

Burlington Reports

Paws and Claws Society, Inc., Thorofare, NJ



Issue 20, March 2017

Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

For Fur-ther Information . . .

You can find more information on our web site at pacsnj.org!

- Find out "What's New" by following links on our home page or clicking "News"
- Read other issues of Burlington Reports by clicking on "Newsletter", or join our email list to be notified when new issues are ready for viewing
- Click the link for any issue of the newsletter to comment on that issue's content. Start or join a discussion!
- Hover over "Newsletter" on our navigation menu to find "Links for Further Reading" for more information on topics mentioned in *Burlington Reports*, or click on "Share with Squirt" to share a question or story in our Squirty's Words column
- Hover over "Furry Angels" to learn about pets currently available for adoption, read about pets who have found their Forever Homes, read or submit to the Funny Pages, read Letters From The Heart, download forms, and more
- Read about Paws and Claws Society's programs or see "Gems of Wisdom and Pearls of Knowledge: Humane Messages" at Compassion Central
- Find statistics and No Kill information on Tips From The Trenches
- Read articles about pet care (and even use the age calculator to find out your pet's age in human years) at Caretakers' Corner
- Look for "Share" buttons throughout our web site to share content via Facebook, Twitter, email, and other services



In This Issue:

Did You Know? (Fascinating Facts About Animals)	1
Pet Humor	2
It's Bunny Time Again	2
Pet Safety in Emergencies or Travel	3
Burlington The Cat On Animal Communication	4
Squirty's Words...From The Rainbow Bridge	5
Pet Food Recalls	8

Did You Know?

Here are some fascinating facts about animals. (See our web site for full links.)

From The Fact Site:

- Gorillas can catch human colds and other illnesses.
- A newborn Chinese water deer is so small it can almost be held in the palm of the hand.
- Ostriches can run faster than horses, and the males can roar like lions.
- Deer have no gall bladders.
- The bat is the only mammal that can fly.
- The leg bones of a bat are so thin that no bat can walk.
- Some male songbirds sing more than 2000 times each day.
- The only mammals to undergo menopause are elephants, humpback whales and human females.
- Blue-eyed lemurs are one of two (non-human) primates to have truly blue eyes.
- For every human in the world there are one million ants.
- If you lift a kangaroo's tail off the ground it can't hop – they use their tails for balance.
- If you keep a goldfish in a dark room, it will become pale!
- Cows can sleep standing up, but they can only dream lying down.
- An anteater is nearly 6 feet long, yet its mouth is only an inch wide.
- The blue whale weighs as much as thirty elephants and is as long as three Greyhound buses.



(Continued on page 4)



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Pet Humor



Chances are, if you haven't already, you will soon be seeing lots of wild rabbits hopping around in grassy areas. They like to live in people's yards, in meadows, on farmland, in forests...any place, actually, that they can dig shallow nests or burrows.

Wild rabbits (except for Cottontails) are social animals and they tend to live in groups, digging intricately tunneled burrowing systems that can be more than three feet deep. These burrowing systems, known as warrens, include offshoots with living quarters, areas to nest, entrances and exits, and even emergency escapes called "bolt-holes".

As with most animals, rabbits adhere to a dominance hierarchy, Female rabbits, called does, will battle for dominance, and the dominant does get the best nesting sites. The dominant males (bucks) will mark their territory along boundary lines by leaving droppings, scratching, or rubbing their chins on the ground to leave their scent.

Spring and Summer are the main reproductive periods for wild rabbits, but breeding in the US generally runs from January or February to October.

Cottontails (as well as hares) live above-ground and generally do not live in groups. They build a shallow nest for their babies (called kittens or kits) by digging a small hole and lining it with leaves, soft grass, and fur, then covering it with soil, loose grass, leaves or twigs.

Rabbits are well known for prolific breeding. A doe can produce as many as 20 kits in a year, and some of the kits will begin breed-



add mentioned in Burlington Reports!

It's Bunny Time Again



Eastern Cottontail

ing during their first year as well, reaching sexual maturity at just a few months. Wild rabbits often live for less than one year, however, due to dangers such as predators, disease, and of course dangers caused by humans (hunting, trapping, and road traffic).

