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February 2021 Newsletter 🐾 🐾 🐾

We all know that Valentine's Day is the day for lovers, and who loves you more than your pet! Even if you do not have a special human yet to spoil on the day, your pet pal can be your Valentine. Why not take your dog out for a run along a bush track stopping on the way back for a coffee for you and a Puppuccino for your pooch? Too far from a bush track? Then perhaps explore a new pet park or beach. Spoil your cat with a new toy – especially a treat-dispensing one. Curl up and watch a soppy movie with your mutt, kitty cat, or other species pet. Time spent with your animal friend is always special. Have a wonderful Valentine's day but first read our special warnings on page two about saving them from their inquisitive selves.

February is a lovely month with long sunny days, time at the pool, and weekend outings. There are plenty of dog-friendly beaches, parks, wineries (always a relaxing choice – but use a chauffeur to get you there and back), not to mention dog-friendly tours or events. While kitty may not be as good a traveller as your dog, you can treat them at home with a family BBQ, a new game, or even train them to enjoy an outing on a leash. Pets love being surprised when you come home with some new treats or a special new toy. But most of all, they just love being with you no matter what you are doing! So, make the most of the last month of summer.

The Cat.

'From Rural to Royalty'



Cats and people have a long history together, with the domestication of the cat being roughly 3,600 years ago. These exotic felines were popular in ancient Egypt, where they gained a revered status along with their associated goddess Bastet. The Romans had a similar reverence to cats. But then the cat became demonised in the Europe during the Middle Ages as they were seen by many as associated with the devil, witches, and the plague. The colourful history of the cat makes for fascinating reading.

Cats become very useful once people began to settle down and stay in one place. They became valued for protection against disease, guardians of crops and the sworn enemy of the rodent. Of course, cats immediately saw the advantage of this arrangement and due to their cute and cuddly disposition, they wormed their way into the hearts of the people, and they have never looked back.

Today, the cat enjoys a privileged lifestyle although some remain feral and free. The feral cat has been declared an enemy in outback Australia as they decimate other species being such efficient killers. But we love our cats, and the city cat lives an indoors existence, pampered with toys and playthings and they are provided with food almost on demand. As the saying goes 'In ancient times cats were worshipped as gods; they have not forgotten this' (Quote by Terry Pratchett). And our modern cat never lets us forget it either.



Keeping Your Pet Safe on Valentine's Day

1. Send safe floral bouquets to your loved one that lives with a pet. Specify no lilies as these are poisonous to pets.
2. Chocolate is potentially life threatening when ingested by pets. Their body systems were not designed to cope with chocolate - they may suffer hyperactivity, neurologic, and cardiac distress. Seizures and an elevated heart rate are life threatening. Go ahead and indulge, but don't leave chocolate out for pets to chow down on.
3. Wipe up any spilled wine or cocktails ... a curious pet will lap it up and a little bit of alcohol can cause a lot of harm and distress.
4. Cakes and candy sweetened by xylitol may keep your weight down, but it can harm your pet. Hypoglycemia (a sudden drop in blood sugar) can send them into depression, loss of coordination and seizures!
5. Candles attract pets like a moth to the flame. Put burning candles out of your pet's way so they do not get burned or cause a fire by knocking over a candle.
6. Dispose of wrapping tape, ribbons, cellophane, and such after opening gifts. Young pets will chew and swallow them and a trip to the vets for emergency surgery for a blocked digestion system probably was not on your list for what you wanted for Valentine's Day.

A thank you to my favorite human friend on Valentine's Day...

- for letting me be there for you on good days and bad
- for playing with me when I need a playmate
- for taking me on fun walks and car rides
- for feeding me every day
- for treating me with kindness and being so happy to see me at the end of your day
- for being my friend



Case Studies – A Wealth of information re pet care.

Highland Veterinary Hospital has a wealth of information on pet treatments. You can access this information by just going into our Facebook site and click on the Video link to see all the videos available for your information.

Our Kennel Cough video has been very popular [View here](#)
Crate training your pet was also a great topic [View here](#)



There are many videos on our site that will show you what various techniques are used for many health issues from the removal of tumours to dental issues that require attention. Diederik covers a wealth of information in an easy-to-understand format and each video is only a few minutes long. Check our [Facebook site](#) and enjoy!

Homemade Pet Treats for Valentine's Day.

DOGS. Only two ingredients – pureed watermelon and yoghurt – blend together and freeze in ice cube moulds! NB some dogs do not process dairy well so omit the yoghurt.

Or try pumpkin carrot bite. $\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned pumpkin, 1 egg, $\frac{1}{4}$ c shredded carrot, 1 cup whole wheat flour. Combine ingredients, roll into batter balls and place on a baking sheet. Cook at 160-degree C. for 30-35 mins.

CATS. 150 g canned tuna in oil, 1 cup rice or oat flour, 1 egg, 1 tbsp dried catnip and extra olive oil. Combine drained tuna and other ingredients in a bowl. Roll dough into tsp sized balls, flatten, and cook at 160 degrees Celsius.



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Check Your Dog for Ticks Throughout the Seasons.

Ticks are a little bit on the creepy side, but you must keep checking your dog throughout the year and especially during summer when ticks flourish. These nasty creatures can even creep deep into your dog's ears and start feeding! The paralysis tick is the one to watch out for as when it bites, it injects a powerful neurotoxin into the body and this can be fatal to both cats and dogs. If you have problems removing a tick, [please bring your pet into us](#) so that we can remove all parts of the tick.



