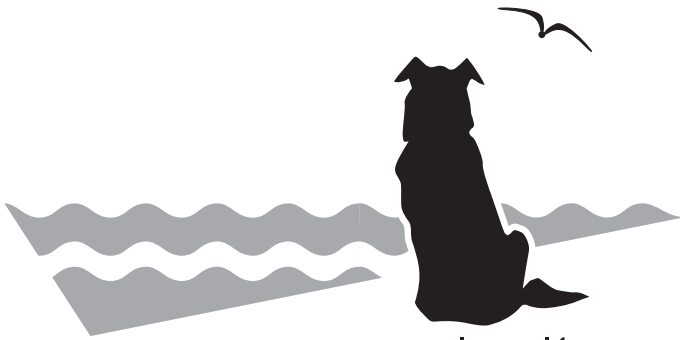






AWC NEWS

NUMBER 20 • Fall 2007



Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre

ATLANTIC VETERINARY COLLEGE • UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

From the Coordinator's Desk

Welcome to the fall 2007 edition of *AWC News*, the newsletter of the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre (SJDAWC) at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island. Since the newsletter in July, we have been pleased to welcome Dr. Michael Cockram as Chair in Animal Welfare. Dr. Cockram led a planning meeting of the SJDAWC Management Committee this fall to develop a strategy for expansion of the research aims of the Centre. Please see page 3 for more information on these advancements.

Dr. Michael Cockram
Chair in Animal Welfare

Through our longstanding partnership with the Friends of the Christofor Foundation, we have accomplished a great deal to improve the welfare of companion animals, horses, and wildlife. We look forward to continuing this work. We are also very excited about broadening the research aims of the Centre in order to expand the impact that the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre can make on the welfare of animals.

Please visit our website at upei.ca/awc to keep abreast of developments at the SJDAWC, such as research publications associated with completed projects, and upcoming events.

SJDAWC
550 University Avenue
Charlottetown, PEI Canada C1A 4P3
Tel: (902) 628-4360 • Fax: (902) 566-0958 • E-mail: animalwelfare@upei.ca
upei.ca/awc
Production & Design: UPEI Integrated Promotions

Help animals by supporting the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre

We welcome and appreciate the generosity of animal welfare supporters and friends of the Atlantic Veterinary College. Donations or planned gifts in the name of a special animal companion, friend, or family member can be a fitting and lasting tribute that will benefit animals for generations to come.

Donors may direct their contributions to support all activities of the Centre to improve the welfare of animals, or may choose to restrict their donation to support service or research projects. Donations may be made through UPEI's secure online system (upei.ca/awc "To make a donation") or by cheque to the SJDAWC (address above).

For more information on the work of the Centre, please contact Dr. Alice Crook at acrook@upei.ca or (902) 628-4360. To inquire about giving options, including bequests, gifts of securities, RRSPs and RRIFs, please contact Rosemary O'Malley-Keyes, AVC Development Office, at omalleykeyes@upei.ca or (902) 894-2865 / (866) 453-4119 (toll-free in Canada and the US).

WELCOME TO UPEI

UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

SIR JAMES DUNN ANIMAL WELFARE CENTRE

Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre
ATLANTIC VETERINARY COLLEGE • UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Atlantic Veterinary College
University of Prince Edward Island
550 University Ave,
Charlottetown, PEI
Canada
C1A 4P3
animalwelfare@upei.ca
tel: (902) 628-4360
fax: (902) 566-0958

To make a donation

SJDAWC Expansion!

This page shows you the look of our revised and expanded website, which we encourage everyone to visit, at upei.ca/awc. Following consultation within the Centre and the AVC, the SJDAWC is expanding its research aims to enable all animal welfare issues to be addressed using the most appropriate methodology. Observational, epidemiological, clinical, and experimental approaches will be undertaken using multidisciplinary methods to understand the scientific basis of animal welfare issues. The Centre will continue to carry out research and service projects that benefit companion animals, horses, and wildlife. However, the scope of the interdisciplinary animal welfare research is being expanded to any species of animal (including companion, farm or food-producing, sport, working, laboratory and zoo animals, and wildlife). The Centre actively seeks funding for this work. The primary goal of the Centre continues to be the promotion of animal welfare through generating and disseminating impartial and scientifically based knowledge and understanding of relevant issues. To pursue this goal we have identified the following broad research aims for the Centre.

