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2002-2003

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President's Message

Welcome spring! Hopefully this edition of the newsletter finds you shoveled out of the snowdrifts and seeing some new green. Here in Florida, the season is in full bloom with ladybugs aplenty, the annual yowling of the cats and croaking of alligators.

A big thank you to Aggie Kiefer, editor-in-chief of *Veterinary Technician*, for accepting SVBT's offer to have society members submit articles for the "Ain't Misbehavin'" column. Watch for the March edition, which will feature animal behavior in the veterinary field. Another huge thank you to our members who have written excellent articles for both *Veterinary Technician* and our newsletter.

Welcome new members! At the time this newsletter went to print, we were 247 members strong! We thank all of you for your support and ideas. Be sure to check out the nominees for SVBT board positions in this edition of the newsletter and then be sure to submit the enclosed ballot!

As a reminder, our memberships run from July through June of the following year. All memberships come due the end of June and must be received before July 15. We now offer the convenience of accepting membership dues online at www.svbt.org. Be sure to renew in time.

You don't want to miss the member's annual meeting and reception in Denver. It is time to start planning for the AVMA / AVSAB / ACVB / SVBT meetings in Denver. There is more CE available in animal behavior at this meeting than at any other veterinary meeting in the country. (That is why we chose it as the place for our annual meeting.) Look for more details about this conference throughout the newsletter.

Hope to see all of you in Denver in July.

Ginny Price

SVBT President

It's Kong Time!

by Sandi Thompson

As a dog trainer, I've seen many dogs whose behavior problems are attributable to the vast time they spend home alone, bored and anxious. I often advise owners to give their dogs meals stuffed into Kong toys; "unstuffing" the Kong and eating the food is pleasurable and time-consuming, and helps distract and entertain the dog, relieving stress. However, the Kongs may occupy these dogs for only an hour (or less); they may have another 8 or 10 hours to spend alone—still plenty of time to bark, destroy the house, or even engage in self-mutilation.

My partner, engineer Dave Rucker, and I conceived of a product that would dispense food-filled Kongs to a dog over the course of a day. We designed and developed Kong Time, a device that holds up to five food-stuffed Kong toys. Kong Time releases each toy at a different, randomized time while the owner is away. We formed a company, ProActive Pet Products (proactivepet.com), to manufacture and distribute Kong Time, which will be available for sale in fall 2003 at a price of about \$100.

As we developed working prototypes, we distributed them to trainers and behaviorists for testing. Each of these individuals has been enthusiastic about Kong Time, and has offered feedback about their experiences using Kong Time in a variety of situations. We recently learned about applications of Kong Time for helping certain shelter dogs, which could have profound positive consequences for the dogs and shelter workers alike.

Corinne Dowling is founder and director of "Give A Dog A Bone" (gadab.org), a nonprofit program operating on site at the

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for Your Support**

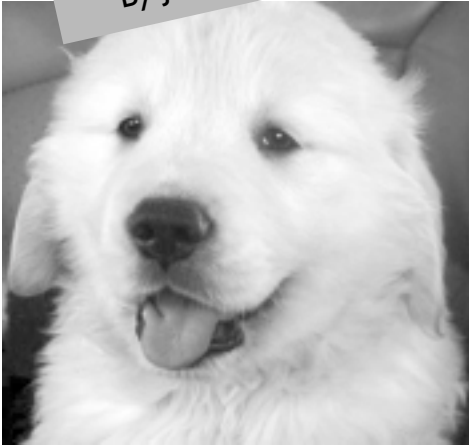


www.kongcompany.com

(Continued on page 5)

Editor's Bark

By Julie Shaw, R.V.T



"Hero"

of this writing, "Hero" is 13 weeks old and quite the handful. His training is coming along nicely in spite of having an attention span comparable to that of an immature gnat. "Hero" has bonded to Dylan and chooses to spend time with him over all other family members. We are working on public etiquette and he is beginning to ignore "look at the cute puppy" comments when he is wearing his training cape. He has learned sit, down, go-under (important in restaurants), leave it, drop it and to target objects with his foot. We are in the early stages of teaching a retrieve and hopefully by July I will be able to report that he is retrieving on cue. As for "Faith", she remains in remission and on good days she assists Dylan with light tasks. On days she does not feel well we shower her with love, kisses and appreciation for the independence she has given Dylan for 6 years.

