



RABID BYTES

The Newsletter of
The Alliance for Rabies Control

Issue 4 August 2007

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Editorial

The first World Rabies Day is shaping up to be an incredible success thanks to the support of many partners, co-sponsors and dedicated individuals across the world. In this issue of our Newsletter, we are highlighting just a few of the numerous events and activities that are being planned to observe World Rabies Day in various countries throughout the world. For a more detailed list please check out our website: www.worldrabiesday.org.

Our most sincere thanks go to our founding partner, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, without whom we would never have attained the global communications coverage that we have been able to achieve. The entire World Rabies Day team deserves credit for working tirelessly to maintain the website, keep emails answered, and work with global partners to find solutions to various needs across the world. Most especially ARC would like to thank Abigail Tumpey, the communications expert at CDC who has been constantly available, and dedicated herself and her team

to making World Rabies Day a tremendous success.

So, where do we go from here and what do we eventually want to achieve in the fight against rabies? Clearly, we as a rabies team need to continue to work together toward enhancing our opportunities to secure major funding for promoting rabies prevention programs, particularly in regard to the elimination of canine rabies in regions where it inflicts so much human suffering. We certainly should take advantage of the momentum generated by World Rabies Day to approach major funding organizations and seek their sponsorship to fund a Pilot Project designed to eliminate canine rabies from a specific region. We have proven that we are an incredible global 'force' when we unite all of our resources. Let us continue to build momentum as we tell the world that we're **"Working Together to Make Rabies History!"**

Deborah J Briggs, Executive Director, ARC

WRD Support Materials

The World Rabies Day campaign has developed support materials for use by anyone planning an event for WRD. Thanks to our numerous partners such as the Pan American Health Association (PAHO), Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), and others, we have been able to launch some materials in French, Spanish, and Portuguese. Below are some of the material resources you can find on the World Rabies Day website: www.worldrabiesday.org

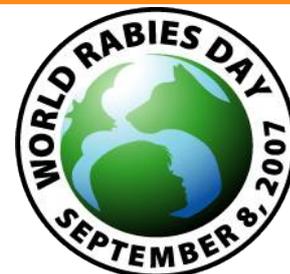
Teaching to Make Rabies History – A teaching module has been created for middle school students on rabies prevention and the World Rabies Day initiative. If you are a teacher of a primary or secondary school, or an agency that can promote this initiative, please log onto our website and download the module. The module is currently available in English, French, and Spanish.

Event Planning Guide – An event planning guide is available on the website and includes downloadable signs and materials to help make your World Rabies Day a success!

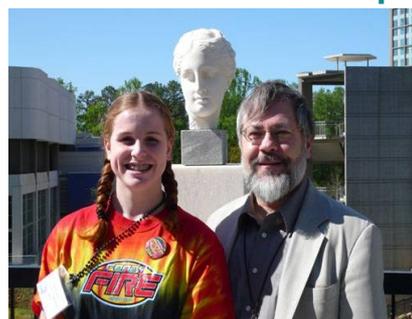
Veterinary Toolkit – This toolkit is aimed at assisting veterinarians (specifically in the United States) in partnering with World Rabies Day and discussing the importance of rabies prevention with their clients. It was designed by a collaborative team of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians.

Logos – The WRD logo has been created in 20 different languages. If you do not see one that fits your needs, tell us!

The ARC website – has background information on the rabies situation worldwide and downloadable factsheets.



Jeanna Giese Participates in WRD



Jeanna (left) with Charles Rupprecht, VDM, MS, PhD of the CDC.

In October 2004, Jeanna Giese, then aged 15, was diagnosed with rabies after a bat bite one month prior. Rabies had been considered universally fatal in unvaccinated patients after symptoms appeared. The physicians at the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin (led by Rod Willoughby, MD) placed Giese into a drug-induced coma and administered antiviral drugs until her immune system could produce antibodies against the virus. She was removed from the coma after seven days and was considered virus-free after 31 days. She is the first person known to have survived symptomatic rabies without receiving vaccine. In June 2007, she graduated from high school and will attend college in the fall. Jeanna, her family, and Dr. Willoughby will participate in two World Rabies Day events in the US, at the Milwaukee Zoo, WI (Aug 26th) and the CDC World Rabies Day Symposium and Expo in Atlanta, GA (Sept 7th).

