

# Burlington Reports

Paws and Claws Society, Inc., Thorofare, NJ



Issue 16, March 2015

Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

## For Fur-ther Information . . .

You can find more information on our web site at [pacsnj.org](http://pacsnj.org)!

- Find out "What's New" by following links on our home page or clicking on "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 the content via Facebook, Twitter, email, or other services



## The Newsletter Is Back!

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## Did You Know?

### Fascinating bits of facts and trivia about our non-human planet-mates

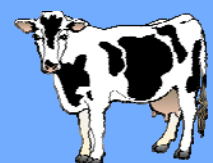
Most US states have a long list of state symbols, ranging from state flowers, trees, songs, or poems to state dances, fossils, and fruits. The list goes on and on and includes many state animals in many categories, including: amphibians, birds, crustaceans, fish, insects, butterflies, mammals (further broken down as Land Mammals, Marine Mammals, Wild Mammals, and Domestic Mammals, though the definition for each category seems to vary from state to state), bats, cat breeds, dog breeds, horse breeds, and reptiles.

From the following list of mammals, can you name the state or states that claim each as their state mammal?

Hint #1: Four states, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, and Rhode Island, do not seem to have an official state mammal.

Hint #2: In some cases, several states claim some of the same mammals!

1. American Foxhound
2. American Water Spaniel
3. Appaloosa Horse
4. Beaver
5. Bison
6. Black Bear
7. Boston Terrier
8. Bottlenosed Dolphin
9. Bowhead Whale
10. Boykin Spaniel
11. Calico Cat
12. Catahoula Leopard Dog
13. Chinook
14. Coyote
15. Dairy Cow



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## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Did You Know? (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

16. Desert Bighorn Sheep
17. Gray Squirrel
18. Gray Whale
19. Great Dane
20. Grey Fox
21. Grizzly Bear
22. Horse
23. Humpback Whale
24. Manatee
25. Missouri Fox Trotting Horse
26. Moose
27. Morgan Horse
28. Nine-banded Armadillo
29. Nokota Horse
30. Orca
31. Plott Hound
32. Raccoon
33. Right Whale
34. Ring-Tailed Cat
35. Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep
36. Rocky Mountain Elk
37. Sperm Whale
38. White-Tailed Deer

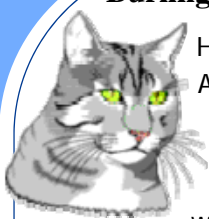


#### Answers:

1. American Foxhound: Virginia
2. American Water Spaniel: Wisconsin
3. Appaloosa Horse: Idaho
4. Beaver: New York, Oregon
5. Bison: Kansas, Wyoming
6. Black Bear: Alabama, New Mexico, West Virginia
7. Boston Terrier: Massachusetts
8. Bottlenosed Dolphin: Mississippi, South Carolina

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### Burlington and Jersey Get To The "Tooth" of The Matter



Hello. Burlington here. After a bit of a hiatus, we're back!

Jersey and I recently went for a check-up at our Vet's office, and Mom asked the doctor to clean our teeth.

I heard Jersey gasp.

"What?" I whispered to her from my carrier.

She came over and sat down in front of the little cage window where I peered out.

"I've heard stories about teeth cleaning," she told me quietly.

I swallowed hard, my throat suddenly dry. "What kinds of stories?"

"When I was at the shelter," she said, "there was this German Shepherd who went for a dental checkup and came back with no teeth."

"No!" I said.

She nodded. "And not only that, but her teeth disappeared while she was sleeping."

I sat back on my haunches, as much as I was able to do that while inside my carrier,

and thought about what Jersey had

said.

"Were her teeth very bad?" I finally asked.

"Well, yes," Jersey replied, "she was in so much pain she could barely eat."

"Perhaps having her teeth disappear was a good thing," I suggested, "and the fact that she was sleeping when it happened made it easier for her."

Jersey contemplated this.

"Maybe."

As it turned out, we both wound up taking long naps while at the Vet's office, a fact for which neither of us has a logical explanation, but for whatever reason, we woke up relieved to find that we still had our teeth, and curious that they were strangely smooth. We both had scratchy throats, as well. As soon as we were back in the exam room, Mom reappeared, and we learned that the reason for our scratchy throats was something called "intubation".

