



The death of Bill C-50: Shame on animal industry groups

By Shelagh MacDonald

The government fell on November 28. Dying on the order paper was Bill C-50, the government's amendments to the animal cruelty sections of the Criminal Code.

As Paul Macklin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, has said, "This legislation has a long and notorious history in Parliament."

It was first introduced in 1999 and has gone through extensive debate in both Houses since then. In fact, in 2003, animal industry groups, animal protection groups and all political parties supported the bill. Unfortunately, the Senate prevented its passage at that time.

Now, two years later, animal industry groups are re-raising the same issues that were debated, and resolved, from 1999 – 2003.

The number one reason Bill C-50 has made no progress since May - and has now died - is this withdrawal of support from various animal industry groups. A large coalition consisting of mostly farming groups and a few organizations representing trappers and researchers had actively supported the bill until February of this year, but is now lobbying for changes.

Another group of hunters and anglers is also lobbying feverishly against Bill C-50, and finding some support among Members of Parliament and Senators.

Where the parties stood on the bill

At the dissolution of Parliament, Bill C-50 was being debated in the House.

The Liberals, with the exception of some rural MPs, supported the bill.

The NDP was unequivocal in its support of Bill C-50.

The justice critic for the Bloc Québécois claimed his party supported the legislation but this was not always obvious from the comments of Bloc MPs.

The Conservative Party was allied with the animal industry groups and opposed Bill C-50 unless it included exemptions of some sort for industry groups. Otherwise, they supported Bill S-24, a far inferior bill introduced in the Senate by John Bryden.

It is absolutely outrageous what these groups are now asking for; they want to be exempt from the animal cruelty section of the Criminal Code, something that is completely inappropriate and offensive to our judicial system. This would be comparable to exempting police officers or hockey players from assault laws and no-one should be exempt from the Criminal Code.

What industry groups don't want to understand is that there are two words in the Criminal Code that allow them to carry out their activities: 'lawful excuse'. 'Lawful excuse' permits the pursuit of lawful activities, such as hunting, fishing, trapping and farming. It has been stated repeatedly by Justice officials: everything that is lawful today will continue to be lawful under Bill C-50.

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Animal



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Celina Dawdy Receives Animal Action Award

By Roger Couvrette
Communications Coordinator

A young girl from Spruce Grove, Alberta, who raised money to buy bulletproof vests for police dogs was awarded an **Animal Action Award** on Parliament Hill on October 26. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) gave Celina Dawdy the award for her outstanding accomplishment at its annual awards ceremony.

Now all of eleven years old, Celina began collecting money for the vests when she was nine, after a police dog in the area had been shot to death. She decided to outfit all eight dogs used by the Alberta RCMP and placed donation jars in veterinary offices and convenience stores. A few of the jars were stolen but she just replaced them. Since the vests cost \$1,200 each, her supporters – chief among whom are her proud parents, Donna and Robert – expected it to take years to raise enough money.

In fact, it took fourteen months. In May of this year, she presented the RCMP with the eighth and final vest.

At the time she gave this reason for her work to a reporter: "I just really love dogs and I wouldn't want anything to hurt them. I just kind of put myself in the police's shoes to think like what would they feel if something happened to their dogs, so I thought of the best way to protect them while they're on duty." Celina has her own dog, Winnie.

The trip to Ottawa to accept the award, accompanied by her mother, was a first for Celina. An employee of WestJet paid for the two airline tickets through a donation of "buddy points." The Alberta RCMP paid for their hotel accommodation.

Others who received awards at the ceremony include the Honourable Stephane Dion, Minister of the Environment, for his leadership in passing Bill C-15 which will hold shipping companies accountable for dumping bilge oil – which kills seabirds – in Canadian waters; Vicki Gabereau, for instituting a "Dog of the Week" segment on her TV program; and Constable Pierre Schelling and his dog, Benny, for their unique dog bite prevention education program.



Celina, in the East Block on Parliament Hill, just before receiving her Animal Action award.
Photo by Carole Hay

Federation launches state-of-the-art website

By Roger Couvrette
Communications Coordinator

In September, the Federation launched a new website, replacing one which originally went online in 1999.

The new site is largely the creation of Progressive Internetworks (PXI), an Ottawa-based company spearheaded by Andrew Buzzell and Kris Veerassamy. They have been doing web design since 1997, with a special focus on non-profit organizations since 1999.