Broad Research Aims

- To present critical and systematic analyses of animal welfare issues; identify animal welfare risk factors; and develop effective and practical solutions
- To develop frameworks for welfare assessment
- To study biological and cognitive functioning of animals to improve the understanding of their subjective experiences
- To study the welfare implications of health, disease, injury, breeding, husbandry, and surgical procedures
- To develop methods for alleviating suffering by the use of analgesia; the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disease and injury; and the modification/refinement of current practices
- To study ethical issues and human attitudes affecting the use of animals by society

Working with us

The SJDAWC seeks partnerships with industry, government, farming, welfare, and veterinary organizations, and with foundations, to undertake animal welfare research and service activities. We welcome national and international collaboration with other welfare centres, veterinary schools, agricultural colleges, universities, and research institutes. The Centre provides excellent opportunities for research training in animal welfare research and welcomes visiting academics or students who wish to undertake a research project. Please contact animalwelfare@upei.ca for more information. As the SJDAWC is an integral part of a veterinary school, there is a wide range of expertise and resources available for animal welfare research. Please click on the Facilities link on the Research page of our website to find out more about these capabilities.

COMPLETED PROJECTS—2007

Several projects funded through the SJDAWC were completed this year. The three research projects are summarized briefly below, with some preliminary results. Full results and analysis will be in the scientific articles, for which publication information will be posted on the SJDAWC website once the articles have been published. (Please note that there is normally a lag time of a year or more after a project is completed before articles are published in scientific journals.)

Service projects use existing knowledge to benefit animals. Reports on service projects completed this year follow the research project summaries.

Comparing two treatments for epilepsy in dogs
Dr. C Gaskill

Epilepsy is a fairly common condition in dogs. Most dogs cannot be cured but, with appropriate therapy, seizures can be satisfactorily controlled in 70 to 80 per cent of epileptic dogs. The two most commonly used anticonvulsant drugs are phenobarbital (PB) and potassium bromide (KBr), either alone or in combination. Until recently, PB was considered the drug of choice; however, the use of this drug sometimes causes serious liver damage. To avoid this, KBr is being used more and more as the first-line treatment for epilepsy, despite a lack of studies to determine its safety and effectiveness.

The objective of this project was to compare the safety and effectiveness of KBr to that of PB in dogs receiving treatment for epilepsy, during their first year of treatment, with the ultimate goal of developing more appropriate recommendations for treatment of epilepsy in dogs.

Results
There were some side effects seen in both groups of dogs. Adverse effects were more common in the KBr-treated animals. More dogs in the KBr group were removed from the study due to either intolerable adverse effects or inadequate seizure control. PB was associated with better seizure control than KBr, as both the frequency and severity of seizures were lower in dogs treated with PB. PB therapy required fewer dosage adjustments than KBr therapy and PB was associated with a faster improvement in the dog's condition.

The conclusion from these results is that phenobarbital is both safer and more effective than potassium bromide. Therefore, the study concluded that phenobarbital, rather than potassium bromide, is the best first-choice treatment for most cases of canine epilepsy. However, potassium bromide is still an acceptable option. In some cases, such as dogs with liver disease or very large dogs (for financial reasons), or where there are problems with drug administration, potassium bromide would be preferable to phenobarbital.

Benefits
Animals that participated in this study benefited directly from the additional patient care provided. Veterinarians benefited from the increased knowledge about anticonvulsant drugs and patient monitoring that they gained by participating in the study. The results of the study will help veterinarians make the best choices when beginning treatment in epileptic dogs. Improving the understanding of treatment options will result, ultimately, in fewer dogs being euthanized for poor seizure control or intolerable adverse effects due to anticonvulsant drugs.

The study results have been written up and submitted for publication. Publication information will be posted on the SJDAWC site once available. The results will be presented at the 2008 American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) Forum. Letters describing study results were sent to all veterinarians who participated in the study.

