

## VETERINARY UPDATE

Dear British Columbia veterinarians, technicians, and assistants,

Thank you for all you do for community animals, and special thanks to those who provide veterinary services for your local BC SPCA branch. The BC SPCA operates 36 shelters across the province, none of which have veterinarians working in the branch. We rely on community veterinary clinics as partners in helping the province's most vulnerable animals.

Many of you provide care such as examining sick and injured animals, performing spay/neuter and other surgical and dental procedures, and providing humane euthanasia for animals suffering from serious medical and behavioural problems. Perhaps you also go beyond caring for shelter animals and assist with cruelty investigations and documentation, promote shelter animals for adoption, participate in a spay/neuter initiative, provide post-adoption exams, participate in our new BC Pet Registry microchip program, or support our staff and volunteers in fundraising events. We could not function without you!

This is an exciting time for the BC SPCA shelter medicine program.

- We are in the process of implementing the Canadian Standards of Care (CSC) in Animal Shelters ([canadianveterinarians.net/documents/canadian-standards-of-care-in-animal-shelters](http://canadianveterinarians.net/documents/canadian-standards-of-care-in-animal-shelters)). This document establishes minimum standards of care for shelter animals, as well as best and unacceptable practices. It was produced in 2013 and is based on the 2010 Association of Shelter Veterinarians Standards of Care.

As part of implementation, we are reviewing our procedures for humane euthanasia, decision-making, and pain management in shelter animals. If you work with one of our branches, they will soon deliver a letter with more details about how the Standards of Care apply to our shelter animals.

- We recently implemented the international Asilomar Accords system for data collection and now have written guidelines for determining treatability and adoptability based on medical and behavioural conditions, publicly available at [bit.ly/2aodjZ3](http://bit.ly/2aodjZ3). We are committed to finding homes for all healthy companion animals, as well as those with medical and behavioural conditions that can be treated while in our care. Our euthanasia rates have been steadily dropping over the years, and our current Live Release Rate is 89%. This is one of the highest Live Release Rates in North America.
- We are working on a new website with a section for veterinarians to access updates relating to our animal health policies and procedures. In the meantime, we would love to hear from you if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback about our shelter medicine programs.



Thank you for your continued dedication and support,

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*The British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) is a not-for-profit organization reliant on donations from the public.*

## Explore B.C.'s remote communities while saving lives



The Canadian Animal Assistance Team is looking for volunteer veterinary technicians, assistants and veterinarians to help spay, neuter, vaccinate and ID animals in remote First Nations communities across British Columbia. To learn more, visit [caat-canada.org](http://caat-canada.org) and click 'Get Involved.'

## Veterinarians work to end suffering in the Campbell River community



In May, 2016 the Campbell River BC SPCA completed their PetSmart Charities of Canada grant to spay and neuter 1,500 cats in the city for guardians who would not otherwise be able to afford the surgeries as well as feral colonies.

The success of the grant, which could not have been achieved without the support and dedication of the Campbell River Veterinary Hospital and Mercroft Veterinary Hospital, is evident in the results. In 2015, the number of cats entering our shelter annually was down 45% over 2012 with an intake of only 441 cats and kittens compared to 809, and we project a further decrease for 2016.

As an added bonus, the participating veterinary hospitals both saw returning clients come in through the program, with Campbell River Veterinary Hospital reporting a 30% return rate in customers. A big thank you to the veterinarians and their staff!

This grant made it possible to provide services to cats in need who would not otherwise be sterilized during their lifetime, like Carl, a stray who showed up at a young couple's home. The pair started feeding the cat, who had health issues, and when they were unable to locate his guardian, took him to the veterinary clinic and learned about the program. With the costs of the neuter covered, they were able to afford and proceed with the treatment of his other medical issues. Now, Carl is an official furry member of their family.

The grant also helped tackle several feral cat colonies in the region, for a total of 175 sterilized free-roaming cats. With the media outreach and education provided during the grant, and the new kid's Humane Education summer camps that have launched, Branch Manager Stephanie Arkwright is hopeful. She is optimistic they will never again face the overpopulation of suffering cats that once overwhelmed the community.

## Building a relationship with your rehabber

If the public brings injured or orphaned wildlife (i.e., non-domestic, non-exotic animals) into your veterinary clinic you may find yourself in a quandary because, without a permit authorized under the BC Wildlife Act, you can only legally hold wildlife for 24 hours. You may be reluctant to euthanize these otherwise healthy or treatable animals, however in most cases there is another option – your local wildlife rehabber. If you establish a relationship with a local permit-holding wildlife rehabilitator, these animals can be transferred to government permitted facilities with the specialized knowledge, experience and equipment needed to care for wild animals and give them the best chance at being returned to their wild homes.

