



VET mates

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT YOUR PETS

MAY 2010



Welcome Kellie!

Kellie Doyle recently joined the small animal team to cover Annabel's maternity leave - Annabel is now the proud mum to baby George. Kellie graduated from the University of Queensland in 2006 and began her career as a mixed practitioner in a small practice in central Queensland. After two years she spent time as a locum around Queensland and after a short trip to China last year she decided that the world needed exploring. She jumped the ditch to visit New Zealand with a view to continuing onto Canada but luckily for us she didn't make it that far! When the opportunity to join Totally Vets arose, Kellie jumped at the chance to be able to focus on her companion animal veterinary skills and after meeting the staff and many of our clients she is definitely starting to feel at home!

Totally Vets resource needs

Nigel Coddington

In 1998 we had 10 vets and 14 support staff working out of the existing building in Feilding. We now have 20 vets and 28 support staff operating in and from the same facility. The efficiency of the workplace has suffered as we have loaded more people and more equipment into the same space. We now have people lining up to get to a work station. On top of that, there are other ongoing structural problems that need to be urgently addressed.

During investigations initiated over two years ago, when it was recognised that the current building no longer met our needs, an opportunity arose that provided an excellent chance to secure our medium to long-term future. Options were rapidly reduced to putting another floor on our existing building or building a new clinic on a new site.

With little difference in cost between option one and two, the decision came down to other

factors. Altering the existing building, no matter how the plan was re-jigged, could not be made to deliver on our requirements. Add the disruption to our clients and team and the decision to build a new facility on a new site was taken.

A new opportunity led to the acquisition of the old ITM site directly across the road from our existing building. The new site is four times the size of our current site and the new building will be almost double the size to accommodate administration, the hospital and the public area. All this can be achieved, with the same address - the corner of Manchester and Eyre Streets - and room for future growth if required.

The land and building will be owned by a consortium of private investors, including the Feilding and Districts Veterinary Club. Totally Vets will lease the building.

As you may be aware, the building has begun and as we write this the concrete is being poured. We are all very excited about our spacious new premises and will keep you updated with any important news and progress as we hear it!

Below Architects' impression of front entrance





PICK OF THE LITTER A warm coat for winter

Treat your pooch to some trendy winter woolies!

A coat is highly recommended for:

- Dogs with arthritis
- Geriatric dogs
- Dogs with a thin coat
- Dogs that sleep outside

Bring your canine companion in to visit us at the Feilding clinic today to have a personalised fitting for a coat.

There are different sizes and styles available and we can cater for a Chihuahua to a Great Dane!



Do your homework

Rebekah Willink

Some very important points to consider before buying a pure-bred large-breed puppy, such as a Labrador, Rottweiler, German Shepherd or Golden Retriever.

- Buy from a reputable breeder, preferably one that is registered with the New Zealand Kennel Club.
- Ask for papers if you want to breed from your new puppy in the future - this way you can breed in good faith knowing that your puppy has come from good stock.
- Make sure the puppy's parents have been hip and elbow-scored and ask for written verification of this. Hip and elbow dysplasia is most common in large breed dogs and can be hereditary - dogs that suffer from one or both of these conditions should not be used for breeding.
- Make sure your puppy has been fed a good quality, complete and balanced puppy food formulated for large breed puppies. Poor diet can also contribute to joint problems or deformities.

The Siamese - Thai for 'moon diamond'

Helen Ryan

Siamese cats were first officially exported from Thailand, once known as the exotic Siam, in the late 1800s.

The Siamese are said to be descendants of the sacred temple cats and the first Siamese to appear in England were a gift from Siam to the ambassador, who brought them home. Siamese are considered to be one of the oldest breeds of cat.

The Siamese people are more familiar with are termed the 'modern' Siamese. They have an elegant, slim, stylish, flexible and well-muscled body. The head is triangular-shaped with a thin snout. The eyes are almond-shaped and oblique, the ears large and thin. The kittens are born pure cream or white at birth then develop colour-points in the first few months. These point colours are seal (brown/black), blue (grey), chocolate (lighter brown) and lilac (warm grey).

The Thai or traditional Siamese shares the colour pattern of its modern relative, however it has a more compact body, an apple-shaped head, full, rounder cheeks, a shorter snout, smaller ears and almond-shaped but not oriental eyes.

Siamese are intelligent, inquisitive and loving in nature. They have a legendary loud low-pitched voice and are great communicators. It has been compared to the cries of a human baby and they can be persistent in demanding attention.

Siamese like to be totally involved in their owners' lives. They do not like to be ignored and need to be the centre of attention. For those Siamese that have very sensitive and nervous temperaments, they do not cope with being left for long periods during the day. These individuals may not adapt to changes of environment or to strangers. It is not unusual for this to manifest into periods where they may not eat or drink, making them prone to health problems.

This article is dedicated to 'Ming-Lu', a well-known and special Siamese patient of Totally Vets, and her mum Marion Roddick. 'Ming-Lu' sadly passed away in March 2010.

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.





PICK OF THE LITTER

Feliway - the secret to happy cats

The day-to-day pressures of modern life and living in a domestic situation with humans and other animals can mean more stress for our cats.