Cross your fingers that I can report in the next edition that "Hero's" attention span has improved to that of at least a **mature** gnat! See you in Colorado.

I hope this edition of The Behavior Perspective finds you all well and battling only mild cases of spring fever.

The focus of this edition is Kitten Kindergarten with our feature article and "Ask the Expert" column by Dr. Kersti Seksel. Dr. Seksel is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorist and one of our highly anticipated speakers at the AVMA in Colorado this year. I recommend as many members as possible attend this year's conference and annual meeting. The behavior lectures are certain to be both practical and informative. The camaraderie at the SVBT annual meeting is guaranteed to rejuvenate.

I'd like to put out a call for anyone interested in taking over editing of The Behavior Perspective. As I take on my new responsibilities as SVBT's president in July I feel it is in SVBT's best interest that I turn over the majority of compiling and formatting the newsletter to someone else. I would like to remain somewhat involved with the newsletter by assisting with the final editing and printing. The editor's position requires between 8-16 hours of time for each edition. SVBT could supply the appropriate software (Adobe PageMaker) if needed. Interested members may email me with questions at shawjk@purdue.edu.

Many of you have asked how my son's new service-dog-in training is doing. At the time

Reminder!

All memberships come due the end of June and must be received before July 15

**Renew your
membership**

online at

www.svbt.org

SVBT Scholarship Winner, Lyn Callander, C.V.T.



Congratulations **Lyn Callander, C.V.T.**, winner of the 2003 DOGS! Course scholarship contest. Lyn has previously focused her efforts in the area of feline behavior and has started Kitten Kindy classes. She has written numerous client education handouts on feline behavior issues and teaches a class called "Understanding Feline Behavior" through the local community center. Lyn works full time at Crossroads Animal Hospital in Burnsville, Minnesota, and part-time at an emergency clinic. She also volunteers at the local humane society and wildlife center. Lyn looks forward to using the knowledge she gains from the DOGS! Course to begin puppy socialization classes. She also hopes to offer classes at the community center and humane society. Lyn plans on applying the behavior modification techniques she learns to increase the adoptability of surrendered dogs at the shelter.

Keep up the great work Lyn!

Title Clarification by Dr. Gary Landsberg and Dr. Suzanne Hetts

Editor's Note: In the Behavior Perspective, Winter 2003 edition, there was some confusion concerning the terms "veterinary behaviorist" and "certified animal behaviorist." The latter should have been called "certified applied animal behaviorist". Furthermore, there are differences between veterinary behaviorists and certified applied animal behaviorists, not the least of which are that only veterinarians can make a medical differential diagnosis and only veterinarians are allowed to prescribe drugs. I thank Dr. Bonnie Beaver for bringing this to my attention. She wrote, "We have 'board certified veterinary behaviorist" and ABS has 'certified applied animal behaviorists' but I am not aware of what group recognizes a 'certified animal behaviorist'. As used in the bullet point, this person 'is responsible for the diagnosis and differential diagnosis of a behavior problem, as well as for the medical work-up, pharmacological treatment and the development of a treatment plan...' This means the person must be a veterinarian since the law in most states defines veterinary medicine as 'the diagnosis and/or treatment of mental and physical problems.' Therefore the phrase should refer to a veterinarian or board certified veterinary behaviorist."

We have enlisted the help of two very respected behavior professionals to clarify these issues.

