

BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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Dear Client,

I always feel sad writing the winter newsletter as it means the good weather of summer is behind us and the cold, wet, dark days are ahead. This year feels even worse as the coughs and colds seem to have already done the rounds with many of the staff including myself being sick. Maybe we have got it out of the way early this year and the winter will be bug free.

A lot of the staff are getting some reprieve with trips to warmer climates. Geoff is doing some more of his vet charity work in the Pacific Islands. I do admire him going on holiday and doing more work instead of recreation. Geoff tells me it is not a holiday and he actually comes back to Blockhouse Bay vets for a rest.

I think a week on a tropical island must be a holiday even if you are working.

Jacqueline is heading back to Scotland to see her folks. Scotland can actually be quite pleasant during their summer. She tries to tell me this is not a holiday but a family obligation but I am not buying that one either.

Myself I am off to Whistler for a few weeks with eight friends for a mountain biking holiday. This is definitely a holiday and I will not be doing any work. For those of you who get nervous when I do these trips I promise to be careful (ish).

Don't worry though we are all doing these things at separate times so someone will be available to treat your pets.

Looking forward to seeing you soon

Lance Eastman and all the team.



Flea product Confused by all the options?



Are you confused by all the options for flea control in your pet?

Should you use a topical, a tablet or a collar?

What about ones that do worms, mites or ticks?

The number of different products on the market can make an informed decision difficult.

Products vary in effectiveness, cost and ease of treatment.

The good news is our staff are trained in these products and can work out the best option for your pet.

Come in and have a chat with one of our friendly staff.

One important rule though. Treat your pets all year round, do not stop in the winter.



Antibiotic resistance-a very scary problem.

Not many things scare me. I don't mind flying, sharks don't worry me and terrorist bombings won't stop me going on holiday. I figure when your time is up, your time is up. If your going to go out maybe a dramatic way is the way to do it. I do have some fears though and one of them is antibiotic resistance. I worry that one day when I finally have to get a new knee, I will get a post op infection and instead of a course of tablets to clear it up, I end up with resistant bacteria that eats my flesh away and possibly kills me. I think I would take being eaten by a shark over being eaten by bacteria any day.



When I was a young vet I was aware of antibiotic resistance but it never seemed to be a major problem. Today, however I see it on a regular basis. When we take a swab for bacterial culture we are not only seeing what grows, but also a sensitivity test which tells us what antibiotics will kill the bacteria. It is very frustrating and a bit scary when the bug grown is resistant to all the antibiotics tested.

It is good medicine to take cultures if possible to check if an infection is actually present and the best way to treat it. Many clients want to miss this step to save money. "Lets just give him antibiotics in case it is an infection".

A good example of this is cats urinating blood. 80% of these cats do not have an infection but we often treat with antibiotics in case it is one of the 20%.

I believe antibiotics have probably saved billions of peoples lives and a huge number of animals as well. Vets as well as doctors need to be more careful in future prescribing antibiotics and patients and pet owners need to take the advice of these medical professionals
A world were antibiotics don't work anymore is a very scary place.

Daisy found after 9 years.

As a vet I simply love microchips. They have resulted in many pets being happily reunited with their owner and probably saved many lives also.

In the news recently was the case of Daisy an Italian Greyhound who went missing after a storm in Sydney. The dog was found using the microchip and returned to her owner.

Not that unusual a story except the dog was found nine years later. Daisy was now fifteen years old.



We have certainly found some cats at the clinic that have been missing for a couple of years but I thought nine years must be some sort of record. When I wanted to find the details of this story I googled "lost dog found after nine years." To my surprise there were quite a few stories that were very similar.

Do I think Daisy was living rough for nine years? I remember watching the littlest hobo as a kid. The dog travelled around America having adventures with different families. Although a romantic notion I don't think Daisy was an Aussie littlest hobo. I think Daisy was found and illegally kept by someone for nine years. She most likely ran away again and when found this time the microchip was scanned.

I use the word illegally kept deliberately as it makes me very angry when people think it is ok to keep a pet just because they found it. Often when a pet is found it may have been living rough and in very poor condition. This does not mean the pet is neglected or unloved.

I am sure Daisy's owners were very glad to see her back after nine years but I am sure they would have loved to have received that phone call nine years earlier.

Ringo goes to new home.

One evening a kitten was brought into the clinic which had been found in the engine bay of a parked car. This is not an unusual story as we get brought in lots of lost/stray kittens.