Improving care of cats with seizures: understanding the side effects of potassium bromide
C Gaskill

Seizure disorders affect about one per cent of cats. The three main drugs used to control seizures in cats are phenobarbital, diazepam, and potassium bromide (KBr). Unfortunately, all have potentially serious side effects. KBr is being used more and more commonly, although no controlled studies have been done to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of

this drug in cats. Coughing and breathing problems that are difficult to treat have developed in some cats who received this drug. Because KBr may be safer for some cats than either of the other two anticonvulsants currently used, it is important to learn more about the airway disease that appears to be associated with its use.

For this project, Dr. Gaskill studied the effects of KBr on lung tissue taken from cats that had died from non-respiratory conditions. This project is part of a larger study investigating the effects of KBr on cat lungs.

Results
Using bioelectric techniques, Dr. Gaskill's laboratory has identified the presence of a specific chloride channel in cat airways. Dr. Gaskill's laboratory is now focussing on measuring the effects of bromide ions on these channels, using feline epithelial cells from cell culture.

Benefits
As the study involved either cultured cells or tissues removed from cats who have been previously euthanized for unrelated reasons, there were no direct or indirect benefits to animals over the course of this study. Ultimately, it is anticipated that the results of the overall larger study will benefit all epileptic cats, as the information gained will allow better understanding of how KBr causes adverse effects on the lung tissues of cats. Understanding how this drug affects cat lungs may help with strategies for veterinarians to prevent or minimize this respiratory side effect, and to better treat it when it occurs. This will improve the safety of anticonvulsant drug use in cats.

Selenium and vitamin E levels in horses on PEI
J Wichtel, J McClure, T Muirhead

Selenium (Se) and vitamin E are essential components of the diet of livestock, including horses. Unfortunately, deficiency in these nutrients is an ongoing problem in Eastern Canada, mainly due to a soil insufficiency in Se, which results in low levels in hay, pasture, and grain. Inadequate levels of these nutrients are known to cause muscular and neurological diseases, a decreased immune response, and decreased thyroid function in horses.

Inadequate Se status is a significant problem in the PEI horse population. The groups most at risk are pleasure horses, broodmares, and, particularly, their foals. Broodmares deficient in vitamin E and Se give birth to foals who can subsequently develop severe problems such as white muscle disease, which is often fatal. These foals are also at increased risk for common infectious diseases such as neonatal sepsis (widespread bacterial infection).

The objective of this study was to evaluate Se and vitamin E status of horses on Prince Edward Island. The specific aims were to determine the serum Se, vitamin E, and thyroid hormone status of representative groups of adult horses on Prince Edward Island; to determine serum Se and vitamin E concentrations in broodmares and their foals (less than 72 hours after birth) to examine the relationship between broodmare and neonatal foal Se and vitamin E status; and to test the relationship between Se and thyroid hormone concentrations in serum.

Results
Animals included in the study were healthy non-racing adults, racing adults, broodmares, and their foals. Analysis of the data collected showed that, as hypothesized, Se deficiency is widespread in the horse population on PEI. In certain subpopulations, serum Se concentrations indicated marginal or deficient Se intake in the majority of horses. These results indicate that Se supplementation is not widely practiced by horse-owners, and/or the methods of supplementation used are inadequate. The groups most at risk are pleasure horses, broodmares, and, particularly, their foals. There appears to be a relationship between mare and foal status. Investigating the best methods for ensuring adequate supplementation of pregnant broodmares has therefore become a priority. Other interesting findings include the low vitamin E concentrations observed in a high proportion of pleasure horses, and the low T4 concentrations observed in race horses and broodmares. The relationship between T4 and Se status is weaker than that observed in other species.

Benefits
Owners of the horses in the study were informed of the Se status of their horses. In the longer term, through publication of the study results, veterinarians and horse-owners will be provided with information about factors associated with inadequate Se and vitamin E levels, and how to ameliorate the effects through correct supplementation.

This study gave rise to other important questions, such as what is the best form of supplementation (especially for broodmares), and what health benefits might accrue from more diligent supplementation practices in the Maritimes. Will supplementation give rise to an enhanced immune response to pathogens, as has been found in some other species? To answer these questions, Dr. Wichtel and colleagues have begun a related project, *The effect of dietary selenium supplementation in mares and their foals*, which is also funded by the SJDAWC. The goal is to provide horse-owners and veterinarians with the best possible advice regarding Se supplementation.

