



# The National Animal Interest Alliance Conference

## Animal Summit: Focus on Solutions



Submitted by Lynne Clements

When my laptop battery failed, I took so many hand written notes I was on the last page of my new tablet as the last speaker finished. Before getting started with a report, I'd first like to thank Lori Hathaway, a local Rottweiler owner, for supplying her notes as she was typing them at the conference. Lori is the anti-dog legislation contact for her local club (Columbia River Rottweiler Club, Inc.) and a Director. She's also a legislation liaison for the American Rottweiler Club.

Because of the amount of information that was covered over the three days, you will find a brief report on all of the topics/speakers, include the bullets and key points from presentations in Lori's notes, and provided information on acquiring additional information where available. You may also contact me for additional information as well as a printed copy of the report.

The Conference was held Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 in Vancouver Washington. Speakers and notes on their presentations are in order as presented. The Conference was video taped and hopefully copies will be available. For more information on the NAIA, visit [www.naiaonline.org](http://www.naiaonline.org) and [www.naiatrust.org](http://www.naiatrust.org).

**Nancy Hill** – Director of Spokane Regional Animal Protection Service and Vice President of the National Animal Control Association. Ms. Hill shared insights into "Pet-licensing and other solutions for a new tomorrow."

Briefly, a lot of information was discussed on ways to improve the shelter situation and funding. Spokane County Regional Animal Protection Service, "SCRAPS", has implemented several programs geared toward affordable spay/neuter of pets, complying with and benefiting from licensing, fund raisers for the shelter, community involvement, and many other suggestions. Nancy offered her assistance of advice to assist other communities to improve their shelter situation. For more information, visit <http://www.spokanecounty.org/animal/> or phone (509) 477-2532. Following are highlights of her discussion.

### Pet Licensing

Only 3% of cats that come into the shelters are claimed. This could be improved with proper identifi-

cation such as collars with tags and microchips.

Spokane area is looking at ways to make spay/neuter affordable. Mandatory is only as good as their enforcement ability and they do not advocate mandatory s/n. They have added \$3 surcharge onto pet licensing that goes into an account to provide coupons to people to take to their vet to be spayed/neutered. Over \$100,000.00 in vouchers is available annually to pet owners. The vouchers are worth:

Dog spay \$50

Dog Neuter \$45

Cat Spay \$45

Cat Neuter \$27.50

Only requirement is that your pet be licensed. Then you qualify to get the vouchers. The vets are promoting this to their clients and it's been very successful.

### Solutions

We are killing too many animals because they don't have homes. Some helpful solutions are:

Volunteers

Fundraising

Training Classes - they have established owner training programs (free) to help people learn to work with their pets, so they are better family members, so the owners are less likely to give them up. They will also do one on one work with specific problem dogs (barking, aggressive, digging, etc.)

Educational Outreach – bite prevention and responsible pet ownership to kids in school. Educational programs for adult & other community groups.

Internet – <http://www.petfinder.com>, for example.

Advertising – they use press releases in the paper, radio, TV.

Work with the community. No person can fight this battle alone. Create a team. Get community buy-in.

Local animal rescue groups. (and clubs, dog trainers, vets). Make it easy to rescue an animal from your shelter.

Out of agency transfers. They transfer animals to Seattle area, who has more room to absorb extra animals. This reduces killing adoptable pets because of lack of room at the shelter.

Coalition – form a coalition...apply for a non-profit 501(c)(3) status...Once you have that you can

apply for grants. (Maddie's fund <http://www.maddiesfund.org/>, Friends of Pets Coalition <http://www.friendsofpetsonline.org/>)

Laws and Public Policy. Nancy does not advocate BSL. She feels it is better to keep the requirements achievable, or people will just go underground and stop licensing their pets.

Enforcement – hire professional animal protection officers, be proactive in offering solutions to community, professionalism is key with an emphasis on customer service.

Design on a dime – do more with less. Think outside the box. Facility evaluation; Make small changes that make the facility look more inviting.

Spokane County has a dog limit (4), and more than that you have to get a kennel license. They have two different types of kennel licenses, one for those that have exceeded their limit because they are show people, small breeder, (hobby license) etc. The other for those that are a business. There are also zoning laws.

Consider becoming your local club's Canine Ambassador. "*Canine Ambassadors contribute to their clubs' public education efforts by making presentations usually to groups of children in classrooms or other venues.*" [http://www.akc.org/public\\_education/get\\_started\\_ambassador.cfm](http://www.akc.org/public_education/get_started_ambassador.cfm). I am on the Public Education Committee for my local all breed club and we are using this program and setting up a "Kid's Corner" education/activity center with our education booth this year. We will have AKC brochures and color books targeting kids, as well as dog safety color books from State Farm and supplied by our local agent. The goal is to start early to teach kids responsible and loving pet care and ownership.

**Jeff Helsdon**, Attorney at Law, Director of the Doberman Pinscher Club of America, Legislative Director and Delegate to the American Kennel Club has been active in canine legislation working to preserve and protect the sport of dogs from unreasonable legislation. Mr. Helsdon presented, "A legislative approach to building community support for animal control: The NAIA Guide to Pet Friendly Ordinances."

Supporter of the NAIA model ordinance, found at <http://www.naiaonline.org/pdfs/petfriendlyguide.pdf>, Jeff also covered stats and support of responsible ownership laws and local animal controls.

Information presented by Jeff reports 63% of US households own a pet. We must not succumb to the thought that responsible breeders of cats and dogs are bad. They are providing something positive to the

American people.

Issues include, only about 30% of US households license their pets. Why? Perhaps because they fear governmental control. Or because they feel Animal Control provides no benefit to them. The bad experience they've had, bad experiences with Animal Control not helping them. Or, they are ignorant of the laws.

A tiny percentage of pet owners caused most of the problems.

The 30% who license their pets pay the freight for 100% of animal owners, including the tiny percentage who cause most of the problems.

We need to give Animal Control the tools they need to be effective at their jobs (i.e. increase pet owner participation in licensing, lower the incidence of killing unwanted pets, etc.)

#### Breeder Licensing, Pet Limits, Breed Bans

Unenforceable

Drives pet owners out of the system

Losers in court

#### **Supply and Demand**

For 50 years, ordinances and public education campaigns have focused successfully on reducing the supply of dogs and cats.

Lower license fees reward sterilization

National spay/neuter campaigns

At least 77% of owned cats are neutered.

At least 60% of owned dogs are neutered.

During the same 50 year period

Demand has increased

Pet ownership is up

According the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) <http://www.appma.org>, 63% of American households had a pet in 2006, up from 56% in 1988.

Unenforceable legislation lumps the responsible and the irresponsible owners together. There are those that believe that by virtue of breeding, you are a bad person.

Some indicators bear analyzing

42% of shelter dogs are already altered

50% of shelter cats are already altered

Demand is being filled by more distant, out-of-state and out-of-country sources

Poorer sources (un-socialized, diseased, etc.)

US Customs sting estimates 10,000 dogs came through San Diego portal into US in 2005

These statistics indicate that Americans are going to get their pets somewhere and all this anti-dog legislation pushes them to get their pets from less reliable

sources.

### **Time for New Approaches**

We have to get our conversation about effective pet-overpopulation to the people that need to hear it, the everyday pet owner. Combined efforts with animal control.

