

# P.E.T.S.

**Protesting Environmental Tobacco Smoke      October 2007      Number 71**

## **A NOTE FROM REGGIE**

Hi fellow pets. It seems really strange to only write to you every other month. Since August, lots of stuff has happened. Did you hear about the 2-year-old cat in a nursing home that would go in certain rooms and cuddle with the patients and in a few hours the patients would die? It seemed that the cat knew when the people were close to death and wanted to comfort them. When my human companion was in the nursing home in Cape May, there were three resident cats. One lived in the Alzheimer wing, and the other two had free roam of the first floor. She loved those cats. I heard a story on the news about two baby geese who saw a pit bull terrier and followed it home. They wouldn't leave and the owners of the pit bull weren't sure what to do. Officials believed that the babies got separated from their mother and adopted the pit bull. The baby geese are now living at a bird rescue facility where that are around other geese. It just goes to show that pit bulls can be gentle and loving if their human companions don't interfere in their behavior. My human companion and I are big Phillies fans. We were so excited when they became division champs and so disappointed when they were eliminated in the playoffs in the first three games. We hope next year will be better. How are the children in your families making out in school this year? Do you ever watch "Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader" on television? My human companion is a college graduate and she doesn't know some of the answers to the questions. She said she thinks that school must be a lot harder than it used to be. Personally, or perhaps I should say felinally, I think some of those contestants are just plain dumb! I hope you have a very happy and spooky Halloween, and a very happy and thankful Thanksgiving. Meow for Now!

## **ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST**

The Southwest Council will be hosting their annual legislative breakfast on October 24, 2007 at The Ramada Inn at 2216 West Landis Avenue in Vineland New Jersey. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the event begins at 9am until 11 am. Two NJ Department of Education professional development hours are available. Attendees will meet local legislators and hear from them about the pending legislation on alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. The event is free. The Southwest Council, Inc. is a non-profit health agency that provides prevention/education resources and services for the illegal use, misuse and continued abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties.

## **DEEPEST SYMPATHY**

It is with deepest sympathy that I inform you of the death of P.E.T.S. Coalition member Samantha Vinci. She was 18 years old, and loved to lay in the sun and eat treats. Her family sorely misses her; and I know I speak for the coalition when I offer our heartfelt sympathy.

## **AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT**

It's time to prepare for the Great American SmokeOut. This year let's encourage our humans to take a few minutes and send an e-mail to the names on their buddy list, asking them to participate on Nov. 15,2007. Here is a suggestion for the e-mail.

On Nov. 15, 2007 millions of people will participate in the American Cancer Society's Great American SmokeOut. This year please put your cigarettes away for one day if you are a smoker, and send this e-mail to family, friends and associates. Together we can get the word out. Smoking is the #1 cause of preventable death in the United States, with more than 400,000 people dying every year in the United States alone as a result of smoking related diseases. Please quit for the Great American SmokeOut and think about quitting for the rest of your life.

## **FREE SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC FOR FERAL CATS**

The Animal Friends Foundation Inc. will be offering a free clinic to spay or neuter feral cats on October 21, 2007. A person can bring a maximum of five cats. Cats must be in a trap or a carrier. The person bringing in the feral cat is responsible for transporting and providing recovery care. In addition to the surgery, the cats will also receive rabies and distemper shots. For \$30, pet cats can be spayed or neutered and will receive rabies and distemper shots. To register or for more information call (856) 503-5572, or e-mail [Animalfriendsfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:Animalfriendsfoundation@yahoo.com).

A feral cat is a cat that has reverted to a wild behavior. There are thousands of feral cats in our area - cats that are fending for themselves. Often they live on farms and other rural areas and take care of rodents. Sometimes they were pets that were discarded like refuse and do the best to find food. They may visit your neighborhood and dine on scraps offered by caring folks. These feral cats have kittens and form colonies. A program called TNR, Trap Neuter Release, has become popular. The feral cat is trapped, neutered, and released to their colony to live out their life, but not reproduce. That way the colony does not get bigger than its food supply which can result in a painful and cruel existence. TNR programs are one way to keep the feral colony numbers under control. Thanks to the Animal Friends Foundation for caring for all animals. Surely they are a wonderful organization of volunteers who a really making a difference in our communities.

