



Newsletter

The American Association of
Human-Animal Bond Veterinarians

Volume 23 • SPRING 2009

AAH- ABV web page: www.aah-abv.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Victoria Voith, DVM, PhD, DACVB

The President's message this time is HELP!! Your association solicits your assistance with the following:

1. Key questions/topic areas for the participants to explore at the strategic/planning retreat that is taking place July 15, 2009. Please send up to 5 topics that you consider important for AAH-ABV to address. Send to vvoith@westernu.edu. On subject line put "AAH-ABV Retreat." We may not get to all of them, but we need to know what your concerns and ideas are.
2. Attendance at the 2009 annual meeting at the AVMA. We have several items to discuss and vote on - such as reciprocal sharing of our mailing list, changing length of elected offices from one year to two, e-mailing of the newsletter instead of producing hard copies, student clubs, revitalization of the association, and whatever YOU want to bring up.

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University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine's Research Center for Human Animal Interaction (ReCHAI)



Dr. Rebecca Johnson with Kenzie

*Letter from the Guest Editor:
Dr. Rebecca Johnson*

It is indeed an honor to be invited to serve as a Guest Editor for the AAH-ABV Newsletter because the members of this Association are doing such impressive work in promoting the human animal bond every day in all that they do. There has perhaps never been a more important time to celebrate and to call on the bond. The world is so dominated by high-tech/low-touch means of communicating, and is so affected by the worldwide economic crisis, that our need for the unconditional love and companionship that animals give us is ever strong. This gives us a great responsibility to push the science of the bond, as we regularly see new situations in which human animal interaction could play a major role in facilitating the health of these multiple species. Toward that

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**Letter from the President:
Victoria Voith, DVM, PhD, DACVB**

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- 3. Identifying and contacting other organizations with overlapping interests regarding reciprocal links to web-sites. Send me information regarding this and what is needed for our Web Master to establish a link. On subject line put "AAH-ABV links"
- 4. Don't over look the Human-Animal Bond session at the AVMA meeting this summer. Great stuff.

That's it. See you in Seattle?

Victoria L. Voith

**Letter from the Guest Editor:
Dr. Rebecca Johnson, DVM, PhD**

Continued from Page One

end, our work at ReCHAI continues apace. We have a team with consistently robust energy levels for our HAI work. Each day is filled with wonderful projects and programs that enrich not only us, but also our various constituencies. It is a joy to share some of these with you in this issue of the Newsletter.

Speaking of projects and programs, I would be remiss if I did not thank a very important person at ReCHAI. Ms. Charlotte McKenney is our stalwart Assistant Director. She lends unfailing dedication to all of our initiatives, a solid attention to detail, and very skilled mentorship of the many students who work with us. She is the "IRB Queen," successfully managing all of our IRB approvals and reports,



Dr. Rebecca Johnson and Charlotte McKenney

and makes a major contribution to every one of our projects. ReCHAI is so much the better for her commitment and energy devoted to the cause. A great deal of this energy has found its way into planning our upcoming conferences.

Conference planning has been a major occupation for us since early 2008 when the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ) approved our proposal to host their 18th Annual research conference in Kansas City, MO. The national conference planning committee has lent a great effort to the cause, and in this newsletter you will read details of the ISAZ meeting and an endorsement of the conference by long-time ISAZ member and pioneering HAI investigator, Dr. Lynette Hart. The ISAZ conference is joined with an HAI conference aimed at practitioners of many different fields who will be presenting an array of fascinating HAI program details and outcomes. So please review the details of the two conferences. It is my pleasure to invite you to attend. We would love to host you in Kansas City in October, 2009!

Sincerely,
Rebecca A. Johnson

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Dear Friends at AAH-ABV:



2009 is shaping up to be a wonderful year of convergence and reunion for all of us working in various aspects of the human-animal bond! I'm looking forward to seeing you all in July at the AAH-ABV meeting in Seattle during AVMA, where we will once again renew our foundation with Delta Society and foster new areas of common interest. A special feature of the July meeting is that Bill McCulloch, a founder of Delta Society, will be speaking about the earliest establishment and the current vision pertaining to "One Health", and the value of the human-animal bond. Other pioneers such as Erika Friedmann, a founder and current president of the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ), will join Bill and others in presenting new and exciting developments for successfully linking the human-animal bond within the health sciences and community settings. Some hot topics such as dog breed legislation, dog training approaches, and veterinary over-treatment of pets will be discussed.

Continuing this momentum, a linked pair of landmark conferences will be offered in Kansas City in late October, leading off with the strong ongoing research leadership of ISAZ, bridging into a more practitioner oriented conference. The two back-to-back conferences, totaling five days of meetings, will provide a "crash course" on the current state-of-the-art research and practice concerning human-animal interactions. Generous sponsor support has made it possible to invite outstanding guest speakers, including Jaak Panksepp, Marc Bekoff, and pioneers Dennis Turner and Alan Beck, and plan for a rich program. Fresh and timely conference themes include: challenges for enhancing human-animal interactions, the one-health concept across species, animal-assisted interventions, human-animal interactions in professional practice, and crisis planning. A special symposium of the conference has been funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development. Continuing education credit is available. No other conference opportunity like this has ever happened before! This pair of conferences promises to be memorable and groundbreaking, pointing the way to a new wave of developments in the field. It is the event that everyone will later wish they had experienced! Favorable registration rates are available for all ISAZ members. Reductions are provided those attending both conferences, or participating by contributing a paper or poster. Special registration rates are available for students, vet techs, shelter workers, residents, interns, rescue group worker, and animal visitation group members. Details are available at the website: http://www.rechai.missouri.edu/isaz_hai09.htm

With a trio of conferences in July and October, this very unique year offers special opportunities to tune-up in the area of human-animal interactions and be part of the growing professional implementation of animal-assisted interventions. At the same time, the international emphasis on incorporating animal-assisted interventions into health settings is being formalized with new curricular opportunities. The accreditation of academic programs in animal-assisted therapy by the International Society for Animal-Assisted Therapy is facilitating curricular development and availability. Switzerland, Germany, Israel, and Japan are some of the other countries actively involved in this process of offering structured academic programs related to animal-assisted interventions. The conferences will provide a quick update on this worldwide movement.

Finally, representing the board, I encourage you all to join ISAZ, the scholarly society dealing with human-animal interactions. Membership includes a subscription to *Anthrozoos*, the scholarly journal in the field of human-animal interactions.

See you in Seattle and Kansas City!
Lynette Hart, Ph.D.



Introduction to ReCHAI

Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction

People and animals have lived close to one another for centuries. The human animal bond is the strong connection that they feel toward one another. The MU College of Veterinary Medicine is proud of this exciting center based on the growing field of research showing how the human animal bond impacts health in people and animals. The human animal bond is a powerful force in promoting “One Health.”

ReCHAI is designed to:

- Conduct research and education programs on the health benefits of human-animal interaction (HAI).
- Foster understanding of the benefits of HAI among the public and health care professionals.
- Facilitate Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) and Animal Assisted Activity (AAA).
- Disseminate evidence of the benefits of HAI, AAT and AAA.
- Foster educational and research opportunities for MU students.
- Collaborate with other centers nationally and internationally to promote HAI.

Director of ReCHAI: **Rebecca A. Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN**

It is her contention that this interaction may play an important role in mediating the stresses of aging, negative outcomes of relocation, and in facilitating health. Her research shows that companion animals may provide a unique source of social support and facilitate motivation for exercise and other wellness-promoting behaviors. Her role as Director of ReCHAI at the MU College of Veterinary Medicine is a natural one, combining her research and clinical interest in fostering wellness and independence among older adults with her belief in the importance of human-companion animal interaction.

The author of many scholarly publications in peer reviewed journals and books, Rebecca has presented her research findings nationally and internationally, and is called upon as a consultant regarding relocation of older adults, and instituting human-companion animal interaction programs. In 2005 she was named the University of Missouri-Columbia’s MU William H. Byler Distinguished Professor, an award given for “outstanding abilities, performance and character.” In November, 2007 she was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, the highest honor in academic nursing, joining only 1500 nurses worldwide to achieve such an accomplishment.

