

Hambone Award Contender

Have you ever heard of the Hambone Award? It's a prize given out by Veterinary Pet Insurance, the nation's largest and oldest pet insurance company. Each month, the company selects the most unusual claims and chooses a monthly winner to vie for the yearly prize – the Hambone Award. Don't worry, all the contenders are pets who survived their ordeals. Last year's winner Ellie, a Labrador retriever from California, went to the emergency room after eating an entire beehive. She vomited large piles containing hundreds of dead bees, but Ellie was not harmed by the dead bees nor by the pesticide that killed them.

When reading suburban Chicago newspaper The Daily Herald's online headlines, the following caught my eye, "Owl Vs. Chihuahua", and that's where I read about Chico the Chihuahua's brave fight against a Great Horned Owl. Chico's owner was taking him for a walk in the wee hours of the morning, when a Great Horned Owl swooped out of nowhere (owls are silent flight birds) and picked up poor Chico, intending him for his late night snack. Chico and his owner won the tug-of-war, and Chico won the VPI 'most unusual' story for the month of January, beating out such claims as a Labrador retriever that ate a marijuana cookie, a Golden retriever that swallowed a 5-inch barbecue skewer, a mutt that got wedged between banister bars and a Boston terrier who collided with a skier. If you'd like to read the other entries and be part of the public voting in September, you can go to the [VPI Hambone Award's website](#).

Oh, and how did the Hambone Award get its name? There was a dog insured by VPI who got himself trapped in a refrigerator and ate an entire Thanksgiving ham before he was discovered. He was treated for a mild case of hypothermia whereupon he fully recovered.

Goodbye To Ron Santo

People who don't pay much attention to baseball and the MLB, particularly the Chicago Cubs, might not realize who Ron Santo is or that he is gone.



Ron Santo, legendary Chicago Cubs supporter, has passed away at the age of 70. Gaining popularity first as a player then as an outspoken sportscaster, Ron Santo became the voice and face of the Chicago Cubs in recent years. Always saying what was on his mind, Santo's gravelly voice was the easiest way to find that Cubs game on WGN radio 720 in a hurry. As a Cubs fan, I will miss it.

Sadly, Ron Santo did not live to see himself inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, nor did he see his beloved Cubbies win the World Series. If you'd like to read more about Ron Santo or about his crusade against juvenile diabetes, [here is an article](#) in the suburban Chicago newspaper, The Daily Herald.

Condolences and prayers to the Santo family.

Are We Playing Politics... Or Preschool?

I check out the headlines on Chicago's suburban newspaper's website, The Daily Herald, partly because that's where I'm from (so I know of the locations of the news stories) and partly because my own small town daily paper is kind of boring because we're... well, crime-less. No news is good news, so they say, and I agree with that assessment for my little corner of the world. But far removed am I, and so reading about the disasters in the Chicago area can be quite entertaining; especially the recent stories concerning this woman, Lisa Stone, a trustee from a place called Buffalo Grove, which is an upscale suburb of Chicago.



There have been numerous news stories about Ms. Stone, and I didn't really pay attention until I saw this headline:

[Buffalo Grove village president tells trustee to 'shut up'](#)

If you want to envision grown-up politicians behaving like children, read the article, for it's like a play-by-play of a school yard bickering session. If you would like to see the

trustees in action, [here is a link to video of the actual meeting](#). It goes a bit long (a whopping 3+ hours – these poor people were at their meeting until 10:30pm!), but most of the action involving Ms. Stone is in the first 10 minutes (after the Pledge of Allegiance) and in the last 30 minutes of part 3 of the meeting, which is where poor flustered President Hartstein has finally had enough.

Causing most of the problem is Ms. Lisa Stone because she doesn't seem to respect the most basic rules of politeness nor eloquence. She interrupts the other board members; speaking out of turn, continuously overriding her superiors and her time limits (time limits which were created, voted upon, and passed by her fellow board members because of her actions at previous meetings), and she just doesn't seem concerned about any agenda other than her own. After watching these little pieces of political treasure (ah, Illinois politics, gotta love 'em. Isn't this a state poised to have TWO former governors in the pokey at the same time?), I couldn't resist doing some internet research on Lisa Stone. The most interesting thing I found was her election website, electlisastone.com where the very same newspaper who provided a play-by-play of her getting told to 'shut up' by the board president endorses her political career with very encouraging words which are displayed prominently and proudly on the top middle of the page! Also of interest on this site? Check out the little video on the left side – the then-mayor of the same city, Buffalo Grove, also endorses Lisa in the election. And guess who the mayor was during the election? Elliott Hartstein, the same president of the village board who got so flustered with Ms. Stone that he told her to 'shut up'. How about those politics, folks! More entertaining than a 3-ring circus and for free, from the comfort of your own living room!

Nightmare On Alumni Street

As has been the trend lately, they are going to remake a popular horror movie from my youth – [Nightmare On Elm Street](#). When the movie came out in 1984, I was too young (and scared) to watch it, but the main character, [Freddy Krueger](#), was everywhere. Everyone wanted to be Freddy for Halloween, and just his picture was enough to scare me silly. I think even people who don't like horror movies know who Freddy Krueger is – a burn victim with a hideously scarred face who has knives for fingernails and invades the dreams of his victims. We tried watching Nightmare On Elm Street as adults not too long ago, and it wasn't scary – it just came across as dumb. So maybe a remake IS in order. I just hope it's not horrible like Rob Zombie's Halloween remake. Actually, the Friday the 13th remake wasn't so great either. I did enjoy the Texas Chainsaw Massacre remake though, and I really liked the remake of My Bloody Valentine – two movies that prove slasher films can be successfully remade. So I hope this Nightmare on Elm Street is on par with the latter two I mentioned.

The reason I'm bringing this up is because I read an article about how they are going to be filming this remake in Chicago, with some scenes being filmed at the high school my husband attended. The students had a surprise assembly on Friday, where they were told that their high school is going to be used to film a movie and that extras would be needed. How cool of an assembly would THAT be? The article mentions that the movie will be out April 16, but it doesn't specify which year – I'm hoping they mean 2010 because I'm anxious to see it! I just hope they don't try to do any funky computer stuff for Freddy's face or glove. I think good old fashioned makeup is sometimes what makes things scarier! [Here is the article about the choosing of the high schools](#). And just for fun, here is the trailer from the original Nightmare on Elm Street: