



Charley's Strays, Inc.

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Limestone, April 30, 2012

Dear Friends,

No this little girl is NOT one of Charley's Strays, but the lucky dog of the Thompson Family. Galen and Cynthia had sent me a letter with "Greta" in full Easter decor, and I wanted to share it with you. 😊

Easter came and went, and we were all worried about our friend Teddy (the black bear-type, not the volunteer gentleman-type at Charley's. He had not missed showing up on Easter Sunday for the past six years. We figured he took one look at the 6 inches of snow, which came down that Sunday and decided not to march through the winter-woods. Two days after, he came wobbling up the trail, which leads to our backyard, still pretty big, and round; he does not look like he suffered starvation through the winter. So we are all one happy family again - Jim, our two dogs, our Teddy, and I.



Everything is going well at the Shelter. We did have one setback, again the vet bill: Jasper, one of our new dogs, was diagnosed with heartworm. Estimated cost to treat him: \$600. He has had his first treatments, meaning other than medication he also had to stay overnight at the clinic, and after Reb had to keep him very quiet which is a hard thing to do, because Jasper is a highly active dog. His next treatment will be in a month from now. Everybody else including our old Davy seems to be in good shape.

The rest of our volunteers are also getting older and slower, and Ted asked me to try to find out if any of you know someone who may help out on Saturdays- volunteer or paid, we do need a backup person or help for Ted. So if you do know someone, please give me a call, or an email at: jbrewer7@maine.rr.com. Thanks!

I talked to Cindy Houston a couple of days ago; she will have her annual yard sale in September, but has NOTHING to sell! So, instead or along with a donation ☺ could you please open those filled-to-the-top drawers with small items which you really have no use for, and mail them to us? Or if you live close to Cindy, give her a call; I think she would be willing to pick them up.

Again, we cannot store large items; Cindy has very limited space, so what we are looking for is small stuff, things we get at least one dollar a piece for. Shoes and clothes do not sell, but jewelry, household items, gift items and so forth do bring a few bucks. Her phone number is 781-932-3387.



I have some interesting reading-material this month, so I will not stay to long with the Shelter news, and therefore I will go straight to our supporters.

We thank each and every one of you who has helped us again this month with donations, packages, stamps and coupons:

Al Smith, Belmont
Arlene Hayes, Reading
Barb & Jon Anderson, Augusta
Barbara Niro, Bernard
Betsy Anderson, Framingham
Bonnie Buckmore, Waterville
Carole Parker, Winchendon
Cindy Houston, Woburn,
Cristine Cardello, Melrose
Cynthia Thompson, Millinocket
Dorothy D'Alessandro Ossip
Dorothy Eckstein, Medford
Enid Hayes, Halifax

George Hinds, Cambridge
Iris Martinello, Tewksbury
Jackie & Kellee Lowney
Jean Catignani, Conway
Jean Tillson, Franklin
Jim Lavita, Dennis
Joe D'Alessandro, Tufonboro
John Caswell, Newport
John Wells, Oakland
Joseph Blake, New Bedford
Joseph Kogut, Upton
Josephine Smith, Woburn
Linda Merriam, Dresden

Lorena & Harry Clark, Beverly
Marian Delarue, Woburn
Mary Klayda, Winchester
Michael Kane, Greenwood
Mildred Walker, Presque Isle
Nancy Brown, Waltham
Pat Thain, Dracut
Phil Mann, Rowland Hghts
R.D. Bournival, Nashua
Robert Hull, Lawrence
Sandra Nicholson, Beverly
Susan Borsic, Woburn
Viola McDonald, Woburn

Thank you very much!

We also received a donation from Jean Tillson and James Peterson in honor of their cat that is very ill. Michael Kane sent us a birthday donation in honor of dog Davie's 14th birthday at our Shelter! George Hinds sent us a check in memory of his late wife, Catherine.



