

# Rabies Remains A Serious Threat Here, Animal Supervisor Warns

BY LYNN CARLSON

If you think the threat of rabies has diminished because you haven't heard much about it lately, think again, says the county's new animal control supervisor.

It's hunting season, a time when dogs will be scouring the woods and running the daylight out of raccoons, the animals most likely to carry the rapidly spreading, almost-certainly-fatal disease.

And cats who are allowed to roam are always at high risk for the disease, because they are naturally more efficient hunters than other domestic animals.

"Rabies is not seasonal," warns Greg Thompson, Brunswick County's new animal control supervisor. "There have been 103 cases discovered in North Carolina this year, throughout the year. Most were in raccoons, but ten were in domestic animals—eight dogs and two cats. None of the ten had had a legal rabies vaccination."

Thompson hadn't come to Brunswick yet when two rabid raccoons were discovered in the Ash area back in September. But he's heard about how every veterinarian in the county vaccinated hundreds of dogs and cats that month as worried pet owners flocked to a county-sponsored clinic.

The veterinarians probably would prefer numbers a little more manageable this Saturday as they conduct the fifth and final rabies clinic of 1993. But they, along with Thompson, hope for another strong response to the offer of a year's worth of protection against rabies for \$5 per animal.

"Several thousand animals got vaccinated this year, but there are still thousands who've never been vaccinated or whose vaccinations aren't current," said Thompson. "It's simply the best protection you can give your pet and your family."

Brunswick County's rabies control program is "excellent," said Thompson, who joins the department after four years in animal control in his hometown of Wilson. The more cooperation the public provides, the more effective his department can be in its goal to protect people and their pets, he adds.

Thompson is impressed that the Brunswick County health department and local veterinarians sponsored five clinics in 1993, though state law requires only one a year.

Animal control officers also impounded 5,300 strays and unwanted animals, most of the time keeping its 24 dog kennels and 27 cat cages full much of the time. Sadly, says Thompson, most of them were put to death because they were never claimed or adopted.

As the third facet of rabies control, officers have responded to numerous calls about people being bitten by animals. Every such call requires that the biting animal be confined and observed for 10 days, even if it has a current rabies vaccination.

One of Thompson's goals in his new job is to start a public education program about the importance of animal control, rabies control and re-



STAFF PHOTO BY LYNN CARLSON

ANIMAL CONTROL SUPERVISOR Greg Thompson takes time out to greet a "client," a friendly pooch who's been vaccinated and neutered and is ready to be adopted by a loving family.

## Where To Go For Vaccination

Four rabies clinics will be offered this Saturday, Dec. 11, by local veterinarians and the Brunswick County Health Department.

Vaccinations will cost \$5 each and are effective for one year.

Clinic sites and hours are:

- Companion Animal Hospital, East Gate Square, Shallotte, 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.
- Brunswick Animal Hospital, U.S. 17, Supply, 9 a.m. until noon
- Seaside Animal Care, Carter Drive, Calabash, 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.
- Leland Veterinary Hospital, Clairmont Plaza, Leland, 8 a.m. until noon.

sponsible pet ownership. He says he's a pet lover, not just a pet policeman, and likes to see dogs and cats become a part of loving, responsible families rather than being euthanized.

### A Problem On the Rise

Statewide, there have been more than 10 times as many cases of laboratory-confirmed rabies in 1993 than there were in 1990.

Worldwide, according to information supplied by Calabash veterinarian Ernest Ward, more than 27,000 cases of animal rabies were reported, along with 500 confirmed hu-

man cases.

"The actual number is most likely to be well over 20,000," he says, adding that few Americans are aware that in southern Asia alone, rabies may account for more than 15,000 deaths per year.

"Bite wounds are by far the most common mode of infection for rabies," Ward said. "Contact with bodily secretions, especially saliva, is also a likely route of transmission. Dogs and cats are usually exposed to the virus when they fight with or are attacked by a rabid animal."

The virus is shed in the saliva for

up to 13 days before a rabid animal exhibits any neurological signs and continues until it dies, usually in 20 days or less.

Classical signs of rabies consist of three disease stages:

■The prodromal stage lasts two to three days and is characterized by apprehension, nervousness, solitude and intermittent fever. Friendly animals become agitated and hostile, while fractious and aggressive animals may become unusually friendly and approachable;

■The "furious" stage typically lasts one to seven days and presents as manifests itself as restlessness and extreme irritability. Dogs may snap at unseen objects, chew and eat unusual items and even attack their owners. Cats especially exemplify the furious stage and will scratch and bite at anything.

