

December 2006 Volume 2, Issue 2



Holiday Hazards! Pet Proof Your Home

With the holiday season fast approaching, we turn our thoughts to entertaining friends and family in our homes. The holiday season is a great time of year for people to come together to share meals, host parties, and enjoy each other's company. Some traditions over the holidays, however, can be harmful to our furry companions. While you celebrate the holiday season, please keep in mind the following tips to ensure the safety of your pets:

- Certain plants such as Mistletoe berries, and the leaves, stem and flowers of the Poinsettia can be dangerous to pets if ingested. Be sure to keep these plants well out of the reach of animals in your home, or opt to use artificial versions.
- Foods and drinks such as alcoholic beverages, seeds and pits from many fruits, chocolate, macadamia nuts, walnuts, coffee, tea, onions and other foods an be harmful to pets. For more information on other poisonous foods, drinks, and plants visit www.aspca.org.

- Never feed pets leftovers from the dinner table. Items such as chicken bones can easily shatter and choke cats and dogs.
- When cooking dinner for your guests, be sure to move pet birds away from the kitchen area. Fumes released from nonstick cookware and self-cleaning ovens can be deadly.
- Decorations such as tinsel, glass ornaments, and garlands can easily attract pets, but are dangerous choking hazards. Electric decorations such as stringed lights can give your pets a shock should they chew on the chords. Keep decorations out of reach.
- The unusual commotion of the holiday season can be stressful on animals as well as all of us! Put your pets in a quiet room or area of the house when guests are visiting. Make sure your pet's identification is updated, in case they stray or get lost.

misiae mis issae.	
Keeping Pets Safe for the Holidays	1
ACS Call Center	1
Rabies Prevention and Safety	2

Incide this issue

Adoptable Animals

Adopt a Valentine Shelter Event 3

-2

3

- Upcoming Shelter and Mobile Events 4
- Quarterly Success Story 4

We're Here for You:
Animal Care Center:
(714) 935-6848
After Hours Pick-up:
(714) 935-7158
Visit Us on the Web:
www.ocpetinfo.com

ACS Call Center: New improvements to get you through the call-center maze.

Tired of wading through confusing recordings and carpal-tunnel-inducing button pushing just to speak to a real live person? We've all experienced the frustrations of navigating a maze of recorded instructions. No matter how simple your question, we're left to press numbers, and wait. The entire process seems impersonal and ultimately sets a poor standard for customer service.

Each day, Animal Care Services (ACS) receives more than 900 calls about stray and injured animals, urban wildlife, licensing, adoptions, lost pets and much more. In our effort to continually provide exceptional customer services, and reduce customer wait times, we at ACS recently revamped our call center operations. Before the switch, ACS Call Center wait times averaged from 10-30 minutes. Now, customers can speak directly to an ACS representative who will answer their questions or transfer the call to an ACS department better able to provide the needed information. And the process is complete in just a few short minutes!



Soktha Penh is ready to handle your pet-related concerns.

Story continued on page 2.

ACS Call Center Continued...



Our employees go above and beyond to answer your calls!

In order to make the changes necessary to ensure shorter wait times and efficient customer service, ACS has installed a business call management system (BCMS). The BCMS organizes incoming calls, distributes calls to customer service representatives and tracks daily call volumes. The system is structured in a way that enables ACS staff to immediately respond to all calls coming into the Call Center.

With representatives personally answering calls Monday-Friday (8 a.m.- 5 p.m.), ACS has become a more efficient point of contact for information about Orange County's animal-related services. One call to ACS connects customers with a staff member who will go above and beyond to provide information about specific animals, animal control, and animal care as well as numbers for other agencies that can provide additional help and information.

To contact the ACS call center, please call (714) 935-6848. It is open 7 days a week from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Rabies Prevention... safety is key!

n October 14, 2006 Animal Care Services (ACS) was contacted about a stray bat found near the entrance of a Sears department store. Eleven individuals had watched the bat behaving strangely; biting at the air and flopping on the ground seeming unable to fly. One gentleman used his pen to

pick up the bat and hold it inches from his face, not thinking about the chance of being exposed to rabies.

Animal Control responded to the call immediately. The bat was confiscated and tested for rabies. The results came back positive and each of the 11 individuals had to be contacted about their possible exposure to the deadly disease.

Rabies is caused by the Lyssavirus found in the saliva of infected animals. It is transmitted to other warm blooded animals, including humans, by a bite, scratch, contact with saliva, or possible contamination of an open wound. Once transmitted, it infects the central nervous system and brain. Early symptoms include fever, headache, and bodily discomfort. Then, as the disease progresses, the infected person develops neurological symptoms: insomnia, anxiety, confusion, slight or partial paralysis, excitability, hallucinations, hyper salivation, and difficulty swallowing.

While rabies ranks as one of the most common zoonotic diseases in the United States and the world, few of us consider the kinds of situations that can lead to rabies exposure.

When most of us think of a rabid animal, we often paint a picture of a wild-eyed dog, foaming at the mouth. This situation, however, is very rare. The last reported case of rabies that was connected to a domestic dog occurred in LA County in 2004- and that dog brought the disease from El Salvador. The most commonly reported cases of rabies in California have been found in wildlife, particularly bats.

In the United States, human fatalities associated with rabies occur in people who fail to seek medical assistance, usually because they are unaware of their exposure. Bat bites are very small and hard to detect, and in some instances bats can find their way into our homes, easily exposing us and our pets to rabies.

Although rabies is 100% fatal if left untreated, it is completely preventable. The decline in cases of domestic animals is largely attributed to animal control programs, as well as the increase of low-cost vaccines available for pets.