I meowed to Jersey and she giggled when she heard how funny my voice sounded. Her giggle sounded a bit funny, too. We took turns showing each other our teeth and agreed that they were certainly cleaner than before.

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



## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Burlington the Cat

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"You can brush their teeth at home," the doctor told Mom, "if they'll let you."

"Brush our teeth?" Jersey said, "With that minty stuff that Matthew and Mallory use every morning and every night?"

I made a face. That didn't sound very tasty.

Dr. Tails told Mom about some special toothpaste that they make for cats and dogs, that is flavored like chicken or

some such thing. That sounded better than mint, anyway.

He went on to show Mom all sorts of dental chew toys and treats for dogs and for cats. She examined each one and selected a toy for each of us, as well as a package of treats for each of us.

That evening, after we'd gone home and had dinner and our evening naps, it was playtime! While the kids did their homework and watched TV, Mom got on the floor and played with each of us with our new toys. Jersey loved her toy, which was shaped like a funny-looking bar bell and had grooves that made it fun to chew. After she chewed on it for a



minute, her eyes grew wide and she sat straight up.

"There's something yummy inside!" she said.

"You found the toothpaste," Mom said, pointing to where she had put it inside the toy, "While you chew and work to get it out of there, you'll be cleaning your teeth."

There was no toothpaste inside my toy, but I preferred it that way, since mine was filled with catnip. As if to punctuate that thought, I bit into it one more time and purred with satisfaction. My toy was made out of some sort of net material and filled with catnip and crunchy stalks. There were knotted streamers on the ends that made it fun to fling into the air and catch, and I couldn't resist sinking my teeth in again and again.

Later, after we were exhausted, Matthew and Mallory got ready for bed. Even though Jersey sleeps in Matthew's room and I sleep in Mallory's room, Jersey usually spends a few minutes with Mallory and me before she heads off down the hall for the night. We were both lying on the foot of Mallory's bed when she climbed in and pulled the covers up. She petted both of us and told us good night. We both licked her hand to say good night, and she turned off the

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### Did You Know? (Continued)

(Continued from page 2)

9. Bowhead Whale: Alaska
10. Boykin Spaniel: South Carolina
11. Calico Cat: Maryland
12. Catahoula Leopard Dog: Louisiana
13. Chinook: New Hampshire
14. Coyote: South Dakota
15. Dairy Cow: Wisconsin
16. Desert Bighorn Sheep: Nevada
17. Gray Squirrel: Kentucky, North Carolina
18. Gray Whale: California
19. Great Dane: Pennsylvania
20. Grey Fox: Delaware
21. Grizzly Bear: California, Montana
22. Horse: New Jersey
23. Humpback Whale: Hawaii
24. Manatee: Florida
25. Missouri Fox Trotting Horse: Missouri
26. Moose: Alaska, Maine
27. Morgan Horse: Massachusetts, Vermont
28. Nine-banded Armadillo: Texas
29. Nokota Horse: North Dakota
30. Orca: Washington
31. Plott Hound: North Carolina
32. Raccoon: Oklahoma, Tennessee
33. Right Whale: Georgia, Massachusetts, South Carolina
34. Ring-Tailed Cat: Arizona
35. Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep: Colorado
36. Rocky Mountain Elk: Utah
37. Sperm Whale: Connecticut
38. White-Tailed Deer: Arkansas, Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Wisconsin

See our web site for the complete list by state.



## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Humor

Do you remember the **Basic Rules For Cats Who Have The Run Of The House** (from [pawspetouspets.com](http://pawspetouspets.com)) that we began to examine in the October 2012 issue? In that issue, we looked at "Hampering". Now, let's learn about "Doors", "Guests", "Play", "Games", and "Toys".

#### Doors



Do not allow closed doors in any room. To get a door opened, stand on hind legs and hammer it with forepaws. Once door is opened, it is not necessary to use it. After you have ordered a door opened, stand halfway in and out and think about several things. Swinging doors are to be avoided at all costs.

