understood my dog-speak she said ‘I’m so sorry’. She hugged me, and hurriedly explained it was her job to make sure I went to a better place, where I couldn’t be ignored or abused or abandoned, or to have to fend for myself, a place of love and light so very different from this earthly place. And with my last bit of energy, I tried to convey to her with a thump of my tail that my ‘How could you?’ was not directed at her. It was directed at you, My Beloved Master, I was thinking of you. I will think of you and wait for you forever. May everyone in your life continue to show you so much loyalty.

A note from the Author: If ‘How Could You?’ brought tears to your eyes as you read it, as it did to mine as I wrote it, it is because it is the composite story of the millions of formerly owned pets who die each year in American, Canadian and British animal shelters. Anyone is welcome to distribute this essay for a non-commercial purpose, as long as it is properly attributed with the copyright. Tell the public that the decision to add a pet to the family is an important one for life, that animals deserve our love and sensible care, and that finding another appropriate home for your animal is your responsibility. All life is precious.

Animal Champions

At the other end of the spectrum to this writing, we recently came across the following video on the website ‘youtube’, showing a remarkable animal sanctuary in the USA run by an equally remarkable lady, and we wanted to share some of the marvellous work done by individuals to help animals in need.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwM6f0liHpo&feature=email>

Alternatively visit www.cathouseonthekings.com

GOD LOVED THE BIRDS AND INVENTED TREES.
MAN LOVED THE BIRDS AND INVENTED CAGES.

Jacques Deval



Book Review

Lieutenant Colonel Jay Kopelman with Melinda Roth: ‘From Baghdad, with Love’– A heart-warming story of devotion’ (Bantam Books, 2007 paperback £7.99)

On the surface this is a heart-warming story of a whole range of humans trying to rescue a tiny puppy from within a war zone. But it is also a story of how humans who find themselves as part of the killings and atrocities are also trying to rescue, at least in part, their own humanity.

It is a story of how, if people can come together for a common purpose, it can be done, against all odds. And it is a story of how the tiny puppy can bridge differences between cultures (ethnic, civilian and military) by evoking the wonderful warmth and kindness that is common to us all.

The book depicts the reality of day-to-day life within dreadful conditions, but what is striking is that it is written with an uncommon degree of self-reflection as well as neutrality. Recommended.

Freni Chinoy



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