Symptoms of a tick include coughing, vomiting, wobbliness, panting, sitting down often, and paralysis starting with the hind legs which is critical. When checking for ticks, look in areas such as between toes, inside the ears, and even the anus. If removing it yourself, you need a glass jar to put the tick so you can bring it to us to follow up on. Have someone hold your dog steady, use the tweezers to grasp the tick right next to the skin and pull it off firmly. You do not want to break the tick in half leaving their mouth in your dog. If this happens, we can remove the mouth part for you. Do not twist the tick nor squeeze it as this can release the blood inside it on the dog. You should always have a regular tick preventative treatment ongoing, just like for fleas. Ticks and fleas can be prevented and because these two parasites are so invasive to pet health, the cost of prevention well and truly overcomes the cost of surgery or treatment for an exposed pet.

It's a known fact that dogs love stinky stuff. Even a posh dog will find it hard to walk past a dead creature without wanting to roll in it. Wearing stinky stuff is like a designer label for pets. Dogs not only have millions more scent receptors than us, but we are complete opposites as to what smells good! When your dog rolls in the unmentionable, they are trying to impress us. Sadly, we never seem to respond positively ... I wonder why?



Does Your Cat Suffer from Anxiety?

Anxiety is best described as the anticipation of a danger or threat. While your cat is not physically in danger, their heart rate increases, and panting or salivation increases. Your cat may be nervous and hide. Many fears or phobias develop during the first year of your cat's life. So, it is important to treat these anxieties as soon as possible. Comforting and reassuring your cat is vital to getting them over a perceived threat.

Allow your new kitten to socialise during the first 7 -12 weeks of age to develop a confident kitty. Don't try to wrap them in cotton wool and do everything for them. They need to develop their confidence that they can handle life without your help. For an older cat that has anxiety tendencies, keep them busy with interesting activities. Boredom can develop into anxiety if you let it. Give them plenty to play with at home, a bit of soft music to listen to or the television turned on, so they don't panic when you go out. Activity can overcome their anxiety.

The environment needs to be stimulating, they need places to climb, hide, scratch and play. Anxiety needs to be dealt with as soon as it raises its ugly head. A cat with full blown anxiety may require medication while you work on overcoming their problems. Behaviour modification takes time and effort on your part and the earlier you start, the better it will be for your cat. Desensitisation and counterconditioning (careful exposure to what scares your cat) does work to turn the fear into a positive experience.



Is Your Dog Misbehaving?

The most common problems people have with their dog is excessive barking, digging, chewing, and destroying things, and jumping up on people. Most dog behavioural problems are made worst by sheer boredom. Some breeds of dogs need more to do than others. The Samoyed and the Siberian Husky are bred to work, as is the Australian Shepherd. These dogs need activity and a purpose in life. You can still have these breeds as a pet but be aware they need long walks to wear off their energy. They also require a large yard so that they can exercise at home when you are at work. Digging is part of normal canine behaviour, so you need to consider where your dog can dig to their hearts content. A purpose-built sand pit for puppy is perfect. And a visit to a pet friendly beach is an ideal place to take a busy dog, as they love to dig in the sand. Excessive chewing can be a sign of distress, separation anxiety or just simple boredom. The chewing process releases certain hormones that makes your dog feel good. The secret to overcome this behaviour is to give them something challenging to chew on rather than have them chew on the furniture! If you go out to work, make sure that you leave a treat or two to engage your pet. Freeze an ice block that encloses treats is a great idea for summer as it keeps your pet hydrated as well. Instead of water, you can use a pet friendly stock flavouring to add taste to the ice.

Boredom is a major cause of dog behavioural problems. No wonder they bark and attack the fence any time someone walks by – it breaks the monotony. Can you ask a buddy to drop in and take your dog out for a walk a couple of times a week? If not, can you afford a dog walker to come over and take your restless pup out for some exercise? Perhaps you and a friend can swap favours – babysit for them when you have free time if they will dog sit for you when they are free? You need to get creative to keep your dog happy and healthy. Do not let boredom set in as once bad habits are adopted by your pet, it is hard to reverse them. Training is ideal for dogs. They love a challenge and the activity. But it does take patience. Praise and reward them when they achieve something and be low key when they don't. Never yell, hit, or abuse your dog – not only is it cruel, but it worsens the situation. Repetition is the way your dog learns. Dogs love to please, so keep your dog busy. When you are away for the day, alternate a few toys for your dog to play with. Balls, ropes tied to a tree, boxes, or treat dispensing toys can dispel your pet's boredom. When you are home, train your dog to bring in the mail, pick up the pegs when you take in the washing, or turn on the sprinkler so they can go nuts in the water. A dog does not want much, just your attention and activity.

Interesting Facts

Puppies usually go to the toilet just after waking up or eating. If they circle around sniffing, it is a sign they are ready for the toilet!

Cats love to play. Toy mice, feathers and empty boxes or cardboard bags are ideal. Toys do not have to be expensive.

Did you know that cats have over one hundred vocal sounds, while dogs have about ten!

And a random fact – only female mosquitoes bite and drink blood. They do so to nourish their child-bearing bodies!



Call us anytime you need our help or advice.

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Dealing with Injured

Wildlife. An injured animal or bird is already stressed, so don't rush in and try to help them. I recently came across an injured kangaroo who had been hit by a car and one of its legs was damaged. It panicked every time I tried to get near it so I quickly rang the wild life emergency number (I have it stored on my phone for my area) and a professional was able to come immediately. They anaesthetised the poor animal with a dart gun so that they could approach them, carefully wrapped them and took them to the pet hospital for care. Your priority is to keep yourself safe and then find help for the distressed creature.

Watch the teeth, beak or sharp claws when attempting a rescue. If possible, use a thick tarp to wrap them in and keep calm at all times.

We are here to help for any animal health & welfare concerns.

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