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PAWPRINTS

Bringing you all the latest news from Spinney Vets

Issue 02



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Spinney Vets

PAWPRINTS Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of our Newsletter, which can also be read online on our website www.northampton-vets.co.uk

It is a jam-packed edition with plenty of advice we hope you will find useful as we enter a time of year which can prove difficult for our pets, with the loud bangs of fireworks all the way through to new year, Christmas food and drink lying around, not to mention decorations!

As well as firework and Christmas hazards, we are offering guidance on how you can spot the potentially fatal parvovirus disease in your canine companion.

We're also congratulating some talented young artists whose work was selected to grace the walls of our newly-refurbished Wootton Fields surgery.

Having pets is a joy, and nothing gives us at Spinney Vets greater joy than being able to help pet owners and to share our knowledge and experience with them.

If you have any feedback on our newsletter or if there's something you would particularly like to see included in the spring edition, please let us know.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this edition and on behalf of everyone at Spinney Vets, I'd like to wish you and your pets a Merry Christmas and a very happy new year.

Iain Fletcher, Clinical Director



Removing firework fears for your furry friend

Unexpected loud bangs can prove too much for many pets and this time of year can be a particularly frightening time.

Bonfire Night may now be behind us but fireworks are no longer restricted to November 5, with many people using them in their celebrations for Diwali, Christmas, New Year's Eve etc.

Plug-ins and sprays which calm pets down will be helpful especially when used in conjunction with noise desensitisation. Noise desensitisation can begin at least eight weeks before and plug-ins should be installed at least two weeks before an expected noisy event.

Our clinical director Iain Fletcher said: "We offer free anxiety clinics which are run by our knowledgeable and experienced vet nurses. **These can easily be booked online at www.northampton-vets.co.uk.**

"Now for the first time 'Sounds Scary' is available free of charge to download through the Dog's Trust at www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/dog-behaviour-health/sound-therapy-for-pets.

"It's important to follow the Sounds Scary instructions on the Dog's Trust website.

"You should also make sure your dog has a safe place to hide such as a covered crate filled with bedding and their favourite chew, which will help to relax them. This 'den' should be available to them at all times."

For further information please contact us at the hospital.



Megan Spring (left) and Sarah Wagstaff with Ted

Stay alert to signs of parvovirus in your pup

We are urging dog owners to stay alert to any signs their pet may have contracted parvovirus and have issued some preventative advice.

We want owners to be vigilant as we have seen an increase in the number of diagnosed cases compared to what we would normally expect.

Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious disease which can be fatal if left untreated. It is spread by diarrhoea, vomit and oral secretions.

There is no cause for alarm but we would like to issue additional advice to dog owners.

If you have an unvaccinated pup, it's not wise to let them walk where there is traffic from other dogs, particularly in parks. Parvo is a hardy virus and can last in the environment for six months.

If you have been putting off getting your pet vaccinated, we would advise that you get started. If you're unsure about vaccines you can give us a call and we'll happily talk you through it.

Signs dog owners should look out for include their pet being quiet, a loss of appetite, vomiting and bloody diarrhoea.

Bloody diarrhoea doesn't necessarily indicate parvo in your dog so we don't want to panic owners unnecessarily. We just ask them to be cautious and get their pet checked out.

If your pup is bright and well, there is no need to get it tested for parvovirus. For those who do have concerns, the test is readily available and very easy for us to do.

We also want to make owners aware that dogs who have had the puppy and first annual booster are not immune to the virus for life.

Pet Health Club competition winners are now on track



Nine lucky animals and their owners have been presented with great prizes following a hugely successful summer campaign for our Pet Health Club.

A prize draw was held for all new Pet Health Club members, and existing members who wanted to enter, and the winners picked randomly during August, September and October received either a PitPat dog activity tracker or a Tractive cat GPS tracker.

The winners for August were dogs Chops Gelder and Florence Grant, and cat George Rose. All three are patients at our Wootton branch.

In September, dogs Benson Sumner and Eli Langford from our Spinney branch were winners, along with cat Charlie Farrar, who visits our Wootton branch.

And the final winners from the competition in October were dogs Derek Hurley and Rosie Jenkins, who attend our Spinney branch and Wootton branch respectively, and cat Lottie Fitchet, who is

registered with our Wootton branch. Practice manager Caroline Longdon said: "We were delighted to be able to hand over these great prizes to the winners who have signed up to our Pet Health Club.

