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# Humane Animal Society

## Newsletter

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**HELPLINE: 97915-32266**

Issue 11

January 2009

HAS  
wishes all its'  
members a Happy  
and Prosperous  
New Year!

### Inside this issue:

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HAS ANIMAL BIRTH  
CONTROL (ABC)  
2008 Statistics  
# Of stray dogs  
spayed/neutered

JAN—MAR = 500  
APR—JUN = 550  
JUL—SEP = 650  
OCT—DEC = 650

## WANTED: A New Owner for Fun, Care and Companionship this New Year

There are millions of stray and homeless animals in India today. HAS does what is practically possible to control these numbers in a humane way, for instance by adopting procedures such as Animal Birth Control. But due to financial and infrastructural limitations, it is practically not possible for HAS to individually provide shelter for all these animals. If each one of us were to adopt one stray/homeless animal, the numbers of those without shelter would become negligible. HAS volunteers trained in dog behaviour will guide the pro-



*"Animals are such agreeable friends - they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms."*  
- George Elliot

spective adopters to make the correct choice, and advice the new adopters about dog care, diet, behaviour, vaccinations and grooming.

Prospective adopters would be interviewed by HAS counsellors to ensure that the dog goes to a loving and responsible home. If found suitable, they would be allowed to adopt the dog. The new adopters will be given vaccination certificates, leaflets on dog care and will have our assistance at any step.

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### Make a positive start to the Year 2009!



**Call 97915-32266 TODAY and  
take home a bundle of joy!**

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## Doctor Dog

Q: Is it true that a female dog should have at least one litter of puppies before being spayed?

A: **NO.** The female should be spayed by the time she is six to eight months of age. Many veterinarians now believe that spaying at an earlier age presents little or no increased risk. Spaying a female puppy before

the first heat cycle helps protect against mammary tumors and helps prevent the development of several reproductive tract diseases.

Q: How can I keep my puppy from chewing everything he comes across?

A: Realize that chewing is a natural behavior for him. It eases the discomfort of teething and is a part of a

puppy's exploration of his environment through the sense of taste. If you catch your puppy chewing something he shouldn't, remove the object with a firm "no." Let him sense, through the firmness of your voice, that chewing is unacceptable. Correct your puppy quietly and firmly each time you catch him chewing an unacceptable object.

"Animal Sacrifice is cruel , primitive, and brutalizing. It's time to end it"



## Blood on our Hands

Blood sacrifice was common to all ancient cultures and religions. Ancient Hindus and Jews did it; Muslims continue to do it (during Id). There are scenes of human and animal sacrifice on Harappan seals. The first to speak out against bloody sacrifices were the rishis of the Upanishads. The chief message of the Buddha and Mahavira was to stop the killing of innocent animals. In time, the sacrifice of people and animals came to be regarded as primitive and cruel. Interestingly, scenes of animal sacrifice are rare in classical temple sculpture or painting.

Till the 20th century, hu-

man beings --especially the unwanted girl child --were regularly sacrificed in India. Education resulted in a public outcry against the practice and the government responded by banning human sacrifice, although we still hear of occasional lapses. But mere banning is never sufficient, and any change in attitude and action owes much to individuals such as the late Krishna Iyer in Tamil Nadu and Peela Ramakrishna in Andhra Pradesh. The former went around persuading people to "break" a pumpkin instead of killing an animal or bird. The latter took the police to the remotest villages to stop sacrifices. Such was the com-

mitment of these men.

Animal sacrifice is particularly brutal. Buffaloes, goat and roosters are queued up as in a slaughterhouse, crying as they watch the others die and await their turn. Blood flows everywhere. Sometimes the worshippers anoint themselves with it; most times, they drink it even as it flows out. After the sacrifice, the priest may garland himself with the entrails. After beheading the buffalo, the chopped-off legs may be placed in its mouth, the fat spread over its eyes. The worst form of sacrifice is live impalement. It is altogether too gory. Is this what the Gods want?

Blood sacrifice was re-

garded as magic, a tool to propitiate or please a god, to fulfill a vow and as a sacrament. The animal (and, formerly, person) could be a scapegoat for human sins or inexplicable natural phenomena, or a vehicle to carry away the collected demons or ills of an entire community. It seems very unfair that a little goat or a peaceful buffalo should be made responsible for events beyond their comprehension or control. Ancient peoples performed sacrifices to (control negative forces, particularly disease, in the belief that any blood would satisfy the bloodthirsty spirit. The animal was sacrificed to "save" a human life. Today, medicine performs the task more efficiently.

