

Website:  
[www.hasindia.org](http://www.hasindia.org)  
Email:  
[info@hasindia.org](mailto:info@hasindia.org)



**Humane  
Animal Society**

**Newsletter**

No-42, 4th Cross,  
Meena Estate,  
Sowripalayam Road,  
Coimbatore 641028  
93671-44147,  
93661-27215  
**HELPLINE: 97915-32266**

ISSUE III

APRIL 2009

Do you have any relevant stories or photos to share?

Send in your entries to HAS and get your voice heard!

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## Neuter and Spay: the Humane Way

*Spaying* is a general term used to describe the ovariectomy of a female animal. *Neutering* is a general term used to describe the castration of a male animal. However, neutering is used in reference to both genders. The surgical procedure, performed by a veterinarian, renders the animal incapable of reproducing.

Spaying can be done before the first heat cycle (between 6 to 9 months) in the females and males can only be neutered after the testicles descend (between 9 to 12 months). Humane Animal Society is a strong proponent of "early" neutering since this guarantees that the animals will not be able to breed and populate within a community.

Animal shelters are unfortunately faced with an incredible burden: What to do with the overpopulation of dogs that they cannot find homes for. Having your pet neutered ensures that you will not be adding to this tremendous burden.



For more information on neutering or spaying your pet, please contact Humane Animal Society.

*Let's work towards a Coimbatore free of homeless dogs!*

Through neutering, you can help your dog live a happier, healthier, and longer life. Spaying eliminates the nervous pacing that is a sign that a dog is in heat. Castration stops the mating drive in males, reducing the urge to roam, which in turn, reduces the risk of fights, injury, poisoning, accidents, and contracting diseases. If you have more than one pet in your household, all the pets will get along better if they are neutered. A long-term benefit of neutering is improved health.

All of us are affected by animal overpopulation. Health is threatened by the danger of transmittable diseases, including rabies, animal bites, and attacks. Property may be damaged and livestock killed when dogs roam in search of food. Animal waste, proving to be a serious environmental hazard, foul public places. It is only when all of us assume the responsibility for animal overpopulation that we will see any decrease in the problem.

## Doctor Dog

How do I administer medicine to a dog?

ANS: Pills- Open your dog's mouth and drop the pill down, as far back as you can, on top of and in the center of the tongue. Close the mouth and hold it shut while stroking the throat until your dog swallows. If it licks its nose the chances are that it has swallowed the pill. Liquids—Tilt the

chin up at 45\* and place the neck of the bottle into the cheek pouch, between the molar teeth and the cheek. Seal the lips around it with your fingers and pour in the liquid. Bottle syringes and eye-droppers can be used.

The dog is frothing at the mouth and not eating anything. He is listless. What could be the matter?

ANS: Frothing could be due to (a) distemper of the jaw; (b) ulcers and wounds in the mouth; (c) rabies; or (d) consumption of poison.



## Are We Civilised?

*"We cannot talk about culture and civilisation if we do not uphold the dignity of life"*



*Hens being cruelly transported to restaurants*

On watching news flashes, I couldn't help but ask myself a few questions: How could the land of Mahatma Gandhi have been so violent? Why has the land of the Buddha and Mahavira seen so much carnage in recent times? The killings of 1947, the communist insurgencies of Kerala, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, and the Bombay riots to name a random few. In fact, if you take localised riots such as Vanniyars versus Dalits in Tamil Nadu, communists versus RSS in Kerala, and Kannada versus Tamils in Karnataka, the list is endless. The increasing numbers of rape and murder make us wonder whether we are civi-

lised at all.

The common strain is that the weak are attacked - we have not yet grown out of that syndrome. I have been writing about heritage, culture and the environment. But human behaviour can be so uncivilised and crass that I often wonder whether we can really appreciate the finer things in life when we are capable of so much inhumanity. It is ironic that the seed for violence probably took root in the philosophy of a pacifist Mahatma Gandhi.

He exhorted Indians towards civil disobedience and non-cooperation. Unfortunately, this resulted in a loss of respect for law and civil society. If we go back

to the freedom movement, we will realise that nearly every call for *satyagraha* and non-cooperation ended in violence, forcing Mahatma Gandhi to break his fast or come out of prison.