Veterinary Behaviorist Gary Landsberg BSc, DVM, Dip ACVB

Dr. Gary Landsberg is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and presently serves as their president-elect. He is a frequent speaker on behavioral topics at veterinary conferences around the world, has coauthored a number of veterinary behavioral texts, including Handbook of Behavior Problems of the Dog and Cat, (2nd edition, 2003). In the year 2000, Dr. Landsberg was awarded the American Animal Hospital Association award for his contributions to the field of companion animal behavior in 2000.

The veterinary behaviorist must first be a graduate of an accredited veterinary college. This insures a comprehensive background in anatomy, animal welfare, genetics, neurology, physiology, medicine, surgery and pharmacology, as well as the type of medical problems that might have an effect on the behavior of the pet. The veterinary behaviorist must also receive training in normal species typical behavior, comparative animal behavior, the principles of learning and behavior modification, abnormal behavior, psychopharmacology and the effects of disease on behavior, and must work for at least two years seeing cases under the mentorship of a board certified veterinary behaviorist. Publications, presentations to other veterinarians, case histories and a four-part examination are all then required to achieve board certification (see www.veterinarybehaviorists.org for details).

In short, the veterinary behaviorist has a unique combination of education and training, clinical expertise and medical knowledge to be able to diagnose and design a treatment program for your pet's behavior problem, including the impact of medical problems on behavior and the use of psychotropic drugs in treating behavior problems.

Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist Suzanne Hetts, Ph.D.

Suzanne Hetts holds a Ph.D. in animal behavior and is certified by the Animal Behavior Society as an applied animal behaviorist. Since 1982, Suzanne has consulted with pet owners, veterinarians, animal care and control professionals and attorneys regarding animal behavior problems. Along with her husband, Dr. Dan Estep, she now co-owns Animal Behavior Associates, Inc., located in Littleton, Colorado.

Dr. Hetts is a frequent speaker at many national humane, animal control and veterinary conferences. Dr. Hetts has been a consultant to Delta Society's Service Dog Education System is the past chair of the Animal Behavior Society's Board of Professional Certification, has served on the Board of Directors of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, and was the Scientific Director of American Humane Association's Humane Dog Training Project.

Founded in 1964, the Animal Behavior Society is the largest professional organization in North America dedicated to the study of animal behavior. In 1990, the ABS developed a certification program for applied animal behaviorists, providing the means by which interested parties can identify those individuals who meet the requirements of the Society.

CAAB's must possess a doctoral degree in a biological or behavioral science, have five years of professional experience, or a doctorate in veterinary medicine plus two years in a university-approved residency in animal behavior and three additional years of professional experience in applied animal behavior. Any of these degrees must include 21 semester credits in behavioral science courses including 6 semester credits in ethology or related fields and 6 semester credits in animal learning or psychology.

CAAB's must also demonstrate they have a thorough knowledge of the literature, scientific principles and principles of animal behavior and show evidence of significant experience working interactively with their particular species of interest. They must also provide three letters of recommendation from regular ABS members affirming the applicant's professional experience.

Individuals can be certified at the Associate level with a Master's degree and two years of professional experience.

Certified applied animal behaviorists most often work in zoos, research environments, and with companion animals and their owners. More CAAB's are also working in animal shelters.

Those who work with companion animals in a private practice setting often receive referrals from veterinarians, after potential medical causes for the pet's behavior changes and problems have been evaluated.



SVBT Executive Board Nominees

The following SVBT members have been nominated for positions on the Executive Board of Directors. Please complete and mail the enclosed ballot by May 31, 2003.

Donna Dyer, C.V.T. Candidate President-Elect

Donna worked for over 10 years as a Certified Veterinary Technician in Denver, Colorado after graduating from Bel-Rea Institute of Animal Technology in 1988. Her clinical background includes experience in the high-tech environment of a referral practice as well as experience at an animal assistance foundation.

