

AVONLEA ANIMAL HOSPITAL AND BRITTANY GLEN HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

December 2003

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Welcome to the holiday edition of the Avonlea Animal Hospital and Brittany Glen Veterinary Services winter newsletter! The hustle and bustle of the holiday season is now upon us. Decorating, baking, shopping and wrapping all the gifts for our loved ones will keep us all busy during the next month. During this hectic time of the year, we often forget to sit down and spend a little time on ourselves. Now, if you are sitting and reading this letter, you are already taking a step in the right direction. The information, tips and ideas provided for you and your pet(s) in this letter will certainly help to make your pet's holidays safer, and thereby, your holiday more enjoyable. We are sure that Digit's corner will help to ease your dilemmas regarding pet gifts and new-years resolutions.

Are you sending out Christmas cards?

Create personalized greeting cards of your pet under the Christmas tree or with Santa for that personal touch. Your friends and family will cherish the cards forever. Read on and see how we can help you during the holiday season!

Hospital News

New Staff

As many of you Avonlea clients know Dr. Colleen Bray has embarked upon a new life adventure. Her husband, Sanjeev, accepted a position in England where he will continue his research on black holes. Yes...apparently black holes do exist! Unfortunately, the commute was a bit too much for Dr.

Bray, so she decided to pursue a position in a veterinary practice on the other side of the pond. We will all miss her and wish her and Sanjeev well in all of their future endeavors. To fill the void that Colleen has created, we have hired two new professional staff that we would like to introduce to you; Dr. Dana Dolinsek and Dr. David Mills. Dr. Dolinsek is a 2003 graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College and is very pleased to be starting her career with Avonlea and Brittany Glen. Dana's, passion for animals and her keen interest in providing exemplary veterinary services will be obvious when you meet her. She currently resides in Guelph with her husband Jared, and their greyhound, Russell. Dr. Dave Mills has been working as a veterinarian for over three and a half years in Kingston, Georgetown, and now in Mississauga. He and his wife Hilary currently live in Georgetown with their German Shepherd, Flip. Dr. Mill's has enjoyed every minute working at Avonlea and Brittany Glen since starting in August 2003. The people and pets he has met over the past several months have been great, and he looks forward to meeting many more in the future. Avonlea and Brittany Glen are pleased to have added both Dr. Dolinsek and Dr. Mills to our team of professionals. We are confident that they will provide you and your pet exceptional veterinary care.

Brittany Glen Veterinary Services

Our sister clinic, Brittany Glen Veterinary Services, located at unit 123 5602 10th Line West at Thomas St. (in the Sobeys's plaza), is continuing to flourish and grow. The past 8 months of serving the Meadowvale south

community has allowed us to “meet and treat” many wonderful pets. As noted in our last newsletter, our new clinic offers examinations, vaccinations and routine health management. Any surgeries, treatments or hospitalizations

are provided at Avonlea Animal Hospital. Patient records are available at both locations. Betty-Lou Tufford, the main receptionist at Brittany Glen will be pleased to help you with any inquiries. Some changes you may have

noticed include different faces in the reception area and new office hours for each veterinarian. It is our endeavor to provide our clients with helpful, friendly and informed staff members. We appreciate your patience and your continued trust in us during this period of growth. Dr. Sandi Rosely, Dr. Dana Dolinsek & Dr. David Mills will be available at both clinics! If you prefer the consistency of one veterinarian simply call the office and we can book the appointment with your preferred doctor at either clinic.

Digit's Corner:

Hello everyone! I would like to take this time to formally introduce myself...my name is Digit (also known as the “clinic cat”). Most of you may recognize me from your trips to Avonlea Animal Hospital; I’d be the one sleeping on the front desk!

With January 1st, 2004 fast approaching, I would like to share with you a list of my 3 important New Years resolutions. Please pass these along to your own pets, as the outcome is to simply make me a happier and healthier animal...and who doesn’t want that?