If you find that you have wild rabbits in your yard, do you know how to help protect their young?

1. **Look for nests before mowing your lawn.** Do a quick walk through the yard and look for telltale signs of a nest, such as a circle of leaves or twigs in an otherwise green and grassy area. If you find a nest, don't touch it, and of course, don't mow close to it. (Baby rabbits stay in the nest for only a couple weeks, so you'll be able to mow soon enough.)
2. **Don't interfere.** The mother rabbit visits her nest for only a few minutes each day to suckle her young. This happens mostly around dusk and dawn, so it may appear that the mother never visits and the babies are abandoned. The mother's milk is very filling, so the babies aren't being left hungry, and the mother is protecting her babies by not visiting often, as frequent visits

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It's Bunny Time Again (Continued)

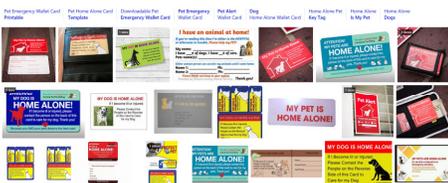
(Continued from page 2)

would alert predators to the existence of the nest.

3. **Is there ever a time when you should interfere?** If you suspect that something has happened to the mother, try laying a few twigs on top of the nest in an X or a tic-tac-toe pattern. If the twigs are disturbed by the next day, the mother has been there to feed her babies. If she doesn't return to the nest, or if you already know

that something has happened to her, the advice on rabbitweb.net is this: "...call your state Wildlife or Fish & Game department or a wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible. Your veterinarian probably can help you locate a wildlife rehabilitator because vets typically get dozens of calls every spring like this. You can also do a search on the Internet for a wildlife rehabilitation information directory to find a wildlife rehabilitator nearest you."

Pet Safety in Emergencies or Travel



Bing Image Search: "pets home alone wallet card"

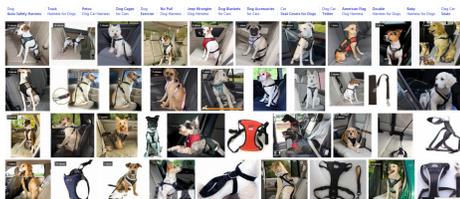
An Internet search for "pets home alone wallet card" will lead to several different options that are available for wallet cards and/or key tags that can notify emergency responders that you have a pet or pets at home in case you are in an accident or have a medical emergency and are unable to return home to care for them. Just fill in the name and contact information for someone you trust who will be able to feed and care for your pet(s) until you are able to go home.

You can also find window-clings or stickers for your home that will notify firefighters or other emergency responders to the number and type(s) of pets in your home. If there were to be a fire, for instance, and you were not home or could not speak, the firefighters would be alerted to look for and try to rescue your pet(s).



Bing Image Search: "pets emergency window sticker"

In our last issue, we talked about safe car travel with cat carriers. In this issue, we're looking at safe car travel for dogs.

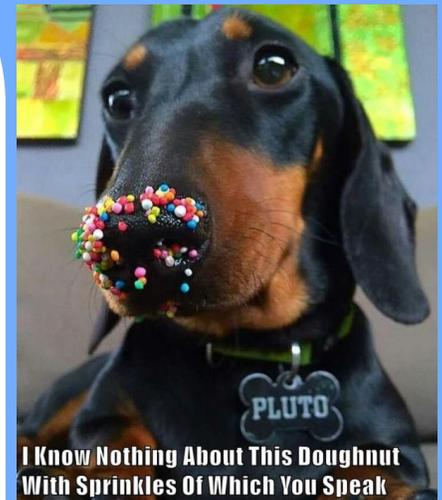


Bing Image Search: "dog car harness"

If your dog is too large for a carrier, there are other items that can make car travel safer for them. Be sure to do your research, though. An Internet search for "dog car harness crash tests", for instance, will turn up many helpful links. While most dog car harnesses actually fared very poorly in crash tests, there are those that did very well.

