



The ShepHeard

Newsletter of the German Shepherd Dog Club of Austin

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Welcome Exhibitors!

The membership of the German Shepherd Dog Club of Austin would like to take this time to welcome you to the great state of Texas for our annual Conformation Dog Show.

The judges for this weekend are D.D. Ardoin on Saturday, April 14, and Carol Smith on Sunday, April 15.



Best of luck to you all!

Pictured:
Konigin's Phantom of the Opera
WD/BOB GSDC of Austin
April 15, 2006

Photo by: Amy Murkland

RPOA and members of the German Shepherd Dog Club of Austin speak out about proposed animal legislation.

On April 11th, members of the German Shepherd Dog Club of Austin and the Responsible Pet Owners Alliance (RPOA) attended a public hearing on proposed legislation concerning pet ownership. President of the Austin German Shepherd Dog Club, Mary Tripp, and member Carolyn McKenna, an American Kennel Club breed judge, spoke out against SB 411, and SB 405 in front of a legislative committee at the state capitol. While they were sympathetic to those speaking for the proposed bill, they pointed out that the need was not for new legislation, but for enforcing the current laws concerning the restraint of dogs in public places, the needless addition of laws that will be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce, and the lack of personnel to enforce laws currently in the books.

SB 411 was written as a companion to HB 1355 in which severe penalties for pet owners of dogs that cause serious bodily injury or death to a person. If this bill passes, people whose pets injure or kill another human for any reason, would be accused of a felony and could serve jail time and suffer stiff fines. The bills broad language does not specify if the animal is running loose or confined on the owners property by fence. As a result, the pet owner could face jail

time if his pet injures or kills another person while protecting the owner or their property.

Pet owners in Texas should be alarmed by the possibility of a bill such as this passing. Instead of making criminals out of pet owners, the government should consider proper enforcement of current laws, funds to support the personnel to enforce current laws and stiffer fines for people who repeatedly disregard the laws concerning confinement and restraint of their pets.

For more information on this and other proposed laws concerning your pet contact the Responsible Pet Owners Alliance at (210)822-6763 or email them at rpoa@texas.net to subscribe to their alerts. You can also visit their website at www.responsiblepetowners.org.



Pet Food; Just how safe is it?

In early March of 2007, dogs and cats suddenly became ill and died mysteriously in Canada and the United States. The cause of these mysterious illnesses and deaths was narrowed down to the food they were fed. The pet food recall began in mid-March 2007, when Menu Foods Inc. recalled all its "cuts and gravy" style dog and cat food produced at two of its U.S. facilities between Dec. 3, 2006, and March 6, 2007. The recall was prompted by reported instances of cats and dogs in the United States that developed acute kidney failure after eating the affected products, including nine cats that died during Menu Foods' routine taste trials. The products are packaged in cans and pouches under numerous brand names. The recall information was not for public press release in the US, but was sent to business and financial editors.

As the outbreak of illnesses spread and more pet owners reported illnesses in their pets, the US Food and Drug Administration began to look into the issue. In their studies, the FDA discovered Melamine in samples of recalled pet food. Melamine is used in the production of plastics, and as a fertilizer in some countries. The melamine is believed to be associated with wheat gluten imported from China that was used as an ingredient in pet foods. Melamine should not be within any food product in any levels.

The FDA has traced the source of the wheat gluten to a single supplier, Xuzhou Anying Biologic Technology, of China, and has issued an import alert on wheat gluten from China. Records reveal that all shipments of wheat gluten from the suspect Chinese supplier were purchased by a U.S. firm, ChemNutra Inc., that supplies ingredients to pet food companies. At this time, no evidence suggests that any of the imported wheat gluten from this supplier has entered the human food supply. The FDA's investigation has determined that other manufacturers used the contaminated wheat gluten, leading to recall action by several other companies and expansion of Menu Foods' recall to include all

products manufactured with wheat gluten purchased from ChemNutra which Menu Foods' records show was first used on Nov. 8, 2006, and last used on March 6, 2007.

Do NOT feed the pet food to your animals. Return the pet food to the store where you purchased it and ask for a refund. If you cannot return the pet food immediately, store it in a secure place where pets and children cannot get to it.



Signs to Look For in Your Pet

Pet owners should be alert to signs of kidney illness, such as:

- loss of appetite,
- weakness or lack of energy
- vomiting
- excessive drinking and urination

If your pet shows any of these signs, call your veterinarian.

To Report a Reaction to a Pet Food

Call the FDA consumer complaint coordinator for your geographic area. To find your coordinator, visit: www.fda.gov/opacom/backgrounders/complain.html. Try to have the following information available before calling:

- Brand name, lot numbers, and UPC code for the pet food fed to your dog or cat when it was ill. A lot number is typically stamped on the bag/pouch or on the can lid. Lot numbers usually consist of a series of letters and numbers.
- If your pet received treatment by a veterinarian, his/her name, address, and telephone number
- Date illness first noticed
- Signs displayed
- Any veterinary reports available.

For a list of recalled pet foods and other information, visit www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/petfood.html

