

## Understanding euthanasia for your pets

**Vet tips**  
**Dr. Sara White**



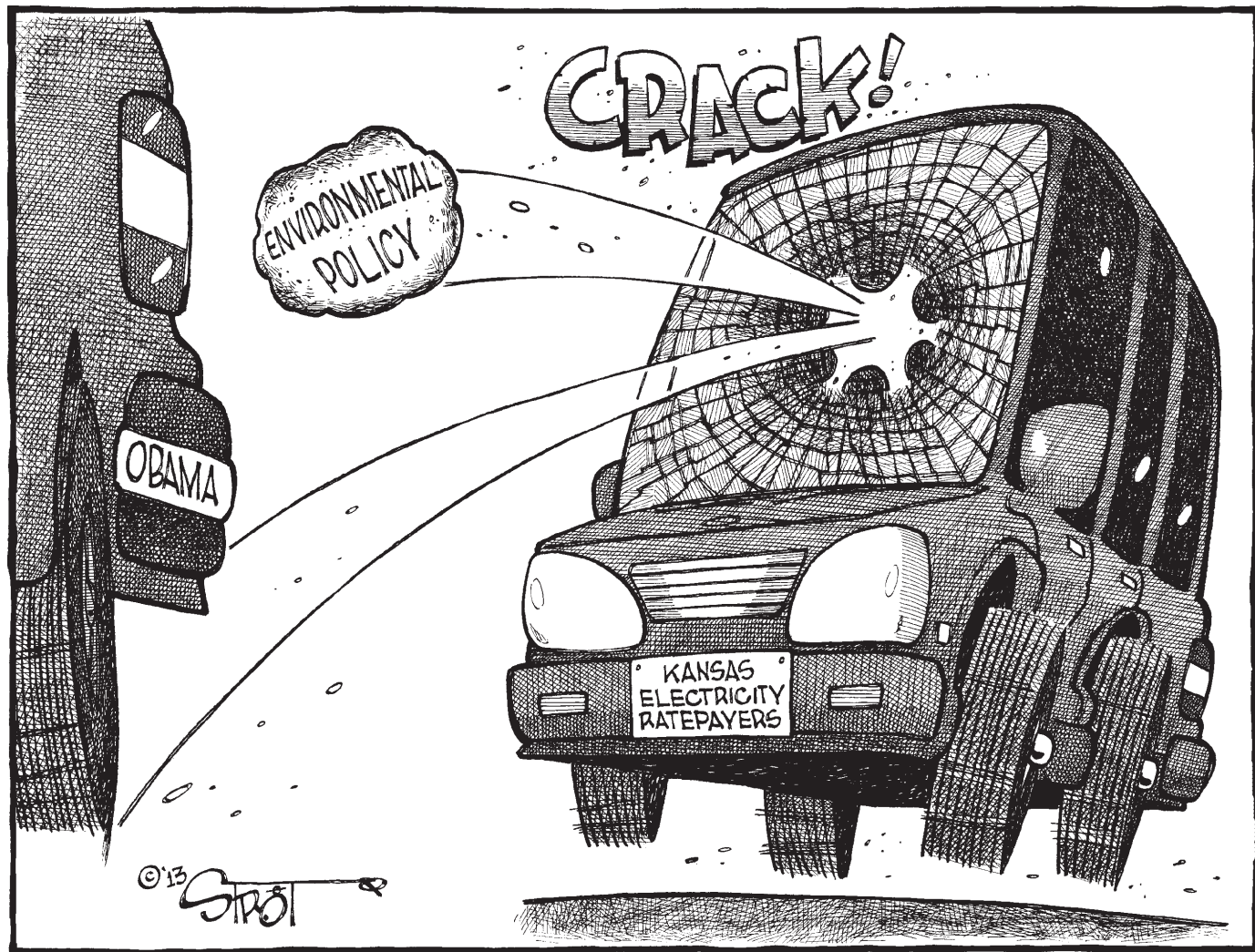
Knowing when it is time to euthanize a beloved pet is never easy, not even when they have reached a venerable age. It is even more difficult in the young or middle aged that are suffering from a serious illness or traumatic injury. Whatever your pet's age, the same factors apply when evaluating quality of life. It is good to remember the three "A's":

appetite, activity, and ability to control bladder and bowels. If your pet refuses to eat, does not enjoy interacting with people, sleeps more than usual, is physically uncomfortable, has trouble controlling bladder and bowels, and enjoyable routines are distressing, it is time to consider euthanasia.

When God put people in dominion over the animals, we were given a very special and important responsibility. This responsibility includes relieving animals from suffering. No veterinarian enjoys euthanasia. It is hard. Only the owner can decide when the time is right to euthanize a pet, but never hesitate to ask your veterinarian for guidance. Your veterinarian will help you understand quality of life issues and when saying goodbye is the only humane thing to do. When pets have more bad days than good, when they stop interacting with others, or when medical conditions can not be controlled or become too burdensome, it is time to say goodbye.

The best thing the owner can do is be prepared when the time comes to euthanize a pet. Things to consider: where to have the procedure done, what time of day/week, if you would you like to be present with your pet during the procedure, would you like to take your pet home to bury or would cremation be an option, and would it help to have someone with you for support. There are many things to consider. Always ask your veterinarian about the process. The lethal medication provides a fast, easy and peaceful death within minutes. Pets often times take deep breaths as they are dying. This can be disturbing. These breaths are a normal part of the dying process and are completely involuntary. Pets also will lose bowel and bladder control. This does not mean the pet is suffering, it is a normal part of the process.