Here is some of the interesting reading material I mentioned on page two:

RESULTS OF THE 2011 SHELTER SURVEY FOR THE STATE OF MAINE

Animal Intake				
	DOG		CAT	
Stray	4,145	39%	11,265	47%
Surrendered	3,364	48%	10,474	51%
Transferred	1,160	13%	263	1%
Born at shelter	16		285	1%
Animal Outcome				
	DOG		CAT	
Reclaimed	2,603	30%	440	2%
Adopted	4,808	55%	13,019	61%
Euthanized	991	11%	7,297	34%
Transferred	303	4%	547	2%
Died in shelter	5		146	1%
Overall for Cats and Dogs				
	INTAKE		OUTCOME	
	Stray	50%	Reclaimed	10%
	Surrendered	45%	Adoptions	59%
	Transferred in	3%	Transferred out	4%
	Born in Shelter	1%	Died in Shelter	1%
			Euthanasia	27%

Please read on, more "good" stuff to come!

Gabriele, Mary, Ted and Jim

Toxic Chicken Jerky Treats: Pet Owners Square Off Against FDA

By Dr. Becker

While the FDA continues to dilly-dally -- searching endlessly for the precise mechanism in chicken jerky treats from China that is causing illness and death in thousands of pets in the U.S. and elsewhere – pet owners are starting to demand action.

And it's no wonder, since the first FDA warning on these popular but potentially deadly treats was issued a very long four and a half years ago, in September 2007.

Pet Owners Have Had Enough

Earlier this year, pet owners and a U.S. Senator from Ohio urged the FDA to show a sense of urgency in investigating the treats at issue, and getting them pulled from store shelves.

In a letter to FDA Commissioner Margaret H. Hamburg, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown made this appeal:

"I urge you to promptly pursue efforts to find the contaminant in these pet foods, alert customers of the dangers of these products, and make sure the products found harmful are pulled from the retail market."

A U.S. Representative from Ohio sent his own letter to Hamburg:

"The FDA must not wait to issue a voluntary recall until it is able to definitively identify a causal agent," said Kucinich's letter.

"The FDA has clearly established an association between consumption of the chicken jerky and illness and death. It is simply not feasible to expect every dog owner to be aware of a modestly publicized warning from the FDA."

The FDA's position is they will not implicate nor recall products until a specific contaminant has been identified. The agency maintains chicken jerky treat samples have been tested for drugs, poisons, mycotoxins, heavy metals and certain chemicals, yet the problem remains a mystery.

But while the FDA seems content to remain clueless about what's causing the problem, pet owners and veterinarians in the U.S., Canada and Australia have their own suspicions. These include:

- Ongoing melamine contamination
- Irradiation of ingredients in jerky treats
- An as-yet unidentified chemical preservative
- Diethylene glycol (a toxin)

Meanwhile, a grassroots group calling itself Animal Parents Against Pet Treats Made in China is working -- with little success so far -- to have retailers voluntarily pull potentially tainted chicken jerky pet treats off store shelves.

The Number of Sick and Dead Pets Continues to Climb

According to MSNBC.com, by February 10th of this year, the FDA had received 537 reports of sick dogs. That number included 353 from 2011 and 184 so far in 2012.

(Please note: The number of reported incidents varies tremendously depending on the source, thus I'm also seeing a total of 596 new reports just since the last FDA warning in November 2011⁴. That would mean in about 4 months' time there have been nearly 600 new reports of illness and death in pets who ate chicken jerky treats made in China. I'm not sure which sets of figures are correct. The situation is absolutely unacceptable, regardless.)

Symptoms include loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea (sometimes bloody), increased thirst and/or urination, and decreased activity.

Symptoms appear within a few hours to days after a dog eats the chicken jerky treats. Pets who become severely ill or have symptoms lasting more than 24 hours should be seen by a veterinarian immediately.

Blood tests may show markers for kidney failure. Urinalysis may point to acquired Fanconi syndrome.

Fortunately, most sick dogs have fully recovered, however, an increasing number of deaths are also being reported.

Internal FDA Document Names Brands of Suspect Treats

Recently MSNBC.com got their hands on copies of internal FDA documents which included a log of complaints from pet owners and vets naming three popular brands of jerky treats linked to kidney failure and other serious illness in pets. According to MSNBC.com:

"Of 22 "Priority 1" cases listed by the FDA late last year, 13 cited Waggin' Train or Canyon Creek Ranch jerky treats or tenders, both produced by Nestle Purina PetCare Co., the records show.