#### Guests

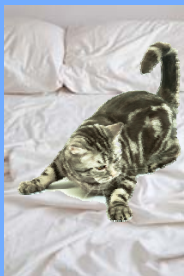
Quickly determine which guest hates cats the most. Sit on that lap. For sitting on laps or rubbing against trouser legs, select fabric which contrasts well with your fur. For example: white-furred cats go to black wool clothing. Note: Velvet takes precedence over all other cloth. For the guest who exclaims, "I love kitties!" be ready with aloof disdain, apply claws to stockings or arms, or use a quick nip on the ankle. Always accompany guests to the bathroom. It is not necessary to do anything - just sit there and stare.

#### Play

This is an important part of your life. Get enough sleep in the daytime so you are fresh for your nocturnal games. Listed below are several cat games. It is important though to maintain one's Dignity at all times. If you should have an accident during play, such as falling off a chair, immediately wash a part of your body as if to say "I MEANT to do that!" It fools those humans every time.

#### Games

- "Catch Mouse": The humans would have you believe that those lumps under the covers are their feet and hands. They are actually Bed Mice, rumored to be the most delicious of all the mice in the world, though no cat has ever been able to catch one. Maybe YOU can be the first.



- "King of the Hill": This game must be played with at least one other cat. Sleeping humans are the hill which must be defended at all costs from the other cat(s). Anything goes. This game allows for

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lamp on her bedside table.

A few minutes later, we heard her sigh.

"I forgot to brush my teeth," she whispered.

Jersey got up from her spot on the bed, jumped down, and came back a few minutes later with her dental toy in her mouth. She climbed from Mallory's stack of school books to the chair at the foot of the bed, and then onto the bed, since she can't jump directly from the floor to the bed like I can. She trotted up toward the head of the bed and let go of the toy. It landed on Mallory's pillow with a *plop*.

"I can't play with you right now," Mallory said, pushing the toy away.

Jersey picked it up again and redeposited it onto the pillow, wagging her tail.

Again, Mallory pushed the toy away.

Undeterred, Jersey plunked it



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!

### Burlington the Cat

onto the pillow a third time, this time panting afterward.

"She's not going to make the connection," I told Jersey.

"She forgot to brush her teeth. I'm helping her," Jersey told me.

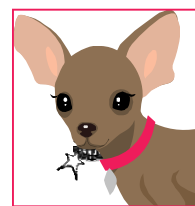
"I know," I said, "but she isn't going to chew on that toy. Humans don't like to chew on our toys."

"Why not?" Jersey asked, looking confused.

"I don't know. They just don't."

Mallory got up and padded to the bathroom, brushed her teeth, and got back in bed. Jersey gave her one last lick on the hand before jumping down and retiring to Matthew's room.

As I laid my head down on my paws, I noticed the toy was on the pillow again.



That Jersey. She has a good heart.

And very clean teeth.



## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Is It Safe To Adopt An FIV+ Cat?

Shelter cats that have tested positive for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) are less likely to be adopted, largely due to unfounded fears and a lack of information. Here are some facts and myths that will hopefully help to dispel some of those fears.

**1. Myth/Fear:** My baby (or my dog, etc.) might catch the virus if I bring home an FIV-positive cat.

**Fact:** While FIV is often compared to HIV in humans, it is not the same virus. The comparison lies in the fact that both viruses lead to suppression of the immune system and make the body more susceptible to infections and other illnesses. FIV is specific to cats only and cannot be transmitted to humans, dogs, or other non-feline animals.

**2. Myth/Fear:** My other cat(s) might catch the virus from sharing a litter box or water bowl with, or grooming with, an FIV-positive cat.



**Fact:** FIV is actually not easy to transmit. The virus can only live for a few seconds in open air. It is most commonly transmitted from one cat to another through a penetrating bite wound and less commonly, in fact rarely, in-utero from a mother cat to her kittens.

If you have an FIV-negative cat at home, it will be safe to adopt an FIV-positive cat so long as both (or all, if you have multiple cats) are introduced to one another properly and they do not fight. (And you wouldn't let even two FIV-negative cats be



They say I have baggage.  
I just want to go home with you.

together if they fought viciously enough to cause penetrating bite wounds, right?)

**3. Myth/Fear:** An FIV-positive cat will be sick all the time. What kind of a life is that?

**Fact:** It is quite common for FIV-positive cats to live long, healthy, and very happy lives! Feed them good food, keep them (and any other cats in your household) indoors to reduce exposure to other illnesses, make sure all their vaccinations are kept up-to-date, and contact your veterinarian at the first sign of any illness.