Animal sacrifices continue in villages all over India. The beginning of the planting season and Navaratri are particularly bad periods, when large numbers of animals, particularly buffaloes, are killed to propitiate local goddesses and thus ensure fertility. In the Himalayan states and the East, animals are sold by weight to be sacrificed to Devi during Navaratri, to reenact killing of the buffalo-demon Mahisha. The confrontation between the Goddess and the buffalo goes back to a totemic period when the worshippers of the former defeated the worshippers of the latter. Unfortunately the memory of that confrontation lives on in the brutality of buffalo sacrifice.

There is a distinct gender bias in sacrifice. The male god - generally

an aspect of Shiva or Vishnu - is regarded as benign and peaceful, an austere yogi or a benevolent provider. The female - a form of Shakti - is bloodthirsty; violent and cruel. She may be Kali, with sharp, protruding canine teeth, or Mari, the smallpox goddess, or any one else. Every village in South and Eastern India, has bloodthirsty village goddesses who reinforce the myth of the wicked witch, always a woman. The former is controlled by blood, the latter by society. Women are potentially evil, according to this belief, and must be kept under control. They are drinkers of blood and consumers of human and animal flesh, and any insufficiency in their propitiation will, it is believed, invite their wrath and inflame their cruel natures. The Sapta Matrikas (seven mothers/sisters/virgins); the various forms of Kali and Mari and all village goddesses have longing for blood and a reputation for cruelty. Their images are ugly and frightening, both in appearance and behaviour.

What an awful image of women, which is ingrained in the Indian psyche! Surely the mother who procreates and nurtures deserves a better reputation? While the temples to the male Gods" are beautiful, majestic buildings that inspire awe and "serenity, Devi temples are small, dark and dingy, situated outside the city in a sacred grove that is the haunt of dead spirits. Thus supporting animal sacrifice is supporting both gender inequity and perpetuating myths about the evil that is woman. Male spirits who demand sacrifice are generally the Goddess' lieutenants, who have developed a taste for blood. This image was created to justify the suppression of women.

Another little-known aspect is economic. Animal sacrifices are promoted by moneylenders, who freely give loans for the occasion and thus get illiterate villagers into their clutches. The wielders of the knife are often butchers who officiate as priests and charge for their services. The cost of a buffalo runs into thousands, a goat, sheep or rooster into hundreds. Add the cost of the feast and the poojari's fees, and the result is a hole in the pocket. There is a mafia that benefits from the conduct of animal sacrifices, which keeps the lower strata in permanent bondage. This becomes a vicious cycle. The animal sacrifices purport to improve their situation. But they tie the votaries, who generally belong to the lowest classes and castes, in economic chains, where they remain forever. Obviously, the gods are not pleased.

Sacrifice means giving up something precious to oneself. Thus Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his son, while Shunahshepas offered himself to be sacrificed. Buying and killing an innocent animal does not fit the bill. The sacrifice probably originated among totemic tribes who sacrificed the animal totem to acquire its strength or wisdom. Conquering tribes would sacrifice the animal totem of the defeated tribe to signify victory. In the choice of the buffalo to be killed, there is an obvious racial message: that the dark-coloured, slothful and ugly animal deserves to die.

Animal sacrifice is cruel, disgusting and primitive. Bloody sacrifices brutalise the viewer, confusing the distinction between right and wrong. If one man supports animal sacrifice, another will support human sacrifice, the killing of

## DID YOU KNOW?

(1) An estimated 1 million dogs in the United States have been named the primary beneficiary in their owner's will.

(2) A cat will almost never meow at another cat. Cats use this sound for humans.

children and sati. How can any of these be permitted in a civilised society? All cultures and religions evolve, discarding ugly practices. Over the years, we have learned to identify and repudiate negative aspects of Hinduism, such as sati and the caste system.

Animal sacrifice is another cruelty that must be rejected and discarded. It is surprising to hear educated people talk of "customary practice". Religion should be value-based and ennobling. Sacrifice is neither: It is cruel and disgusting. We need to rise above petty political differences to sup-

port the implementation of a good law.

*Nanditha Krishna*



## Argentine Dog Saves Abandoned Baby

An eight-year-old dog has touched the hearts of Argentines by saving the life of an abandoned baby, placing him safely alongside her own new puppies.

The country's media are calling him "the miracle baby".

He was born prematurely to a 14-year-old girl in a shanty town outside the capital, Buenos Aires.

She is said to have panicked and abandoned the boy in a field, surrounded by wooden boxes and rubbish.

Then along came La China, reports say, the dog which somehow picked up the baby and carried him 50m to place him alongside her own puppies.

The dog's owner reported hearing the child crying and finding him covered with a rag.

The baby, weighing 4kg (8lb 13oz), had some slight injuries, but no bite marks.

The owner called the police and the child is now being looked after by the authorities, while a decision is taken about his future.

The frightened mother appeared shortly after her baby was found.

The Argentine media has descended on the shanty town, talking of "the Argentine Romulus and Remus", the legendary founders of Rome, abandoned as babies and rescued by a wolf,

nearly 3,000 years ago.

