YOUR VET

SUMMER 2012

TIME TO ENJOY THE SUNNY SEASON

CITY.BEACH Veterinarians

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OUR VETS:

Dr Neville Robertson
BVSc(Syd), MVS(Murd)

Dr Alan Wade
BSc, BVMS(Murd)

Dr Meg Green
BSc, BVMS(Hons)

OUR NURSES

We have a group of talented, versatile and fully trained nurses. Our nurses love animals and are passionate about animal care. They run the puppy classes, weight clinics and help us keep your pet health and happy during their stay with us. Our nurses can help you with all of your pet's needs.

OUR HOURS

Monday to Friday	7.30am to 7pm
Saturday	8.30am to 4 pm
Sunday	Closed

Consultations are by appointment.
We are closed on Public Holidays.

AFTER HOURS

For urgent attention after hours including Public Holidays please call Perth Vet Emergency (PVE) on 9204 0400. This is a dedicated local emergency centre and they are located at 305 Selby Street North, Osborne Park. Alternatively call Murdoch Pet Emergency Centre (MPEC) on 1300 652 494.

OUR WEBPAGE

City Beach Veterinarians has a new web page! Visit the site for information about your pets health, us and many other interesting items. Let us know what you think. Our web address is **www.citybeachvet.com.au**

RELIEVE THE BOREDOM FOR YOUR PET

Cats and dogs can both get bored if not stimulated enough. This can be through being at home alone while the human members of the family are away. Destructive behaviour such as digging, barking and tearing things apart by dogs and scratching and other erratic behaviour by cats. You can break their boredom by enriching their environment.

FOOD HUNT:

This is great for both. Separate batches of food and hide them around the house for your pet to find, if you are able to be present for this activity it's a good idea to toss them the odd treat to encourage them to keep hunting. Obviously if you have both a cat and dog, this game should be carried out in separate areas (you wouldn't want one stealing the others food).

BALL BOBBING:

You could leave a ping pong ball in a basin full of water for your cat. They can get great enjoyment out of chasing the ball around the water with their paw. Just make sure it is a safe depth of water for your cat and in an area they can easily climb out if it they did happen to fall in.

GAMES:

A game of tug or fetch in the back yard is good fun for your dog. It gives them good exercise and time with you. While it is good to take your dog for a walk out of your property, it is also very important to make your home a source of fun and exercise for your dog so that they are content there and have less of an urge to try and leave the property out of boredom.

INSIDE

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• ALTERNATIVE SMALL PETS

DOGS WITH JOBS PART 2 – GUIDE DOGS

Guide dogs have a hugely positive impact on the lives of a blind person. They enable a person to have more independence, mobility and confidence as well as being great companions.

Dogs being used to guide the blind dates back to 1819 when Johann Whilhelm Klein started an institute for the blind in Vienna, Austria. Almost 100 (1916) years later his philosophies were put into practice to train dogs for German soldiers who had been left blind during the First World War. By the 1920's and 30's schools and training were being established in the USA, Italy and England. Australia's first Guide Dog school was set up in Perth in 1951 and the first Australian Guide Dog was Dreena.

Generally Labradors make good guide dogs as they have a gentle temperament, are keen to learn and love to please. However, there are many different types of dogs that can be used as long as they fit the requirements needed.

Puppies that have been selected as having great potential as guides are put into training. Generally a volunteer will take a puppy for its early stages of life. Here they will go through initial training like social skills and obedience. After around 18 months they will be introduced to a vast range of environments to experience different sights, sounds and smells. These include places such as shopping malls, buses, trains, city centres, cafes and medical centres. Their training is made up of a lot of positive reinforcement for correct decisions and behaviours.

The dogs must learn things like walking without sniffing, stopping at kerbs, avoiding head height obstacles and narrow spaces for their owner, laying quietly for extended periods of time and to refuse commands that may lead a person into danger.

DO'S AND DON'TS TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A GUIDE DOG.

Do not feed or distract a Seeing Eye dog.

Don't be afraid to offer assistance to a blind person.

Consider the person with a guide dog, talk to them instead of or as well as their dog.

Think about volunteering for puppy training and if that is not possible think about contributing where you can with time or money. It is a great service to have guide dogs and this service is mostly run on generous donations.

