

Eye on Del Norte: Full Disclosure is ALWAYS the right choice

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Last week, The Triplicate published a spay / neuter allegation practice which was conducted and overseen by an unlicensed complaint-revoked licensee veterinarian. The complaints came from several pet owners who recently had their pets spayed or neutered by Neuter Scooters, a mobile spay/ neuter clinic. They expressed their displeasure which included improper use of controlled substances and flawed surgery on their pets. Many affected incurred additional corrective surgery costs on their cat or dog.

No one disputes the dire need for low cost spay and neuter service but the veterinarians of these services must be qualified to practice and in good standing with the State in which each is licensed. Full Disclosure of vets' license history must be disclosed to the pet owner.

These questionable practices were performed on Tribal lands with implied sovereignty to proceed. It is and remains unclear if Tribal government were advised of veterinarians licensure. This disturbing story demands additional scrutiny. Who can do what to your pets without proper licensure?

I conducted an interview with Humane Society Del Norte president Danielle Larsen, an interview fraught with deflection, deception, absence of disclosure and lack of candor.

Full Disclosure is always the right choice. Ms. Larsen declared she has professionally known the veterinarian in question, Tess Peavy for 21 years. When asked if Peavy's license to practice had been revoked in Oregon and denied in California, Larsen declared she was not aware of Peavy's status and deflected the intent of my question by stating discount spaying and neutering services were conducted on Tribal lands in December, January and last week in Hoopa. The implication is clear: the standards of practice on Tribal lands did not meet the standards in the Golden State. Ms. Larsen's response lacked even a crumb of credibility. When asked if the Tolowa, Elk Valley Rancheria or Yurok were even aware of the qualified veterinarian deficiency, Larsen's response was guarded. Peavy, in-fact, is not licensed in Oregon or California. Larsen declared licensure ignorance but stated Peavy was licensed in Ohio and Indiana, another superfluous deflection.

The Humane Society Del Norte was recently awarded a \$385,200 spay / neuter grant from California for All Animals, a UC Davis-funded grant. The first installment of \$128,000 was delivered to the Humane Society, in early January.

Questions linger:

Why hasn't the Humane Society utilized the services of the three licensed vets in Del Norte County or the two licensed vets in Curry County?

The question of funding from the Humane Society to the unlicensed PUB VET Dr. Peavy must be carefully examined by the grantor, California for All Animals.

Is the Humane Society skirting ethical standards to allow the unlicensed to practice veterinary medicine ?

Disclosure is parsed out sparingly and the public has every right to know how these funds are being dispersed and if the spay / neuter vets are properly licensed by governing boards and the Drug Enforcement Agency which oversees the use of controlled substances.

Full Disclosure is imperative.

It is disheartening to observe aggressive attacks on the anonymous individuals who've mustered the courage and brought their concerns to interested parties, Veterinary Boards and the media, including The Triplicate.

Finally, another distressing retort was noted at the end of our interview. Ms. Larsen said the content of our interview might hurt her BUSINESS. The Humane Society is not a business. The Humane Society is a 501c3 charity which pays no taxes and receives donations and grants.

Full Disclosure must be shared, for without Full Disclosure, the public may lose trust in the mission to render help.

Full Disclosure equates to honesty and credibility.

EYE ON DEL NORTE

Roger Gitlin is a former Del Norte County commissioner.