

7/13/16

Dear Dr Breuker,

My name is Lori Shepler and I'm the mom of City the Kitty. City is the number one spokescat to end declawing. I was an Latimes award winning photojournalist for 25 yrs at the Los Angeles Times and also wrote stories. I've won three team Pulitzers with my colleagues at the Latimes for my photojournalism. I have been working for the last 3 years on this cause, 16 hr days, 7 days a week as a volunteer, to help end this inhumane thing in North America.

Many of City's supporters sent me a heads up about Lake Haven Rescue and how Cheryl has been automatically declawing most of her kittens and young cats that she adopts. Long story short, I've reached out to Cheryl many times in the last week and she believes there is nothing wrong with declawing, that it doesn't affect a cat or kitten in a negative way, long term, and feels that declawing the kittens and younger cats helps her find homes for them faster.

I asked her if she would consider printing out the brochures that the PawProject.org has available on their website to educate the public in your town about the facts about declawing and how people can use commonsense to use the humane alternatives like scratchers, nail trimming, and Soft Paws but she doesn't want to and says it is shoving it at them and that it will turn people off.

I would have to say that she is one of the only Rescues in America that are declawing most all of the kittens and younger cats that she gets, as most shelters and rescues are against declawing and make people sign a form saying they won't declaw a cat and also educate them about the facts about declawing.

It actually is quite shocking as to how she just seems to want to move as many cats out of the shelters and in to homes no matter if she is harming so many of them by declawing them.

I have people writing me who also work with Cheryl and I was informed that you are her go to vet to do the declawing. I also have people writing me who have adopted her cats and their kitties have had problems related to declawing but Cheryl never acknowledges it could be from the declaws and continuously blames it on a specific type of cat litter or how the owners aren't doing the right things.

I also see on your website you have this information that pretty much goes along with Cheryl's very antiquated and inhumane mindset that believes declawing is ok.

I must say that she most likely gets this perspective from you since you are the one doing the majority of her declaws for her and she thinks the world of your surgical skills to amputate kitties toes. She calls you her " extraordinary skilled surgeon" and thinks that cats don't need their toe bones and claws for anything that has to do with their health and well being.

You Dr Breuker and enabling and performing this mutilation and inhumane thing for her on so many cats. Will you please explain how you justify doing so many declaws on kittens and cats since you took an oath to heal and help animals. These kittens didn't even get the chance to use scratchers and prove that they won't scratch a beloved sofa.

I get notes from vets everyday who are stopping performing declaws and we have a list on citythekitty.com , pawproject.org, and declaw.com of ethical vets who are honoring their oath to heal and aren't declawing cats. They tell me they are getting even more business because pet owners want to take their business to ethical practices like theirs.

They also tell me that the majority of clients understand after being counseled about how declawing is inhumane and cruel and always does cause some sort of negative consequence for a cat whether it is arthritis, litter box avoidance, biting issues, phantom pain, or their muscles in their back to become weak.

You are a licensed trained veterinarian Marie and know better. And it's not like you are one of the old school vets that started doing this in the 60's when it sadly caught on like wildfire in the veterinary profession in America.

I was born in Jackson Michigan and I'm sad to say that Michigan is one of the worst states in America in regards to declawing. There seems to be such an antiquated and inhumane mindset about declawing and it's almost like the internet isn't back there or people just don't seem to use their brains to realize how barbaric it is to amputate the much needed body parts from a cat for the sake of a natural behavior when there are humane alternatives that work.

Will you please at least consider this. Please teach Cheryl about the truth about declawing as she feels declawing a cat with you, a skilled surgeon, is the same as spay and neutering and if it is done correctly she feels that it isn't bad.

Will you please inspire her to start educating her potential cat adopters to at least have these brochures printed and available for the public?

Rescues and Shelters in America don't declaw cats and still get lots of cats adopted, so why is Newaygo so different and so opposed to joining the modern world about this inhumane and unnecessary procedure. Hopefully you know that declawing is banned or considered unethical in most of the rest of the world and cat owners would never consider such a cruel thing for their kitties and vets in those countries don't perform it and call it mutilation.