Another three listed Milo's Kitchen Home-style Dog Treats, produced by the Del Monte Corp. The rest listed single brands or no brand."

Priority 1 cases involve animals 11 years of age or younger for which medical records documenting illness exist. In many of these cases, samples of the suspect treats are also available.

This report, obtained by MSNBC.com through a public records request, is the first indication in four and a half years of any specific chicken jerky treat brands linked to illness or death. As you might expect, Nestle Purina and Del Monte officials maintain their treats are safe.

And as we've also come to expect, the FDA continues to state that, "No specific products have been recalled because a definitive cause has not been determined."

For Pet Owners

In an article I posted at the end of last year, I called the chicken jerky pet treat situation discouraging and troubling. Today I'll add *infuriating* to the list. Four and a half years is far too long for a situation like this to drag on, while thousands of pets and their heartbroken families pay the price.

The FDA, pet food manufacturers and retailers selling the stuff should have long ago demonstrated a scrap of integrity by either taking this garbage out of circulation, or slapping a clear warning on every package. If you are a pet owner

- PLEASE don't buy or feed chicken jerky treats, chicken tenders, chicken strips or chicken treats made in China to your pet. Play it safe. Buy only food and treats made in the U.S. Buying pet food made in this country won't remove all risk of winding up with a tainted product, but it will certainly improve your chances of keeping your pet safe.

You can play it even safer by making your own chicken jerky right at home. Buy some boneless chicken breasts, clean them, and slice into long, thin strips – the thinner the better. Place the strips on a greased or non-stick cookie sheet and bake them for at least three hours at 180 degrees. The low temp dries the chicken out slowly and the strips wind up nice and chewy. Let the strips cool, and then store them in plastic bags or another airtight container. You can also freeze them.



CAT REPORT – APRIL 2012

I hope you all paid attention to the report from the state's annual shelter survey earlier in this newsletter. What a waste of perfectly good animals who had to be euthanized because irresponsible people can't or won't stop letting their pets reproduce and can't or won't take care of the results! This sort of news makes me very sad, for the cats and dogs, for people who do care about them and for the shelter workers who have to do the dirty work. At least Charley's Strays and our many other rescue friends keep some of them safe.

Not a lot of news from here this month – all our cats have been well, if not always well-behaved.© The ones with access to the porch have taken advantage of the mild weather, and for the rest I've often been able to open windows enough so they can smell and feel the breezes. Now that there are birds, bugs, leaves blowing in the wind and other such entertainments, much window-sill sitting goes on, especially on sunny days.

The house call the beginning of the month went smoothly. As I expected, Buddy and Mr. Tom each got a good report. If Tommy's estimated birth date is somewhere near correct, he's 13 this year – a good age for an FIV+ cat. His companions are all around seven or eight or nine, again depending on the accuracy of the guesses. As you probably know, once a cat is adult vets are often hard-put to find indicators to pin down his or her age.

Tia's kids are fine so far. Ashley is such a nut! – all I do is look at her and she flops down on her back and invites a belly-rub. This morning I was picking up the breakfast dishes in her room and here she was, upside down on top of the dish I was reaching for. Grover is still the stand-offish one of the three, but every now and then he'll let me pet him a bit.

Many thanks, as always, to the cats' friends. Teresa gave them a second Christmas gift this month, after all the treats and catnip toys she sent in December, and I got coupons from her, Suzanne Belisle, P. A. Lenk, Iris Martinello (she sent some last month, too, but Gabriele didn't forward them until after I'd done the March cat report), Irma Simon and Al Smith. The company I use most is getting sneaky with their coupons: I can get dollar off on their expensive dry food only if I also buy two cans of their very expensive new, fancy, supposedly superior canned food. When the canned first came out I got a few coupons for free cans, which of course I used. Lisa and Alison got most of it, since they're the two who hang out in the kitchen, and they both like it. I'll still have to think hard before I spend \$1.50 for six ounces of canned in order to save a dollar on dry.