PetGazette

Western North Carolina | May-June 2019 | Volume 8 - Issue 3

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- Cars for CAAR
- Dog Shows
- Fundraising Rematch
- Mane Event
- Paw Art sale
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Calendar of Events

Angel Pets Conference & Expo

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Calendar of Events May-June 2019

AHS=Asheville Humane Society **ACW=**Asheville Cat Weirdos **AKC=**Asheville Kennel Club **BRAC=**Blue Ridge Agility Club **BRHS=**Blue Ridge Humane Society **BWAR=**Brother Wolf Animal Rescue **CAAR=**Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue **FHS=**Foothills Humane Society **FUR=**Feline Urgent Rescue **HOHS=**Heart of Horse Sense **SARF=**Sarge's Animal Rescue Foundation **SKC=**Spartanburg Kennel Club **WMR=**Woof Meow Rescue

May

Wed. 5/1 – 2-6pm. WMR fundraiser at River Arts District Farmers Market. info@woofmeowrescue.org**.**
Sat. 5/4 – 10am-12pm. CAAR Adoption Event at BMW of Asheville, 649 Airport Rd., Fletcher. Adoptable dogs. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com, 828 885-DOGS (3647).
Sat. 5/4 – 9-10pm. AHS Yoga with Kitties at AHS, 14 Forever Friend Ln., Asheville. $15 per person, advance registration required. Please bring own yoga mat. beth@pureyogaavl.com.
Sat. 5/4 – 4-5pm. AHS Pilates with Puppies at AHS, 14 Forever Friend Ln., Asheville. $15 per person, advance registration required. Puppies provided by AHS. ciscopilates.com.
Sun. 5/5 – Uncommon Market New Belgium Brewing.
Mon. 5/6 – 11am-2pm. BWAR Adoption Event at Second Gear, 444 Haywood Rd., West Asheville. bwar.org, 828 505-3440.
Thur. 5/9 – All Day. Carol Marks' birthday.
Sat. 5/11 – 12-4pm. WMR Adoption Event at Woof Gang Bakery, 33 Town Square Blvd., Biltmore Park. Adoptable dogs from WMR. woofgangbakery.com 828 650-9950.
Sat. 5/11 – 7am. BWAR benefit Tri-Cross at Carrier Park, 220 Amboy Rd., Asheville. bwar.org, 828 505-3440.
Sat. 5/11 – 2-5pm. CAAR Adoption Event at Hillman Brewery, 25 Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville. Adoptable dogs. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com, 828 885-DOGS (3647)
Sun. 5/12 – All Day. Jim Marks' birthday.
Sat. 5/18 – 10am-12 noon. Orphaned Bottle Baby Kitten Care Workshop, Room 315, Lenoir-Rhyne University, 36 Montford Ave., Asheville. FREE comprehensive workshop. bwar.org, 828 505-3440
Sat. 5/18 – 11am-3pm. FHS, BWAR Adoption Event, PetSmart, 150 Bleachery Rd., Asheville. foothillshumanesociety.org, 828 863-4444; bwar.org, 828 505-3440.
Sat. 5/18 – 12-5pm. WMR Pints and Pups Adoption Event at Archetype Brewing, 265 Haywood Rd., Asheville. info@woofmeowrescue.org**.**
Sat. 5/18 – 11am-7pm. BWAR at Asheville Food Truck Showdown, WNC Ag Center, 761 Bolylston Hwy., Asheville. Adoptable dogs. bwar.org, 828 505-3440
Sat. 5/18 – 1-4pm. ACW event at the Grey Eagle, 185 Clingman Ave., Asheville. Silent auction, all proceeds to Emergency Fund. ashevillecatweirdos.org.
Fri. 5/24 – All day. Liam Marks' birthday.
Fri. 5/24-Mon. 5/27 – 8am-"5pm". Blue Ridge Classic of the Carolinas. Conformation, Obedience, Rally, Agility at WNC Ag Center, Fletcher. Spectators welcomed without their pets. Admission free, parking $5. Breeders, vendors, food available.
5/24-5/25. HKC All Breed Conformation competition. Davis Bldg. Rings 1- 8.
Expo Bldg. Rings 9-10
5/26-5/27. SKC All Breed Conformation competition. Expo Bldg
Rings 11-14
5/24-5/27 BRAC Agility Competition, McGough Arena.
Contact AKC at ashevillekennelclub.com, BRAC at blueridgeagility.com, HKC at hendersonvillekc.org, 828 388-2565, SKC at spartanburgkc.org.
Mon. 5/27 – All day. Dillon Marks' birthday.
Mon. 5/27 – All day. Memorial Day.

June

Coming: Asheville Humane Society Photo Contest Phundraiser. DetailsT-BD at press time. Contest information at ashevillehumane.org.

Sat. 6/1 - 10am-12pm. CAAR Adoption Event at BMW of Asheville, 649 Airport Rd., Fletcher. Adorable adoptable dogs. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com, 828 885-DOGS (3647).
Fri. 6/7 – 5:30pm. Haywood Spay/Neuter Yappy Hour fundraiser at Maggie Valley Club and Resort, 1819 Country Club Drive, Maggie Valley. Hors d'oeuvres, wine pull, silent auction of "experiences", and live auction of original Margaret Roberts art. Tickets $50. haywoodspayneuter.org, 828 452-1329.
Sat. 6/8 – 10am-12pm. WMR Art Workshop and Adoption Event, 3726 Sweeten Creek Rd., Arden. Participants will make custom pet photo frames and portion of proceeds will benefit WMR. Adoptable dogs will be there. artworkshop.com/event or info@woofmeowrescue.org.
Sat. 6/8 – 10am-12pm. HOHS Mane Event at Heart of Horse Sense, 6919 Meadow Town Rd., Marshall. Hands-On Horse Activities, Scavenger Hunt, Farm Tours, Equine Therapy and Rhythmic Riding Demonstrations, Live Music,more! heartofhorsesense.org, 828 649-7064.
Sat. 6/8 – BRAC Putt-Putt Open fundraiser at Champions Golf Learning Center, Brookside Camp Rd, Hendersonville. blueridgehumane.org/get-involved/fundraising-events/golf/.
Sun. 6/9 – 1-4pm. CAAR fundraiser and adoption event with WNC Wheels Car Club car show at Asheville Outlets, 800 Brevard Rd., Asheville. shopashevilleoutlets.com, 828 667-2308, or info@woofmeowrescue.org.
Sun. 6/9 – 11am-6pm. BWAR at VeganFest, Pack Square, Asheville. Free. Adoptable dogs there roughly 11am-1pm, weather permitting. bwar.org, 828 505-3440.
Tu. 6/11 – 5:30-8pm. BMW of Asheville presents Man Up for Mutts Birthday Fundraiser to benefit CAAR and Pilots 'n Paws at Blue Ghost Brewery, 125 Underwood Rd., Fletcher. David Crouch, veterinary surgeon and Larry Taylor, General Manager of BMW of Asheville will compete to raise the most money for CAAR. charliesangelsanimalrescue.com or 828 885-3647 (DOGS).
Fri. 6/14 – 7:05-??. WMR hosts tent for Small Business Appreciation Night at AshevilleTourists game. info@woofmeowrescue.org.
Sat. 6/15 – 5:30-8:30pm. FUR 5th Annual Barnyard BBQ Blast, Barn Star Events, 2436 Jonathan Creek Rd., Waynesville. Live music, raffles, silent auction, games plus BBQ dinner. Tickets needed. furofwnc.org or barnstarevent.com, 919 606-2969.
Fri. 6/21 – 7:05-??. WMR volunteers will staff concession stand at Asheville Tourists game. Portion of sales at stand will benefit WMR. info@woofmeowrescue.org.
Sat. 6/22. – 6:05-??. WMR volunteers will staff concession stand at Asheville Tourists game. Portion of sales at stand benefit WMR. info@woofmeowrescue.org.

