"How Can Anyone Do Something Like That?"

By Roger Caras

I recently visited a veal raising operation in Connecticut. I was enraged by the tiny wooden pens holding calves immobile for 14 weeks in a darkened room while they were fed an anemic diet. The man running the place told me very matter-of-factly that by keeping the animals from moving he kept them from muscle development which (he claimed) made the veal more tender. He was so used to what he was doing he no longer saw it as cruel. Perhaps at the beginning he did think about the cruelty but the positive incentive of monetary reward eventually outweighed the negative one.

Perhaps we are all potentially cruel. Perhaps for each of us there is a balancing point where a positive incentive of reward or satisfaction would outweigh and tip the scales in favor of what we now know to be cruelty. It would be dangerous indeed for any humanitarian to ever claim to be humanely fool-proof. That is the way the people we have been talking about probably started out. "Not me", they said, "I'm a nice person".

What does all this add up to? Two things. We had better keep a careful check on ourselves. I have known humane people who would not allow euthanasia when it was the only humane thing to do. Also we had better understand the people we oppose. It is not enough to be angry, outraged, incensed, or to suffer any other emotional reaction. It is not right to hate. Hate lowers us to the bottom rung of the ladder in human behavior. What we have to do is find a way back into these people's souls. We have to find a way through or over or around the wall they have built up to protect themselves from seeing themselves for what they are. Rage and hate are not the ways to reach them. It is going to take a more sophisticated approach. More on this later . . .

If you are planning a vacation and own a pet, you have a few decisions to make. Some dogs and cats are suited for travel because of illness or physical impairment. They may not be able to withstand the rigors of travel no matter how carefully you plan the trip. If doubt exists regarding your pet's physical condition discuss the situation with your veterinarian.

If your dog or cat is not in good health or it becomes restless on trips, serious consideration should be given to boarding the animal with a friend or at a kennel. If your trip will be of short duration you might arrange for a responsible neighbor to dog sit or to regularly visit your home, feed your pet, and provide it with exercise. This latter idea may be preferred for the timid or elderly animal since the familiarity of home may provide needed security during your absence.

A clean well-run boarding kennel is another option to pet travel. Caution should be taken to select a facility which will provide quality care for your animal. Your personal veterinarian or local humane society can also assist in the selection of a reputable facility.

Veterinary Examination

Prior to a trip your dog or cat should be examined by a veterinarian to assure it is in good health. A veterinary examination is also necessary to obtain the legal documents required for interstate and international travel. In addition to examining your animal, the veterinarian should provide any inoculations your pet requires such as rabies, distemper, infectious hepatitis, and leptospirosis. A veterinarian may prescribe a sedative or tranquilizer for the nervous pet traveler.

Legal Requirements

Every dog or cat traveling across state lines should be accompanied by a valid health certificate and a certificate of rabies inoculation. While state health restrictions regarding pet travel are rarely enforced it is advisable to obtain the required documents and avoid the risk of having your pet placed in quarantine or refused entry into a state.

If you visit Canada your cat will be permitted to enter the country without any special documents if it is healthy. Dogs must be accompanied by a rabies certificate issued during previous 12 months. Also, a definitive description of the traveling dog is required.

Advance preparation is required for travel to Mexico. A health certificate, prepared in duplicate, should be mailed to the Mexican consulate with a $4.00 fee. The certificate must include a description of your pet, the number of the rabies vaccine used, proof of distemper vaccine, and a veterinarian's statement verifying the animal is free from infectious or contagious diseases. You may proceed with your trip when the certificate has been certified and returned.

Travel throughout the United States is unrestricted (with the proper documents) with the exception of Hawaii where there is an unwaiverable 120 day mandatory quarantine for all dogs and cats.

Travel Carrier

The carrier which you select should be durable and smooth-edged with opaque sides and a grill door. The carrier should have several venting holes situated on four sides. Select a carrier which has enough room to permit your animal to sit or lie down. Be certain to choose a carrier with a secure door handle. Excellent pet carriers may be purchased from most domestic airlines.
Preparation

Even if you do not anticipate any problems with your dog or cat it is wise to acclimate the animal to travel. Permit the animal to explore the carrier, place its food dish inside the carrier, and confine the animal to the carrier for brief periods. As a final step in the acclimation process confine the animal in the carrier and drive it around the neighborhood. If properly introduced to automobile travel most dogs and cats will quickly adjust to and even enjoy motorized outings.

When packing don't forget your pet's feeding and watering dishes, bedding, leash, collar, and first aid kit. A container of drinking water and a can of flea powder may also prove to be useful accessories. Be certain the animal wears a leather identification collar rather than a chain or choke type collar throughout the trip.

Keep feeding to a minimum during travel. Ice cubes or ice cream are better for the animal rather than consuming large amounts of water. A light meal can be provided a few hours before departure. It is also advisable to line the carrier with shredded newspaper or a towel.

On The Road

Those animals which enjoy travel need not be confined if you have a restraining harness or are accompanied by a passenger who can hold the animal. Never permit your dog or cat to ride with its head protruding from the window. It could be injured by particles of debris or cause minimal stress to animals. Pets should be distracted for the brief moment an animal is apprehended by a good Samaritan. If you must continue on your trip or return home make arrangements for the hotel clerk or shelter employee to contact you if your pet is located. There have been cases of animals being reunited with their owners six months to a year after they were lost.

It is important that the owners of short nosed dogs be prepared to travel as outlined in other sections of this article.

Responsible Pet Ownership

Many hotels, restaurants, and individual citizens will give your pet special consideration. Obey local animal control ordinances, keep your animal under restraint, be thoughtful and courteous to other travelers, and have a good trip!

Hotel accommodations should be reserved in advance of your trip. Most of the hotels which accept pets are popular with travelers. Without a reservation your pet may literally be left out in the cold.

Lost Pet

Even the most conscientious pet owner may be distracted for the brief moment an animal needs to stray. If your pet is missing immediately canvas the area. Should your animal not be located within several hours take the following action:

1. Contact the local animal control officer, or humane society.
2. Post signs at intersections and in store fronts throughout the area.
3. Provide a description of the missing pet to the police, milkman, and others with business routes in the area.
4. Advertise in a newspaper/radio station.

Be certain to list your hotel telephone number on all lost pet advertisements. A lost pet may become confused and wary of strangers. Therefore, it may be days or even weeks before the animal is apprehended by a good Samaritan. If you must continue on your trip or return home make arrangements for the hotel clerk or shelter employee to contact you if your pet is located. There have been cases of animals being reunited with their owners six months to a year after they were lost.

Hotel Accommodations

There are approximately 8,000 hotels, motels, and inns across the United States which accept guests with pets. Nationwide hotel chains which accept guests with pets include Holiday Inns, Howard Johnson's, Quality Inns, Ramada Inns, Sheraton, Rodeway Inns, and Hilton Hotels. Individual hotels which accept pets are listed in Touring With Tonne available from Gaines Dog Research Center. 250 North Street, White Plains, N.Y. 10625 for $5.00. In North Carolina state statutes prohibit admission of dogs to any hotel room used for sleeping purposes.

Touring With Towser

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