"We hope the pets and owners will really enjoy using them.

"Our Pet Health Club is a convenient and affordable way to protect your pet by making sure their important treatments are up to date. It offers comprehensive care, great value for money and peace of mind throughout your pet's life.

"If people want to know more about our pet health club we'd be delighted to have a chat with them and explain just how much their pets could benefit from being members."

For more information on our Pet Health Club please call 01604 648221 or visit www.northampton-vets.co.uk/our-services/pet-health-club.

Making neutering a more comfortable experience

The long-term advantages of neutering female dogs are well documented, including a reduction in the risk of mammary cancers, elimination of the risk of potentially life-threatening uterine infection and avoidance of unwanted pregnancy.

However, surgery is always a concerning time for any pet owner, not only the risk of being under an anaesthetic and that of the surgical procedure itself but also the difficulties of the post-operative period.

For this reason, we offer keyhole surgery neutering techniques for females as well as males who have undescended testicles.

Also known as laparoscopy, these are minimally invasive techniques allowing us to enter and explore a dog's abdominal cavity to allow

surgery to be performed with reduced damage to muscles and other external tissues.

Less damage means less post-operative pain and irritation, it also means less exercise restriction and, in most cases, we avoid the need for the dreaded buster collar.

Our clinical director Iain Fletcher said: "We are proud to have been offering this more gentle technique for five years now and we are also excited to have recently introduced new state-of-the-art technology to make the procedure even safer."

This technology is a new diathermy unit known as VetSEAL, which uses high frequency electrical currents to produce heat which clots blood vessels.

Most importantly, this technology contains sensors which help ensure clotting has occurred before removal of tissue.

Iain added: "We hope the knowledge that we bring, combined with the latest technologies and techniques, will help minimise the fears some owners have about getting their dogs neutered."

Laparoscopic spays start from £350.

Paws for thought and protect your pets this Christmas

We are warning pet owners to be aware of household hazards which could affect your animals at Christmas in a bid to avoid an emergency trip to surgery.

The festive period can present a number of potential issues for pets, as homes are decorated and a range of food and drink is often accessible.

Our Wootton clinical director Lisa Bond said: "Among the items which present risks to pets at Christmas are ribbons on presents, tinsel, sharp tree needles, low-lying fairy lights, chestnuts and chocolates.

"Drink, too, can be dangerous and a traditional Christmas favourite, Baileys Irish Cream, can prove particularly dispiriting for animals.

"Christmas and the associated festivities can present a bit of a minefield for pet owners. For example, dogs will drink most forms of alcohol left in glasses at Christmas parties, so people need to be wary of leaving glasses where their animals can get them."

The signs of ethanol intoxication are similar to those in humans – vomiting, depression, a lack of co-ordination, disorientation and drowsiness. Dogs in these conditions need warmth, rehydration and immediate nursing care.

Other festive items which could cause harm to animals include plants such as mistletoe, poinsettia, holly and ivy which can all cause upset stomachs, while lilies can be very harmful to cats.

Other food items which should be on pet owners' radars include

grapes, raisins, currants and sultanas, which can cause kidney failure in dogs and cats, along with macadamia nuts, onions and mouldy foods such as walnuts, bread and cheese, which can all be harmful.

Lisa added: "In terms of household hazards, while tinsel and wrapping paper might be tempting for your pet to play with, you must make sure they don't eat it."



Talented pupils' art gracing walls of refurbished Wootton

The work of some talented young artists is now gracing the walls of our newly-refurbished surgery.

Earlier this year, we invested £215,000 in a rebranding and major expansion project, which included the transformation of our Wootton Fields surgery.

As part of this, we enlisted the help of local pupils to help us celebrate the completion of the work.

Youngsters were tasked with creating animal-themed art, which our surgery visitors can enjoy!

The winning entries were from Caroline Chisholm School and Hardingstone Academy.

It was difficult to choose the final art pieces as so many talented youngsters rose to the challenge and there was an abundance of brilliant entries to choose from!

But there had to be winners and we hope our visitors enjoy looking at the artwork as much as we enjoyed choosing the pieces which are now gracing the walls of the surgery.

They look wonderful and we would like to thank all those youngsters who worked so hard on their amazing pieces.



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