Rising Star of Entrepreneurship Award

ReCHAI was among 20 outstanding small businesses honored by members of the Missouri General Assembly on January 28, 2009 at a business showcase held in the state capital rotunda in Jefferson City, MO. ReCHAI received the “Rising Star of Entrepreneurship Award” during the event, which was sponsored by the Missouri Small Business & Technology Development Centers and the Missouri Procurement Technical Assistance Centers. The award recognized ReCHAI’s impact on the economic development of the state, and included proclamations from the state house of representatives and senate.

We thank P & G Pet Care (maker of Iams & Eukanuba pet food) for their humanitarian efforts with the JOSH Project and facilitating Dr Cynthia Kinney’s presentation at the 2009 AVMA.

Human-Animal Interaction: Impacting Multiple Species

October 20-25, 2009

Kansas City, MO USA



"City of Fountains"

Two sequential conferences jointly sponsored by:

International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ)
18th Annual Conference



Oct. 20-23, 2009

University of Missouri
College of Veterinary Medicine
Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction
(ReCHAI)

1st Human Animal Interaction Conference

Oct. 22-25, 2009



Featured Presentations & Speakers:

ISAZ Keynote: Oct. 20

Shared Feelings: Neuropsychological Interfaces Between Animal and Human Emotions

Dr. Jaak Panksepp, Professor, Veterinary & Comparative Anatomy, Pharmacology & Physiology, College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University

ISAZ Plenary: Oct. 22

Wild Justice, Cooperation, & Fairness: What Humans Can Learn from Animal Play

Dr. Marc Bekoff, Professor Emeritus of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, University of Colorado, Boulder

HAI Keynote: Oct. 22

Bringing it All Together to Benefit All: An International Perspective on HAI Education Especially in the Health/Human Services Sector

Dr. Dennis Turner, Invited Professor for Animal Assisted Therapy/Animal Assisted Activity, Educational Research Center for Anthrozoology, Azabu University, Japan

HAI Plenary: Oct. 24

A Tale of Two Species: The Human Animal Bond

Dr. Alan Beck, Dorothy N. McAllister Professor of Animal Ecology, Director, Center of the Human-Animal Bond, School of Veterinary Medicine, Purdue University, Indiana

HAI Workshop: Oct. 25

Maintaining the Disabled Person-Assistance Dog Team through Behavioral Intervention: A case study approach

Dr. Ed Eames & Toni Eames, International Association of Assistance Dog Partners California State University, Fresno

NIH/NICHD Supported Special Symposium, Oct. 23

Scholarships may be available for attendance at this symposium

Research meets practice:

Human-animal interaction in obesity across the lifespan

Speakers:

Introduction to Dog Walking and Physical Activity

Jacquelyn Epping, MEd, CDC Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, Atlanta, Georgia

Epidemiology of Dog Walking for Fitness and Health

Dr. Adrian Bauman, Sesquicentenary Professor of Public Health in Behavioral Epidemiology and Health Promotion, School of Public Health, Institute of Obesity, Nutrition & Exercise, University of Sydney, Australia

Innovative Physical Activity Programs and Obesity in Children

Dr. Audwin Fletcher, Professor, School of Nursing, University of Mississippi, Jackson

Dog Walking as Physical Activity for Older Adults

Dr. Roland Thorpe, Assistant Scientist, Center for Health Disparities Solutions, Johns Hopkins University, Maryland

March 20-----Abstract Submission Site Open
June 1-----Conference Abstract Deadline
July 1-----Notification to Presenters
July 10-----Early Bird & Presenters Registration Closed

ISAZ-HAI 2009 International Conference

http://rechai.missouri.edu/isaz_hai09.htm

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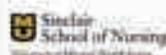
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For information please contact us at rechai.missouri.edu



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Overview:

The ISAZ/HAI sequential conferences will provide an exciting opportunity for those working in HAI research and practice to share their latest findings and program outcomes. They will serve as a source of renewal for those who have been working in the field for some time, and as a source of inspiration for those newly joining or contemplating entry into the field. What sets these conferences apart from other HAI conferences is the merging of investigators with those working in HAI practice with the express purpose of stimulating dialog and listening between the two groups. A **Special Symposium** will focus on how human animal interaction may help fight obesity across the lifespan.