Events Planned Around the World

The following pages give a flavour of the many events that are being planned around the world to mark World Rabies Day. For more details on each, contact details of the organisers and for other events occurring please see the World Rabies Day website: www.worldrabiesday.org



The Pasteur Institute of Iran. Photo: Dr A Fayaz

Iran

World Rabies Day will be marked by a ceremony on September 8th in the Modarres Hall of the Pasteur Institute of Iran.

Over the course of the day, speeches will be presented from authorities of many different organizations including the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organisation Representative in Iran, the Veterinary Council of Iran, the Ministry of Education & Development, the Centre for Diseases of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting. Dr Ahmad Fayaz from the Pasteur Institute, Iran, a WHO collaborating centre, will also present a report on the current rabies situation in Iran and epidemiological trends.

Approximately 500 participants are expected and will receive information on rabies prevention, booklets, folders and WRD souvenir mugs.

India

15 Veterinary Colleges throughout India have joined forces with both government and private veterinarians to mount a huge rabies awareness campaign. Each college will hold a half or full day rabies information workshop. Student marathons, with participants in T shirts with Rabies logos will run along prominent highways, or past assembly buildings. Wherever possible these events will be inaugurated by (or even run by) local celebrities such as film stars and cricket players.

Press conferences will be held either by the Dean or a Professor of the Clinical Department to highlight the problem of rabies in the country, with both print and electronic media being involved.

Mass rabies vaccination camps will be held in the clinical departments of the colleges, with the help of local Animal Welfare organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations. Efforts are being made to involve the corporate sector especially local canine rabies vaccine producers requested to supply doses of vaccine free of cost.

Banners, posters and placards are being prepared by the Veterinary Associations to be used at strategic points in each city and in some states, the State Departments of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services will also be involved.



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India

To coincide with World Rabies Day, the Marwar Trust, an animal protection charity based in India, will launch puppet shows about rabies awareness and bite prevention in the slum areas of Jodhpur in Rajasthan.

The puppet shows will target the street kids who don't go to school and are the most likely to be bitten by rabid dogs. This is in addition to the charity's work in the schools in Jodhpur, its mass canine rabies vaccination programme and the establishment of a new diagnostic laboratory.

Peru

Peru is close to canine rabies elimination, so recent epidemic events besides dozens of deaths due to sylvatic rabies have endangered the progress achieved over the latest decade. The World Rabies Day campaign is regarded as an opportunity to take action and promote prevention and education on rabies in the country. The Rabies Strategy Office of the Ministry of Health of Peru is leading the organization of World Rabies Day events in Peru, co-ordinated by Dr. Ana Maria Navarro.

The program starts with three scientific events on rabies on August 28-29 with international speakers. On September 2nd, several cities will include World Rabies Day speeches in their patriotic Sunday Raising Flag ceremonies in local main squares.

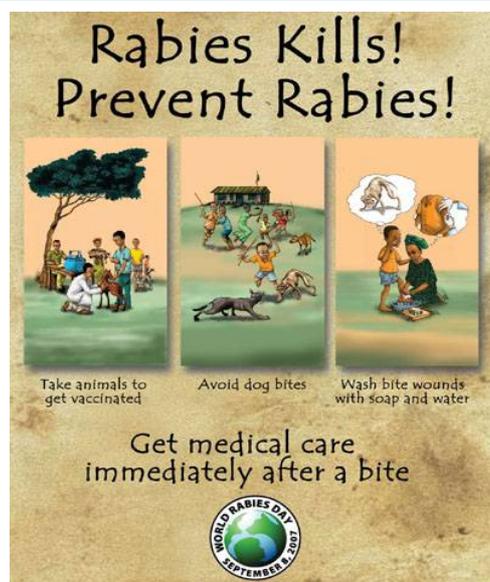


Peruvian awareness poster

Leading up to September 8th, many additional activities are scheduled: rabies seminars for health professionals, journalists and the general public, banner/slogan contests, dog costume contests, rabies educational festivals, district parades and plays on rabies. On September 4th, the Peruvian Ministry of Health will host an international videoconference with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the CDC, and Institute Pasteur-Brazil. On September 7th, a large World Rabies Day parade will be held in Independencia, one of the most populated districts in Lima, including the participation of government authorities, award ceremonies, dog exhibits and a rabies expo with distribution of educational materials on rabies featuring the World Rabies Day logo.

