

## My Pet World

By Steve Dale,  
Tribune Media  
Services



Steve's website is [www.stevedalepetworld.com](http://www.stevedalepetworld.com).

### Powerful new preventives kill fleas faster than ever

Along with spring showers and flowers come fleas. It's a sure bet in most parts of the country, but some places have it worse than others. Fleas in Florida and other southern states can be so overwhelming that many pet owners throw in the towel, assuming these pests are inevitable, and simply hire an exterminator when needed.

Veterinary parasitologist Dr. Michael Dryden studies fleas, and has become so expert at designing their demise that he's known as Dr. Flea. Dryden insists that you can win the war on fleas, no matter where you live. And he's positively giddy about safe new chemistry that reliably kills fleas faster than ever.

Dryden said it's been about 15 years since he's seen this sort of "game changer" in the world of flea prevention. Two new brand-name products, NexGard and Bravecto, contain Isoxazolines. NexGard is a monthly chewable to protect dogs against ticks and fleas. Bravecto, also an oral chew for dogs, delivers 12 weeks of protection against fleas and ticks in one dose.

Another more established chewable to prevent fleas in dogs and cats is Comfortis. Trifexis, also a chewable, kills fleas, intestinal parasites, and also prevents heartworm in a single monthly dose.

"So many people are accustomed to the spot-on application systems," says Dryden. These products come in small tubes which a pet owner squeezes to apply the preventive along a pet's back or between the shoulder blades.

"However, today's chewables can do the same job with (equally) great efficiency," Dryden notes. It's that efficiency, which Dryden calls residual speed of kill, that's incredibly important -- and that's where the new chemistry in NexGard and Bravecto shines.

"When a flea jumps on a dog or cat, in seconds the flea is feeding," says Dryden. "We can now kill fleas fast enough where not enough protein is injected into the saliva of the flea to elicit an allergic reaction (in the dog). We can manage flea allergies by using products with this residual speed of kill. We don't know how many pets are affected by flea allergies (flea allergy dermatitis), but that number is pretty high. (It's) the most common allergy in pets."

There's also a product called Vetra 3D, a monthly spot on with repellency properties; the idea is to provide a force field around the pet so fleas and ticks can't readily pass through it and bite.

"I like the idea of preventing the bite," says Dr. Mike Paul, past president of the Companion Animal Parasite Council. "It takes some time for ticks to transmit disease, so the faster ticks are off the pet, the better -- and still better if fleas and ticks don't attach in the first place."

Since 1990, Tampa, is where Dryden heads to evaluate flea products.

"We consider Tampa the flea capital of the world," he said. "It's not unusual to see dogs with 1,000 fleas. Pets there, and in other places where fleas are abundant, can even die from flea infestations. I feel for the pain of frustrated pet owners. And I can assure you that used properly, the new technology works, and works well."

This doesn't mean older flea preventives are no longer good choices.

"We're always excited by new products with proven effectiveness, but there are many other effective veterinary-recommended products to kill fleas, even those out for several years," Dryden says.

Unfortunately, too many pet owners don't even ask for or ignore veterinary advice about purchasing flea and tick products, Paul notes.

"Veterinary professionals know which products to suggest based on geography, lifestyle of the pets and the mix of pets in a household. The problem is many people -- either for convenience or to save money -- go to big box stores or purchase (preventatives) randomly online."

Dryden adds, "The simple truth is that many of the over-the-counter products just don't work dependably." As a result, pet owners either wind up back at their veterinarian's office and end up spending even more money, and perhaps require an exterminator. Worst of all, when owners choose unreliable products, pets can become subject to diseases and discomfort caused by fleas.

"Getting veterinary input in the first place is really the only way to go," Paul says.

# PETS

## Pups fly first class with Gulf Breeze pilot

By Ashley Varese  
editor@navarrepress.com

As the owner of Gulf Coast Air Tours, Eric Kline spends time doing what he loves: flying his Piper Saratoga while giving his passengers a view they'll never forget.

Sometimes his clients are kids, and he swoops in low so they can look out for sharks. At dusk, he takes couples on sunset beach tours, where they can relax with a glass of champagne.

