



# MERRY CHRISTMAS



**Merry Christmas** and **Welcome** to our Summer newsletter. The staff at Ingleburn Veterinary Hospital would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone and their pets a safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to servicing your needs both over Christmas and The New year as best we can and will be closed only Christmas day and Boxing Day, other holiday hours can be seen in the next column. Of course we will also be available over Christmas for emergencies should the need arise for anybody.

This issue will contain various seasonal topics, our latest promos and giveaways, as well as select articles from our talented staff. The winners of our “Phantastic Photo Competition” will also be announced. We had quite a lot of response to our last newsletter, so obviously some of you are reading it! Hope you enjoy this one just as much. As usual feel free to make any comments or suggestions. We are keen to report on any fresh ideas given.

-Bronwyn

## Staff News

**Corinne James** will be leaving us this Christmas to do the unthinkable (get Married) and move to England. We will miss her terribly but wish her well for her future.

**Jenni Conway** also tied the knot in November this year over in Tasmania with her GI Joe (*he's in the armed forces*) and we now call her Jenni Elliot. Congratulations to them both!

**Mahala Burchell** has joined us once again to help out during the busy summer ahead. Some of you may remember her from a few years ago when she worked as one of our full time nurses. Mahala will be helping out some evenings and the odd weekend. Welcome Back!

**Matthew Gray**, our kennel hand and general handyman left us at the end of October to pursue a fulltime job in an unrelated industry. We wish him well with his new job and will miss his handy work around the place!

## Christmas/New Year Holiday Hours

Christmas Day – Closed

Boxing Day – Closed

New Years day – 10am till 12noon

Australia Day – 10am till 12noon

Phone 9829 1947 at any time for emergencies

## Staff Training

- **Mark** attended a presentation on “Better Mobility and Pain Relief” in November.
- **Corinne** has recently finished her exams to complete her Masters Degree – congratulations Corinne!
- **Ros** attended an “Intensive Care & Anaesthesia” workshop. The program included oxygen and fluid therapy in emergencies, monitoring high-risk anaesthetic patients and post operative care and management.
- **Connie** attended a seminar outlining emergency and critical care topics further to the conference she attended in August.

## Puppy Preschool

Congratulations to our recent graduates: *Ruby Grimes, Jester Olsson, Micky Elias, Rembrandt Ellul, Zac Erwin, Bindi Pretki, Roxy Highlands, Candie Russell, Sasha McAreavey, Casper Andrews, Elly & Gizmo Tracey, Brandy Williams, and Thor Sarmiento.*



Puppy Preschool is an early socialisation and basic training program for young puppies (under 12 weeks of age) and their owners. We recommend it for all pups. Classes are run here at the hospital, by two of our qualified nurses Ros and Nicole. The course consists of 4 consecutive weekly classes that run for approx. 1 hour on a Tuesday or Wednesday evening.

## “Phantastic Photo Competition”

During the month of October we held our “Phantastic Photo Competition”. A big “Thanks” goes to everyone who entered a photo of their pet. We had some great photos sent in and judging was made very hard. Winners were selected by Adam Crofts – our Pfizer Animal Health representative.

The following won a 3 months supply of Revolution flea and Heartworm treatment for themselves:

“Gary” Lau, “Master Effen S” Marsh, “Mala” Suto and “Austin” James. These winners were the best in their category. The major prize winner for the “best photo” overall was “Kimba” Summerell. The Summerell family has been rewarded with a brand new digital camera. Congratulations to all our winners and thanks again for your entry. Don’t forget, if you wish to collect your photo from reception please do so during the month of December. Photographs will not be kept after January 1, 2007.

-Bronwyn

## Holiday Time

Holiday time is fast approaching so if you are planning to go away here are some useful tips.

