



# RABID BYTES

## The Newsletter of The Alliance for Rabies Control

Issue 19  
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## EDITORIAL

This month the world will observe the fourth annual World Rabies Day. After initiating the first World Rabies Day, several of my colleagues told me that simply having one day a year to do something about rabies prevention would never be enough, and that in fact rabies prevention needed to be a yearlong activity, rather than a one-day event. After four years of watching and listening as Peter Costa, Head of Global Communications for the Alliance and Louise Taylor, Editor-in-Chief of our Newsletter, fielded questions and stories from around the world, it seems to me that many countries have been able to use the World Rabies Day initiative as a springboard to improve rabies prevention activities in their own region. The wide-ranging activities that people have organized for World Rabies Day, ranging from the traditional educational forums and animal vaccination clinics to ingenious theatre productions, samba dances hosted by veterinarians, dog-sled races and

children's poster contests, have educated hundreds of millions of people around the world and provided new and fresh ideas for others to help improve rabies awareness in their own area. Whatever it is you chose to do this year for World Rabies Day, we encourage you to send a report along with photos to Peter Costa at [peter.costa@worldrabiesday.org](mailto:peter.costa@worldrabiesday.org) so that we can publicize your events on our website.

There are many conferences relevant to rabies control that are scheduled to take place in the upcoming months and you will find more information on these meetings enclosed in the Newsletter. We hope to see you at the Rabies in the Americas Meeting next month and invite you to stop by our booth and meet our staff. Meanwhile, we wish all of you great success for your planned events for World Rabies Day and hope to hear from you soon.

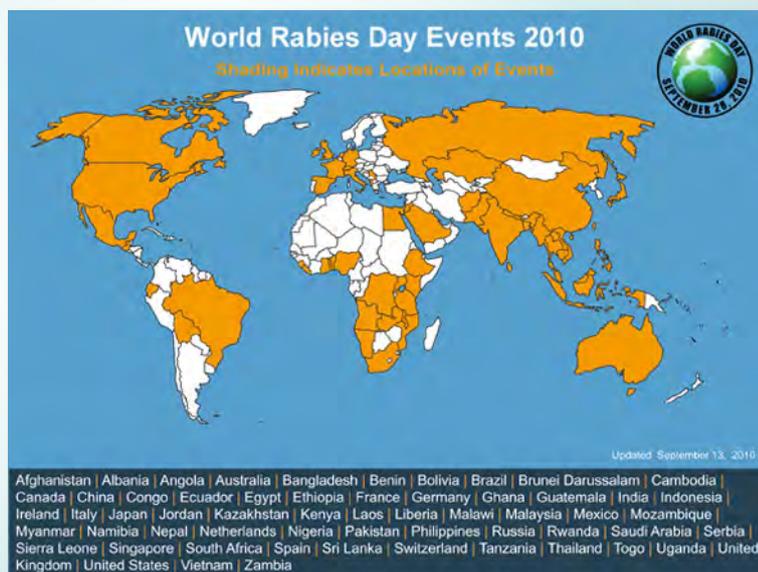
*Deborah Briggs*  
Executive Director, Alliance for Rabies Control

## WORLD RABIES DAY – WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND THE WORLD?

Want some ideas about what to do for World Rabies Day this year? How about hosting an educational forum amongst professionals to bring the latest recommendations by WHO to their attention? Since the new recommendations have just been published from the WHO, it seems that World Rabies Day is the perfect opportunity to bring these new guidelines to the attention of medical and veterinary professionals. If that does not strike your fancy, how about taking the opportunity to deliver an educational message to a classroom full of children about 'responsible pet ownership' and their role in protecting their pets and themselves against the most deadly disease known to mankind? After all, over 50% of all dog bites and rabies deaths occur in the youngest members of our society. Teachers in the Philippines have been blazing new trails in just how rabies education can be incorporated into the school curriculum in a big way.

Why not organise a group to view one or all of the four webinars being broadcast online by The Alliance for Rabies Control and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on World Rabies Day? Presentations on rabies control are being made by speakers from all around the world. There is no cost to attend the Webinars, but you need to register. Details of the programme and how to register are available on the [WRD website](http://www.worldrabiesday.org).

Still not convinced that this is what you want to do to contribute to this year's World Rabies Day? Well, there are several other options, for example, organizing a parade with veterinary students marching through the streets holding banners and signs about how to prevent rabies.