The website features a "next generation" Content Management System, according to Andrew Buzzell. This system allows CFHS employees to easily maintain and expand the site, manage the homepage, e-commerce and donation systems, and produce automated news feeds and updates.

This eliminates the need for the traditional "webmaster."

Furthermore, "the website is engineered to produce standards-compliant web pages with features to make

them accessible to people with disabilities, following the most up-to-date international standards for accessible web design," Buzzell is proud to report.

The site, which offers the opportunity to make secure donations and purchases from a new e-store, is meant to not only be self-sustaining, but to contribute meaningfully to the Federation's funding base, and, in the future, to provide a platform for a password-protected member services and benefits section.

The website offers direct links to the sites of the Federation's member societies and contains a section on its homepage for current news and events from member society humane organizations in every part of the country.

You can see the results of this unique collaboration with PXI at our website at www.cfhs.ca. Further information about Progressive Internetworks is available at www.pxi.ca.

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Tale of two shelters

A new shelter in Calgary

By Cathy Thomas, Executive Director
Calgary Humane Society

The Calgary Humane Society (CHS) is in the same situation as many of Canada's animal shelters. Having built a facility in the past – in our case, in the 70s – we are now desperate for a new one. Why?

- Because we are wasting money maintaining buildings we've worn out and outgrown;
- Because our warehouse-type shelters are not comfortable for animals or people;
- Because our city, like many others, has grown: our shelter was built when the population was half what it is today.

The CHS Board and management team started talking about a new facility in 1999. Our business-planning goal was something like: *to look at the possibility of maybe building a new facility some time but we don't want to make a decision just yet because it's quite frightening to even contemplate.* Our other goals were thankfully more specific and we quickly realized that in order to accomplish these goals, we needed to get serious about a different facility.



We hired some folks to evaluate the CHS's potential for raising the funds needed. They confirmed what we already knew: *you've got a great story to tell and some money in the bank but you're weak on connections to the people who can donate the kind of funds needed.*

But we knew we had no choice and so we struck out in 2002 to identify a campaign chairperson and a lead gift.

Continued on page 7

A rebuilt shelter in Fredericton

By Glenda Turner, Education and Awareness
Committee, Fredericton SPCA

Five years ago it was just a dream. Today the Fredericton community has its bigger and better SPCA Shelter.

The old shelter has been transformed into a brighter, more spacious and healthier environment for the 1500 animals who find sanctuary there each year. In the words of President Jane Jenkins, "It no longer feels like a pound. It is a more open, brighter and more hopeful kind of place."



Construction work began in late spring and finished in early October. The primary objective was to provide a healthier environment for the animals in care. The renovated facility features four separate ventilation systems, one for each of the main areas of the building, designed to prevent the spread of disease through air-borne contaminants from one section to another.

The renovated shelter also boasts a new drainage system with six-inch pipes. This improvement facilitates cleaning and maintenance operations while enhancing the overall environment for the animals, shelter staff and visitors. New seamless floor coverings also help staff keep the shelter a clean, healthy place. Staff members appreciate the industrial-size washer and dryer.

There are separate dog and cat admission rooms, with dedicated quiet space where new arrivals can adjust to strange surroundings, as well as separate dog and cat isolation areas.

Continued on page 7

Avoiding puppy mills

By Shelagh MacDonald

If there is a new dog in your future, please do your homework and make sure you are not supporting the cruel and lucrative puppy mill industry.

The acquisition of a dog will substantially affect your life for the next ten years or more. In today's fast-paced world, people turn to the internet, pet stores or newspaper ads, all of which are rife with puppy mill puppies.

One of the best options is to adopt from the local humane society, SPCA or rescue group. These dogs are usually vaccinated, microchipped or tattooed, sterilized, and have been temperament tested.

If the adoption option is not for you and you have your heart set on a purebred dog, you really need to know how to distinguish a good breeder from a disreputable one. Be observant, ask lots of questions and make sure you see their facilities and all their dogs. Don't buy from someone who wants to meet you somewhere to sell you the puppy, takes only cash, who won't allow you in their kennel building or whose facilities are dirty and run-down. And don't buy from a place that has dozens and dozens of dogs.

If you see any of these warning signs, or if you find malnourished or mistreated dogs, you should leave and report it to your local humane society or SPCA. As hard as it is to just walk away from those poor, sweet faces, if you buy the puppy out of pity, you will just make room for another one to fill its place. And the suffering will continue.