La China, worried about her own puppies, is reported to be petrified by her new found fame, and her owner says he is worried that she is not eating.

*David Schweimler*



## Lara the Black Pearl

She came home in a neurosurgeon's apron pocket on 9 November 2002. Dr. Uma Nambiar, the onco-neuro surgeon at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre, New Delhi gifted her to us. Uma had already given her a name - "Lara". We never asked Uma why she chose Lara. Maybe, Uma was a great fan of Brian Lara, the world's best cricketer (but knowing Uma, I knew she didn't know the difference between cricket, the game and cricket, the insect) or Lara Dutta, the most beautiful woman of the year - Miss India. She was a gift for Uma from one of her patients. For us, she was the most beautiful pet. A velvet black Labrador born of Angel & Snoopy on 13 October 2002. Lara was a little bundle of joy, just one month old; jet black velvet hair with sparkling, beautiful eyes.

The moment she arrived, the other two inmates, Fluffy and Ruffles, did not take it too kindly, for having to share their space in our hearts. But having found someone smaller than they, they were magnanimous, I must say. Yet, they kept a little distance. Lara wouldn't leave her new mom's lap. The new mom, my better half Vickey, would not keep her down. We made a nice little crib and that was to be Lara's bed for a month. The crib was always next to Vickey's bed. We were not allowed to even speak aloud while she was asleep, lest we wake her up.

A month passed without much

ado; Uma came again with yet another pup on 8 December, this time with Lara's brother. He had no name. I chose Zeeno for his name. Zeeno had a story. The family which kept Lara and Zeeno had a tragedy in their home. One night, when Zeeno's owner, the lady of the house, took Zeeno's mom, Angel, out for her call, she spotted two strangers hiding in their garden. She raised an alarm. Her husband came out and in the fight that ensued, the robbers fired at her husband and escaped into the darkness. The man died later in a hospital.

Were these dogs a bad omen? They believed so. They wanted to get rid off the bad omen.

Superstitious as most people are, nobody would take Zeeno. Uma, the bold woman she is, knew me by my DNA and was certain that I will be only too happy to explode a myth.

There they were: Lara and Zeeno, the brother-sister duo. Resembling identical twins, we had difficulty identifying who is what. But, sure enough, they knew who is who! My God! There was no end to their pranks. They had a weakness for blankets and could crawl into it without drawing the slightest attention. God knows from where they learnt the art. They had the best of the vet care; registered with KCI, medical history cards made and training under strict supervision of Vickey.

They picked up the training well. They even learnt mathematics, geometry to be precise. They learnt that the shortest route from one

side of the double bed to the other side was walking over the bed; pillow was the easiest thing to chew and tear; one shoe from each pair could be hidden in places not easily noticeable; the new pair of shoes is the best to chew on; Newspaper, magazines and books are meant to be chewed, shredded and not read; Mamma's kitchen was the best restaurant in town; my garden and the flower beds were the best place for playing "Roll on grass"; cupboards were the best for "Hide and seek"; Sofas were the best to cuddle up during daytime, Animal Planet on TV has dogs which do not bark at them - the list is endless.

They assumed that answering the door bell was their privilege and opened doors were meant for running out, irrespective of who the caller was. Every opening of the door led to a steeple chase for their mamma (to retrieve them). No doubt, it gave sufficient exercise to Vickey. They learnt pretty soon that their mom is a poor decision-maker, if they run in opposite directions which resulted in more outing-time for at least one of them. God knows whether they had a secret agreement to take turns for the longer outing. Everything seemed to go well in the family of four pets, one Mom and one Dad.

In six months they were fully grown. They would carry their plates when called for food. But, they never learnt to wash their own plates after the meal. After all, what does Mamma do the whole day? They soon became a handful. Lara was more intelligent. Zeeno was little dumb and a slow learner, like all males. While playing "Fetch", Lara would be off the

“Lara came into this world with a purpose, accomplished it, better than the best, and joined the stars”

the starter block in a jiffy and fetch the ball; but Zeeno would still be gaping at the out-stretched hand, thinking that the ball is still in the hand.

When she was eighteen months old, the symptoms started appearing. Lara would often fall sick. She started showing signs of lack of appetite, loose bowels, depression, seizure, falling hair etc. The Vet diagnosed her with ailments of probable inbreeding. But I suspected it to be Infectious Canine Hepatitis (ICH). Despite all the timely vaccinations, how could she be infected? Maybe all the medicines bought over the counter were fake! When human beings are treated with spurious medicines, who cares for these less fortunate beings? She was treated with all sorts of medicines and hormones. She stopped barking, started a kind of stuttering every now and then and used to froth in her mouth.