We check them over, feed then and usual worm and flea treat them before sending them off to the SPCA.

When we checked over this little kitten we realised that it had ringworm on its face.

Ringworm is relatively common on kittens and is caused by a fungal infection and has absolutely nothing to do with worms. Although ringworm is treatable it can be spread to other animals and to people as well. It also takes about a month to clear up.

We contacted the SPCA and they thought they may have a foster home for him. These are homes where people look after animals until they are ok to be re-homed.

The little kitten was sent off to the SPCA. Later that day we got a call from the SPCA saying unfortunately they didn't have a space for him and given the ringworm, would have to be euthanised. They said we could have him back and look after him ourselves.

The nurses looked at me with their sad faces. That and the fact this kitten was seriously cute meant we had to have him back.

I made it clear we didn't need another clinic cat, but would get him fixed up and find him a home. The kitten was given the name Ringo until he found his new owner.

Ringo was made a home in the isolation ward as we didn't want him in the normal hospital ward (given the ringworm).

The nurses had to treat Ringo for a month with anti-fungal tablets. They had to keep all his food bowls and bedding separate from the normal clinic ones and practice good personal hygiene when ever he is handled. The nurses are used to this when dealing with any contagious diseases.

After a month we had all fallen for Ringo and there was talk of keeping him. Luckily a good client was looking for a new kitten so Ringo has now gone to a new home.



Ringo at his new home with his face all cleared up

Reminder about reminders.

We all lead busy lives and trying to remember the things we need to do each day can be a challenge. Remembering things like when the dog needs his vaccination or when the cat needs its next blood test can be hard.

We will often send out reminders in the post, especially for vaccinations. The world has moved on and many people don't want to receive reminders this way anymore.

We are trying to send out more information to you via email or text. If you would like to receive your reminders via email or text or both then let us know next time we see you.

One thing I hate is giving out my email address to a company then being bombarded with advertising. I hate it even more when you can't unsubscribe easily to these emails.

We won't send you junk emails and you can simply remove your email address at any time.



Breeze's column-I nearly killed my Mum!!

I know the headline "I nearly killed my Mum" sounds a bit dramatic but apparently it is true. Well according to my Mum anyway.

I will tell you the story and you can decide.

I was off to one of my special swimming holes at the Nihotupu Dam. Yes that is right I do swim in your drinking water but don't worry I am a very clean dog.

I have swam in this spot many times over the summer but today something was different. The water was running much higher and faster. I was a bit nervous but really wanted to get to my swimming hole so tried to cross the stream. Big mistake. I instantly started going down stream and despite an excellent doggy paddle stroke it was clear I was going to be washed away.

Luckily my Mum is a life guard and reached in to grab me. I was so grateful as I was getting scared. Things then got seriously weird. I thought Mum would pull me out but instead we were both getting washed down the river. My Mum then did something strange. She lay on her back and had me lying on her chest. The thing is my Mum knew something that I hadn't realised. This river goes into a water fall and in a flash we were bouncing down the rocks and crashed into the water below.

We both managed to scramble out at the bottom. I was so excited, "that was fun Mum lets do it again."

Mum didn't share my enthusiasm, in fact she looked very unhappy. She was bleeding from her arms and legs and was struggling to walk. We then had the slowest walk/hobble back to the car. I was going to mention that it was a very short swim but the look on Mum's face I decided to keep quiet and walk slowly back with her.

Mum says I nearly killed her. I actually thought it was kind of fun. What do you think?

The Breeze.



New Blood Pressure Reader.

Many people seemed surprised when I say I want to check their pets blood pressure. The first question is "How do you do that?"

We have had a blood pressure reader for many years but to be honest I hated using it so much I always got the nurses to take the blood pressure readings.

You had to put a cuff around the leg, then pump the cuff up to occlude the blood flow in the leg.

At the same time you would have to find the pulse with a special probe on a shaved patch on the leg. We would listen to the pulse via some headphones. When the cuff is inflated a pulse cannot be heard, as we release the pressure we listen for the pulse to return. When we hear the pulse again we look at the dial and record the number. This is the pets systolic blood pressure.

If this sounds fiddly remember we are trying to do this on a cat that might not want to stay still at all.

So when I was shown this new blood pressure reader and how easy it was to use I was super keen to get one.

You simply put the cuff around the leg, press a button and wait. It gives you both systolic and diastolic pressure plus the heart rate.

I think this new piece of equipment will be appreciated by the patients and the nurses. You never know I might even use it myself.