Cats naturally use their facial pheromones to mark familiar and comforting items in the environment and Feliway mimics this pheromone, therefore creating a state of comfort. It helps to reduce and/or prevent the signs associated with stress and provides a sense of wellbeing and security.

Obvious displays of stress include urine spraying and aggression towards other pets. Some more discrete displays of stress can include food intake disorders, over-grooming or a lack of grooming or soiling in the house.

Feliway is great for the prevention and reduction of urine-marking in cats. It helps settle and calm cats that are in an unknown or stressful environment and allows reaction to stressful situations to be controlled and avoided.



Acupuncture for pets

Kellie Doyle

Kellie Doyle, one of our small animal vets is currently undertaking a course in Animal Acupuncture through the University of Melbourne and is hoping to be able to start offering this alternative treatment to your pets in the very near future.

Although many of you are probably familiar with a variety of alternative medicines available to

people, acupuncture is a relatively new field in the western world of animal care. In particular, it has proven itself useful as an aid in the management of musculoskeletal pain (such as arthritis, or after orthopaedic surgery), although it has applications in many disorders including urinary tract disease, nervous disorders, gastrointestinal disease and many geriatric conditions.

Traditionally its usefulness can be explained by the acupuncture needles tapping into a network of energy channels in the body. By placing needles at certain points in these channels, the function of all organs in the body can be affected. From a scientific perspective, acupuncture works by increasing the microcirculation of blood to the area of focus,

decreasing inflammation and stimulating the production of endorphins (the happy hormones).

If you are interested in exploring this option for your dog or cat but are worried about how they will cope with having multiple needles placed in their body, don't rule it out straight away - you may be surprised at how well it is tolerated and the needles are very small! Kellie has been performing acupuncture on a couple of our staff members' dogs recently and they are coping with it very well.

As soon as this option is available for your pets we will let you know. In the meantime however, if you need any further information regarding acupuncture for pet, give us a call at the Feilding branch and we will be happy to help.



Feline senior wellness

Rebekah Willink

As cats grow older, their bodies become less able to cope with physical or environmental stress. Their immune systems become weaker and they are more prone to developing certain diseases such as diabetes, hyperthyroidism, kidney disease or cancer.

With many cats living well into their teens or even their early twenties, we often wonder "when is a cat truly a senior citizen?" Below is a guideline to give you an idea of how the ageing process may be affecting your cat's health:

- Mature to middle-aged: 7 to 10 years
- Senior: 11 to 14 years
- Geriatric: 15+ years

IT'S TIME TO SEE THE DOCTOR!

As with people, it is important for cats to visit the doctor more frequently as they age. A feline senior wellness examination is designed to promote the longest and healthiest life possible, recognise and control known health risks for older cats and/or detect any signs of disease at their earliest stage, when they are most treatable.

Most experts agree that the senior cat should visit their veterinarian every six months. Cats age much more rapidly than people and health problems can occur quickly. Your vet will carry out a complete physical examination and also offer additional laboratory tests (if appropriate) that may include blood tests, urine tests and blood pressure monitoring.

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN YOUR SENIOR CAT

Keeping a close eye on your cat in between wellness exams is a great help! Some common signs or symptoms that show they need to visit their vet can include any change in eating/drinking habits, toileting habits or behaviour. Any unexplained weight loss or gain should also be a cause for concern.

DON'T FORGET THE BASICS!

Along with paying close attention to your cat's health as he or she ages, you should also continue routine wellness care including parasite control (fleas and worms), prophylactic dental care, nutritional management and vaccinations.

Give us a call at the Feilding branch of Totally Vets today for more information regarding wellness care, or to make an appointment for your feline friend.

Dog and cat nutrition - comparing pet foods

Sandy Fitzgerald

There are many different pet foods available (made from many different combinations of ingredients) for owners to feed their pets and it is important to understand the factors that make pet foods different. This will enable you, the owner, to make on-the-spot comparisons between products and choose the best one for your pet.

DETERMINE THE FOOD'S PURPOSE

Is the food for a dog or a cat (they have very different nutritional requirements)? Is it a maintenance diet, for a puppy/kitten, for an older dog, for a small/medium/large breed, for a working/active dog or for weight management? All these foods are available and formulated differently to meet your pet's specific individual needs.

CHECK THE NUTRITION CLAIMS ON THE PACK

Is the food "complete and balanced"? This claim means that all the nutrients your pet requires are met and that they are balanced to the daily energy needs.

Does the food "meet the nutrient profiles of AAFCO"? AAFCO stands for Association of American Feed Control Officials. This claim will give you the highest level of nutritional assurance that a pet food meets the stringent requirements set by AAFCO.

CHECK THE INGREDIENT LIST

Some ingredients are better quality than others in terms of the energy and nutrients they provide. For a given amount, high-quality ingredients tend to provide more energy and nutrients than lower-quality ones, so you need less of them. When comparing foods, check how much you would need to feed your pet each day. The difference between foods can be huge - you may need to feed so much of a lower-quality food that you will pay more in the long-run.

NOTE THE UNIQUE BENEFITS

High-quality pet foods give your pet unique benefits such as intestinal health, immune system enhancement, antioxidant support, dental defence and many others, all included in the price. Check what you're getting for your money.

If you would like help with choosing the right food for your pet, please come in and see us at the Feilding branch - we will be delighted to provide you with a solution that is right for you and your pet.