1. Lose weight: This year I have somehow managed to pack on the 2 pounds I was happy to have shed in 2002...must have been from the dog treats and kitten food I sneak when no one is looking! I have been told that obesity leads to a number of health problems including diabetes and heart disease. That’s certainly something I would like to avoid. The key is to keep physically active (play with more toys and dog’s can go on more walks), to not eat human food (besides vegetables), and eat a weight control diet. Oh yeah, and go easy on the treats!
2. Better oral hygiene: Just like you, bacterial plaque can accumulate on the surface of my teeth, and this (combined with decaying food stuck to tartar) is the reason I often have bad breath! Listen, if I could brush my own teeth, I would, but cats and dogs need the help of our owners. Good oral hygiene is accomplished through routine veterinary exams, daily brushing, and dental treats/diets. In the end, it will prevent costly dental cleanings and tooth extractions, and I will be more comfortable and less smelly!
3. Save money: Ok, so its not actually me that has to pay the bills, but this year I would like help save wherever possible. I figure the following preventive measures will help in the long run and help me to live a longer and happier life.

Catch health problems early-early diagnosis of problems allows less intensive and expensive treatments.

Annual check-ups and vaccinations- annual exams can detect potential problems earlier, and vaccines can protect from fatal diseases.

Spay/Neuter- this is important in making sure uterine and testicular cancers do not strike in later years. Neutered animals are also less likely to hunt and fight and that means fewer battle wounds and infectious diseases.

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It is our goal to provide comprehensive, excellent veterinary service and patient care, while providing our employees with desirable and fulfilling employment.

Holiday Emergencies

With the holiday season upon us, we would like to take a moment to inform you about the common toxins and possible hazards that your pet(s) may inadvertently be exposed to during this time of the year. Prevention is key. However, if you suspect that your pet(s) has been exposed to a toxin and is showing any symptoms such as protracted vomiting or diarrhea, dehydration, neurological dysfunction i.e. dizziness, abnormal eye movements or seizure, please call the clinic promptly!



POINSETTIA, HOLLY, MISTLETOE

You may decide to add a festive touch to your home decor with these three



plants. Beware... the poinsettia and holly leaves and stems can cause irritation to the mouth, stomach upset and drowsiness. All parts of mistletoe are toxic, especially the berries. This plant has the potential to cause severe vomiting and diarrhea.



CHOCOLATE

Mmmm... can you smell all the baked goodies? Baking chocolate and dark chocolate are the worst offenders; even a small amount of the baking chocolate can be toxic to a small dog or cat. Small amounts of milk chocolate can be toxic but are much safer compared with the baking and dark chocolate. Vomiting, hyperactivity or neurological disorders can all be symptoms of chocolate overdose.



FOREIGN BODIES

Beware, lots of toys, tinsel and ribbon for your pets to chew and swallow! For all you kitty owners, I would advise NO TINSEL on your trees. These objects have the potential to block the normal passage of material through the stomach and intestines. Watch for vomiting, dehydration and inappetance if suspicious.



PANCREATITIS

We love to spoil our pets, especially during the holidays, but be cautious of the types and amounts of table food that are given. Too much fatty food can lead to inflammation of the pancreas. The major symptom is vomiting and abdominal pain. These pets require

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Diet-this doesn't always mean a weight control food, but more a diet that is right for your pet. This includes developmental food for kittens, mature formula for geriatric animals, hypoallergenic diet for those with food allergies, etc. Dr. Rosely, Dr. Dolinsek or Dr. Mills will help you to decide which would be right for you.

These are the three most important things I want to work towards in the year 2004. They are great tips for any animal and can be beneficial, if followed.

I would also like to take this time to include a small list of Christmas/Holiday ideas that are sure to be a hit with your pets! Have you started your holiday shopping yet? If not, please take these great "buys" into consideration...believe me, your pets will thank you for it! You can even pick up some gifts when you have your picture taken with Santa at Brittany Glen!!!

For all of your "Feline Friends":

Cat nip/cat nip toys- this is a safe and fun way to get a little extra "kick" into your cat's day. It often helps your cat become more active, and it's also a tasty holiday treat!

Feather toys- all cats will agree that this is the most amusing toy out there! The feathers are often attached to a string and a stick, which allows the pet owners to make the feathers "fly". Be sure to include this in your cat's stocking.

Treats- a more nutritious option is always a good idea. Something that is tasty and healthy, such as medi-treats and liver snacks, is your best bet because that means we can have more of them, right?

For all of your "Canine Companions":

Kong's- these odd shaped plastic toys seem to always hold a dog's attention (and its easy to see why), the inside can usually be smeared with your dogs favorite treat...cheese whiz or peanut butter!