Ongoing

Please call or email organization to confirm events since schedules can change.

Every Saturday morning - 10-11am. BRHS Yoga with Cats! Venues change. Details at blueridgehumane.org, 828 885-3647.
Every third Mon. of the month: - 1-5pm. Low-cost vaccines at BRHS, Hendersonville. blueridgehumane.org, 828 685-7107**.**
Every second Tu. of the month - Hendersonville Paws for Love tests potential therapy dogs. Venues vary. Sign up, get directions at 828 692-5641.
Every second Tu. of the month – 10am-1pm. ACW Cat Pantry distributes food at the Thrift Hound, 234 New Leiscester Hwy., Asheville. pantry@ashevillecatweirdos.org.
Every Wed., Sat., Sun. - 10am. BWAR Outward Hounds Hiking Club meets at shelter to take dogs on hikes. volunteer@bwar.org. 828 505-3440.
Every Sat. & Sun. - 10am-5pm. Furever Friends Cat Adoptions. Petco, 825 Brevard Road, Asheville. fureverfriends@att.net; 828 398-4943
Every Sun. - 10am-2pm. AHS Hiking Hounds. Take shelter dogs for hikes. ashevillehumane.org, 828 761-2001.
Every First Sat. of the month – 11:30am-1pm. Volunteer orientation at AHS, 14Forever Friends Lane. volunteer@ashevillehumane.org, 828 761-2001**.**
Every Fourth Sat. of the month – 10am-4pm. ACW Cat Pantry distributes food at the Thrift Hound, 234 New Leiscester Hwy., Asheville. pantry@ashevillecatweirdos.org.
Every First Sun. of the month – 12-5pm. WMR Adoption Event at 10th Muse Coffee, 8 London Road, Biltmore Village. info@woofmeowrescue.org.
Every Second Sun. of the month – 11am-3pm. ACW Whole Foods Artisan Market, 4 South Tunnel Rd., Asheville. Chance to buy ACW merchandise from local artisans.
Every Third Sun. – 1-5pm. WMR Hi-Wire Big Top Adoption Event, 2A Huntsman Place, Asheville. info@woofmeowrescue.org.

PET-TY FREE PUBLICITY

Let us know about your pet-related event and we'll let others know about it, too. Email the info to editor.petgazette@gmail.com, or leave a message at 828 633-1348. We'll add it to the Calendar of Events, and maybe even do a whole article.

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PetGazette
Published bimonthly since 2012

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PetGazette focuses on the fun and care of pets in WNC. It is written by local experts for local pet lovers. The opinions and recommendations of contributors are their own, not necessarily those of **PetGazette**.

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Graphic design and layout by
Intellicode Inc. www.intellicodeinc.com
Printed on 100% recycled newsprint

Phone: **828 633-1348**
Mail: PO Box 151,
Candler, NC 28715

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Notice re Sending Info to PetGazette

If you want to get the news or programs of your pet-centric organization into PetGazette, great. We welcome it. We exist to get it out to the public.

But DO NOT assume that the editor will see the information on social media. He will not. The editor wastes time the old-fashioned way. Therefore, email info to editor.petgazette@gmail.com. That's editor.petgazette@gmail.com. And be sure to send the info by the deadline for the relevant issue – June 15 for the July-August issue, August 15 for the September-October issue, and October 15 for the November-December issue.

To reiterate: DO NOT assume that the PetGazette editor will see the information about your organization on social media. He will not. His wife has established some social media accounts with his name of them, but he doesn't visit them. The editor wastes time the old-fashioned way. So email your information to: editor.petgazette@gmail.com. That's editor.petgazette@gmail.com. And please do it by the deadline.

Thank you for reading the old-fashioned way. editor.petgazette@gmail.com.

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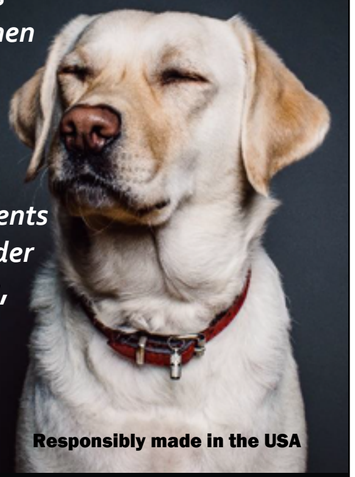

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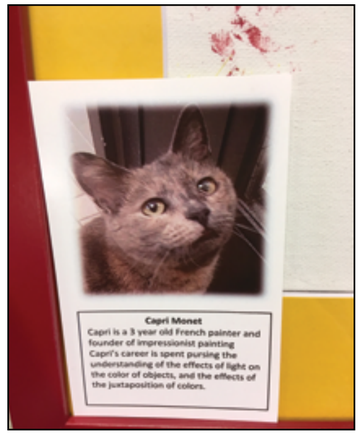
Haywood Shelter Pets Create Art For Sale

Volunteers, staff and hand resident cats and dogs worked together to create paw print paintings that are now on sale to the public. All proceeds will go to the newly established Haywood County Animal Shelter Medical Fund.

Shelter staffer Stacey Lutz, who helped the cats and dogs create the artwork, explained that this is the first year that the animal artworks have been produced for sale. Lutz added that the creation of future paw print paintings would be dependent on having sales success in 2019. She also said that some pet adopters would especially enjoy purchasing the artwork that had been created by their newly adopted pet, since the framed and matted versions all include a brief biography of the pet. As of PetGazette press time, one pet artist, Isabelle, had been adopted and her new family had purchased her painting.



The paintings are $15 without a frame and $30 with a frame. The paw paintings can be viewed at the shelter Mondays through Fridays, noon to 5pm, and on Saturdays from noon until 4pm. The shelter is located at 435 Jones Cove Rd., Clyde. Call 828 456-5338 for more details.

Sarge's Names New Operations Administrator

Sarge's Animal Rescue Foundation has named Fred Strohm operations administrator for its Waynesville facility.

Strohm holds a Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, IN. Before joining Sarge's, he was most recently operations manager at the Terre Haute Humane Society (THHS), where he had oversight in daily operations, with a budgetary and efficiency focus. Strohm supervised the THHS staff of 25 people and served on the building committee for a new animal shelter — a journey which, he said, mirrors Haywood County's process to build the new animal shelter. Strohm was previously a THHS volunteer, then on the board of directors, culminating his service as THHS vice president.