While these passengers probably offer nice conversation, they don't compare to the four-legged friends he travels with once or twice a month.

That's right. Some of his favorite flights are with the dogs he transports from kill shelters to foster homes through Pilots N Paws, a nonprofit organization that pairs pilots with animal rescue groups through its website.

Founded in 2008 by Debi Boies and pilot Jon Wehrenberg, the organization launched [www.pilotsnpaws.org](http://www.pilotsnpaws.org) to work as a clearinghouse where pilots willing to provide free transportation can connect with rescue groups and shelters. The organization boasts more than 5,000 pilot volunteers and more than 12,000 volunteers, according to the site.

"My wife and I are big animal lovers," Kline, an Air Force veteran said, "so I looked into it."

He usually flies three to four dogs each trip, but has had as many 15.

He's travels from Pensacola to locations such as Brooksville, Fla., West Palm Beach, Tampa, and Bainbridge, Ga.

"We had a huge fly-in last year," he said. "A bunch of dogs from Alabama, 200, to Bainbridge, which was the staging area."

He said he and the other pilots dropped the dogs off in Bainbridge, and then other pilots picked them up for another leg of the trip, until they reached their final destination.

Kline said each flight is different.

"You're always hoping it will be nice and quiet, and they won't poop or pee, but when a big dog poops in a small area, you're like 'dude, what is that?'"

He said for the most part, his passengers lay down and nap in



Submitted photos  
Gulf Breeze resident Eric Kline, an airline transport pilot, volunteers with Pilots N Paws, a nonprofit that connects pilots with animal rescue groups to remove dogs from kill shelters.

their crates during the 90-minute to two-hour flight.

"I had a couple once who busted out and started walking around," he said.

Another time, he said he had a dog who was "so pregnant" he thought she might give birth on the plane.

Kline, who also volunteers with Angel Flight, a nonprofit that arranges free air travel to hospitals for people with medical needs, lives in Gulf Breeze with his wife, Andi, and their two daughters, Sophie and Maggie.

While 17-year-old Sophie was volunteering for the Humane Society, Kline gave her a few quick tips for speaking with potential adopters.

"I told her, 'your job is to place (the pets) in homes. Paint a picture of what it's like to have a dog,'" he said. "When I picked her up from an adoption event, she said, 'Dad, imagine a dog wagging his tail,' and I realize she's selling me a dog!"

Sure enough, they added the rescue dog to their family, which already included a Golden Retriever.

As for 14-year-old Maggie, she's already made one of the Pilots N Paws trips with her father.

"It's such a fun thing," he said. "We have two dogs, and for me it's such a wonderful thing."

For more information about Pilots N Paws, visit [www.pilotsnpaws.org](http://www.pilotsnpaws.org).



Kline said for the most part, his four-legged passengers curl up in their crates and nap during the two-hour flights.

WITH OVER "101" TREATS TO CHOOSE FROM...



YOU'RE SURE TO "SPOT" THE RIGHT ONE FOR YOUR DOG!

**PET NATION**  
cool pets. hot prices.

1898 ANDORRA STREET, NAVARRE - 936-8201

### Pet Briefs

#### Pensacola Humane Society events

- Sunday, May 10, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Petco Adoption Event - Pensacola Humane Society visits Petco, 1670 Airport Blvd., with some adoptable dogs and cats looking for their forever homes. Stop by for free goodies and information about getting involved.
- Wednesday, May 13, 5 to 10 p.m.: Yappy Hour at Tijuana Flats - Bring your friends and family to a doggone good time at Tijuana Flats, 4970 Bayou Blvd., Pensacola. Enjoy

food and drink specials; 10 percent of all sales will be donated directly to the animals at the Pensacola Humane Society.

- Saturday, May 16, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.: Doggie Bathe In - Bring your dirty dog to the second in our season of Bathe Ins the third Saturday of the month through October. Bath and dip prices: small, \$7; medium, \$8; large, \$9; extra-large, \$10. Nail trims are \$5. Groomings are limited and first-come, first-served. Pensacola Humane Society, 5 North Q St., Pensacola

### Trouble in Navarre

