

SafePet Saves Lives

This month we are featuring a very special rescue organization that provides temporary shelter for pets of women leaving an abusive relationship.

According to research done by the Ontario Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,

48% of surveyed Ontario women who had left their abusive partner said that their pets delayed their decision to leave an abusive partner.*

61% of surveyed Ontario women who had left their abusive partner stated that their partners had brutalized or killed a pet.*

The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association manages the SafePet Program, which is dedicated to helping women leave abusive relationships by providing temporary housing and care for their pets. To become a foster parent, visit their website

www.ovma.org/pet_owners/safepet.html

today for more information, and to download an application form.

All arrangements are made through a local veterinarian, and the identity of the foster parent and location of the pet is never revealed to the woman or her abusive partner.

[Please get involved now.](#)

(*OSPCA 1998)

Benefits of Pet Massage

If your veterinarian has ruled out any medical cause for stiffness, lack of mobility, or anxiety, therapeutic massage may help. Massage can:

1. Increase oxygenation to muscles and tissues.
2. Increase elasticity of muscles.
3. Increase range of motion, flexibility, and stride length.
4. Release contracted muscles.
5. Release stress and tension.
6. Bring about an all-around improvement in mind and body.

Local providers of pet massage include:

A Touch of Love, 2276 Queen Street East,
www.atochoflove.ca

Brought to you by:

Beaches Pet Services
....there for your pets when you can't be.

www.beachespetservices.ca
416.686.1098

Pet Sitting - Dog Walking - In-Home Boarding

New to the Neighbourhood

Say hi to Bonnie at **Baden Hound**, 2210 Queen St. East, (behind the Pet Valu) 416.693.8989. Currently offering Dog Grooming and Daycare... coming soon, an Agility Course,...Hydrotherapy and Reiki Therapy in a couple of months.

Choosing a Vet

One of the most important decisions you will make as a pet owner is choosing your pet's veterinarian. Over the next few months we will walk through the various points you should consider when making your selection.

The best place to start your search is by getting a personal recommendation from another pet owner. However, don't stop there....make sure the recommendation comes from someone who has both a similar pet care philosophy as you do, and a similar pet.

The importance of this is most evident when you look at the difference between cats and dogs. Not all vets like cats, and trust me, your cat can tell the difference. My cat's first vet was a dog person who treated cats by necessity. Every trip to this vet was a nightmare. Her next vet was a cat lover, and the difference was remarkable. She fawned over him at each visit.

Aside from species, also pay attention to breed. Some vets are wonderful with small or medium

sized dogs but do not relate as well to large dogs. Some vets gravitate naturally to large dogs, but are not as comfortable with small or toy breeds. This does not mean they do not provide good medical care, but if you have a choice would you not prefer that your pet be cared for by someone who really feels an affinity with your pet?

Matching your pet care philosophy is also important. Does your vet believe in using every treatment at his disposal to prolong life, while you are more concerned

Upcoming Pet Events

March 12 and 13 Pet First Aid Course

www.allaboutdogs.ca for information

This 10 hour course covers everything from prevention of illness and injury, to how to keep your pet in optimal health. You will also receive hands-on training in emergency bandaging, assessing vital signs, transportation, Heimlich, and CPR.

March 12-14, Purina National Dog Show

International Centre, Mississauga
www.ckc.ca

With over \$40,000 in prizes, the event will include three Championship Dog Shows, six Obedience Trials, three Rally Obedience Trials, as well as The Breeder's Village.

If you have an upcoming pet related event, email us at info@beachespetservices.ca to have your event listed for free in an upcoming issue of Paws to Reflect.

Product Review - Paw Protector

"Made from essential oils, herbs and vitamins, this one of a kind Paw Protector soothes and moisturizes sore, tired paws. Apply Paw Protector to the pads of your pet's feet prior to going outdoors, especially during bad weather.

This product aids in keeping paws protected from cold surfaces, ice, salt, and hot pavement. Reap-

lication after returning from the outdoors keeps your pet's pads conditioned and moisturized."

Although many people put special boots on their pets during the winter months, it can be difficult to find boots small enough for some of the toy breeds, and some dogs refuse to wear boots.

This wonderful product will help alleviate their discomfort and give you the peace of mind that you are doing everything you can to keep your pet comfortable.

Paw Protector can be purchased at **A Touch of Love**, 2276 Queen Street East, or in their online store at www.atochoflove.ca/petsupplies.

Who's Walking Who?

Did you know that something as simple as letting your dog go in or out of the house ahead of you can lead to an out of control, misbehaved dog?

As a pack animal, a dog instinctively looks to the pack leader for guidance and security. If you are not filling that role, your dog will take over, leaving you with a pet that controls you and your household.

In order to assert your leadership, incorporate these simple household rules:

1. Always make your dog sit before you put on his leash, then stay until you invite him to follow you in or out

of the house.

2. At mealtimes, do not simply place the food in front of your dog. Ask him to sit and stay. Do not put his food down until he obeys and sits calmly.
3. When walking your dog, be sure that he walks properly at your side in the "heel" position or follows you closely. Do not let him lead you or pull you from tree to tree, smelling and peeing as he goes. You will have a much more pleasant walk, and your dog will be far more relaxed and drained of energy at the end if you keep him moving at a

good pace.

