

PAWPRINTS

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Animals Help Betty White to Think About the Bright Side



By Steve Dale

How beloved is Betty White? In a telephone interview, I suggest her neighbors stand and applaud as she walks by, and that she must get a standing ovation in the fruit section of her local supermarket. "Not true, but you should see what happens when I buy meat," says the 84-year old comedic actress. "I've just been around forever, that's all it is."

Indeed, Betty White's career pretty much parallels the history of TV. It began with a long forgotten but relatively successful show in the 1950's called *Life with Elizabeth*, in which she starred. In the 1960's, there were countless



Betty White

appearances with her late-husband Allen Ludden on *Password*. A decade later, a whole new generation discovered White as happy homemaker Sue Ann Nivens on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. Equally as recognizable was the Rose Nyland character from the 1980's on *The Golden Girls*. And after a single guest shot on *Boston Legal* last season, producers wanted more. She's been back for many episodes since as the calculating gossip mongering Catherine Piper in a recurring role.

"She's (Catherine Piper) so much fun to play," says White. "She's not the nicest lady in the world. She commits murder and gets away with it."

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MERIAL MUSINGS



Horses May Not Even Whisper How They're Feeling



An exciting aspect of being a veterinarian is the front row seat we have to witness the advance of medicine and technology. We can use new equipment and medicines to identify and fight diseases.

A recent example that impacted me and my family (due to our love of horses) is the invention of the three meter endoscope. This tiny camera on the end of a nine-foot long flexible probe allows veterinarians, for the first time, to look at the stomach lining of horses without doing more

invasive surgery. We have confirmed that horses are so prone to stomach ulcers that 90 per cent of racehorses and 60 per cent of performance horses have (or have had) stomach ulcers.

A recent study confirmed that even recreational horses are at risk for stomach ulcers in as little as just five days. These ulcers are due to subtle stresses in the horse's life, such as travel, a dietary change, training, herd dynamics, etc. The good news is that a product called ULCER-GARD® (omeprazole) can proactively prevent

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Horses may not whisper *cont'd from pg 1*

stomach ulcers before they occur. Here is a testimonial from a horse owner:

"Most people never think about horses getting ulcers, but their prevalence is much higher than we can imagine. I am a true believer in ULCERGARD and its ability to prevent ulcers in horses. My top mare is on ULCERGARD and she is 100% on her game. This product is easy to use. All performance horses should be using ULCERGARD - trust me, they need it.", says Jay Holmes, 2004 National Reigned Cow Horse Association, (NRCHA) Open Hackamore World champion.

By Scott Vande Griend, DVM



Bernie and Tori, both smiling.

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The Toy Lady: Darlene Ehlers 2006 Pet Sitter of the Year



By Steve Dale

"I get love at work everyday; how many people can say that?" says Darlene Ehlers of Cleves, OH, the 2006 Pet Sitter's

International Pet Sitter of the Year. "It's gratifying to me, but I get so much more back in return. You can't get that at your typical corporate job."

It's unlikely that the person in the next cubicle is as happy to see most people at work as the dogs and cats are to see Ehlers. And no wonder, she gives most of her clients' pets toys.

She says, "I'm surprised to have won (the Pet Sitter of the Year honor), I suppose the fact is that people know they can depend on me, and that I'm organized has something to do with it."

Still, the unexpected can happen - even to the

most organized. Once she set her keys and cell phone down in the owner's house, went into the garage with the three dogs in her care and closed the door behind her. Now, she had no way out. She didn't panic. Turned out panicking would have been a waste of time. One of the dogs stepped on a garage door opener. At first, she had no idea how the garage door even opened.

Ehlers, 52, has been pet sitting for nearly ten years. She was in charge of auto finance distribution and lease contracts for Reynolds & Reynolds for several years, and before that was a manager at a doctor's office. She was still employed at Reynolds & Reynolds when she saw a magazine story on pet sitting and then picked up the book "Pet Sitting for Profit," by Patti Moran (founder of Pet Sitters International).

"I was never the kind to make impulsive decisions, but being with animals all day sounded fun," she recalls. In 1997, she began to pet sit part time; she made it her full time career in 2002 after the death of her mom. On the same day of her mother's funeral, an orange cat just showed up at

her home with a huge hole, presumably a bite wound. It took months for the wound to heal. She named the cat Jasper.

Ehlers, who had been her mother's caretaker says, "I really believe my mom sent me Jasper so I had someone to take care of." Well, today, she also has three other cats and two dogs, an Australian shepherd and an English springer spaniel. She's married to Ron Ehlers, an engineer, and has two step daughters.