Format:

Although the conference agenda includes topics appropriate for both HAI researchers and practitioners throughout the entire event, each group is specifically targeted on certain days, with a combined day in the middle:

Oct. 20-23: ISAZ researchers

Oct. 23: Combined day for HAI researchers & practitioners

Oct. 22-25: HAI practitioners

Goals:

The ISAZ/HAI conferences will serve as conversation connecting mechanisms between those working in HAI research and those working in HAI practice. Participants will deepen their respect for each others' HAI work and form new collaborative partnerships.

Objectives:

By the close of the conferences, participants will:

1. Analyze ways that HAI benefits humans and animals.
2. Describe newly learned facets of HAI.
3. Delineate ways to apply new HAI knowledge to their particular field.
4. Establish new professional contacts relevant to their work.

Target Audience:

Investigators and practitioners working in the HAI field, nurses, physicians, veterinarians, social workers, psychologists, physical & occupational therapists, activity directors, students of professional disciplines, those working in animal assisted therapy and animal assisted activity, and members of the general public who are interested in HAI.

Continuing Education Credit:

Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Medical Technicians, through University of Missouri, Columbia, MO.

Conference Themes:

1. Challenges for enhancing HAI:
 - Animal environmental enrichment
 - Shelter animals
 - Animal rescue organizations
 - Animal abuse
 - Animal hoarding
 - Animal relinquishment to shelters
 - Animal bite and attack injury
 - Zoonoses- Infection control
 - Dog/animal fighting
2. Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual Wellness Across Species (ONE HEALTH)
 - Obesity/ Physical activity, prevention and treatment
 - Environment/Interchange
 - Cultural ideas and preferences
 - Quality of life
 - Long term care of animals
3. AAA and AAT
 - Professional/Educational training
 - Humane approach to animals doing this work
 - Service animals
4. HAI impacting professional practice
 - Optimizing practice
 - Advocacy
 - Practitioner responsibilities and consequences
 - The right companion animal for the family
 - Mental health area
 - Animal hospice care
 - Role of animals related to children's development
 - Older adults and companion animals
5. HAI crisis planning
 - Pet Evacuation Act
 - Animal emergency
 - Daily care vs. Crises/ Catastrophe care
 - Value of animals during crisis
6. Open track
 - Eco tourism
 - Balance in nature
 - Animal behavior

Research Meets Practice: Human-Animal Interaction in Obesity Across the Lifespan

(Submitted to National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD))



This proposal requests financial support for a one-day symposium imbedded within the two sequential conferences just described. The symposium (October 23, 2009) will overlap the two conferences in order to facilitate a “research meets practice focus” needed in the human-animal interaction HAI field. The symposium will provide an exciting opportunity for those working in HAI research and practice to share their latest findings and program outcomes related to the area of human-animal interaction, physical activity and obesity. A grant was submitted under the NIH Support for Conferences and Scientific Meetings mechanism. At the Scientific Review Group meeting, the proposal received a priority score of 130 and a percentile rank of 5.5. These are excellent scores and we await funding level announcements following NIH Council review in early June, 2009.

Educational and Research Opportunities for Students



All of the studies and programs undertaken by ReCHAI have involved students from nursing, veterinary medicine, and a multitude of other disciplines through service learning projects, independent study courses, volunteer work, research and clinical practice. Upon reading or hearing about our work, students seek out learning experiences

