

# BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



24 Donovan Street, Blockhouse Bay  
Phone: 626 3456  
Fax: 627 1073  
E-mail: [vets@bhbvets.co.nz](mailto:vets@bhbvets.co.nz)  
[www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz](http://www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz)

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Dear Client,

I have never been great at keeping track of the years and so gave myself a shock when I realised we are up to our 7th annual photo competition.

It has got bigger every year and this year we had a huge number of entrants. I am not sure if people are getting better at taking photo's or the cameras are getting better but either way the quality was outstanding.

I would like to thank all of you who sent in a picture of your furry family member. I have put some of the photo's up on the web site. Sorry if your ones didn't make it but as I say we had a lot of entries.

If you have received this newsletter in paper form and would like to see it in colour via e-mail then send us your e-mail address.

We have heard of an outbreak of Parvovirus in West Auckland so make sure your dogs vaccinations are up to date.

Look forward to seeing you soon

Lance, Jacqueline, Geoff & the Team



"Cleo's Bar" taken by Doreen Nutall.

## 7th Annual Pet Photo Competition Winner



The winner this year was Tank & Tess in full on play taken by Susanna Day.

Susanna will receive a years supply of ADVOCATE for her dog Tess to keep her free of Fleas and Worms.



Runner up this year is Stig, taken at Cornwallis Wharf by Delwyn Prosser.

Stig will receive a box of Advocate kindly donated by Bayer. To see more entrants check out the Gallery page of the web site. [www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz](http://www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz)

## Keeping your pet safe under Anaesthetic.

Many of you will have had your pet under anaesthetic and will have no doubt been worried about something happening to your precious family member. The good news is the risk of something going wrong under anaesthetic is very, very small and generally much less than most people think.

However small the risk it is important that we do everything to minimise the risks and potential side effects of an anaesthetic.

We do this in a number of ways.

**1** We always **check the patient over** to make sure it is in a fit state for anaesthetic.

**2** In older or sick patients we perform **pre-anaesthetic blood tests** to check the patient can cope with the anaesthetic. This is especially important with kidney function.

**3 Intravenous fluids**– In many patients we will give intravenous fluid during surgery to maintain blood pressure and hydration and keep those all-important kidneys flushed through.

**4 Monitoring**– During anaesthetic and on recovery a veterinary nurse will monitor the vital signs of the pet, detecting any problems early.

**5 The best drugs**– Over the years anaesthetics have greatly improved. We strive to always use the latest and best anaesthetics available.

**6 Experienced surgeons**– It is well recognised that the shorter time on the operating table the better for the patient. By using only experienced surgeons your pet is generally under anaesthetic for a shorter time.

I hope next time your pet needs surgery you can be assured that we will do everything to make it as safe and smooth as possible.

Also keep in mind that just because someone will do a job cheaper does not mean it will be done to the same standard.



## Looking for a home.



Can you help this beautiful cat find a new home. He is currently being fostered for the SPCA but is looking for a permanent home.

He is male, neutered and vaccinated and about three years old. He is also very friendly. For further details contact the clinic.

## Puppy Classes Available at the Clinic

Get your puppy off to the right start. Learn about how to train your puppy while it develops important socialisation skills.



Phone Sindy on 09 8373909 or 027 2932894

Or get more information at  
[www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz](http://www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz)





# CASES OF THE MONTH

## Bernie gets to keep leg.

Bernie is a nine year old male Saint Bernard who started limping and his owners brought him in as they were concerned he could have arthritis developing. On examination we noted a painful swollen area just below his left elbow.

Bernie was sedated and x-rays taken of the leg. For an older, large breed dog his joints actually were very good but the bad news was the area of swelling showed the classic signs of a bone tumour.

Bernie's owners were devastated as they were not expecting such a serious life threatening problem. Unfortunately this is a relatively common thing to occur in large breed dogs such as Saint Bernards.

Bernie's owners wanted to try anything to save him, so we arranged a referral to see an orthopaedic specialist. One option would be to amputate the leg but being such a large dog Bernie would probably struggle to get around. It was decided instead to perform a leg sparing operation. The surgery involved removing the section of bone that the tumour was in. Putting a metal plate across the gap to support the bone and filling the gap with bone grafts from other areas of the body.