For the last eight years, Donna has focused her efforts on companion animal behavior and improving the relationships between people and their pets. She is currently employed as the Training and Behavior Education Specialist at Premier Pet Products in Richmond, VA.

Donna is co-founder and has served as Corresponding Secretary of the SVBT. In addition, she chairs the Public Relations and Continuing Education committees and has worked since the organization's inception to advance the goals of SVBT, build alliances with organizations in related fields, and solicit sponsorships to fund the group's projects.

Donna was instrumental in setting up SVBT's Advisory Panel and the first annual business meeting and reception in Nashville, TN in 2002.

She is a member of one of the Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams that are deployed by the federal government in response to natural and man-made disasters. The VMATs provide veterinary medical services to animals in need in addition to conducting animal disease surveillance, hazard mitigation, animal decontamination and biological and chemical terrorism surveillance.

Donna attended and passed the written examination for the 5-day lecture and practicum course DOGS! at Purdue University in 2000.

Tara Lang, BS, RVT Candidate Secretary-Corresponding

Tara graduated from Murray State University in 1995 with a Bachelors of Science in Agriculture and an area in Animal Health Technology. While at Murray State, she was an active member, and officer, in both the Pre-vet/AHT club and Alpha Zeta. Since graduation, she has lectured at the Association of Avian Veterinarians national conference,

and been a guest speaker for the Dunwoody (Georgia) Nature Center, Atlanta Bird Club, and the Animal Health Technology program at Murray State University. She is currently an officer of the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA).

Once Tara entered private practice as a registered veterinary technologist, she discovered that she had a knack for talking to people. She was eventually communicating with most of the puppy, kitten, and exotic owners on how to provide the best care for their pets. This involved a great deal of behavioral and husbandry counseling as well as the traditional medical information. Many of the clients were coming to the veterinary office with out-of-date information. Tara decided to devote her career to educating clients using current and accurate information. Tara has attended many continuing education courses on behavior and exotic animals over the last 7 years. These courses have added to her enjoyment and confidence in advising and working with clients on the ever changing needs of their beloved family members.

Tara has recently accepted a part-time job for Rolan Tripp, a veterinarian who has a special interest in behavior. She assists him in his behavior practice following up on cases, doing research on various projects and working on editing his behavior articles.

"I would like to utilize my public speaking skills, and ability to coordinate and train groups of people, to further advance SVBT's presence in the veterinary community. I feel that my past and current duties as a technologist will be beneficial if I am elected to the corresponding secretary position."

Sarah Lahrman, R.V.T. Candidate Secretary-Recording

Sarah graduated from Purdue University in 1998 with a Associates Degree in Veterinary Technology. She is also a graduate of Purdue University's 2002 DOGS! Course. She currently works at Line Street Veterinary Hospital in Columbia City, IN (a small animal practice). "I have an interest in canine and feline behavior. I hold puppy socialization classes and offer pre-purchase counseling at the hospital. My husband and I reside in Fort Wayne, IN and have 3 children: a English Bulldog (Jobie), a Great Dane (Cyrus), and a cat (Ozzy). Other hobbies/past times include quilting, shopping and spending time with family."

Sarah believes running for the secretary position will help her become more involved with the SVBT. "I enjoy the work that I do

and I feel that behavior medicine is something you either like or you don't. And unfortunately, most often it is usually one person in a clinic/hospital that has an interest and so it's hard to bounce back info or talk to other employee's and get them excited about a case like you are. Behavior medicine is somewhat lonely. Holding a position in the SVBT will help me continue to grow and keep me educated on behavioral issues and I would be very proud and honored to hold such a position."