Prevention and education are the keys to keeping you and your family safe from the disease. Listed below are ways to prevent exposure:

- Vaccinate your pets. Dogs are required to be vaccinated for rabies at 4 months of age. Cats can be vaccinated as early as 8 weeks, and it is recommended that cats receive updated vaccines because as free-roaming animals, they are more likely to come into contact with wild-life. The first rabies vaccine is effective for 1 year, and then animals should be re-vaccinated every 3 years.
- Teach your children to respect wildlife, and to always keep a safe distance. Do not feed or provide harborage to wildlife on your property.
- Report any bite from a domestic or wild animal to Orange County Animal Care Services: (714) 935-6106.

Report dead, sick or nesting bats immediately to Orange County Animal Care Services (714) 935-6848. For more information on rabies control and prevention, visit www.cdc.gov.

NEVER ATTEMPT TO HANDLE A BAT!



Adopt - a - Pet







Name: Sabrina ID#:A0787248 Sex: Female Age: 10 years Breed: German Shepherd

> Name: Monroe ID#: A0790787 Sex: Male Age: 3 years Breed: DSH Rabbit Name: Salem

Name: Salem
ID#: A0774514
Sex: Neutered, Male
Age: 2 years
Breed: DSH







Name: Darcy
ID#: A0776614
Sex: Spayed, Female
Age: 3 years
Breed: Pit Bull mix
Name: Hamilton
ID#: A0792525
Sex: Male
Age: 1 year
Breed: DSH Rabbit
Name: Hobby
ID#: A0774502
Sex: Neutered, Male

Age: 3 years

Breed: Persian mix

Orange County Animal Care Services makes every effort to promote all of the wonderful animals we have available for adoption. At the time of publication, these animals were in need of lifelong homes.

All adopted animals are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped prior to leaving the shelter. If you are interested in adopting a pet, please visit us online at www.ocpetinfo.com, or simply come down to the shelter!

The 2nd Annual Adopt-a-Valentine Shelter Event

Each year Animal Care Services (ACS) performs over 5,000 spay/neuter surgeries. The overall impact is saving the lives of animals, as well as helping reduce pet overpopulation.

In recognition of the American Humane Association's *Spay Day USA*, ACS will be hosting its 2nd annual Adopt a Valentine event on **Saturday, February 10th, 2006.** Adopt a Valentine is **FREE** to attend and will be held at the Orange County Animal Care Center, (561 The City Drive South), located in Orange, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Spay Day USA is a day to shine a national spotlight on spay/neuter as the simple, humane solution to the tragedy of pet overpopulation. ACS is proud to host Adopt a Valentine in honor of Spay Day and will take the opportunity to further educate the public on the benefits of spay/neuter and promote all of its adoptable animals.

It has been proven that spayed/neutered animals live longer, healthier lives and altered animals are better, more affectionate companions. Altering your pet is a small price to pay for your pet's health and the prevention of more unwanted animals, which is why the Animal Assistance League will provide FREE SPAY/NEUTER vouchers to Adopt a Valentine attendees who own unaltered pets!

At last year's Adopt a Valentine event, ACS placed over 30 dogs, cats, puppies, kittens, rabbits and other critters into lifelong homes! Plans are already underway and this year ACS anticipates an even bigger success. Put your best paw forward and be a part of all the fun and excitement! For more information on this event, please call (714) 935-6848.



© HSUS, 2007

Mobile Adoption & Shelter Events for December-February

 $oldsymbol{\Lambda}$ nimal Care Services is always looking for ways to promote adoptable animals and bring them into the public eye. One way that we do this is through our participation in local community events. Each week we prepare animals at our shelter to go out into the public and potentially find a new home. Mobile adoptions are a • great way to promote animals, provide information to the public, and inform our local communities of the services we provide. Here is a list of the upcoming mobile events that ACS will be participating in:

- December is Adopt a Bunny month! Throughout the entire month of December ACS will be offering reduced fees for rabbit adoptions. For more information please call (714) 935-6848
- Saturday, December 2nd, 2006: Ralph's Grocery Store Mobile Adoption (10 a.m.- 2 p.m.) Fountain Valley, CA.

- Monday, December 25th, 2006: ACS will be closed in observance of the Christmas holiday. The Care Center will be open the following business day.
- Monday, January 1st, 2007: ACS will be closed in observance of the New Year's holiday. Have a safe and happy holiday weekend!
- Saturday, February 10th, 2007, in honor of Spay Day USA, ACS presents Adopt a Valentine! You never know what Cupid has in store for you at the Care Center! Come adopt your newfound love, the shelter is open from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (561 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868).

ACS is always looking to participate in new events. If you have an upcoming community event that you would like us

to be a part of, please send your information to Rachel Gorman, Public Education Officer, 561 The City Drive South, Orange, CA 92868, or call her at (714) 935-6301.



Celebrating Success

range County Animal Care Services takes great pride in promoting the successes we have in adopting our animals to lifelong homes. We often receive updates from visitors that tell us heart warming stories of how they were either reunited with their lost pet, or had found the perfect companion to take home. Here is a story regarding a rabbit named Buster, who had found a special place to call home.

Dear Animal Care Center,

In March of 2006 we lost our beloved bunny to old age. My three girls were heartbroken as was I. Since we had rescued our sweet bunny from the streets, we knew that our next bunny would be one that needed rescuing too.

We went online to your website and found the bunny we thought we would want to adopt. When we arrived at the shelter, however, Buster (as we now

call him) caught our attention! There was an immediate connection and we knew we had to have him.

We all love him very much and enjoy watching him hop around the yard, or cuddle in our laps while we brush him.

Thank you very much for giving us an opportunity to make Buster a part of our family!

Sincerely, The Parize Family Garden Grove, CA



Sisters Emma and Sophia love their new friend Buster!