The four remaining finalists: Denise Cagle, Columbia, SC; Gail Keener, Fort Mill, SC; Debra Milton, Douglasville, GA and Jill Nuciolo, Rochester, NY.

In the interest of disclosure: I was one of three members of the selection committee chosen to pick the top Pet Sitter based on the five finalists. The other two judges were Bud Most, national events manager for the Iams pet food company and Dr. Rolan Tripp, founder of The Animal Behavior Network. Our committee was charged with identifying the candidate who most embodied excellence in pet sitting.

FROM THE AVMA

Happy Halloween For Pets Is a Safe Halloween

When the school bell rings, don't let your pet go back to school with your children. Many dogs and cats will naturally follow kids and might be encouraged to tag along as they head off to the first day of school. In order to prevent this keep your pet confined so your

pet doesn't lose their way or simply cause a nuisance around the school yard.

It is also that time of year for Fall and Halloween festivals. Here are some tips from the AVMA to help you ensure that your pet has a

happy and safe Halloween:

Don't leave your pet outside unattended on Halloween (or on the days preceding or following this holiday). Halloween pranks committed

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against pets can be vicious, and black cats are particularly at risk. In fact, around this time of year, keep your cat indoors.

Halloween treats are for people, not pets. Candy wrappers and lollipop sticks can be hazardous if swallowed, and chocolate can be poisonous for pets.

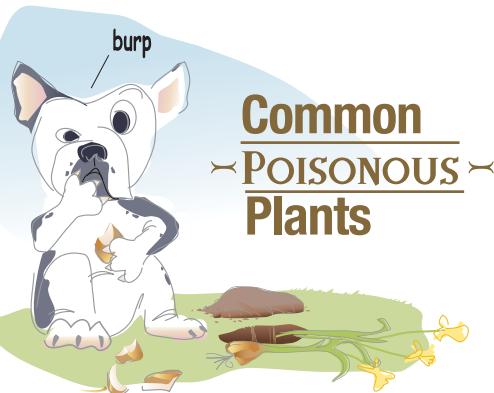
Keep pumpkins out of reach of curious noses and paws. Pets may knock over a lit pumpkin and cause a fire.

Despite how much fun it is for people, many pets don't enjoy getting dressed up for Halloween. If you do dress your pet, be sure that its costume doesn't interfere with the pet's ability to breathe, see, hear, move, or bark.

Consider keeping your pet in a separate room, away from the door, when trick-or-treaters arrive. Strange people in even stranger clothes can frighten some pets.

When you do answer the door for visitors, make sure that your pet doesn't suddenly head for the great outdoors. In case your pet does escape, make sure that it is wearing proper identification. Pets with identification are much more likely to be returned to their owners.

For more information about pet safety, visit your family veterinarian.



The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is available 24/7 to answer animal poison-related emergencies, 365 days a year. Toxicology experts provide diagnostic information and treatment suggestions to owners whose animals have been exposed to potentially hazardous substances.

Here's a list of the five most common poisonous plants, the plants people most often complain their pet has gotten into.

1) Marijuana: Interesting, this should appear at the top of the list. It turns out that instead of

Betty White *cont'd from pg. 1*

White chuckles and then adds, "Sue Ann, well she was, let's call her the neighborhood nymphomaniac. My favorite has to be Rose. I don't know, I just liked her optimism. We get so much negative these days; it's great to play positive."

However, in a sense, she maintains her favorite program of all wasn't a sitcom, but a show that lasted only about a season debuting back in 1970 called "The Pet Set."

Most of America is aware of White's love affair with animals. "It was my dream job, coming to work, and my co-stars were animals. We'd invite a celebrity friend who would bring in his or her pet for an interview. Then, the pet would be excused and we'd bring in other animals. Well, everybody thought, would have accidents all over the stage. That's wasn't the case at all. And the cameras would get close up and we'd all see these magnificent creatures."

Of course, *The Pet Set* pre-dated entire cable networks, such as the National Geographic channel and Animal Planet, which are now devoted to animal programming.

giving your pet the munchies, this plant can cause any number of serious responses including depression of the central nervous system, increased heart rate, anxiety, seizures and coma.

2) Sago Palm: All parts are poisonous, but the seeds or nuts have the greatest concentration of toxins. Ingestion of just two seeds may cause vomiting, diarrhea, seizures and liver failure.

3) Lilies: An issue for cats, since even a nibble can cause severe kidney damage.