There are many good reasons not to let your dog ride loose in your car. The most obvious, of course, is his or her safety in the event that you have to stop quickly or have an accident. Another reason is that, when there is an accident, if rescue personnel or a good Samaritan opens your car door to try to help you, a frightened dog will often run. A dog that is safely contained or harnessed can be moved to safety and treated for injuries if need be.

Pet Humor





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Did You Know?

(Continued from page 1)

From Mother Nature Network:

- African buffalo herds display voting behavior, in which individuals register their travel preference by standing up, looking in one direction and then lying back down. Only adult females can vote.
- A single strand of spider silk is thinner than a human hair, but also five times stronger than steel of the same width. A rope just 2 inches thick (made of spider silk strands) could reportedly stop a Boeing 747.
- An octopus has three hearts
- Warmer weather causes more turtles to be born female than male.
- Barn owls are normally monogamous, but about 25 percent of mated pairs "divorce."
- Squirrels can't burp or vomit.
- The Colossus Penguin, discovered from fossilized remains to have lived 37 million years ago, stood at 6 foot 8 inches from toe to beak tip, making it comparable to LeBron James in height and weight!



Burlington The Cat On Animal Communication



Hello, Burlington here. Have you ever heard the quote by Stephen R. Covey that says, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply"?

I find that to be an accurate statement about many humans.

The differences between the ways animals communicate and the ways humans communicate are vast, yet it's not terribly difficult for us to learn to understand and communicate with each other. The key is to be very observant.

When humans think about "communication", the first thing that likely comes to mind is use of spoken language, but there is so much more!

We animals are able to learn certain spoken human words by hearing you say them repeatedly and associating them with particular things (such as "food" or "treats" or "potty"). Even when we don't know the words you're saying, we love when you talk to us

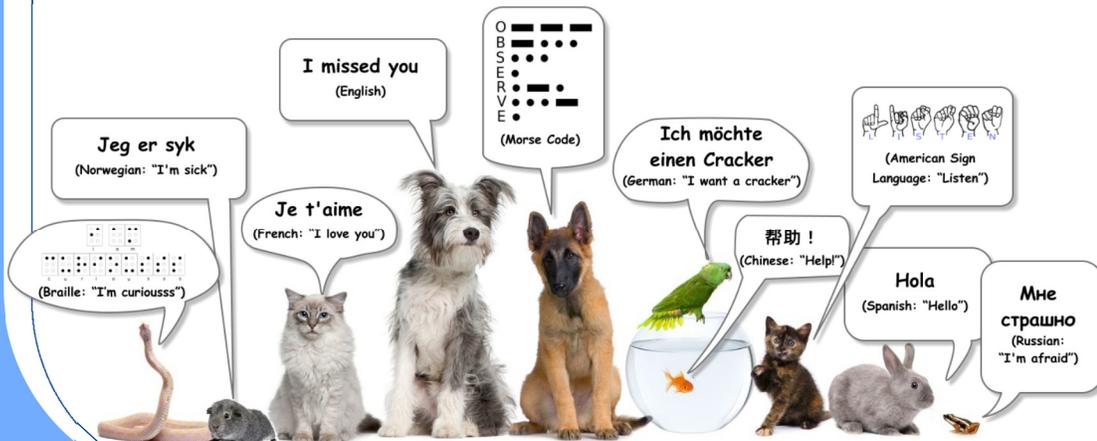
anyway. The sound of our beloved humans' voices makes us feel very loved and happy.

We communicate differently, however, using body language, scent, and of course the more obvious audible cues like meowing/barking, purring, growling, hissing, or snarling. Humans still possess the ability, in varying degrees, to read body language and probably scent as well, but with nowhere near the clarity or accuracy of their ancient ancestors.

There was a time when these abilities (senses? instincts?) were as crucial to a human's survival as they can be to an animal's survival, but evolution has a way of filtering out some of the less necessary traits over time so that now, most humans must make a conscious effort to observe in order to pick up on the pieces of non-verbal communication that are so obvious to animals.

Being unable to recognize these cues can lead to disastrous results. One example of this presented itself

(Continued on page 6)



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Squirty's Words . . . From The Rainbow Bridge

Question: Why does my cat dip his paw into the water bowl and then drink the water from his paw, instead of drinking straight from the bowl?