We all view things different. Breeders and pet owners view Animal Control as the enemy. Animal control views breeders and pet owners as the enemy or the problem or as irresponsible.

Discussion pointed out that good breeders should be allies of Animal Control.

We need to cast aside these different views and join together to solve the problems.

Can views be changed to cooperate in a beneficial fashion? Can Animal Control provide benefits to breeders and owners? Right now, licensing is viewed basically as a tax. What if it was instead viewed as a benefit? (i.e., they provide “free ride home” to licensed or chipped pets that accidentally got loose; longer holding times at the shelter for an animal that is licensed/chipped allowing more time for the owner to retrieve if, for example, they are on vacation, or otherwise unavailable.)

Can cooperation address reasons behind shelter relinquishments? If A/C had a larger network of people like us that could help field the phone calls, and contact they receive from people saying they need assistance with their pet or they are taking it to the shelter, it would be VERY helpful. Sometimes they are often hooked up with the different breed rescues who help field these types of calls. A/C could have lists of trainers that they could refer people needing help too. Think of the affect this could have on reducing shelter animals if this was done on a national level.

Effective ordinances distinguish between responsible and irresponsible pet owners.

Offer additional incentives for desired behavior. Keep licensing simple.

Confinement and control. Tethering. The NAIA model ordinance requires fence for tethered animal to protect public from contact.

At risk and dangerous animals (NAIA has re-named potentially dangerous dogs as “at risk”, like “at risk youth”). The statue talks about certain behaviors – it is behavior driven. The dog is at risk due to an irresponsible owner.

### Pet Licensing

Adopt additional incentives for responsible pet ownership (free ride home for licensed pet with ID)

Eliminate unenforceable laws

Enforce meaningful penalties for dangerous dogs and nuisance behaviors

Set up balanced A/C advisory board (and volunteer your services)

**Joyce Briggs**, MS President, Alliance for Contraception in Cats and Dogs (ACC&D) and CEO, ClaraVista Strategies. Ms. Briggs presented information about non-surgical methods of contraception for pets.

With supporting stats and information, advocates non-surgical pet sterilization, [www.acc-d.org](http://www.acc-d.org), which could reduce cost, provide easier access, provides a solution where their may be barriers to surgery. Joyce discussed programs and products, how they work, side-effects, what’s available and what’s in research, how contraceptives work in animals, and, how we can help. Mission statement: To expedite the successful introduction of methods to non-surgically sterilize dogs and cats and to support the distribution and promotion of these products to humanely control cat and dog populations world wide.

In America:

4-5 million dogs/cats euthanized in shelters yearly

32.6 million non-sterilized pets in households

Estimated 9-30 million feral cats

Areas of the US with limited access to vets

Worldwide the problem is even worse. One area does not euthanize, they electrocute.

Non-surgical sterilization can reach pet owners with barriers to surgery, solutions for low income/indigent, etc. It’s faster, easier, and less expensive.

They are looking for something safe/effective, permanent or perhaps long term, single injection or treatment, covers male and female dogs/cats, documented effects on behavior and health. Pet owners want termination of female heat cycle and male sexual behaviors. Goals: Affordable. Acceptance of vet community. Viable business strategy.

What’s holding this technology up?

Research is under-funded

Economics – drug development is costly and risky

Culture – vets and pharmaceutical acceptance, lack of consumer knowledge

What impact can a non-profit have? Examples given show that non-profit organizations have done much to further health issues (The Population Council, One World Health, Cure Autism Now!, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, etc.).

ACC&D Board:

Dr. Stephen Boyle – Scientist

Joyce Briggs  
David Gies – Funder  
Dr. Linda Rhodes – Animal Health  
Dr. Andrew Rowan – HSUS  
Betsy Saul – Petfinder.com  
Dr. Steve Zawistowski – ASPCA

The ability to save \$25 per surgery would save \$53 Million per year on s/n (based on statistics of s/n numbers and cost in America today).

How does it work? Reproductive hormones (GnRH) start in the brain, then move to the male/female reproductive parts. They are looking at ways to interrupt this cycle, somewhere along the path of the hormone.

Neutersol is the first FDA approved non-surgical method. It is permanent and works only in male dogs.

Suprelorin implant – temporary for male dogs. Under development in US, allowed in several other countries.

Gonazon agonist implant – One year contraception for female dogs. Approved in E.U. 11/06.

The methods that are not permanent can be redone. She indicated the side-effects are minimal, but she didn't know what those were. A comment from the audience was that hormone therapy has been shown to cause huge behavioral changes in humans. Joyce said that contraception methods for cats/dogs in America has to go through the FDA. A comment from the audience stated that the FDA does not do long enough studies on side effects. Joyce stated that traditional spay/neuter side effects are not clearly defined at this time, either.

This adds an alternative to surgery, not a replacement. Some people do not s/n their pet simply because they don't want to put their pet through it.

In the aftermath of Katrina, this technology could have been used to stop homeless pet accidental breeding (i.e. give all of them a temporary non-surgical sterilization). This is just one example of the benefit.

There may come a time when we look at traditional surgery as a much too invasive of a way to sterilize.

**Joan Miller**, Cat Fanciers Association Director, legislative chair, and author. Ms. Miller presented an "overview of cat population dynamics and approaches to cat-related problems."

The purebred cat fancy has taken a very active and accretive position in addressing legislative issues. Admittedly, not being a "cat person", I did not have great expectations for my interest in this topic, and because

I'm trying to stay on the important task of providing the key points without too much text, I do have to say, this was extremely interesting. Certainly, most of their issues and concerns are the same as ours, with some additional species related issues. I would encourage visiting CFA web site at <http://www.cfa.org>, their legislative link, and to contact Joan Miller about speaking to your group. She is in San Diego, CA and can be reached at 619-269-0107 or email her at [JMiller-Art@aol.com](mailto:JMiller-Art@aol.com). She is an incredible source of legislative information in our battle to protect our rights as responsible owners and breeders. I was astounded to have been so engrossed in her presentation and the highlights following do not give her presentation justice.

The "domestic cat" does not exist, in her opinion. They have a full range of lifestyles and are not fully evolved. Taming cats and the process of domestication are different. Their basic nature is hunting and reproducing.

She talked about the history of cats. The Abyssinian is the closest to the original cat, it is believed.

Pedigreed cats in America make up about 5% of the cats. 95% of the cats in America are random bred.

Owned cats are altered 86% - 93% of the time. Intact cats do not make good indoor pets (males spray, females come into heat very frequently).

Cats that are only "loosely owned" (i.e. they are fed outside, but they live outdoors and roam, they aren't really claimed by anybody), they are only altered 5% of the time. The terminology "guardian" that has started cropping up in ordinances is felt to be a set back to the cat fancy because they are trying to encourage ownership, or encourage people to actually claim that they own the cats that they "feed". That way they can be held to a higher level of responsibility/accountability.

They have found that keeping cats inside from dusk till dawn, helps solve many of cat related problems (hunting behaviors, etc.).

Rabies vaccination: thousands have been tested for rabies, only 2 positive in CA in 2005. Vaccinated (rabies) cats often develop vaccine site sarcomas.

Licensing is felt to be a pet tax with dogs at 12% - 30% compliant and cats at 1% to 5%.

