

BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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Dear Client,

Hopefully by the time you read this it will be Spring rather than Winter and the wet, cold days will be behind us.

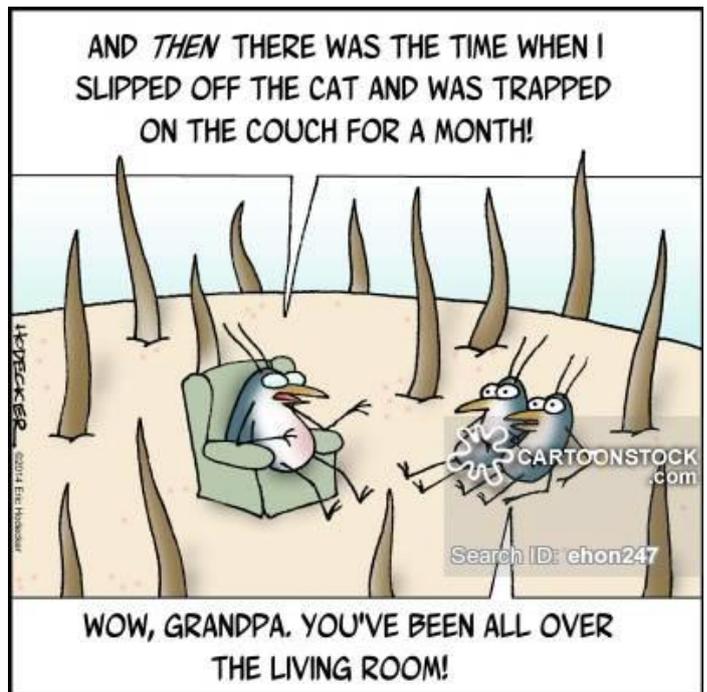
Thank you to everyone who said they didn't want me to stop writing newsletters and actually enjoyed reading them. I was surprised that many didn't actually know who wrote them. I would like to say it is a joint effort but sadly I end up writing 95% of articles with the occasional report from Geoff's Tonga Charity work or one of Jacqueline's sporting adventures. I even help Breeze and Radish with their columns.

You may also note that I have started writing a column for the new Blockhouse Bay Beacon Newsletter. Not sure where I will get the time but will try to keep thinking up articles to educate and amuse.

This Winter has seen several of our staff head to the northern hemisphere to travel including Fiona and Geoff (Not together, don't want to start a scandal) and as I am writing this our young nurse Kirsty is on a six week trip around Europe. It does bring back fond memories of my backpacker days. I just hope with all the problems up there she returns home safely.

From the Editor

Lance Eastman



FLEA WARNING

**They are coming your way.
Get your ammunition now.**



We have a wide range of products to prevent that flea infestation at your place.

We have topical treatments, tablets and collars, as well as flea bombs for the house.

Come in and talk to our friendly knowledgeable staff about the best option for your pets.

Do not wait until you see fleas treat NOW.



Compulsory microchipping of cats – a good idea?

I was listening to talk back radio the other day and they were discussing Wellington council making it compulsory to microchip cats. Now I know listening to talk back radio makes me officially old and very uncool but I must admit doing it some times.

One thing about talk back is people ring up and offer opinions on subjects they know absolutely nothing about with absurd suggestions. This day I was listening was no different.

It was suggested that cat rangers would be patrolling the streets catching cats, grabbing poor pussy from the front garden. Have you ever tried to catch a cat outside? Not easy to catch an animal that can scale any fence, climb a tree or run over the roof of a house.

No, I think you can rest assured cat rangers will not be patrolling our streets any time soon.

I do think humane traps will be used in reserves, especially with sensitive native bird life to catch cats in these areas. If the cat is microchipped it will be returned to it's owner, if it is not it will be deemed stray or feral and most likely euthanased.

One comment made on the radio is it is easy to tell the difference between a much loved pet and a stray. Believe me it is not. Your sweet friendly cat that sleeps on the children's bed can turn very aggressive and nasty when trapped in a cage. Deciding a cats fate on how friendly it is, is rather risky. One thing I am not sure about is what happens when your cat is trapped and returned to you. Probably a warning about how cats kill native birds. What happens when it does it again and again? Will the council insist it remains an inside cat? Will they threaten euthanasia if caught again?

So is compulsory microchipping of cats a good idea? In theory it sound like a good idea. The microchips will differentiate family pets from strays and feral cats. I personally believe that every cat in New Zealand should have an owner who cares for it and not have feral populations of cats who breed and live wild.

I do have concerns with the councils proposal though. One, I really am not a fan of governments telling us what to do in ever small aspect of our life. Secondly, I think compliance on this issue will be very poor. This could mean many family pets could potentially be euthanased for not having a microchip.

I am a cat lover and have pretty much lived in a house with a cat my entire life. These cats have had the freedom to come and go as they please and I must admit I like that idea. I am pretty sure many of them have caught birds and although I am not happy about that, have to accept it as part of being a cat lover.

I have said many times that I think microchipping cats is a good idea. Do I think Wellington councils idea will work? I have my doubts. I do hope the effects of compulsory microchipping of cats on the local bird life and the local cats is fully assessed before other councils decide to follow suit.



