

BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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Autumn 2014

Dear Client,

Many of you will have met Margaret our morning receptionist who has been with our clinic for many years. I knew Margaret before she started at the clinic and one of my first tasks after buying the clinic was to lure Margaret away from another clinic to come and work for us.

She has been a huge asset to me ever since but sadly all good things come to an end. Margaret has decided it is time to retire. She hopes to spend some time travelling with her husband Ken.

I am sure we will still see Margaret as Breeze loves being taken to Kakamatua by her Auntie Margaret and her boxer Maya. If you have been to the clinic in the last few months you may have noticed we have been very busy. Don't forget to make an appointment as this really helps the smooth running of the clinic. Also if you want to see a specific vet don't forget to ask at the time you make your appointment.

Look forward to seeing you soon

Lance, Jacqueline, Geoff, Jess & the Team



Can you guess what Ollie and Poppy have been up to while their owner was out?

THE TEAM

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

PRACTICE HOURS

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

9th Annual Pet Photo Competition Winner



The winning photo this year is Roxy in her Christmas hat taken by Anita Rodger. Roxy wins a years supply of ADVOCATE kindly donated by Bayer. This year was the hardest yet to decide on a winner with many photo's being great for different reasons. This one caught my eye for the very narrow depth of field, with the head sharp in focus and everything else in the background blurred.

That and the fact the dog is so cute.

I would also like to offer a consolation prize to Christine Fletcher for this scene she captured of Ollie and Poppy when she got home. Maybe not technically the best photo but it captures what the dogs have been up to brilliantly.

Christine will receive a box of Advocate to treat one of these naughty dogs.

For more entrants in the photo competition check out the gallery page of the web site.

Tonga trip for Kirsty and Geoff

At the beginning of December 2013, Blockhouse Bay Vet Nurse Kirsty and I headed to Tonga as part of a Unitec/SPAW charity exercise to look after the pets and livestock in Tonga. Tonga has no full-time veterinary service but this deficit is helped out by charity organisations including South Pacific Animal Welfare (SPAW), a New Zealand based animal charity (see www.spaw.org.nz for more information on the good work SPAW does for animals in the Pacific).



For this trip a group of ten Unitec vet nursing students (inc Kirsty), two vet nurses from Unitec, and three vets (inc me) left for the main island of Tongatapu in the Kingdom of Tonga to act as the veterinary service there for a week.

Spending a week on a tropical island with 14 women might be some peoples idea of a holiday (or hell!!) but this trip was all about work. We saw 277 individual animals for the week and performed operations on 117 of them. We also dispensed medications/treatments for over 60 animals that we didn't see directly (but which we talked to the owners about or were shown videos of - got to love cell phone cameras). That's over 55 animals seen and over 20 operations per day through a clinic smaller than Blockhouse Bay Vets. Add to this there are no gas anaesthetic machines, x-ray facilities, blood machines, drip pumps, hospital cages, surgical monitoring devices, or laboratory services, and you are working in 32-36°C heat and 90+% humidity with no air conditioning.

The Unitec student nurses worked flat out the whole week they were there on the island and got great nursing experience to help them with their future careers. The numbers of animals seen and lack of automated machines meant that the nurses were reliant on their examination, observation and clinical skills to allow, in some cases, complex medical and surgical cases to be managed and treated successfully. Kirsty and the other nursing students did exceptionally well and were an absolute asset to have with us on the trip.

At the end of the week, after a final pack up and stock take, the girls could look back on what they achieved in Tonga that week. Injured animals treated, cats and dogs spayed and neutered helping to control the island animal population, lots of children shown how to care for their pets, livestock wormed and treated and over 300 animals receiving treatment or medication that they would not have got if we hadn't been there.

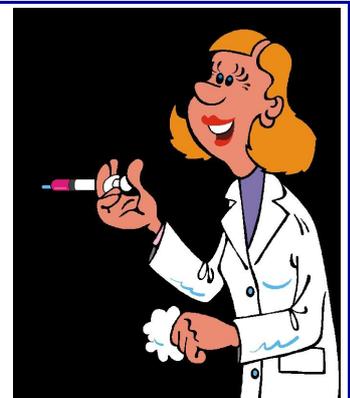
Sexism still alive and well.

Many years ago veterinary medicine was a male only profession. By the time I did my studies in the late 80s early 90s half the students were female. Since then it has become a largely female dominated profession with some years having 80% or more female graduates.

