

Local News

Animal Corner

TAMIU hosts LAPS ceremony

BY ISABEL MENDEZ
Shelter director

Paw Imprints: An evening of friendship and appreciation was shared with a group of caring and concerned animal lovers. Texas A&M International University hosted the annual recognition of volunteers, awards ceremony and installation of 2001 LAPS officers.

One highlight was a presentation of 'specialty books' donated by the



Isabel Mendez

Community College and the city of Laredo Public Library.

This is the second year that books relating to animals have been presented to libraries. "The idea is to increase available information on non-human companions for all who will seek guidance," Diana V. Saucedo, chairing this presentation, said.

Diana Farias, LAPS president said, "This is a source of pleasure for the givers and those on the receiving end. And there is so much more available, so we will throughout the world.

Feline Fine: Time will greatly help to reduce anxiety, stress and tension as a cat settles in when you bring a new pet into your home. You can make the transition easier by helping it feel safe and secure.

Adjusting starts as soon as when you bring it home.

*Use a car carrier to keep it safe during the trip. Once home, provide the cat with a safe refuge away from other pets.

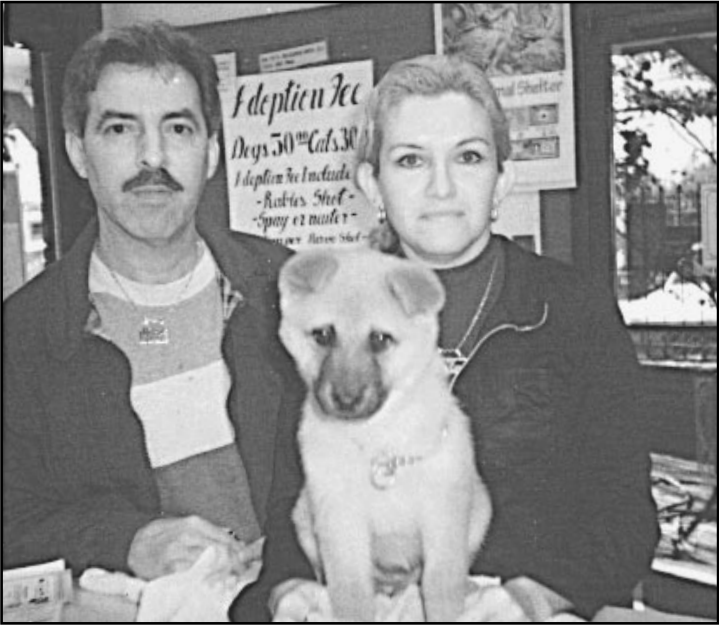
*Provide food, water and a litter pan, and don't try to hasten the adjustment process by picking up the cat or forcing it out of hiding.

Your cat will explore its surroundings and become accustomed to you on its own

Gradual, supervised introduction to other pets is also best, making sure the newcomer has a safe place to retreat into until it is comfortable with its new friends.

Pet Helpline: Q.: What should I do if my pet gets lost? "Bullet" likes to roam sometimes. I worry about this very much

A. All pet owners fear the possibility of a lost pet. Your companion may be lost for a variety of reasons including running away from home,



Times courtesy photo

PET OF THE WEEK: Jose Luis and Bertha Vela are the happy and proud new masters of "Coco." This mixed-Chow, mixed-Shepherd female is only two months old and already knows she has found the perfect family! The Laredo Animal Shelter always has so many puppies, kittens, dogs and cats that need to find this relationship. Please come by 2500 Gonzalez Street soon so you can check out what is available.

running in a strange place, or maybe being frightened, or stolen.

* Get an identification tag for your pet. This can be the single-most important item that will help you and your pet get reunited.

* Do a thorough search of your house (even ventilation areas) and behind or inside closets, large appliances like dryers or refrigerators, and check inside cabinets and drawers, if it is a small creature.

* Next, check out the neighborhood where your pet was lost, talking to residents and leaving your phone number and description of your pet with them.

* If you have a computer, make up a quick flyer, with a recent picture of your pet if possible, and place them in a wide radius around the neighborhood.

* Do not give out the pet's name. If someone has stolen it, they will learn the pet's name, and calling it by name will insure a quicker adjustment to the new surroundings.

* Walk around your neighborhood and call out to your pet, loudly and listen for sounds of your pet.

* Place your pet's bedding or a piece of clothing that carries your scent, right outside your home so your pet can "smell home."