*Countries that have registered WRD2010 events so far*

*(Continued on page 2...)*

## OBSERVATION OF WORLD RABIES DAY IN INDIA 2010

World Rabies Day is being observed in India this year with many activities planned leading up to 28th September. In order to highlight the incidence of Rabies and its prevention in India it was decided to use the print and electronic media to take messages not only to the urban elite but also to the rural poor who most need rabies prevention information.

The following short message will be telecast and printed in newspapers across India.

***Rabies is a Fatal but a Preventable Disease***  
***Do you know that every year 20,000 people die of Rabies in India ?***  
***Rabies can be PREVENTED by taking immediate action after a Dog Bite***  
***Wash the bite wound immediately with Soap and Water and consult a Doctor for advise regarding vaccination***  
***Anti rabies vaccines alone are not adequate. Rabies Immunoglobulins are life saving***  
***Please Vaccinate your dogs against Rabies every year***

Indian Film and Sports celebrities have been identified to spread the message on Rabies and its prevention in English and in 10 Indian languages across the whole country. Sports icon and former Captain of the Indian Cricket Team, Rahul Dravid has already recorded this message which will be telecast at prime time every day between 21st and 28th September 2010 by all the TV channels of the country. In addition film stars such as Amala Akkineni, Ganesh, Trisha who are revered by fans across the country will also be recording this message in their own languages to be telecast during that week on all local vernacular channels.



*Rahul Dravid*



*Intersectoral meeting in Bangalore*

On Wednesday 25th August 2010 an InterSectoral Meeting on Prevention and Control of Rabies in India was held at the Veterinary College Bangalore with members of the medical and veterinary profession invited. This was a brain storming meeting with 50 members present, including Dr. Gongal, SEARO WHO India, Maj. Gen. Kharb, Chairman Animal Welfare Board of India, Dr. Chinny Krishna, Chairman Blue Cross of India, Chennai, Deans of Veterinary Colleges, Pharmaceutical Industry, Municipal Corporation Vets in charge of stray dog control and ABC programmes and members of the Rabies in Asia Foundation (RIA). Recommendations have been drawn up to be sent to the Government of India. In addition it was also decided to take a delegation from this meeting under

the leadership of Maj. Gen. Kharb to meet the Minister of Agriculture/Health to increase the pressure to make rabies a notifiable disease in India.

Brief Information on Rabies has been prepared in English and translated into Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Bengali, Oriya, Punjabi, Gujarathi, and Marathi. This will be sent to Members of Parliament from their constituencies in all states to pressurise the government to make rabies a notifiable disease.

Rabies posters and leaflets with the WRD 2010 logo have been printed in various Indian languages and are being distributed throughout the country through Veterinary and Medical schools. Fifteen Veterinary Colleges will undertake a Rabies awareness programme in the week preceding 28th September, distributing information and posters and conducting Anti Rabies vaccination camps.

A public interest film on Rabies has been produced by RIA. It will be officially released at a press conference on 27th September and a programme on Rabies will be aired by the local TV station. An intradermal vaccination programme for school children has been organised in Bangalore. A series of lectures on Rabies will be delivered by veterinarians and medical personnel in public and private schools in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Taken together, these activities show that WRD outreach in India is set to be bigger than ever.

*Contributed by Dr Abdul Rahman, a board member of the Alliance and Secretary of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association*

## WORLD RABIES DAY (...continued from page 2)

This will be occurring in over 15 Colleges of Veterinary Medicine throughout India. How about writing a new song about how to prevent rabies, or holding a bicycle race as the local community has done in Tanzania? Providing the opportunity to vaccinate your pet through a vaccination clinic and donating the vaccine to do so are other ways that professionals, private industry and citizens are working together to do something on World Rabies Day this year in both developing and industrialized countries. Distributing 30,000 educational posters throughout several African countries is also an idea that a few professionals decided they would lend their support to this year. Are none of these ideas what you want to do this year to do to help save lives and increase educational awareness on World Rabies Day? You still can contribute in a big way without too much effort! Log on to our website ([www.worldrabiesday.org](http://www.worldrabiesday.org)), watch our new '[Understanding Rabies](#)' videos and [donate financially](#) to help us support ongoing community programs throughout the world in areas that desperately need your help. After all, we are all in this fight together! Best wishes for a most productive World Rabies Day from the Global Alliance for Rabies Control.

