



# VET mates

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT YOUR PETS

AUGUST 2010

## In memory of Teresa Sharman-Richards

Eliza Trembath

Totally Vets' relationship with Teresa first began around 15 years ago when she, and Lesley Butler, returned from the UK and started running a local animal shelter called Nassus. Nassus stood for Nassus Animal Shelter Saving Unwanted Strays, and was named after a band that Teresa managed called 'The Sussan's' (Sussan spelt backwards is Nassus!).

Not only had Teresa been running Nassus on her own for the past six years, she also managed Petstay Boarding Kennels and Cattery (formerly Emys Kennels and Cattery). If that didn't keep her busy enough she had recently provided her services to the Manawatu District Council as an after-hours animal control officer.

Teresa was one dedicated lady! She was a courageous and selfless individual whose number one passion in life was animal welfare, to the point where she would often go without in order to be able to provide for the animals in her care.

Totally Vets would like to sincerely thank everyone who has made a donation to the Nassus account here at the clinic - it just goes to show that Teresa was certainly a very well-known and loved member of the Feilding community.

## Come and see us at the Dog Show!

Aimee Perrett

Totally Vets is delighted to be supporting the New Zealand Kennel Club Eukanuba 2010 National Dog Show again this year.

Held at Manfeild Park from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd October, this is a wonderful opportunity to see confirmation, obedience and agility conducted simultaneously over the three days. It is preceded on 30 September by the Pro Plan Prelude All Breeds Championship Show and Totally Vets will be manning their stand for both shows over the four days.

The show offers something for every dog lover. Watch New Zealand's top purebred dogs compete to find the Best of Breed and ultimately on Sunday afternoon, the Best in Show. The event is an ideal opportunity to check out your favourite dog breed or just marvel at the wonderful range of breeds on display. The excitement of the agility

competition is infectious for both those watching and taking part! Handlers run their dogs off the lead through a series of obstacles. It is a timed event in which the quickest time wins while time penalties are added for faults. The weave poles, a series of vertical poles the dogs have to navigate through in a slalom pattern, and the tunnel, sometimes up to 5m long, are crowd favourites.

Come and see us at the Totally Vets stand for our show specials on Frontline, toys, accessories and others, or just visit us to say hello - we would love to see you there! We will also be running our very popular free competition for your chance to win six months' worth of Frontline.

**Show entry is \$6 for adults and free entry for children accompanied by an adult. Put the show date on your calendar now and a friendly reminder from the organisers that, if your own dogs are not competing, please leave them at home.**





## PICK OF THE LITTER GO-SLOW - the anti-gulp bowl

Dogs can be well-known for gulping down their food or water too quickly.

Doing this can cause them to swallow excess air along with the food or water

and this rapid eating can cause indigestion, vomiting and, in extreme cases, a painful and potentially life-threatening condition called gastric-dilatation and volvulus (commonly known as "bloat" or GDV).

This specially designed dish encourages dogs to eat and/or drink at a slower pace which helps reduce the intake of excess air, leading to improved digestion and reducing the risk of bloat.

The GO-SLOW bowl can be used for food or water and is suitable for wet or dry food. It comes in three sizes and is priced from \$16.00.

## Desex your cat

Rebekah Willink

A reminder to everyone who has adopted a cute little kitten over the last few months - now is the time to get them spayed or neutered!

These kittens will be approaching about six months of age which means they are becoming sexually mature and are able to make babies! As the days start to get longer, female kittens start to come into season and male kittens will realise that they can roam the streets looking for some lovely lady friends. Also, be aware that not only male kittens will roam to look for a mate, females will do it too.

There are hundreds of unwanted kittens born every season and animal shelters and SPCA's are often inundated with litters of kittens and have to work overtime to try and find homes for the little bundles of fur.

Cats should be desexed at around six months of age and the surgery itself is quick, cheap and most often goes without any complication or side-effect.