Human-Companion Animal Interaction: a 3-Credit Undergraduate Course



In this course we explore the historical & theoretical bases of human-companion animal interaction (HAI), the nature, issues, & clinical applications of HAI (including animal assisted activity and animal assisted therapy), and service animals. The course is aimed at preparing students from all disciplines with a solid knowledge base about what role human-companion animal interaction may play in their respective disciplines. Teaching methods include guest speakers, lecture, discussion, classroom activities, and an issues paper. Students also complete a service learning project in which they do 20 hours of volunteer work with an agency focused on animals. Thus, they have an opportunity to apply HAI concepts in a practice setting of interest. The course was first offered in the Spring of 2008 to 16 students, the following Fall semester, 68 students completed it. This semester (Spring, 2009) there are 66 students enrolled from 23 majors. These include Education, Journalism, Arts & Sciences, Biology, Accounting, Theatre, Psychology, Pre-Veterinary Medicine, Pre-Health professions, Nursing, Environmental Science, Hotel Management, Business Administration, Political Science, Mechanical Engineering, History, Nutritional Sciences, Human Development and Family Studies, English and Animal Science. The program advisor tells us that the students “absolutely love” the course and that “we could probably fill the Hearnes Center (one of our sports arenas) if we could offer it there.” It is heartening to know that students from so many disciplines are taking knowledge of HAI into their respective fields.



Veterinary Research Scholars Program (VRSP)

ReCHAI serves as a training site for the MUVRSP in which veterinary medical students are exposed to research career opportunities through a mentored research experience. The program has a goal to assist in further developing the community of veterinary research scientists. The scholars conduct a hypothesis-based research project based on their mentor's program of research, participate in weekly topics courses and present the results of their experiments at the National Merck-Merial Symposium and the MU Phi Zeta Research day. Each year, ReCHAI has at least one VRSP student. Our 2008-09 students presented their posters in the Veterinary Professional Students poster category competition at the 32nd Annual CVM Phi Zeta Research Day. Annie Chih, a second year veterinary medical student, won a second place award for her project entitled, "Exercise Motivation and Fitness through Dog Walking among Older Adults." While Rachel Ray, a third year veterinary medical student, received a fourth place award for her poster presentation entitled "Shelter Dog Behavior Improvement: Dog Walking as Enrichment." It was thrilling to see HAI research receive 2 of the five vet student poster awards. We are proud of these promising students and it has been a delightful experience working with them.



ReCHAI: A Clinical Placement Opportunity for Nursing Students

As a discipline, nursing is grounded in theory and research, ReCHAI provides a variety of appropriate clinical research experiences for nursing students. Through innovative programs and research projects nursing students further their knowledge and skill development while completing their community health nursing clinical practica. Students apply their classroom learning to our work in community settings with people of different cultures, backgrounds and ages. They work with us on our Walk a Hound, Lose a Pound, Reading with a Therapy Dog, and PAWSitive Visits programs.



PAWSitive Visits Coordinator and Pet Care Assistant for Nursing Homes

ReCHAI hires an MU student as a coordinator for our "Pawsitive Visits" animal visitation program. The student coordinator is responsible for organizing and scheduling weekly sessions during the academic year for a variety of animals to be brought to the facility by their owners or handlers. Residents have the opportunity to not only interact with the animals, but also to learn about the particular species and individual animal visiting via brief tutorials that are prepared by the "Pawsitive Visits" Coordinator and/or the animal's owner. The program has been in operation for over three years with great success. In nearly every visit, when participants visit with the animals, it stimulates their pleasant reminiscence about animal experiences in their prior lives.

ReCHAI Pet Care Assistant: Helping those who can't.

We hire a student Pet Care Assistant (PCA) who visits a local nursing home that contracted with us for this service four (4) times per week. During each visit the student locates the resident cat mascot, assesses the cat for normal behaviors and health, refills the food and water containers, and cleans the litter box. The PCA delivers cat food from the College of Veterinary Medicine as needed. Monthly, the PCA leads a group discussion concerning the cat with the residents and staff, providing a brief educational tutorial about cat health and behavior. The PCA also assists with maintaining the Pet Memory Book at the facility to record events in the cat's life.

Programs



PALS for Seniors

(Funded by Li'l Red Foundation)

Is an innovative, online training and registration program, to enable people and their dogs to become registered to do animal assisted activity visits with older adults who live in the community or in health care facilities. This online environment provides the curriculum, training materials, a message discussion board, and a library of relevant materials for those who train and register with our program.

