

# pawprints

GREAT NEWS ABOUT PETS SNIFFED OUT FOR YOU ♡



## KYRA SEDGWICK'S LIFE LESSONS FROM DOGS

For Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon, their idea of a vacation is to take their two children to New Orleans to volunteer. "One of the things we did was a day of work for a New Orleans animal shelter that was a sort of a make-shift shelter after Katrina," says Sedgwick. "It's one of those places that didn't even exist before [Hurricane Katrina] – and it was heartbreaking, there was so much trauma. Many [of the animals] were being adopted all the time, but it was still hard to see the ones that were left behind."

Sedgwick is promoting animal shelter adoptions with support from Hill's Science Diet. "There are so many pets who need a home out there," she says.

Sedgwick, who had already garnered a Golden Globe (in 2006) as LAPD Deputy Police Chief Brenda Leigh Johnson in *The Closer* on TNT, recently added a People's Choice Award. Sedgwick has appeared in big screen and TV movies, including *Phenomenon*, *Born on the Fourth of July* and *The Woodsman*.

On *The Closer*, she's a brilliant interrogator, and ultimately traps suspects into a confession. That sort of brilliant interrogating isn't necessary with her own pets. "Laura and Paulie are adopted; Laura is the cat and Paulie is our Labrador retriever," she says. "When we see the paper torn up when we return home, there's not much of a confession necessary," she laughs. "That's about all

he [Paulie] does; he's 11. Besides, you can't really scold a pet after something is done. You have to be there that moment."

Sedgwick, who is a New Yorker, born and bred, moved to Los Angeles when she was 18. "The first thing I did was to get myself a Golden Retriever from a shelter," she says. "I had

some behavioral issues with him, but I got help. He was such a great dog, and he lived to a very, very old age. He taught me about commitment and showing up for someone even if you're not feeling in the mood. I think that having a pet can really do that for you and can teach you about being in a relationship and giving and receiving love."

That same dog even taught her about another kind of long-term commitment, her 20-year marriage to actor Kevin Bacon. Often in interviews, when asked for the secret to her marriage's success, her answer is, "My secret is that I'm not naïve enough to think there is a secret." In this interview she echoes the same

refrain, but then continues, "I'm going to circle back to dogs. Really, dogs teach a lot, they teach you about responsibility. And just to learn to share your space. Also, pets teach about giving back. You give them love and they'll give love back to you. It's always true with pets, while it may not always be true for human beings. So, in our case, we're trying to teach our kids (ages 16 and 19) how to give back." ♡



BY STEVE DALE



Photo Courtesy of Steve Dale

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## FLEAS AND TICKS ARE NOT WELCOME

BY STEVE DALE

The good news is that modern veterinary flea products really do a job to zap fleas; so the days of using dips can be relics of a flea fighting history. "The bad news is that fleas and ticks are enjoying a perfect storm of concurrent events, so pet owners must be vigilant," says veterinary parasitologist, Dr. Michael Dryden, Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

He says the recent overall increase in temperatures has made it possible for fleas and ticks to survive months longer in places where they normally wouldn't. As sprawling suburbia increasingly intersects with wildlife, our backyards have become a drop-off place for fleas and ticks. Favorable conditions have made it possible for many animals, such as deer and raccoon, to increase in population which can lead to more fleas and ticks.

Dryden says it doesn't take long for fleas to settle into your home sweet home. A couple of fleas could hitch a ride on your shoes, or for sure, your unprotected pet. Laying 40 to 50 eggs daily, it doesn't take long before you can find your home overrun. Dryden adds if those fleas do take up residence, you may have to pay for an expensive exterminator – an expense which may have been avoided with the right protection.

Fleas are not fun house guests. Many pets are allergic to their bites; they do bite people if they're hungry and they spread disease. As nasty as fleas are, arguably, ticks are even more of a concern when it comes to disease transmission, often gifting dogs with a cocktail of infectious agents causing several diseases simultaneously, including any combination of Lyme, ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, babesiosis and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. If ticks occur where you live, your veterinarian will likely recommend a product to help protect your pets against both fleas and ticks.