# DEAR REGGIE

Dear Reggie: I live in a fish tank, so I don't worry about Halloweeners, but are you scared of those people who come dressed in those scary outfits.

Jaws Lopez  
Tiger Shark, New Jersey

Dear Jaws: No, I'm not scared because we don't get many Halloweeners, and the ones that do come are little, and I recognize their voices. Today humans have to be careful when they let strangers in their homes. The costumes can scare animal companions. So every human has to decide what is best for everyone concerned, including you. Sometimes adult humans have costume parties. Make sure you let them know that the parties should also be smokefree.

Dear Reggie: What should we do in storms? I'm afraid of lightening and thunder. What can I do?

Bailey Williams  
Cat, New Jersey

Dear Bailey: Many animals are afraid of thunder, lightening and gusty winds. Last week we had a few really bad electrical storms, and the loud cracks of lightening frightened me. I climbed in my human companion's lap, and I usually don't play that lap game. I think if you are afraid, sitting in your human's lap or just staying in the same room with them will make you feel better. Many humans are afraid in storms, so when you sit in your human's lap, you may be helping them too. They may be just as afraid or more afraid than you are.

## ANNUAL EMPTY BOWL BANQUET

The Animal Friends Foundation Inc. is hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Empty Bowl Banquet on Saturday November 3, 2007 at the Peking Tokyo Restaurant, 101 E. Main Street, Millville - 6pm till 10pm. The deadline for reservations is Nov. 1. Guests at the dinner will chose a complimentary handcrafted, food-safe pottery bowl. A four course dinner will be served consisting of soup, sushi sampler, four family style entrees (2 vegetarian and 2 meat), desert and beverages. Cost of the dinner is \$40 per person. Diners can BYOB if desired. All tickets must be purchased in advance. Interested persons may call (856) 503-5572 or e-mail [Animalfriendsfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:Animalfriendsfoundation@yahoo.com). Space is limited. There will be a silent auction of fashion jewelry and door prizes will be enjoyed. Proceeds of the event will support local spay/neuter programs. The Animal Friends Foundation is a local organization of volunteers committed to reducing the overpopulation and euthanasia of companion animals through community education and support of spay/neuter programs. If you would like to volunteer, make a donation, or need more information please call (856) 503-5572.

# RECENT STUDIES

- A recent study indicates that smokers are more likely to develop complications and worse hearing after having surgery to correct chronic problems in their middle than nonsmokers have.
- A recent study indicated that pregnant women who smoke are more likely to quit smoking if they use nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) like the patch, lozenges or gum in addition to counseling than pregnant women who use only counseling to quit smoking. Twenty-four percent of pregnant women quit smoking after using NRT and counseling compared to eight percent of women who used only counseling. But there has not been adequate studies done to determine if NRT is safe during pregnancy. However, we do know that smoking during pregnancy increases the chance of sudden infant death syndrome.
- A new study shows that women who are pregnant and smoke are more likely to suffer from depression than pregnant women who do not smoke are. Because of the increase in depression, it may be more difficult for them to quit smoking. The study also found that pregnant women who smoked were more likely to be poor, less educated, and less likely to have access to adequate healthcare, than pregnant women who do not smoke were.

## BAR VIOLATES SMOKING BAN

The Vineland Health Department is bringing action against Randazzo's Tavern on North Main Road in Vineland, New Jersey. In September, two patrons were seen smoking inside the bar. New Jersey passed the Smoke Free Air Act, which took effect in April 2006. This is the first time the health department has brought charges against an establishment based on the SmokeFree Air Act. There was an anonymous complaint, which resulted in patrons being caught smoking, ashtrays visible on the bar and cigarette butts discarded on the floor. Officials on site said they did not see anyone smoking. There have been few formal complaints of facilities disregarding the law.

## TOBACCO USE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

The bill that would allow the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the right to regulate tobacco has 55 sponsors and cosponsors in the Senate and 200 sponsors and cosponsors in the House of Representatives. If the bill passes, the FDA would have authority over tobacco products and could eliminate candy-flavored cigarettes marketed to children. Finally it appears that the FDA will soon have the right to regulate the only product that when used as intended causes death. It's about time!