*Contributed by the Deborah Briggs on behalf of the World Rabies Day team.*

## HUMAN DEATHS AVOIDED DURING RABIES OUTBREAK IN GHANA.

Annually, an estimated 24,000 rabies deaths occur in Africa. From 2000-2003, Ghana reported 122 human cases. In 2008, all nine exposed persons died in a single rabies outbreak in the Upper East region of Ghana. New Juaben Municipality (NJM) recorded a rabies incidence of 10 per 10,000 in dogs, and canine vaccination coverage of 15.1% in 2009.

On February 4, 2010, NJM Veterinary clinic reported a suspected dog-rabies outbreak with human exposures in suburban-Koforidua, Eastern-Ghana. A team from Ghana Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (Ghana-FELTP) was sent to assist in the investigation of the outbreak, to determine the causative agent, source, spread of infection, and to initiate interventions.

We defined a suspected rabies-case as a person or dog bitten or scratched by a rabid animal in suburban-Koforidua between 17th January and 19th February 2010 with or without classical rabies clinical signs. We conducted a descriptive study of when, where and who were affected and at risk. We did active case search in both humans and dogs through interview of community members and review of veterinary and hospital records. We assessed the environment, took dog-brain specimens for laboratory diagnosis and performed descriptive analysis of the outbreak data.

Rabies was laboratory-confirmed in one dog and a second dog was epidemiologically linked to the index. The index had been bitten by a stray dog a month earlier, and a group of stray dogs were observed living in bush next to the community and entering the community to scavenge for food in waste bins placed outside the houses.

In total, we identified suspected rabies-cases in twelve humans and two dogs. The attack rate in humans was 8.2/10,000 persons with zero fatality. Human exposures occurred between January 27th and February 4th, peaking on February 1st and 2nd, and these people were helped to receive Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) within 7 days. Since PEP was not locally available, we searched for a source, directed, and encouraged exposed persons, where necessary, to pay for and receive it within 7 days. Under a local politician's leadership, a rabies education programme was conducted in the affected community and on regional radio, the timeliness of which might be responsible for the zero fatality in humans. A group of stray dogs was identified inhabiting the bush next to the community. These dogs usually enter the community to scavenge for food in the waste bins placed outside the houses.

The magnitude of this outbreak was low, similar to a rabies outbreak in Austria in July 2004 where two persons were involved with one fatality. However, human mortality was avoided, in contrast with the rabies outbreak in Upper-east Ghana in 2008 where nine exposed persons died. Stray dogs were a possible source of the outbreak, supported by their presence and attacks in the community. However, this was not confirmed by laboratory testing. We recommended mass vaccination of dogs and cats and control of stray dog populations.

*Contributed by Dr. Kofi Afakye, Resident of Ghana Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (Ghana FELTP), Accra. He can be contacted at [kofifake@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kofifake@yahoo.co.uk)*



*A stray dog being attracted to waste bins outside houses.*

## 'PICTURE IT' COMPETITION FOR WRD

Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health recently held their second 'Picture It' children's T-shirt design competition to create awareness for WRD 2010. Children were encouraged to draw a picture which portrays the message of rabies prevention and World Rabies Day. The competition was open to all children and grandchildren (up to 12 years old) of employees of Intervet/Schering-Plough and their parent company, Merck. This year's designs are currently being judged with a shortlist of excellent entries. The winning design will be donated to the Alliance for use on T-shirts and other merchandise available from the [WRD online store](#). There is a [short video](#) about the competition featuring Ishika Joshi, last year's winning designer, on the Intervet website.

For many years, Intervet/Schering Plough Animal Health have been involved in supporting the AFYA Serengeti (Health for Serengeti) project in Tanzania where canine rabies vaccination has virtually eliminated rabies from the targetted regions, protecting dogs, people and wildlife from the threat of rabies. Through their 'dose-for-dose' campaign veterinary professionals across the globe using Intervet vaccines can contribute an equal number of doses of vaccine to the Serengeti project.



## HUMAN AND CANINE RABIES EPIDEMIOLOGY IN UGANDA

A recent review of the epidemiology of human and canine rabies in Napak District, Uganda, and current activities to control rabies has led to recommendations for more effective programs. Although rabies is recognized as a major problem in Uganda, the official death rates in both humans and dogs are known to be highly inaccurate, and reporting from district to central authorities often fails. More generally, patients with clinical rabies may not report to health centers due to the known futility of treatment, the preference for traditional healers, the costs of travel to hospitals and the perception that signs of rabies are caused by witchcraft. Financial and logistic constraints also limit dog rabies incidence surveys, patient follow-up studies and laboratory confirmation of suspected rabid dogs.

Records from the local government District Health Office and District Veterinary Office, local hospitals and the Ministry of Health Epidemiological Bulletin were used to assess the situation between 2000 and 2009 when 35 human rabies deaths were reported.

Canine rabies seems to be well established in Moroto/Napak Districts, with no decline in the annual number of suspected rabid dogs for the past eight years. The actual number of suspected rabid dogs is underestimated because many ill dogs are never examined, and in those examined, the impression smear test used in the laboratory often fails to detect early stage rabies.

From 2000 to 2009 over 4,000 persons were treated for dog bites across the Moroto/Napak districts. 65% of the dog bite victims were under the age of twenty years. There was no sexual differentiation, and there was no significant peak in the distribution of dog bites by month, even though canine and human rabies in Moroto/Napak have a clear seasonal peak. While dogs appear to bite people at a constant rate throughout the year, the risk of contracting rabies from them is greatest in the second half of the year.

Peak transmission period in Moroto/Napak has been established to be July to October. Studies of dog behavior patterns indicate that during these cooler months, there is increased mating behavior, males fighting over females and dogs roaming about in large numbers. The major significance of the seasonal peak is that stray dog collection and mass immunization campaigns should be timed to precede its occurrence.

Most dogs in Moroto/Napak are indigenous, poorly controlled and forage around the "manyatas" during the day. The actual vaccination rate cannot be calculated because the total dog population is not known. However an annual vaccination rate of 25% was estimated, well below the 70% to 80% recommended by WHO to interrupt transmission, and reflecting a low priority assigned to dog vaccine. Additionally, there are pockets of zero immunization in the stray dog population.

There has not been any reduction in the average number of suspected canine cases in spite of vaccination programs. From 2000 to 2005, 12,307 dogs were vaccinated and there were 73 suspected canine rabies cases. From 2006 to 2009, only half as many dogs (6,084) were vaccinated, there were 77 suspected cases of canine rabies. The small number of vaccinations administered in 2008 may be one factor related to a 2009 epidemic. Vaccination campaigns have low success rates because dog owners find it difficult to reach vaccination sites, vaccine supplies are often limited, campaigns have been conducted at irregular intervals and stray dogs are numerous and unvaccinated.

Much more effort needs to be concentrated on stray dog control, especially in the pastoralist communities in Napak district, and improved mass vaccination campaigns. Police or the army personnel could be useful during such campaigns. Posters, newspapers and radio messages could also be used.

The initial operating cost of an improved rabies control program with adequate immunization coverage and elimination of stray dogs would be higher than the current expenditure. Some of the treatment costs would be reduced with better dog control and should be diverted into preventive programmes. The increased cost is clearly justified by the large numbers of dog bites and the unacceptable current level of death from human rabies.

There is a need to coordinate rabies control activities under a single authority or to form a standing committee from the human and veterinary agencies involved. Last but not least, public support, understanding and participation in the program needs to be fostered by increased awareness of the issue.

*Submitted by Dr Inangolet Francis Olaki, a veterinary PhD student and District Veterinary Officer for Napak, Uganda. Dr Francis is conducting a rabies education programme with materials supplied by the Alliance. He has support and funding from the Food and Agriculture Organization in Uganda (especially the Karamoja Field Office), Save the Children in Uganda (Karamoja Field Office), the Napak District Local Government and the Ugandan Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries.*



*Dr Francis teaching pupils about rabies and control measures in Napak district*

## ELECTRONIC CONSULTATION ON DOG POPULATION MANAGEMENT

The Food and Agriculture Organization, Animal Production and Health Division is organizing an electronic consultation on Dog population management options between 13 September and 8 October 2010. The main objective is to identify dog population management options with special emphasis on animal welfare and health. They will also collect relevant information, data and ideas to prepare background documents for a technical meeting, which will be held by FAO jointly with the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) and other organizations in the first quarter of 2011. The e-consultation will provide an opportunity for researchers, development workers, national and local authorities and the international community at large with an interest in dog population management to share their knowledge and experiences.