We knew there was something fatally wrong with her. The vets gave up. But Vicky's love and affection kept her alive and reasonably active. I was transferred to Doda to fight the militants and Vicky too had to go to Shillong to take care of her ailing mother for a month. But Lara was still under the constant care of the Vet and

Pancham Lal, my buddy, who was as much caring as we were. We separated Zeeno and Ruffles, lest her ailment was contagious. Yet, she braved it all. She became weaker and weaker with no appetite. At times, she would stumble and fall and could not get up. We knew we would lose her despite the best care we could give. Though we could see death in her beautiful eyes, they would always show us a ray of hope. Her last few days, she could neither get up nor drink anything. Vicky spoon-fed her for a month.

It was 23 December 2004. Around 10 PM, fifteen minutes before she died, she struggled to her feet and wobbled out of the house on to the backyard. She had never done that before. Maybe, she didn't want to burden us with carrying her dead body. I carried her back into the house. She kept her eyes wide open looking into our eyes. Vicky was crying seeing her plight. Lara was seeing her Mom for one last time. She tried to bark once. But no sound emerged. Then she closed her eyes forever, never to open again. One last heave of lungs and then...the end!

The story ended! She looked majestic and at peace in death. We could not see our Lara lying motionless, given her never-say-die spirit to live.

Past midnight, I shovelled a 3-feet deep pit in our backyard, said a small prayer and lowered Lara to her final resting place. A wintry night it was, and we covered her with one of her favourite blankets, lest she feel lonely and cold. The garden soil covered our Lara. A concrete slab moved over it. Our tears had dried up. Lara had become immortal. Did we see a bright star on a Christmas night sky over Delhi? We believe so.

Are we to be superstitious? No way! Lara came into this world with a purpose, accomplished it, better than the best and joined the stars. After all, she was the daughter of an angel on a short-term loan to us lesser mortals!

Lara had the courage to fight the odds, but no one could stop destiny and the inevitable. Adieu Lara! You taught us a lesson or two even in your death. You will always remain in our hearts, as the smartest of all among the canine kind we ever possessed. You will always remain our Lara Baby...

*Isenhower Ike*

# ACTION CENTER

## *Wish List*

We urgently need a lot of items to make our shelter better equipped and to also better cater to the needs of our four-legged friends. If we can get these items donated (second-hand is fine), it means that more of the funds raised can go directly to the animals. If you can spare any of the following item/s, please contact us. As we have limited manpower, it would be great if you could drop off the items at our office; if not, we can arrange to collect it from you. On behalf of our friends, thank you!

As we have a limited budget, we are seeking for sponsorship for the materials listed below:

<p><b>Transportation Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Ambulance (Mobile Clinic) – 1 No.</li></ul> <p><b>Accommodation Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Wire mesh puppy pens – 10 Nos</li></ul> <p><b>Surgical Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Emergency Lamp</li><li>▶ Lab microscope</li><li>▶ Stethoscope</li><li>▶ Digital thermometers</li><li>▶ Gloves (Sterile and non-sterile) size 6.5</li><li>▶ Face masks</li><li>▶ Intravenous fluids – Hartmann’s Dextx/Nacl, NSS</li><li>▶ Elastoplast</li><li>▶ Dressing materials</li><li>▶ PDS sutures</li><li>▶ Hair caps</li><li>▶ Lab coats</li><li>▶ Microchipping injector</li></ul> <p><b>Miscellaneous Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Regular Collar</li><li>▶ Dog Muzzle</li><li>▶ Choke collar</li><li>▶ Leash</li></ul>	<p><b>Treatment Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ BNP powder</li><li>▶ Negasunt powder</li><li>▶ Silvasulf cream</li><li>▶ Xylazine + Reverzine</li><li>▶ Baytril</li><li>▶ Ivermectin</li><li>▶ Cephalexin 250mg caps</li><li>▶ Synulox</li><li>▶ Neosporin ointment</li><li>▶ Liverolin syrup</li><li>▶ Digene Syrup</li><li>▶ B-Complex Tablets</li><li>▶ Aciloc Tablets – 150 mg.</li><li>▶ De-worming tablets</li><li>▶ Euthanasia forte</li><li>▶ Anti-dandruff lotions</li><li>▶ Tick and Flea powder</li></ul> <p><b>Feeding and Grooming Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Rice – 200 Kgs per month</li><li>▶ Dog Treats</li><li>▶ Bread, Milk, Eggs</li><li>▶ Dog Shampoo</li><li>▶ Dog Soaps</li><li>▶ Grooming Brushes</li></ul>
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**Want to make a difference  
but can't**

**Please Donate!**

Donations can be made by crossed Cheque/DD in the name of Humane Animal Society (HAS) and sent to the address below C/o Dr. Mini Vasudevan.

**Humane Animal Society  
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Your contribution will go a long way in making a tremendous difference in the lives of several stray 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.