Some common secondary illnesses that are associated with FIV include stomatitis, which is an inflammation of the mucous lining of the mouth (see our August 2012 newsletter for more information on stomatitis); upper respiratory infections; and skin diseases. It is important to remember that FIV-negative cats are susceptible to these same conditions, even with healthy immune systems, so it's always important to seek veterinary treatment if your cat shows

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### Humor (Continued)

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the development of unusual tactics as one must consider the unstable playing field.

- **WARNING:** Playing games 1 and 2 to excess will result in expulsion from the bed. Should the humans grow restless, immediately begin purring and cuddle up to them. This should buy you some time until they fall asleep again. If one happens to be on a human when this occurs, this cat wins the round of "King of the Hill."

- **"Tag":** This game requires two or more cats and may include a dog. One cat is "it." The other(s) chase him around the house until they catch up. Then follows the "Scrimmage," after which the cat who caught the other becomes "it" and is chased around. Great fun but has the greatest potential for loss of Dignity from maneuvers such as the Non-Carpeted Floor Skid and the Throw Rug Wipeout. Whenever such a situation occurs, all felines must immediately wash themselves. Dogs are generally too stupid to do this and may continue to play. In this case, the dog automatically becomes "it" and should be subjected to the "Pileup."



- **"Tube Mouse":** This is a game played in the bathroom. Next to the Big White Drinking Bowl is a roll of soft white paper which is artfully attached to the wall so that it can spin. Inside this roll is the Tube Mouse. When you grab the paper, the Tube Mouse will spin frantically as it tries to escape from you. When the Mouse is exposed, it dies of fright and stops spinning.



#### Toys

Any small item. If a human tries to confiscate it, this means it is a Valuable Toy. Run with it under the bed. Look outraged when the human takes it away. Watch where it is put so you can steal it later. Two reliable sources of toys are dresser tops and wastebaskets. Below are listed several types of cat toys.

- Bright shiny things like keys, brooches or coins should be hidden so the other cat(s) and humans can't play with them. They are generally good for playing hockey with on uncarpeted floors.

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## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Humor (Continued)

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- Dangling and/or string-like things such as shoelaces, cords, gold chains and dental floss also make excellent toys. They are favorites of humans who like to drag them across the floor for us to pounce on. When a string is dragged under a newspaper or throw rug, it magically becomes the Paper/Rug Mouse and should be killed at, all costs. Note that playing with shoelaces when the human is trying to tie them is a great source of Hampering [See the October 2012 newsletter to learn all about Hampering.].
- Within paper bags dwell the Bag Mice. They are small and the same color as the bag, so they are hard to see, but you can easily hear the crinkling noises they make as they scurry around the bag. Anything, including shredding the bag, can be done to kill them. Note: any cat you find in a bag hunting for Bag Mice is fair game for a Sneak Attack, which will usually result in a great Tag match.

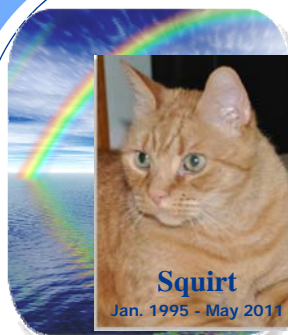
Also excerpted/adapted from pawsperouspets.com:

#### Things Dogs Must Try to Remember

- The garbage collector is not stealing our stuff even though I haven't gotten the chance to rip the bag to shreds to see what was in it.
- I do not need to suddenly stand straight up when I'm lying under the coffee table.
- I must shake the rainwater out of my fur before I enter the house.
- "Kitty box crunchies" are not food!
- If I chew crayons or pens, especially the red ones, my people will think I am hemorrhaging.
- I do not need to bark each time I hear a doorbell on TV.
- The sofa is not a face towel. Neither are my humans' laps.
- My head does not belong in the refrigerator.
- My humans like to have some room and covers when we go to bed.



### Squirty's Words . . . From The Rainbow Bridge



*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:** I want to get my dog some shoes to wear for walking when it's cold outside, but my friends think it's a silly idea. What do you think?

**Answer:** The pads of a dog's (or cat's) feet are made up of skin that is hairless and pigmented, over a thick cushion of fat and tissue. This causes a shock-absorbing effect and also works to provide traction and help with balance and stability. The pads are course, especially those of dogs and cats that walk a lot and/or walk on rough surfaces. However, paw pads are not immune to damage!



