



Unknown if Stewie, world's longest domestic cat, faces malignant or benign tumor

Stewie, the world's longest domestic cat, has a tumor behind his right eye, but computed tomography scan results have not determined whether it is malignant or benign, Reno owner Robin Hendrickson said.

"We are waiting for them to call back," Hendrickson said. "The ball is rolling. I have hopes, but I want to wait until after I speak with them."

Hendrickson noticed the bump behind Stewie's right eye on Christmas morning. The 7-year-old Maine coon was taken to Animal Emergency Center on Christmas to drain the mass in his head. After swelling remained, doctors referred Hendrickson to the University of California, Davis for a surgery that was to cost \$3,500, Hendrickson said.

"We were told we had to go (to UC-Davis) because the mass was in his sinuses," Hendrickson said.

After reading a news story Wednesday in the Reno Gazette-Journal on Stewie, Mary Jo Barrett, the mother of Paul Barrett — owner of Eye Care for Animals — contacted

Hendrickson.

"I boldly called my son and told him he should take care of the cat," Mary Jo Barrett said.

Paul Barrett, a Reno High School graduate, lives in Scottsdale, Ariz. He flew into Reno on Friday to perform surgery on his mother's dog.

"We have to evaluate (Stewie) first, but if we are able to do surgery, we will do it for free," said Julie Gamarano, the marketing and public relations manager for Eye Care for Animals. "We consider Stewie a special case."

Eye Care for Animals, which has 43 locations nationwide, evaluates therapy cats for free, Gamarano said. Stewie was registered as a therapy cat in June for the Regent Care Center of Reno.

"He visits with people at the care center and generally brightens their day," Hendrickson said.

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Hendrickson said her fundraising site at www.stewiecat.com has raised \$2,600 since Christmas for the surgery.

"This is not something that we treat every day," Gamarano said. "We don't want to get too far ahead of ourselves. We have to evaluate and see what's wrong. We don't know anything yet."

Guinness World Records sent an email Oct. 12, 2010, confirming that Stewie laid claim to the longest domestic cat record at 48.5 inches.

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