*The Call for documents and invitation are available [here](#), you can contact [dog-population-management@fao.org](mailto:dog-population-management@fao.org) for further information, and read the blog postings [here](#).*

## RABIES EDUCATION IN RURAL INDIA

Siaw-Yean Woon, a veterinary student at University of Sydney, Australia recently received a Davis Projects for Peace grant for a project on rabies control in India. Here she tells us about her experiences while conducting the project.

"For a bat hospital placement, I needed to be vaccinated against rabies and this reignited my passion for elimination of this fatal yet preventable disease, and motivated me to apply for the grant. My proposal consisted of helping to fund the Blue Cross' Animal Birth Control-Anti-Rabies (ABC-AR) program for humane control of dogs, conducting a rabies educational program for rural schools and villagers, and funding of rural hospitals to provide subsidised PEP rabies vaccines. I hoped to not only reduce the rabies burden, contributing to the community's peace, but to also address one-health, cultivating harmony between the dog and human populations and promoting the dogs' welfare.

I implemented my project over three weeks in July, travelling to Chennai, Kanchipuram district and Kunnam village. The CPR Environmental Education Centre (CPREE) kindly assisted me in reaching nine chosen rural English-medium schools. The visits proved a highlight of my project, with overwhelmingly enthusiastic responses from each school. The children were fascinated by my foreignness, and delighted in the powerpoint, role plays and quiz - modified from the Alliance's educational resources and designed to facilitate their learning. Collectively, I presented to over 1000 students across Kanchipuram. I also presented to 46 Chennai teachers at a CPREE workshop, and many approached me afterwards, requesting a visit to their schools.

At the Kunnam Blue Cross Centre, where funding for the ABC-AR program was distributed, I observed the full process in action. In the morning we travelled through villages in the van, scanning the streets for stray dogs. It was interesting to note the many dogs we passed that had already undergone the procedure, demonstrated by an ear-notch. That day, 20 dogs were captured and transported back to the Centre. The vet spent the afternoon performing desexing, rabies vaccinations and ear-notching procedures on the previous day's catch, which were held until the following week's release. The release was effortless and satisfying, unlike the noisy capture. It involved merely opening the van door, and allowing the dog to nonchalantly exit, returning to its original point of capture.

My Kunnam village visit was another valuable experience, accomplished with kind assistance from the Blue Cross staff. Murugan, a Blue Cross worker and villager, arranged for my visit and located a village girl, Tharika, to be my translator into Tamil, resolving the expected language barrier. The villagers, who open-heartedly welcomed me, gathered to watch my presentation. My visit was a catalyst for creating a relationship with them, and I accepted their impromptu offer to stay a few nights with them, allowing me to organise another presentation session.

With help from Vets Beyond Borders and the Association for the Prevention and Control of Rabies India, I was able to identify four rural hospitals in Mysore, Punjab, and Kerala, to provide with PEP rabies vaccines, helping to prevent further unnecessary deaths.

My project was an incredible learning experience, and gave me insight into the challenges involved in working in those conditions. With determination, and altruistic assistance from those I encountered, I was able to deliver the vital message of rabies awareness and preventative action to communities often considered inaccessible. Due to the interest generated, I am sending CDs of my presentation and school materials to the city schools I was unable to visit in time, which incorporate the Alliance's Tamil teaching resources. As a result of my work, the CPREE is creating an educational program focussed on dog bites and rabies prevention, continuing the message of rabies awareness I hoped to deliver.

*Siaw-Yean's full proposal can be read [here](#) and there is an interview with her about the project [here](#).*



*Siaw-Yean with the children of Swami Vivekananda Matriculation Hr. Sec. School*

## REPORT ON RABIES SCIENTIFIC CONSULTATION

A scientific consultation on "Human and Dog Rabies Prevention and Control" was organized by the Gates Foundation (GF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in "les Pensières", premises of the Marcel Mérieux Foundation in Annecy France 7-9 October 2009. Meeting participants were scientists, clinicians, veterinary public health specialists, coordinators and advisers of the Gates Foundation funded projects and representatives of other organizations such as PATH, WSPA, RIA, and the Alliance. The 2 day Consultation reviewed results of recent human rabies vaccine trials (pre and post exposure prophylaxis) using the intramuscular or intradermal route, as well as new intradermal vaccine delivery systems and the use of a cocktail of monoclonal antibodies for passive immunization. A number of other issues were discussed such as the duration of immunity in humans following immunization, the optimal use of rabies immunoglobulin and cost-effectiveness of preventive immunization of children. The Consultation also discussed control and elimination of rabies in dogs particularly the use of existing and new methods for sterilization in addition to vaccination as well as oral vaccination for dog rabies control and elimination. Recommendations on all these topics can be found in the meeting report available on the [WHO website](#) and on the [Alliance's meetings report webpage](#).

*Contributed by Dr François Meslin of the WHO*

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC STERILIZATION AND RABIES VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

Dr Bob Weedon, the Alliance's Veterinary Outreach Coordinator, has a strong interest in dog sterilization and recently visited the Caribbean to observe a programme combining sterilization with rabies control in action. He tells us about it:

"For two weeks in June, 2010, I participated in a sterilization project in the Dominican Republic organized by the nonprofit, [Animal Balance](#). The campaign focused on dogs, because they are the principal reservoir of rabies, and there are countless street dogs in communities. The first week, we were in Sosúa, and the second week in Cabrera. In total, we vaccinated almost 500 dogs against rabies, surgically sterilized almost 150 female dogs, and a dozen or so cats, and chemically sterilized 55 male dogs with Esterilsol. Collaborators on these two projects included Dr Amy E. Fischer, Teaching Associate and Extension Specialist at the University of Illinois, two students from the University of Illinois, Dr. Marcial Guevara and Marissa Woodall, and two students from University of North Carolina Wilmington, Laurie LeMonds, and Lindsay Buffkin.



*Dr Weedon (centre back) and other volunteers at the Cabrera vaccination and sterilization clinic.*

Emma Clifford of Animal Balance and I also met with Dr. Martin Viloria, Director General of the Dominican National Anti-Rabies Center, and Dr. Rosario Cabrera, Public Health Veterinarian with the Pan American Health Organization, with Dr. Guevara helping translate into Spanish. We discussed a number of items related to rabies prevention in the Dominican Republic. My goal for the meeting was to offer the assistance of the Alliance in developing World Rabies Day (WRD) events in the Dominican Republic, as well as helping with resources to facilitate rabies awareness and prevention in the country. Dr. Viloria was aware of the WRD initiative, but had not considered a coordinated effort to promote events to raise awareness of rabies, nor WRD rabies vaccination clinics on a nationwide basis. He wholeheartedly embraced the idea, and asked me to return to work with him to develop a national WRD initiative.

An additional goal from the meeting was to get Dr. Viloria to consider animal population control in the country's rabies prevention efforts. As recently as the spring of this year, Dominican officials have used depopulation efforts to help control rabies outbreaks in communities. Such efforts angered the citizens of these communities, and did nothing to foster cooperation between the citizens and officials. Dr. Viloria was very interested in animal population control as a chief component of the country's anti-rabies efforts. He was particularly interested in high-volume surgical sterilization, and the use of Esterilsol to chemically sterilize male dogs. He asked Drs. Fischer, Guevara and me to help train veterinarians and veterinary students in the Dominican Republic using these techniques when I return to develop the WRD initiative.

I have always believed that animal population control is an integral part of rabies prevention, so to be able to work on a project incorporating both in an international setting was a dream come true for me. As a result of the positive meeting with Dr. Viloria, I am very optimistic about helping with rabies prevention efforts in the Dominican Republic by developing a national WRD initiative, incorporating rabies vaccination and animal population control, including the use of chemical sterilants. The opportunity to train veterinarians and students in the country on the use of Esterilsol will allow its use on a widespread basis to help with the animal overpopulation problem, particularly as it relates to rabies transmission."

## WORLD RABIES DAY SAILING

The intrepid team from the Veterinary Laboratories Agency in the UK have done it again. Obviously they didn't get wet enough during their damp climb of Mount Snowdon in Wales last year, so this year to mark World Rabies Day, they embarked on a sailing trip. Joined by colleagues from the UK Border Agency and the Ivanovsky Institute in Russia, two boats set off from Southampton on the south coast of England on August 13th to race around the Isle of Wight. Braving winds of up to 25 knots, the first yacht sailed around the island in a respectable 9.5 hours and the second yacht in 10 hours. As well as aiming to raise awareness of the disease, the team also wanted to raise funds for the Alliance's work. You can contribute at: [www.justgiving.com/WorldRabiesDaySailing](http://www.justgiving.com/WorldRabiesDaySailing).



