



# RABID BYTES

WRD in Madagascar .....	1
CARe Project.....	2
Rabies Awareness on WRD .....	2
WRD Webinar.....	3
WRD Vaccination Clinic.....	3
Human monoclonals for PEP.....	4
RITA in Puerto Rico .....	5
Community-based Rabies	
Control in Kenya.....	6
Global Surveys on Rabies.....	7
Upcoming Conferences.....	7

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## EDITORIAL

With the end of the year almost upon us, it seems like a good opportunity to let all of you know what we have accomplished by working together in 2011 and to take a look at what we hope to achieve in 2012. Time has passed so quickly since the Global Alliance launched World Rabies Day over five years ago, but clearly this initiative has changed the world of rabies and continues to serve as an excellent platform for individuals and countries to focus more attention on programs aimed at preventing rabies ([www.worldrabiesday.org](http://www.worldrabiesday.org)). We have managed to create a large network of public health professionals located in various locations around the world that are willing to share experiences and, where possible, resources to help in the fight against rabies. We have seen countries begin rabies prevention programs that would never have even considering to do so a few years ago. Through the Partners for Rabies Prevention, we have developed a freely accessible on-line resource that provides step by step strategic assistance for countries and individuals that want to make a difference in the rabies situation in their country. Thanks to Dr Katie Hampson and the University of Glasgow team, we are in the final stages of completing an overview of the global burden of rabies. This will be critical in helping to provide more information on the disease burden. Through collaboration and partnerships with many individuals and international organizations, we have launched community-based programs that empower local citizens to take responsibility for sustainable rabies prevention efforts in their own areas ([www.globalrabiescontrol.org](http://www.globalrabiescontrol.org)).

Where are we headed in 2012 and beyond? We continue to focus on improving awareness about how to prevent rabies in humans and how to improve rabies prevention in pets through vaccination and education. We want to accomplish this by adapting and extending the Bohol project into new areas in both Africa and Asia. We aim to adapt some of our current school-based educational programs for 'non-traditional' educational programs, specifically in areas where a large percentage of the population does not have regular access to schools. Additionally, we want to expand our very successful Webinar based educational system to provide information above and beyond the participants in 83 countries that we have already reached. Finally, from the entire team of the Global Alliance want to wish all of you Happy Holidays and we look forward to working together in 2012.

*Deborah J Briggs, Executive Director Global Alliance for Rabies Control*

## NEWS FROM GARC AND WRD

### WRD in Madagascar

This year, World Rabies Day was celebrated for the first time in Madagascar, with the focus on raising public awareness of rabies. The Institut Pasteur of Madagascar partnered with Sanofi Pasteur to hold a press conference headed by the secretary general of the Ministry of Health. Presentations on the current state of rabies management and anti-rabies treatment in Madagascar were given, a documentary film from Sanofi Pasteur was shown, and awareness sessions for journalists from TV, radio and print media were also held.

In addition a new rabies treatment centre was opened in the District of Mandritsara. This area has around 50 dog bite cases per month, but is almost 1000km from the capital and previously the closest treatment centre was over 200km away. The new centre was opened on WRD, and technical training of the personel was carried out so that they now have current knowledge on rabies epidemiology, reporting procedures for rabies, the administration of rabies vaccines, how to establish a committee to fight against rabies, raise community awareness and what to do in the case of a rabies epidemic in the district.

*Contributed by Dr Ramahefalalao Emilie Fara II of the Pasteur Institute of Madagascar.*