PAWSitive Visits is an animal visitation program for older adults in which nursing home and retirement facility residents learn about and interact with a variety of animals. This activity provides the participants with an animal to hold, hug and touch as well as entertainment and mental stimulation of recalling memories about animal experiences in their lives. The following animals have visited the residents:

- Multiple dogs and cats of many different breeds including a Newfoundland, English Springer Spaniel, Great Dane, Daschund, Great Pyrenees, Collie, Siberian Husky, German Shorthaired Pointer, mixed breeds, & a Maine Coon Cat
- Exotic species including a Coatamundi (S. African type of raccoon), ferret, chinchilla, rabbits, & a pot-bellied pig
- The College of Veterinary Medicine's mascot Mule Team (with rides for those who are able to get into the wagon)
- Birds of prey from the College of Veterinary Medicine's Raptor Club
- Palamino horse and a Welsh Pony

TigerPlace Pet Initiative (TiPPI)

TiPPI is a cross-disciplinary, collaborative program between the MU Sinclair School of Nursing and the MU College of Veterinary Medicine. The underlying principle of TiPPI is the belief in the health benefits of human animal interaction and the human animal bond for older adults and pets. This belief is based on research showing that older adults live longer, healthier and happier lives when they own or regularly interact with pets.

We foster a pet-encouraging environment at TigerPlace, a state of the art "aging in place" retirement housing facility built by Americare Systems, Inc. in collaboration with the MU Sinclair School of Nursing. Each apartment includes pet-encouraging design features such as screened porches, outside doors for each apartment, wide windowsills, and tile floors in entry ways.

We sponsor a student worker as a Pet Care Assistant providing help to senior pet owners with care of their pets.

Excellent veterinary care is provided to the TigerPlace residents' pets, while simultaneously providing an invaluable learning experience for veterinary medical students to work with older adult clients. The on-site fully-equipped veterinary exam room enables residents to simply walk their animal down the hall to see a veterinarian. A faculty clinician works with veterinary medical students to provide care to pet residents of TigerPlace. Foster care and adoption services are provided for bereaved pets of TigerPlace when their owners are deceased or can no longer care for them.

**Proposal to change Article IV, Section 2. Of the AAH-ABV Constitution
regarding the terms of officers from one year to two years.**

Voting will take place at annual meeting this summer.

Change to read: The term of office shall be as follows:

President: Two years • President-elect: Two years

Immediate Past-president: Two years • Secretary: Two years (renewable)

Treasurer: Two years (renewable) • Secretary & Treasurer may be combined

Research



Pet Pals: Testing a Dog Visit Protocol with Newly Admitted Nursing Home Residents (Funded by a MU-Columbia Research Board Council Grant). We studied whether older adults who had recently moved into a nursing home could benefit from dog visits using a three-group, randomized design. New nursing home residents received 3 visits per week for 6 weeks from either a trained visitor dog and its handler, or a friendly human visitor; a control group received no visits. We monitored their daily hassles and uplifts, stress (salivary cortisol), anxiety, depression, social support, sense of coherence and loneliness. Data analysis is underway.



Walk a Hound Lose a Pound:

This community shelter dog walking study provides adults and families with children an innovative way to increase physical activity. It is an ongoing partnership with the Central Missouri Humane Society, the MO Department of Health & Senior Services, and the City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department. The study consists of weekly (Saturday morning) walks with shelter dogs on a nature trail near the animal shelter. Participants are also educated about nutrition and the health benefits of walking. We measure physical activity stage of change, body weight and physical activity levels outside of the program. Our findings show that by taking the dog walks, participants are motivated to further increase their physical activity. The study also increases community awareness about dogs available for adoption. In addition, the dogs become more adoptable through better socialization, more exercise, and leash-walking practice.

