

ANIMAL HOSPITAL NEWS



Animal Hospital of Cornelius

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Jury Duty — Lowering the Bar

Have you ever served on a jury? Well then you probably know how I felt when I received my jury summons a few weeks ago. A combination of excitement to be off work and on the inside of a dramatic important case with national if not worldly implications, mixed with the dread of losing hours, days and possibly weeks of my life to languishing in some ridiculous mess of a frivolous lawsuit - not to mention the lost pay or vacation hours if this thing ran too long to adjudicate. I spent the next three weeks trying to come up with a valid excuse to extricate myself from the obligation of my civic duty. As the jurors were sworn in, the judge reminded

us that: the right to a trial by **jury** is one of our most important rights and is guaranteed by the United States and North Carolina Constitutions. By serving as a juror, citizens are helping to preserve this freedom.



Yeah, yeah, yeah—those words mean so much when the case is complete tripe and should have been tossed out before reaching

the courtroom doors. It is hard to believe some of the cases that lawyers are willing to pursue on to our court dockets—but you know what ‘they’ say about lawyers..... Such is the case here—and of course as my fate would have it, my name was chosen from the selection pool of about 70. Man that makes me 4 for 4 in having my named called - but this time I had prepared and rehearsed the perfect “get out of jury duty” excuse story. Ha! This was going to be my chance to vamoose during voir dire. The questioning of jurors began and before I knew it they had come to my turn. The guy before me had been let off, which was bad luck

for me, and then his replacement was insulted when the lawyer asked “What does your wife do for a living sir?” right after a question about his marital status to which the response was “I am a widower.” I almost snorted as the lawyer was stammering and making a lame apology. The odds were **not** ever in my favor as my turn at questions prevented me from even getting started in to a possible acquittal from the jury. I attempted to raise an objection, but the judge simply instructed me to “SIT DOWN PLEASE.” With the judge’s commanding tone warning of trouble, I sat down, cranky Juror No. 10.

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BAD CASE OF JURY DUTY BLUES CONT'D

The case we were set to hear was a dispute between neighbors over that perennial suburban pet peeve - unscooped dog poop.

"Dog Poop?!!" I whined in my brain as my eyes rolled up into my head. Good grief is this what our country has descended in to? The opening statements by the two attorneys contended each side's story and advised that there would be eyewitness testimony and sophisticated DNA evidence.



The plaintiff, Mrs. Daisy Cornell, said she saw Baxter Zakrzewski on a cold morning in April walk away after he "made a mess" on the grounds of Kings Point Marina off West Catawba Avenue. She called police and filed a complaint under Mecklenburg County's "pooper scooper" law. The plaintiff was represented by Paul Clement, ESQ. and also works in the legal profession herself. A photo of the waste was among the evidence that Clement submitted along with testimony from the police officer who took the complaint.



As testimony began, the plaintiff outlined the case, the charges and the evidence

that would be presented. Mrs. Cornell was called to the stand and under examination complained that "Zakrzewski was 'doing his business' at Kings Point because he knew it annoyed us," referring to herself and a sister who lives with her. "This individual has no respect or regard for anyone else and views himself as above the law."

The plaintiff next called Officer Brit of the Cornelius Police Department who described the complaint and explained the law that was violated, as well as the how evidence was collected, stored and documented. It was at this point that a photograph of the offending pile was entered into evidence. I laughed to myself as the defense raised an objection only to be overruled, to the photo being evidence of anything. I object too, I mused - to this whole ridiculous exercise. The court recorder pecked



away at the keys keeping everything that was said documented for austerity.

The next witness called for the plaintiff was this cat named "Kato Kaelin" who corroborated Mrs. Cornell's



testimony, "I was grooming myself that morning when I saw the commission of this

heinous crime." "Do you see the one who was responsible here today Mr. Kaelin?" asked Mr. Clement. "Yes - Baxter Zakrzewski over there, he's the one." replied Kato. "Let the record show that the witness identified the defendant. Your witness." announced Mr. Clement turning the questioning over to the defense attorney, Mr. Hans Sidi.



"Mr. Kaelin, isn't it true that you have had a long tense history with the defendant that is bringing you here today to testify? In fact, you previously filed a criminal complaint yourself against the defendant, isn't that true?" barked the defense lawyer. "Yes, that is true," hissed Kato in response. "I initiated that case because Baxter was always running loose all over our neighborhood trespassing and also for repeatedly breaking the city noise ordinance." "And a jury found Mr. Zakrzewski not guilty in that case, isn't that right Mr. Kaelin?" lawyer Sidi replied smugly. "Juries can be wrong." Kato retorted quickly. "I see. Well we will hope that this jury can make the right decision, based on proven facts and not some personal vindictive agenda."

The defense then had the opportunity to tell its side of things, and immediately tore into the photographic evidence stating that this could be a picture of anyone's and anything's droppings. "We will prove scientifically that the feces in that photograph could not be Mr. Zakrzewski's because it is the wrong size and consistency and will further offer defense testimony that the DNA of pile collected by police does not match the

defendant's. The defense calls Mr. Oakley Pressley, president of BioPet Vet Lab to the stand. Mr. Pressley, could you please describe your business and involvement in this case for the court?" "Gladly," responded the witness. "We have a national database called PooPrints that we maintain. Our clients are mostly apartment complexes or homeowner associations, but we do have some individual clients like Mr. Zakrzewski who also find our services valuable. PooPrints



typically works like this: all the dogs in a complex or neighborhood are given a cheek swab to gather their DNA. Then when a mess is not cleaned up, the property manager sends a sample of the offending poop to PooPrints to match its DNA against the swab database. The service costs about \$30 to register each dog and \$60 in addition to test each sample. In this case we tested the sample collected by police and determined it not to be a match for the DNA of the defendant." After 4 days of testimony, the jury was given the case to render a verdict, it took us less than 3 minutes to make our collective decision in favor of the defense. Who says that the wheels of justice turn slowly? But I will say that frivolous lawsuits really sends our judicial system to the dogs.