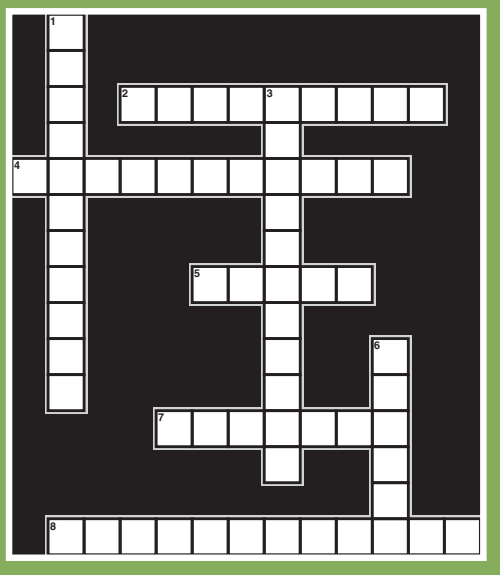
Clever CROSSWORD

Across:

2. Which type of dogs make good guide dogs because of their gentle temperament?
4. ---------- behaviour can start when animals are bored.
5. Hopefully cats will ----- each other when first introduced.
7. What is the second training method mentioned for Guinea Pigs?
8. Guide dogs enable a person to have ----------, mobility and confidence.

Down:

1. ------ ---- are great pets for children.
3. Your vet may prescribe ---------- for infected fly bites.
6. Which soldiers first benefited from the use of guide dogs?



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF "YOUR VET". ANSWERS ARE SHOWN ON BOTTOM OF INNER LEFT PAGE.

MAKE THOSE FLIES BUZZ OFF

As many dog owners know, the trauma caused by fly bites can be a frustrating problem. Flies seem particularly fond of ear margins, especially the ear tip. They will occasionally settle for tip of the tail.

The bitten area gets damaged and may ooze blood, attracting more flies looking for a desirable snack. Hair loss occurs and the areas often become infected.

Treating fly bite dermatitis requires a two-pronged attack. First is the need to protect the damaged, at risk areas. This can be done by selecting from the vast armoury of creams, sprays and spotons available on the market. Ask your vet about which products he or she finds most successful in your particular area, and be sure to use it frequently. Your vet may also need to prescribe antibiotics if the ears or other bitten areas have become infected.

The second part of the attack is aimed at reducing the number of flies in the dog's environment. Remove old bones and uneaten food. Regularly pick up any faeces in the garden. Sticky fly strips can be hung above kennels and around your dog's favourite resting areas. Finally, arm the kids with fly swats and tell them it's for a good cause!

INTRODUCING A NEW CAT IN YOUR HOME

Cats can be quite a challenge when introducing a new cat to a household with an existing cat (we won't use the word "old" cat, as I'm sure most established cats would take exception to that term). It is hard to predict if two cats are going to get along as they can be a lot more sensitive than other animals to these kinds of changes and their territorial nature.

There are however ways that you can make the introduction less stressful to everyone involved. Mostly based around a gently, gently approach. Both cats need to feel secure to allow them to move onto introductions.

Age and other factors are good things to consider first. It may not work that well introducing a kitten with bundles of energy to an older cat that already has the lay of the land. Think about putting similar aged cats together. Also, a kitten that has just left its mother is more likely to adapt and bond as it will enjoy the companionship of another animal.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO GET THE INTRODUCTION STARTED;

Give each cat their own area to start with, where they are separated with their own food, litter tray and toys for several days.

Slowly move things like food closer to each other, so that they start to hear and smell the other cat, but still feel safe having their own area.

Spend time with each of them playing, talking to them and petting them to reinforce bonds with your resident cat and welcome your new cat.

Swap items with the cats scent on around. This is another step that helps familiarise one with the other.

Once you are ready to introduce them, just make sure you stay present and continue to make both cats feel secure. Hopefully they will sniff at each other, even groom each other and even if they sit and stare at each other this is good.

If there is aggression, there is nothing wrong with separating them again and starting the process over. Time is always a good tool to help the process. If your cats go beyond posturing, hissing etc. and start fighting make sure you do not get in the middle of it, you will only get hurt. The best way to break up a fight is to do something like make a loud noise or stamp your feet.

GUINEA PIG TRICKS

Guinea Pigs are great pets for children. They are cute, furry and a small and manageable size for children to look after. Training a Guinea Pig to perform a few basic tricks is a good way to enhance the experience between child and pet and it keeps the Guinea Pig mentally stimulated, active and healthy while being fun and rewarding for your child.

To get started there are two basic methods used while training a Guinea Pig. There is the Lure-Reward training and the Clicker training. Both are effective and your child can use one or the other or a mixture of both. These ways are also positive and there is no punishment involved in training.

