

FMCA news



"Dignity for Animals"

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Message from the President

UMWELT

In the 1920's, a German theoretical biologist, Baron Jakob von Uexküll "proposed the idea that every animal perceives through its own particular sensory apparatus, and he called this world UMWELT."¹ Last year, we investigated the umwelt of man's four-footed best friend, our faithful woofies. Dogs' predominant defining sense of his or her world is smell. Vocalization and the hearing process are important senses in the umwelt of many species including us! One could ask: Why sing and what does the song mean? Also, do animals have rules governing vocal patterns and mimicry and what is the purpose of specific vocal sounds? Many research projects have concluded that "Voices are social glue. They help animals locate and identify one another. They keep animal societies together."²

"The central fact about vocalization of any species is that voice stands in for physical contact."³ Birds certainly excel at vocal communication. Many 20th and 21st century researchers have chronicled their findings on the function of song in mating and defense, the role of memory, and the question about whether and how birds learn to sing. Song is different from simple calls like squawks, and includes a remarkable variety of sounds from brief repeated sequences of notes to longer intricate phrases from a huge repertoire. Unlike humans, birds sing to stake out territory, to attract and guard a mate, or defend a nest. A major fact about birdsong in both hemispheres is that birds sing more at the time of the year when pairing and nesting begins and the trigger is a rise in the bird's testosterone level. For scientists, one of the most frustrating of song forms is the duet. David Logue's study of tropical black-bellied wrens revealed that there is a code, a set of rules governing the two phrases of their song and its timing. He has established that the stable coded duet is used for locating their mates and cooperative defense.

If dueting is "the glue that binds a pair of birds together,"⁴ how does vocalization bind together larger families? Recent studies of South African meerkats show that their vocalization brings coherence to the family group. The meerkats have three warning calls that indicate whether the threat is coming from an airborne predator, a land predator, or specifically a snake. One can only imagine how much specific information is in these calls. Could these warning calls be rudimentary verb-like vocalization that we refer to as the evolution of speech? Furthermore, it became clear that the alarm calls not only command a reaction but indicate how urgently the family should act. These important revelations "imply that meerkats can do something only humans were capable of: using a vocal utterance both to refer to something and to convey emotion."⁵ Further study of the connections between the complex dynamics of meerkat families and the many functions their vocalizing serves, will clarify the role of speed and memory capacity.

Whales and dolphins are among the big-brained species whose complex communications is tied to the complexity of their social system and variability in the animal's environment. You are probably aware of the complexity and evolution of the "songs of the Humpback Whale" and the extensive research done on the vocalization of cap-



(continued on page 2)

Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc. (FMCA) is an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax-exempt humane organization. FMCA does not have a shelter. All rescued animals are cared for in foster homes. We receive no government funding and are entirely dependent on private donations.

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Interested in sharing a heart-warming poem or article of interest to be included in our next newsletter? Contributions are welcome. Please mail your articles to FMCA, PO Box 386, Germantown, MD 20875 or send by email to info@fmca.org.

Do you have friends or neighbors who you think might like to join Friends? Please feel free to share this newsletter with them. We would love to have them as new members!

Don't forget to visit our website

www.fmca.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from page 1)

tive dolphins and the orcas of the northwest. The active study of the Beluga whales that live year around in the Quebec fiord that empties into the St. Lawrence River is showing that "the whales social groups are crucial to their livelihood and that vocalizing is strong stuff that helps group members find one another and stay close."⁶ In short, without the perceptual and thought processes that underlie their calls, clicks and whistles, the species would not survive.

"Dolphins have long been recognized as adept mimics, and this talent has been seen as evidence of extreme sociality."⁷ Two researchers developed a delightful experiment to test the link between learning and mimicry. Dolphins were presented with a dolphin-sized keyboard with images of toys on the keys. The dolphins enthusiastically activated the keys with their beaks to produce different whistles and were rewarded with a toy or rub from their handler. Then they unexpectedly began to mimic the whistles before they touched the correct key. The dolphins' fluency in adapting their voice has evolved as an adaptation to the continual shifting in their undersea world.