The message will also be spread through the mail, with the Ministry of Transports and Communications and the Peruvian Postal Services (SERPOST) scheduling a special stamp exhibition on rabies at the Postal Museum and SERPOST sponsoring educational postmarks on rabies being used in the mail service from August.





A Poster prepared by CDC for use in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Senegal.

Pakistan

The Infectious Disease Society of Pakistan and Rabies in Asia (Pakistan Chapter) Foundation have welcomed the initiative of the Alliance for Rabies Control and will be joining countries across the world on World Rabies Day on September 8, 2007.

15 different organizations have pledged support for a campaign to raise awareness through radio, television and print media. A walk will be organized in Karachi, led by the mayor or his designate. Balloons, T shirts and caps with logos of various organizations and a message for rabies control will be given to participants.

Medical and Veterinary professionals and students, their friends and supporters, and organizations involved in animal and human welfare and the City Government are expected to participate. Additionally, similar activities are being organized in other cities throughout Pakistan.



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UK

In Edinburgh, two events have been organised, by ARC and students of the University of Edinburgh Veterinary and Medical Schools. A fund-raising comedy night on Sept 12th and a 'Race Against Rabies' will be held around the famous landmark Arthur's seat which overlooks the city on Sept 22nd. The event is open to runners, walkers and their dogs.

South Africa

The national Rabies Advisory Group has planned a National Rabies Week from the 3rd to the 9th September. Local State Veterinary Offices will carry out awareness drives and each of the nine provinces will also have a provincial ceremony involving high ranking officials and politicians to generate publicity about the ongoing tragedy of rabies.

Pamphlets, t-shirts, banners, posters and more items are being produced and will be distributed, with local and national media getting involved.

The campaign will target school children, local clinics, veterinary practices, medical and veterinary students, and health professionals. Appropriate rabies information and guidance material is being prepared for each group. The South African Veterinary Association has given its support to the campaign and annual vaccination clinics will be held throughout the country to vaccinate dogs and cats. The campaign will culminate nationally with the Ministers of Agriculture and Health visiting a rabies infection hot-spot for an awareness rally.

Thailand

The largest ever public gathering to campaign against rabies will be organized by the Molecular Biology Center for Neurological Diseases, Chulalongkorn University Hospital, the Thai Red Cross Society, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and animal protection groups.



The main venue of the Thai World Rabies Day will be Lumpini Park, located in the city centre of Bangkok. A mass campaign to raise public awareness on rabies control and protection will be conducted with various activities including: a rabies exhibition, pet vaccinations, an essay competition for elementary students, and a "Love dog, love life" training scheme for school teachers. The highlights also include a mini-concert from famous Thai singers, and a panel discussion with doctors and a rabies patient's relatives entitled "Rabies: how many more lives will be taken?".

Sri Lanka

A half day media seminar for TV, radio and print personnel is planned for the last week of August with the participation of the Hon. Minister of Health, the Secretary of Health and the Director General Of Health Services. The technical presentations will be on the theme of "Prevention and Control of Rabies".

All health institutions in the country will participate in a public awareness poster campaign, and school children will be targeted in a similar programme.

In Columbo, a one day educational programme will be held for medical officers selected from all hospitals where PEP is administered, in order to update their knowledge of current recommendations for rabies prevention.

Argentina

In Buenos Aires, there will be a Symposium on "Rabies in the World, the Situation in Argentina and strategies for its control and elimination" at the Pasteur Institute on the 8th September.

A WRD poster has been designed and will be distributed at the National Meeting of Healthy Communities, where 1200 local communities will be represented. There will also be a Distance Learning Workshop on Rabies, covering the impact on health, society and economy of rabies in 24 provinces of the country and several radio and TV interviews have been lined up.

A Personal Perspective

Dr. Sarah Cleaveland, is a senior lecturer in veterinary epidemiology at Edinburgh University, UK. She has worked on rabies control projects in Tanzania for over 12 years, protecting both humans and wildlife by vaccinating domestic dogs. Motivated by the human suffering that rabies causes, she was instrumental in establishing the Alliance for Rabies Control charity. This is her perspective on World Rabies Day.

"It was only just over a year ago that I was sitting around my kitchen table in chilly Edinburgh discussing with a few friends and colleagues how we might galvanise interest and support to tackle the problem of rabies worldwide and how we might set up a charity to do that.