Consider other pets in your home. Animals display a sense of loss when their companions die. Allowing them to sniff the body can help them understand that their friend will not be returning. Grieving signs in pets include over grooming, excessive vocalization, reduced appetite, and changes in sleeping habits. Grieving is very important and normal for the human family as well. Families may wish to make a memorial to remember their pet. The human-animal bond is an important part of our lives! Please talk to your veterinarian about end of life issues.



## Keep having faith in your instincts

Barry Schiff, award winning author and accomplished pilot, has noted that, "Pilots are becoming more and more dependent on automatization and computerization."

Schiff went on to say, "...when they're called upon to revert to old-fashioned abilities, they can make mistakes." Whether this, in fact, had any bearing on the Asiana Airline crash last week-end, remains to be seen. The former Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Mary Schiavo, has, in the past, echoed a similar concern.

It isn't just in the airline industry. I remember when one of our children was about eight. He was being treated for a seizure disorder, and each time he seemed to be faltering the doctor would increase his medicine. It wasn't until our family doctor, after hearing my concerns, walked and talked with our son.

He returned and said, "The kid is overmedicated."

**Phase II**  
**Mary Kay Woodyard**



When he confronted the pediatric neurologist he said, "The blood tests don't show that."

Our doctor replied, "I don't give a damn what your tests say, talk to the kid and you'll figure it out." And he did.

My mother felt if she was in tune with her classroom children, she should be able to see their struggles, whether academic or environmental. When she began teaching a teacher was required to visit each child's home by Thanksgiving break. She said that was far more valuable than any testing she ever did.

When I first became ill with

rheumatoid disease I knew something was wrong. My ob/gyn said I just wasn't getting enough exercise, despite the fact I had three children, a two story house and was involved in several volunteer activities. I knew something was changing in my body, but he took the pat answer. Tests didn't indicate anything wrong and it would not have changed the outcome of my disease. It would, however, have validated my instincts and knowledge of my own body.

Computers and technology are valuable tools in our everyday lives, but so are the instincts we refer to in a variety of ways. Some call it a still, small voice, others identify it as the voice of God and for still others it is gut instinct. Whatever you call it, I do believe it is given to us by God.

Steve Jobs maybe said it best when he said, "It's not a faith in technology. It's faith in people." Mail to: mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

**Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:**  
e-mail [dpaxton@nwkansas.com](mailto:dpaxton@nwkansas.com)  
or to write

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kansas 67654



Thumbs up to Cynthia Washburn, who recently retired after 29 years of employment at the Norton Medical Clinic. She will truly be missed by residents of Norton and surrounding counties because of her pleasant, professional service. With thanks for her dedication, we wish Cynthia the very best in her retirement. Brought in

Letter to the Editor,

If the City/County Airport board is unable to meet due to lack of board member attendance, why isn't a new board appointed?

August Muehe  
Norton

## Fall into marketing traps or stay out of it and be you

I saw an online story about a woman who decided to forgo make-up and self-adornment. She quit styling her hair, covering it with scarves. She cleaned out her closet; keeping only basic, modest items.

Her experiment was borne out of a desire to see how people would respond to her.

She felt people began to relate to her because they wanted to know her, not because of her appearance. She met her fiancé after she quit enhancing her beauty. It's what is inside that matters, right?

She stated when she began her experiment she had over \$600 worth of makeup (more on her at a later date).

Sadly I realized I probably have that much in perfume.

Let me explain: I'm right on the cusp of being an old lady. Have you ever noticed how old ladies tend to douse themselves in fragrance?

In my youth I liked Tweed and Tigress. 20 years ago it was Red and Giorgio; another 20 years have passed and they no longer seem right.

Now I'm searching for something light.

So I stalk the perfume counters. What seems right in the store ends up being awful at home!

**This Too Shall Pass**  
**Nancy Hagman**



I sniff my friends and even perfect strangers, "Excuse me, what is your perfume?" Such behavior is probably just as off putting the old lady application method!

The daughters had some samples from Victoria's Secret. I liked one of those but I just can't shop in Victoria's Secret. I'm not going to cover my head with a scarf but Victoria's Secret is the other extreme. Appearance is everything!

Along the way I've accumulated quite a perfume collection. I keep it in a cupboard but even though it is not exposed to heat or light I fear some of it is starting to turn!

I tend to lose track of when I purchase things. The Burberry Brit is recent---I got it when Patricia enrolled in college. Oh wait, that was nine years ago!

One bottle was a Christmas gift for Kate from a boyfriend's grandmother. The lady was not present. Kate took a

whiff, she didn't like it much. I spritzed some on. It didn't seem so bad. The boyfriend sniffed and said, "Oh, yeah, that's an old lady perfume!" Then fell all over himself apologizing.

The fact that I still have the perfume and we haven't seen that fellow in years says something: I'm not sure what---

The latest addition seemed most promising. DKNY. I like the clothes. It was the last sample I tried. By then I was so overwhelmed by scents I wasn't sure, but something smelled really good.

Once again buyers regret hit the moment I attempted to open the packaging. The bottle, when I finally got to it, was really cute but I broke a nail prying the lid off. Then I saw it: "DKNY Be Delicious" the label proclaimed.

Seriously? "Be Delicious"????

It's the equivalent of having "Juicy" written across your butt. Besides a person who boycotts Victoria's Secret must have a serious perfume.

Nonetheless, I like it. I think I'll rename it: "Nancy".

If anyone compliments me I can say, "It's very ironic but it is called "Nancy". It was meant to be!"

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