



The 28th of April 2014

Dear Editor

I am responding to the article written by Mr. Anthony Abbondanza whose article showcased the indifference of some elected officials in regards to animal welfare by-laws.

Open letter to elected officials of the West Island

Dear West Island mayors, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of certain facts;

- 48% of households have a companion pet
- These families consider their pet as a member of their clan this is why we refer to them as pet parents.
- The issue of animal welfare as a whole is a community issue including elected officials
- As noted by Mr. Abbondanza, Quebec is ranked at the bottom tier for animal welfare in Canada.
- Municipalities have the power to legislate animal welfare by laws.

In response to the interviews given by the mayors;

Saint Anne de Bellevue, Mrs. Paola Hawa, mayor; the main issue in your municipality is free roaming cats.

As a frequent visitor to your town, it is difficult to ignore the cat overpopulation in your community.

I would conclude the student population is a major factor, taking in a cat as a companion and releasing it in the wilds of Saint Anne de Bellevue once the school year is finish.

With no program such as a trap neuter release implemented by the city and supported by the community would help solve part of the problem. Licensing cats and reviewing your by laws would make a world of difference in the useless suffering of these animals. Although the council was quick to implement a ban of dogs on the boardwalk

Pointe Claire, Mr. Morris Trudeau, mayor; interesting to see that a mayor refuses to give an interview, I guess the community has no companion pets, Pointe Claire must have a dome covering their city.

Dollard des Ormeaux, Mr. Janiszewski, mayor; after reading your reply; *the city will act if the number of known animal abuser grows,* the first thing that came to my mind was the following;

do we take the same attitude if the issue was with pedophiles. With all due respect no registry exists in Québec for animal abusers. So let's be serious, the caacQ is willing to meet with the city of Dollard des Ormeaux and present the reality to which we animal welfare agencies have to deal with on a daily basis and present solutions. Owning a dog for 15 years does not translate that all is well! In regards to puppy mills we have won the fight in the consciousness of the residents for the caacQ this file is closed. Let's move on to other issues that need to be addressed in the short term.

Beaconsfield, Mr. Bouelle, mayor; puppy mills or commercial breeding in Beaconsfield PLEASE! As a resident of Beaconsfield, the issue are the bylaws. I have to applaud Councillor Karen Messier for being straight forward and honest on the issue.

And last but not least, Dear Citizens of the West Island;

During a meeting with a mayor of a Montreal borough he stated to me; *if citizens do not actively participate in city council meetings at question period and do not request changes in animal welfare in our borough why should we be concerned.*

Stop whining and complaining and take an active role in your community, be organized, have a plan of action and be professional!

One simple solution to begin with

A few years ago I did a study on the animal control contracts given by the municipalities located west of AutoRoute 13. What a mess; public security, SPCA Montreal, a pound located on the south shore, a pound located in Mascouche, another pound located in Vaudreuil. Then just to ensure the animal never gets back home the by-laws would indicate in one municipality the animal control would hold the animal for 48 hours, another city 5 days, a shorter stay if the animal did not have an I.D. tag, longer stay if it did. What a chaos, Can we not have a standardized holding period?

Did anyone ever stopped and think that a lost cat or dog does not know his postal code, and roamed to a different borough or municipality. To my amazement there is no web base platform that connects all 10 west island municipalities for a lost and found, allowing families to be reunited with their loved ones. This is 2014 is it not!