- If you are planning on using a boarding facility for your pet, book early because they fill very quickly over the Christmas/New Year period. It is advisable to phone a few facilities and ask to inspect the premises, before making a choice for your pet.
- Check your pets are fully vaccinated and remember, dogs are required to be vaccinated against kennel cough as well as distemper, hepatitis and parvo virus. Most kennels call this a “C5” and require a certificate of proof.
- If your pet is on a special diet or takes regular medications make sure you have enough to last!
- In case of an emergency, always leave a contact telephone number and your vet’s phone number. If you are taking your pet with you, make sure you know where the nearest vet is located. There is plenty of pet friendly accommodation available, look on the internet or your local book store.
- When travelling by car, make sure your dogs are properly harnessed and cats are secure in carry cages. Make regular toilet and refreshment stops and if your pet suffers from travel sickness there are medications available to combat this.
- If you are holidaying with your pet along the coast be wary of **paralysis ticks**. Check your pet daily and further reduce the risk by using either **Frontline spray, Frontline Plus Top spot, Permethrin or Proban tablets**.

If you would like more information on any of the above tips please phone us or call in to the clinic for advice.

-Sue

## Dental Health Month

Our Dental Health Month in September was very popular this year. It was great to see so many pet owners taking the time to ensure the dental health of their pets. About 30 lucky people who purchased special dental diets for their pets were also rewarded with a dental kit for themselves which contained a toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss – compliments of Hill’s Pet Nutrition. Oral hygiene is important for all of us and we were happy to promote dental health month once again. We had good response to our **Free Dental check** offer during September – much greater than in previous years. Awareness of dental disease is becoming more prominent in our society and our pets are reaping the benefits with healthier gums and their flashing pearly whites! Remember to keep up with raw meaty bones 2 or 3 times per week, treats like Greenies and dentabones are ok too, but not quite as effective and if all else fails consider switching your pet to a specially formulated diet that will take care of his/her teeth whilst they are eating – they really work! Ask our staff for more info.

-Bronwyn



## Warning about snake bites!!

Recently we have had an unusually high number of snake bite victims. The peak seasons for snake bites are March and November. Although there is probably not much you can do at home to prevent your pet being envenomated, please consider this threat when taking your pet walking through scrub/bushland.

Snakes can produce several types of toxins, including neurotoxins (toxins which attack the nervous system), toxins which affect the clotting ability of the blood, and toxins which attack other cells in the body (eg muscle breakdown). The predominant toxin varies between snake species.

Signs to look out for include: inco-ordination, weakness/paralysis, excess salivating, problems breathing, cyanosis (blue tongue/gums indicating problems transporting oxygen around the body), fitting, dilated pupils, pink urine, or evidence of bleeding at other sites. It is very rare that the actual bite wound is identified in animals, and often we treat with antivenom based on history and clinical signs.

If you suspect that your pet has been envenomated, seek veterinary attention immediately and try to prevent your pet from unnecessary movement. Be mindful of your safety: do not try to capture the snake. There are snake catchers in this area that are specially trained to do this job and we have some contacts on hand if you need them. We can administer a combined antivenom and so do not always require identification of the rogue snake.

-Corinne

## Product News

**Frontline Plus** – This Summer when you purchase any packet of Frontline plus flea & tick control for your pet we are giving away **free ice cube trays** to keep your pets water bowls cool on hot days. Don't forget to ask for yours. This promotion continues until stocks last!

**Metacam 100ml** – When you purchase any specially marked pack of Metacam 100ml for your dog this summer you will receive a voucher for \$10 OFF your next purchase. The voucher must be redeemed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007.

**FIV vaccine** – Further on in this newsletter Connie discusses the benefits of this relatively new vaccine available for cats. We are recommending it for all outdoor cats and if you would like a quote please phone the clinic and our friendly nursing staff will be happy to help.

**Advantage** – This summer when you purchase any pack of advantage flea control for your pet you can pick up a **free** "pet hair remover" for removing unwanted excess dog and cat fur from your furniture and clothing. This promotion will continue until stocks run out!

**Revolution** – Pfizer animal health currently have a competition running till **15/12/06**. If you purchase any 6 pack of Revolution for your dog or cat you can go into the draw to win a brand new Volkswagon Convertible. All you need to do is fill out an entry form at the time of purchase and drop it in the box at reception.