Limit laws – indoor cats are not a nuisance. Outdoor cats obviously can be a nuisance. So, it's the un-owned or loosely owned cats that are the cause of ordinances that require mandatory spay/neuter. They have observed that if people are mandated to spay/neuter, they will begin to ignore cats they have

“loosely owned” (they may be threatened with a \$500 fine per cat if they do not claim the cat and have them s/n within 30 days).

Mandatory spay/neuter laws is felt to be a disincentive to taking in strays or helping feral cats.

In one city, a 1991 study showed 20% of owned cats had a litter prior to spaying, the “oops” litter. The latest study (2005) showed that 3.9% of owned cats had a litter prior to spaying. This dramatic drop came after this city focused on educating people about spay/neuter.

**Because of legislation, in part, there has been a dramatic drop in litters registered in the last 5 years. The cat fancy is concerned about this because they are working with limited gene pools. And, purebred cats are not part of the overpopulation problem, but these responsible breeders are being hit hard. It's very similar to the bottom 15 breeds in the AKC...if those breeds were to lose even 2 breeders, it would be devastating to the breed.**

Cat Fancier's Association is international vs. AKC being limited to America.

Cats have a high risk of pyometria so they are shown, titled (equal to a breed Championship) and then they are bred. They can't hold off being bred without complications. Ordinances that specify how many heat cycles between breedings really affect the cat fanciers.

In LA, 46% of cats killed were unweaned kittens as opposed to 1% of unweaned puppies.

**Mickey Lee**, Education Coordinator for the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon. Ms. Lee discussed the role of feral cats in our communities and research associated with feral cat colonies.

**Marla McGeorge**, DVM, JD, Feline practitioner and President of the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon (FCCO). Dr. McGeorge discussed the FCCO's efforts to stabilize and reduce feral cat populations in Oregon.

Focusing on the feral cats and their population issues. They are a trapping and return organization. They have mobile units that travel around and catch feral cats, s/n them, vaccinate them, they will then go to a caregiver while they recover, then they are released to the same location so they can return to their colony (if it's safe). A snipped right ear is the visual clue that a feral cat has already been through the program.

They are also largely involved in educating the public, trying to educate about not just feeding feral

cats, but they need to take the next step and s/n. And, to s/n all “loosely owned”, porch cats, barn cats, etc.

They rely heavily on volunteers in each city. For surgical services, they have to rely on volunteer veterinarians. The clinic is on the road every weekend (Fri, Sat, Sun). Funded by donations and grants. Contribution of \$25 is asked of most people bringing in cats.

They would like to collaborate with other groups to stop the overpopulation of cats.

They showed a very interesting video of one feral cat's journey through the process. They can move 100 or so cats through the process in one day.

It is cheaper to run a cat through this process than to take a cat into a shelter. This costs the tax payers a lot less money. It also teaches future generations of people that we can't let cats breed and then just kill their offspring. We have to be responsible for the cats alive now.

They largely deal with people that are low-income. They find/feel that if you introduce legislation that puts costly responsibilities on “owners”, they go underground or no longer claim the cats because they can't afford the cost to comply with the legislation.

**Gary Patronek, DVM**, Epidemiologist, Director of Animal Welfare and Protection at the Animal Rescue League of Boston. Dr. Patronek presented “Update on Animal Hoarding: New Thoughts about Underlying Psychology and Implications for Intervention.”

Gary opened with video of a place they went to that had multiple cats and dogs, cages and cages from floor to ceiling, living in filth and underweight dogs. Reportedly, seventy cats and fifteen dogs. All were euthanized. The owners were taken to a mental health facility.

Hoarding is a deviant behavior whose primary goal is to satisfy a human need for compulsive care giving. They do not provide adequate care and are not a rescue. In a study done, 76% of hoarders are women, 70% + of those women are divorced/widowed.

[www.petabuse.com](http://www.petabuse.com) tracks hoarding cases around the nation.

There are institutional hoarding facilities, sometimes backed by an organization. They may claim to be no kill shelters. The animals are kept in horrible conditions. Hoarders generally tend to downplay (extreme denial) what is happening, (i.e. they will say “I just didn't clean up the mess” when the place is incredibly filthy, including dead animals laying about in

different stages of decay).

There is usually a history of childhood trauma where the child adopts disassociate behaviors.

Caregiving equates to control, power, in a hoarder's mind.

Do not enable them. Legitimate rescues and shelters are trying to heal the animals. Hoarders are trying to heal themselves.

There is no universally accepted standard for companion animal care. So, when these hoarders are taken to court, it becomes very problematic trying to show what they have done wrong.

Wish list:

1. Cruelty laws need to address neglect of a "herd", concept that if some animals are at risk, the rest are also at risk.
2. More widely accepted standards for acceptable animal care over long term.
3. Explicit recognition of the importance of quality of life and the factors that contribute.

Clearly, the problem becomes a matter of where is the line drawn between writing an acceptable standard of animal care vs. maintaining people's rights.

**Tom Sharp**, MBA, Assistant Vice President of Compliance, American Kennel Club. Mr. Sharp presented an overview of AKC's kennel inspection program, covering 5,000 kennels annually.

AKC conducts over 5,000 kennel inspections annually.

Inspections initiated by:

- Written complaint/substantial evidence – must be signed

- Registration of 7 or more litters per year
- 25 or more supplemental transfers per year (distributors and pet shops)

Random selection of breeders who register 4 to 6 litters in a year

Types of complaints they commonly receive:

- Unhealthy puppies and dogs
- Poor dog and kennel conditions
- Failure to receive registration papers as promised
- Failure to honor terms of contract (AKC can't do anything about this)

Dogs do not look purebred

They have a Care and Conditions list.

Their philosophy is to assist breeders to identify areas of deficiency, help them correct the problems, explain AKC expectations, they will take action if necessary.

They will have a picture ID and be wearing a shirt

with the AKC logo. Ask to see the picture ID.

AKC does not have the power to remove dogs. But, they will report failure to local, state and USDA officials if breeder does not take measures to meet guidelines.

If there are minor problems, AKC will send out a letter stating those need to be fixed prior to the AKC's next inspection. Major problems – they are put on "hold" (registration activities) with the AKC. They have 45 days to request re-inspection and comply.

Refusal to allow inspection/DNA sample collection gives you a 10 year suspension from the AKC. People are mostly given 1-2 day warning of an inspection.

They do have policies in place to suspend people (registration of dogs and event privileges) that have been convicted of neglect or cruelty to dogs. Standard penalty is 10 year suspension plus a \$2000 fine. All penalties include dogs that the person co-owns too.

AKC Inspections

- Protecting the AKC and its customers by policing its own.

- Ongoing, educational and proactive.

A force for good for dogs and people who love them.

Inspectors have booties and gloves to wear and sanitizers to use in order to avoid possibly contaminating the next kennel they go to inspect.

AKC has a free service online ([http://www.akc.org/services/breeder\\_records.cfm](http://www.akc.org/services/breeder_records.cfm)) that gives records services. They eventually would like to see breeders keep all records online with the AKC, and not have to keep paper copies at their home.

**Bo Gloster, MD, FACEP**, Board Certified in Emergency Medicine and Internal Medicine and a member of the AVMA task force on canine aggression. Dr. Gloster presented an epidemiological overview of the scope and severity of dog bites in the U.S.

