



Newsletter

Montgomery County's Newest Animal Welfare Group

Volume 1, Issue 9

November 30, 2006

Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County
P.O. Box 7041
Gaithersburg, MD 20898
Telephone: (301) 740-2511
website: www.awlmc.org

Calendar of Events

Upcoming Adoption Events

Kentlands Petsmart Saturday Adoption Events

- Dec 2
- Dec 9
- Dec 16
- Dec 30

White Flint Petsmart Sunday Adoption Events

- Dec (none planned)

Upcoming Fund raising events

Barnes and Nobles Gift Wrapping at Gaithersburg Store

- Dec 2
 - Dec 15
-

ANY ARTICLE IDEAS? PLEASE E-MAIL ROGER OR JONATHAN WITH THEM. GUEST WRITERS ARE MOST WELCOME! THANK YOU LAURIE, NONA, KACEY, HEIDI AND JANET CULP WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS MONTHS NEWSLETTER.
JONATHAN & ROGER

Message from the President



Laurie Graham

Hi fellow volunteers,

Well, we are even closer to getting our shelter! We have filed for a Use and Occupancy permit application for the space at 18959 Bonanza Way in Gaithersburg, MD. The space is very nice for a start-up shelter. We already have the cages, computers, tables, and desks. We are just waiting for the county to give us the permit to open. Stay tuned....

We have had a number of fundraisers over the last month. We were at the Cat Show at the Fairgrounds and got lots of attention from the public. We even adopted a kitten to a wonderful new home. We also had a wine and cheese tasting in Olney. In December, we will be doing gift wrapping at Barnes and Nobles in Gaithersburg. We will be at the store on December 2nd and 15th. It should be a great time, so if you are out shopping, stop by and say hello. Thanks to all who have helped at our fundraising events and a special thank you to Nona Silver. Every penny brings us closer to being able to operate a shelter.

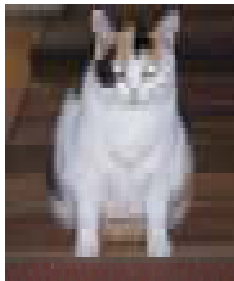
Of course, in December we will be doing our Saturday adoption events at the Petsmart in Kentlands and will also do one or two events at the White Flint Petsmart. Our adoption program is now nearing the 200 adoption mark. They are at 196. Congratulations to the adoption and foster teams.

On a personal note, I had to make one of the most difficult decisions that any pet owner faces this week. I had to perform the last act of love for my cat Cassidy "Kitty". Kitty had been suffering from a bone marrow

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disorder for a couple of years that resulted in severe anemia. Over the last 2 years, Kitty went through multiple blood transfusions and daily medication, but she finally stopped responding to her medication and began a steady decline. Kitty was my first cat and she is the one that started it all for me. She was the gentlest of cats that lived to be petted. You just had to pat the seat next to you and Kitty was there. If she heard a bag of treats shake, anywhere in the house, she would be there in a flash. She just loved her Temptation treats. She had one of the all time greatest silent meows. It would just melt your heart. She was my constant companion and I will miss her tremendously. As soon as I opened my eyes in the morning, I would see Kitty staring back. She was always glad to see me when I go home and would come running to me. She gave unconditional love and was one of the best friends that I have ever had. As many of you know, the death of a pet is an incredibly painful and personal process. I was lucky to have a vet that I trusted and who I know cared deeply for Kitty.∞∞∞

In Memory of Cassidy “Kitty”



Administering Pills to Cats: Tips and Tricks

Jonathan Allen

With all the trials that a pet owner or foster can face, feeding a pill to a cat can seem trivial, even laughable, but once that same owner/foster is facing a stubborn, upset, or perhaps even seriously ill animal, that trivial issue becomes a lot more difficult and important. Owners facing this challenge for the first time without a support system of fellow owners or a rescue organization step into a process of trial and error that can leave an owner/foster and animal stressed out and frustrated. To help with this problem, we offer a few of the methods that those brave souls have found, as well as a new, gentler

solution that has offered relief to those facing this challenge.