Strohm and his wife, Ashley, had been looking for "more natural and scenic places to live," when he accepted the Sarge's operations administrator position. "This area fit well," Strohm said, "— and Sarge's is a great group of people."

Strohm began fostering fearful dogs some time ago and has adopted three of them. "Computers are my career, but animals are my passion," he said.

Strohm and Ashley have four dogs - Heidi, Morgan, Dublin and Lala - and four cats - Mokey, Lilo, Teardrop and Aladdin.

"Helping the animals is paramount," Strohm said. "My focus will be on how we can better serve the animals in Haywood County."

Photo from Strohm family archives.

Aladdin in a familiar spot on Strohm's shoulder.

Sarge's Adoption Center, 256 Industrial Park Dr.,Waynesville. More information about Strohm and Sarge's is on Sarge's Face Book page, at sargeandfriends.org or by calling 828-246-9050.

The Intelligence Level of Dogs

by Kathryn R. Gubista

The Asheville Humane Society (AHS) has partnered with Finding Rover to use facial recognition technology to identify lost dogs and cats in Buncombe County. The new 21st century tool provides an additional means for community members to recover their lost pets, and to help adoptable dogs and cats find their forever homes.

How smart is your dog? Is your dog's intelligence level equal to human ages? For example, when dogs are seven years old, are they similar to seven year old children? Do dogs experience "teenage years"? Can dogs reason and make sense of things? Can dogs think about past behaviors and change their ways to be "better behaved" in the future? Can dogs possess "emotional intelligence"?

Nearly 200 AKC Obedience judges ranked Border Collies the smartest dog breed.

HOW HUMANS PERCEIVE DOG INTELLIGENCE

Ask dog owners how smart their dogs are and you will get a diversity of responses. As a dog trainer, we discuss this topic with each and every client. Often times, owners relay stories about how their dogs "know" they did something wrong and are remorseful. Or their dogs "know better", but are defiant or resentful. There are training methods that use "time outs" so dogs can "think about" their actions to modify their future behavior. Some behaviorists even contend that dogs possess an advanced awareness called *Emotional Intelligence*.

THE INTELLIGENCE OF DOGS

Believe it or not, the intellectual abilities of dogs are similar to that of two year old toddlers. Yes, that is correct. The intelligence of adult dogs is akin to the dreaded "terrible twos" of children. Does this shock you? This is not just my humble opinion. Stanley Coren, PhD, professor of canine psychology at the University of British Columbia, wrote the book *The Intelligence of Dogs* (1994). In 2009, Cohen presented research using several behavioral measures that suggests the intellectual abilities of dogs are similar to young, two-year-old toddlers.

ASPECTS OF DOG INTELLIGENCE

Coren defines three aspects of dog intelligence: *Instinctive Intelligence, Adaptive Intelligence and Working/Obedience Intelligence.* Instinctive Intelligence refers to dogs' knowledge of what they were bred to do (herding, retrieving, protecting, etc.). Adaptive Intelligence refers to their ability to problem solve. Working/Obedience Intelligence refers dogs' abilities to learn from humans. While all three aspects of dog intelligence indicate animal smarts, the working/obedience intelligence is the category used for breed comparisons.

RANKING DOG BREEDS ON INTELLIGENCE

Coren ranks the intelligence of 138 AKC-recognized dog breeds based on evaluations of nearly 200 AKC obedience judges. These rankings are based on Working & Obedience Intelligence only. Border Collies are the unanimous selection for smartest dog breed. Rounding out the top five smartest breeds are Poodles, German Shepherds, Golden Retrievers and Doberman Pinschers. The lowest rankings dogs are Bulldog, Basenji and Afghans. These rankings are a great resource if intelligence level is an important component in your selection of dog breeds.

THE MINDS OF TODDLERS & DOGS

Sigmund Freud introduced three distinct parts of the human psyche: ID, Ego, and Super-Ego. For humans, these three components develop at different life stages. The ID represents the primitive and instinctual minds of animals that involve both sexual and aggressive drives. The psyche of young children and dogs is represented by the ID. As human children grow up, they develop a realistic mind and moral consciousness, represented by the Ego and Super-Ego, respectively. As dogs grow up, their minds remain instinctual. Possessing emotional intelligence requires self-awareness and control of one's emotions, which are attributed to the realistic mind of the Ego. For these reasons, dogs and young toddlers do not possess emotional intelligence.

TEACHING TODDLERS & DOGS

As a teacher or trainer, it is imperative that you understand the intelligence level and limitations of students, including dogs. At the "Terrible Two" life stage, kids are ego-centric, in that they perceive the world as revolving around them. The mantra of these young toddlers is "Give Me, Give Me … Mine, Mine". Sharing is not part of their social etiquette. They have no concept of manners and social graces. The job of parents and caregivers is to teach toddlers manner and social skills. Same with a dog. Dog training involves teaching lots of manners and social skills, even before you start worrying about obedience skills.

THE FIDO METHOD

FIDO is an acronym that represents the methods we use to train dogs. The "F" stands for Focus. Both dog and human need to be present and pay attention when training. The "I" of FIDO represents the word ID, along with Interactions, Information and Intention. Our techniques do not assume dogs possess higher levels of intelligence. The "D" of FIDO represents Directions. We believe directing or guiding dogs towards the right behaviors and away from the wrong behaviors. Observational Learning represents the O of FIDO. "Monkey See Monkey Do" training. We don't expect dogs to figure things out on their own. We show them what we want them to do through gentle guidance. The FIDO Method recognizes and applies the intelligence levels of dogs for fast and effective dog training.

Kathryn R. Gubista, PhD is an evolutionary biologist, college biology instructor, former zookeeper, author and certified professional dog trainer with Lucky Dog Training Asheville. She can be found on Instagram @TrainingLuckyDogs and @KyloRenPup; TrainingLuckyDogs@gmail.com or at 828-423-9635.

(828) 423-9635 The DOG'S PERSPECTIVE

CANINE GOOD CITIZEN AKC EVALUATOR

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Asheville Kennel Club to host two shows in two days

On Saturday, June 8 and Sunday, June 9, the Asheville Kennel Club (AKC) will host consecutive dog shows licensed by the American Kennel Club at the Western Carolina Ag Center in Fletcher.

The events will run from 7am until 7pm daily. AKC shows chairman Moshe Reshef emphasized that spectators are not just allowed, they are welcomed with open arms. (Their pets, however, should be left home.) Entrance is free, but there is an Ag Center parking fee of $5.

Good breeding shows early.

Reshef said that he expected to see between 800 and 900 entries, up from the 750 entries in 2018. He explained that the Asheville shows are gaining more recognition in the world of pedigreed dog enthusiasts and that the club has added events to the two day program in response. The American Kennel Club recognizes 193 breeds, and the 2019 Asheville shows will include a vast majority of them plus some new competitions. These will include new breed specialty competitions for the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel and the Manchester terrier, among others. There will also be new competitions for puppies four to six months old, and an American Kennel Club Owner Handler Series.

