



The **Mephitis Advocate**[™]
Skunk News You Can Use!



We will open this newsletter with Jasper's story. I'm sure most of you already know what happened to Jasper and his family and many of you have helped. If you are not familiar with the story, please consider sending whatever donation you can spare. This is an important achievement for domestic skunk owners everywhere.

This is Jasper's story in the words of his owner.

On Feb 11th we had a knock on our door and it was our police, health department and social services. They were here because of an anonymous complaint of too many animals in my house and it was against our local ordinance, so I asked what social services was here for and they told me because when you have a complaint on too many animals they thought they would be walking into feces, and a dirty house. I said you know how clean my house is and she said yes, I didn't think it was going to be dirty but she had to come as there are 2 children in the house, and the health department was here for that same reason. Now let me just say that a few of the officers from the police department have known that I do have a houseful of pets, but they weren't going to do anything as our house and property are tidy, but they said if they received any complaints we would have to go by the ordinance, restricting us to 5 cats and 3 dogs. Well yes, I was up to 13 cats and 5 dogs, with no restrictions on our other pets like 2 birds, a rabbit, 2 guinea pigs, and 2 aquariums of salt water fish and of course my 2 skunks. Jasper is my skunk and I had my brother's skunk here as he retired to the Philippines and I kept Flash and added him to my license.



While the cops and all were here, I guess my daughter must have made a remark to the social worker that Jasper bit her yesterday, but we did not know this at the time. The police told me I would have to get rid of 8 cats and 2 dogs, and that they would be back on the 17th to make sure I was legal with cats and dogs. As soon as they left we took 4 cats to the humane society to be put up for adoption as we know a couple of people there and they said bring them right in, we have an adoption clinic tomorrow, so we did. On our way back we got a call from the police and the officer told me they were back at my house and we needed to talk. We came home and the health department and police said we have a problem. I said what now, are you going to tell us my skunk bit someone, and low and behold they said yes, my daughter. I said Jasper hasn't bit anyone.

They said they have to act as it came out of the kid's mouth and they needed to act now. So they confiscated Jasper and said he would be killed to test for rabies. I said come on he's a pet skunk, not a wild one. They didn't care and took him. They did tell me I had until Monday to find an alternative to euthanization, so we started checking into everything, but it was looking slim.



We took our 2 kids to the emergency room on Friday night to be looked over, and I have a report from the doctor that they have no bites or scratches from any animal. This still wasn't good enough for the health department as they said the kid can get rabies from the skunk's saliva, and still requested him to be put down. With the letter from the doctor and no bites or scratches on my daughter, I decided it was time to call an attorney. We threw an injunction against the killing of the skunk. We went to court on Wednesday and the judge wasn't too helpful and told us we needed to come to an agreement with the health department, which no matter what we offered they said no, unless we can come up with an approved rabies test that had been done before. We have gone round and round with them, we even suggested our daughter go for rabies treatment and a quarantine period at the vet and they still said no. That's where Deb came in and got the rally started. And by the graces of God and all the people out there who care, the health department folded and agreed to let my daughter go through the shots and keep the skunk quarantined until the day she's done with them. This I think is a giant step forward for domestic pet skunks.

Now all we have to do is raise enough money for Jasper's attorney fees, vet bill for the next month and my 5 year old daughter's shots. She is a brave little one. She is looking forward to completing these shots so her skunk can come back home. She even said Mommy I'm a big girl, I didn't cry and it hurt. Last night her 1 leg was very sore but she's doing fine otherwise.

If you know any one who would like to help and donate, even if it's a buck, here is the info... pay pal go to send money, send to email address jaspertheskunk@yahoo.com, they would choose gift and specify the amount. If people want to send a check, it can be made out to: The Jasper the Skunk Fund, c/o 1st National Bank, PO Box 310, Berlin, WI 54923.

Tammy Friedeck February 19, 2011

Skunk Vet Care Website Update

We are pleased to announce the website is progressing at a rapid pace and will be ready soon.

We have a submission form that you can print out and give to your vet or for your personal submissions.

There are instructions at the bottom of the form of how and where to send them. Dr. Schneider would like to gather as much information as possible, so anything you can send her will be appreciated.

If you need a submission form sent to you, please contact us at mephitisadvocate@yahoo.com and we will be happy to send it to you.

Featured Skunk

Taltos



We got a call from an owner about his 6 month old baby boy. The baby had seizures a few weeks prior and was brought to the veterinarian for testing to see if the cause of the seizures could be determined.

Bloodwork was drawn and once the results came back, the veterinarian determined the baby had Addison's Disease and recommended he be euthanized because he would have to be on medication all his life. Thankfully the owner started asking around if anyone knew of someone that was willing to take a special needs skunk and he found his way to us.

After speaking with the owner at length, I was convinced this baby did not have Addison's and I asked him to send me all of his records. There were a lot of errors made with this baby, including the diagnosis of Addison's Disease.

In August, before the seizures started, he was neutered and given a distemper vaccine and rabies vaccine on the same day and given Metacam. A couple of days later he was prescribed a muscle relaxer and Metacam because the owner thought he was walking a bit strange and drinking a lot of water.