Positioning Methods

Some of the oldest, most common methods involve careful positioning. In one, the owner holds the cat's head firmly from above, with forefinger and thumb at the corners of the cat's mouth.

The owner tips the cat's head back slightly and presses the fingers at the cat's mouth to make it open. When the cat's mouth is open, the owner places the pill as far back on the cat's tongue as possible, then closes the mouth and keeps



it closed with the head still tilted back. The owner strokes the cat's throat in a downward motion to encourage the cat to swallow, holding the mouth closed and continuing to stroke until the cat licks its nose, indicating that it has swallowed the pill.

In another method, the owner first fills an oral syringe with water, then picks up the cat and turns him or her so that his or her back is facing the owner. It is suggested that the owner sit on a chair so that he or she can support the cat's back with his or her legs. The owner tilts the head upwards and puts the pill in the corner of mouth, as far back in the throat as possible. The owner keeps the head tilted, then quickly washes the pill down with the oral syringe. The owner immediately follows this treatment with food.

Food Methods

Food methods also seem to be common, but unfortunately come with the hazard of causing bad eating habits by associating fatty foods with rewards. Some owners have bought slices of liverwurst, cut them into cubes, and inserted pills into the cubes; others have used clumps of butter, first introducing the cat(s) to the concept of butter as a treat without the pill, then adding the pill to the butter after a few feedings. Others recommend jelly, but again,



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these are not universally recommended, as they are not very healthy for the cats.

Some cat owners try pureed baby food meat; the owner dips his or her finger in the jar, nestling the pill in the baby food. The owner offers the baby food to the cat, and the cat usually licks it up, but note that some cats are very good at licking up everything BUT the pill.

There is hope for the cat owner, though. NuTec recently introduced Pill Pockets®, treats that, according to their website (<http://pillpockets.com>), “(come) with a patented pocket to safely conceal the medicine - it’s as simple as that.”



As shown on the packaging, the treat has a hole in the center, where the owner tucks the pill, then wraps the meat of the treat around the pill, concealing the pill from the animal. The animal eats the treat, usually unaware of the pill inside. Many AWLMC members have used it and recommend it; it comes in two flavors, salmon and chicken, and is sold at PetSmart for \$8.99 a bag (for around 45 treats to a bag).

Suggestions Solicited

Faced down a difficult cat and lived to tell the tale? Have any suggestions for administering pills? Send your stories to Jonathan at crimnos@gmail.com; if we get enough responses, we’ll follow-up with the best stories and suggestions from AWLMC volunteers.



Sources:

<http://www.petpublishing.com/catkit/faq.shtml>

http://www.ehow.com/how_2255_give-pets-oral.html

http://www.petcaretips.net/giving_medications_cat.html

<http://www.pillpockets.com/> ∞∞∞

Volunteer Profile: Jonathan Allen

Kacey Nolle

Jonathan David Allen was born in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and has loved animals all his life. He majored in English and Mass Communication at James Madison University. Jonathan works as a technical writer for Time Warner Cable, but his real passion is writing fiction. He is currently working on the second draft of his novel about a family who lives in his hometown.



Jonathan and his lovely girlfriend Kacey created their own Brady Bunch earlier this year when Jonathan and his 4 guinea pigs (all boys) moved in with Kacey and her 4 cats (all girls). The big family happily resides in Gaithersburg, Maryland, but they hope to move to a bigger apartment in DC.

Jonathan enjoys photography, reading, playing video games, hiking, and following his favorite baseball team, the Washington Nationals. His favorite TV show is Lost, and he loves watching old episodes of Mystery Science Theatre 3000, Kids in the Hall, and other classic comedy series. Known to his friends and family as intelligent, sarcastic, funny, and compassionate, Jonathan is one of those people everyone likes.

Editors’ Note: Thank you Jonathan for all of your hard work preparing the many thoughtful and researched articles each month for the newsletter. ∞∞∞

Poisoning in Cats: Common Dangers and Signs to Watch For

Jonathan Allen

It is a situation that all cat owners and fosters hope they do not have to face: accidental poisoning. Your cat may be acting strangely, perhaps vomiting, or may have lapped up unidentified chemicals that leaked from beneath the sink in an unforeseen accident. Whatever the circumstances, you suddenly find yourself facing a potential medical emergency with serious, critical decisions to make and not a lot of time to make them.

