

LAURIE PATTON — SE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

A Note From Your Director

April showers bring May flowers and of course may flowers bring pilgrims :)

I want to congratulate all cats and their owners for surviving another show season!



This year the regional celebration will be held in Huntsville, Alabama. Our sponsor page will be on the website soon so please get your sponsorships in as soon as possible. Looking ahead to the new show season I wish everyone much success with their cats...!!..



It's ALL About the Cats"

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS





BITS AND PIECES

THE CONTROVERSY OF DECLAWING

"The inhumanity of the procedure is clearly demonstrated by the nature of the cats' recovery from anesthesia following surgery. Unlike routine recoveries, including recovery from neutering surgeries, which are

fairly peaceful, declawing surgery results in cats bouncing off the walls of the recovery cage because of excruciating pain. Cats that are more stoic, huddle in the corner of the recovery cage, immobilized in a state of helplessness, presumably by overwhelming pain. Declawing fits the dictionary definition of mutilation to a tee. Words such as deform, disfigure, disjoint and dismember all apply to this surgery. Partial digital amputation is so horrible it has been employed for torture of prisoners of war, and in veterinary medicine, the clinical procedure serves as a model of severe pain for testing the efficacy of analgesic drugs. Even though analgesic drugs can be used postoperatively, they rarely are, and their effects are incomplete and transient anyway, so sooner or later the pain will emerge."

- *Dr. Nicholas Dodman, Professor of Behavioral Pharmacology and Director of Behavior Clinic at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, explaining declawing.*

There are very few issues in the pet world as controversial as declawing. If you are considering this procedure for your cat, or if a veterinarian has suggested it, please read this article through and thorough before making any decisions that will affect you and your pet forever.

You need to learn exactly what this major surgical procedure is. Declawing is not a simple or routine surgery and should never be done to prevent your cats from scratching furniture or your children. It will not prevent or correct a behavioral problem, and, in fact, may cause much greater problems in the future, both behaviorally and physically.

You may hear friends or family members tell you how much happier they are with their cats after declawing – but there are just as many people who discover that declawing leads to far worse problems than it solves. There is no way to know which category your cat might fall – but is it worth it to cause your pet a lifetime of pain because you don't want to take the time to teach your cat about scratching or to teach your children how to respect the cat?

Declawing is illegal and considered extremely inhumane in twenty-five countries, including most of the "civilized" nations and even in some third world countries. England, Scotland, Wales, Italy, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, Brazil, Israel, Japan, Yugoslavia, New Zealand and the entire continent of Australia have outlawed declawing.

So why do we here in the United States (except for a few brave counties in California) allow declawing to continue? Money. Many veterinarians now refuse to declaw, but many will still take your money (and it is expensive), declaw your cat, send it home and when you bring it back in a year because of severe behavioral problems, they will blame you or the cat, and never tell you that it was most likely caused by declawing.

What is declawing? It is described as "de-toeing" because unlike our fingernails, the claw actually grows from the first toe bone. The procedure is so excruciatingly painful that it

was once used as torture. The physical recovery time is weeks but there are also long term effects. Before you declaw your pet, first have the nerve to visit www.stopdeclaw.com. Look at the pictures of what will be done to your pet and the picture of declaw surgeries "gone bad." And if you still care more for your furniture, give up the cat to someone who does not declaw.

What are the consequences for your cat? Chronic pain and suffering. Cats are unable to express their pain; however you can ask any human amputee and they will tell you about "phantom" pain that can range anywhere from a one to a ten in pain increments. And phantom pain lasts for life. Yes, they learn to cope with chronic pain because they are cats and they are stoic. But is that the gift you want to give your pets?

Joint stiffness due to the tendons that control the toe joints becoming "frozen." The toes remain full contracted for the life of the cat. The toes are often so arthritic that they cannot be moved and they continue to make scratching motions as a desperate but feeble attempt to stretch those still toes, legs, shoulders and back. Also, newly declawed cats shift their body weight backward and off the sore toes. This causes stress on the leg joints and spine and leads to damage and arthritic changes in multiple joints.

Experts say that declawed cats have more litterbox problems than clawed cats and the statistics prove it. Not many people would rather have their carpets, sofa cushions, bedding or mattresses urine soaked, but this is a very common outcome. Scratching the litter hurts and the cats associate litter with pain and therefore find nice soft things to pee on. Also, many cats know that their claws are missing and so they turn to biting as a primary means of defense. So if you are trying to protect your children from scratches, you may end up with a biting cat. And don't forget the personality change – so many people complain to me that their friendly happy kitten is now a shy, reclusive cat and has seemed to have lost its zest for life. I ask them when they declawed their cat and there is silence on the other end of the phone.

It's the same question I ask when people call to tell me that their cats do not use the litter or they bite and they want to get rid of it. Helping Paws does not allow declawing of cats nor do we place them. After all, if you don't want your cat urinating on your bed, who would? And since you did it to yourself to your cat, it is your responsibility to see the cat through life or euthanize it rather than pass it on to someone else.

So what happens to the cats that owners don't take responsibility for? They get sent to die in shelters, they are euthanized, they are put outside and/or abandoned without any defenses and they become prey for coyotes, and other carnivores. The lucky ones get locked in the basement or garage for the rest of their life. And the sad thing is you are punishing your cat for your bad decision.

I would love for people to end me suggestions for [Bits and Pieces](#) on anything that is feline related.

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RECIPES



AMISH BROCCOLI SALAD

Ingredients

1 head broccoli, chopped	1/2 cup sugar
1 head cauliflower, chopped	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup mayonnaise	1/2 pound bacon, fried and crumbled
1 cup sour cream	1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese



Directions

Mix all together and refrigerate. Serve chilled.

How to remove permanent marker from everything!



Clothes - hand sanitizer
Walls - toothpaste or hairspray
Wood - rubbing alcohol
Carpet - white vinegar
Dry Erase Board - dry erase marker
Furniture - Milk



PANCAKE BUNNY BREAKFAST

Ingredients

Pancakes, bananas, chocolate chips, strawberries, cocoanut or butter for the tail. Put together and yum, yum/

The SE Newsletter is posted monthly. Anyone wanting to submit articles, recipes, trivia, or anything you think others would enjoy, please send the information (Subject Line: SE Newsletter) to:

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Judith Milling

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