Paw pads can sustain cuts, abrasions, or cracks, which can become infected if not treated properly. Paw pads can develop yeast infections as well, which can be compared to athlete's foot in humans. Check pets regularly and contact your veterinarian if you see any of these symptoms:

- cracks, cuts, scrapes or abrasions
- bleeding or swelling of the pad and the surrounding area
- changes in color or texture

Also watch your pet's behavior for excessive licking of an injured paw pad or difficulty walking or bearing weight

What can you do to protect your pet's paw pads?

- Keep cats indoors and keep floors and other areas free of debris and household chemicals
- Be aware of the temperature and conditions of the ground, sidewalk, or asphalt when walking your dog. Contact with very hot surfaces in summer can cause blisters and burns. Contact with excessively cold surfaces, ice, and exposure to harsh chemicals like those used for melting ice in winter can cause dryness and cracking. (Dogs and cats can get frostbite, also, most affecting the tips of their ears and tails!) Some of a dog's perspiration comes from their paws, and this moisture can freeze into small ice balls between the pads.
- Wash paws with warm water after walks in winter, to remove salt and chemicals
- Look for balms that are made specifically to moisturize and heal dry, cracked pads, and waxes that are made to help to protect against harsh conditions. (Check ingredients to make sure they are safe if your pet licks and ingests the product.)



**Wait . . . What?**

- Trim nails regularly and keep the hair around the paws and between the pads short
- And yes, you can buy boots for your dog. They aren't silly at all. Even sled dogs wear them!

Peace, Love, and Head-Butts,  
Squirty



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

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## Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

### Is It Safe To Adopt An FIV+ Cat?

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signs of illness, regardless of FIV status.

**4. Myth/Fear:** There are special shelters where cats with FIV can live. I don't need to adopt one.

**Fact:** Shelters and sanctuaries, particularly those that are equipped to house special needs animals, always face space limitations. Some veterinarians actually still recommend euthanizing any cat that tests positive for FIV, even if the cat shows no symptoms yet! There is a great need for loving homes for FIV-positive cats. Yours could be just that home!

There is a vaccine available for FIV, but it is recommended to speak with your veterinarian regarding the pros and cons of this vaccine. This is because a cat that has been vaccinated against FIV will test positive for FIV in the future, even though the cat does not really have it. In the event that a cat has had the FIV vaccine and becomes lost, it could wind up at the office of an unfamiliar veterinarian, who, upon testing and finding an FIV-positive result, could decide to euthanize a perfectly healthy cat. (See number 4.)

Microchipping can be a big help in a situation like this, but the decision of whether to vaccinate for FIV is one that should be carefully weighed.

**Interesting Additional Information:** There seems to be a recognizable "look" that is common among FIV-positive cats.

Of course, not all cats with this look have FIV and not all FIV-positive cats have this look, so it is impossible to look at a cat and know if it has FIV.

However, a post on the Tabby's Place web site mentions having

seen this profile over and over among their FIV-positive population:

- Big, giant head
- Tough-guy ears, with more than a few scratches and notches
- John-Wayne-like walk

It's easy to guess why this is.

As an unneutered (also known as unaltered or intact) tom cat reaches sexual maturity, at 6 to 9 months old, he develops a thick neck and fleshy jowls, designed by nature to protect him when fighting with other males as they compete for the females' attention. If a tom is neutered before these secondary sexual

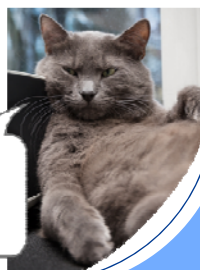
characteristics begin to appear, he won't have that "big headed" look.

Unaltered male cats fight much more, as mentioned above, and therefore can acquire many injuries, scratches, notches, and a tough-guy walk.

Because the most common method of

spreading the FIV virus is through a deep, penetrating bite wound, unaltered male cats (and any cats that might be bitten by them) are the most likely to become infected with the virus.