FROM THE AVMA

## SUMMER SAFETY

Summertime may be a favorite time of year, but the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) warns that heat and pests can create hazards for pets and pet owners.

"Summertime can be deadly for pets," explains Dr. James Cook, president of the AVMA. "I advise pet owners to be attuned to their pet's response to hot weather. For example, some dogs will exercise with their owners in the summer heat until they literally drop from heat exhaustion. This is a serious situation that requires immediate attention from a veterinarian."

"The biggest problem in the summer is flea control," adds Cook. "Prevention is the best cure. Once fleas are on your pet, in your home, or in your carpet, you'll need the help of both a veterinarian and an exterminator. That's a situation more like a war than a treatment."

Here are more tips from the AVMA:

- Consider keeping dogs indoors, in air conditioning, on extremely hot days. If your dog overheats, lower his body temperature gradually by immersing him in cool water or moving into an air conditioned location and giving him small amounts of cold drinking water or ice cubes. Take your pet to your veterinarian immediately. Signs of heatstroke are panting hard, staggering gait, rapid heartbeat, listlessness, restlessness, dark red or purple gums and tongue, and vomiting.

## ECONOMICAL PET TOYS BY DR. SCOTT LINE

Here are some ideas for saving dollars on your pet care budget. Buy your food in bulk; save on grooming by doing it yourself and have a talk with your veterinarian about the most cost-effective ways to keep your pet healthy. As part of that effort, keeping up to date on things like vaccinations and heartworm preventives will require an up-front cost, but will be likely to save you money in the long run by helping you avoid potentially expensive treatments if your pet becomes ill.

But saving money doesn't mean you have to give up on fun. There are pet toys you can buy at a low cost, or even make at home, that will allow you to have a good time with your pet. Toys that contain treats or food are a great way to keep a pet busy. Some may be filled with expensive treats. Still, another way to save money is to simply fill the toys with your pet's regular (dry) food. You can also



- Never leave a dog inside a car in hot weather, even with the window cracked. A car's inside temperature can increase 40 degrees in an hour.
- A day at the beach can be fun, but make sure your dog can stay cool on the hot sand and remember salt water will dehydrate your pet. Bring drinking water and a portable bowl. Dogs love to swim, but inexperienced dogs can potentially drown – that's why supervision is important. ☺



Photo Courtesy of Steve Dale

"Summertime can be deadly for pets. I advise pet owners to be attuned to their pet's response to hot weather."

make a simple food/treat dispensing toy of your own by filling an empty plastic soda bottle with food. Your pet may spend an hour nosing it around before all the food comes out. If you have a dog that chews, though, be careful about leaving any toy you're unsure about when you're away; eating plastic can be dangerous. For cats, a wine cork or plastic top from a milk carton are great toys.

Another way to enjoy time with your pet, but not break the family budget, is to take your dog for a walk. Or check out the local park with your best friend, or play fetch in the yard. The exercise is good for you and your pet, and doesn't cost a penny – now that's what I call a bargain! ☺

*Dr. Scott Line is a veterinary behaviorist and associate editor of Merck/Merial Manual for Pet Health Home Edition.*



FROM STEVE DALE

## MY PETS' TROUBLES

**Q:** We recently adopted a 3-year old Golden Retriever who chases her tail and actually pulls out the hair when she gets a hold of it. Is this a bad habit or is she mentally challenged? I've offered her a Kong and tennis balls to distract her and it's helped some. What do you think?  
B. B., Louisville, KY

**A:** See your veterinarian to rule out any number of possible problems, ranging from fleas to allergies to anal gland problems.

Assuming you've ruled out potential medical issues, you have the right idea to attempt to distract your dog with an incompatible behavior, such as playing with a ball or working to get treats out of a Kong toy, according to legendary veterinary behaviorist Dr. R. K. Anderson, professor emeritus University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine. Also, make sure your dog gets lots and lots of exercise. It's helpful to offer the ball or toy before the tail chasing begins so you are sure not to unintentionally reinforce the unwanted behavior.