■The final "dumb" or paralytic stage usually develops within two to four days (up to 10) after the first clinical signs are observed. Dogs begin to salivate profusely because they are unable to swallow, make choking sounds which may make the owner and veterinarian con-

cerned that something may be lodged in the throat, and experience difficulty in breathing. The animal eventually lapses into coma and dies of respiratory failure.

In humans, the syndrome is identical.

"It is imperative to have your animals vaccinated for this disease,"

Ward said. "You do not get a second chance with rabies. We are experiencing an outbreak of rabies in our area of proportions that have never been seen before."

If you observe a suspicious wild animal, leave it alone and contact the Brunswick County Animal Control Department at 754-8204.

**LUNCH BUFFET**  
MONDAY-FRIDAY 11-2:30

Ocean City's  
**CLEAN Sweep**  
CLEARANCE

**NEW!**

**1993 Chevy Full-Size K-Blazer**  
Stk. #1664, Conv. Pkg., Loaded **\$99 OVER INVOICE**

**NEW!**

**1993 Geo Storm Sport Coupe**  
Stk. #1646, AC, Auto, Stereo **\$99 OVER INVOICE**

**NEW!**

**1993 Chevy S-10 Blazer**  
Stk. #1642, 4x4, 4 door **\$99 OVER INVOICE**

**CHECK OUT THE NEW 1994'S!**

USED CAR CLEARANCE  
**\$99 OVER INVOICE AND COST**

1993 CHEVY S/10 BLAZER	1991 GMC S/15 SONOMA SL	1992 CHEVY ASTRO VAN
1992 OLDS CUTLASS	1993 CHEVY CORSICA LT	1992 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE
1992 GEO METRO	1993 FORD RANGER XLT	1992 PONTIAC GRAND PRIX
1992 PONTIAC GRAND AM	1992 CHEVY ASTRO VAN	1992 CHEVY C1500 TRUCK
1992 PONTIAC GRAN AM	1992 PONTIAC GRAND PRIX	1992 GEO STORM
1992 GEO PRIZM	1992 PONTIAC SUNBIRD	1992 BUICK PARK AVENUE
1993 CHEVY CORSICA LT	1991 CHEVY CAPRICE WAGON	1992 GEO STORM
1992 GEO METRO		

You are not going to believe it.

It has not been a very good week. It all started when I dropped a bottle of very expensive medicine and the boss got mad. He told me to get out of his sight, so I went home. I got there and was thinking about the old sour puss when I remembered the saying, "If life hands you lemons, make lemonade." So I went to the refrigerator to get some lemons. I got the lemons, squeezed them and went to the cupboard to get some sugar, but I was out of sugar. I decided to go ahead and make the lemonade without sugar. But when I went to turn on the water, there was none. That was when I remembered I had forgotten to pay the water bill. Well, I decided that I would go pay the water bill and get some sugar at the same time. I went out, got in the car and the battery was dead. I got the battery charger and started the car. I started to the grocery store and ran out of gas. I walked to the gas station to get a can of gas. But when the man asked for a deposit, I realized I had forgotten my wallet. I walked back home and realized I had forgotten to pick up the house key. I walked back to the car to get the electric garage door opener and walked back home to open the garage door, but it wouldn't open. That was when I realized I forgot to pay the electric bill too. So, I decided to break into my house. That was when the policeman came by and here I am. I called the boss to come bail me out. He said that if I could increase sales this week, he would come and get me, otherwise I could stay in jail.

I need your help. Please take the check below to Coastal Drug Store, make some purchases, sign the check and save 10% on any new prescription and 5% on any sundry item in the store.

**COASTAL DRUG**  
A FRED MINTZ PHARMACY

754-6563

4802 Main Street      Shallotte, N.C.

NOTICE: The ad is prepared 90 days prior to sale date. In some cases, some advertised items may not be available due to circumstances beyond our control. We reserve the right to limit quantities.

**NO ONE KNOWS YOUR GM CAR BETTER**

**SERVICE COUPON**

**Oil Change With Lube & Filter**

All makes & models up to 5 qts. oil Includes **\$23.99**

**Free Inspection**

Belts & Hoses • Check Fluid Levels & Visual Inspection Under Carriage.

NO ONE. Good thru Dec. 17

**Automotive Detail Special \$34.95**

Wash, wax & buff. Completely detailed inside & out. (Trucks & Vans Extra)

**Ocean City**

**Cars, Incorporated**

"YOUR" Brunswick County Chevrolet-Geo Dealer

1-800-242-0373

Sales • Service • Parts • Hwy. 17 N., Shallotte • 754-7117