Elephants share with whales and dolphins many characteristics: big brains; long lives; a complicated social structure; complex vocalization among family members; long mother-infant ties; and great intelligence. Elephants lead social lives that parallel the fluid arrangements of whales and dolphins: males and females gather in pods that converge and separate; elephants have a matriarchal family structure; groups of related females and their calves travel together; elephant males have loose coalitions in their bull groups. Kathy Payne (*Silent Thunder: In the Presence of Elephants*) studied Cynthia Moss's Amboseli Elephants vocalization and discovered their infrasound calls, which are transposed into Rayleigh waves, are "heard" through the elephants' feet!

A great deal has been learned over the last two decades about elephant calls and hearing. The females do most of the calling, using their voices to trumpet, bellow and send low frequency waves over as much as 116 square miles. "Their vocal range is as remarkable as the anatomical features involved in receiving these calls."⁸ Also, these calls are used for a multiple of purposes. Although "mind," "consciousness" and "language" are forbidden terms for behavioral ecologist, one can't help wonder what is going on in that big elephant mind about its self-awareness.

Self-recognition is a specific indication of self-awareness. The "mark" test that uses a mirror is the predominant technique for understanding the sense of self in animals. Unfortunately, it produces a lot of false negatives: animals fail if they don't actively use the mirror to locate and gesture to direct attention to the mark on their forehead. Only one of the five elephants tested made a big deal over the mark. On the other hand, elephants hang around the mirror watching themselves eat and carry on ear and mouth inspections. Their unusual repetitive behavior "seems to indicate the elephants recognize the mirror images as themselves."⁹ Further studies are needed to fill in the blanks in our knowledge of animal vocalization and its place in defining the animal's "umwelt."

1 Calls Beyond Our Hearing, Holly Menino, pg. 45

2 Ibid, pg. 19

3 Ibid, pg. 7

4 Ibid, pg. 119

5 Ibid, pg. 140

6 Ibid, pg. 174

7 Ibid, pg. 180

8 Ibid, pg. 195

9 Ibid, pg. 201

From the FMCA Cat and Dog Rescue Group – a Review of 2012

2012 was a great year for the FMCA Cat and Dog Rescue Group. For most of us, the end of the year included holiday celebrations, good times with family and friends and focusing on plans and resolutions for the upcoming year. It was also a perfect time to look back as a group at achievements, shortcomings and to strategize on ways to make 2013 even more successful for the FMCA Cat and Dog Rescue.

Year-end reviews are typically full of numbers, statistics and notable accomplishments, of which we had several. We placed 208 animals in homes in 2012, a number we have not hit since 2007. Our Trap/Neuter/Release group rounded up 94 cats and kittens from various colonies for TNR. We secured on-going sponsorships enabling us to offer reduced adoption fee incentives similar to other area rescues and shelters. We finalized plans for a 2013 initiative; a program that administers microchips for foster animals during vetting, then registers them to their new owners at adoption time.

While we are proud of these achievements, what we would like to share are some of our "special stories" from the past year. All are rewarding in that we accomplished what we set out to do, some are funny and some a bit sad. They are a look into what is near and dear to our hearts and one of the reasons why volunteering with the FMCA Cat and Dog Rescue is such a rewarding experience.

there's hope...

Back in March, Terri Allen was asked to look at an injured puppy that had been hit by a car and turned in to the Montgomery County Humane Society by a good samaritan that saw the little dog by the side of the road. No owner had come forward to claim her. Her leg was badly broken and she potentially had other related injuries. Surgery was under way within hours to amputate the badly crushed back leg. The little puppy became seriously ill after surgery and required an immediate trip to the emergency vet hospital that night where she received treatment for shock and two blood transfusions. Her outlook seemed bleak. Terri named her "Hope." Everyone that came into contact with Hope was immediately enamored by her sweet and uncomplaining attitude. After a long, sometimes painful, recovery that has left her disabled, Hope has found her forever home. She now lives in DC with two other disabled dogs, Sweetpea, a chocolate lab with Hyperplasia, and Rocky, also a three-legged 'tripod'. Hope's devoted people are making sure she is now living the good life.



the long way home...