Reports show; Kids are usually bitten in the face and neck. Adults usually take bites to the hand and arm. Children under age 14 are the most common to be bitten...more commonly boys. Approximately 50% of all children are bitten before the age of 18. Summer months are the peak of dog bites. Most severe bites occur in people 0-4 years old and over 70 years old. An older person or a child should never be left alone with a dog. Most dog bites to children occur when there is not an adult present.

There are 1000 dog bites everyday in emergency rooms in the US. Only about half of the bites go to

the ER, the other half go directly to their doctor, etc. So, roughly estimated, there are 2000 bites everyday in the US. This can cost in the billions of dollars every year (costs include medical, legal, emotional, etc.). About 4-5 million dog bites in this country every year. Ten to twenty times more dog bites as cat bites in this country. Cat bites infect much more frequently. Ten to twenty dog bite deaths per year for the last 20 years in the US...unfortunately last year was 35 or 40. Dr. Gloster feels that we have hit the lowest level we are going to be able to get to of deaths caused by dog bites. If we try to push harder to reduce it further, we are going to create more problems from such issues as BSL, insurance rates and mandatory spay/neuter.

30%-40% of dog bites are received from the household pet. 40%-50% are neighbor dogs. 80%-90% of dog bites are received from a known dog.

People that have dogs are more likely to be bitten by other dogs because they are more comfortable with dogs and are more likely to interact with dogs. Dogs are more likely to bite on their own territory. Only 1 out of 400 leashed dogs off their territory will bite. 97%-98% of bites are inflicted on family members or guests on dog's own property. So, roaming dogs are not the huge problem in dog bites.

Kids have a tremendous vascular system in their heads. They are more likely to bleed to death from trauma to the head because of it. The elderly bleed out easily because their vascular system does not have the elasticity of a younger person. This is why kids and elderly are more likely to die from dog bites.

Being proactive is the best method of preventing dog bites. He recommended reading "A community approach to dog bite prevention" published by the AVMA. <http://www.avma.org/press/publichealth/dogbite/messpoints.asp>

Training of dog, health of dog, victim behavior are play a part in preventing or causing dog bites.

**Bonnie Beaver**, BS, DVM, MS, Diplomate, Professor, American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, and College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at Texas A & M, Past President of the AVMA. Dr. Beaver discussed current information about dangerous dog issues.

Dog bites are the most common public health problem.

4.5-4.7 million people bitten per year  
17% seek medical attention

350,000 go to ERs  
13,200 are hospitalized  
70-80% of deaths are children.

From the CDC website – non-fatal data from 2005. Dog bites are 9<sup>th</sup> most common problem from non-fatal injuries overall.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Rd, Atlanta, GA 30333, U.S.A.  
Switchboard: (404) 639-3311 / Public Inquiries: (404) 639-3534 / (800) 311-3435 Web: <http://www.cdc.gov/>

Dog bites are costly. \$2 million spent in Worker's Comp. 22% of claims are for dog bites (2001). \$1 billion in homeowner's insurance.

She talked about the Ontario Canada pit bull ban that was passed. The bite statistics in Canada did not even list pit bulls in the top 5 of breeds that have bitten. They have no data to support a pit bull ban.

Aggressive dogs in US 1979-1998

238 fatal attacks in breed known

39 Rottweilers

27 Husky/Malamutes

17 German Shepherd

9 Doberman Pinscher

1993-1998: Rottweilers involved twice as often as pit bull types in fatalities.

Data: Data is often wrong. It is gathered from "voluntary" sources. Breeds are often mistaken for other breeds, or may be mixed. We don't have accurate data on how many dogs are actually in America. We don't know how many dogs exist from each breed.

Why don't breed bans work?

Reactionary – people feel the need to do something after a bad event, even if what they do is ineffective.

Dangerous dogs act 1991 – Scotland. Study shows that the number of bites overall did not change after ban. Study showed that the percentage of dog bites by banned breeds went UP after ban. Ban did not work.

Extent of dog bite problem unknown.

Breed identification is poor. 50% of dogs in US are not purebred. Not all purebred dogs are registered. Media is the worst – they identify dogs as if they are purebred. Follow-up studies indicate information often wrong. There is not currently any genetic test to separate breeds. There are 13 different purebreds that fit the description of the pit bull. Then you have to factor in all the mixes...

Toledo vs. Tellings. This ruling says general descriptions (of breed) are too vague. Identification by appearance violates an owner's legal rights to due process. Owner has no way to prove the dog is not a

pit bull. The dog considered guilty without proof it will ever injure someone (“breed” profiling).

If we have 5 million dog bites every year, and we have 60 million dogs in the US, that means we have 55 million good dogs in the US.

Breed popularity can change behaviors, dogs are bred for appearance rather than behavior. Dog bite reports parallel breed popularity.

General population data is not available. Licensing, vaccination data is not accurate. Biting dogs are less likely to be licensed.

All dogs can bite. Provocation difficult to prove in some cases. Large dogs can do more damage. Large dogs have been very popular, so their bite numbers go higher.

Incidence of bites by breed is unknown. Breed population statistics are unknown. Not all purebred dogs are registered. AKC’s data only covers births. Life spans vary by breed and individuals.

Actual risk exposure is unknown.

Media highlights certain types of dogs.

Contributing factors to dog bites:

Heredity. There are certain lines more prone to aggression or nasty behavior

Victim behavior.

Owner-related factors

Socialization

Training/play behavior

Care of animal

Alternative Solutions

Prevention. Additional information at:

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

Animal Control needs to have appropriate funding so they can do their job.

Interesting point she made is that it has been shown that politicians, hear more from their community regarding animal issues than any other issues (via emails, faxes, phone calls).

It is critical that we make ourselves available to the media so that reliable information is given out, rather than skewed information.

Mandatory spay/neuter issues bring home an important point. All of us (responsible dog people and/or breeders) need to be active politically so that we can educate the law makers. We have an expertise and we need to share it.

**Ron Simons**, Executive Director, SPCA Alliance: Working to identify and eliminate the causes of dangerous dogs by targeting dog fighting, and abusive and irresponsible dog ownership.

Working to identify and eliminate the causes of dangerous dogs by targeting dog fighting.

Dog fighting in the Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA area is on the rise.

He reiterated that most people are bitten by a dog that they know.

In a study done in Charlotte, NC for one year, this interesting data emerged in their bite statistics:

Tethered: 11% of the bites that year

Fenced: 11.7% of the bites that year

He is involved with neighborhoods that have dogs, often pit bulls, running at large that are charging people/children and threatening. He showed pictures of 2 dogs that had gotten an officer down and were moving in with open mouths. He then showed pictures of pit bulls being kept in terrible conditions. He said, this is the reality of the neighborhoods that he deals with.

These people do not see the Am Staffs that are well trained and are pictured cuddling with a kid or doing behaviors in the obedience ring to perfection. These fighting pits are trained to pull small cars, they have to be tethered and fenced because they are so strong, they can bite through a fence and bite through a normal tether, so the tether is often logging chains.

It is becoming very popular to hold fights in abandoned homes.

He showed pictures of dogs that had been in fights. He described how high drive they get into. There was a dog he was exposed to that was pulled off a dog fight, both front legs were broken, and she was still lunging on her chest at the other dog. And another bitch was fought when she was pregnant.