Please stop holding on to the despicable and very unethical mindset that says declawing keeps a cat in a home. The rest of America and Canada are waking up and are moving away from this weak excuse, so why can't you Dr Breuker and the town of Newaygo? I remember that people in Michigan always had good morals and values and did the right thing.

Please be a leader and a good example for the veterinary profession and a doctor that honors the oath you took to heal and help animals.

Will you join us and help us and be a part of the solution to end declawing in your state and in America? You will be a hero if you will, especially if you can get Cheryl to stop that appalling practice of declawing her cats. You could be an inspiring leader in Michigan and start to work with us to make innovative campaigns to get Michigan out of the dark ages in regards to declawing.

I have millions of supporters through other famous cats and organizations like the Paw Project and we would give you accolades and most likely Cheryl would get more donations to help do what she does so well.

No one is taking away what both of you do to help animals but you are deceiving the public and Cheryl by performing and condoning this elective, non-therapeutic mutilating procedure. She is getting lots of cats in homes but harming every single one of them that she declaws. Her legacy will be known as this and she will be in this very dark chapter's history book about this evil procedure.

Also my feline research team has reached out to your practice to see how you address declawing and each time they did on separate days and different employees. They were first time cat owners and asked about declaw prices, what declawing was, and if it was safe and ok long term for a cat. 3 different employees at your practice said things like, there are no problems and it takes around 7 days or less for cats to be back to normal, they tout that you use the laser and are good at them, and you and Dr Russell do 100's of them. One employee said the only negative consequence is that a cat might not be able to stretch out as much. Each time your employees asked if the cat owner wanted 2 paws or all four declaw. When the first time cat owner asks what is best to do, your employees say usually the front two but if you have a cat in a nursing home or for an old person and they might scratch jumping off a lap then 4 paw is ok. They recommended the laser because there is the usual propaganda, less pain, faster healing, and less bleeding. They say the younger the better because older cats might be a lot more sensitive and could be more tender from declaw.

They say older cats have more blood vessels and bigger digits so it might take more time healing. But not once did any of them say that it was not recommended or bad for a cat and all of them said in a short time your cat is usually back to normal.

This information on your website is also quite appalling since you say you recommend declawing kittens at 3 months old and you say it can be done "later in life." This is where Cheryl gets her unhealthy mindset about declawing. <http://www.fremontanimalhospital.net/new-kitten-now-what.html>

Cheryl obviously cares about helping animals but boy is she on a path that is so very inhumane. It's not too late to make a positive change and I think that you are the only one she will listen too.

She is unwilling to change anything according to what she's said to me.

Thanks for your time,

Lori and City

8/4/16

City Kitty,

Here at Fremont Animal Hospital we declaw cats using a laser as an elective surgery. We declaw cats and kittens for Lake Haven Rescue also. You will not change our minds on offering the surgery as a clinic, and unlikely to change Lake Havens position on declaws. Many Americans are lazy and many prefer declawed cats even with the knowledge of the negative repercussions. However, you have brought up many good points of things that I know to be true about the potential side effects of declawing cats. After you email we are going to be more proactive about educating clients of those negative side effects. We can always learn and improve. Thank you for your concerns.

Marie Breuker DVM

8/4/16

Hi Marie,

Your words at the end of your email are encouraging. Just curious, what was it that enlightened you about what I wrote since you are a veterinarian and surely know that declawing always harms a cat's health and well being. I'm glad that you will start to make positive changes and educate your cat clients about the negative consequences of declawing whether it is weak back muscles from not being able to use their claws, arthritis, and long term pain and discomfort from the 10 or 18 amputations.

Michigan is one of the worst states in the country and you would think that basic education about declawing is non-existent in my home state. You do know that most cat owners, when educated about the facts about declawing, they don't ask for this mutilating procedure to be done to their kitties. The problem is the majority of vets make great money doing these mutilating procedures and don't want to stop.