In August, a press release and photo was sent to area newspapers regarding the recognition 5-year-old Philip Travis Jr. received from the Vineland Health Department for his work as a tobacco control advocate. The Cumberland County Reminder printed the press release and photo on their front page. The Daily Journal, however, sent a reporter and photographer to do an original article, which also appeared on their front page. The Daily Journal also did a thumbs up editorial. My human companion called the publisher, Mr. Charles Nutt to see if I could share the editorial with you. Also The Daily Journal is on the internet, and readers can comment on the articles. I wanted to share some of those comments with you. Mr. Nutt gave permission and you will notice the copyright at the bottom of the page. The italicized material is quoted and the copyright applies to all italicized material. First I would like to share The Daily Journal's view about Philip. Also thank you Mr. Nutt!

#### **PRAISE FOR THE YOUNGSTER FIGHTING LITTER**

*We admire the spirit and dedication shown by 5-year-old Philip Travis Jr. of Millville in picking up discarded cigarette butts. Because of his efforts Cumberland County is a cleaner place to live. Believe it or not, since the youngster began his crusade three years ago, he has collected and properly disposed of 594 nasty cigarette butts from different locations throughout our area. Wow! This young man puts all those who heartlessly and thoughtlessly throw cigarette butts on the ground and trash our landscape to shame. Thanks, Phillip. The community appreciates your efforts. We do have one strong recommendation, however. While picking up litter and cigarette butts, wear gloves to add another layer of protection against possible harmful germs.*

The Daily Journal is on the internet at [www.thedailyjournal.com](http://www.thedailyjournal.com). Here are a few of the comments, with the screen names the people use to make their comments, underlined. Grammar, punctuation and spelling were reprinted as posted. Quoted material is italicized, my comments are not.

Jscull *You go Phillip! You have a great hobby and maybe just maybe you will be the inspiration for some people to quit the weed. Save the environment for our children.*

Picking up cigarette butts is not a hobby, but an environmental project that protects animals from eating them. The filter can take 15 years to degrade. This year Phillip picked up 594 butts. Over the three years, he has participated in our project, he has picked up nearly a thousand butts.

Blondie1 *Great job cleaning up after the slobbs that throw cigarette butts on the ground! BUT, His parents should really teach him manners and not permit him to lecture adults about their habits...good or bad! PS before you jump to conclusions I'm a non smoker...and still believe its not a CHILDS place to tell an ADULT what to do.*

Justreading *Blondie1, I agree. My son hates smoking and when he use to see people do it, he'd say something, he actually smacked a cig out of my dads hand once (OMG)....it use to really embarrass me. (My son is adopted, moved in with me when he was 8 so I had to teach him manners)....After a few times of doing this and us telling him its not any of his business what adults do and he has no rights to tell an adult what they can or cant do, even though YES its DISCUSTING...he has learned to just cover his nose and walk away. Thank God today my parents are both smoke free!*

Phillip does not indiscriminately approach people on the street and tell them not to smoke. He talks to family, friends and people at parties and picnics. He is sensitive to the smell of cigarette smoke, and can tell if someone has smoked a cigarette. He tells the person he cares about them and doesn't want them to get sick. I may be a cat, and not up on human manners, but I hardly see any harm in expressing a genuine regard for human life. By picking up butts he shows a concern for animal life too.

Deetdadee *This child shouldn't be handling these nasty butts with his bare hands, get him a scoop or something.....preferably a new hobby. While it's a noble crusade to bring the dangers of smoking to everyones attention, going around picking up cigs is not going to prove anything to smokers or make them quit.*

I think if people would look down and see all those cigarette butts, they would want to clean them up too. Trillions of cigarette butts are discarded on the ground worldwide every year. Phillip tried to use gloves to pick up the butts, but his mother said she couldn't find surgical gloves small enough, and children's gloves made it impossible for his little fingers to pick up the butts. She spent much time teaching him about washing his hands thoroughly. Each year as part of the clean-up project, the health department offers latex gloves for people who want them. But there are many things that children experience with more germs.

Whitetrash *Ew..I would never allow my kids to touch cigarette butts, save that for the inmates. It is nice that he cares so much but he should find something more productive to do then counting butts. Kind of a weird obsession. And I am a non smoker but if some little \_\_\_\_ was to come up and tell me what he thought about me smoking, I would probably kick his mom's \_\_\_\_\_. Teach your kid some manners and respect for elders.*

I have refrained from editing the comments, but I did leave out two words in Whitetrash's comment because I don't think it is appropriate in my publication. I thought about leaving out her screen name because I don't like that word either. But I wanted to point out the kind of remarks that some people make when they don't use their real names.