Good breeders don't breed more than one or two different breeds, they produce only a few litters per year and they would never sell their puppies to a pet store. Good breeders will want to know a lot about you, your experience with dogs, your lifestyle and your plans for the puppy. Good breeders register their puppies with the Canadian Kennel Club or other recognized breed registry and they will guarantee the health and temperament of your puppy.

A good breeder will be knowledgeable about health and genetic issues and will provide health clearances to show that their breeding dogs are free from such disorders. They will require you to sign a contract that will have obligations for you regarding the care of the dog and will outline their guarantee on the health and temperament of the puppy.

A puppy from a good breeder may cost a little more, but the dedication, caring and ethics of that breeder are well worth it. For more information, including a checklist of what to look for when getting a dog, go to www.cfhs.ca/animals/Puppy_mill_info/.

The death of Bill C-50 (cont'd...)

It is important to note that Bill C-50 is not about new law; it is about improving the current law. The key words that describe the offences are unchanged from the current legislation to Bill C-50. In addition, all of the defences that are available today, such as legal justification and excuse, will continue to be available under Bill C-50. The current legislation has not been used to prosecute standard industry practices, and nothing in Bill C-50 has changed that.

The CFHS is saddened that these industry groups are more interested in pursuing incomprehensible and unreasonable demands than protecting animals from cruelty and abuse. One certainly is left wondering what kind of cruelty they want to inflict on animals for which they are asking for an exemption.

It is a disgrace that Canada's law remains in the 19th Century, while animal industry groups continue to stand in the way of long-overdue amendments to animal welfare legislation which, we all know, currently allows heinous crimes against animals to go unpunished.

A great gift idea!

Now you can help us support our four-legged friends with the purchase of a charm bracelet designed by Jeanne Lottie. The detachable charm can even be worn as an accessory by your pet!

Every penny raised from these bracelets helps the animals. IAMS has donated the bracelets to the CFHS, so that the entire cost of the bracelets will help us with our work. Show your support for animals and purchase a bracelet today! Cost: \$9.99. Just go to www.cfhs.ca.



Book Reviews

by N. Glenn Perrett



No Dogs in Heaven?

By Robert T. Sharp, D.M.V.
Carroll & Graf Publishers
2005, 208 Pages
ISBN: 0786715243

No Dogs in Heaven? is an entertaining book of close to 40 stories written by Robert T. Sharp, a veterinarian who practices in southern Ohio. Some of the stories are sobering including Dr. Sharp's description of a stockyard late at night.

"At midnight, the yard activity drops to zero. A surreal environment is created by the hundreds of lightbulbs hanging from cords, the dust of thousands of cattle in the cold night air, steam coming off the backs and out of the mouths of calves, the smell of sawdust and urine, and the noise of hundreds of homesick calves moaning for their mothers." (pages 38, 39)

Many of the stories have happy endings including the one about the box turtle who was run over and whose shell was shattered and had a large piece missing. Dr. Sharp used wire, Vaseline and fiberglass body-putty to repair the shell. The repair worked as the turtle was seen eight years later!



Speciesism

By Joan Dunayer
Ryce Publishing
2004, 204 pages
ISBN: 0970647565

Books that further the rights of nonhuman animals

are vital and should be embraced. In her book, *Speciesism*, Joan Dunayer provides considerable information on how nonhuman animals have been enslaved and brutally treated by our species.

In defending her definition of speciesism, which she defines as "a failure, in attitude or practice, to accord any nonhuman being equal consideration and respect" Dunayer provides insightful and compelling arguments on why nonhuman animals deserve life, freedom and other basic rights and how these rights can be obtained. When will this occur? According to Dunayer, when public opinion changes. "Many more people must recognize and reject speciesism." (page 149)

Anyone who cares about how nonhuman animals are treated will benefit from reading *Speciesism*.



Help Your Dog Fight Cancer

By Laurie Kaplan
JanGen Press
2004, 119 pages
ISBN: 0975479466

Many dogs will get cancer in their lifetimes. Of the 18 wonderful canines that have shared our lives, seven had cancer. This figure is close to the one provided in the Foreword of Laurie Kaplan's informative book, *Help Your Dog Fight Cancer*, where the author states that, "Experts predict that approximately half of our dogs will have cancer in their lifetimes..."