The shows provide a perfect chance for dog lovers to see all kinds of breeds in action, and to meet breeders and handlers of the type dogs they are interested in. The shows are also the perfect place to find out about all the new products and services available for dogs and their families. Specialty foods, training services, "personalized" collars, clothing, harnesses and leashes, memorials, toys, toys and more toys, dog doors, etc., etc., etc. If it's something an owner or a dog would want, it probably will be available through a vendor at the Asheville Kennel Club's two dog shows. Food will be available through the usual Ag Center facilities.

There are two shows in Asheville in two days because the American Kennel Club allows each affiliated club to host two shows a year, regardless of timing. For logistical and organizational purposes, the Asheville affiliate has long chosen to run its two shows on consecutive days in one weekend, rather than having, for example, separate spring and fall shows. Certified judges are allowed to judge on both days of the Asheville shows, but not allowed to judge the same breed on both days.

Pirate at home.

Cavalier King Charles Spaniels will get particular attention at this year's shows. Unlike most breeds, "Cavs" come in, and are judged in, four distinct colors: RUBY, black and tan, Tri-color, and Blenheim – a red and white combination. "Cavs" also happen to be the favorite of AKC treasurer Elizabeth A. Brown. She also serves the Hendersonville Kennel Club and the national Cavalier club. Brown has three Cavaliers herself, including Pirate, a RUBY who will be competing in the June shows. For more information about the dog shows on June 8 and 9, or about all the activities, teaching programs and services of the Asheville Kennel Club, visit ashevillekennelclub.org.

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Support Animals Explained

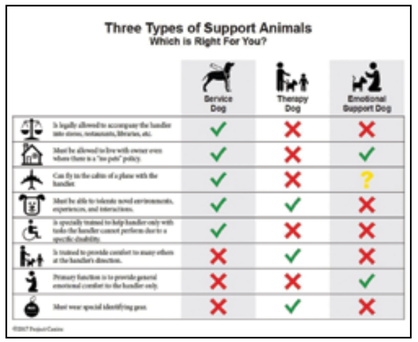
by Caitlin Morrow

Sarge's Animal Rescue Foundation is helping adopters understand the important differences in support animals. There is a meme circulating on Facebook about all dogs being 'therapy dogs.' While it's mostly true (and hilarious), behind the meme is a very real problem — the unregulated, and confusing, world of assistance dogs.

Caitlin Morrow with Dozer, one of her three dogs.

People come into Sarge's regularly asking staff to find them a service dog, only for us to discover they don't understand what type of assistance dog they truly need. The three big types of dogs that offer assistance are: service dogs, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals.

Service Dogs. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service dog as one specially trained to perform various tasks which help mitigate a person's disability. These dogs are granted public rights under the ADA but must not be a nuisance in public and must be well trained for public access.



Some examples of these dogs are diabetic alert dogs, seizure alert dogs, mobility assistance, guide dogs for the blind, hearing assistance dogs and so many more. These dogs can be of any age, size or breed but be specially trained.

Therapy dogs, on the other hand, are dogs that are social, well-trained and well-behaved in public — but training is specifically for them to go into places like nursing homes, hospitals, schools and other places where they provide therapy for many people. These animals can be of a variety of sizes, ages and breeds, but go through rigorous testing to earn a certification to allow them to enter specific facilities that have invited therapy dogs to participate. Therapy dogs are not granted public access rights.

Emotional Support Animals are the third category and is a category specifically for individuals who use their animal for personal therapy and need an exemption to restrictions that housing places on owning pets. These dogs are not granted public access rights or therapy dog access. These dogs do not need to have any specialty training.

The chart accompanying this article can will help you find the type of animal right for your needs. For more information visit info@sargeanimals.org., call (828) 246-9050 or follow Sarge's on Facebook.

Caitlin Morrow, BS, CPDT-KA, RVT, is Sarge's Animal Behavior Coordinator. She oversees the behavioral health of the animals in Sarge's care including enrichment, training and behavior modification, as well as training for volunteers and staff.

Wine Pull, Auctions to Highlight Spay/Neuter Fundraiser

The second annual Yappy Hour fundraiser for Haywood Spay/Neuter (HS/N) will be held on Friday, June 7 at 5:30pm at the Maggie Valley Club and Resort. Friends of dogs and cats will gather to support the work of HS/N while enjoying exquisite hors d'oeuvres and a wine pull.

There will also be a live auction with original art work by Waynesville artist Margaret Roberts and a silent auction for "experiences" such as dinner parties, a chance to participate in a corn hole tournament, hikes and other fun learning experiences.

Bonnie Grumka, Wine Pull Chair, said: "We are already getting some very good bottles of wine from friends of HS/N and will continue to accept them through June 1". As of PetGazette press time, a 2015 Chateau Montelana Napa Valley Cabernet, valued at $60; a 2017 Rombauer Chardonnay, valued at $40; and a 2017 Biltmore Reserve Chardonnay, valued at $20 were among the wines donated – all of which were equal to or greater in value than the wine pull ticket price of $20.

Those interested in Yappy Hour sponsorship, donating wine for the wine pull, purchasing admission tickets or learning more about the work of HS/N, should contact Scarlette Heatherly at

828-452-1329 or stop by the HS/N office, open Tuesday through Friday 10:30am through 4:30pm. Individuals who would like to support HSN: Platinum Paws for $1000; Pampered Pets for $750; Happy Tails for $500 and Faithful Friends for $250. Business sponsors are available at Top Dog for $1,000; Meow Mad for $750; Best in Show for $500; and Purrfect Partner for $250. Each sponsorship comes with an appropriate number of Yappy Hour tickets and level of recognition in media releases and signage at the event itself.

Nancye Buelow, Haywood Spay/Neuter board President states, "I am humbled by the outstanding work of this incredible organization and know that the community will want to support our efforts as they learn more about all the important work we do."

According to Heatherly, the inaugural event in 2018 sold out, and this year's Yappy Hour is expected to sell out quickly. She said that once the capacity of the Maggie Valley Club and Resort facility is reached, ticket sales will be ended and no tickets will be sold at the door. Tickets for the Yappy Hour event must be purchased in advance. They are available at the HS/N office at 182 Richland St. Unit 1, Waynesville, or online at haywoodspayneuter.org.

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FUR Backyard BBQ Fundraiser Set

The 2019 Feline Urgent Rescue (FUR) giant fundraising event will be at Barn Star Events in Waynesville. The Fifth Annual Backyard Barbecue will start at 4:30 with the FUR annual meeting for staff, volunteers and interested civilians. Then, at 5:30, the agenda will switch from business to fun that will last until 7:30pm. Or so.