Thanks for your reply. Hopefully you will also educate Cheryl since she says that you are the best skilled vet ever and trusts your advice about declawing and that there's nothing wrong with declawing kittens. I hope that you enlighten her on the simple, commonsense facts that if a cat owner has scratchers and takes the time to train their cats, most of them don't destroy their beloved furniture. I've had cats for a long time and not one of them has destroyed a rug, sofa or furniture and that's because I have lots of scratchers in my home. Simple and easy and no need to do something very inhumane, barbaric, and mutilating to a cat. Cat

owners and vets in most all other countries are appalled that vets like you and so many others do this inhumane surgery.

Thanks,

Lori and City the kitty

11/22/17

Hi Dr Brueker,

I'm revisiting this issue because Cheryl is still declawing most of the kittens she gets. It is sickening to see the photos of the kittens she had declawed this week. You said that you were going to be proactive about educating cat clients about this inhumane procedure but my researchers have found that this is not true. Your staff members do not mention any of the humane alternatives and say that you do declaws quite often. Either there are two things going on. You don't want to accept the facts about how declawing always harms the health and well being of a cat or you are choosing to stay ignorant about it because the money from declawing is just too good to give up.

The kittens that you declawed for her this week never had a chance to live their lives completely healthy with their toes and claws. Cheryl always brings this discussion back to you where she says that she has skilled surgeons and she never sees problems with any of the cats that you declaw for her.

Have you seen the latest studies about declawing that show no matter how it is done, it always causes long-term negative consequences. <https://www.drmarybecker.com/veterinary-medicine/evidence-declawing-cats-just-keeps-mounting/>

Even your own employees say that you see cats holding their paws up, limping, not using the litter box, and hiding issues. Why does Cheryl say that she sees no negative problem with the cats she gets declawed by you. Why aren't you educating her about the awful truth about declawing and teach her about the simple, commonsense humane alternatives that most of the rest of the world and American cat owners use instead of having their cat's toe bones amputated off??

Your veterinary Associations say you should do it as a last resort but what you declaws to all those kittens for Cheryl before the cat owners even ask for it and it's not even close to a last resort scenario.

I'm wondering is it all about money for you or do you have any conscience to feel that what you were doing for her cats and other cats is very wrong and actually animal cruelty.

I'm just wondering how you sleep well at night knowing that you have harmed all those kitties for life and taking away a part of them that is all about being a cat?

What shelters does she get all her cats from and they approve of declawing all the kittens and many of the young cats?

I understand that your laser was very expensive and you have to do a lot of toe amputation's to pay it back but the oath you took was to ease the suffering in all animals and not cause it.

Did you see where Denver banned declawing last week? They did that because it is cat cruelty and wrong. Did you see that AAFP came out against declawing?

Why don't you and your practice be one of the good ones that educates cat owners in your community about the awful truth about declawing so that they get out of the dark ages and realize they are harming the cats that they adopt?

I really would like some logical and honest answers because this is so wrong how you both are harming these poor cats for life.

thanks,

Lori Shepler and City the Kitty

Ps. What do I need to do to stop you from declawing the "E litter" kittens for Cheryl on Monday? Find people to rescue them or pay you and/or Cheryl money? Please let me know ASAP.

Thanks.

Lori

11/24/17

Hi Dr Brueker,

Have you seen this video? Can you please educate Cheryl about the facts so that she stops declawing the kittens and cats? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mM00TNHRpLQ>

I'm sure you have heard of Dr Robin Downing. If you and Cheryl just educated the public about the truth about declawing then they wouldn't want to have this cruelty and harmful procedure done to their cats. Teach them about the common sense humane alternatives like nail trims, sturdy scratchers, Soft Paws, and deterrents. Why is Cheryl stuck in the dark ages and why won't you work to inspire her to stop declawing all those kittens and cats?

Thanks,
Lori