**Vets Own** – Pet Health Insurance have recently improved their benefits by now including coverage for Hereditary and Breed Specific Excluded Conditions. For example, this means that GDV *Gastric Dilation and Volvulus* (**bloat**) in deep-chested breeds is no longer excluded, along with all the other breed related conditions. Vets Own also offer a **Free Cover Note – with no age limit!** For more information, drop in and ask for a brochure or go to the website [www.vetsown.com.au](http://www.vetsown.com.au).

**Sentinel Spectrum** – This summer when you purchase a 6 pack of Sentinel for your dog it comes with a **Free** packet of "Capstar", an oral treatment for the fast acting knockdown of adult fleas. So if your pet picks up any fleas whilst out and about you can be rid of them just as quickly as they arrived. This promo is for a limited time only while stocks last.



### Medication drop –offs

We are now offering a free medication drop – off service for our **Ingleburn clients** who find it difficult to travel over to the new clinic regularly to pickup medications, heartworm tablets, flea control products etc. We understand that a few Ingleburn clients used to walk to the old clinic for these things because they don't drive or don't own a car and now have to rely on someone to bring them over to the new clinic. This service is available every week day. You must phone ahead at least a day in advance though and the drop-off time will vary according to how heavily booked we are for the day.

## An Important Warning to Cat Owners! – Permethrin toxicity can be fatal.

For many of us, getting on top of flea control this summer will be a priority. But did you know that many over-the-counter flea preparations can be potentially deadly to your cat???

**Permethrin** is a man-made insecticide which belongs to a class of chemicals called Pyrethroids. They are designed to kill insects by disrupting their nervous system. Common products which contain permethrin include flea and tick shampoos, soaps, rinses, spot-on treatments and collars, many of which can be readily purchased from supermarkets and pet shops. Most of these products are **only** indicated for the treatment of dogs.

Cats, however, are **highly sensitive** to permethrin. Inappropriate or accidental application or ingestion of permethrin based products could cause severe symptoms, including hyperexcitability, muscle tremors, seizures, hypersalivation, vomiting, depression, and even death. Early signs of permethrin toxicity could be as subtle as ear flicking and paw shaking. If you see these signs, and suspect that your cat has been exposed to permethrin, seek veterinary advice immediately.

There is no specific antidote for cats that have been affected with permethrin. Treatment will be aimed at controlling the seizures, muscle tremors, body temperature and minimising the risk of organ damage. The overall outcome will depend on how severely cats are affected.

If you have a dog, and use permethrin based products on them, make sure your dog is DRY before letting them come in contact with your cat (even a gentle rub against product applied to your dog's coat can be enough to intoxicate them).

Pyrethrin, *not* permethrin, is a common active ingredient in many cat flea shampoos. Pyrethrin is a natural insecticide, is generally safer and will not cause any side effects if used appropriately.

**But** before you use ANY product on your cat, double check and then triple check the label and make sure it is safe to be used on cats!!! If you are not sure, please call us to make sure! We can also suggest much safer and effective flea products for your cat (and dog!) and give you advice on flea control.

- Connie

### A Little Humour

#### Top 5 things a cat thinks about.....

1. Is there something I'm not getting when humans make noise with their mouths?
2. Why doesn't the government do something about dogs?
3. Hmmm... If dogs serve humans, and humans serve cats, why can't we get those STUPID dogs to do anything for us?
4. If there is a God, how can he allow neutering?
5. This looks like a good spot for a nap.

- Ros

## Feline Immunodeficiency Virus

### “Cat AIDS” – Is your cat at risk?

#### Firstly, what is Feline Immunodeficiency Virus?

Known as FIV or “Cat AIDS”, Feline Immunodeficiency Virus is an emerging infectious disease affecting cats. Once cats are infected, the virus progressively destroys the immune system, making them more vulnerable to infections and can eventually lead to multiple and potentially fatal health problems. Like HIV in humans, there is no specific cure for FIV.

Even though the virus itself is very similar to the HIV or “AIDS” virus, it is **NOT** possible to catch FIV from your cat (nor is it possible for your cat to catch HIV from a human!). FIV **only** affects cats.

#### How do cats get FIV?

The virus is transmitted through **bite wounds** inflicted from fighting with an infected cat. Unlike HIV in humans, sexual transmission of the virus is rare. However, bite wounds during mating may transmit the virus. It is also possible, but uncommon, for kittens to be infected from FIV infected mothers via the placenta or through infected milk.

