



The Littlest Lobbyists in the Land

Don't assume this group of grade-schoolers came to National Humane Lobby Day for a lesson. "We're here to meet our representatives," young Thea says with a determined smile. "We've been working on this for a while."

These pint-sized advocates are fourth graders from the Seattle Jewish Community School. They're also veterans of the PAWS Kids Who Care Program, a multi-week classroom workshop teaching children about compassion and understanding for all animals. Today, with teacher Elizabeth



Siegal and PAWS Humane Educator Tiffany Ong, students are putting their humane lessons into action. "They're amazing," says Elizabeth. "They've worked really hard." Recently, her students entered a national contest sponsored by the National Humane Education Society, taking first and third place. Clearly, they've learned their lessons well!

After a morning of mock legislation and rubbing elbows with legislators, the team meets Representative David Frockt, a sponsor of the Spay-Neuter Assistance bill. With Frockt's best wishes, they're off to meet with Senator Scott White.

In White's office, nine-year-old Micah unfolds a piece of paper he's been carrying all day. "This is a picture of my dog. I got her spayed because I love her and think it's important." Senator White explains that some bills don't become law because there's no money, to which Micah replies, "But there *is* money. Pet owners will pay 2.5 cents per pound of pet food—it isn't even a tax." Not bad for nine-year-old.

After another half dozen students present their case, classmate Jack pushes a hand through his tousled hair



and sighs, "It went really well. It was really cool." But for all the study and debate, Jack knows what really works. "Kids have an influence that grown-ups don't have...grown-ups argue with each other, but they don't argue with kids." We'd have to agree.