Neutering feral cats on PEI (2005–07)
P Foley, H Gelens

The objectives of this service project are to decrease the birth rate of the feral cat population on Prince Edward Island, leading to a decline in the population through attrition; to test feral cats for feline leukemia virus (FeLV) and feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) in order to continue gathering prevalence data on these important infectious diseases; and to provide some basic and preventative medical care to all the trapped feral cats.

Progress
The first objective is being accomplished by trapping and surgically sterilizing (spaying or castrating) feral cats over six weeks of age. These surgeries are performed approximately every two months on "Neuter Days" run by volunteer veterinarians, veterinary students, and volunteers from the Cat Action Team of PEI (CAT), a non-profit organization dedicated to the trapping, neutering, and releasing of feral cats on PEI. This project, during which 295 feral cats were neutered, is a continuation of the programme that was started in 2001. Since then, a total of 3,312 feral cats have been spayed and neutered in cooperation with CAT using funds provided by the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre, the Pegasus Family Foundation, and other funds raised by CAT.

Assessing the decline in the birth rate of the total feral cat population on PEI is difficult. One indirect measure is to examine the records of the PEIHS to determine the total number of cats surrendered over the last several years. These results show that, with the exception of brief upswings in 2003–2004 and 2005–2006, there has been a decrease in the number of cats surrendered. There are likely several factors associated with this decrease (such as the PEIHS policy to neuter all animals before they leave the shelter); however, there can be no doubt that the feral cat neutering programme is a major contributor.

Table 1: Number of cats surrendered to the PEIHS from May 2000 to April 2007 (the PEIHS records numbers of cats surrendered yearly from May to April).

Year	Number of cats surrendered
2000–2001	2022
2001–2002	1634
2002–2003	1588
2003–2004	1756
2004–2005	1307
2005–2006	1345
2006–2007	1222

The second objective of this project was accomplished by testing all trapped feral cats for FeLV and FIV. Any cat that tested positive for either virus was euthanized to help prevent spread of these fatal viral illnesses in the cat population of PEI. The initial prevalence of these diseases was high (2001: FeLV 5.2%; FIV 7.3%), but has since declined (2006: FeLV 2.8%; FIV 2.3%). In many individual colonies, FeLV and FIV have been eradicated, with occasional FeLV- or FIV-positive cats immigrating to the colonies from surrounding areas. In addition to providing valuable prevalence data on these diseases in feral cats on PEI, this data provides hope that these diseases could potentially be eradicated on PEI.

The third objective was to provide some basic and preventative medical care to the trapped feral cats. All the cats were vaccinated against feline viral rhinotracheitis, feline calici virus, feline panleukopenia virus, and rabies virus. This last was considered particularly important from a public health perspective as it helps provide a rabies-vaccinated population of feral cats, should raccoon rabies ever be introduced onto PEI. The cats were also dewormed and any eye or ear infections were treated topically. Every cat received a unique tattoo number for identification, and to preclude the possibility of accidentally performing surgery on previously neutered cats in the future.

Benefits

The quality of life for individual animals was improved through neutering, vaccination, deworming, and treatment of pre-existing medical conditions. Spayed and castrated cats fight less and have better chances of survival than cats that are mating and raising kittens. Individual cats that tested positive for FeLV or FIV and were euthanized were spared the slow and painful death that can be associated with these diseases.

The project was of benefit to the feral cat population as a whole by decreasing the prevalence of FeLV and FIV, which also benefits owned cats who interact with feral cats. Fewer kittens were born, resulting in less competition for resources and thus improving the overall welfare of the feral cat population. Spaying and castrating of cats results in less nuisance behaviour such as urine spraying and fighting, thus improving the public's goodwill towards feral cats. The publicity generated by the activities of CAT volunteers in this project has raised the awareness of the plight of feral cats on PEI, and stressed to the public the importance of neutering cats and dogs.