Visitors will enjoy delicious BBQ sandwiches from Butts on the Creek, a variety of tasty and seasonal sides and desserts, plus wine from Bosu and beer from locally crafted beer collection, a rustic reclaimed wood birdhouse, Grass Root Garden gift certificate and much more! Plus we have a special raffle for 2019 -- tickets are being sold at all FUR fundraisers this year and their departed furry friends may also buy a customized engraved brick that will be placed in FUR's memorial garden at their Sanctuary. Order forms and example bricks will be on display at the event. While Boojum, as well as a choice of non-adult beverages. There will also be music, dancing, silent auctions, raffles, games and more!

L to R: The three remaining FUR co-founders: Rachel West, Judy Vail, and Jamie Powell. The fourth co-founder, Cynthia Henderson passed away from cancer a few years back.

"The Rainbow Bridge Quilt is a very special item."

The barn at Barn Star Events in Waynesville.

The silent auctions will include framed photographs, a hand-crafted lamp, an oil painting and much more!

Raffles include a massage from Belle On Main, locally roasted coffees with pottery mugs, the winner will be drawn at our final event in November -- this special item is a hand-crafted quilt titled "Rainbow Bridge" by Haywood County's very own Traci Hoglen, President of the Blue Ridge Mountain Quilters quilt guild.

"The Rainbow Bridge quilt is a very special item," explained Renee' Robbins, the event co-chair. "We have lost several cats recently at FUR, due to old age and illness, and we wanted a way to commemorate all of our cats who have gone on to the Rainbow Bridge. But just as important," she added, "we wanted our supporters to have a way to commemorate the animals they lost as well. What better way to do that than by cuddling up under a handmade quilt that represents the Rainbow Bridge?"

Individuals who want to honor no cats will be at the event, information about FUR, their adoptable kitties and how each person can make a difference will be available.

All proceeds from the Backyard Barbecue Fundraiser will benefit FUR of Western NC, a non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming of cats in western NC.

Barnstar Events is at 2436 Jonathan Creek Road, Waynesville. Tickets for the FUR Backyard Barbecue Fundraiser are $35 per individual or $125 for a sponsorship. A sponsorship provides two plates of food, four drink tickets and special recognition during the event. For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit the FUR website at furofwnc.org.

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CAAR gets support at Asheville Outlets car show

Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue (CAAR), a Fletcher-based, all volunteer animal rescue group, will be the beneficiary of a car show at the Asheville Outlets on Sunday, June 9 from 1-4pm.

The WNC Wheels Car Club, in association with Prestige Subaru, will present an event that all concerned hope will become an annual fund raiser for CAAR. The event will feature a car-club challenge, in which car clubs are encouraged to have large numbers of their members attend. There will also be raffle tickets, a 50/50 drawing, prizes, and giveaways.

Perhaps the best part is that CAAR volunteers will have adoptable pets on site! Car owners of all years, makes and models - classics, antiques, rat-rods, hot rods, imports, exotics – are welcome. Owners of motorcycles – two wheeled or four wheeled - will also be welcome to join together united in their love of their machines and our four-legged friends.

In addition to Prestige Subaru, several other local businesses have pledged their support and funds to help make this event a success. Cane Creek Concrete, WNC Collision Center, Kiser Insurance, J. Allen (Hunter Engineering Equipment Distributor), Accurate Sealers Automotive Water and Wind Leak Specialists, and Shades of Grey Window Tinting are all additional sponsors as of PetGazette press time. Each of these sponsors, through their generous donation, has already allowed this event to be a success because their donations, along with show entry fees will be donated to Charlie's Angels after the event's expenses are taken care of.

The Service Manager for Prestige Subaru has also donated a very large, lightly used, Matco 4S toolbox to CAAR to be raffled off at the end of the car-show season during a WNC Wheels event. This is a professional level technician toolbox that sells for over $4000 new! Tickets will be available on site at this car show as well as at CAAR, at all WNC Wheels events, and at Prestige Subaru until the raffle ticket supply is exhausted, or the last WNC Wheels Car show of the year (whichever comes first.) Tickets are $10 each or 12 tickets for $100. All proceeds (minus cost of tickets) will be donated to CAAR.

Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization that was founded in 2009. In addition to working with area county shelters, CAAR creates new ways to save more animals. One of its most successful partnerships has been with the Aloft hotel in Asheville, which fosters chosen animals at the hotel. To date, 113 dogs have found new homes through this innovative program.

For more about CAAR and its programs, visit info@charliesangelsanimalrescue.com or call 828 885-3647 (DOGS).

The Mane Event will benefit Heart of Horse Sense

Hands-on horse activities, a scavenger hunt, tours of the Heart of Horse Sense (HOHS) working farm, demonstrations of equine therapy and rhythmic riding, plus live music and more will be featured in the annual HOHS Mane Event fundraiser.

The 2019 edition will be held on Saturday, June 8 at the HOHS farm and headquarters at 6919 Meadows Town Road in Marshall. Starting and ending times for the family friendly festivities had not been communicated as of PetGazette press time, but the 2018 event ran from 1-5pm so this year's timing will probably be similar. The 2019 ticket prices had also not been communicated at PetGazette press time, but will probably be similar to the 2018 price.

In addition to the special activities available at The Mane Event, children and adults can learn about the life-enhancing work of HOHS. Through Equine Assisted Therapy and other horse-related activities, the organization changes the lives of at-risk children, traumatized children and adults, and veterans suffering from PTSD or other disabilities resulting from their service to their country.

The Mane Event tours and demonstrations will take place at the HOHS arenas. Visitors should follow the gravel road past the white house and past the covered arena on the right. Then, just after passing the outdoor arena, The Mane Event goers should make a left, pull up to park on the left, and walk up to the main arena.

Directions to Heart of Horse Sense: Take New Leicester Hwy/63 for about 12 miles from its beginning at the intersection with Patton Avenue in Asheville. Turn right on Meadows Town Road (also known as 1001) You will see signs saying "Piney Grove Baptist Church" and "To Marshall". After 3 miles, just across the street from Piney Grove Baptist Church, you'll see barns with green tin roofs on the right. Make a right into driveway with double-green mailbox: 7041 Meadows Town Road. Follow the gravel drive behind the "little brick house", where you can check in, purchase tickets (if you haven't already) and get information for the day.

For updated information about The Mane Event, visit heartofhorsesense.org, or call 828 649-7064.

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Blue Ridge Classic of the Carolinas a Triple Threat Dog Event

On Memorial Day weekend – Friday May 24 through Monday, May 27t - the Blue Ridge Classic of the Carolinas (BRCC) – the joint venture of the Hendersonville Kennel Club Inc. and the Spartanburg Kennel Club – will hold their annual dog shows, plus obedience and rally trials at the Western North Carolina Ag Center.

Obedience and rally events will be held in the Expo Center, while All-Breed conformation events will be held in the Davis Event Center. Concurrently, in the

McGough Arena, the Blue Ridge Agility Club will hold its annual weekend of agility trials. (See page 11)

These shows serve more than one purpose. The conformation events, aka dog shows, are not just beauty events. They showcase the breeders' progress in improving their selected breed of dogs.

That's what conformation events have always been about since the beginning of dog shows – the improvement of the breeds.

