

BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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SPRING 2013

Dear Client,

Somewhat to my family and friends amazement I decided to take part in Dry July which involves not drinking alcohol for a month to raise money for cancer treatments. I struggled for a while as to whether to email clients requesting donations. In the end I figured it was very easy to ignore an email and many clients I would consider friends anyway. I must say you guys really came to the party donating over \$1100 to the charity. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your generosity.

It has got me thinking though of the power of numbers. I would like to raise some money for Bird Rescue who do an amazing job in our local community. Check them out on page two.

Don't forget Spring means get that flea treatment on NOW.

Look forward to seeing you soon

Lance, Jacqueline, Geoff & the Team

THE TEAM

VETS: Lance Eastman, Jacqueline Eastman, Geoff Neal & Jess Paton.
NURSES: Fiona Hammond, Amber Corney, Kirsty Pomeroy
RECEPTIONISTS: Margaret Galbraith & Vanessa Harrison
ASSISTANT: Debbie Officer

PRACTICE HOURS- All consults are via appointment only.

Monday to Friday 8.00am to 7.00pm
Saturday 8.30am to 2.00pm

Comfortis now available for Cats

Comfortis is a tablet given once monthly for fleas.

It has been available for several years for dogs and has grown in popularity in that time.

The product is now available for use in cats.

Now some of you are thinking "I can't give my cat tablets that is why I use the pour on treatments like Advantage, Frontline and Revolution." That is fine and these are good products to use, however, some clients have no problem giving tablets but don't like applying the liquid to the back of the neck especially if small children want to pat the cat.

At least now you have the option of tablet or topical for both dogs and cats.

Spring is here so next time you are in stocking up with flea treatments ask us whether Comfortis might be an option for you.





Lyn McDonald & Berend Westera at work.

Saving our precious New Zealand birds.

It is not uncommon for members of the public to come across sick or injured birds and bring them into clinics like ours. Have you ever wondered what happens to these birds?

On arrival we will examine the birds and try to assess how serious their injuries are. In some cases euthanasia is sadly the only humane option but in many cases the birds can be saved, rehabilitated and returned to the wild. I would love to say that is what we do at Blockhouse Bay Vets, but we are simply not set up to do this. We are however exceptionally lucky to have an excellent facility in Green Bay called Bird Rescue. We are also blessed to have hard working people like Lyn McDonald and many volunteers to help run the facility.

The bird hospital regularly sees Korora (Little blue penguin), Kereru (NZ Pigeon), Ruru (Morepork), Tauhou (Silvereye), Karuhiruhi (Pied Shag) along with ducks and many lost caged birds. On my last visit there they were treating an Albatross that was very underweight and was found on the beach in Titirangi.

These native birds I believe are a national treasure and saving these birds is all done on charitable donations.

Earlier in the year we started raising some money to support bird rescue and were doing well with our charity box on the counter when to our disbelief someone ran into the clinic, grabbed the box and ran. The box was actually chained to the counter but the chain broke and the money was gone. Lyn tells me they need to raise some money for new hospital cages for the birds and I would, with your help, like to try and help. We have learned our lesson this time and will not leave more than a few coins in the charity box at any one time.

If everyone who came into the clinic over the next three months donated \$1 we could raise over \$2000 to support the important work that Bird Rescue does.

If you want to know more about Bird Rescue check out www.birdrescue.org.nz



Milly crosses the Harbour Bridge!!

We get cats brought in almost on a daily basis, from people who want us to check and see if this stray has a microchip. On some occasions the cat belongs to their next door neighbour and they simply take it back to where it came from.

Last month however we had such a cat brought in, found living around a house in Blockhouse Bay. The cat was micro-chipped so we were able to track down the owner.

To our surprise the owner lived on the North Shore. We thought maybe they had moved and not updated their details but actually they had never moved and the cat had been missing for three months. Initially Milly's owner thought we were doing a prank call but when she realised we really did have her cat she was ecstatic and quickly drove to our clinic to get Milly.

Now I don't think Milly could have walked that far especially as she would have had to get across the harbour bridge. She probably climbed into a vehicle by mistake.

As vets we love micro-chipped cats as we feel like Santa Claus when we ring an owner and tell them we have their cat fit and well at our clinic.

Is your cat micro-chipped? Are you 100% sure nothing could ever happen to it for the next ten to twenty years? Next time you are in ask us about micro-chipping your cat. We can do it at a routine vaccination.





CASES OF THE MONTH

Funny walk no laughing matter



Spike is a ten year old male tabby cat who's owner had noticed him walking very strangely. Spike was walking with his hocks (ankles to us) on the ground. His owners were concerned Spike may have had an accident. When I examined Spike I recognised this characteristic walk and was very suspicious of diabetes. Sure enough Spike had been drinking a lot more water than normal and after some blood test diabetes was confirmed.