Each neuter day, dozens of students from all four years of the veterinary medicine programme volunteer to take part. This additional training experience is extremely valuable to the students. It also reminds them of their responsibility to use their training for the benefit of feral animals, and shows them that trap, neuter, and release programmes are viable. It is

Student with feral cat on a neuter day

hoped that many of these future veterinarians will set up or take part in feral cat neuter programmes in the areas where they will practise veterinary

Feral cat recovering after neutering

medicine. Since the start of the programme, five privately owned veterinary practices on PEI have begun offering discounted services to spay and castrate feral cats for the Cat Action Team. They follow the protocols that Dr. Foley and CAT have established.

Dr. Foley and the SJDAWC have been contacted by veterinarians in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Ontario, and Quebec who are interested in establishing feral cat neutering programmes in their provinces. In all these cases, the PEI programme has served as a role model in the development of their programmes.

AVC humane dog training programme (2005–07)

N Guy, E Cawthorn

This service project is carried out at the PEI Humane Society (PEIHS) under the direction of Dr. Norma Guy (AVC Clinical Behaviour Service) and Dr. Els Cawthorn (Shelter Manager, PEIHS). Veterinary student dog trainers provide behavioural enrichment and basic training for dogs at the PEIHS; assist Dr. Cawthorn in assessing the behaviour of shelter dogs and carry out behaviour modification for those dogs requiring special attention; interact with shelter visitors and potential adopters to educate them about pet behaviour and act as adoption counsellors; and provide educational material within the shelter and on the website to promote both the adoption of shelter dogs and non-coercive methods of behaviour modification.

An additional significant objective of this project is to facilitate the experience within the shelter environment for all veterinary students involved in

the project, in order to increase their understanding of shelter issues and promote a positive attitude toward shelter activities by future veterinarians.

Progress

Over the two-year course of this project, 655 dogs were adopted out by the PEIHS. Each adoption requires that a dog be evaluated for its suitability as a pet, that it be maintained in a healthy physical and emotional state during its stay on the adoption floor (which may be a period of months), and that the potential adopters be screened for their ability to provide an appropriate and loving home. This is a complex and time-consuming process, but it is central to the goals of the PEIHS. The work of the student trainers is highly valued by the shelter and is virtually indispensable if the shelter is to continue the tremendous progress it has seen in recent years.

All dogs on the adoption floor, and many dogs on the receiving floor, benefit from the work of the student trainers. Over 400 dogs were clicker trained in the past two years. Some of these dogs were on the adoption floor for a prolonged period of time, making their time with the trainers especially important. Those dogs that did not receive training were either adopted out very quickly or were part of a very young litter. The trainers were responsible for observing and reporting on the behaviour of all dogs in the shelter. For some dogs, their arrival at the shelter is the best thing that has ever happened to them; for others, the shelter may be a very stressful place. Trainers work with the Shelter Manager to ensure that signs that a dog is not coping well are recognized and addressed.

In the past year, the PEIHS has changed its policy on the return of dogs, allowing for a refund of the full adoption fee (minus a $30 administrative fee) if the dog is returned to the shelter within 14 days. Recognizing that the ultimate goal is to find good permanent homes, it is always possible that the first family to adopt a dog may not be the best "fit". The shelter is extremely successful at re-homing returned dogs, and would rather see dogs returned to the shelter than be kept in inappropriate circumstances or allowed to stray. In many cases, the trainers can work through minor issues with owners, helping to keep the dog in its first home. If that does not work, the dog is returned, re-evaluated, and placed in another home. This can work extremely well, as dogs who

Sheba and student trainer Ashley Harvey, AVC 2009, in the PEIHS dog park. Sheba has since been adopted.

have been returned (as opposed to those who arrive as strays) come with more information about their behaviour in various household situations. The trainers help adopters develop a long-term relationship with their pets and a positive attitude toward the shelter itself.

Data from the PEIHS illustrates its success in increasing the "live release rate" for all animals. This rate is the percentage of the animals coming into the shelter who are either returned to their original home or adopted out to new homes. One of the most troublesome aspects of shelter management is the control of infectious diseases and the effect of stress on the spread of disease. The live release rate is an excellent indicator of the overall effectiveness of health, behaviour, and adoption strategies. Over the past five years, the live release rate for dogs has increased from under 60% to over 75%.

Dr. Guy was awarded funding in the 2007 SJDAWC competition to continue this highly successful project for a further two years.