We have all been very pleased at the scale of concern from all over the world about this horrific disease and the incredible response from individuals and groups to our simple message: "Rabies is a horrific disease that kills tens of thousands of people each year, but each one of these deaths could have easily been prevented".

There are many problems and challenges facing the world, particularly in countries of Africa and Asia, where we often feel powerless to help. I think the huge interest generated by World Rabies Day stems from the fact that, for

rabies, we are not powerless – we can, now, today, all make a difference. We recognise that rabies is not in the same league as HIV/AIDS, TB or malaria, but it is a disease that affects millions of people each year and being able to make a tangible difference on this scale is enormously motivating.

So, the phenomenon of World Rabies Day has been unleashed and the incredible momentum pushing it all forward is just fantastic! The enthusiasm, and hard work put in by all of those in the WRD coordination team has been truly amazing and I am confident that we are on the brink of a new era in rabies control.

Over 100 years ago, Pasteur stated that "Ridding the world of rabies would be a blessing for humanity". With the global interest and support we have received, I am confident we will be able to fulfill his vision."



World Rabies Day Campaign – From Grassroots to Global!

Peter Costa and Abigail Tumpey, Communications Coordinators for ARC, and CDC respectively, have had their hands full this summer, energizing communication activities surrounding the World Rabies Day campaign.

"To date, we have over 45 countries planning World Rabies Day events, and at least 40 events in the United States alone," says Costa, who joined the campaign team in June. "The worldwide impact of this campaign is very apparent and participating in the outreach component of this extraordinary initiative continues to be personally rewarding."

"We continue to bring partners onto this initiative, despite being less than a month away from the event," Tumpey remarks. "However, we are looking at this campaign as the first step in a long-term effort towards rabies prevention and control globally."

The pair admits that the entire initiative would not have been possible without the collective team of individuals from ARC, CDC, and Kansas State University. "The entire World Rabies Day Coordination team is about a dozen individuals from 4 time zones. We are a small but mighty group!" Costa describes. Tumpey agrees and admits that getting everyone on conference calls proved to be a challenge! "No matter our location – we all had a job to get done! Each of us has a different skill set and the diversity of our backgrounds has made this campaign a success."



Abigail Tumpey

Besides Costa and Tumpey, the team includes: Dr. Deborah Briggs, ARC; Dr. Cathleen Hanlon, Global Alliance for Rabies Control; Kim Doyle, Fundraising & Partnerships, ARC; Dr. Erin Kennedy, US Student Coordinator; Jim Hackworth, Graphic Designer; Niall and Margot McPherson, Webmasters; Jesse Blanton, CDC Rabies Team (Google Maps and Earth parts of the website); Susan Moore, Kansas State University ('Teaching to Make Rabies History' module); Dr. Sarah Cleaveland, Edinburgh University and ARC; Dr. Sergio Recuenco, CDC Rabies Team (outreach to Peru); Sebastien Kiogou, CDC Rabies Team (outreach to West Africa), and Curt Wommack, CDC Graphics Expert (WRD logo).

The entire World Rabies Day team would like to thank and recognize our outstanding partners who have made this event and campaign possible! Please visit our website to see the numerous partners who are **"Working Together to Make Rabies History!"**

Cathleen Hanlon, formerly of the CDC Rabies Team, now at Kansas State University and director of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. Has played a huge role in coordinating the WRD campaign. These are her thoughts.

"As part of the organizing team, I think that the World Rabies Day initiative represents the best of the rabies prevention community. In less than a year, the idea for an annual recognition of the need for human rabies prevention and animal rabies control was put into writing and gained global visibility and partners. We recognize the many basic and health care needs of developing countries but, rabies is one disease in humans that is easily preventable through prompt and appropriate medical care. Moreover, the disease can be eliminated from its most important animal source, the domestic dog, through responsible ownership including coordinated and methodical rabies vaccination of dog populations. In retrospect, the formation of a World Rabies Day initiative seems obvious. However, the ongoing loss of human and animal lives to rabies is, in large part, uncounted and unrecognized. For the rabies prevention community, this is the reality of our daily professional lives but it is shocking news to many others. Now is the time for... as Professor Asabe Dzikwi said... **"Working Together to Make Rabies History."**



Peter Costa

US Veterinary Schools' Enthusiasm Spreads Worldwide

Currently, 26 US vet schools are holding events in association with World Rabies Day and ARC has a dedicated coordinator to organize this enthusiastic response: Dr. Erin Kennedy, a vet with the Rabies Team at CDC.

