



As of October 2010, 17 cities, two California counties, and the state of Rhode Island have recognized the importance and value of the term "animal guardian" by incorporating the term into their animal-related ordinances. If you are interested in helping to make your city the next Guardian City, please contact [guardian@idausa.org](mailto:guardian@idausa.org).



## How You Can Make "Guardian" a Household Word

Use the word "guardian" instead of "owner" in your everyday language, and urge others to do the same.

Distribute copies of this brochure in your community. You can request them at [literature@idausa.org](mailto:literature@idausa.org).

Ask your local shelter, rescue group or animal protection group to use the guardian language in their literature.

Make your city a Guardian City. Contact IDA for information on how you can incorporate the guardian language into your city's animal related ordinances.

For additional ways you can inform the public about the term "animal guardian" please visit [guardiancampaign.com](http://guardiancampaign.com).

Please contact us at  
[guardian@idausa.org](mailto:guardian@idausa.org)  
for more information

In Defense of Animals  
3010 Kerner Blvd.  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
415.448.0048

[www.idausa.org](http://www.idausa.org)



Guardian language - leading the way for a better tomorrow for animals.

## Guardian Campaign



# “GUARDIAN”

For a more just and  
compassionate world.



*The Guardian Campaign is an international effort designed to encourage a greater respect, responsibility, and compassion toward the animals with whom we share our lives.*

Throughout history, the power of language has shaped social and political movements. Our word choices define not only who we are, but our values and the direction in which we hope to progress as a society.

The Guardian Campaign promotes the use of the term “guardian” instead of “owner” when referring to our animal friends. This ethical shift in thinking helps animals to be seen and treated as more than mere property, commodities, objects or things to be bought and sold, abandoned or abused at an “owner’s” whim. By using the term “guardian”, we recognize that animals are individuals with feelings, needs and interests of their own. The term reflects the profound bond that exists between ourselves and our animal companions.

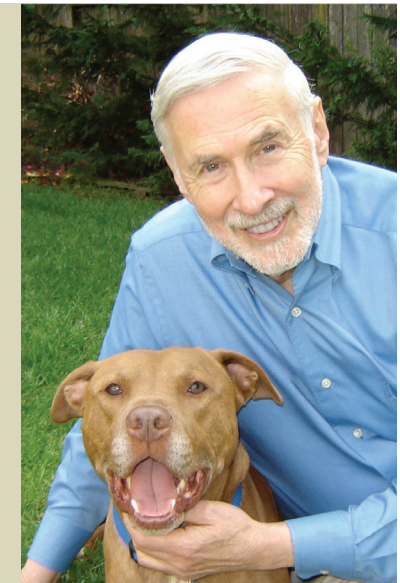
The importance of language cannot be overstated. It affects how we think and how we act. As people think and act as animal guardians and not simply “owners”, they will be more likely to spay and neuter, give proper veterinary care, and adopt and rescue rather than buy and sell. When shelters, rescue organizations and communities use the guardian language, we will finally begin to see a reduction in the millions of animals killed in our nation’s shelters, and we will put an end to puppy mills once and for all.

A more just and compassionate world for animals begins with our choice of language. Using this term will teach others, including our children, to respect animals and treat them with dignity. I always refer to myself and others as guardians and I hope you will do the same.

Elliot M. Katz, DVM

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elliot M. Katz, DVM".

Founder and Chairman of the Board  
In Defense of Animals



Charlie and his guardian,  
Dr. Elliot M. Katz

“The word ‘owner’ is outdated and doesn’t reflect the human/animal bond that exists in our culture today. The word ‘guardian’ denotes a higher level of responsibility toward another being. Although it is a simple language change that does not alter the legal status of animals as property, we hope that the increased awareness of the ‘guardian’ language will elevate the status of animals in our community. We will use the word ‘guardian’ as another tool to fight animal abuse and exploitation.”

Jan Mc-Hugh Smith,  
Former Director  
Humane Society of Boulder Valley

“It is truly time for all of society to see animals as more than mere commodities or property to be bought or sold, exploited or killed at an ‘owner’s’ whim. I am proud to be the guardian of my animal companions.”

Gretchen Wyler, Former Vice President  
Humane Society of the United States  
Hollywood Office



“The term ‘guardian’ accurately describes the relationship of perpetual care that is needed to teach children respect, compassion and kindness for domestic pets. Studies show that children who learn compassion and respect for animals have a better chance at becoming compassionate adults, responsible community members, and are less likely to behave violently towards others.”

Edwin J. Sayres, Former President  
American Society for the Prevention  
of Cruelty to Animals