Amy Newfield Breton, CVT Candidate Secretary-Recording

Amy graduated from Becker College, Leicester Ma in 1998 with associate degrees in both Animal Care and Veterinary Technology. Amy is currently the head certified veterinary technician at Sterling Veterinary Clinic in Sterling, MA. She is a member of the VMAT-1 team which is deployed by the USPHS during disaster situations. She currently holds two positions: Assistant Logistics Officer and Planning Sections Chief and has received extensive animal disaster training. She was deployed to NYC to assist with the needs of the SAR, NYPD K9 and FEMA USAR Teams. Amy was recently featured on the cover of *Veterinary Technician* for her efforts on her VMAT-1 team. Amy says, "I have strong interests in emergency/disaster medicine and animal behavior. I am hoping that my enthusiasm in animal behavior creates a "whirl-wind" in my practice, thereby having all staff become aware of how important it is as a veterinary community to be more knowledgeable and helpful in the area of behavior. Being involved with VMAT has helped quench my thirst for disaster medicine. My VMAT team plays an integral part in my life."

Amy is an active member in numerous organizations including: MVTA: Member since 9/98 (Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Assoc.) VMAT-1: Member since 11/00 (Veterinary Medical Assistance Team) VECCS: Member since 4/02 (Veterinary Emerg. & Critical Care Society) SVBT: Member since 7/02 (Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians) NAVTA: Member since 1/03 (North American Veterinary Tech. Assoc.)

Marcia Rafter Ritchie, LVT, CPDT Candidate Member At Large

Marcia Rafter Ritchie Graduated from SUNY Delhi, AAS in Veterinary Science in 1977. She worked in private veterinary practices for 20

years and has been an obedience/conformation dog show competitor since 1979. She has been a professional pet obedience instructor since 1984 and was in the first group of 120 instructors to be nationally certified as a Pet Dog Trainer through the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT). Marcia has been the Training Director at Eagle Ridge Kennel since 1991 where she supervises a training staff of 7 instructors who teach pet dog obedience in 4 different locations in the Buffalo, NY area. She teaches group and private classes. Marcia recently wrote the feature article for The Behavior Perspective on pet-selection counseling.

Marcia attended Purdue University's DOGS! Course in 2002. She is a consultant / volunteer for Erie county SPCA and volunteers as a 4-H leader in the dog program.

Cassandra Vong, BS, LVT Candidate Member At Large

Cassandra received her BS and LVT degrees in veterinary technology at Michigan State University. She also has a BS degree in Animal Science. Cassandra currently coordinates and teaches 2nd and 3rd year veterinary surgery labs as well as 4th year spay/neuter rotations. Cassandra assists local rescue groups and veterinary students with behavior modification and temperament evaluations

for both dogs and cats. Cassandra is president of the Michigan Veterinary Technician Associate and a board member for the Friends of Ingham County Animal Shelter and the Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog Owners Association

Cassandra spends her spare time accompanying MSU's vet students and faculty in a mobile animal clinic program to Indian reservations in the western states. Their primary focus is spay, neuters and vaccinations. Cassandra has noticed an extreme difference in the temperaments of the reservation dog population verses the mid-west pet dog population.

Cassandra attended and passed the DOG! Course at Purdue University in 1999.

Angela Martin, C.V.T. Candidate Member-at Large

Angela began her career in behavior at the Tree House Animal Foundation, a no-kill cat shelter in Chicago, Illinois where she pioneered their feline socialization program. "My work there consisted of assessing the behavior of resident and newly admitted kittens and cats and designing, executing, and overseeing each behavior modification program. I also authored booklets on feline behavior and socialization, and trained and supervised volunteers."

Angela's interest in animal behavior crosses into other species as she is also a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and founder of Atagahi Wildlife Haven. Designing caging for social enrichment and development of skills needed for successful release back into the wild is an essential and enjoyable part of her work.