Totally Vets prints **Vet Mates** on paper using FSC certified mixed source pulp from Well Managed forests and other controlled sources. The paper is produced under an environmental management system ISO 14001.



## Border Collies don't do boredom

Helen Ryan

The Border Collie was originally called the Scotch sheep dog and originated in Northumberland.

They are most commonly known for their black and white coats but they also come in tri-colour, red and white, black and grey, yellow, yellow and white and all black.

As a breed, Border Collie's are one of the most trainable. Apart from being used as a working dog on the farm they are also used in narcotics and bomb detection, police work, search and rescue and are great in competitive agility and behaviour. Border Collies have even been used as guide dogs for the blind and assistance to the handicapped.

Due to the fact that they were bred to do work and are highly intelligent, if they are not working on a farm then they need to be kept occupied. They need to be given enough exercise to deal with their high energy requirements and very active minds. Apart from going for walks they need to spend time playing. Owners need to have the time

to spend with them as this is not a dog you can just chain up or cage all day especially if they are not getting enough exercise.

Not surprisingly, they will display behavioural problems if they are left to their own devices which can include becoming destructive, escaping from the property and trying to round up whatever or whoever is around.

Puppy preschool classes are highly recommended to ensure they are very well socialised. This can help sensitive puppies that have a tendency towards shyness. Border Collies are happiest when they know who is boss. A consistent leadership style by the owner is crucial, so that there is no doubt who the pack leader is.

**If you can give the time to accommodate their physical and mental health needs then a Border Collie is for you - they can be a great family dog.**





## PICK OF THE LITTER

# Winter warmers...

Keep your elderly pets warm this winter.

### SNUGGLESAFE HEAT PADS

A microwaveable heat pad which provides up to 10 hours of warmth - quick and easy to use,

and no wires or cords! The Snugglesafe comes with a washable polar fleece cover, is ideal for newborn, convalescent and elderly animals and is priced at \$49.60.

### PET PADS

A 33cm x 35cm electric blanket that provides gentle heating and is ideal for young, convalescent or elderly animals. The temperature can be controlled by the amount of blankets placed between the animal and the Pet Pad. Priced at \$50.90.



# NEW! Hill's Prescription Diet Feline j/d™

Article courtesy of Hill's Pet Nutrition

## Is your cat slowing down, jumping less or reluctant to play?

Recent studies have shown that many older cats have evidence of arthritis on x-rays. Some studies have shown that giving appropriate medications such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs can improve cats' ability to jump, groom and get in and out of litter-boxes; unfortunately however these medications are not always suitable for all cats.

Take the following test for your cat to rank their mobility score and rank the extent to which you agree with each statement in regard to your cat.

- 1 = Agree strongly
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = Not sure
- 4 = Disagree
- 5 = Disagree strongly

- My cat rarely comes to greet me or interacts with people
- My cat is reluctant to jump on and off surfaces
- My cat spends less time grooming and has a poor coat
- My cat rarely purrs or shows signs of contentment
- My cat is reluctant to play with me or other animals
- My cat shows pain when I touch its joints

### TOTAL MOBILITY SCORE

The following ranges indicate how severely a cat may be affected:

- 29-30 Probably not affected
- 22-28 Mild
- 15-21 Moderate
- 8-14 Severe
- 6-7 Very severe

Healthy cats with full mobility should score 30. A lower score may indicate a mobility problem that may be affecting your cat's quality of life.

Although arthritis is not curable, the good news is that a new product for arthritic cats has recently been launched onto the New Zealand market that is clinically proven to make a difference. Hill's Prescription Diet Feline j/d™ can help your cat walk, run and jump better in as little as 28 days!

When animals suffer from arthritis, cartilage (the cushioning in their joints) is wearing away which causes significant pain. So, what makes Hill's Prescription Diet Feline j/d™ so effective? Clinical studies have shown that a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids can interrupt the destruction of cartilage. Also, controlled calorie content and the added antioxidant L-carnitine helps to maintain a healthy weight and avoid stress on the joints.