He showed pictures of puppies that had been used to “train” the fighting pit bulls. They are often duck taped around their muzzles, front feet and rear feet, and the fighting dogs are allowed to chew on them.

He showed pictures of different types of “exercise equipment” they use for the pits... They often steal small pets to put in a cage in front of the pit bull in the equipment so it keeps the dog “motivated”.

This happens every day in America...it is a HUGE problem. And, fighting pits is often associated with other problems such as drugs and prostitution..

He feels dangerous dog laws are the answer.

He stated that an Animal Control officer should have some sort of certification so that they possess the credentials to do an evaluation as to if a dog should be considered dangerous or not.

Dangerous Dog: Means any animal who’s behavior, temperament, size, or any combination thereof, when considered under the entirety of the circum-



stances, including the nature of the surrounding area, constitutes a reasonable risk of injuring a human or animal or damaging personal or real property. That behavior includes, but is not limited to, an animal's biting or attacking or attempting to attack a human or another animal. However, this definition shall not apply to any animal that has been subject to provocation or if the victim has been trespassing, as defined in this section, upon the animal owner's premises.

He feels that dangerous dog laws put the responsibility back to the owner. He watches people on both sides of fighting for or against BSL, and he wishes they would see that they need to instead focus on solutions.

**Joan Dalton**, Founder and Executive Director of Project Pooch. Ms. Dalton presented an overview of Project Pooch, which provides correctional facility youths an opportunity to learn responsibility and compassion by training shelter dogs for adoption.

Joan talked about a facility in Woodburn Oregon that works with troubled children (Project Pooch). They have a kennel on site. The youth's are carefully screened, including they cannot have a history of cruelty to animals. They do not allow Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, and Dobermans (purebred) because of their gang affiliation. Giving one kid a "gang dog" would give them a status symbol. This decision was not based on the thought that those breeds are bad.

All dogs are taken from shelters and used to teach the youth that a dog is a responsibility for life. They temperament test the dogs before putting them into the program.

Funding is always an issue. Most funding comes from donations.

They have space for 13 dogs. They are kept in kennels to keep them safe (rather than in the dorm with the youth's where the dogs might be in danger).

She showed video about their program that was aired on Animal Planet. The kids and dogs were happily engaged in doing agility, obedience. A lot of very tough guys were laughing and praising their dogs. The program really helps bring out their caring side.

They offer free follow-up training to the homes that have adopted the dogs. And, they will take back any dogs that do not work out in their new homes.

Close to 200 dogs have gone through the program. Each dog is treated as an individual and they are not adopted out until they are ready.

They are trying to look at ways to start up a prevention program, where they get out into communities

and work with kids prior to them getting into trouble.

**Walter Bebout**, Director of Canine Legislation, American Kennel Club. Mr. Bebout discussed AKC's legislative programs.

Walter spoke on AKC as a leading resource on dangerous dog issues and other legislative issues.

Issues this department works with:

Bred Specific Legislation

Mandatory Spay/Neuter

Statewide "Breeder" bills

Limit/zoning/nuisance ordinances

Cruelty

Guardianship

Consumer protection – animal "lemon laws"

Walter always evaluates a bill asking the question, "What is the writer trying to achieve with this bill?"

What is the intent?

Challenges inherent in the political system

Fifty state legislatures

3141 counties in the US (parishes in Louisiana, boroughs in Alaska)

More than 30,000 incorporated cities in the US

More than 33,141 local governmental entities in the US.

Because of these challenges, they rely heavily on the local dog fancy to report to them issues that have arisen in areas around the US.

Goals of elected officials

Reelection

Gain power within the institution

Make good public policy

Enforceable and enforced dangerous dog legislation is the answer rather than BSL. They are finding that 7 out of 10 governments buy into this philosophy.

AKC Canine Legislation Department

5580 Centerview Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27606-3390

phone: (919) 816-3720

fax: (919) 816-4275

e-mail: [doglaw@akc.org](mailto:doglaw@akc.org)

AKC Resources

Taking Command – electronic newsletter

Legislative alerts

Bill/ordinance analysis

Assistance/intervention in legislative process

Outreach capability to AKC constituents via email and regular mail

Seminars at dog events

Brochures [http://www.akc.org/canine\\_legislation/brochures.cfm](http://www.akc.org/canine_legislation/brochures.cfm)

Walter indicated that the AKC has recognized the legislative department needs to get out in the field more. So, we will be seeing them more at events.

Partnering Resources

State federations

National parent clubs

Local dog clubs

Legislative liaisons

Untapped Resources

AKC registrants and event participants

Purebred dog owners

Pet owners

Coalition formation with animal interest groups

US Pet Statistics

Approx 73 million dogs owned in the US

39% of US households own at least one dog

More than 70% of owned dogs are voluntarily spayed/neutered.

A large percentage of the US people responsibly own cats and dogs. We have A LOT of people that can help with the fight to maintain our rights.

AKC is coming out with a brochure about responsible pet ownership. It will list the steps a person needs to take for their dogs to be a good citizen in their community. Walter said gets a brochure about recycling every time he receives his water bill. His hope is that someday, people will be exposed to responsible dog ownership brochures just as frequently.

AKC has recognized that they do not explain what they do to help in situations that need attention around the country. For example, they were very involved in Katrina and raised and spent almost \$900,000 to help that tragedy. They now have a spot on their website that tracks their involvement in fighting the California bill AB1634. [http://www.akc.org/canine\\_legislation/CA\\_action\\_center.cfm](http://www.akc.org/canine_legislation/CA_action_center.cfm)

Someone asked how can we get the AKC to be the voice of authority vs. HSUS, and others? Walter answered that we all of need to establish relationships with our local government.

Walter said that as bad as AB1634 is, he feels it has awakened the pet community in California and they will never be surprised again, and that is a good thing.

Walter showed a darling picture of his dogs and said this is why he fights for the rights of responsible dog ownership.

#### **Panel Discussion on Dogs**

Included: Bo Gloster, Dr. Bonnie Beaver, DVM, Ron Simons, Walter Bebout

Someone said she always comes away from events

like this with the realization that we all must unite. We all come from different viewpoints in many cases (i.e., SPCA vs. breeders, AKC vs. CFA, etc.). Ron Simons responded that yes, we do need to unite. He recognizes that often what they (the SPCA) suggest is scary to breeders, but we all need to come together and find solutions that end animal suffering. AR groups are organized and work as a team. They are masters at dividing and conquering those of us that oppose them and they are easily getting each different group to focus on their tiny piece so we as a whole are ineffective.

Someone asked if it would make sense to take a mobile van around to low-income communities and offer free spay/neuter/vaccinate/educate pit bull owners. Ron Simons responded that his group (SPCA in Charlotte NC) does offer free spay/neuter clinics to low-income areas. His view is we shouldn't focus stopping euthanasia of adoptable pets, we should rather focus on stopping the over-population to begin with by stopping irresponsible or accidental breedings. Bo Gloster said that it will take many different types of efforts (education of school children, postmen, etc.).

Ron Simons (SPCA) has a project where they go to building sites and get the scraps from the building project...dog houses are made from this and then given to low-income families so their dogs can have a warm, safe place to sleep. Nancy Hill, Spokane A/C, said her group has dog house drives in their community where they pick up unused dog houses and pass them on to needy homes/dogs.