The seizures occurred in October and from the bloodwork results, the veterinarian diagnosed Addison's and put put him on steroids. Addison's can not be diagnosed by bloodwork alone. There is a specific test that must be done for

proper diagnosis and this test was not done. Although I relayed this to the owner, he was still convinced that the baby had Addison's and he did not want a "defective" baby. I agreed to take him and because the owner wanted to see where he would be living, we set up a time for the owner to bring him to us. I asked him the usual questions about the previous diet so I could get an idea of what to expect. I found out the baby was fed a very low protein diet that included a lot of vegetables, grapes and chicken nuggets from a fast food restaurant. Now the seizures were starting to make sense.

In the meantime, I spoke with my veterinarian about the best way to handle this. We decided to slowly wean him off of the steroids and after he was clean for 6 weeks, we would do the Addison's test.

The night before the owner was to bring us the baby, he called and said he wanted to get a second opinion before giving him up. I told him that was a great idea because I was still sure he did not have Addison's. We agreed to wait on the second report before making any decisions.

About a week later, the owner called me and said the second veterinarian agreed with the Addison's diagnosis and once again I asked to see the records. The reality of the second opinion is that he went to the same veterinarian as before and no new tests were done. The first veterinarian just sent the bloodwork to a friend of his that then confirmed the first diagnosis. Once again without benefit of the Addison's test.

The owner was then ready to give up the baby but this time not willing to bring him to me. I had to go pick him up. It was obvious he no longer was interested in where he would be living or in what conditions, so I didn't want to wait. I was willing to leave right then but the owner preferred I wait until the next day, so that's what I did.

I showed our veterinarian the bloodwork and he confirmed that there wasn't sufficient evidence of Addison's according to the bloodwork. He didn't even think it was necessary to do the test, but I insisted because I needed proof to send to the original veterinarian that he was negligent in diagnosing this baby and recommending that he be euthanized. We ran more bloodwork and had the test done in January. The results showed that he does not have Addison's and his bloodwork was much improved from his change in diet.

With baby season almost upon us, I feel like this story is an important one to share. It teaches us the importance of feeding a high quality species appropriate diet. It also teaches us that we are the most important advocate for our pets. It is our duty and responsibility to speak up for them when we feel something isn't right. It is our responsibility to keep up with the latest findings that affect our pet skunks. No one veterinarian will know everything there is to know about every single animal, so we must be proactive owners and ask questions. The most important thing you can do for your pet's health care is to keep informed and speak up for him when you feel something isn't right.

Mary Vice Copeland April 1, 2011

ANNOUNCING
THE ANNUAL FLORIDA SKUNK RESCUE
SKUNKIE EGG HUNT

Sunday, April 10, 2011

In Hudson, Florida (One hour North of Tampa)

Hosted by Judy Slade and Don and Brenda Hoch

From Noon to 5 PM

Festivities will include:

EASTER EGG HUNT FOR HUMANS

EASTER EGG HUNT FOR THE SKUNKS

SPRING PRINCE AND PRINCESS CONTEST

SPRING SKUNKIE COSTUME CONTEST

FRIENDLIEST SKUNK CONTEST

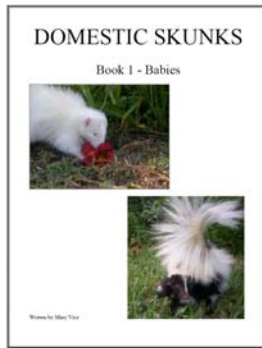
**RAFFLE and SILENT AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE FLORIDA
SKUNK RESCUE**

LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

Come and enjoy all the fun and meet great skunk people.

RSVP Judy at skunkrescue@toast.net or call 727-378-7069 by April 5 for
more info and directions to the party.



Domestic Skunks, Book 1 - Babies

Now also available on Kindle!

Coming to Amazon soon

Over 90 pages of current, up to date information and tips for raising a happy, healthy baby skunk. Filled with color pictures of domestic skunks.

\$15.50 each (includes domestic US postage). Paypal payment using stripedbandits@yahoo.com as the account. International orders can contact stripedbandits@yahoo.com for instructions and postage amount.



You can win this tote!

It's easy to do. Submit a story with pic for us to use in an upcoming issue and if we use your story, you will receive this tote for free!

Submit entries to mephitisadvocate@yahoo.com.



New Products Available Soon!

Two new products will soon be available for purchase.

Pet Skunk Support Factors

Designed specifically for skunks to address and prevent nutritional deficiencies that can occur. Created with the highest standards and ingredients and ease of use in mind, it will surely be a hit with skunk owners.

Stomp

A species appropriate diet for pet skunks.

Finally, a conveniently packaged food that addresses the nutritional requirements of pet skunks made with only the highest quality ingredients that takes the guess work out of meeting your pet skunk's daily needs.



Ask Ashlar

If you have a question you would like answered on the newsletter,

please fill out the submission form at

www.stripedbandits.com

or email us at mephitisadvocate@yahoo.com