How does a cat become poisoned?

You may wonder how you got here. You're a responsible owner and/or foster. How could this have happened? It's easier and more common than most owner/fosters think. First, remember that cats can become poisoned in any number of ways; they may directly ingest a toxic substance either by eating it or by eating poisoned prey, which can happen outside or inside the home. They can also swallow poisons while grooming contaminated fur. Some toxins can even be absorbed through the skin of the cat (particularly the paws), and a few can gain entry by inhalation. The important thing to remember is that, even while poisoning is largely preventable, it can be incredibly difficult to prevent all potential circumstances, in which case it is best to be prepared, know the warning signs, and be ready to act when you suspect a poisoning.

Warning Signs

Warning signs of poisoning are extremely variable, and depend on the particular poison a cat may have ingested. Even so, there are some general guidelines and symptoms an owner/foster can watch for. Many toxins produce gastrointestinal signs (such as vomiting and diarrhea), while others produce neurological signs (tremors, seizures, or excitability), respiratory signs (coughing, sneezing, or difficulty breathing), skin signs (inflammation, swelling), liver failure (jaundice, vomiting), or kidney failure (increased drinking, anorexia, and weight loss), so looking for symptoms from any of those groups can

help. Some toxins act on more than one body system, and so can produce combinations of the above signs. Most common poisons manifest symptoms within three to four days of exposure, but some can make it more difficult, taking weeks, months, or even years to begin to take a toll on the body.

This also means that an owner cannot be lured into a false sense of security if they see their cat ingesting a toxic substance and that cat does not immediately fall ill. Every toxic ingestion is cause for concern and should prompt an immediate call to a veterinarian or local veterinary emergency facility.

In the meantime, while trying to determine symptoms, take preventative measures: remove as much of the poison as possible to reduce additional absorption. If the suspected poisoning was the result of a spill, promptly clean it up. For topical exposures, bathe the animal in lukewarm water with a mild dish soap. Inducing vomiting is strongly discouraged, unless under the direction of a vet.

What to do

If you have determined or suspect that your cat has been poisoned, it is of the utmost importance that your cat be taken to the veterinarian or emergency facility as soon as possible. If the cat is upset or angry, it is usually best to wrap it in a towel and put it in a crate to prevent it from hurting itself or you. This also prevents the cat from grooming itself further if there is a poisonous substance on its coat. It is best to call the veterinary practice to warn them that you are coming and give them time to prepare any treatment that your cat may need. If you can, try to identify the poison and tell the vet what the cat has ingested, as this can help immensely with treatment.

For most poisonings, there is not much you can do at home, but in some instances, a vet may recommend inducing vomiting before bringing the pet in for examination and treatment. As previously noted, do not EVER induce vomiting of a toxic substance unless specifically directed by a veterinarian.

The best home care is prevention. Know the dangerous substances and plants around your home (see the

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companion piece **Hidden Poisons** for more information) and either eliminate or limit your cat's access to them by keeping them safely and securely stored away. Do not allow your pet to roam, as the best way to limit exposure to wild toxins is to keep your cat indoors.

Sources:

<http://www.fabcats.org/poisonsinthehome.html>

<http://www.doctordog.com/catbook/catpoison.html>

<http://www.petplace.com/cats/poisoning-in-cats-what-you-should-know/page1.aspx> ∞∞∞

Welcome New Volunteers

Roger Gagne

Sher Provinale and I have processed a number of volunteer applications over the last few weeks resulting in eleven new volunteers being added to the organization.

Please welcome: Aubrey Bursch, Mary Fischer, Nathan Hast, Andrea Kramer, Michelle Kramer, Sandra Mercer, Dave O'Connell, Natalie Riek, Debbie Sampson, Elaine Silver, and Melonie Wilson

There are currently a total of 88 volunteers in the AWLMC. ∞∞∞

Wine and Whiskers Fund Raiser

Nona Silver

A Wine and Whiskers fund raising event was held on Friday night November 17th from 4-8 pm. AWLMC co-sponsored the Wine and Cheese event at the Olney Beer & Fine Wine store in Olney located at 18208 Village Center Drive (next to Shoppers Market). Several wineries participated and AWLMC was to get a share of wine and cheese sales. We also had a silent auction setup.