While All-Breed shows are just that, open to any of the 193 AKC recognized breeds, many of the shows also contain Specialties within the larger show. Specialties are open only to dogs of one particular breed.

The 2019 BRCC will include Specialties for the American Bull Mastiff, American Wire Haired Pointing Griffons, Dandie Dinmont Terriers, Shetland Sheepdogs, and Siberian Huskies.

The purpose of the obedience trials is to show off the ability and talent of the dogs to work with and for their trainers. There are many levels – beginning with Rally – an introductory version of obedience training – up through regular obedience levels from Novice to Utility. Betty Ann Brown, HKC Treasurer, said, "It is amazing to see a well-trained dog responding to its handler's direction."

Obedience competitions are open to all purebred breeds AND to any and all mixed breeds as well. As a variation on the

"Obedience is open to mixed breeds."

obedience theme, some experienced dog enthusiast has envisioned an event in which humans demonstrate their ability to quickly and faithfully obey their terriers. No actual event has yet been held, however.

In addition to hundreds of dogs, the Davis Event Center will be home to vendors of just about anything and everything a dog or its owner would want:. There will be toys of every kind, stuffed

or not, squeaky or not; services of every kind, from chiropractic to dog walking to dog sitting; and dog foods and supplements of every kind, from basic kibble to fresh to frozen. And, of course, human food will be available, for the humans, in the Davis Event Center Restaurant.

The BRCC is about as family friendly as an event can get, and spectators will be cheerfully welcomed, although requested to leave their own non-

participating pets at home. Admission to the BRCC is free, but whether you have one person or a bunch of clowns in it, you will be asked by the Ag Center for s $5 parking fee. That's a very small price to pay for a priceless time among hundreds of man's best friends.

Agility Trials Concurrent with Dog Shows

While some dogs will be competing in Obedience at the WNC Ag Center, and others will be strutting their stuff in the Conformation competition in the Blue Ridge Classic of the Carolinas events over Memorial Day weekend, the more energetic dogs and owners will be competing in the Blue Ridge Agility Club (BRAC) trials in the McGough Arena.

Admission is free. The trials will start at 8am each day, and end about 5pm Friday through Sunday. Monday's events will wrap up about 3pm. There is no set time table and individual dog breeds do not run at a particular time, they run by dog height. Anyone looking to see an individual breed might check with a competitor they know since BRAC *can not* provide a specific time to come.

Agility trials are just plain fun to watch. Both owners and dogs are active and athletic, and the trials are open to purebreds and mixed breeds alike. There's not a *hoity* nor a *toity* in sight. However, it is a lot of work to get the dogs to run a course both accurately and fast, which are the points of the whole deal. It's similar to jumping horses – speed and fewest faults area what count towards determining the winners. While jumping horses come in pretty much one size, canine agility competitors range in size from toy poodles to standard poodles and beyond. So, just to make it fair, dogs compete within their own size groups, and obstacles – from jumps to weave poles to tunnels to teeter totters – are set at appropriate heights for each competing group.

Before each event, handlers are given a chance to walk the course on which they will compete. That gives them the chance to envision the best path to achieve the best time and direct the dog to follow it. Every course is different, so without his/her handler's direction the dog could go off track, retrace steps, take the same obstacle twice, or simply go walkabout, wasting the hours and hours and hours that human and dog have worked together preparing for the trials.

The handicapped accessible McGough Arena is accessible off Fanning Bridge Road just east of the Asheville Airport, or by walkway from the other BRCC venues within the Ag Center. The 65,000 square foot facility is often home to equestrian events, so is certainly more than big enough for canine agility trials. In fact, the 120 by 240 foot arena is divided into three rings for the trials, all going at once with competition, handler run-throughs, or volunteers setting up/taking down obstacles. The result, of course, is a three ring circus that families get to watch for nothing. Except, maybe, for purchases made at the food concessions, or one of the vendors filling the 42 available spaces for them.

Photo by Stewart Event Images

Clyde's Joe Root and Claymore, his Bearded Collie, competing at a previous trial.

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Woof Meow Rescue adoption day at Woof Gang Bakery

On Saturday, May 11, volunteers from Woof Meow Rescue (WMR) will be at the Woof Gang Bakery in Biltmore Park with adoptable dogs, hoping to find them forever homes. The store is at 33 Town Square Boulevard, Suite 140, and the dogs will be there from noon until 4pm.

Woof Meow Rescue is a fairly new entry into the ranks of area animal rescue groups. The new, all-foster group was started in the fall of 2018 by Founder Ally Verba, who has years of experience with dog and cat rescue operations. She had worked for the Asheville Humane Society (AHS) before deciding to start a rescue group that recruited foster families to help relieve the pressure on established shelters and organizations surrounding Asheville. In some surrounding areas the local shelters simply do not have the space to hold dogs for extended periods and might have to euthanize animals unless other alternatives are presented. Woof Meow is now one of those alternatives.

Woof Gang bakery is a growing East Coast chain with over 110 franchises operating from Connecticut to Florida, and branches reaching as was west as Texas and Nevada. The Biltmore Park franchisee is Ann Marie Sindt, who has been with Woof Gang Bakery for about three years and bought the franchise in 2017. Like Verba, she is a lifelong dog lover and has four friends at home. She also fosters dogs in the store, where, as the saying goes, customers can shop and adopt.

Verba says that Woof Meow Rescue does not believe in breed discrimination, or labeling a dog with a guestimate about its ancestry that could have negative connotations. "The truth is," she says, "that every dog is different, just as every human is different. The only way to know what a dog might be like is to get to know that dog." Believe it. The PetGazette editor and publisher once adopted a Golden Retriever from a Golden Retriever rescue organization He neither swam nor chased tennis balls!

In addition to encouraging potential adopters to consider each dog as an individual, the Woof Meow volunteers encourage weekend adoptions. That way, people and dogs get to know better if they will be a good fit, and there are fewer cases of "surrendered dogs" or "failed adoptions."

Woof Meow has regular adoption events as well as the one at Woof Gang Bakery. On the first Sunday of every month it has dogs for adoptions at the 10th Muse Coffee Shop, 8 London Rd., Asheville from noon until 5pm. And on the third Sunday of every month it has adoptable dogs at High Wire Brewery's Big Top, 24 Huntsman Place in the Biltmore Village section of Asheville.

For more about Woof Gang Bakery, visit woofgangbakery.com or call 828 650-9950. For more about Woof Meow Rescue, or to see if they are fostering the dog that should be yours, visit woofmeowrescue.org.

AKC offers Handling Classes

The Asheville Kennel Club (AKC) offers instruction and tips for competition in the sport of Breed Conformation. Potential professional handlers or owner/handlers can learn the basics of training, preparing and presenting a dog in the show ring. The fee for the classes – to cover the cost of facility rental – is $3 per dog for AKC club members and $5 per dog for non-members.

Handling Classes are provided on Wednesday evenings, starting at 7pm, at the Federal Reserve Center on Louisiana Avenue in West Asheville, next to KFC.

For more information, visit ashevillekennelclub.org.