#### Which cats are at risk?

Outdoor, free-roaming cats, especially those that are not desexed are at the greatest risk of contracting the disease from fighting with other cats. However, any cat which has outdoors access is at risk because it only takes one bite wound from an infected cat to contract FIV.

#### How do I know if my cat has FIV?

In most cases, there will be no obvious signs that your cat has contracted the virus when it first becomes infected. Some infected cats can remain healthy for many years following infection. However, as the disease progresses, there may be vague and non specific symptoms such as fever, loss of appetite, weight loss, poor condition, chronic infections etc. More severe signs can develop as the disease progresses into the AIDS phase but these signs will not be unique to FIV.

The only way you can tell if your cat has FIV with certainty is to do a blood antibody test. This test is available at our clinic. Testing is simple and we can give you a result while you wait.

#### What can I do to prevent my cat from contracting FIV?

The best way to protect your cat from contracting FIV is to reduce their exposure to potentially infected cats. In most cases, this would mean keeping your cat completely indoors or housed in an enclosure where they cannot come into contact with other cats. If you already have a cat that is kept strictly indoors and are considering getting another cat, it may be worthwhile to screen any new cat before introducing them into the household. Desexing your cat will also greatly reduce their risk of getting FIV. Desexed cats are less likely to roam, be territorial and fight with other cats.

If it is not possible to keep your cat strictly indoors, an alternative is to **vaccinate** them against the disease. The revolutionary FIV vaccine was released in Australia in 2004 by Fort Dodge and provides a high level of protection against the disease.

-Connie

## Parvo Virus

**Warning** - We are seeing many cases of **Parvo virus** lately. These pups are always **not** fully vaccinated! Puppies require a primary course of vaccinations as follows:

- **First Vaccination** 6-8 weeks
- **Second Vaccination** 12-14 weeks
- **Third Vaccination** 14-16 weeks

It is extremely important that pups have their **third** puppy vaccine **after** the age of 14 weeks. Boosters are then required yearly with their Annual Health Checkups. Parvo virus causes damage to the cells lining the gastrointestinal tract. Subsequently, the signs of infection include lethargy, inappetence, vomiting and bloody diarrhoea. The virus itself is very stable in the environment. This means that the elements such as wind, rain and sunshine do not kill off the virus. Unfortunately, this also results in us seeing cases of parvovirus fairly regularly (and we have seen quite a few cases recently). The risk of parvovirus is virtually eliminated when your dog is properly immunised. Even after the recommended third vaccine, pups should be kept in as ‘safe’ as environment as possible (since potentially they may still pick up the disease until their immune system has had a chance to react to the vaccine) for an additional 2 weeks. This means avoiding high risk areas like the park, walks out on the street, etc – basically anywhere you don’t know the history of the place or anywhere a stray dog could roam, (this could also include your front yard if it is not fully fenced in). Being kept indoors or a secure backyard that has not been exposed to the parvo virus is ideal.

If your dog’s vaccinations are not up to date, please consider that the cost of vaccinating a pup is a small portion of the cost of managing a parvo case, and the outcome of treating these cases can be unpredictable, with some puppies dying despite aggressive treatment.

-Corinne



### Grooming Tip

If you’re looking for a grooming product that can relieve minor skin discomfort and inflammation, whilst maintaining normal skin, we stock a range of

**Dermcare** products for dogs and cats that can do just that! In particular, the **Aloveen shampoo and conditioner** range which combines soothing aloe vera with colloidal oatmeal. The shampoo is gentle, hypoallergenic and soap free and is suitable for use on dogs and cats with Atopic Dermatitis, Contact Dermatitis, Dry, itchy, and even sensitive skin. The **Conditioner** is designed to be left on the coat to enhance and prolong the soothing aloe vera and oatmeal properties. Its pleasant smell makes it ideal to use as a **“Dry Bath”** on relatively clean dogs between washes – **Great for indoor dogs!** Pop in and ask for a **free sample** during the month of December – while stocks last.

-Bronwyn