NEW DOCTOR JOINS THE ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF CORNELIUS



The Animal Hospital of Cornelius announces the addition of our newest DVM .

Please join us in welcoming our new associate DVM, Dr. Stephanie Blythe! Dr. Blythe is returning home to become part of our team of professionals here at the Animal Hospital of Cornelius. After graduating from Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Blythe spent a year in Rhode Island with Ocean State Equine Associates. She loves horses, but is equally passionate about companion animal care and looks forward to helping our practice continue to provide exceptional service to our patients. We are thrilled to have Dr. Blythe as part of our family and know she is an excellent fit with our approach to medicine and veterinary care!



Employee of the Month

Congratulations go out to Lauren Berry as she earns recognition as our October 2016 Employee of the Month! Lauren has been employed with the Animal Hospital of Cornelius since May of 2013. Last year Lauren hit a very big challenge in her life, and she was diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Even though Lauren had a long road to recovery, she managed to still come to work always with a great attitude.

Lauren maintains her positive attitude everywhere she goes, and thoroughly enjoys living life everyday. She has a Bulldog named Mack, that defines “the perfect sidekick”. Mack comes to work with Lauren everyday

and manages to keep everyone smiling, including his “Mama”. Lauren is a dedicated employee that always maintains her hardworking mentality, no matter what obstacles may get in the way.

Thank you Lauren—keep up the great work!



Everyone is all A-purr! CATS is back on Broadway. CATS the musical first hit Broadway on 1982. The musical was composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and is based off of, "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" by T.S. Eliot.

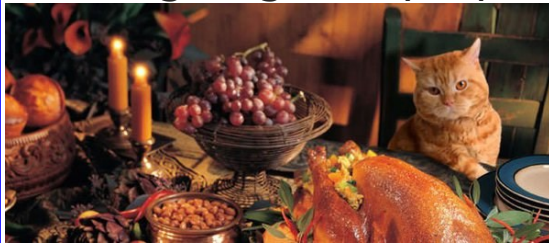
The musical is based on exactly what the title implies, CATS, tells the story of a pack of cats. It focuses around a very important night for these cats, the night that the cats must decide who goes to the "Heaviside Layer and come back to a new life." The characters in the play really capture the personality of our feline friends at home. Some of the cats are playful, some are curious, while others are troublemakers, sly and graceful.

CATS has been a great success, and is one of the best known musicals of all time. It is the 4th longest running show of all time, it has been performed around the world, and translated into more than 20 languages.

CATS' original run on Broadway lasted 18 years from 1982 - 2000. Cats is loved and adored by many fans and critics. It was honored with a total of 7 Tony Awards in 1983, has been performed worldwide, and made into an onscreen movie. Now it is being brought back to life for both Musical and Cat lovers. If you get the chance to go to New York City, I would highly recommend going to see CATS, and make an amazing "Memory".



Thanksgiving Safety Tips From The ASPCA



Thanksgiving is a time for friends, family and holiday feasts—but also a time for possible distress for our animal companions. Pets won't be so thankful if they munch on undercooked turkey or a pet-unfriendly floral arrangement, or if they stumble upon an unattended alcoholic drink.

Check out the following tips for a fulfilling Thanksgiving that your pets can enjoy, too:

- **Talkin' Turkey:** If you decide to feed your pet a small bite of turkey, make sure it's boneless and well-cooked. Don't offer raw or undercooked turkey, which may contain salmonella bacteria. Do not give your pet the left over carcass—the bones can be problematic for the digestive tract.
- **No Bread Dough:** Don't spoil your pet's holiday by giving him access to raw yeast bread dough. When a dog or cat ingests raw bread dough, the yeast continues to convert the sugars in the dough to carbon dioxide gas and alcohol. This can result in bloated drunken pets, which could become a life-threatening emergency, requiring hospitalization.
- **Don't Let Them Eat Cake:** If you plan to bake Thanksgiving desserts, be sure your pets keep their noses out of the batter, especially if it includes raw eggs—they could contain salmonella bacteria that may lead to food poisoning.
- **A Feast Fit for a King:** While your family enjoys a special meal, give your cat and dog a small feast of their own. Offer them made-for-pets chew bones. Or stuff their usual dinner—perhaps with a few added tidbits of turkey, vegetables (try sweet potato or green beans) and dribbles of gravy—inside a food puzzle toy. They'll be happily occupied for awhile, working hard to extract their dinner from the toy.

A few small boneless pieces of cooked turkey, a taste of mashed potato or even a lick of pumpkin pie shouldn't pose a problem. However, don't allow your pets to over-indulge, as they could wind up with a case of stomach upset, diarrhea or even worse—an inflammatory condition of the pancreas known as pancreatitis. It's best keep pets on their regular diets during the holidays. Please visit the ASPCA's website for the [People Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Pets](#) page for more information.