Wildlife rehabilitators are often very happy to have support and interest from a local veterinarian. Most are charitable, non-profit organizations with limited funds for veterinary consults and euthanasia services for wildlife in critical distress. Luckily, generous veterinarians all over BC donate services to wildlife rehabilitators, and in return, they know who to turn to when the public walks through their clinic doors with orphaned baby animals and injured adult wildlife.

To find a wildlife rehabber in your area, consult the Wildlife Rehabilitators Network of BC (WRNBC) at: [wrnbc.org/contact/find-a-local-rehabilitator](http://wrnbc.org/contact/find-a-local-rehabilitator)

In the unfortunate case you find wildlife in critical distress in your care, a veterinarian may euthanize these animals without consent from a BC SPCA special constable. However, euthanasia of species “of concern” or “at risk” requires approval from a Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Regional Biologist or the provincial Wildlife Veterinarian: [registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/schedules\\_e.cfm?id=1](http://registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/schedules_e.cfm?id=1).



# BC Pet Registry

## BC Pet Registry, getting lost pets home

The BC Pet Registry, an initiative of the BC SPCA, has grown significantly since its launch in 2015. With over 25,000 pets registered, we are encouraging animal guardians to visit a veterinarian in British Columbia to microchip, tattoo and licence their pets. Using our industry portal, veterinarians and animal sheltering agencies can search identification stored in the registry to reunite lost pets with their guardians. In addition, we have partnered with the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) to ensure that our registry is traceable not only in BC but anywhere in the world!

You can help more lost pets return home by connecting your clients to the BC Pet Registry. With low-cost ISO microchips, universal scanners, and profit-sharing, the BC Pet Registry has the tools you need to provide a value-added service to your clients, all the while potentially bringing in new clientele.

For more information, please get in touch with Aidan Reid, social enterprise officer at (604) 709-4677 or [info@bcpetregistry.ca](mailto:info@bcpetregistry.ca).

## Thank you for demonstrating leadership and compassion



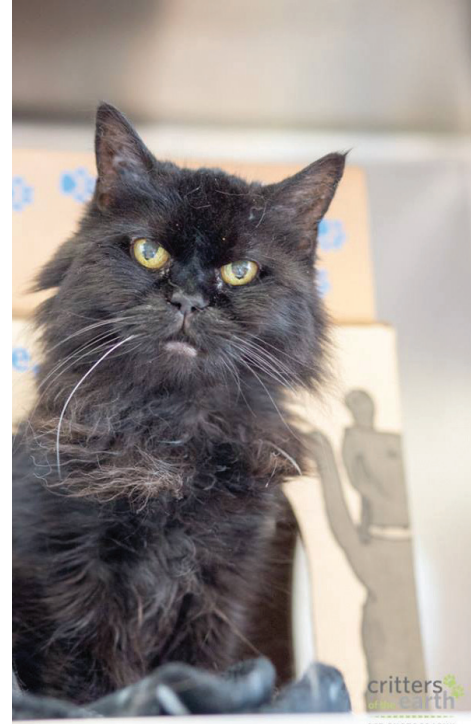
After our newsletter was sent out last year, a number of veterinarians got in contact with us to let us know about their availability to partner on spay/neuter initiatives. While we do not currently have a presence in every community in British Columbia, we appreciate the willingness of veterinary clinics to address these gaps and offer low-cost spay/neuter procedures for low-income clients in their own communities. Without these offerings, we know there would be even more homeless and abandoned animals. You are heroes!

## Vets in Action program helps cats like Queenie eat without pain

On July 17, BC SPCA cat Queenie had 7 teeth removed as part of the year's second Vets in Action Day. Hosted at the Lifetime Pet Care Practice in Surrey, the day was a true testament to the team's passion and dedication for animal welfare, wherein participating volunteer veterinarians, technicians and assistants performed spays, neuters, dental work, and a variety of other important veterinary services to BC SPCA animals free of charge.

The stars of the day were the clinic's own Dr. Zoran Radnic, Dr. Linda Schild of Kennedy Heights Animal and Bird Hospital, and Dr. Claudia Richter of Burnaby Animal Hospital, who, along with their team, helped thirteen animals move one step closer to a clean bill of health and a new forever home.

The BC SPCA assists 43,000 animals annually with the help of amazing volunteers like these and we're always looking for veterinary professionals to donate their time and talent to the homeless and abandoned pets who need it most. If you are committed to animal welfare, hoping to meet new clients in your community, and wouldn't mind a bit of extra publicity, please consider joining us for our next Vets in Action Day - we would love to have you on board!



To get involved, contact Lifetime Pet Care Practice at (604) 594-7387 or Ryan Voutilainen at (604) 291-7201.

**Do you have questions or feedback for the BC SPCA?**  
Please email us at [outreach@spca.bc.ca](mailto:outreach@spca.bc.ca).