Some time ago, on the Chennai-Salem highway, we stopped three lorries, each carrying 35 to 45 buffaloes and cattle jam packed, en route to Kerala to be slaughtered. It was a heart-breaking sight. The animals were tired and sick and could barely stand. One buffalo was so tired that his head was balancing on the rope at the back of the lorry, cutting his neck. Others had tears streaming down their faces. Apart

from the illegality of the journey (only six large animals may be permitted on a lorry), I was appalled at man's inhumanity to his fellow beings. When the lorries are stopped, the animals are made to walk. Have you seen cattle transported from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh to Kerala? It is awful. They are tied nose to nose, whipped and made to walk with no food or water. Why should we, argue the transporters, waste money to feed animals that are going to be killed anyway? If one falls down, fire is lit beneath the animal to force it up and make it walk.

Leather has become a fashion statement in India, with designers and glamorous models filling the catwalk. Let us not go into the merits or demerits of wearing leather and eating meat. If you want to eat meat the least you can do is visit a slaughterhouse and then decide whether the pleasure is still worth it. But the transportation of animals and the brutal methods of killing them in our country do concern every thinking individual. Today there is a campaign going on in the USA and Europe against Indian leather, and the industry is crying foul. Why don't they clean up their act instead? Animals are transported in the cruelest ways to Kerala and West Bengal where slaughter is a free for all. The changes must begin in these states. The locals must refuse to buy the leather or meat of animals that have suffered cruelty in transportation or during slaughter.

Yet another issue is the utilisation

of animals for research: I saw three tiny monkeys whose spines had been broken by a PhD student who was writing a thesis on the effect of dropping weights on them at the A L Mudaliar Institute of Basic Medical Sciences in Chennai. Even after they were rescued and taken away, they were so traumatised and incurable that they refused to move out of their tiny cages, lying huddled in a foetal position day and night. Two lucky ones died soon. The unlucky third lived long and suffered. Scientists have been the greatest thinkers and creators. Surely they are not so bereft of ideas?

Have you seen rabbits used to test beauty products? Have you seen hens transported to hotels in Chennai? After a lifetime of balancing on thin wires that make up the floor of their cages, they are tied together by their legs and hung upside down from the handlebars of bicycles during their final journey to a diner's plate. Their wings get caught in the cycle wheel, which yanks them off piece by piece. Again, the lucky ones die. Then there are the bullock carts, those vehicles with infinite weight that bullocks, foaming at the mouth, strain to pull. The animals are forced up steep slopes, whipped and prodded till they are no longer able to pull and are sent to the slaughterhouse on a final grueling journey leading to death and deliverance. Have you seen children tie and light a cracker on a dog's tail? Have you seen municipal workers beat dogs to death, those faithful friends of man? Have you seen the dhobi whip his donkey to move fast with the animal's front legs tied together to prevent movement and its back overloaded with bundles of clothes? But of course you have seen it all. Yet we do nothing, because it does

not concern us, or we do not care, or we look but do not see. And the forms of entertainment we enjoy are even worse. The famous *Jallikattu* of Tamil Nadu is agony for the bulls; chili powder is rubbed in their anus and they are poked and stoned till they run crazed with pain and fear, all this for our "heroes" to put a silly garland around their horns. Or a race in Maharashtra, where a horse and bullock are yoked together to a cart, and several such-carts compete in a race. The horse, the steed of the gods, runs fast. Pity the poor bullock.

Do you know what happens to race horses? After a lifetime of making money for their owners, they are suddenly auctioned to the *jhutka* owner or sold for pleasure rides, where they suffer starvation, endless hours of work, and illnesses. During the annual carnival in Goa, there is a feast when people run around the streets biting live piglets, who run crazed with fear. How barbaric can we be?

And how many of us have visited circuses and enjoyed them, uncaring of the cruelties in the training of the animals. Or visited the zoo to see animals in cages, a life sentence for crimes they never committed? I mention all these because I feel we have become insensitive to violence and cruelty. We do not give a thought or a second glance, although we see it every day around us. Once one becomes desensitised to cruelty, the form it takes becomes irrelevant - cruelty to animals can easily be replicated towards people. We cannot talk about culture and civilisation if we do not uphold the dignity of life.

J Edgar Hoover, former director of the FBI, made a study of people convicted



*Inhumane transportation of buffalo and goats on Trichy Road*

*“What , you may ask, can an individual do? Do not forget that the common man has a mighty weapon—his purchasing power”*

murder. He found that in every case, the convict had a childhood history of cruelty to animals. Nearer to home, in a prominent murder incident in Annamalai University, the common refrain against the accused was that he had carved up animals in the hostel, in full view of his friends.