Lure-Reward appeals to the Guinea Pigs love of treats. It is a simple method of giving the animal a verbal command, luring it through the action with the food and then rewarding it with the food when the task is complete. Healthy treats, such as carrots, lettuce, parsley and berries are good to use as you don't want to end up with an overweight pet in the process.

Clicker training is similar to Lure-Reward, but a clicker is added when the treat is given. This gives the animal a noise to recognise and associate with having done well. Eventually the food can be taken away and the Guinea Pig will recognise the clicker as reward.

Now that you have a start, here are a couple of fun tricks to try:

STAND UP

Firstly, hold a treat in front of the Guinea Pigs nose and let them get a sniff of it, then once you have their attention, introduce the voice command of "Stand" or use a hand signal as direction. While you are doing this start raising the treat slowly. When the Guinea Pig starts to stretch its head up, let it have a few nibbles on the treat, then move the lure higher until it is standing. Repeat the steps until the Guinea Pig learns to recognise the command to "Stand".

ROLLING A BALL

First of all find a small ball that is a good size for the Guinea Pig to work with. First of all put the Guinea Pig in a play area with the ball and watch to see if they show curiosity or nudge the ball. Rubbing the ball with some food might help to peak their interest. When they do nudge it reward them with a treat and or click. If it doesn't show immediate interest, then reward them for paying attention to the ball, such as moving towards it or looking at it. The trick here is to develop the behaviour and keep rewarding them until they get to the point of moving the ball around.

These are both a couple of fun ways to start off and as your child progress it can be fun for both of you to look into more tricks to try.

ON BEHALF OF ALL OF US, WE EXTEND OUR VERY BEST WISHES TO YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, FOR A SAFE, HAPPY AND HEALTHY FESTIVE SEASON.

ALTERNATIVE SMALL PETS TO CONSIDER

HAMSTERS:

- Hamsters come in a wide range of coat types and colours.
- They are ideal to keep on their own.
- Great to handle.
- Keep in mind they are nocturnal by nature, so sleep a lot during the day.

LIZARDS:

- There is a great variety of size, colour and types of lizards. Do a little research on what would be best suited.
- Bearded dragons are very popular as they have a friendly nature.
- Lizards bond with their owners, so it is a really good idea to get them from when they are a hatchling.

TORTOISES AND TURTLES:

- They often win a popularity contest in many peoples' eyes when it comes to comparing them to other reptiles.
- The can be tamed quite easily
- Both come in a wide range of interesting sizes, shapes and colours
- They are best kept inside in warmer areas and should have both wet and dry areas to live in.

RATS AND MICE:

- These are highly intelligent animals, so are good to train and teach tricks
- Great companions when handled a lot
- Do not keep rats and mice together, as rats will attack mice

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD

Across: 2. Labradors; **4.** Destructive; **5.** Sniff; **7.** Clicker; **8.** Independence.

Down: 1. Guinea Pigs; **3.** Antibiotics; **6.** German.

PRACTICE UPDATE

COMPLETE HEALTH

City Beach Veterinarians is committed to making it easy for you to look after all of your pet's needs.

Our Complete Health packages provide all of your pet's routine preventive health care. You do not need to remember when your pet is due for any products as we mail them to you monthly!

Each Complete Health package includes

- Monthly Flea Control
- Heartworm Prevention
- Intestinal worming medication
- Annual vaccinations

By taking out a Complete Health package you will save 5% off the price you would normal pay for the products and services listed above.

There are extra rewards for being a Complete Health member. These include

- $20 discount off every primary consultation
- Unlimited free nail clipping
- Pet food discount vouchers
- Microchipping discount (transferable)
- For dogs there are 4 free hydrobaths which include blow drying.

Complete Health means peace of mind.

PUPPY PRESCHOOL

Just like humans it is best to start training young! We run regular puppy classes that are great fun and informative. Your pup will learn to socialise with other pups, enjoy visiting us and you will start to learn the basics of training.

This is a great start to your pup's life and helps cement a long lasting relationship between you and your pet. Ask one of our nurses for more information.

VET PROFILES:

Dr Neville Robertson

Neville graduated from Sydney University in 1985. He moved to WA a year later to take up a position as an Intern in Veterinary Anaesthesia at Murdoch University. Nev has completed a Masters Degree in Veterinary Science at Murdoch University.

Dr Alan Wade

Alan graduated from Murdoch University in 1988. Alan worked extensively in the United Kingdom before returning to Australia 9 years ago. He has worked in many large practices and gained significant experience dealing with complicated cases over the years.