Ron Simons (SPCA) said that we have got to join together with our Animal Control and develop relationships. The only way we are going to fix the problems is to get in there with the "other side" and find solutions. Patti Strand agreed and further discussed the need for working together.

Joan Miller (CFA) suggested that we can really get the word out if we get a booth at HSUS conferences. They are hugely attended by the public and it would be a great resource.

**Heather Hastings, MPH** (Masters in Public Health), US Department of Health and Human Services is a public health advisor with the US Department of Health and Human Services and the Officer in Charge for the US Center for Disease Control Seattle Quarantine Station, which is responsible for seven states. The station is part of the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, National Center for Infectious

Diseases. Ms. Hastings spoke on animal importation issues.

Contact information:

[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm)

[hkh8@cdc.gov](mailto:hkh8@cdc.gov) 206-553-4519

Quarantine Station Role in Animals & Animal Products

Enforce CDC regulations restricting the importation of animals and animal products that pose a human health threat.

Work with other agencies to identify and respond to health issues.

She talked a lot about the different animals and animal products that are not allowed to enter this country, or must be placed in quarantine. (There is a huge variety of items.)

Dogs and Cats

Regulated under 42CFR 71.51

Dogs and cats are subject to inspection and should be healthy

Rely on assistance from USDA and CBP staff

Animals that appear sick are put into confinement

Must have current vaccination records

Dog importation into United States

Regulations address imports of family pets, not high volume imports

There is an increase in commercial imports of puppies bred in other countries

There is an increase in importation of "rescue" animals

No surveillance system to quantify numbers of import dogs

Ports vary in activity and inspection stringency

Surveillance of confinement agreements gives some estimate of commercial imports and numbers of dogs posing a public health risk for rabies

Dogs imported through land border crossings often not declared or issued confinement agreements

Importation of dogs lacking rabies vaccination in California; the numbers have been going up.

Dog importation into Chicago – 2006

10,125 dogs imported through Chicago O'Hare  
5,156 (51%) were not currently vaccinated and required confinement agreements

Most puppies (4,295) imported by a single commercial distributor

861 (17%) of all other imported dogs required a confinement agreement

Conclusions

Process for importing animals or animal products into the US is not simple

Many federal partners may have importation regulations for various species

Working together with federal partners (and people like us) is critical to the success

How you can help

Educate consumers about imported puppies & dogs

Include Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ) health messages in your materials

Let us know of importation violations

Work with public health partners to assure animal health

She was asked if a puppy is imported from a rabies free country, do they have to go through confinement. She said no, confinement requirement is waived.

**Ryan Deckert**, Oregon State Senator (D), author of Oregon's 2005 dangerous dog bill. Senator Deckert discussed the origin of a bill, the process used for developing it and key elements of the final law.

Spoke about how to work effectively with your representatives.

Has served 2 terms in the house, 2 terms in the senate.

Oregon was having a large surge in dog attacks. One of the worst was on a child. Ryan was involved with a team that started writing a new bill to try to stop these attacks. The media always jumps on dog attacks and gives that a great deal of focus, like no other legislation he's worked on.

His group started looking at what breeds are most likely to attack. So, of course, the bill started out being breed specific. He was contacted by the dog fancy on a large scale, and he began to see the value in making the laws non-breed specific, largely due to Patti Strand's efforts. They were able to develop a thoughtful, logical approach that works on the real problem, irresponsible owners.

He strongly recommended that the dog fancy needs to engage in a much stronger (polite) way with their law makers. Get in there and get working with them, explain why what they are looking at does not work and help them craft better legislation. Call, write, email. Ask to meet with them. Offer help.

Ryan strongly feels that there will be more and more bad dog legislation, rather than less. And there is only going to be a greater need for the dog fancy to get involved and help legislators write better legislation.

Ryan was asked how to get more funding directed to Animal Control? Ryan indicated that when coun-

ties need to do budget cuts, Animal Control is often one of the first to get cut, because they are trying to keep up police staff, schools, etc. Ryan suggested that the dog fancy needs to try to find dedicated fees on the county and city level that might be more successful than from the general fund.

Ryan indicated that National organizations do play a large roll in helping to write legislation (AKC, NAIA, HSUS, etc.), but it has to be paired with local people that are available and able to easily respond that can offer their expertise.

Ryan was asked how to best approach legislators. He responded, thoughtful emails, calls, letters from citizens. Face to face interaction that is also thoughtful and helpful. Something that speaks specifically to the issues being faced by those legislators in that area. Offerings to sit in meetings with the legislators. Walk into their office and see if you can meet. Handwritten notes often catch attention. Something that doesn't just look like a form letter, something that sticks out to them. Don't wait until they are at the hearing to try to meet with them.

Everyone has to keep focused and keep working through the process. There may be several revisions before the bill is worded in such a way that it is acceptable.

Ryan was asked if responsible pet ownership could be added to the curriculum at public schools. He said that it probably wouldn't happen on a government level. Probably mostly due to funding. But, he encouraged people to go into individual schools and get something going. He suggested that people could give it a try, though. Pick a state and start the process and see how successful they are at getting the state to add it to their curriculum.

He said that California projects its prison population by how many 3<sup>rd</sup> graders they have that can't read. He understands the need for early education. He again encouraged the group to try to get something going with a state that could be used as a model. A teacher in the group added that most teachers are not equipped to teach kids properly about dog safety and animal responsibility. This might best be handled by the dog fancy

If we do not engage with our legislators, we will definitely get bad outcomes. So, get in there.

**Mark Cushing**, Attorney at Law, chairs the Tonkon Torp Government Relations and Public Policy Practice Group in Portland, Oregon. A long-time political strategist, corporate executive and trial lawyer,

Mark focuses his advocacy practice on providing high-level strategic advice and services. He is based in Portland, but maintains a significant practice in Washington, DC. Mark works with NAIA and NAIA Trust and presented a lobbying workshop at the summit.

Mark addressed legislative issues that we are up against and ways to address them. Such as, Animal Rights groups have \$150 million budgets annually. That's what makes this so hard to win. We have got to build up our organizations (he suggests NAIA) that will work in conjunction with AKC, so they can effectively take on legislation at the state level. State bills set precedence.

Mark promotes that the most effect lobbying is done by private citizens. We need to have professional help behind us, but a well educated, well prepared private citizen has a greater shot at being effective when going up against a well-funded organization like the AR groups.

#### Rules of Lobbying

1. It helps if you like politics, better yet if you like politicians. We've got to approach it with a positive frame of mind. We are going in to ask a politician to do something for us that they don't have to do. Approach the process with respect and interest.

2. Always make the politician's job easier, not harder. If we are making it harder, regroup and start over. Make the information we are providing, simple, acceptable and short. If we have one huge point to make, make that point first, in the first paragraph. When we approach a politician showing them that our viewpoint will make a larger group of their supporters happy, we are much further down the road to success.

3. With whom do I want to meet? Public official or staff? Staff at least 98% of the time. Staff runs the world. Politicians rely on their staff. We need to tap this resource. Meet with the staff and educate them. Ask them if it would be good to meet with the senator, etc., or should the staff present the facts to the senator.

4. Reduce position/request to 60 seconds or one long paragraph. If you can't do this, then keep trying until you succeed.