FMCA was asked to help find homes for several cats and secure transportation for cats belonging to a former foster mom who passed away in 2012. We took seven cats into our foster program. They went to various foster parents and all have been placed, except Nefertitti, prior to year-end. We also helped to coordinate transportation to Metairie, Louisiana for another three going to live with the owner's sister. We vetted the three and prepared them for their long journey to their new forever home. The transportation went well; they were handed off and with their family before the holidays. There was a happy ending to this part of the story that had such a sad beginning.



and then along came fizzy...

"The star quality kitten," "the fuzzy panda-kitten mix," "the adorable fur ball." These were a few of the descriptions we received from wannabe adopters inquiring about the adorable but feisty Fizzy. Fizzy came to us as a lone kitten found near a feral group and quickly acclimated to hanging out and playing hard with a group of rowdy older kittens at his foster mom's home. When Fizzy's picture was featured in a petfinder.com post for miscellaneous late season kittens, he became our instant internet sensation and developed a considerable following. A wonderful family that adopted an older cat from FMCA ten years ago started looking for a replacement when that cat passed away at age 19. They saw Fizzy's petfinder.com post and could hardly wait to meet him. In the end, they adopted Fizzy AND his buddy Blake, one of the aforementioned rowdy kittens he was hanging out with at his foster home!



But perhaps the most gratifying are the updates we receive throughout the year during our adoption follow-ups. It is so rewarding to hear about and see how wonderful our kittens, cats, dogs and puppies are doing in their new homes. Check out page 7. Our adoption updates are posted regularly on our Facebook page, facebook.com/fmcainfo.

Your Pet's Oral Health

Marion Webster

How important is your pet's oral health? Just read my story and decide for yourself.

On August 6, 2012, my cat Sugar had her annual check-up and vaccinations with her veterinarian of many years. He made a comment regarding some tarter on a tooth and flicked it off with his fingernail. This was the only mention made of her mouth. He pronounced her health good.

A few weeks later Sugar did not seem to be acting like herself. She preferred to stay upstairs rather than coming downstairs, which was her normal routine. I thought that this might have been because we had house guests who had brought their dogs with them. The dogs stayed on the first floor. Soon she stopped eating. I made an emergency appointment with her vet and took her in. He and his assistant veterinarian examined her. They could not make a diagnosis. A blood sample was taken. It was recommended that I make an appointment with VCA.

The next morning I took her to another vet, not VCA. He examined her mouth and immediately diagnosed that Sugar was suffering from infected gingivitis. Further examination revealed that her entire colon was totally blocked and that her kidneys were very enlarged. Both of these conditions can be felt with a manual examination. How the first two veterinarians failed to detect this condition, I cannot comprehend.

Sugar spent a week in the hospital. When we went to visit her over the weekend, my husband noticed that the pupil of her left eye was a distorted shape. The infection had spread to her eye.

When she finally came home, I became her "private duty nurse." She had to be force-fed a mixture from a syringe. She needed this sustenance many times a day to give her strength. Force-feeding is very difficult because the animal naturally fights it. She also had to be medicated three times per day with three different medications. I was determined to get her well. We had been cheated by improper care.

Sugar seemed to be improving and began to eat on her own. Suddenly, she stopped eating. Back in the hospital she had to go. There, everything possible was done for her. The infection had spread to her heart and to her kidneys. A clot attacked her heart. She suffered a seizure. Our precious Sugar died. I shutter to think of the pain and suffering that this wonderful little animal had to endure because of incompetence.

Tarter may cause gingival ulcers and causes recession of the gum, which leads to abscesses. Puss accumulates between the gum and the tarter and extends to the root of the teeth where those abscesses form. The bacteria gain entrance to the blood stream and can cause infection throughout the body; such as endocarditis or inflammation of the heart valves, resulting in heart disease, kidney infections, therefore, loss of kidney function, liver infection and loss of liver function.

