

THE N.O.A.H. NEWS

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July - September 2005

SUMMER is a time for family fun! Vacations, trips to the beach, barbeques, and long, warm nights. Pets are enjoying the extra attention from children home from school and the extra long walks in the park. Take time to smell the flowers, for soon we will be shoveling that white stuff again.

TRAVELLING WITH YOUR PET

A pet is a part of the family, and for many people, the family vacation includes all members. But before you pack up the car, there are important considerations to keep in mind. First, be honest about your pet's ability to travel. If your pet is very young or old, is ill, or recovering from surgery, it may be better for all concerned to look into a pet sitter or boarding facility. If you are in doubt, ask your Veterinarian. If your pet has not traveled before, try a short overnight or weekend trip first.

The second thing you should do is schedule a visit with your Veterinarian.

During this appointment, the following can be discussed:



1. Are all vaccinations up to date and do we need any health or rabies certificates? You will need these if you are traveling by air, crossing the border, or if you have to unexpectedly board your pet while on your trip.

2. Are there any increased risks of fleas, heartworm, or ticks in the area you are traveling? What sorts of preventative medications should be used?

3. Are there any medications that can safely be given for carsickness?

4. Seriously consider having your pet microchipped. While no one likes to think about it, many pets become separated from their people while traveling and often collars are not on pets when they are recovered at shelters. Animal hospitals, humane societies, and kennels nationwide are using scanners that will read these implanted chips and let you be reunited with your lost pet. Microchipping is safe, quick, inexpensive, and very common.

To further increase the chances of a safe and quick return, bring a recent photograph and a written description of your pet, which includes any unusual markings. These will be invaluable if your pet does become lost.

DECIDING ON A NEW DOG

So you've decided to go ahead and take the plunge. You've had the family meeting, scanned the dog breed books, and delegated walking and feeding duties to each member of the family. Now, all that has to be done is to go out and get the dog. But where should you go? Is a breeder the right choice? Humane Society? Pet store? All of these can potentially be the best choice, however, each come with their own set of pros and cons.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY

If you prefer an adult dog of a non-specific breed, then you may want to check out the humane society. There are plenty of dogs available for adoption that will be sent to a new home fully vaccinated, dewormed, microchipped, and spayed or neutered. The biggest concern when you adopt an adult dog is that the entire history of the dog is unknown. The humane society staff does a wonderful job at collecting information on dogs given up for adoption and at assessing the behaviour of strays that are picked up, but there still may be some gaps.

Some of the reasons why dogs are given up for adoption may be due to over-activity (usually as a result of inadequate training and exercise), a change in lifestyle (children, job transfer), or an inability of the dog to adapt to new situations (poor socialization efforts). However, with this knowledge and a little effort and patience on the part of the adoptive owners, these dogs will most likely make wonderful companions and deserve a second chance.

A BREEDER

If you have always wanted a particular breed of dog because of a certain look, temperament, or size, then a breeder may be the way to go. Good breeders take pride in their craft, ensuring that breed standards are upheld while minimizing genetic abnormalities that are inherent in most purebred dogs. Good breeders also maintain the cleanliness of the kennel areas, feed and exercise their dogs well, and see to any health concerns in a timely manner. They do not over breed, and with the additional costs of vaccinations and deworming, are more likely to break even with the sale of a litter. Most importantly, they want their puppies placed in the proper home environment. This means that they will probably interview you to determine if there will be a lifelong commitment of care.

Beware of backyard breeders. Due to the popularity of certain breeds, some people believe easy money can be made on the sale of puppies. What you may not be getting is a dog that is genetically or temperamentally sound. This means that necessary veterinary exams, bloodwork, X-rays, and proper socialization efforts may be overlooked in order to minimize expenses.

THE PET STORE

If you are specifically looking for a puppy, a pet store offers a wide selection. They also sell all the accompaniments necessary for the new arrival. Dog toys, beds, food, grooming supplies, and crates are all available in one location. The convenience of this "one-stop shopping", however, is reflected in the price of your puppy. Puppies at a pet store may be higher when compared to the puppies you can purchase at a breeder or humane society.