5. Break issues down into 3 categories:

a. The one thing you must have, i.e. the "win".

b. 1-3 things you would like to have, and will push for as long as you can without jeopardizing #1.

c. The wish list which you are prepared to abandon as soon as required to. You have to go in prepared to negotiate.

d. Understand your opponent's position better than he or she does. Force yourself to articulate his or her

arguments as positively as possible, then rebut each one. Don't be dismissive of the other side. If we can dispassionately show the other side, and then show why it won't work that way, it is much more successful (this coming from a successful trial attorney).

e. Never demonize or personalize your opponents (regardless of what you think of them). This violates rule #2...it makes things harder on the politician if they think they are in a war between angels and demons. We can still show our passion, just not demonizing of the other side.

f. There is beauty in numbers, put simply, size (of grass roots supporters) matters. Politicians want votes! If nothing else, you can show the list of supporters to the politicians. It's not just the 3 people sitting in the room with them.

g. Despite #8, keep meeting attendees to the minimum number possible. This does not apply to hearings. PACK hearings. Arrive one hour early and pack the room with supporters of your side.

h. Know the difference between grass roots and grass tops, and use both. Grass roots in this case are those that own cats and dogs, are involved in Animal Control, etc. Grass tops are key people that have been identified that are important to that politician. Can be people from their personal life. These people have huge influence on that politician.

i. Be an expert (truly) but try not to show it. The smartest person in a discussion is hugely knowledgeable about their topic, but doesn't hog the conversation. They know how to talk. They aren't irritating.

j. Listen to the questions the staff or politicians ask; drop everything else and answer those questions first. This is important. The question they ask might be pivotal as to whether or not they support you in the future, even if you don't understand the relevance at the time.

k. Understand the pure politics of the issue and legislative situation, and frame what you are doing accordingly.

l. It's all email these days, so don't fight it with letters or hard copies unless you have no choice or are asked to do so. It's easy to get info to people this way, so use the technology. Call and meet in person when appropriate.

m. Despite #14, use PowerPoint for hearings and presentations, and include hard copy for staff. (Check ahead to see if they will allow it or have the technology for it – always take hard copy.)

Fund-raising and political contributions matter. Put another way, the off-season counts so don't just

show up when you have a problem. The staff and politician need to know us. If we come in when there's a problem and we already have a relationship with everyone, it makes a big difference. There has got to be an around the clock presence. Attend events. When you are handing over a check to show support of a politician's cause, use that moment to tell them what WE support...we fight anti-dog legislation, etc. Politicians have to raise money...politicians HATE to raise money. Politicians need votes, if we bring lots of votes, they listen. Come to them on THEIR level.

We need to know in advance who on our counsels would vote for BSL, Mandatory S/N, etc. We need to be ahead of the game. Build relationships. Outsiders are often frowned on, the committees often want to listen to local, familiar people. Remember to always say "thanks". Show them appreciation for their efforts. It's a lot harder to say no to a friend than it is to someone you don't know. If they know us, respect us, they will be harder pressed to not give us what we ask for when it comes to anti-dog legislation.

A lobbyist is a political tour guide. They can show us who it is worth talking to. They can help us navigate the system and where to put our time.

NAIA is going to help coordinate all the different groups that are involved.

Someone asked how to encourage people to come forward to show support against anti-pet legislation because they are scared of retaliation. He said he would have someone stand up for the absent group at the hearing and say very directly that more people would be here, but they are actually fearful for the safety of their families or pets.

See <http://www.naiatrust.org/pdf/louisville%20complaint.pdf>, The Louisville Kennel Club, Inc., The league of Kentucky Sportsmen, Inc., Kentucky Houndsmen's Association, Inc., Greater Louisville Training Club, Ruth Snow d/b/a Roses for Felines Cat Club, Ruth Snow d/b/a Diames and Dollars Cat Club, Norman Auspitz d/b/a Kentucky Colonels Cat Club, Waggin' Tail Kennels, Inc., Royalton Kennels, LLC., Paul Lee, HI Patrick King, Jr., DVM, and Kurt Oliver, DVM vs. Louisville/Jefferson County Metor Government. He views this as the most comprehensive list of arguments and best overview.

If you hire legal counsel to fight legislation, make sure they know what they are doing. They can make or break it.

If a jurisdiction ever concedes that pets are not property but we are guardians, this would change so many things (he said we didn't even have time to

cover all the different aspects that would change for the bad). It's really just heading to make pet ownership illegal. We cannot let property status be changed.

Find out if the staff has pets, show them how the proposed bill will impact them.

He said that he feels limit laws will not be proven unconstitutional because the public health and good will come into play. He said we should still fight the laws, but he doubts they will ever be won based on the unconstitutional card.

It also came up that groups should start organizing veterinary and legal scholarships. We need to start growing our own people that will support us through these fights.

**Marsha Kelly**, of Kelly Media Counsel, has more than thirty years of experience in strategic communications, media relations and issue management. A former speech coach and teacher, and magna cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota, she has trained numerous spokespeople in effective communications and media interview techniques. She and her clients have appeared successfully on major network news programs. Marsha will present a media workshop geared to empowering Summit participants.

Hijacking the Humane Movement (Preface by Rod and Patti Strand)

The role of the news media has changed... beginning around the Vietnam War time. The media began to realize that their sources were lying to them. In Watergate, it reached its apex. Journalists became very skeptical. As a result, they often do not report on the positive side of things.

The media are the middle. They are supposed to be the link between the event and the public.

The amount and types of media have grown substantially over the years. The Internet has changed everything. There is a constant search for visual stories.

So, when you are thinking about what is newsworthy:

Is it unusual?

Is it timely, current, topical?

Is it local?

Is it visual? How can you make it visually appeal to the public?

Smaller areas have general reports that cover everything. Larger areas have beat reporters that cover specific areas. It's important to identify who your media contacts are. There is an editor involved that will decide what gets covered. Then there is an editor that

controls what gets published in the editorial page.

In big papers, they will have people in charge of just putting together the headlines. Their job is to grab the readers through headlines and pictures. That's why often the headlines don't match the story so it's often not the reporter's fault, it's the editor or headline writer.

TV. There's different people in charge of all the elements. One person in charge of what gets covered. One person in charge of who's going to cover it. They may or may not have beat reporters. Usually, the reporters don't know much about the issues. Then there is a camera person that has no idea of the issues. Sometimes just a videographer shows up with no reporter.

Reporters often really have no idea of the issue. They may arrive with just a few quotes from AR Groups and hit you with those and ask for rebuttal. The way those questions are answered will control how the interview goes. We have control so we have to learn how to use this control.

Reporters will be skeptical and will challenge everything we say, that's their job. The media tends to be skeptical of the "organization" and more sympathetic to the underdog. For a long time, the AR groups have been viewed as the poor little group that is just trying to save the poor animals.

You have to help them meet their deadlines. And, they are very unforgiving when they have been misled. Be sure of your facts or don't say it. Don't compromise your credibility.

How do you generate media coverage?

We are in a situation right now that we spend more time reacting to media coverage. We need to turn that around and generate media coverage the way we want it to go.

- Develop media lists – make sure your list is current

- Find out who is covering the issues and develop a relationship. Don't just go to them when you need something. Introduce yourself, leave some background information, materials about the anti-pet movement. Don't over burden them with data, just a quick summary. Keep it easy for them.