Diabetes is surprisingly common in cats and like humans seems to be becoming more common. The good news is with treatment they can do very well.

Spike's owners are now giving him insulin injections morning and night and have him on a special diet. Spike is doing much better but it may take some time for him to walk normally again.

Many of us who have had cats before are familiar with cats getting kidney failure as they get older and drinking more water. It is not a good idea however to assume that drinking a lot means kidney failure as many of these cats will have diabetes which is very treatable.

Zac Struggles to pee stone



Zac is a four year old male Dalmatian who came to the clinic because his owner had seen him passing pink urine.

Sure enough Zac had blood in his urine. There are quite a few possible causes for blood in the urine, one of these are bladder stones. A stone wouldn't necessarily be at the top of my list of differentials but Zac had one thing going against him. He was a Dalmatian. Now Dalmatians are well known for forming

bladder stones, specifically Urate stones. Not all Dalmatians are affected but some have a genetic defect which affects their ability to metabolise Uric acid.

Sure enough we x-rayed Zac and could see one large stone in his bladder. This was removed via surgery and sent to the lab for analysis. It was no surprise but the stone was a Urate stone.

Zac recovered well from surgery and the aim now is to create a diet that is low in purine yielding foods. Some foods like liver and other organ meat are very high and some food like eggs and most fruit and vegetables are very low.



The stone removed from Zac's bladder.

Head stuck in jar



I got a phone call a few weeks ago asking for emergency assistance for a cat with a jar stuck on its head.

I rushed out to the house to see poor little Kitty a 9 month old female black and white cat with a peanut butter jar stuck on her head.

Kitty's owners arms were all scratched and bleeding from trying to remove the jar.

Luckily it was a plastic jar and I managed to cut the jar off of Kitty's head.

Now you may think this is unusual but it is not the first time I have seen this. I would have loved to have got a photo but am not sure Kitty or her owner would have appreciated this. Good old Google though found multiple images of cats with their heads, stuck in jars.

Something to think about when putting out the recycling.

Radish's Column- The ultimate catch!

Last time I wrote my column I said how much I wanted to catch my first bird regardless of what Gareth Morgan thinks. The big problem I have is when I see a bird I stalk it across the garden trying not to jangle my stupid bells hanging on my collar then when I get close enough, I pounce like a lion. I am not sure what I am doing wrong but as I pounce the bird simply flies away. I can't fly which is grossly unfair.



Then one day I couldn't believe it when I saw these three giant birds just walking around the house. They didn't seem to fly but I am pretty sure they were birds.

I stalked them across the garden and was about to make my move when I started to have second thoughts. These birds didn't look like moving let alone flying, in fact they started to stare at me, there were three of them and they looked mean. I was outnumbered.

Bugger it! I ran back through the cat flap had a bite to eat from my bowl and then slept the rest of the day away. I shall wait till they come out with a smaller version but I will be back.

Radish



Stick injuries in dogs-what is the risk?

I was listening to talk back radio the other day and they were talking about the risk of dogs playing with sticks. The radio presenter suggested that the risk was minimal and we were all getting a bit soft and overly cautious. It was quite clear from the way he talked he didn't understand how these injuries occur so thought I would try to explain it.



Typical stick related wound to throat.

Chewing on a stick is very unlikely to cause serious injury, the problem arises when we throw them. The stick tends to go end over end in the air and may land on one end of the stick. If the stick falls to the ground and is picked up by the dog no problem. However if the dog arrives at the stick as it hits the ground one end is stuck in the ground the other is impaled down the dogs throat which can be potentially fatal. This is not common but we would treat a couple of dogs a year with this type of injury.

It is your choice whether you throw sticks for your dog but ideally the stick should have landed before your dog gets to it.



Have you heard of Phubbing? Are you guilty of Phubbing?



I must admit I have only just learnt what Phubbing is. It is actually defined as the act of snubbing someone in a social setting by looking at your phone instead of paying attention.

Most of our clients are great if their phone goes off in a consult, they will either quickly turn it off or if they have to answer it, they will tell the caller they are at the vets and will ring back shortly.

Some clients however are unbelievable, they will answer the call then continue to talk for ten to fifteen minutes in the consult room. I have often resorted to seeing another client and returning back later. Sometimes they are still on the phone!

As vets we appreciate you are paying for our time and would never answer our mobiles in a consultation. I think we should make the clinic a Phubbing free zone. What

do you think? Feel free to offer you opinion on our comments page after the newsletter on our web site.