Since cancer is common, it is important to learn as much about this disease as possible. Laurie Kaplan, whose dog Bullet had cancer, has put together an informative book on caring for dogs with cancer. Not only does Kaplan offer advice on choosing doctors, treatment, causes of cancer, common cancers, foods, medical interventions and much more, but she offers hope as Bullet had years of remission after completing a 75-week chemotherapy protocol. Numerous contributions from veterinarians add to Kaplan's book making this an excellent resource for anyone fortunate to live with a dog – and a "must read" for those who are living with a canine companion who has cancer.

Because of Winn-Dixie (DVD)

Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment www.foxhome.com

Like the book *Miracle Dog*, the movie *Because of Winn-Dixie* can help a lot of homeless dogs. *Because of Winn-Dixie* is the heart-warming story of a large, stray dog who is rescued by a young girl and how the dog brings together people in a small town enriching their lives in the process. Winn-Dixie also plays an important role in the young girl and her father healing their troubled relationship. Dogs provide humans with so much and movies like *Because of Winn-Dixie* that accurately portray dogs as special animals are worth watching.



Shelter in Calgary - Continued from page 4

We hired an architect who started us down the path of putting our ideas on paper. We did a benchmark trip to the U.S. to visit three shelters that were similar in scope, we had a committee of staff start the design process and we did an evaluation of our current site to see if what we needed would even fit.

We put together our vision for a facility that was “cageless” (no chain link or bars), as “green” as we could afford, with natural light and more space for our growing education/outreach, and animal health and behaviour modification programs. The new facility will be 43,000 square feet (2 ½ times larger than our current shelter)!

We discovered much to our chagrin that we would need to move to a larger site. A site was identified and it would become a factor in our negotiations for support with the City.

Where are we today? We’ve raised almost \$10.3 million thanks to the city (\$1.5 million for the land), \$450,000 from the province, \$2 million that we’d already saved prior to the campaign, \$1.4 million from the sale of our current site and the rest (almost \$5 million) from very generous individual and corporate donors. The facility is under construction and we are due to relocate in March 2006. It’s been quite the journey!

Shelter in Fredericton - Continued from page 4

There is a playroom for kittens and a separate room for rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, hamsters, birds and others that are not cats or dogs. All rooms have natural light, either through windows or solar tubes. Wider corridors add to the feeling of open space.

A new adoption room gives visitors looking for a new pet an inviting and private place to observe and interact with an animal they are thinking about taking home.

Planning for a capital campaign to renovate and expand the old 1981 building began early in 2000. In the fall of 2001, the SPCA launched a professionally planned, structured campaign to raise \$850,000. Over the next three years, donations from 1800 individuals, businesses and foundations, plus a \$150,000 contribution from the City of Fredericton, totaled \$550,000.

At the beginning of 2005, a scaled-down plan was worked out with the architects, Goguen and Company Ltd., eliminating non-essential features such as outdoor dog runs, fenced dog play areas, public washrooms, landscaping and paved public parking areas. The project was tendered, the shelter operation moved into temporary rented quarters, and construction began. A special public ceremony marked the official re-opening on October 28.

Farm Animal Welfare in Canada

by Shelagh MacDonald

The CFHS is a founding member of the newly-formed National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC). This Council was struck partly in response to consumer demands for an improved system of oversight for the care and use of animals raised for food. After a few years of consultation meetings, the inaugural meeting of the Council was held in August, 2005. The vision for the Council is: “A national coordinated approach promoting responsible farm animal care”.

The NFACC consists of approximately 18 members, the majority of whom represent producer and processor groups in the livestock industry. The CFHS is currently the only animal welfare representative on the Council, and also sits on the Executive. Other non-producer groups on the Council include the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, the Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association, the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and an animal welfare researcher.

One of the focus areas of the NFACC is to re-establish a system for the development of Codes of Practice for the livestock industry. Since the 1980’s the Canadian government has financially supported the process of developing and revising Codes of Practice for various commodity groups, such as pigs, poultry, beef cattle, veal calves, etc. The CFHS has been the only animal welfare representative on the Code committees. Funding for this process has been suspended pending the recommendation of the NFACC.

The CFHS is pleased to be part of this new process, and will be pushing hard for improvements in animal welfare. We are also requesting the addition of another animal welfare representative on the Council.

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Thanks!

CFHS would like to thank PXI for their patience and expertise in setting up our new website.

Check out our new website!

Thanks!

CFHS would like to thank IFAW for working with us - albeit unsuccessfully - to get Bill C-50 passed.



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