Answer: It's tempting to say "Because he knows it's adorable and it will make you smile", but there is probably

more to it than that. There are many possible reasons for cats to drink their water this way. If you have a multiple cat household, your kitty may always be keeping an eye on the others. If he puts his head into the water bowl, the edge of the bowl may obstruct his view of who else may be in the room with him. Another possible reason could be that he is having trouble seeing where the water line is and is using his paw to get a feel for how full the bowl is. If the bowl is in an area with low light or if Kitty's eyesight isn't as great as it once was, he may simply be trying to avoid the embarrassment of dunking his nose into the water.



In memory of Squirty, a longtime friend of Paws and Claws Society who passed away on Mother's Day 2011 at the age of 16½, Burlington Reports added a new section to remember pets who have passed. Ask Squirty a question or share your pet memorial story on our web site (hover over "Newsletter" on our menu). Let Squirty meet your pet(s) at the Rainbow Bridge and escort them to Pet Heaven.



Question: Why do my cats sometimes scratch on the floor next to their food dish, the way they scratch in the litter box? Are they saying they think their food is...well...so yucky it belongs in the litter box?

Answer: Your cats' behavior isn't a commentary on the quality or the flavor of the food you feed them. They're simply acting on an instinct that was handed down to them by their ancestors. Even if your cats have never lived outside, they still have the instincts of their outdoor relatives. Because they don't want predators to come along and eat their food or to discover their safe location, they cover it up to hide the scent.



Question: Why does my cat always turn her back to me when she sits on or near me?

Answer: A cat turning her back to you doesn't necessarily indicate that she is snubbing you or is unhappy with you. Quite the opposite, actually. Have you ever heard someone say they "wouldn't turn their back" on someone to illustrate the level of their distrust of the person? Your cat is paying you a compliment and saying that she trusts you when she turns her back to you. She may also feel protective of you, ready to intervene on your behalf, should a predator threaten you.

*Peace, Love, and Head-Butts,
Squirty*



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Humor (Continued)



See "For Fur-ther Information" on page one to learn about links for additional reading on topics mentioned in Burlington Reports!

(Continued from page 4)

recently.

Do you remember Breezy (who is called "Patches" by her family), my lost love who I was reunited with a few years ago? Her human mom, Helen, recently adopted a second cat who almost lost her life due to a human's inability to read her communication cues.

I was sitting on top of one of the higher book shelves in Mom's book store one day last week when Helen came in with two carriers. She opened Breezy's carrier but set the other on the counter while she talked with Mom. Breezy looked around and quickly spotted me. In under four leaps from surface to surface, she was on top of the shelf with me. We greeted one another and then lay down to watch and listen to the human conversation.

"We were just at the vet for checkups and I thought Burlington might like to see Patches," Helen said, and she and Mom both looked up at us and smiled before returning their attention to the second carrier.

"Who do you have here?" Mom asked.

She leaned over and peered into the carrier, making little clucking noises and smiling.

"This is Gabi."

Helen turned the carrier so the cat inside could see Mom better, and as a result, I was able to get a better glimpse of Gabi, a fluffy pale-orange colored cat.

Burlington The Cat (Continued)

"She's been with us for a couple months now. She was surrendered for being aggressive."

Mom's eyebrow shot up. I looked over at Breezy. She rolled her eyes.

"She isn't aggressive?" I asked.

"Not even a little bit."

I looked back at Gabi, who was busy licking her paw, carefully inspecting each space between her toes as she worked.

Helen said, "They were going to have her put down. What a tragic loss that would have been." She smiled at Gabi. "She's such a great cat. They just didn't understand her."

She went on to tell Mom Gabi's story. The people who had previously adopted her had had dogs in the past, but she was their first cat. The woman had described the cat as being a "loner", not as affectionate as she'd hoped. She'd reported that the cat had become headstrong and obstinate and would bite without provocation, eventually biting the woman badly enough that she required stitches.