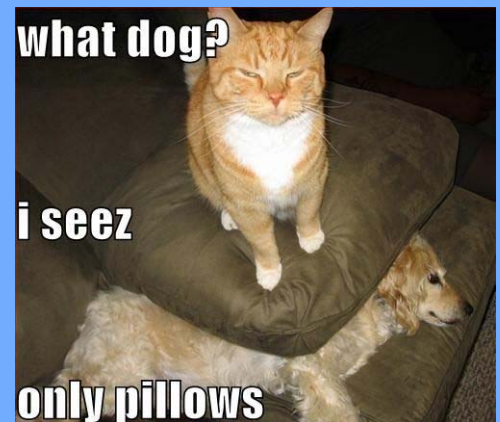
**Another reason why spaying and neutering are so important!**



### Humor (Continued)

(Continued from page 6)

#### Pet Sibling Rivalry?





## Paws and Claws Society, Inc.

1017 Grove Avenue  
Thorofare, NJ 08086

Partners in Prevention *Not* Destruction, since 1993

Visit us online at [www.pacsnj.org](http://www.pacsnj.org)

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## Understanding Our Pets' Behavior

In her book entitled *Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals*, Temple Grandin (with co-author Catherine Johnson) says:

"Gerbils love to dig and tunnel, and a lot of them develop a corner-digging stereotypy when they're around thirty days old. A stereotypy is an abnormal repetitive behavior (ARB for short), such as a lion or tiger pacing back and forth in its cage for hours on end. Pets and farm animals can develop stereotypies, too. Stereotypies are defined as abnormal behaviors that are repetitive, invariant (lions always pace the exact same path in their cages), and seemingly pointless.

"An adult gerbil spends up to 30 percent of its "active time" doing stereotypic digging in the corner of its cage. That would never happen in nature, and many researchers have hypothesized that the reason captive gerbils develop stereotypic digging is that they have a biological need to dig that they can't express inside a cage.

"On the other hand, in nature gerbils don't dig just to be digging. They dig to create underground tunnels and nests. Once they've hollowed out their underground home, they stop digging. Maybe what the gerbil needs is the result of the digging, not the behavior itself. A Swiss psychologist named Christoph Wiedenmayer set up an experiment to find out. He put one set of baby gerbils in a cage with dry sand they could dig in, and another set in a cage with a pre-dug burrow system but nothing soft to dig in. The gerbils in the sand-filled box developed digging stereotypies right away, whereas none of the gerbils in the cage with the burrows did.

"That shows that the motivation for a gerbil's digging stereotypy is a need to hide inside a sheltered space, not a need to dig. The gerbil needs the emotion of feeling safe, not the action of digging."

Many of us make the mistake of misunderstanding the behavior of animals, particularly our pets, by seeing their motivations in an overly simplistic way or by projecting human-like thought processes onto them. The fact is, they aren't human, even if they *do* agree to fill the role of our furry children.

When our pets engage in behavior that is disruptive to us or unhealthy for them, it is our responsibility, as their protectors and caretakers, to figure out the reason behind it.

Things aren't always as they appear on the surface, though. An example of this is a white Turkish Van named Guy, a cat who belonged to a Paws and Claws friend. Guy lived in a loving home with two human parents and two other cats who he loved. He began urinating on his human dad's clothes or towels that he had dropped onto the floor. At first, his dad saw this as a display of dominance or marking territory, then felt it was a personal attack of some sort. Then they realized that, since the dad was the only person in the house who left his clothes or towels on the floor, the behavior may not have been directed at him, and that Guy apparently chose those things because they were soft and he could mimic the "covering up" that he nor-

mally did in the litterbox.

In order to figure out why Guy was urinating outside the litterbox, his human mom began to observe his behavior over several days. She noticed that he would always go to the litter box after a meal, but would then leave without using it and look for somewhere else to go.

Eventually, the mom figured out that when Girl, Guy's cat-sister, would use the litterbox, she was messy and would spray the sides or front of the box. If Guy went to the box after Girl had been there, he wouldn't use it. He was bothered by an unclean box.

The mom started scooping the box multiple times a day, particularly while the cats were eating, in preparation for their after-meal "potty breaks", and set up a second box as well. Guy never went outside the litterbox again!

It's important for us to remember that cats and dogs aren't motivated by a desire for revenge. They don't act out simply to hurt our feelings or make us angry. It generally isn't about us at all; not in the way we might think of something being "about us". It's about their needs, their environment, or something they need for us to do differently.