Again, I fault the education system. Fifty years after independence, it has not taught us values. The bullock, say our textbooks, is a beast of burden. So the weight of this burden and the treatment of the animal cease to trouble us. Hens provide us meat and monkeys entertain us, making young people believe they were born for our gratification. The instances go on. This is the beginning of discrimination, cruelty and violence. When one race or religion or caste or colour considers itself superior to another, can we complain? After all, we perpetuated this myth. There is a Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act. The fine for an act of cruelty is a laughable Rs 50. A proposed amendment to the Act and increase in the fine amount has been stuck in Parliament for ten years, even while our parliamentarians

increased their salaries, amenities and freebies.

What, you may ask, can an individual do? Do not forget that the common man has a mighty weapon - his purchasing power. Do not use bullock carts for transportation - and tell the bullock cart owners why not. Do not visit the circus, and refuse to buy leather. If you see an act of cruelty towards animals, stop the person immediately. Go to the nearest police station and hand him over under the PCA Act. The animal must be seized, but make sure that it is fed and watered at the police station (the police are, after all, a part of our heartless society).

This is a small step. Even if the fine is a meagre Rs 50, the sheer harassment and corruption involved in trying to get back his animal from the police station could make the bullock-cart driver more careful in future. Point out every cruelty you see to your family, friends, maid, and anyone else. We must send out strong messages of disapproval and condemnation. We cannot prevent violence towards human beings if we do not stop vio-

lence towards all forms of life.

*Nanditha Krishna*

*The writer is a member of the Governing Body of the Blue Cross of India. She is a well known social commentator and art historian but is best known as the Honorary Director of the C P Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation and the C P R Environmental Education Centre*

*Courtesy: Sunday Express*



*Monkey chained up for human entertainment.*

## Max - A Miracle in my Life

It was April 9<sup>th</sup> 2008. Max was lying in my arms with his head slightly tilted towards the floor. His breathing seemed slightly calmer, now that he was in a more comfortable position. He had been quite disturbed for sometime, was struggling for breath and certainly hurting somewhere. Only if he could speak...

I was in deep misery not knowing what to do and the thought of being helpless was extremely frustrating. I held him tight and closed my eyes. He snuggled closer and that seemed to calm him further. I had called the vet already – but it was going to take time. I wished I could do something to make him feel better. That is when I felt his breathing becoming slower and heartbeat getting fainter. My heart sank and tears rolled uncontrollably down my cheeks as I clung to his dear life in a desperate attempt to arrest the hands of time and destiny. But it was not to be, as by then his breathing had stopped; heartbeat still fainter, finally coming to a stop. His soul had departed and his body lay lifeless in my arms... As with all noble souls, he left this world without much suffering and staying cheerful and content almost till the end...

Max doesn't need any introduction to anyone who knows me; in fact, even those who didn't know me or my husband Madhu, knew Max. He was our German Shepherd – an integral part of our lives for the 9 years that he shared our lives. He was 13 years and 2 months when he passed away. He had fallen sick just 10 days before that. But that didn't take the cheer away from his face. His hind legs were rendered immobile though, which definitely caused some consternation – but he never let that hamper his spirits. The vet was hopeful and so were we. Thirteen years is a long time for a dog of this breed – but we certainly hadn't had enough of him. He was more than a

family member and with each passing year, our bond had only become stronger. The last year was a bit difficult for him, as age was catching up. He had slowed down considerably and had become more sluggish. We kept him trim and fit and took him for regular walks; but it took longer for him to lift himself up despite the vitamins and supplements of Glucosamine and Omega 3 that we lavished on him. His steps were less sure and it took longer for us to complete our walking rounds. Long gone were the days when we ran and walked 9 miles together around the White Rock Lake and lay exhausted on the grass catching our breaths. He seemed to get anxious and stressed out if at least one of us was not with him. Hence, despite all our busy travel schedules, we had taken care to ensure that one of us was back home by nightfall to be with him. He always slept in the same room as us – his occasional sighs breaking the stillness of the night and his place offering the cozy warmth in the early mornings when it was time to rise and shine. He was truly the sunshine of our lives.