Fundraising rematch at Blue Ghost Brewery June 13

Last year, when two local heavyweight pet lovers contested for the title of Best Fundraiser, veterinarian David Crouch eked out the title by a few hundred dollars over BMW of Asheville General Manager Larry Taylor. This year, they'll go at it again in the Birthday Faceoff.

"They aren't playing for dog biscuits."

The competition is so titled because the two men have birthdays just one day apart – June 9 for Taylor and June 10 for Crouch. The two also share a June nativity with Roscoe, the unofficial mascot of BMW of Asheville and friend to everyone, especially to potential donors to pet charities.

Whoever wins the Faceoff will get to donate to the pet rescue charity of his choice: Charlies Angels Animal Rescue if Taylor collects the most, Pilots' Paws if Crouch draws the most *dinero*. And they aren't playing for dog biscuits! In 2018, the two brought in over $16,000 between them to help pets in need.

Larry Taylor, General Manager of BMW of Asheville and David Crouch, DVM, owner of Western Carolina Veterinary Surgery. Taylor is urging donations to Charlie's Angels Animal Rescue, Crouch to Pilots 'n Paws.

The June 13 Faceoff festivities will start at 5:30pm and run until 8pm at the Blue Ghost Brewery. Donors can give online, or at the event, or both. But if they go to the event they'll get a good time as well as a good feeling for their donation. There will be good food, lots of drink specials, a chance to win BMW merchandise, and a chance to meet Taylor and Crouch in person. There will even be a chance to meet Roscoe and, if the two haven't gone off to a quiet spot together, to meet Senna, Crouch's poodle. Their masters may be competitors, but the dogs are *muy simpatico*.

To support your favorite charity online, use the charity website and type "Larry" in the notes to support Charlie's Angels, and "David" to support Pilots 'n Paws. And/or go to the Blue Ghost Brewery at 125 Underwood Road in Fletcher on June 13 and be there when the count comes in.

If there's a Birthday Faceoff recount, so much the better. That would be a reason to stay there and have more fun. And it might even mean more funds raised for homeless animals through Charlie's Angels or Pilots 'n Paws.

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Rosie Fund to Honor Rosie Marks: CPPI Beneficiary
A personal journey by Carol Marks

As many of you know, Jim and I lost our little PetGazette mascot Rosie last January. The guilt and grief are still there. In sponsoring the Angel Pets Conference and Expo, I've researched the participants and found much helpful information on how to grieve in a healthy way.

One thing to do is to Honor your pet. Leigh Love, the organizer of the Conference, did a moving honoring ceremony for Rosie. Best Friends was there for us, and Tricord Stones provided a wonderful memorial for our garden (you'll see it on our Conference table; Rosie said we could borrow it).

All of these helped us, but we wanted to help others, too. Then Mary Cervini of Community Partnership for Pets (CPPI) sent us a note. In Rosie's name, she had sponsored a pet in a rural shelter who was at high risk of euthanasia. This meant that Rosie's death allowed another pet to live. At that point I knew we had found a truly meaningful, ongoing way to Honor Rosie's life.

So PetGazette is establishing The Rosie Fund to help provide financial resources for CPPI. Why CPPI, when there are so many rescues, shelters and spay-neuter organizations here? Because other areas are not so fortunate and heartbreak there is frequent.

Founder Mary Cervini says:

"Community Partnership for Pets Inc. (CPPI) is working our way across the State of NC setting up and funding spay/neuter programs to focus on eliminating the suffering and euthanasia of dogs and cats. Our priority at this time is to work with poor, rural animal shelters that are out of sight and out of mind to many people. The people and pets struggle in these communities to stay alive! If you want to truly turn hopeless into Hope, please join us. Please visit our website at communitypartnershipforpets.org to see the counties and groups we are currently working with or to make a donation. You can even sponsor a dog or cat at one of these shelters. *For a $50 donation we can GUARANTEE a dog or cat will be rescued!"*

You can make a donation in Rosie's honor, or *in honor of your pet*, at their website. To learn more about Community Partnership for Pets, or to rescue a dog or cat, come to the Pet Gazette table at the Angel Pets Conference and Expo on June 8 at the Renaissance Hotel in Asheville (see article page 15). If you come, bring a picture of your Rainbow Bridge friend for our Memorial board, so we can all Honor him or her.

Yours in life, *Carol*

Grieving the Death of a Beloved Pet

by Jim Neugass, RN

During the last seven years of my career as an RN in hospice care, I repeatedly witnessed the processes of families experiencing the loss and grief when a loved one passed. And for many pet owners, the loss of their precious pet can be comparable, in almost every way, to the loss of a human loved one.

In fact, conversations I have had with a number of pet owners said that they grieved more over the loss of their pet than over the loss of friends or relatives. And research has confirmed this phenomenon. The grief might be compounded because the pet owner had to make the difficult choice for euthanasia to ease the suffering of a pet with a serious injury or an incurable medical condition. Unfortunately, there's little in our cultural playbook – no grief rituals, no obituary in the local newspaper, no religious service – to help us get through the loss of a pet.

So, what can we do to care for ourselves when we grieve the passing of a pet? Here are some suggestions discovered on the Internet:

- Don't be afraid to cry.
- Discussing your grief with friends and family members can be helpful.
- Take some time out to grieve for your pet.
- Consider joining a pet loss support group in your area or online.
- Speak with a grief counselor to help you work through your emotions.
- Celebrate the time you had with your pet.
- Do something from your heart that will help you remember your pet.
- Create a small memorial service with family or friends.
- Displaying one or more of the items (paw print, a lock of hair, dog collar or favorite small toy).
- In a window-box frame with a photo of your dog in a prominent in your home.
- Consider planting a tree or other plant in your yard with a decorative stepping stone that can be placed there with a message or the name of your pet.
- In the case of cremation, scatter the cremains near the tree.
- Remember that grief takes time, but things will get better.
- Focus on the happy memories with your pet.
- Future pets cannot replace your lost companion, but at the right time, they might help fill a void.
- Be grateful for the time you shared your life with your loving companions.

That last point bears repeating: Be grateful for the time you shared your life with your loving companion. It was a gift you can always keep in your memory and in your heart.

Hendersonville's Jim Neugass is a retired hospice RN who now has a part-time career as a pet photographer. He can be reached at foreverfriends2me.com or 828 707-8757.

Asheville Angel Pets Conference and Expo to Address Pet End of Life Issues

The *Angel Pets Conference* will be held on Saturday, June 8 from 8am. to 5pm in Salon A at the Renaissance Hotel Downtown Asheville, 31 Woodfin Street. The Conference and accompanying Expo will provide information on all aspects of pet end of life issues for h pet parents and professionals alike.

L. Leigh Love of Bright Star Studio, organizer of the event, said "The goal is to help us become more knowledgeable and comfortable in caring for our pets (and ourselves) during this difficult, but inevitable time in our pets' lives."

The Conference will highlight important medical topics of senior animal needs and resources, assessing animal quality of life, explaining hospice and palliative care and cover all considerations for pets at the end of life transition. Special focus will also be on grief healing from pet loss for ourselves and family. Being aware of the resources available can be tremendously helpful and healing.