Thanks to Pat and Roger Gagne and Sandy Dunham for braving the cold and wind and keeping track of the silent auction. Very special thanks to Linda Buel for setting up, and donating most of the items for the silent

auction. And, of course, thanks to all who came out and supported this fund raiser. The financial information has not come in yet but we hope to know the totals shortly.

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Hidden Poisons

Jonathan Allen

All too often, when a cat is poisoned, the poison is either unknown or unidentified, but it is important that an owner/foster know and recognize household products and plants that pose potential risks to cats. In an emergency, an owner/foster's greatest asset can be an encyclopedic knowledge of these hidden dangers. Offered here is a short, simple list, compiled from various sources on the Internet, intended to aide owner/fosters in protecting cats from these hazardous materials.

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

It can be difficult for owner/fosters to keep track of all the household items that can be hazardous to a cat's health. Following is a general list of items, with examples from each group.

- Cleaning and hygiene products, such as bleach, cleaning fluids and creams, deodorants, deodorizers, disinfectants, and furniture and metal polishes
- Human medicines, such as laxatives, aspirin, paracetamol, and antidepressants
- Decorating materials such as paint, paint remover, white spirit, and wood preservatives
- Automobile products such as antifreeze, brake fluid, gasoline, and windshield washer fluid
- Beauty products, such as hair dyes, nail polish and remover and suntan lotion
- Miscellaneous household items such as mothballs, photographic developer, and shoe polish

PESTICIDES

As a general rule, almost any pesticide is hazardous to a cat's health; keep them all safely and securely locked away from animals. Rodenticides, in particular, pose the biggest risk to cats. These are the most common pesticides implicated in poisoning of cats, due to cats eating poisoned

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prey, which can happen both indoors and outdoors.

- Insecticides (insect killers including ant and wasp killers)
- Fungicides (for treating fungal infections, eg. mildews, rusts, rose black spot)
- Molluscicides (slug and snail killers)
- Rodenticides (rat and mouse killers).

PLANTS

There are multitudes of plants that are poisonous to cats, and they fall into a variety of toxicities. We have attempted to cover as many as possible, but it is difficult to cover all, given regional variations and toxic effects.

General Plants

- Plants of the liliaceae species (day lily, Easter lily, stargazer, rubrum, tiger and Asiatic lilies). Symptoms of poisoning from these plants include protracted vomiting, anorexia, and depression.
- Cocoa mulch (used on gardens, not significantly toxic, but can cause significant gastrointestinal distress)
- Dumb Cane (Dieffenbachia) (highly toxic, and unwise to also have around small children)

The following are highly toxic, and may cause a rash.

- Chrysanthemum
- Weeping fig
- Creeping fig
- Poinsettia

The following contain oxalic acid that cause mouth swelling, and occasionally may cause generalized toxicity such as staggering and collapse.

- Arrowhead vine
- Malanga
- Boston ivy
- Marble queen
- Caladium
- Mother-in-law plant
- Parlor ivy
- Elephant's ear
- Emerald duke
- Heart leaf
- Philodendron
- Jack-in-the-pulpit

The following contain a wide variety of poisons; most cause vomiting, abdominal pain, cramps. Some cause tremors, heart and respiratory or kidney problems, which are difficult for an owner to interpret.

- Amaryllis
- Ivy
- Asparagus fern
- Jerusalem cherry
- Azalea
- Needlepoint ivy
- Bird of paradise
- Pot mum
- Creeping charlie
- Ripple ivy
- Crown of thorns
- Spider mum
- Elephant ears
- Sprangeri fern
- Glocal ivy
- Umbrella plant
- Heart ivy

OUTDOOR TOXINS

Owners and fosters are discouraged from allowing their cats outside, for a number of reasons; the amount and variety of potentially poisonous plants and shrubs chief amongst those reasons.

If a cat does happen to get outside, the following outdoor plants produce vomiting and diarrhea in some cases.

