

House Bill 315 Scheduled for Hearing Tomorrow

The ASPCA sent an e-mail alert to their members today asking them to call members of the Illinois House of Representatives' Executive Committee to urge their support of House Bill 315 (the Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Bill). In their information, ASPCA writes:

"THE ISVMA IS OPPOSING THIS BILL SO WE NEED HUMANITARIANS TO CALL THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TODAY!"

The emphasis is not added. The ASPCA is characterizing this issue as veterinarians versus humanitarians.

The ISVMA is opposed to House Bill 315. We need every ISVMA member veterinarian to contact their state representative and state senator to explain our opposition. Please contact the legislators that represent the district you live in and the district where your veterinary practice is located. [Click here to find out who your legislators are and how to contact them.](#)

Statement of ISVMA Position on House Bill 315

Illinois veterinarians are committed to efforts to reduce the number of unwanted and abandoned animals in Illinois and to advance the well-being of animals and the public. All across the state, veterinarians participate in existing programs to provide low-cost spays/neuters, promote animal adoption, and encourage responsible pet ownership that includes appropriate vaccination, preventative health maintenance.

House Bill 315 has a laudable goal of trying to reduce the number of unwanted animals in the State and Illinois veterinarians support this goal. However, ISVMA has very serious concerns about how the proponents attempt to achieve the objective:

1. House Bill 315 increases the tax on rabies vaccinations \$3 per year, placing an unfair tax burden on responsible pet owners who properly vaccinate their animals. This additional tax on rabies vaccinations is a further disincentive for people to vaccinate pets against a dangerous and deadly disease. In many cases, the existing taxes imposed by local and county governments already exceed the cost of the vaccine.
2. During the past year, Illinois experienced a significant increase in the diagnosis of bat rabies. Skunk rabies was recently diagnosed in two domestic animals in north-central Illinois (a cow and a horse). Raccoon rabies is also rapidly spreading west toward Illinois. Illinois veterinarians and public health officials are concerned about the convergence of these three separate strains of rabies in Illinois at a time when rabies vaccination compliance in the state is less than 50%. Any government program that relies upon funds generated by an increase in the tax on rabies vaccination is dangerous public policy.
3. Any program aimed at reducing the stray population in Illinois must include a public relations campaign to educate pet owners about the benefits of spay / neuter because lack of education is the greatest barrier to population control. The ISVMA supports alternate funding proposals that would equitably generate funds to provide responsible pet ownership education and promote effective population control programs.

Please call your legislators to relate the ISVMA position on House Bill 315. Once you have made your call, please e-mail or fax ISVMA to let us know which legislators you spoke to and what, if anything, you learned from your conversation that will assist us in our effort to find a more appropriate solution to pet overpopulation.

E-mail ISVMA at info@isvma.org or fax contact information to (217) 523-7981.

Remember to Register for the MVVMA Annual Meeting

The Mississippi Valley Veterinary Medical Association changed their long-standing tradition of holding their Annual Meeting in the fall in order to avoid conflict with the ISVMA's Annual Convention which has transitioned to November meetings (formerly February). Please note that there will be no MVVMA Annual Meeting in the fall.

101st Mississippi Valley Veterinary Medical Association Meeting

March 2 (Wed) & 3 (Thurs), 2005

**Par-A-Dice Hotel
East Peoria, IL**

If you wish to download the meeting program in Microsoft Word format please [click here](#).

If you wish to **register** for the meeting please [click here](#).

Registrations Still Available for ISVMA Spring Seminar!

The Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association (ISVMA) is proud to offer an excellent continuing education seminar designed to develop vital communication skills essential for each member of your practice team. Nationally acclaimed consultant Karyn Gavzer will present: **"It's Not What You Say; It's How You Say It – Tips and Strategies for Effective Client Communications."**

For more information on this tremendous program or to register please visit:

www.isvma.org/springseminars.htm

REMEMBER TO REGISTER EARLY TO GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY!

*There are only 150 spaces available at each of three regional locations for this very popular and useful program.

About the Photo in This Issue...

The Great Gray Owl North America's largest owl. It is dark grey overall and interspersed with bars and flecks of light grey and white. When perched, they appear very bulky because of their dense, fluffy plumage, long wings extending past the body, a relatively long tail, and a large head. The size of the head, and the prominent facial disk make the yellow eyes appear small. A noticeable white "moustache" strip is under the facial disk, broken by a black "bow-tie". The feet are heavily feathered and remain hidden from view. The Great Gray Owl is a ponderous flier, does not often move more than short distances between perches and seldom glides. They fly close to the ground, except when flying to a nest. The Great Gray Owl thermoregulates by roosting in dense cover. When hot, a Great Gray Owl will pant and droop its wings to expose an unfeathered area (apterid) under the wing.

Great Gray Owls inhabit a range of forested habitats. In far north America, they frequent stunted coniferous forests along the edge of the Arctic treeline, through spruce and tamarack muskeg forests further south. In the Sierra Nevada Mountains they breed in mixed conifer and red fir forests. Nesting habitat usually includes copses or islands of aspens within pure stands of conifers. Most foraging is done in open areas such as swamps, bogs, and forest clearings where there are scattered trees and shrubs that can be used as perches. During migration they may be found in estuaries, mountain meadows, and along farm fields.

Great Gray Owls are found from Alaska across Canada, down the Northern Rocky Mountains, and northern Minnesota. They are also found in northern Europe and Asia.

During certain winters, "irruptions" of Great Gray Owls occur in the southern portion of its range. These irruptions usually occur as a result of food shortages. The winter of 2004-2005 has seen the largest irruption of Great Gray, Northern-Hawk and Boreal Owls in recorded history.

This Great Gray Owl was photographed near Meadowlands, Minnesota in February 2005.



Contact Us

Please feel free to forward this issue of the E-SOURCE to veterinarians that are not receiving ISVMA's electronic newsletter. Any ISVMA member may subscribe to the E-SOURCE for free:

If you wish to add your name to the recipient list, send an e-mail to info@isvma.org and ask to receive the E-SOURCE newsletter.

ISAE values your membership and does not want to send you any unwanted email. If you would like to be removed from this member service, please email info@isvma.org