Amazing Cat Facts

- Cats have over 20 muscles that control their ears.
- Cats sleep 70% of their lives
- Cats can't taste sweetness
- Owning a cat can reduce the risk of stroke and heart attack by a third.
- Isaac Newton is credited with inventing the cat door.
- A house cat is faster than Usain Bolt.
- A cat's nose is ridged with a unique pattern, just like a human fingerprint.
- There are cats who have survived falls from over 32 stories (320 meters) onto concrete.
- A cat has been mayor of Talkeetna, Alaska, for 15 years. His name is Stubbs.





CASES OF THE MONTH

Izzie eats Nerf bullets and erasers.

Izzie is a five year old female cat who has an unusual habit. She likes to eat inedible objects. Now if you said Izzie was a dog I would say that is not that uncommon but most cats are much more fussy about what they will swallow.

Izzie came into the clinic looking rather sorry for herself, she had vomited several times and had a sore abdomen.

Her owners were aware of her eating habits and thought she may have eaten an eraser and Nerf bullets (soft toy bullets).

It was decided to x-ray Izzie and see if we could see these items in her abdomen. Sure enough these items showed up very well on the x-ray. Many of the pieces were in the large bowel and had clearly managed to negotiate the intestinal tract and would soon be passed out. There was however quite a lot of material in the stomach that hadn't gone anywhere.

The question was would this material pass through or remain in the stomach?

It was decided to put Izzie on an intravenous fluid drip to make sure she was well hydrated and see if the offending objects would travel on through.

Izzie was re-xrayed the following day to see if things were moving on. Unfortunately the stomach looked exactly the same. It was decided the best option would be to surgically remove the items from the stomach.

Izzie was taken into theatre and administered a general anaesthetic. Her abdomen was opened up and her digestive tract was carefully examined from one end to the other to make sure no pieces were stuck anywhere.

Her stomach was then opened up and the pieces of toys and erasers were removed.

This is a tricky procedure as it is imperative that no stomach contents leak out into the abdomen. The stomach must then be carefully closed to make sure it has no leaks.

Izzie made a dramatic improvement and went home the following day eating normally.

Lets hope Izzie doesn't decide to do this again!



Izzie recovering after surgery



The white areas in the abdomen show the erasers in the stomach and bowel.

Time Management

One of the benefits I believe our clinic has is we have consultations available from 8.00am to 6.45pm Monday to Friday. I don't know any other clinic that offers this. We run by appointments and do our very best to make sure everyone gets seen who needs to be seen and are not kept waiting.

The reality with people working and having busy lives is many people want the same time slot. Please understand that this is never going to be possible.

If you double book appointments nobody is happy.

Anger management:

When angry with someone, it helps to sit down and think about the problem...



Radish– how to servant surf.

Lately my servants have suggested to me that I am getting fat and need to go on a diet. I would like to make it clear that I strongly disagree and think it is just a bit of Winter weight.

So my fellow feline friends what do you do when your servants decide to feed you less and you are still hungry?

Of course you could go hunting to supplement your diet. The problem with this is I am too fat to catch anything. Well too lazy anyway.

There is a much easier way to get extra food for very little effort. I call it servant surfing. You see every house comes with a set of servants. Some of these servants already have cats to look after but this is the real beauty, some of them are unemployed. They have a big house and no cats to serve. What do they do all day?

My advice is find yourself an unemployed servant and go introduce yourself. Start with the lost starving cat look. You may need to suck in your stomach a bit, but to be honest most don't seem to notice.

You may need a few visits to truly sell the lost cat thing but before you know it, out comes a bowl of food.

The important part here is to eat it like you haven't eaten in days. They cannot know that you only had breakfast an hour ago or the whole thing won't work.

Next smooch around your new second servants legs for awhile as if you are their new best friend. You now have an extra meal when ever you need one.

Don't think you can only do this once. You can have as many extra servants as you are capable of winning over.

The great part is your real servants are so thick they can't work it out. "She is not eating any of this diet food but is still getting fatter, how is that possible?"

Keep on purring –Radish



Link between Osteo-arthritis and being over weight.

I know what you're thinking. That is hardly a revelation. If you are heavy then the strain on your joints will cause more damage and arthritis will develop. That is what I have been telling my clients for the last 25 years. Nobody actually listens but that is what I have been saying.

I recently went to a conference where this subject was discussed. Did you know that over weight people have more osteo-arthritis in their hands than thinner people. How can this be? Surely they don't walk on their hands.

The reason is that fat actually produces compounds called adipokines which actually inhibit chondrocyte growth. Now chondrocytes are what produces and maintains our cartilage in our joints and our pets joints.

A study showed that a 10% reduction in weight was more beneficial than being on anti-inflammatory arthritis medications.

Have a think about that. You could give your dog expensive drugs or get him or her to lose weight for nothing.

I must admit I know how vitally important it is that dogs and cats are not over weight but also find trying to get them to lose weight an incredibly frustrating experience. All of the pets owners must be highly motivated to achieve this or it simply doesn't work.

If however you feel you are highly motivated to get your pet to lose weight to increase their chances of a long, pain free life then we are always here to help with a diet and weight loss plan.