If there's no improvement, videotape the tail chasing. Present the video to a veterinary behaviorist ([www.dacvb.org](http://www.dacvb.org)) or a veterinarian with a special interest in behavior ([www.avsonline.org](http://www.avsonline.org)). Your dog may have a compulsive behavior, and can be helped perhaps requiring the aid of a psycho-pharmaceutical drug. Learn more about this behavior, and other behavior problems on Anderson's non-profit Animal Behavior Resources Institute website, [www.abrionline.org](http://www.abrionline.org).

Email questions about your pets' behavior troubles to [info@pawprintsnewsletter.com](mailto:info@pawprintsnewsletter.com).

# CATALYST PURRS OVER CAT-FRIENDLY CITIES

BY STEVE DALE

**PHOENIX, AZ.** Dogs may have the claim as our best friends, but America's number one companion is cats. There are simply more pet cats than dogs. To celebrate appropriate cat care and the cat/human bond, the CATalyst Council held a press event at the American Animal Hospital Association Conference in Phoenix, AZ announcing the ten most cat-friendly cities. Tampa, FL leads the list, followed by Phoenix.

Rounding out the top-10 are San Francisco, CA; Portland, OR; Denver, CO; Boston, MA; Seattle, WA; San Diego, CA; Atlanta, GA and Minneapolis, MN. Cat friendliness was determined by lots of considerations, including the number of tabbies in town, counting a plus for the cats microchipped, and the number of Cat Fanciers' Association cat shows. Also, the numbers of internal medicine specialty veterinarians, American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) hospitals, emergency and critical care specialists, boarded veterinary behavior specialists and members of the American Association of Feline Practitioners per capita. Extra consideration was even given if the city's Mayor happens to have a cat.

Tampa happens to lead the top-25 markets in AAHA accredited hospitals, is second for the number of feline specialists, and third when it comes to emergency and critical care facilities. Phoenix placed fourth in the count of feline specialists and second when it comes to emergency and critical care facilities.

Dr. Jane Brunt, executive director of the CATalyst Council, says there are millions of people who love their cats and offer appropriate care. However, there are also many that let their cats slide under the radar. Cats are twice as likely not to see a veterinarian compared to their canine cousins. Cats are also more likely to be given up to shelters than dogs, or sometimes just plain given up on – let

outside to fend for themselves. In some ways, it appears that cats don't share equal status to dogs – and the CATalyst Council is out to change that.

Brunt adds, "The CATalyst Council's purpose is to change society's image of cats as aloof creatures. The vision of the CATalyst Council is to raise the level of care and welfare of cats by cat owners. And, celebrate the unique qualities and inherent beauty of cats!"

To enhance that celebration, Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon even proclaimed March 27 as CATalyst 2009 Top 10 Cat-Friendly City Day in Phoenix.

Learn more at [www.catalystcouncil.org](http://www.catalystcouncil.org).



Photo Courtesy of Sarah Cloud

"The vision of the CATalyst Council is to raise the level of care and welfare of cats by cat owners. And, celebrate the unique qualities and inherent beauty of cats!"



## FEATURED WEBSITES

1. Steve Dale  
www.stevedalepetworld.com  
www.petworldradio.net
2. American College of Veterinary Behaviorists  
www.dacvb.org
3. American Heartworm Society  
www.heartwormsociety.org
4. American Humane Association  
www.americanhumane.org
5. American Veterinary Society Animal Behavior  
www.avsonline.org
6. Animal Behavior Resources Institute  
www.abrionline.org
7. CATalyst Council  
www.catalystcouncil.org
8. Companion Animal Parasite Council  
www.petsandparasites.org
9. Morris Animal Foundation – Happy Healthy Cat Campaign  
www.research4cats.org
10. Winn Feline Foundation  
www.winnfelinehealth.org



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