* Don't delay calling veterinary clinics in the area, then the animal shelter, animal control, and check out the found ads in the newspaper. Consider placing a lost pet ad.

Because of possible scams, you should keep some of your pet's identifying characteristics from the public. Have the finder tell the characteristics to you.

Tail-Wagging News: Each year the Humane Society of

the United States helps hundreds of high school, college, and post-graduate students who face assignments, such as animal dissections, that they oppose on moral grounds.

Two years ago, the HSUS began requesting samples of alternative study aids from companies that manufacture them.

The more than thirty items available include CD-ROMS, models, conventional computer programs and charts.

These items are available on temporary loan to students and educators. For more information, contact the Animal Research Issues section of the HSUS.

For grades 9 through 12, four slide programs are now available from the Youth Education Division of the HSUS.

Topics include pet overpopulation, puppy mills, cosmetics testing on animals and the fur industry.

Each program is available for a refundable \$40 deposit. Contact the HSUS's Youth Education Division, P.O. Box 362, East Haddam, Ct. 06423.

A Wave Of The Paw To: Recent visitors to the Devine Sisters Shelter for Animals were Diana Saucedo, Jo Ann Kahn, Pete Cabrera, Ann Neel, Kathie Alexander, Carolyn Leyendecker, Gwen Loera and Jean Ruiz. These folks have provided newspapers, brought other donated items and in general had an opportunity to realize how much their help is needed and appreciated.

Then there are other Laredoans who come to the Shelter looking for lost pets or have made their visit count so much because they adopted a new household companion! These folks have saved a life and will find unconditional love and devotion in return. Thank you to each and every one of you for coming to the Animal Shelter!

J.A.: Interviewing with style

How may time have we lost an opportunity for a great job or to get into a good school because we did not know how to interview with style? A job or school interview is your opportunity to showcase yourself. The following advice will help you to make a good impression.

Before you go to an interview

- Complete the application in your own handwriting. Use your best penmanship. Neatness counts!
- Learn about the company and the job.
- Think about how you will fit into the job.

List the skills you have to offer the company.

- Be prepared to ask any questions you might have. Write them down and take along the list. Having good questions is a sigh of your interest.

- Dress appropriately (Sunday best); neatness and cleanliness are very important.
- Be sure you are on time for the interview.

Go alone.

At the interview

- Have confidence in yourself. SMILE!
- Shake hands firmly. "Say, Hello. I am..."
- Be pleasant, and try to relax. Avoid nervous habits.
- Don't criticize a former employer.

- Maintain good posture
- Think before you speak.
- Look at the interviewer when talking.
- Answer questions completely; do not give "yes" or "no" answers.
- Show enthusiasm and interest in the job and company.
- Ask about career opportunities.
- Do not discuss salary and benefits first.
- Sell yourself. If you are asked about your weaknesses, give an example that might benefit the company; for example, " my weakness is that I am a perfectionist."
- Shake hands when you leaving. Say, "thank you for your time and consideration. I have enjoyed meeting you. I have enjoyed our discussion."

After the interview, send a thank-you note. This is an example of a Junior Achievement program for middle and high school student. JA is looking for community volunteers to bring this kind of programs to our younger student to help prepare them for the workforce.

If you or your company would like to teach a JA class, please call 725-3464 for more information.

Wellness

Nurture your immune system

BY DELIA TRUJILLO
LITMAN

The soft golden rays of January sunshine that South Texas is frequently blessed with at this time of the year are uplifting and inspiring as we continue to seek new ways to improve our health and find a greater inner peace.



Delia T. Litman

In this article, we will consider only by maintaining a healthy, properly functioning immune system.

Modern conventional medicine battles disease by means of drugs, surgery, radiation and so on. While these therapies do have their place in dealing with acute illnesses, our goal is to avoid these acute illnesses in the first place by nurturing our health as best we can.

Our immune system is a complex interaction involving white blood cells, bone marrow, lymphatic vessels and organs and blood serum factors.

For example, white blood cells identify and then destroy cancerous cells, viruses and microorganisms like bacteria and fungi. The immune system also produces antibodies, which either damage invasive cells or alert the white blood cells to attack.

Another important component of our body's immunity is the lymphatic system, which provides a continuous cleansing at the cellular level, removing waste products, toxins and other debris from the tissue.