The surgery went very well and Bernie is now walking pain free again. Ultimately there is a high chance that the cancer may spread to the rest of the body but in the mean time Bernie is pain free and still has the use of his leg. Bernie and his owners are very happy.

It is important that old lame dogs are not simply assumed to have arthritis as bone tumours, although less common, do occur especially in large breed dogs. If intervention is wanted then it is best to catch it early to improve the prognosis.



## Observant owners save Polly's life.



Polly is a twelve year old female cat who is much loved by her owners. One day when brushing her they noticed a small hard lump under one of her nipples. Being concerned owners they brought her straight into the vet clinic. Now as our pets get older they are inclined to develop lumps and bumps. Some are nothing to worry about while others can be life threatening cancers.

Any growth around the mammary tissue is of greater concern as these can be very nasty tumours.

In Polly's case it was decided that the lump should be removed and sent to the laboratory for histopathology. Although the lump was quite small and could have been removed with a small incision, it was elected to remove the entire mammary gland.

The entire piece of tissue was then sent to the lab for analysis. This serves two purposes one to identify what the lump is and the other to see if we have completely removed it.

It turned out that this small lump was an aggressive mammary cancer but the good news is by taking the entire gland we had good margins around the tumour so it is highly likely that the surgery will be curative. Polly was lucky her owners acted so quickly as these tumours can spread making removal much more difficult.

## My Christmas Surprise

Since Twisty passed away last Christmas our house has been catless. A house never feels quite right without a cat but before you know it a year had passed in our house without one.

As the owner of a vet clinic I have never needed to buy a cat, as there was always one to rescue. In fact the hard part is avoiding rescuing them all. Over the years our nurses have hand reared many orphaned or abandoned kittens and I tend not to take too much notice for fear I will get bonded with them. So this December when Fiona, our head nurse, saved an abandoned day old kitten and bottle-fed it I never twigged that something was afoot. She brought it to work each day and I watched as it grew and developed from a small furry blob into a kitten with a personality.

Jacqueline and Fiona had decided that this would be my new cat but I still didn't twig even when I got home on Christmas Eve to find this kitten running around my kitchen.

Jacqueline informed me this was my Christmas present. I was hoping for a new mountain bike but the more I played with my new kitten the more I realised it was a good idea.

I decided to call my kitten Radish. My mother was absolutely appalled at this name which made me even more sure of my choice of name.



I haven't had a kitten in the house for many years and I forgot how completely mad they are. Radish would charge around the house like an energiser bunny on steroids attacking curtains, cushions, my feet and poor Breeze's tail. When the batteries ran low however she would climb up on my chest and snuggle under my chin and fall asleep. The bond was created and I knew she would be a great family addition. Radish is too young to write yet but I am sure she will have something to say in future newsletters.

Regards Lance and Radish

## The Power of Instinct

As mentioned above I received a kitten for Christmas. The kitten was bottle fed and had no influence from litter mates or a mother. She knows how to go to toilet in a litter tray without training, she will play with toys in a typical hunting manner and is already stalking flies and showing an interest in birds. These behaviours are not learnt but hard wired into the kittens brain.

I think the same is true with dogs. I see many breeds of dogs every day and the behaviours they display are often very similar amongst that breed.

It frustrates me then when I hear in the media it is not the dogs fault for being aggressive but the owners who have created such a dog. In some cases this is correct but I know many examples of great clients who have done everything right but their sweet little puppy has grown up wanting to attack any dog it sees. If this aggression gets misdirected at a child, we then get some of the stories of late in the papers of children being badly mauled.

You could argue that it is not the dog's fault for being aggressive as we selective bred them for their aggression. I think in some ways it is like saying it is not a Lion's fault for eating a Gazelle. Can fighting breeds like Pit Bulls make great family pets? Yes they can and I know of many. My point is their instinctive behaviour is more towards aggression and simply not encouraging it may not be enough to prevent it.

I don't want to see a ban on certain breeds, as I was in the UK when this was done and it was very complicated and did not work well. What I would like is for people to think very carefully about what sort of dog they want as a family member before getting one.

All breeds of dogs have the potential to be aggressive but certain breeds have been selectively bred for fighting and have instinctive behaviour for aggression. Why would anyone choose a dog with a greater chance of aggressive behaviour?