4. Do not allow your dog to jump up on you or others. This is not a sign of affection, it is a sign of excitement and dominance.

For everything you need to know on how to have a happy, well balanced dog, check out Cesar Millan, The Dog Whisperer at www.cesarsway.com.

"As a pack animal, a dog instinctively looks to the pack leader for guidance and security."

Myths about Microchips

Myth: The implantation procedure is too expensive.

Fact: The costs incurred are one-time only. Rates in the Beaches and Upper Beaches range between \$61 and \$98 for implantation and registration of the ID, so do take the time to make some phone calls and find the best deal.

Myth: The procedure is painful.

Fact: The procedure is no more

painful than a vaccination.

Myth: Most vets and shelters don't have microchip readers.

"1 in 3 pets will go missing in their lifetime. 95% of them will not make it home."

Fact: In Canada, almost all shelters and veterinarians have universal microchip readers.

Myth: The microchip will wear out.

Fact: The chip has no internal power source. When the reader is waved over it, the chip draws power from the reader to display the ID number.

Ask your vet today about having your pets microchipped. Make sure they come home....

Cat Food - Wet vs. Dry

Get a group of cat owners together and sooner or later the debate will start....which is better, wet or dry?

In the wild, cats eat very little grain. They absorb undigested grains found in the stomachs of the birds and rodents they eat, and occasionally graze on small amounts of grass to aid digestion, but their diet consists primarily of

protein. The majority of their water requirements are satisfied from this diet as well.

When we place a cat on a dry kibble only diet, we are switching them to a high carbohydrate, low protein diet. We are also removing their main source of water, requiring them to drink large quantities of water to meet their needs.

However, a wet food only

diet increases the incidence of dental problems. It also is more difficult for owners, as it is not safe to leave wet cat food out all day for the cat to graze on.

The optimum recommended diet is 80% wet food and 20% dry. Feed your cat wet food in the morning and evening, and leave a small amount of dry kibble for grazing during the day.

Pet Insurance - Yes or No?

The question of whether or not to purchase pet insurance is one that most pet owners struggle with at some time or other. If you are considering purchasing pet insurance, read the fine print carefully and be sure to ask the following questions:

1. Is the deductible calculated on an annual basis, or on a per incident, per condition, or per illness category basis?
2. Does the policy cover pre-existing or hereditary conditions?
3. What are the co-pays and annual caps?
4. How much will your premium increase as your pet ages?

All of these need to be taken into

consideration when making a decision on pet insurance.

An even more significant issue is the fact that pet insurance policies will typically require that you pay the veterinary costs up front, and wait to be reimbursed.

For some people this will not present a problem, but many people consider purchasing pet insurance because they cannot afford to lay out large amounts of money for emergency veterinary bills.

If you do not have the ability to put the bills on a credit card or pay cash, then pet insurance really does you no good at all. You would be much better off putting the amount you would spend on premiums into a Tax Free Savings account each month to build an

emergency fund.

If you invest at the same rate as an average monthly premium of \$25 per month, it will take some time to accumulate. However, most pets will remain relatively healthy in their early years, so if you begin setting funds aside when your pet is still a baby, you will have a significant amount accumulated by the time the pet begins to develop health problems in their older years.

The other advantage to an Emergency Fund is that if you are fortunate to have a pet that remains healthy throughout its life, the money you have saved is available for use on other things, while the money paid out on monthly premiums is gone forever into the pockets of the insurance company.

Understanding the Breed

Too often a family dog is chosen because it is cute, lovable and overtly affectionate. Then we get the lovable rascal home and find that he/she does not fit at all with our personality or lifestyle.

The key to avoiding this situation is to be sure you know and understand the breed before you bring it home.

In each issue, we will examine a different popular breed, explain the purpose for the breed, and the requirements for having a happy, contented representative of that breed in your home.

First up is one of the most popular family pets, the **Golden Retriever**. As their name suggests, these dogs were bred for hunting, and have medium to high energy requirements. They have above average intelligence, which makes them easy to train, and they are highly sociable. They love to swim.

If you choose to make a retriever your family pet, be prepared to drain his physical and mental energy on a regular basis. Three walks a day plus regular games of fetch to satisfy his retrieving instincts will prevent him from developing undesirable



behaviour such as barking in the house, chewing furniture, pacing, etc.

Retrievers have a thick wa-

terproof undercoat, and shed heavily on a seasonal basis, so be prepared for regular brushing and frequent vacuuming. They are not suitable for people with allergies.

Golden retrievers love to eat and can be prone to obesity, so you must be committed to not overfeeding them. They will eat everything you give them.

If you are prepared to meet their requirements, Golden Retrievers are loving and loyal family pets.

For more information or to find a registered breeder:

www.canadaguidetodogs.com

www.ontariogoldens.com

To advertise in the March issue of Paws to Reflect, email us at info@beachespetservices.ca, or contact our office at 416.686.1098