Pegasus feral cat neutering programme (2007)
A Crook, A-M Carey, M Hopson

Feral cats are neutered on Fridays at the AVC Veterinary Teaching Hospital through this project, which is funded by the Pegasus Family Foundation through the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The original project goal was to neuter an average of five cats per week, but that number was surpassed two years ago, at which time the project goal was increased to an average of six cats per week. This number is generally exceeded. Procedures are carried out as established by Dr. Peter Foley in consultation with the PEI Cat Action Team (CAT) for the SJDAWC-funded project *Neutering feral cats on PEI* (page 6). Procedures over the last year were carried out by Dr. Anne-Marie Carey or by senior veterinary students under her supervision. As well, additional feral cats are neutered at participating Island veterinary clinics with funds privately raised by CAT. This neuter programme benefits the individual cats by decreasing fighting activity associated with mating and by preventing the spread of disease. On a broader level, the programme is also decreasing the proportion of reproducing feral cats on PEI, with the ultimate goal of achieving negative population growth.

Feral cat

Since January 2004, 1,151 feral cats have been spayed and castrated through this project. This represents a major component of the activities of CAT, through which, since 2001, a total of 3,312 feral cats have been neutered, using funds provided by the Pegasus Family Foundation, the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre, and other funds raised by CAT.

CONFERENCE NEWS

Equine Welfare: In Practice
September 21 – 22, 2007

The third annual "Animal Welfare: In Practice" conference was held at the Atlantic Veterinary College in September, co-hosted by the SJDAWC and the AVC Humane Ethics Club, with generous additional support from the Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada. This year's conference focused on equine welfare.

Attendees included veterinary and animal science students, veterinarians, and horse-owners. Congratulations to students Malgosia Mosielski, Shawn Llewellyn, and Tasha Kean on their successful organization of this conference. Plans are under way for the next "Animal Welfare: In Practice" conference, fall 2008. Watch for further information in our summer 2008 newsletter, and on our website: upei.ca/awc.

OTHER NEWS

2007 Christofor Award in Animal Welfare

Fourth-year student Shawn Llewellyn is the recipient of this year's award, presented October 11 at the Atlantic Veterinary College's Awards Night. During his time at AVC, Shawn has shown a consistent commitment to highlighting and promoting issues of animal welfare to fellow classmates, faculty, and staff of the AVC, and to others. He has accomplished this partly through two years as co-president of the Humane Ethics Club and also as the Representative for the Welfare of Teaching Animals on the Executive of the Society of Atlantic Veterinary Students (SAVS), a position which he helped to finalize through his presidency of SAVS. This new position within the SAVS Executive will be responsible for allocation of SAVS funds to improve the welfare of teaching animals and will oversee current programmes for this purpose, including beagle walking and the equine enrichment programme.

Shawn was instrumental in the development of the Animal Welfare in Practice conference, which has

become an annual event at AVC and is now co-hosted with the SJDAWC. These conferences attract veterinary students and other students from UPEI and from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, as well as veterinarians and technicians from the three Maritime provinces. The first symposium, in October 2005, looked at issues of farm animal welfare and included pain management, on-farm welfare assessment, and livestock handling. The conference in September 2006 focused on companion animals, and included talks on behaviour in dogs and parrots (as companions), pain management, and breeding practices in dogs. The theme of the conference this fall was equine welfare. Shawn has developed a template for putting on such a conference which will serve the Humane Ethics Club well for future conferences.

Presenter Dr. Alice Crook and 2007 Christofor Award recipient Shawn Llewellyn

As Co-president of the Humane Ethics Club, Shawn organized lunchtime talks on current events relating to animal welfare, such as animals in entertainment, the Canadian seal hunt, welfare issues in the tropical fish industry, and federal animal cruelty legislation. Shawn plans to continue his involvement with animal welfare issues. The SJDAWC wishes him well in all future endeavours and congratulates him most heartily on his receiving the 2007 Christofor Award.

Update on Federal Animal Cruelty Legislation

Bill S-203 was passed by the Senate in November and is scheduled for debate in the House of Commons in the new year. S-203 is the reintroduction of S-213, a Private Member's Bill that passed in the Senate in December 2006 and passed Second Reading in the House before Parliament dissolved this past summer. S-203 does not address the flaws in the current federal legislation regarding cruelty to animals, but only increases penalties.