**If you think your cat could benefit from the help of Hill's Prescription Diet Feline j/d™ give us a call at the Feilding clinic, we would be delighted to help.**



# Chewing gum poisoning in dogs - a sweet killer!

Suzanne Lane

What appears to be a harmless piece of gum to us can be life-threatening to our four-legged friends.

The poisonous ingredient in chewing gum is xylitol, a sugar-alcohol sweetener found in sugar-free gums and also other human food products including sugar-free mints, nicotine gum, chewable vitamins and oral-care products.

Xylitol is considered safe in people, but in dogs large amounts can cause huge increases in insulin causing a sudden drop in blood sugar levels, sending the dog into a hypoglycaemic crisis. Liver failure and blood clotting disorders have also resulted from xylitol ingestion. Toxicity has been reported to occur if a dog ingests around 2.5 grams of xylitol per kilogram of body weight. Symptoms may include vomiting, weakness, lethargy, imbalance, collapse or seizures. They may begin as early as 30 minutes after ingestion and can last up to two to three days.

In the Manawatu last year one lucky dog had a narrow escape from xylitol toxicity after ingesting an entire packet of chewing gum - wrapper and all! Having witnessed the event, the owner quickly had the dog admitted to the vet, where it was immediately made to vomit up the remaining sticks of gum and wrapper. Over the next hour the dog was

closely monitored with blood sugar readings taken every 10 minutes. In this instance, timing was the key as complete absorption had not occurred.

Other less fortunate cases may require intensive care hospitalisation and intravenous fluids. In patients with liver failure, antioxidants and liver protectants may be instituted and plasma or blood transfusions may be required for blood clotting disorders. Uncomplicated hypoglycaemia carries a good prognosis but the prognosis is guarded with liver failure and blood-clotting disorders.

Cats may also be susceptible to xylitol toxicity however it is our mischievous canine friends that more often seem to get themselves into trouble.

**Although we love to see our clients and their pets visit us at the clinic, please do try to keep your pets away from sugar-free gum and other xylitol containing products!**

# Is your dog bored and lonely?

Rebekah Willink

Wouldn't it be good if you could spend all day at home with your dog? Unfortunately few of us are lucky enough to have a life of leisure and with some people's busy lifestyles; dogs can be left alone at home for extended periods of time with nothing to do.

Left without stimulation or opportunity to exercise, dogs quickly get bored and lonely. They can become introverted and listless, possibly put on weight or alternatively they can become destructive, aggressive and bark and howl continuously. These dogs are not

getting back at humans; they are just trying to entertain themselves. Either way, a bored dog is an unhappy dog and just like people who are unhappy, they are often mentally depressed.

Here are some helpful easy tips to avoid boredom and loneliness:

**Play:** to keep dogs entertained while they are on their own, they can be provided with a range of virtually indestructible toys. Some can be filled with part of the dog's daily food or treat allowance, making the dog "work" to get the food out. Daily play sessions with the owner or other dogs are essential for socialisation and will help make your dog tired!

**Obedience work:** this quietens dogs down by giving them 'work therapy' or something to replace what they would get as working dogs. Secondly it brings dogs under better control. The commands learned can also be used in other situations, such as telling the dog to 'drop' if he/she starts to be aggressive. Thirdly,

it again reinforces the handler's status as pack leader.

**Free-running exercise:** dogs are happy running around their own property, but they are at their happiest if they can get free-running exercise off their property too. Racing around as they like, playing and following their nose stimulates them, quietens them down and again, tires them out.

**Chew toys:** chewing is a natural behaviour in dogs of all ages. Chewing keeps your dog's interest and reduces stress while helping to enhance the health of their teeth and gums. The important thing is to teach them early on which toys they are allowed to chew.

Boredom in dogs is a common problem, but one which is difficult to detect because they can't communicate their boredom to us. It is a very simple problem to overcome if you just consider the few basic needs of your pet.

**Remember all animals need a reason to exist - dogs are no different to the rest of us!**