AltimaChic *I have to commend this little boy on his wanting to stomp out smoking. I find it great to see a 5 year old child know that smoking is bad for you. I have never smoked a day in my life or ever tried it, and Lord knows, I don't have the slightest urge to either! Even though his mother should probably make him wear gloves, which is what I would do to my kid, how can you tell a 5 year old who wants to do something good, not to do it? It's better than him fighting with other kids, using cuss words or shooting people with his dads gun...I mean really people, it could be a lot worse!! So what if the kids hobby is picking up after ADULTS nasty cigarette butts, he could end up becoming President one day! You NEVER know! And about the whole him telling people that he sees doing it that it's bad, if a kid like that came up to me and said that, I would probably feel embarrassed and do everything I could to quit! He is a little 5 year old boy trying to make a big difference in the world. His mother probably does teach her son manners, such as to say 'please' and 'thank you' or not to lie or steal, but honestly I don't think of it to be a very disrespectful thing, but more of a lesson to those that do smoke that even a 5 year old knows that it's wrong and that your hurting others around you that don't smoke. My boyfriend has a 5 year old so I know exactly what this mother is feeling. Her son is realizing that he wants to help peopple and what's wrong with that? Can you honestly look at a 5 year old kid in the face and tell him to go and bother someone else, or "kick his moms ass" right in front of him....no. Just my opinion...*

Hellokitty *I thought this was a little strange when I read it. I agree that the kid should find something a little more productive to do. I would not let my kids pick up butts from the ground and I do agree with whoever it was that said maybe he should wear gloves. I am a smoker and I know how bad and nasty of a habit it is but I don't need a kid telling me about it. When my son was about 7 years old, we were in Shoprite and he started telling everyone who would listen to him that his Mom did drugs. I was mortified that he would tell people this because it was not true, I don't use drugs. I asked him why he was telling people this and he replied, my teacher said that cigarettes are a drug. I called the teacher the next day and gave her a piece of my mind.*

The nicotine in tobacco is a highly addictive drug. It is more addictive than cocaine or heroin. A smoker is an addict. Being addicted to nicotine is why smokers find it so difficult to quit. Most smokers realize they are addicted to the nicotine in cigarettes, and that they are drug addicts. Many people have quit when they realized they were not weak, but found it difficult to quit smoking because they were addicted to a drug.

## CALLING ALL PETS

Cats, Dogs, Fish, Birds, Snakes, Lizards, Spiders, Goats, Monkeys, Ferrets, Cows, Squirrels, Bunnies, Frogs, Bears, Lions, Guinea Pigs, Horses, Deer, Sheep, Elephants, Fireflies, Muskrats, Rodents etc.

If you're a pet, we'd like you to join P.E.T.S. It's like a club, but no dues, and everyone is welcome...except human beings. You can share your newsletter with your human companions though. I'm sure they will appreciate it if you do.

## HAVE A QUESTION

Do you have a question or comment for the Dear Reggie column? If you do, e-mail the question or comment to me at REGGIE415@aol.com or mail it to me at the address below. Your questions and comments are a valuable part of this newsletter. I hope to hear from you soon.

## LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN

If you know anyone who smokes, please send in their name and address, and how they use tobacco – smoke or chew. I'll send a letter asking them to quit using tobacco because we care about them. Submissions are anonymous. You can e-mail me at REGGIE415@AOL.COM or send a letter to me at:

The Kitty CAT Project  
Vineland Health Department  
P.O. Box 1508  
Vineland, NJ 08362-1508

## WWW.KITTYCATPROJECT.ORG

All of the P.E.T.S. newsletters are available at the Internet address above. If you have missed an issue, you can download it at the website above.

## NEWSLETTER E-MAILED

If you would like to have your newsletter e-mailed to you instead of mailed, please send me your e-mail address.

Supported by funds from the Vineland Health Department, Tobacco Control Program.

## HOW TO JOIN

All pets are eligible. Just fill out this form, cut it out, and return it to:

The Kitty CAT Project  
Vineland Health Department  
P.O.Box 1508  
Vineland, NJ 08362-1508

Or e-mail info to: Reggie415@aol.com

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIES: \_\_\_\_\_

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