These guidelines for healthier immune function are taken from the *Handbook, Prescriptions for Nutritional Healing*, written

by James F. Balch M.D. and Phyllis A. Balch, C.N.C. This highly informative handbook is available from Nutrition Headquarters for \$12.95 plus shipping at 1-800-851-3551.

According to Balch, some of the environmental factors that impair our immune system are additives and preservatives in our food, environmental pollutants, chemicals in household cleaners and pesticides and stress, which also depletes the body of vital energy and nutrients.

Balch also points out that the overuse of antibiotics and other drugs also impairs the immune system.

For example, it is common practice to take antibiotics for viral infections such as the common cold when antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections. Also, antibiotics kill off "good" bacteria together with the "bad," and this disrupts the human body's intricate balance and inhibits its efforts to defend itself against subsequent infections.

Some common signs of impaired immune function include fatigue, listlessness, repeated infections, inflammation, allergic reactions, slow wound healing, chronic diarrhea, candidiasis and vaginal yeast infection and/or having more than two colds a year.

According to Balch and many other health authorities, some suggested lifestyle changes for a healthier immune system are proper nutrition with fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains and other high fiber foods.

For better nutrition, avoid animal products, processed foods, refined sugar, refined flour, tobacco and alcohol. Another important consideration is a moderate exercise program which will reduce stress and elevate the mood, all of which will have a positive effect on immune response. If you have a weakened immune system, it is important not to overexert yourself when it comes to physical exercise.

Getting enough rest is also of vital importance so you can regain your strength and vitality.

Dietary supplements that nurture the immune system are Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin E and zinc.

Useful herbs are astragalus, a powerful anti-oxidant; milk thistle and dandelion, which cleanse the liver and the bloodstream; echinacea, which boosts immunity and increases lymphatic function and goldenseal, which also boosts immunity, cleanses the body and has anti-bacterial properties. These herbs should be taken in minimal amounts.

Taking more than one kind of herb on the same day should be avoided in order to prevent interaction.

These natural remedies are very important during the

cold and flu season, especially echinecea and goldenseal.

Instead of running out and getting an over-the-counter drug at the first sign of a cold or flu, try getting extra rest and consuming some warm chicken or turkey broth; ginger tea with scallions and honey; and some zinc lozenges.

According to Balch, a cold is caused by a viral infection and antibiotics are not beneficial unless your condition has progressed to an acute illness with strep throat and/or other complications.

St. John's Wort also enhances the immune system because it is a natural blood purifier as well as a natural anti-depressant. A positive frame of mind is important in building up the immune system. Negative emotions and negative states of mind contribute towards suppressing your immunity.

Lastly, a regular hatha yoga practice of perhaps three times a week will also nurture your immune system. In addition to reducing stress, increasing energy, and improving circulation of the blood and lymphatic fluids, it also helps develop strong digestion; deeper respiratory capacity; a healthy cardiovascular system and a balanced endocrine system.

(Delia Trujillo Litman is director of White Lotus Wellness Institute, which offers classes in hatha yoga and meditation. For more information, call 712-8898. To receive copies of previous wellness articles in book form, please send \$5 with your name and complete mailing address, including zip code, to 107 Calle del Norte, Suite 206, Laredo, Texas 78041.)

OUR FASCINATING EARTH Phil & Nancy Seff

BORN AGAIN CUCUMBER

THE SEA CUCUMBER, A TYPE OF ECHINODERM, HAS TREMENDOUS POWERS OF REGENERATION. WHEN ATTACKED, THE ANIMAL CONSTRICTS ITSELF DRASTICALLY ALONG CERTAIN POINTS OF ITS BODY, AND BREAKS INTO SEVERAL PIECES. THE PREDATOR FEEDS ON THE MIDDLE OR POSTERIOR SECTION. ALL SECTIONS DIE EXCEPT THE FRONT END, CONTAINING THE MOUTH AND TENTACLES. FROM THIS IT WILL REGENERATE AN ENTIRE NEW SEA CUCUMBER.

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Times courtesy photo

S.T.E.P. academy

Junior Achievement partnered with Rio Grande Plaza management staff to make a difference in the lives of high school students. Managers devoted their time and effort to impacting students at the S.T.E.P. Academy. The consultants spent eight one-hour sessions with the students, doing hands-on activities such as résumés, interviews and career interest. The consultants, from left, Kathy Lee Gafford, Kevin K. Gafford and Ester Kurczyn-Firova, of the Rio Grande Plaza, presented Junior Achievement presentations at STEP Academy.