"We've seen a completely different cat than the one the woman described." Helen waved at Gabi with her finger as she spoke. "She's very intelligent and she needs stimulation or she gets bored, and she loves to play with Patches. She was an only cat before, so maybe she really needed the company of another cat to rough house with. She is quite affectionate with me, but on her own terms. I

(Continued on page 7)

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Burlington The Cat (Continued)

(Continued from page 6)

wonder if the woman tried to force her to bend to her will."

"That doesn't usually work with cats," Mom said and they both laughed.

The bell on the door chimed and Mallory and Matthew came in, carrying their school books. Mallory grinned up at me and I gave her a slow blink.

"Hi, Patches," she said to Breezy, then turned her attention to Helen and Gabi.

Mom and Helen filled the kids in on the conversation.

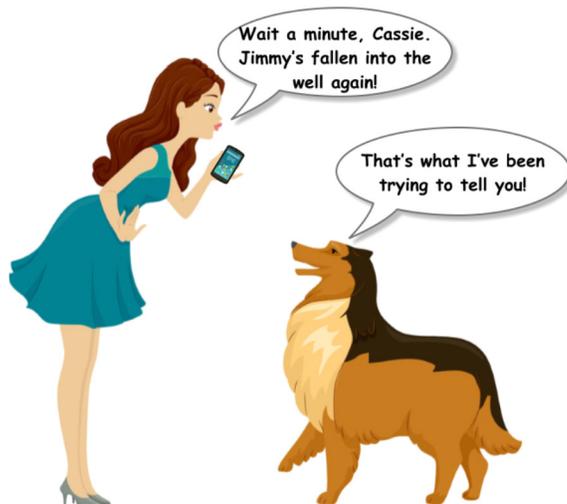
"Maybe she wants out so she can play with Burlington and Patches," Matthew said, peeking into the carrier.

Mallory shook her head. "She doesn't want out."

"How do you know?" Matthew challenged her.

She shrugged. "Look at her. She feels safe in there."

Mallory has always been particularly



good at reading cat body language. Sometimes pets feel as if they have to work so hard to get their humans to understand what they're trying to say, but if they are lucky enough

to live with an observant human like Mallory, that becomes so much easier.

"She does love her safe spaces," Helen said, "we've made her a fort at home that she loves. It's just a t-shirt stretched over a box, but she loves to go inside and sleep. If we try to take her out of it and she isn't ready, she'll flick her tail and flatten her ears."

Mallory nodded. "That's cat language for 'back off'."

"Yes it is. But she's realized now that we will respect her feelings and we won't try to force her to change."

And that's all we pets ask for, really: respect and love. And food, of course, and a safe place to live and sleep. But respect and love are what make a good life great.



Burlington is a fictional gray tabby cat who belongs to a family in the Northeast United States. "Mom" is Paige Turner, owner of a small book store. "Dad's" real name has not been mentioned to date. Their two children are Mallory and Matthew. The family also adopted a Chihuahua and named her Jersey. See our web site for other issues of Burlington Reports and read the ongoing adventures and learning experiences of Burlington and his family!

Humor (Continued)

She thought putting a heating pad under the cat house was a nice thing to do. Little did my friend know the war she had just started. To the victor, goes the warm spot.





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Visit us online at www.pacsnj.org

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Pet Food Recalls

Just a reminder... There have already been several recalls of pet foods in 2017.

Be sure to check out the Pet Food Recall Alerts widget on the Caretakers' Corner page of our web site.

Stay informed to protect the health and safety of your fur-babies!



The screenshot shows the website header with the logo and navigation menu. The main content area is titled 'Caretakers' Corner' and features several widgets. A red arrow points to the 'Pet Food Recall Alerts' widget, which lists recent recalls:

- Blue Buffalo March 3, 2017
- Evanger's February 28, 2017
- Against The Grain February 28, 2017
- Blue Buffalo February 14, 2017
- Against The Grain February 14, 2017
- PetSmart Great Choice February 9, 2017
- Companion Dog Food February 8, 2017
- Evanger's February 3, 2017

Other visible widgets include 'Renter's Guide To Pet Owning', 'Check Pet Food Recall Alerts', and 'Remember: Hot Cars Kill!'.