## NEW WHO POSITION PAPER ON RABIES VACCINES

A new World Health Organization paper incorporates the most recent developments in the field of human rabies vaccines, in particular with regard to immunization schedules. It was published on August 6th 2010 in the [Weekly Epidemiological Record](#), and replaces the previous position paper published in December 2007.

Cell-culture-based rabies vaccines have proven to be safe and effective in preventing rabies and have been administered to millions of people worldwide. All these vaccines can be administered intramuscularly, but some are also recommended for vaccine-saving intradermal use. Cell-culture-based vaccines are safe and usually well tolerated.

*Pre-exposure prophylaxis* (normally consisting of 3 doses on days 0, 7 and 21 or 28) is recommended for anyone who will be at continual, frequent or increased risk of exposure to rabies virus, either by nature of their residence, travel or occupation. Children living in or visiting rabies-affected areas are at particular risk. The protection is long-lasting (at least 10 years) and booster doses are only recommended for people whose occupation puts them at continual or frequent risk of exposure.

The indication for *post-exposure prophylaxis* depends on the type of contact with the suspected rabid animal: category I – touching or feeding animals, licks on intact skin (no prophylaxis required); category II – nibbling of uncovered skin, minor scratches or abrasions without bleeding (immediate vaccination is recommended); category III – single or multiple transdermal bites or scratches, contamination of mucous membrane with saliva from licks, licks on broken skin, and exposures to bats (immediate vaccination and administration of rabies immunoglobulin are recommended). For all exposures cleaning, flushing and disinfection of the wound is required.

The position paper provides details on various WHO-recommended schedules for intramuscular as well as intradermal pre- and post-exposure vaccination, booster vaccination, the correct use of rabies immunoglobulin, as well as on other measures to be observed following possible exposure to rabies virus. It also says that it is imperative that the production and use of nerve-tissue vaccines be discontinued as soon as possible and replaced with safer cell culture vaccines, and that the immunogenicity and safety of vaccines for intradermally use should be demonstrated in appropriate clinical trials using a 0.1ml volume.

It ends with a call for coordinated, inter-sectoral rabies control efforts including responsible pet ownership, dog population management, mass vaccination, compulsory notification of disease in humans and animals, and reliable diagnostic capabilities to confirm cases.

Contributed by Dr François Meslin of the WHO. The paper can also be found on the Alliance website, under [scientific papers](#)



### RITA CHARITY AUCTION

Once again there will be a charity auction at the Rabies in the Americas conference and anyone attending is encouraged to bring along an item or items that can be auctioned. Last year's auction raised over \$2,000 to help sponsor young scientists to attend the meeting and present their work. For further information or to donate, please contact Richard Chipman at [Richard.B.Chipman@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Richard.B.Chipman@aphis.usda.gov).



Richard the auctioneer in action last year

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

The 21st International Conference on Rabies in the Americas (RITA) will be held from October 17th to October 22nd, 2010 at the Camino Real Hotel in Guadalajara City, Mexico. For further details please go to [www.senasica.gob.mx/?id=2511](http://www.senasica.gob.mx/?id=2511)

The 10th SEARG meeting in Maputo, Mozambique will be held January 25-28, 2011. Registration forms are now available on the [meeting webpage](#)

IMED 2011, the International Meeting on Emerging Diseases and Surveillance will be held in Vienna, Austria, from February 4th to 7th, 2011. The congress web site is <http://imed.isid.org>

The First International One Health Congress will be held in Melbourne, Australia 14th-16th February 2011. More details are at [www.onehealth2011.com](http://www.onehealth2011.com)

The OIE's "Global conference on rabies control: Towards sustainable prevention at the source" will be held 7-9 September 2011 in Seoul, Korea. Further information is available [here](#).

The editor of the Alliance newsletter is Louise Taylor. If you have news items or information of interest to those working to defeat rabies, please contact her at [louise.taylor@rabiescontrol.net](mailto:louise.taylor@rabiescontrol.net). For further information on the Alliance's work see [www.rabiescontrol.net](http://www.rabiescontrol.net).