Given we are all used to female vets it still surprises me that many people will assume that because a female was examining their pet they must have been a nurse and not a qualified vet. We have two female vets working at the practice, Jess who is a young vet and Jacqueline who is well, not so young. Even with over twenty years experience some clients will assume Jacqueline is a nurse even after she has examined and treated their pet!

Now before you ladies jump up and down and talk about sexist males, it can often be women who also make these judgements.

It would be nice to think in 2014 that we are past the man = doctor, woman = nurse.





CASES OF THE MONTH

Sausage has huge kidney removed.

Sausage is male kitten who had surgery very recently at the clinic. He came to see the vet with a very enlarged abdomen. Sausage was still eating and drinking and going to the toilet but his abdomen was absolutely huge. X-rays showed Sausage had a huge kidney taking up his entire abdomen.

Blood tests showed he still had normal kidney function so we assumed his other kidney must still be working ok.

Sausage was taken into surgery to have his abnormal kidney removed. This turned out to be quite challenging as his ureter (the tube from your kidney to your bladder) for his good kidney was stuck to the side of his bad kidney. The ureter had to be carefully dissected off the bad kidney as damage to this pipe would mean Sausage could never urinate.

Sausage is one tough kitten and recovered well after his major surgery. I was worried the first night as he hadn't urinated which could mean his ureter was damaged. The next morning though he had gone ok which was a great relief.

The kidney that was removed was grossly abnormal and was most likely caused by a congenital problem.

It is early days for Sausage as he only went home yesterday but assuming his remaining kidney works well and stays healthy there is no reason he shouldn't have a normal life expectancy.



Vaccines to treat itchy skin.

Buddy is a typical friendly seven year old lab who loves his food.

All was well with Buddy for the first few years until he started chewing his feet. He was given treatments which helped but as soon as the treatments stopped his feet would flare up again.

The most likely cause for Buddy's itchy feet was an allergy. For a while he was put on a special food to see if it was a dietary allergy. This did not solve his problem.

As food was eliminated as a cause, that left us with a diagnosis of Atopy.

Atopy is a condition caused by allergies to environmental causes such as grasses.

Often we will treat the symptoms to reduce the dogs itch but the condition always reoccurs as the cause is still present.

Buddies owners were very motivated to solve his problem so we referred him to see a dermatologist. Blood tests were taken to try to identify the allergens causing Buddy's itchy skin. A vaccine was developed from these allergens to desensitise his system.

Buddy now has an injection of his special vaccine every month. It is a slow process but nearly one year later his skin is much better and both Buddy and his owners are delighted with the results.



Breeze's Column– Surf Lifesaving dog to the rescue.

I love summer as although I enjoy my job at the clinic as public relations dog my real passion is surf lifesaving dog.

My Mum takes me out to Piha to help patrol the beaches for people who can't swim as well as me. I am not allowed in the surf boats and I am not even allowed on the beach! I do however sit up on the patrol deck all day and watch out to sea with the other lifeguards looking for people in trouble.

To be honest I can't really tell which ones are in trouble but my fellow lifeguards seem to know and every now and then will run down the beach, jump in their boat and pull some swimmer out of the water.

I have been filmed several times by my friends who film Piha Rescue but for some reason I never make the TV. I think it is doggie discrimination.

I love my days at Piha, especially helping the lifeguards out eating any lunch they can't manage. My only concern is Mum puts me in lifeguard outfits that make me feel a bit stupid. My Dad is also unimpressed especially as this one has Australia written on the back.

Next time you are at Piha look out for me and don't forget to swim between the flags.

Breeze



Looking after our pets teeth.

We all know the importance of looking after our own teeth but often our pets teeth get overlooked. We often don't even see our pets teeth as many dogs are not keen on us looking and we often never think to try.

The photo of the dogs teeth on the right with tartar and recessed, inflamed gums is sadly a very common site for us at the clinic.

This dog clearly needs dentistry with some ultrasonic scaling and polishing but also will require some extractions.

Sadly for this dog even after this treatment the mouth will never be like the top photo and will get a build up of tartar sooner due to the recession of the gum margins allowing food to pocket between the teeth and gums.

Like all things the take home message is prevention.

This can involve diet, dental chews, manual brushing and veterinary dentistry if required.

Next time your pet is in for it's annual health check ask the vet what you can do to look after your pets teeth.



Healthy teeth.



Severe tartar and gum disease.

SPECIAL OFFER

20% OFF the cost of Dentistry

You must mention this add when booking your pets dental

Offer expires 31st May 2014

Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