"I then obtained my Associate of Applied Science, Veterinary Technician degree from Madison Area Technical College in Wisconsin. I am currently employed at the Cat Care Clinic in Madison, Wisconsin where I work with Wisconsin's only 2 Diplomates of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners certified in Feline Medicine. My position at the Cat Care Clinic entails assisting in feline behavior consultations with our clients and referrals from area clinics, writing education pamphlets and training materials, and providing continuing education to our staff." "My desire to serve as an officer of the Society of Veterinary Behavior Technicians primarily stems from the sad fact that behavior problems are still the largest killers of cats and dogs in this country. I believe that veterinary technicians are an untapped and/or underused resource of caring and willing people who can be a great asset to help change this! I wish to help empower technicians by expanding our knowledge and experience through networking and continuing education."

It's Kong Time! *(Continued from page 1)*

San Francisco Animal Care & Control Facility. GADAB provides environmental enrichment for dogs in forced long-term shelter care, and is dedicated to improving the quality of life for dogs in extended confinement with physical, behavioral, mental, and emotional stimulation. GADAB workers teach the dogs impulse-control exercises that help them stop exhibiting stress behaviors such as panting, spinning, body and paw chewing, "painting" (the spreading of feces on the walls and floors), or shutting down. They also provide many versions of the "stuffed Kong" solution for helping the dogs pass time.

We were impressed with progress Dowling made using Kong Time with one dog in particular. For the past six months, Dowling used a Kong Time prototype with "Buster," a mixed breed, held for nine months at the San Francisco shelter due to a severe bite. At the beginning of his stay, Dowling reports,

Buster was extremely depressed, mostly staying in bed. "He was also a scary dog, highly fear-aggressive, and did not want anyone going near him; he would begin roaring at a 10-foot distance," she described.

Buster soon learned that a freshly filled Kong Time machine meant good things, reports Dowling. The dog would get excited when he heard a GADAB staff member loading the machine. "It was a very positive thing for him, in that it broke up his afternoon into smaller pleasant parts," said Dowling. "It also got him out of his bed and exploring different parts of the kennel where little bits of food may have slipped out of the Kongs."

From observing Buster with Kong Time, Dowling concluded, "Kong Time improved Buster's overall sense of well-being; it increased his good nature. I think that any dog who likes a stuffed Kong will benefit from Kong Time. I would recommend Kong Time unequivocally for any shelter and for any dog who is home alone."

We will make Kong Time available to dog owners exclusively through our Proactive Pet Products Club members and the PPP Web site for the first year. Dog professionals and volunteers, such as shelter workers, are welcome to become members; visit www.proactivepet.com for details.

Change in Bylaws:

**The following change
in the SVBT bylaws will be
voted on at the
annual meeting:**

Article IV Section 2:2 Nominations and Elections

*All voting (professional) members
will be mailed a ballot to be
returned to the Nominating/
Election Committee postmarked
no later than designated by the
committee for vote tabulation.*

**Voting (professional) members may
choose to submit their vote online at
the official SVBT website.**

Kitten Kindy® Kitten Socialization and Training Classes

by Dr. Kersti Seksel, B.V.Sc. (Hons), M.R.C.V.S., M.A. (Hons) F.A.C.V.Sc. (Animal Behaviour) Dipl ACVB

A new kitten is just what everyone in the family wanted—cute, fluffy and playful, until it starts scratching the furniture or climbing onto kitten benches or worse still, urinating on the Persian rug! Now, kitty may well end up being dumped, rehomed or euthanized—all because the owners did not understand a cat's normal behavior and how to help the cat learn how to become a pleasurable pet.

It is really important that when the new kitten comes home and is introduced into the household it is taught how to behave. It is important to set up for success, which really means not allowing the kitten to make

mistakes. Setting boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable behavior soon after the cat has arrived is the way to start and these boundaries need to be clear and consistent at all times. The best way of doing this is by always rewarding good behavior. This way a long-lasting and close bond develops and persists between animal and owner and hopefully the kitten does not end up being yet another statistic of an abandoned or dumped animal. One way of helping owners better understand their new feline friend is to run kitten socialization and training classes.