The current Criminal Code legislation on cruelty to animals (Sections 444-447) dates back to 1892. Legislation to amend the Cruelty to Animals section has been before Parliament since 1999 under various names, most recently C-373. The amendments in C-373 address the many deficiencies in the outdated current legislation, including, but by no means limited to, increasing penalties for animal cruelty (similar to S-203).

The main problems with S-203 are that it:

- maintains the outdated and confusing language of the current legislation—e.g., cattle are in a different section from "all other animals which are not cattle".
- maintains the loophole of "willful neglect". The wording of the current offence of willful neglect requires proof of a person's intent. The requirement to prove that a person intended to neglect their animals makes it extremely difficult to lay charges, even where dozens of animals have been starved to death.
- maintains the animal cruelty provisions in the property section of the Criminal Code.

Increasing penalties will not make any difference if the new legislation does not also address the flaws in the current legislation that make it very difficult to successfully prosecute offenders. Bill C-373 strikes the appropriate balance between addressing cruelty to animals as a crime of violence, while at the same time making it clear that lawful and humane practices regulated or authorized by federal or provincial legislation or applicable codes of practice, such as normal agricultural practices, hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal research, will not be affected. However, C-373 is not scheduled for debate and is far down on the list of Private Members' bills.

Organizations that support Bill C-373, including the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, will continue to oppose Bill S-203. For more information, go to

cfhs.ca or see the text of the CVMA submission to the Senate Committee hearings (December 4, 2006) at canadianveterinarians.net/animal-issues.aspx

New Kennel Code

The second edition of *A Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Code Operations* is now available on the website of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (canadianveterinarians.net). There is also a link from the SJDAWC site under Animal Welfare Resources. First published in 1994, the Code has been updated by the CVMA Animal Welfare Committee to reflect current expectations for the care of dogs. This Code of Practice for the care, management, and breeding of dogs is a voluntary one that will be useful for those involved in the care and handling of dogs and puppies, including dog breeders, kennel operators, and humane societies. The Code can also be used as an educational tool by those interested in promoting canine welfare, and as a standard by animal protection and police officers across Canada, as well as by the courts, in animal cruelty inspections and investigations.

SPONSORS

The Centre has recently received renewed funding for the eighth six-month phase of the *Pegasus feral cat neutering programme*. We are grateful to the **Pegasus Family Foundation**, through the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, for this continued support. As well, the Centre is pleased to acknowledge generous support from **Mr. David Madren**, and we also thank those pet owners who have made donations *in memoriam*.

The Centre is very fortunate in its longstanding partnership with the **Friends of the Christofor Foundation**, created through the Estate of Lady Beaverbrook. Lady Beaverbrook, whose first husband was the late Sir James Dunn, had a lifelong interest in the welfare of animals, particularly horses and dogs. Through her generosity, the SJDAWC funds research and service projects with direct and tangible benefits for horses, dogs, cats, or wildlife. Funding from the Friends of the Christofor Foundation has also endowed the prestigious annual Christofor Award—awarded to an AVC student who has demonstrated sustained interest and commitment to improving the well-being of animals—and provides administrative support for the Centre. We are most grateful for the ongoing financial support of the Friends of the Christofor Foundation, without which the SJDAWC would not exist.

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

The Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre (SJDAWC) exists to promote animal welfare by generating and disseminating impartial and scientifically based knowledge and understanding of animal welfare issues.

The Centre facilitates, focuses, and coordinates academic and research resources at the Atlantic Veterinary College to carry out animal welfare research and education, and to provide information and advice to industry, government, organizations, and the public.

Goals

1. The SJDAWC seeks funding for, undertakes, promotes, and supports animal welfare research projects and service activities at the Atlantic Veterinary College.
2. The SJDAWC serves as a resource centre to compile and generate information relevant to the welfare of animals.
3. The SJDAWC strives to raise the awareness of the public and of the veterinary profession on broad questions of animal welfare and animal use, and to provide accurate, scientifically based information on these questions.

(revised October, 2007)