Pet Owner Intensive Care Unit Visitation Policies in Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospitals:

The purpose of this study was to identify existent policies and procedures for pet owners' visits to pets hospitalized in intensive care. We used an anonymous, descriptive online survey of all veterinary medical teaching hospitals (VMTH) in North America to learn about their policies for owner visitation of pets hospitalized in the ICU. We found a range of policies and issues associated with this visitation. Benefits were perceived, such as comfort to the owner, improved mental status and better appetite in the pet, and building trust between owners and their pet's health-care team. Challenges of owner visitation were difficulty getting owners to leave, staff finding it difficult to give care to the pets with owners present, and difficulty when owners are visiting in the ICU when another patient suffers an arrest.

Owner Perceptions of Visits with their Hospitalized Pets:

In this study we asked dog owners about their perspective on visiting their dog while it was hospitalized in the intensive care unit (ICU) and studied reasons that some dog owners elected not to visit their hospitalized dog. The stress associated with having one's dog hospitalized in an ICU was a challenge for the owners. We found--regardless of gender, that owners believed their visits were as helpful to them as to their dogs. We learned a great deal about what owners do during the visits, and in what ways they think their visits are beneficial.

Barriers & Facilitators to Exercise & Physical Activity (Funded by Missouri Foundation For Health).

Existing exercise and physical activity resources in the community were identified and assessed for their accessibility for socio-economically challenged people. Public housing residents participated in a series of focus groups and discussed what would be ideal components of an exercise and physical activity program for them. We found three major barriers to low-income citizens' use of physical activity facilities 1) cost, 2) accessibility and 3) lack of support by the facility. Participants made creative suggestions about increasing their physical activity and exercise through such mechanisms as exercise buddies, team competitions, and regular community dances. Several potential leaders in the community emerged who will help their community residents exercise effectively. A physical activity and exercise program that is community-based, community designed, community-led, and community-maintained is beginning to take shape, and will be the outcome of this project. It will involve dog walking as a low impact physical activity with many benefits.



Older Adults (Funded by The WALTHAM/American Association of Human-Animal Bond Veterinarians, Human-Animal Bond Research Collaboration):

A three-group, repeated measures design was used to test the efficacy of a 12-week (5 days/week) shelter dog walking program for community-dwelling elders. Participants either walked with shelter dogs, with a human walking companion, or maintained their usual activities. Findings revealed that the dog walking group had a statistically significant mean increase in their 6-minute walking distance of 28%, while participants in the other two groups had far smaller, non-significant increases (4% for human walking companion group and 6% for the control group). The dogs were always ready to walk, however we noted human walking companions actually discouraging each other from walking. The participants reported that they “benefited from this program” and enjoyed walking with the shelter dogs.

We also studied the effect of the program on the shelter dogs. Using a matched pair, repeated measures design, we found that although similar in behavior characteristics at baseline, dogs randomly assigned to the experiment (walking) group showed significantly better behavior, higher adoption rates, and lower euthanasia rates than dogs in the control (non walking) group.

PROPOSALS UNDER REVIEW:

Caring for both ends of the leash: Effects of Owners Visiting their Dogs Hospitalized in an Intensive Care Unit.
(Proposal under review by The Waltham Foundation outcome expected May, 2009)

Seniors Fostering Shelter Dogs: Improving Health and Well-Being Together (Proposal under review for The ISAZ/WALTHAM Collaborative Research Awards on Human-Animal Interactions outcome expected, Fall, 2009)

PROPOSALS UNDER DEVELOPMENT:

Service Dog Training Program:
Shared Teamwork of Purpose (STOP) Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Veterans (PTSD) & Dog Walking

References & publications upon request: rechai@missouri.edu

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Faculty Signature _____ **Date** _____

Mission Statement

- To further awareness of the human-animal bond
- To further scientific progress in the area of the human-animal bond
- To further educational opportunities in the area of the human-animal bond
- To encourage veterinary participation in human-animal bond activities with related organizations and disciplines
- To explore the potential for establishing a veterinary specialty in the area of the human-animal bond

***All AAH-ABV members will be listed in the directory unless the member specifies otherwise. Please write checks to AAH-ABV and send them to Dr. Tom Krall, St. Petersburg College, PO Box 13489, St. Petersburg, Florida 33733**