We as pet owners must learn to clean their teeth (not easy if not started early in our pet's life). At the very least, we must have our veterinarian clean our pet's teeth. Be certain that he or she pays full attention to your pet's teeth and gums. It could save your pet's life. Do not be as trusting as I was! I only wish that I could have known then what I know now and had to learn in a very painful way. **ORAL CARE IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOUR PET'S HEALTH AND POSSIBLY HIS OR HER SURVIVAL!!!**

Membership SOS!

Susan Cameron

Friends is a nonprofit, tax-exempt humane organization whose primary purpose is to provide financial support for humane animal protection projects, special need situations, and emergencies. Our organization is unique in that it fills a void specifically in Montgomery County that is not met by the larger organizations.

As you know, FMCA is sustained by a small group of volunteers. Funding is generated from membership dues, fundraisers, private contributions, and by our cat and dog adoption group.

This is a plea to all our wonderful members to ask one or two friends and/or neighbors to join FMCA. We need your support in this effort to build our membership so that we can continue with the work of providing assistance for veterinary emergencies, resolving cruelty cases, humane education and supporting our highly successful cat and dog adoption group.

Please take a moment to pass on the enclosed membership application/donation envelope to someone you know who cares about the welfare of animals that continue to need a spokesperson for their behalf. Many thanks for considering this request.

SAVE THE DATE!

Potomac's TPC at Avenel will be the site for FMCA's annual fall luncheon with oodles of boutiques! Mark your calendars for Thursday, November 14, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. We hope you will come and fill your table with family and friends! The boutiques will be bigger than ever for your shopping pleasure. All vendors donate 20% of their proceeds to FMCA so, the more you shop, the more the animals benefit! Now, that's the cat's meow! See you there!

Canines and Quarterbacks

Ellie Brown

As we all know, Washington's star quarterback RG III has suffered a serious knee injury. He has torn his collateral ligament and severely damaged his anterior cruciate ligament. Will he come back? Will he be as good as ever? The answer is probably yes. Robert Griffin is an athlete. He has excellent surgeons who will repair his knee and ensure that he take sufficient time to recuperate.

Your dog is an athlete too, and he is susceptible to the same injury as a football quarterback. Your dog is particularly vulnerable to ACL injury if he is especially active, or genetically predisposed to ligament weakness.

Ligaments in the leg connect one bone to the other – the thighbone or femur to the shinbone or tibia. Elasticity of the ACL ligaments is essential to full function of the knee, in dogs as well as humans. Rupture or overstretching of these ligaments is perhaps the most common orthopedic problem seen in dogs. Unfortunately, if untreated these ACL injuries are followed by degenerative arthritis.

If a dog owner notices that his pet is limping, or walking on three legs, he should take him to the vet right away. The dog will be tested and x-rayed and, if ACL damage is diagnosed, he will need immediate surgery by an orthopedic specialist. Fortunately, there are three surgery options, all of which are highly successful, though expensive! (It is important not to try to cure an ACL injury with inflammatories or steroids because these only mask the pain.)

Some years ago I had a wonderful athletic Dalmatian named Tupfen (meaning "dot" in German). On two occasions she sustained an ACL injury. One was from a gradual overstretching of the ligament; the other was from a traumatic event. She tried to jump up on a wall that was too high, let out a yelp and fell. Both times her injury was repaired successfully. Tupfen regained full use of her legs. She was good as new after a period of recuperation. She went on to live many active, happy years afterward.

(Personally, I think RG III's chances of full recovery are excellent!)



Hosts our weekly
Cat Adoption Events

Visit us on Saturdays
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

at the Luv-A-Pet Center
in the Germantown store!

Milestone Center
20924 Frederick Road, Germantown, MD

**Tell your Mother-in-Law the
Guest Room is Taken!**



FMCA is in need of volunteers to provide in-home foster care for friendly dogs and cats until they are adopted. Vet care and medications are covered by FMCA; you provide food and water, lots of attention, love and transportation to and from the **Saturday open house events held weekly at the Milestone PetSmart in Germantown, Maryland!** Fostering can last from a couple of weeks to a few months. **Contact Janet Lamkin, 301-977-4833, for more information on fostering.**

Donated Animal Beds



Lycan and Boo help show off the wonderful quilted cats beds that were donated to FMCA. The beds were made by local quilters at a community service event hosted by Capital Quilts. Many of these comfy beds have accompanied our kitties to their new forever homes.