The advantages of puppy training are now well established and accepted. However, kittens can also benefit from such early handling and training. Cats require socialization with members of their own species as well as humans and dogs if they are to become social members of the household. Studies have shown that early handling of kittens in a gentle, nonthreatening manner is just as important for cats for their normal development.

Kitten Kindy® is an early socialization, training and education program designed to help owners and kittens start off on the right track together. The goal of Kitten Kindy® is to help prevent behavioral problems, educate owners on all aspects of raising a kitten and then live with a cat in the family. They aim to establish a close bond between the cat, the owner and the veterinary practice. It is another valuable service that veterinary practices can offer their patients and clients.



Kitten Kindy® is ideal for kittens under twelve to fourteen weeks of age to help them develop into manageable and social adult cats. They allow kittens to explore and learn to play with other kittens, play with toys and develop confidence in new surroundings. Ideally, the younger the kitten the better for maximal socialization. Hand-raised kittens and kittens

from small litters appear to benefit a lot from these social interactions. First time cat owners also gain a lot from attending.

The classes also teach owners about normal feline behavior, how to play and interact with their kittens and teach them how to

prevent many problem behaviors. It also allows veterinary practices to promote preventative health care.

Aims

The specific objectives of Kitten Kindy® will differ with the individual practice and the person conducting the classes, although both should have similar outcomes in mind. In general the classes should aim:

- To educate owners about normal feline behavior.
- To teach owners about the importance of play and socialization in kittens.
- To get kittens off to a good start so that they grow into manageable, easily handled adult cats.
- To identify problem behaviors early and provide advice on how to modify or manage them.
- To inform owners on all aspects of kitten development, pet care and living with a cat in the family—responsible pet ownership.

During classes many behavioral and medical issues can be discussed. By helping owners to understand feline behavioral development and communication it should be possible to educate them about why and when behavior

problems may occur and how they may be able to be prevented.

Structure

Kittens are not small puppies. Although the basic principles of kitten training are the same as training puppies, the classes can't be conducted the same way as puppy socialization and training classes such as Puppy Preschool®. Cats communicate differently and the periods of socialization are different.

The structure of the classes must suit the individual practice and the aim should be to recruit the kittens at the time of their first health care visit. Some written material on kitten care and Kitten Kindy® will help promote the classes.

Kitten Kindy® can be conducted over 2-3 weeks and each class runs for about 1 hour each week. Kittens must be between 8-12 weeks when they start the course and have had their first vaccination. Kittens over 14 weeks of age tend to fight rather than play so owners of cats older than 14 weeks are encouraged to attend without their cat so that they too can learn about feline behavior.

The minimum number of kittens for a class is three while and the recommended maximum is six. The whole family should be encouraged to attend as everyone will have different questions and views.

Ideally two people conduct the classes as that allows for better observation of the kittens and more effective control of the class as well as the ability to deliver more information.

Benefits

During the classes the kittens can be taught to come, sit, give five, give ten as well as walk on a lead. Teaching

tricks is lots of fun and also helps build a bond between the kitten and its owners as well as the veterinary practice. Training sessions are kept short and the focus is on fun—for the kitten, the owners as well as the veterinary staff.

Kitten Kindy® is a real practice builder. It leads to happy pets, happy clients as well as happy staff! Happy Training!



Get HIGH in July with SVBT! By Donna Dyer, C.V.T.

One mile high to be exact.

SVBT is meeting in Denver Colorado, the Mile Hi City, for our second Annual Business Meeting and Reception. It will be held in conjunction with AVMA's 140 Annual Convention. The dates for the convention are July 19–23. Starting on Saturday the 19 we have two full days of CE in behavior planned. Our own Julie Shaw, Dr. Andrew Luescher and Dr. Karen Overall are on the program along with Drs. Kersti Seksel, and Peter Neville. The talks will cover a wide range of topics including avian behavior, the rational use of psychopharmaceutical agents, holding kitten kindergarten classes, the European perspective on feline behavior and how to develop successful puppy classes for your practice. Sunday evening ACVM will hold its first scientific paper session. On Monday, AVSAB will hold its annual meeting with a day full of paper presentations detailing the latest research in veterinary behavior medicine.