There are several things to look out for when deciding to purchase a puppy at a pet store. First, beware of the inflated price that often accompanies the made-up breeds such as Goldi-Poos, Shih-Poos, and Cocka-Poos, to name a few. These dogs are essentially mutts and are bred because they do make exceptionally cute puppies that pull at the heartstrings of the people passing by. Second, beware of the purebred puppies. The history and lineage of these puppies are vague and oftentimes we do see genetic abnormalities. Over vaccinations and inappropriately timed vaccines, parasite burdens, and non-idealistic kennel conditions at the store are also concerns. To ensure you have selected the right puppy, ask plenty of questions, look at the health records, and call us if you have any concerns before the purchase is made.

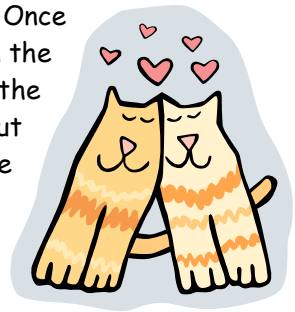
Deciding on where to purchase a new dog is important. Deciding on the type of dog with respect to breed, size at adulthood, exercise requirements, and trainability should not be overlooked. We usually see clients with their new dog during a post-purchase appointment to ensure that the dog is healthy. What would be ideal, in many situations, is a pre-purchase consultation. This way, we could suggest the proper fit between person/family and breed and recommend a reputable seller/breeder.

INTRODUCING A NEW CAT

Before introducing an additional cat or kitten into your home, the first step we recommend is to have the new cat tested for Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) and the Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). Both of these tests can be performed at the clinic with just a small sample of blood. If this test is negative for both of these diseases, then the new cat should be safe to introduce to the rest of the feline residents.

The key to introducing a new pet is to *GO SLOW!* Give the new cat about 1-2 weeks in his/her own room where the two cats can sniff each other under the door. Once they are doing this with minimal hissing, switch the situation. Put your cat in the room for a few hours and let the new kitty roam the house. This allows the resident cat to smell the new cat's scent and explore without worrying about having to fight the newcomer. It allows the new cat to explore the new house and become familiar with hiding areas.

The next step is to let them see each other from across a room or through a tall baby gate you put across the doorway of the room where the new kitty is. Then, when they are used to this, let the cats out together *SUPERVISED*, and put down some treats. Do this roughly the same time everyday, and soon the cats will be running to be in the same place at the same time. When hissing and growling subsides, then start moving the treats closer together. If they start growling at each other, you have moved the dishes too close, too quickly and need to back off. Soon they will associate a good thing with seeing each other. Do not let them together unsupervised, as they could fight and hurt each other. The entire process will probably take about 6 weeks, and even then they may not be best buddies but should be able to be in the same room without hissing at each other. Good luck, and remember - patience!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our website is up and running. As with any new project, there are still some adjustments to be made, but we are very pleased with it so far. Please visit www.oakvilleanimalhospital.com, look around and give us feedback. What information would you like to see on the website?



With the launch of the website, we are changing our email address to info@oakvilleanimalhospital.com. Please be sure to make the change in your address book. Sorry for any inconvenience.

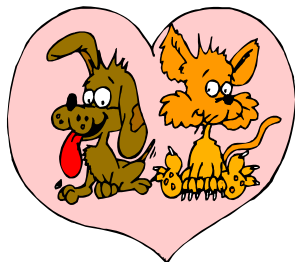


New NOAH Family

Jill, our RVT, had a baby boy on May 25, 2005. Logan Max weighed 9lb 15oz. Dr. Shari Wiseman, had a baby girl on June 16, 2005. Megan Sarah weighed 7lb 5oz. The new mothers and babies are doing great and have been in to visit, accompanied by the proud fathers.

OPEN HOUSE

We are going to celebrate 5 years of serving the community by having an open house in September. Bring the kids, two and four legged and come see the hospital.



A GOOD CAUSE FOR KIDS

A good friend of NOAH's would like your support for the Oakville Magical Races, in aid of Oakville Children's Magical Christmas. There will be 3 different races through scenic Oakville. One is a special race - Kid's Magical Mile. Come out on Saturday, October 22, 2005. For more information go to www.oakvillemagicalraces.com



PAWS FOR THE CAUSE

Sunday, September 25, 2005

Oakville & District Humane Society Walk-A-Thon.

Join the Fun - make a pledge - walk the walk - play some games - win a prize in the dog contest - enter the raffle

There are 3 different routes. Walk-friendly pets on leash are welcome!

For more information: 905-845-1551 www.oakvillehumane.ca