Local and nationally known experts on senior nutrition, end of life care, caregiver support and grief healing will speak at this seated, educational conference. Some Continuing Education credits will be available. Professionals working with animals, those in rescue and animal welfare work, and pet parents alike will find the information valuable.

Conference Speakers and topics:

Dr. Beth Marchitelli, DVM, 4 Paws Farewell, Mobile Pet Hospice, Palliative Care & Home Euthanasia, will speak on Assessing Quality of Life in Companion Animals, as well as Hospice and Palliative Care

Coleen Ellis, CT, CLCP , Two Hearts Pet Loss Pet Center, will address the Healthy Elements of Grieving for a Beloved Pet, as well as Understanding Anticipatory Grief, Children & Grief, Pets & Grief, and Pet Loss Memorialization..

Dr. Kasandra Garner, DVM, Animal Hospital of North Asheville, will cover Senior Pet Needs and Resources.

Dr. Angel Mitchell, DVM, CVA, Bonnie Brae Veterinary Hospital, will cover Senior Pet Nutrition.

Early Bird pricing for The Angel Pets Conference has been extended. Tickets are $110-$125 with 20% off with the promo code PetGazette. Reservations or donations can be made at eventbrite.com/e/asheville-angel-pets-conference-registration-56247879923, or contact Leigh at Bright Star Studio, 828-450-4424, to purchase by check or credit card. Expo admission is included with Conference admission.

Angel Pets Vendor Expo will run concurrently with Angel Pets Conference

The Expo will run from 10am until 6pm in Salon B/C. It will have 40+ vendors related to supportive pet care products and services. These will include nutritional pet supplements, canine rehab specialists, pet trainers, senior pet needs, end-of-life care, caregiver support, memorabilia, pet supplies, artists, veterinarians, healers, animal acupuncturists and chiropractors, pet groomers, memorial sanctuary, animal communicators and more!

Vendor Presentations and Topics

Dr. Beth Jones, DVM – Beth Jones, Asheville Animal Acupuncture and Wellness Clinic. Her Presentation topic will be Animal Acupuncture, and include a demonstration on a senior pet.

Megan Day, WagHab Canine Rehabilitation. Wright will speak on Improving Mobility in the Aging Dog: Techniques, and cover ideas on keeping older dogs mobile and active

Patty Summers – PSAnimal.com. Summers will cover the benefits of animal communication related to senior care, pet transition and after

Dr. Laurel Davis, DVM . Dr. Davis will present Stories from a Holistic Vet: *How Do You Know When to Let Them Go?*

The Expo will be open to the public for a $5 fee. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at eventbrite.com/e/angel-pets-expo-tickets-56249398465?ref=estw. For complete information about the Angel Pets Conference and Expo, visit youtube/qZbdnPpQnTo. The website, angelpetsconference.com has the complete Conference speaker schedule, speaker bios, vendor list, descriptions and contact information for those wishing to purchase tickets or become a vendor or sponsor.

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Skinny Hungry Cats

by Karel Carnohan

They are seen quite frequently – middle aged cats, once quite plump, that have started dropping weight rapidly even though they eat like a pig. Sometime they stop eating because they feel awful. When I see cats like this, I always suspect hyperthyroidism.

Unlike humans and dogs who get HYPOthyroidism, cats get HYPERthyroidism. Thyroid hormones normally function to determine the metabolic rate of the cat's body. Most often, thyroid tumors are benign, with only 3% -5% being malignant. Left untreated, hyperthyroidism will shorten your cat's life and significantly decrease his quality of life. Untreated hyperthyroidism leads to hypertension (increased blood pressure), kidney failure, and heart failure.

Hyperthyroidism is typically a disease of older cats with the average age of diagnosis at 13 years. While many causes have been speculated, including chemicals in the lining of cans used for cat food, nothing has been definitively identified. More than likely this disease is caused by many factors, including environment (endocrine disruptors), diet, and genetics. Additionally, domestic cats live longer today than they did 30 years ago and we test more and catch the development of this disease more frequently.

The clinical signs of hyperthyroidism include weight loss despite a great appetite, a decrease in muscle tone and mass, restless behavior, chronic vomiting and diarrhea, fast heart rate even when resting, and a heart murmur. These signs can mean other diseases, too, so it is important to do a full diagnostic work-up, including blood work, urinalysis and maybe x-rays and an ultrasound. In fact, thyroid levels can be artificially suppressed by other illnesses. If your cat is showing signs consistent with hyperthyroidism but his thyroid levels are normal, your vet will need to rule out other diseases

An overactive thyroid can mask kidney disease, which is also common in older kitties. Once a cat is successfully treated for hyperthyroidism, kidney disease may become apparent. This is why your vet will recommend multiple blood tests — to monitor response to treatment. Cats on therapeutic drugs will need to have regular blood tests to monitor their thyroid levels and make sure that the doses are correct. Hyperthyroidism is typically treated in one of two ways: a twice daily medication that blocks the production of thyroid hormones or a one-time treatment called I131.

A drug called Methimazole will reduce the production of thyroid hormone. It is given twice daily to cats and is typically well tolerated. Methimazole will not cure hyperthyroidism – it basically is just a band-aid - but it can be used safely for years. Once the drug is stopped, the disease symptoms come back so it is a life-long drug. It is important to routinely check bloodwork to monitor thyroid levels and liver function. Methimazole treatment is the least expensive treatment up front, but over time you may spend a considerable amount of money on lab work and drugs.

I131 Radioactive Iodine therapy is the safest and most effective way to treat hyperthyroidism in an otherwise healthy cat – it can cure the disease with a single treatment. Not only do you avoid those multiple trips to the vet for blood work, but you can you avoid giving a pill to your cat twice daily for the rest of hers life. Radioactive Iodine I131 is effective 96% of the time. We refer you to an approved facility to receive an injection of radioactive iodine. During this procedure, your cat will be housed in a facility specially designed to protect against exposure to radioactive elements for about one week. Side effects are rare, but cats can become hypothyroid and need to have thyroid supplementation if too much of the thyroid gland is destroyed. This only happens about 4% of the time.

The cost of I131 Radioactive Iodine Therapy typically runs about $1500. But when you consider years of vet visits, medications and blood tests, it can be well worth it. Your vet can discuss whether this treatment is advised for your cat. Very old cats and cats with serious disease are not good candidates.

In rare cases, surgery to remove a malignant cancerous thyroid may become necessary. But the significant majority of cases can be treated safely and effectively with medication or radiotherapy.

I recommend all cats over the age of 10 years get a senior blood panel which includes testing the thyroid. Catching it early will help protect your cat's health for years to come.

Dr. Carnohan retired from her career in finance at the age of 50 to become a veterinarian and then graduated from the Kansas State College of Veterinary Medicine. She bought the Cat Care Clinic of Asheville in August 201 and has been practicing there ever since. Dr. Carnohan also helped found Asheville Cat Weirdos.