When Dr. Deborah Briggs of ARC originally approached the Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA) in September 2006 to pitch the World Rabies Day initiative, she was convinced that Veterinary students were the future of veterinary medicine and could make a long-term impact on rabies prevention and control globally. She also believed that rabies could prove the concept of a 'one medicine' approach encompassing medical and veterinary expertise.



Some of the OHC team: Left to right, Andrea Winkel, Mike Altmeieler, Erin Kennedy, Emi Eaton, Justin Sobota.

Fortunately, the SAVMA President, Justin Sobota, agreed "SAVMA is thrilled to be participating in this international campaign." SAVMA created a 'One Health Challenge' Committee to encourage and support the involvement of each College of Veterinary Medicine across the United States in World Rabies Day.

Greg Merritt (University of Florida and leading One Health Challenge Committee member) teamed up with the CDC and ARC to contact each College of Veterinary Medicine in the hope of assisting them in leveraging local partners and participation. "The importance of this campaign struck home to me when I read a statistic in June indicating that rabies had killed more people in China than tuberculosis for twelve of the last thirteen months," states Merritt. He used SAVMA's unique position to bring the

message of World Rabies Day to the thousands of veterinary school students in the US and discovered them to be an enthusiastic group for getting involved in their communities.

The student events across the US are varied and range from 5 km dog jogs or competitive runs, to belly dancing, concert fundraisers, and rabies education focused at both children and adults. Texas A&M University, is planning four different events focused on raising rabies awareness in their community. Some of the SAVMA events have been planned solely in awareness of World Rabies Day, while other events are being held in conjunction with other events. Kennedy is clearly impressed, "It constantly amazes me the amount of effort, enthusiasm, dedication, and creativity I see from the student event organizers".

Deborah Briggs thinks that SAVMA's involvement in the WRD initiative has made a significant impact on the campaign and inspired other veterinary organizations worldwide to become involved and to organize events. "Currently we have many veterinary student associations in Asia and Africa involved in World Rabies Day due to the support of SAVMA," says Briggs. In the future she and the WRD team see a united group of veterinary students across the world working more closely together on all infectious diseases. "With the impact of SAVMA's involvement on the global veterinary community, we are certainly laying the ground work for the fulfillment of the dream of the WRD team" says Kennedy.

Story of the World Rabies Day Logo

In December 2006, Curt Wommack, contract graphic specialist for the CDC was given the task of branding the World Rabies Day campaign.

"We needed an image that included all of the various aspects of rabies prevention and control – a wildlife component, a companion animal component, and of course, a human component," says Abigail Tumpey, Communications Coordinator for the CDC and World Rabies Day initiative. "This image needed to be culturally appropriate and recognizable across the world – from school children in the Philippines, to veterinary students in the United States, to people in rural Africa or Asia," agrees Dr. Deborah Briggs of ARC.

Initial images with animal paw prints in the letters, were great, but had to be rejected because of problems translating them into other languages. Instead, Curt started on a quest to make the image into the continents of the world as we now see in the World Rabies Day logo – a bat, a dog, and a human.

"Curt had to redo the images in the globe several times as our veterinarians in the CDC Rabies Team could actually identify the species of the original dog!" Tumpey says. A generic dog and generic human needed to be found to create an image that would be adopted across cultures. Finally, the bat and dog images were finished, but Curt could not locate the perfect image of a child. That is, until he looked in his own house "The image of the child in the World Rabies Day logo, is actually my daughter, Lily," Wommack confesses.

Finally, the logo was finished, giving the campaign credibility and launching the whole initiative. "This image perfectly embraces the rabies prevention and control efforts globally and the entire World Rabies Day initiative," say Dr. Briggs. "The response we have received from rabies researchers globally about this logo has just been tremendous!"

The entire WRD team would like to thank Curt Wommack (and Lily!) for their contribution to the campaign.

This newsletter was written by several members of the WRD team, with invaluable contributions from those organising the events listed. The editor-in-chief of the ARC newsletter is Louise

Taylor who can be contacted via arc@rabiescontrol.org. For detailed information on the work of ARC, and past newsletters, please see our website: www.rabiescontrol.org.



Lily Wommack