Many thanks to Kim Jalette for teaching the quilting classes and coordinating the donations!

What a wonderful partnership – the quilting community, Capital Quilts and FMCA.

Capital Quilts
15926 Luanne Drive
Gaithersburg MD 20877
tel 301-527-0598
www.capitalquilts.com



DONATIONS

We would like to extend our thanks to the individuals and organizations that made our missions possible in 2012!

Carol Agayoff
Susan Airis-Epps
Daisy Albanese
Belva Alger
Terri Allen
Dr. and Mrs. Chester Anderson
Suzann and Ronald Baklarz
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth H. Barnell
Julia and Drew Barton
Brenda Bayus
Betty Fay Benjamin
Linda Bennett
Angela Bolduc
Johanna Bolin
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Morgan Campbell
Capital Quilts
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Nancy Winchester
Laura Woolf
Nancie Wright McManus

2013 Spring Luncheon

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. for FMCA's annual spring luncheon. This year's event will be held at the 7,200 square foot Potomac home of FMCA president, Claire Proffitt. Come see Claire's lovely English Georgian home!

Built in 1979, its exterior is composed of used, Old Baltimore brick. The home's expansive interior features a large foyer with a baby grand piano and curved staircase. The upper front hall is distinguished by a gallery of railing running the circumference of the grand space decorated in Williamsburg inspired paint colors. A wealth of antiques and oil paintings create the perfect showcase for Claire's vast collection of metal and bronze sculptures purchased on her annual treks to Kenya.



Montgomery County Police Officer Sharon Sparks and Officer Tom Kelly with K-9 colleague, Ben.

In addition to the delicious food from River Falls Market, there will be door prizes and a silent auction too! Featured in the silent auction will be crystal and porcelain collectibles from the estate of Dorothy Shapiro.

Police officers from the Canine Section of the Montgomery County Police Department's Special Operations Division will be on hand to showcase several of their canines. Learn how the specially trained dogs perform drug busts, search out bombs, and complete search and rescue assignments.

Help our non-profit grow! We hope you will help us with our membership drive by inviting several friends to join you at the luncheon. Reservations are required in advance. Cost: \$40.00 per person. Please RSVP by sending your check payable to FMCA to: Winnie Reed, 14211 Dufief Mill Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

ADOPTION UPDATES



Gypsy

Margaret Board posted: "About 11 years ago, we adopted Gypsy (formerly Road Runner). She has been a joy and is still feisty as the day we got her! Had to share!!! Thank you Paula Carpenter Syms for bringing her in our lives!!!"

Paula Syms replied and said, "My gosh 11 years, it seems like yesterday

I had this baby kitten. Look at her today. She has a wonderful life with good parents and other animal friends.

Primrose and Katniss

Their mom Mary says, "As your very first Facebook adoption, I wanted to give you guys an update about our sweet little Angels. We adopted these sisters at 6 months old – they are now 11 months – and we cannot imagine our lives without them! Here's their Christmas photo."



Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc.
14211 Dufief Mill Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-977-4833

RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



Available for Adoption



Apricot is as pretty as her name suggests! She is a dilute tortie that loves attention and would like to live with you and sleep in your bed. She doesn't mind being an only cat, since she once lived with another cat and two large rowdy dogs. Now she would like to have all the attention for herself. Apricot's previous owners moved and left her outside to fend for herself, but she deserves a loving, protective home.

Brute is so friendly that he is a pest. He loves to be with you, and has never met anyone he didn't consider a friend. He will sleep with you, sit in your lap when you watch TV, loves to play and gets along with other cats. He has learned to get along with his foster mom's dogs. Brute is an indoor/outdoor cat. He is only happy when allowed outside. He plows through the catnip under the tree, explores the yard and under the deck, and will come back in when you knock on the window and call him. He is only allowed out during daylight hours.



301-977-4833 or info@fmca.org