- Delphinium
- Skunk cabbage
- Daffodil
- Poke weed
- Larkspur
- Indian tobacco
- Castor bean
- Bittersweet woody
- Wisteria
- Indian turnip
- Ground cherry
- Soap berry
- Fox glove

The following trees and shrubs are poisonous and may produce vomiting, abdominal pain, and in some cases diarrhea.

- Azalea
- Western yew
- Wild cherry
- Horse chestnut (rhododendron)

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- Privet
- Buckeye
- Black locust
- Bird of paradise bush
- Monkey pod
- English holly
- Peach cherry
- Balsam pear
- Mock orange
- Rain tree
- English yew
- Apricot, almond
- American yew
- Japanese plum

The following outdoor plants have varied toxic effects

- Rhubarb
- Spinach
- Sunburned potatoes
- Loco weed
- Lupine
- Dologeton
- Buttercup
- Nightshade
- Poison hemlock
- Pig weed
- Water hemlock
- Mushrooms
- Moonseed
- May apple
- Dutchman's breeches
- Angel's trumpet
- Jasmine
- Matrimony vine

Sources:

- <http://www.fabcats.org/poisonsinthehome.html>
- <http://www.doctordog.com/catbook/catpoison.html>
- <http://www.petplace.com/cats/poisoning-in-cats-what-you-should-know/page1.aspx> ∞∞∞

Jabari from Charlotte Mueller



Capital Cat Fanciers Cat Show

Janet Culp

AWLMC had a booth at the Capital Cat Fanciers Cat Show held at the Fairgrounds in Gaithersburg on November 11 and 12. The AWLMC volunteers on hand handed out AWLMC information, goodie bags with upcoming events information (including wine & whiskers, announcements of our HP cat show), had a silent auction, accepted donations and sold stuff, adopted one cat and got to meet and greet with lots of people.

Working the Cat Show



The above picture was taken on Sunday November 12. The volunteers working that day were Nona Silver, Sandie Dunham, Linda Buel, O'Shea Watson, Caren Stark, Debbie Shore and Karen DiegmueLLer (adoptions). Thanks to both the Sunday and Saturday volunteers for their time and effort. ∞∞∞

**Please don't forget to donate to
AWLMC:**

<http://awlmc.org/SecDonate/Donate.aspx>

Or, please send a check to:

P.O. Box 7041

Gaithersburg, MD 20898

Julie Starling

Roger Gagne & Heidi Weber

At the all hands meeting on November 9, Heidi Weber displayed a painting that she had commissioned as a holiday gift to her parents. The painting was of two obviously beloved family dogs and was very well done. As a bonus the artist will donate a portion of the proceeds to animal groups. From Heidi and the artist's web site (www.juliestarling.com) I learned the following.

Julie Starling is a local artist that takes commissions to paint both animals and children. She uses photos supplied by the purchaser. Julie paints in both oil and watercolor in various canvas sizes.

Animals, children, and nature have always been central in Julie Starling's life and they have become the central themes of her art as well. Her newest project is to raise money for the local humane societies by donating 30% of the sales of commissioned portraits to them. Thus when a person commissions a painting with Julie and mentions the AWLMC, she will donate 30% of the painting's cost to the AWLMC after it is completed. She offers this to other rescue groups.

Julie Starling started her painting career in 1990 as a professional face painter in the DC area while she was teaching dramatics and music-and-movement programs at local preschools and day camps. Eventually, she got tired of seeing her artwork washed away and started working in more permanent media.

Julie Starling has ongoing shows at the Mud Hut in Olney, Maryland. In addition, she has had pieces in the Rockville Art League shows and in the Montgomery College student shows and on their website. Last year, she was the Directing Artist for a student bench-painting art project for the Washington Humane Society in DC.

Julie Starling currently lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband Stephen and five small dogs (most of which were rescues from the

Montgomery County Humane Society (MCHS)). When she is not painting, she is busy teaching piano and guitar, taking long walks with the dogs, and helping with the MCHS's Foster Program. ∞∞∞∞

Example from Website



Wild Birds Unlimited – A Sharing Partner