4) Tulip/Narcissus bulbs: It's the bulb portion

"Have you ever come face to face with a water buffalo?" she asks. "Anyone who works with animals can tell you how dangerous they are. And I had this water buffalo on the show, and I began to scratch his ear. He liked it. It was a lovely moment. Then all the sudden he turned, and he, he, he," she pauses using her still perfect comic timing. "He gave me a big wet kiss. If you haven't been kissed by a water buffalo, you haven't lived."

At around that same time White began

her relationship with the Morris Animal Foundation (MAF), which she continues to this day. The MAF funds humane animal health studies to advance veterinary medicine. "Oh, the research has done so much, from helping to

develop the vaccine for feline leukemia to funding research for the mountain gorillas (the same gorilla troupes Dian Fossey studied in Rwanda White cheers,."

White believes she was just about born caring for animals. "I probably did begin way back in the womb," she says. "My mother was just as bad as I am. I was the lucky little kid who had parents who would bring home an animal and say, 'Oh Betty, we found it; can we keep it,."

here that can cause drooling, lack of appetite, convulsions and cardiac abnormalities.

5) Azalea/Rhododendron: Members of this family contain substances known as grayantoxin, which may produce depression of the central nervous system, coma and cardiovascular collapse.

ASPCA Animal Poison Center specializes at dealing with emergencies. Call (888) 426-4435. A \$55 consultation fee will be applied to your credit card. Learn more at www.aspca.org.

by Steve Dale



Welcome to the third year of PAWPRINTS. I am grateful to our sponsor, Merial, and also to the American Veterinary Medical Association for the ongoing determined commitment to reach people who have pets. I hope you find PAWPRINTS interesting and informative.

Our PAWPRINTS guarantee: Love your pets, and they will love you back

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Steve Dale – Editor-in-Chief. The 2002 AVMA Humane Award winner. Steve is a contributing editor for *USA Weekend*, and the author of *My Pet World*, syndicated in over 100 newspapers by Tribune Media Services. He's heard on *Pet Central* Sundays, 8 to 10 p.m. on WGN radio (or www.wgnradio.com). His syndicated radio shows are *Steve Dale's Pet World* and *The Pet Minute with Steve Dale*. Steve's also a TV regular appearing on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *National Geographic Explorer* and various *Animal Planet* shows. He lives with his Devon Rex cat Roxy; Lucy, a miniature Australian Shepherd; and Cosette, a Northern blue-tongue skink. Steve's website is www.stevedalepetworld.com.

Darlene Arden – Guest columnist: Darlene Arden is a certified animal behavior consultant, multi-award winning writer and a lecturer who speaks to a variety of groups from dog breeders to veterinarians. Arden has twice served on the Council of Directors of the Cat Writers' Association and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Dog Writer's Association of America, Inc. She's a World Canine Freestyle Organization judge and referee, and serves on the WCFO Advisory Board. A frequent guest on radio and television, she produces and hosts her own cable television program, *Creatively Speaking*, and is a regular contributor to Animal Radio Network. Her website: www.darlenearden.com

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Cat Writer's Association
www.catwriters.org

Dog Writer's Association of America
www.dwaa.org

Feline Health: Dr. Susan Little
www.catvet.homestead.com

Good News for Pets
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Pet Sitters International
www.petsit.com

Toy Dogs - Darlene Arden
www.darlenearden.com

Meals on Wheels Association of America
www.mowaa.org

Winn Feline Foundation
www.winnfelinehealth.org

Helping Seniors In Need and Their Pets

Senior citizens have pets too. And, in fact, the argument might be made that sometimes seniors rely on those animals for companionship. However, tragically, many seniors can't afford to feed their best friends with four legs, or aren't able to go out to purchase pet foods.

Meals on Wheels, in partnership with Banfield, the Pet Hospitals, has kicked off a campaign to bring pet foods to seniors in need. Pet food is being donated, or you can donate dollars to the Banfield Foundation for the program called Season of Suppers.

"Banfield's vision is to make life better for families, and we understand the important role these pets play in their lives," says Dr. Karen Johnson of Banfield, the Pet Hospital.

Many Meals on Wheels senior recipients share their meals with their pets, which isn't the best plan. Sometimes human food may be detrimental to a pet's health, and those nutritionally balanced meals are often all the seniors eat. Certainly, the pets are better off eating pet food. "Ensuring that they (the senior citizen meal recipients) also get their meals and stay healthy is important," adds Enid Borden, CEO of the Meals on Wheels Association of America.

The goal is for Banfield and Meals on Wheels to deliver one million pounds of pet food this holiday season, and \$100,000 for the Seasons of Suppers campaign.

Either make a donation of food or money at Banfield, the Pet Hospital (most located at PETS MART stores), or online www.mowaa.org.