

SHAMROCK DIGEST

September/October 2010

SAFE TRAVEL

It is law in BC that dogs cannot travel in the bed of a pickup truck unrestrained – ideally in a crate, but tied by harness or collar is accepted. This is for safety reasons. In case of an accident, the dog can easily be tossed out and injured, or injure someone else.

We often forget that dogs in cars can also cause injury to other passengers or be hurt themselves. We think they are safe.

A dog flying through the interior of a car can cause serious injury to the people around it, and the bigger the dog, the more serious the injury. There is even greater concern when travelling with small children as often the loose dog outweighs the kids!

We have had several cases of dogs being thrown through or jumping out of partially open car windows causing serious injuries.

Another real concern is dogs in the front seat of cars with airbags – those dogs don't stand a chance if an airbag is deployed.

Do the right thing and train your canine companion to ride in a seatbelt or a secured crate in the back seat of your car.

PAWS FOR A CAUSE

This year's annual SPCA fundraiser Paws for a Cause will be held on September 12th at Marina Park in Comox.

Join in the fun, watch displays and most importantly help to raise funds for the SPCA. Registration begins at 9:30am, with the walk to start at 10. More information can be found at the SPCA website or by calling the local branch at 250-339-7788.



NEW RECEPTIONISTS

Please join us in welcoming two new receptionists to our team.

Jamie joins us with many years of experience working in veterinary clinics in Alberta.

Naomi is new to the veterinary scene but is very keen to get to 'know the ropes'.

Thank you for being patient with Jamie and Naomi as they learn our systems and get to know our clients and their companions.

CLINIC CATS

Many of you have met our two clinic cats, Trouble and Lulu, but may not know their stories.

Trouble was adopted by the vet clinic from the SPCA as a young cat. She lived here for a few weeks, trying on different names until the name Trouble was truly earned. She is fearless of even the biggest dogs, will check out most open cat or dog carriers left in her reach, and seems to have the best (or worst?) way of showing her calmness off in front of our worried feline patients. She is exceptionally healthy for a thirteen year old cat, still hunting and catching rodents in the back field.

Lulu is the princess of the pair. She doesn't like it when reception gets too busy or crowded, and she is definitely fonder of her thick comfy bed in the office than she is of being outside. Lulu joined us when she was brought in for euthanasia because of urinary issues – she was showing her displeasure at being alone too much by urinating on the furniture. We must be good company as she has behaved for more than 9 years! Other than being a little overweight and needing twice daily eye drops for glaucoma, Lulu is a healthy twelve and a half year old fine feline.

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ANIMAL HEALTH WEEK

OCTOBER 3rd – 9th

This year the theme for Animal Health Week is “Let’s See Your ID”. The veterinary community promotes the permanent identification of all animals for both their safety and ours.

Companion animals that wander or are taken from their owners can be identified and returned because of permanent ID. Permanent ID consists of either tattoos or microchips.

On the farm animal front, it is very important to know the source of our food. Individual food production animals need to be identified in such a way that their life histories can be documented.

MARS HARVEST BANQUET

Mountain Aire Avian Rescue Society is once again inviting the community to their annual Harvest Banquet. With support from local farms and businesses, MARS is able to host this major fundraising dinner.

The evening will include dinner, both a silent and a live auction as well as entertainment.

This year there is a masquerade theme, with prizes for the best costume. Tickets go on sale September 1st for the banquet on October 30th. Please call 250-337-2021 for more information.



CARE OF CAGED PETS

Many small animals are kept as caged pets, however not all are kept under ideal conditions. Proper material on the cage floor, fresh water and food, and mental stimulation all need to be taken into consideration when keeping caged pets.

Cedar shavings should never be used as bedding. Other types of wood shavings or pellets are available from many sources. As many caged pets choose to urinate and defecate in one area of the cage, placing a plastic bottomed tray in that area can decrease the amount of bedding being thrown away with cleaning. Frequency of cleaning will depend on the type and number of animals in relation to the size of the cage.

Water should be changed at least once a day, and fresh foods should be offered in addition to the pelleted mainstay. Investigate the correct fresh offerings for your type of pet. For example, avocado is toxic to many birds. Research the nutritional requirements for your chosen species. Some pets require additional supplementation to keep them healthy.

Don't overlook the need for mental stimulation. By keeping pets in a small confined space, we are removing the ability to roam and investigate their surroundings. We often then supply food all in one dish, negating the need to forage and hunt. By hiding food in different containers, scattering some on the cage floor or inventing games for our pets, we can keep them happier. Remember also to provide hiding places, bedding material, and multiple levels to explore if possible. Ferrets, rats, mice and most birds will use ramps, boxes and containers in many different ways if offered to them in their cages.

Remember to change things up once in awhile!