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It's not a sale if no one's buying

The Web site related to Ron Seely's Saturday news story titled "Going rate for a cloned cat? Now only \$32,000," is www.NoPetCloning.org, and it was created in 2004 by the American Anti-Vivisection Society to educate the public about the reality behind pet cloning. AAVS has significant concerns about animal welfare, consumer fraud, ethics, and science relating to this emerging industry and finds that these issues are not well-characterized by the media.

It is odd that a pet-cloning company would already announce a "sale" on the cost of cloning a cat when it has failed to fulfill the five \$50,000 orders that it received last year. To date, the company has sold only two cloned cats.

What is actually happening to the cats in this lab? The company CEO has admitted to the Associated Press that up to 45 percent of the cats who survive birth in his laboratory will die within the first four weeks of life. Surely, people who love their cats and dogs enough to want to clone them would be horrified by this reality.

Despite these serious shortcomings, the company continues to profit from grieving pet lovers who feel that they can preserve their companion animals' qualities by banking their DNA for future cloning. Yet, no dog has ever been cloned successfully, and only a handful of cloned cats have been born. There's no telling if they will lead normal, average life spans.

Let's hope that this company's 15 minutes of unwarranted fame are nearly expired and that Waunakee realtors will soon have a vacant laboratory on their hands.

-- Crystal Miller-Spiegel, senior policy analyst, American Anti-Vivisection Society, Jenkintown, Pa.