I vividly remember the day we brought him to our home in Dallas - a four year old bundle of boundless energy. We had responded to an advertisement for adoption of a German Shepherd dog, posted by Mike - one of the employees at Nortel where I worked. That was our first introduction to Max and it was love at first sight. Madhu and I had no doubts in our minds that this is the guy whom we were waiting for. This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> pet for Madhu – but, for me, having a pet was a long cherished dream finally coming true and my joy knew no bounds. Max reigned as the undisputed king in our back yard chasing rabbits and squirrels among others and gave the garbage truck driver a run for his life. The gentle giant that he was, his looks and the ferocity of his bark belied the gentleness that really kept trouble makers away. Those who got to know him



*"He was truly the  
sunshine of our lives"*

*“He taught us important lessons of better living— how to embrace life, how to enjoy the moment and more than anything, how to live life to the fullest without holding back”*



better, connected well; and the list of his admirers grew in leaps and bounds.

He became very popular in the circles that we moved around. We traveled the length and breadth of North America with him whether it was scaling the depths of the Grand Canyon or sauntering amidst the woods of Yosemite.

Five years rolled by bringing so much joy. We were contemplating to move to India for a few years and of course we would never move without Max. He was by then 9 years old and considered a senior dog. Preparing him for the long journey by flight became our priority and we spared no efforts in making the transition as smooth as possible. We stopped over in Frankfurt for couple of days where Ajax Mohammed played host to us. Max endeared himself to everyone – even the customs official at Frankfurt airport dropped the files he was carrying to give a bear hug to Max! He got acclimatized faster than us and enjoyed his stay in India tremendously. He had more interactions with people and other animals here. From his vantage point of the vast expanse of the terrace upstairs, he was able to experience more life than what he was used to, in Dallas. His fan club was exploding that got us sometimes rather overwhelmed with kids coming to shake his hands or play ball with him. He had a fantastic time also with his foster parents – Mohan and Shanthi – our benevolent house owners who stayed upstairs. They took turns to dote on him in our absence.

The slight sound of the gate latch would send him shooting to the window where he would part the curtain to see who was coming. From outside itself, we could see the excitement as he followed the movement of the car inside and once parked, he would shift his position close to the door with his wet nose sticking out through the crack even before the key turned...It was a delight to come home just to see the excitement and sheer joy with which he welcomed us. Signs of age became more pronounced as he turned

12. He started feeling more and more insecure when we were both away from home. We had done everything possible to make him at ease and comfortable. I started working out of home in Coimbatore and my trips became very few and far between. We had wanted to move to our own house soon with Max so that he could enjoy the space outside even more. The construction of our house was just about to begin, when Max was taken ill. As it happened, he moved there ahead of us. His body was laid to rest at the far corner of our plot...

Max had touched our lives in ways words can never express. Truer than the human kind, he wasn't merely a companion, but a soul mate. He brought something that was unique and satisfying. He opened our eyes to the unlimited joy and companionship only a pet can bring to one's life. His unconditional love transcended language barriers. His sniff was worth a thousand words. He taught us important lessons of better living – how to embrace life, how to enjoy the moment and more than anything, how to live life to the fullest without holding back. He had a beginner's curiosity even at the ripe old age of 13. He could demonstrate that listening with compassion is as important as having the right words. He was open to new perspectives and held tight to life's simple pleasures. Even while establishing boundaries and space, his puppy like innocence remained intact. In the end, he also showed us how to let go when it is time to let go even when it seemed way too soon. He knew that life passes quickly and therefore one needs to enjoy the ride while it lasts. These powerful lessons learned while sharing life with Max had led us to start an animal welfare organization in Coimbatore ([www.hasindia.org](http://www.hasindia.org)) where among other things, we were able to sensitize humans to the love and joy pets bring to their lives. Max was truly a spiritual messenger and we consider ourselves blessed to have had our lives touched by him!!! I had a hard time com-

-ing to terms with the loss – any amount of justification didn't seem to help. The thought of him not being there to welcome me home devastated me. His absence was so overwhelming that I wandered around the house like a mad woman. It must have been three or four days after the incident that all of a sudden, I had this irresistible urge to speak to Mike from whom we adopted Max. The last time we had spoken to each other was when I told him about our move to India and that we were taking Max along with us. At that time, Mike had told me how happy he was to know that we had bonded so well with Max. I frantically searched my company's internal directory and drew a blank. For some reason, the desire to speak to Mike was so strong that I requested my friend Kurinji to search the White Pages to track him down and was glad when the address finally matched....I picked up the phone and composed myself for making this call. The acknowledgment at the other end was encouraging and after exchanging customary hellos, without further ado, I broke the news. The silence at the other end was a bit longer than usual. Mike's voice cracked as he told me that after all these many years, he had picked up an 8 week old German Shepherd pup from the local shelter just couple of days ago. The pup had reminded him of Max so much that he couldn't name him anything else. My jaw dropped as I clutched the phone tighter and the impact of what he had just said slowly sank in.

This event of someone picking up a pup from a local shelter, as routine as it could ever be, had happened around the time when Max's soul departed this world.

Even stranger was the fact that the pup was born around the same time as Max's birth date. We had huge lumps in our throats that rendered us speechless for a while. I was groping for words when Mike broke the silence again asking me for my e-mail so that he could send me baby Max's pictures.

Life had certainly turned a full circle. What more could I ever ask for? I felt as if the power of belief and hope was put to test only to emerge victorious. Time stood still in quiet realization of the power of the soul having transcended continents, now connected us across the globe. I experienced a sudden surge of peace sweep over me to soothe my weary mind and troubled heart. Mike sent me the pictures of baby Max and I too sent him Max's latest pictures. Mike and I have been in touch since then and I eagerly look forward to seeing baby Max next time I visit Dallas.

Last but not least, I would like to conclude this narration with a silent prayer to our soul mate whose physical presence we miss so dearly. Dear Max, Awake or asleep, we carry a dream of you, and it helps us remember how much better our lives have become, because you are a part of it!

*Mini Vasudevan*

*May 2008*

*This edition of the newsletter is dedicated to Max as we fondly remember him on his first anniversary this month.*





## Go on a holiday with your pet!



Finding a pet-friendly resort can be a harrowing experience. At petvacations.in you can surf numerous pet-friendly resorts india that allow you to bring your furry friend with you.

So what can you expect to find at a pet-friendly resort? Many of the resorts are just like any other hotel except they allow dogs to be in the room with you. You will have to provide food and other necessities for your dog. However, at some of the pet-friendly resorts, home cooked food can be arranged for your pet. Some hotels might even have someone on staff to walk your dog.

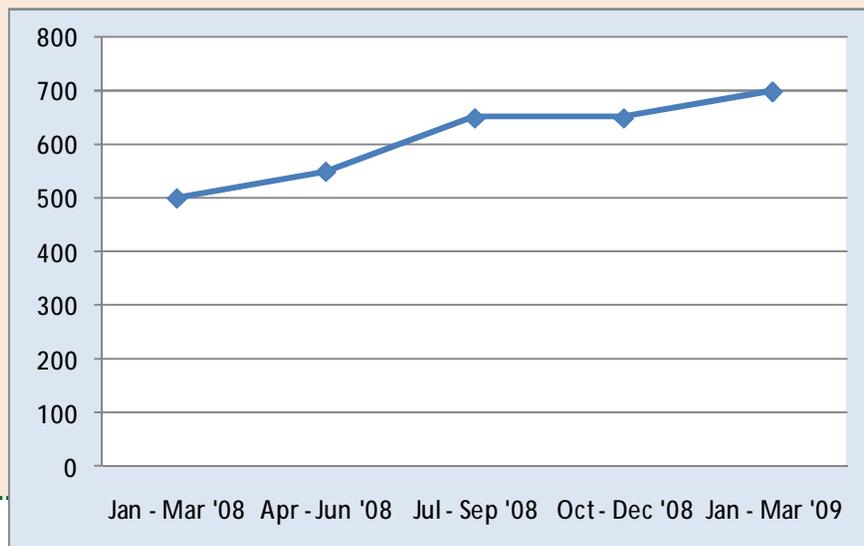
**So, pack your pooch's bag because wherever you go he or she will go with you...**



**HAS ANIMAL BIRTH CONTROL (ABC)**

# of dogs spayed/neutered

JAN-MAR '09 = 700

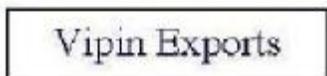


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C/o Dr. Mini Vasudevan.

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Coimbatore—641028

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Your contribution will go a long way in making a tremendous difference in the lives of several homeless and injured animals.

HAS is registered under Section 12 A(a) of the IT Act 1961 and granted the status of Charitable Trust w.e.f. 06 April 2006. All donations are tax-exempt under Section 80G of the IT Act 1961 w.e.f 06 April 2006.