- Develop media materials that are easy for them to use. Get together a media kit to give them. Online is the best delivery method. They want quick access that can be referred to on the road. Include in your kit (as appropriate):

  - News release

  - Info about the event (who, what, where, when,

why is it important, etc.)

Time sensitive? Does the news release need to go out immediately or delayed?

Fact sheet – one page profile of your organization, what are you involved in, what have you done in the past year, etc.

A background on the issue

Keep it simple, concise but thorough

Often newspapers will not accept photos – they want to take them – but if you’ve got a professional quality photograph, include it and suggest they use it

Distributing a news release via email is so easy now. Don’t bother to send a news release via print. This will likely wind up in the garbage. Don’t attach documents. Embed it in text of email. They are worried about viruses. Address it to a specific person. Fax is sometimes useful as a back up, especially if it is time sensitive, just in case your email didn’t go through.

It is generally OK to set up a local email distribution list and send to everybody at once.

There are online resource base (vocus is one <http://www.vocus.com/search/googledemo.asp>) where you can prepare news releases, select your recipients and get it out nationally with the click of a button.

Pitching a story: sometimes you are trying to promote a feature piece. Talk about why this is useful to the audience, why it’s important, offer help in getting a piece together, make it easy on the reporters.

Keep in mind that putting a reporter on a story is a bit like loosing a tiger from a cage. They are going to cover both sides of the story, and never think they won’t. It is their job to dig up dirt. We are inviting a reporter to scrutinize our industry. Proceed with caution.

Maintaining focus when interacting with media.

- Allow yourself maximum preparation time if you have know in advance

- Sometimes it’s on the spot...never talk on the spot. Excuse yourself to the restroom and say you’ll be back in 5 minutes. Collect your thoughts and get 3 or so key points lined up in your head. Don’t talk without a game plan.

- It’s OK to ask questions. What is the story about? Is it about legislation? Who else have you interviewed? Who are you going to talk to? What is your deadline (and always respect their deadline).

- Set ground rules. You are the boss, the reporter isn’t.

- Set up the time in a controlled environment.

- The shorter the better...the longer you talk the**

**more likely you will say something you regret.**

Over time, your defenses come down.

- Do not let your guard down.

- Let them know up front what you are willing to talk about and what you can’t or aren’t willing to or it’s outside your expertise. Then stick to it and don’t be drawn in during the interview.

- Be sure you let the reporter know in advance if you are on the record or off the record. Off the record cannot be retroactive.

- MOST IMPORTANT THING:** Fix your key message in your head before you begin and stick to it. Figure out how to quickly and concisely get your message out. Practice it over and over and over. You might only get 12 seconds for a soundbite. If you say the same thing 4 times in the one minute you are on tape, that’s OK. By the time they edit the film and get it down to your few seconds, no matter where they edit the tape, your same message will come through.

- Never say anything off tape that you don’t want reported. If the reporter is around, they can quote you.

- Your message should communicate why anybody should care about this issue.

- Give your qualifications to the reporter.

- Be responsible of your tone. We have to appear balanced, moderate, reasonable. It’s the other people that need to appear radical.

- Show examples in print of how the other side has said something or has done something radical or nuts, let the other side speak for themselves with the proof you are showing of what they’ve done or said.

- Always be sure of your facts. If you don’t know...say so. Don’t let your credibility take any hits.

- The veterinarian community is often thought to be the most credible source in the animal world by the media and the people that read or view.

- Don’t play defense. You’ll just wind up in debate, not focused on the big picture.

- Public relations 101 – do the right thing and then tell people about it. Be on the high ground in respect to animal welfare. Then you can shift the focus onto what the value system is.

- Bridge from the question that got asked to the message that you want to get out. This is a good technique to get the interview back on track to your key message. Or say, “let me back up a step and let me talk about what I think the real issue is”. Reporters hate it, but it works. If you do it enough, the reporter will eventually give up that line and move on. You

maintain control and you are the boss.

•Be natural. It is intimidating, but don't let it get to you. Be relaxed and natural. Don't talk to the camera unless they say to do so, talk to the person who is interviewing you. They will position the camera where they think the best shot is based on where everyone is positioned. Speak in a conversational tone, don't sound canned or rehearsed. Be calm and don't talk so fast, speak directly, take a breath. Make sure you are understandable. If you are being interviewed on camera, be still. Don't gesture by your face, your face needs to be seen, but you can use your hands spontaneously, some people have to talk and gesture at the same time. Just keep the gestures below your shoulders.

Be genuine and sincere.

Often having an animal with you is not such a good idea. It detracts from the message. You won't get the time to say what you have to say.

When dealing with the press and making corrections to reporting:

Press always has the last word

No pissing matches

Pick your fights – the more important the error is, the more you should try to get it fixed

Focus on what's coming next – how can we get it right next time (corrections are usually printed in the back of the paper and no one reads them...)

If a topic comes up that you aren't comfortable with, you can say I'll answer the question, but not on record. If you are asked a question you can't answer, refer them to someone who can (then warn that person before the press contacts them).

If you know a reporter has a position other than yours on an issue, lay your case out and show them that they have manifested a bias, in a non-attacking way. Then show your side. They often will soften to their view.

### **Panel Discussion (Highlights)**

If the media is not cooperating in covering your story, buy an ad space and get it in that paper anyway.

Direct mail (snail mail) can be effective if used appropriately. Make sure your mailing list is current and contains people that will likely be affected or will act on your behalf. List an action needed (i.e. you are raising funds, you need them to come to a function, you need them to write, etc.).

The AR groups have turned the focus to pure social marketing. They are pulling on people's heart strings. We have to show how our side protects the

animals. For example, if the California MSN bill goes through, more cats will be turned into the shelters, or will become homeless. If Cat Fanciers Association focused on the fact that many of their breeds could become extinct, joe public won't care. The public wants to see how to help the animals. AR people are brilliant marketers. They've made it very hard to argue with them because if we aren't extremely careful, we look like we don't care about the animals and their welfare. We can't let the AR groups define what animal welfare means. Redefining the issue can often be very valuable.

We cannot fight an ethical issue with an economic response.

One view to use is that MSN or breeder licensing will have an impact on the general public getting a healthy, well adjusted dog/cat that has been home-raised with care. And that a home breeder remains a resource for the life of the pet.

People respond better when they hear a position presented in a positive way, not a negative way.

We need to present ourselves in such a way as a thought we are mainstream.

We need to get a celebrity to promote our position.

We need to not always show our "hand" or our strategy. Some of the lists and groups lose because they are letting the other side know their plans. The other side is watching, never forget that.

*Again, I'd like to thank Lori Hathaway for her huge contribution in putting together and sharing so much of this information and I hope that it is useful for ideas and programs in your clubs and communities to make a difference. Since the conference, the all breed club I belong to has voted to donate \$500 to the NAIA in addition to the \$.50 per entry that we already donate from our show every year to support the advancement of this organization. The group club I belong has voted to join the NAIA for the first time, and we have had Patti Strand as a guest speaker a couple of times in the past. Our Terrier Group club also sponsored one of our member's attendance at the conference. Our all breed club is also revamping our public education program and including a Kid's Corner and participation in AKC's Canine Ambassador program, a Legislative Section targeting the general public, and showcasing our local animal shelter that our club already contributes to. We are going to try to join together with other area clubs to increase our people and financial (share expenses) resources and take our public education efforts to other public events where we can set up displays and provide useful information.*