Monday night will be highlighted by the SVBT Annual Meeting and Reception (location to be announced on the SVBT website). There is no cost to members for this event. Come celebrate the successes of our organization. We hope to build on the success of last year's reception. I think I heard Ginny Price request music for this year's event so that she could dance on tabletops. We hope to be able to extend the reception to two hours so we have more time to mingle and network. Drinks and hors d'oeuvre will be served.



Ask the Expert

I am starting a "Cat Education Class." I am not limiting the class to only kittens because I am hoping to get owners of cats of all ages involved in the classes. I am not sure when to make the age cut off. I could see a disaster happening with several adult cats and kittens in the same room! What are the best ages for a class like this? Melissa Kanning, R.V.T.

The socialization period of kittens is thought to last until around 9 weeks of age but, like with dogs, it is not rigidly fixed, and is influenced by many factors and individuals will vary depending on genetic predisposition and experience.

Cat education classes are a great idea—they help promote the practice and increase the cat owner's knowledge about normal feline behavior. It is also a great way to help owners with behavioral problems. However you will need to restrict your kittens to under 12-14 weeks of age when they attend as around that time they may start to fight with each other rather than socialize. In my Kitten Kindy® classes we have 5-6 kittens in the class and all members of their family that would like to attend. We also encourage the owners of older cats to attend without their pet. This way the owners have the opportunity to learn about cats, to train them and can then go home and practice. This way we can maximize the learning experience for all and minimize the chances of problems.

Ask the Expert – Dr. Kersti Seksel

Annual Scientific Sessions in Behavior Denver, Colorado July 20 & 21, 2003

This year at the AVMA meeting in Denver, there will be two opportunities for continuing education in veterinary behavior, in addition to the general program of the AVMA

The American College of Veterinary Behaviorist (ACVB) Scientific Paper Session

Sunday July 20, 2003, 5:00 – 10:00 pm

Session will include:

- Predictability of a Shelter Dog Behavioral Assessment Test
- Comparative Bioavailability of Transdermal Versus Oral Fluoxetine in Healthy Cats
- Canine Sibling Rivalry: Characteristics, owner compliance, and factors affecting prognosis for positive treatment outcome
- The effects of hierarchy, gender, relatedness and familiarity on allogrooming in the domestic cat
- The effect of diet on cribbing
- An Investigation of the Incidence of Clinical Signs of Cognitive Dysfunction Syndrome (CDS) in Cats
- Title: Diagnosis of canine generalized anxiety disorder and its short-term management with paroxetine (Paxil)
- The use of clomipramine hydrochloride for the treatment of feline psychogenic alopecia

The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) Annual Paper and Poster Presentations

Monday, July 21, 2003, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

- The Role of Urinary Tract Disease in Feline Urine Marking Measuring
- What Matters: Behaviors that Pet Owners Tolerate and Their Perception of Possibility for Change in Behavior
- Validity of the Dominance Tube Test When Used with Domestic Ferrets
- Puberty in the Dog: Differences Between Males and Females in the Development of Assertive Behaviors
- Effects of a Synthetic Dog Appeasing Pheromone (DAP) on Behavior Disorders During Transport
- Behavioral Responses to a Physiologically Provocative Test for Anxiety: Sentinel Signs and Concurrence with Physiological Changes
- Mild Polycythemia in Canine Compulsive Disorder
- How Important is Roughage to a Horse?
- Human Directed Aggression in the Miniature Pig
- Puppy Socialization Classes: How to Succeed in Puppy Education and Still Have Fun
- Case Reports in Combination Drug Therapy

You must register early for both events. You may print a registration brochure from www.svbt.org under the 2003 Annual Meeting link.



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www.svbt.org

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