Festive Attire- nowadays there is no limit to what your dog can wear. Whether it is a coat/cardigan to help keep your smaller pups warm, a holiday printed collar/leashes for this time of year, or even reindeer antlers fitted to the size of your dog, there is something for every breed and personality.

Treats- just like cats, those lovable canines love to eat! A healthy option would be the best bet, as it will be sure to keep them in shape. (P.S. I have also been told that most dogs enjoy munching on vegetables...baby carrots are a great biscuit substitute).

Well, that pretty much wraps it up! I hope you all have a wonderful winter, and I am sure to be seeing you in the New Year. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!DIGIT



veterinary care to prevent dehydration and worsening pancreatitis.



ELECTRICAL BURNS

Puppies, kittens and bunnies love to explore their environments with their mouths. Be sure that electrical cords for your Christmas lights are not accessible for chewing. Burns in the mouth or difficulty breathing may be the only clinical signs. Look for a chewed electrical wire if you see this in your pet, as it will help to guide treatment.



ETHYLENE GLYCOL a.k.a. ANTIFREEZE

Antifreeze is a very hazardous toxin affecting all pets. Due to the sweet taste, antifreeze is highly palatable to animals, especially dogs and cats. When antifreeze is consumed it is broken down into oxalic acid. The oxalic acid forms into toxic crystals that can then cause permanent kidney damage, as quickly as within 1 hour after ingestion. Always store antifreeze in a safe location, where your pets cannot have access, and clean up spills immediately. If your car is leaking antifreeze, looks green in colour, be sure to have your car's radiator checked. If you suspect your pet has consumed antifreeze, bring him/her to the clinic immediately and inform the veterinarian about how much and when the antifreeze was consumed.

February is Dental Health Month

Save 10% on all dentals!

Dogs and cats have teeth just like humans and the same conditions that

lead to our tooth and gum problems also occur in our pets' mouths! Oral hygiene is one of the most important aspects of pet health care. It is estimated that 80% of pets more than 3 years of age have dental disease. Dental disease is painful and puts your pet at risk of lung, heart, kidney and joint infections. This occurs because the bacteria in the mouth can get into the blood stream through the inflamed gums. The bacterium is then distributed throughout the body. If dental tartar, periodontal disease or mouth pain is present, a dental cleaning and possible tooth extraction while under a general anesthetic will be needed to clean up the teeth and gums. After the teeth are clean and the mouth is no longer sore, you can start your dental home care program. To keep your pets teeth pearly white, regular oral hygiene should be practiced using pet toothpaste and a soft bristle pet toothbrush. Human toothpaste should not be used, as the foaming agents will cause stomach upset. Lots of love and affection during teeth brushing will ensure that you and your pet enjoy this daily event! Please remember that animal dental care is very important and what better time to have your pets' dental needs addressed than during Animal Dental Month – February. Give us a call to set up an examination so we can further advise you on any pre-dental procedures, such as blood tests or antibiotics. When you schedule the dental during the month of February, you will benefit from a 10% discount on all dental related procedures.

SANTA IS COMING TO BRITTANY GLEN!

Santa Claus will be coming to Brittany Glen Veterinary Services and he would like to meet you and your pet(s). He

will be there Friday December 12 & Friday December 19. Give Betty Lou a call at Brittany Glen 905 286-5200 to book your pet's picture with Santa. Seasonal pictures without Santa will also be offered daily from Dec. 9-12 and Dec. 16-19. Don't be shy...dress up your four legged companions so you will really have something to remember. We will even provide the antlers and hats for those who are a little more daring. Send personalized greeting cards to your friends, and family, it will surely warm their hearts! All proceeds from the pictures will be donated to Pet Trust, an organization that helps to improve health care for all pets. While you are in, pick up a special gift from our selection of toys and pet supplies. Don't worry, your pet(s) won't remember what you got them after it is wrapped and placed under the tree!!!!

All of us at Avonlea and Brittany Glen are excited about our growth and the new staff that we have befriended. We encourage any questions regarding the topics that we have addressed in this letter. If you have specific topics that you would like discussed in the next newsletter slotted for March/April 2004, feel free to make some suggestions. These newsletters are for you and we certainly welcome your interest. We look forward to seeing you and your pets come in for pictures, with or without Santa. Dr. Rosely, Dr. Dolinsek, Dr. Mills, Michelle, Marissa, Betty-Lou, Rebecca, Kristin, Jen and of course Digit wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

