

# BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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Summer 2018

Dear Client,

It has been another busy year that has literally flown by. The good news is the bad weather should be behind us and hopefully the fireworks as well. We should have some long sunny days ahead to take the dog to the beach and I know some of you take the cat on holiday to the bach as well.

The clinic continues to grow and so have our staff. This year we have had two new vets join us, Kate and Morwenna. Both have fitted in very well and have enabled Jacqueline and myself to reduce our hours. We have also had two new nurses with Mariska joining us at the start of the year and Jaime who has worked for us part time becoming full time in December. This will enable us to have more staff right up to closing time, hopefully meaning even better service for you.

Don't forget to make sure you order enough food and medication to see you through the holiday period. Many of the wholesalers close during this period and couriers over Christmas can be a nightmare. The secret is to plan well ahead. Talking of planning ahead, don't wait till you are infested with fleas to try and get rid of them. Treat now. Our staff are trained on all the flea treatment options so come and have a chat with them today.

Wishing you and your furry family a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Lance, Jacqueline, Geoff, Kate, Morwenna, Fiona, Vanessa, Kirsty, Mariska and Jaime.



## Pet Photo Competition



I can hardly believe it is that time of the year for our annual photo competition. What is more amazing is this is the 13th year in a row we have run this competition.

Before I wrote this I looked back on some of those old entries. It brought a smile to my face especially as I have seen many of those pets for their entire life.

**Bayer** have also donated prizes for the last 12 years and will offer the winner this year a years supply of **Advocate** flea and parasite control for their pet.

So put a smile on your friendly vet or vet nurse's faces today and send your pictures to

[vets@bhbvets.co.nz](mailto:vets@bhbvets.co.nz)

The fine print:

1. Competition closes on the 1st February 2018.
2. Please include your name, contact phone number and the pets name.
3. Maximum of 2 photos per entrant.
4. An entrant is a photographer not a pet. Shouldn't need to write this one but some people (Ian) think it is important.



## **BlackHawk is a big hit with my family.**

I get a lot of companies wanting me to sell their pet foods in our clinic. I have to say no to most of them simply due to lack of retail space.

I also have a golden rule that it has to get past my incredibly finicky test dummy. Now Breeze would probably take offense at being called a dummy but would not dispute being fussy.

I have fed her biscuits with gravy mixed through them. I have seen her pick up the biscuits roll it around in her mouth to get the gravy then spit the biscuit back on the floor.

So the BlackHawk rep gave me some samples to take home. To my surprise she ate them with great enthusiasm. It was an even bigger surprise that her favourite was Kangaroo!

Ok so BlackHawk passed the Breeze test, but was it good food? It turned out to be very good food. Black Hawk is a very natural food where every ingredient in the recipe has a nutritional purpose. You will not find wheat, corn, soy, gluten, artificial preservatives, colours, flavours or unnecessary fillers. They do an original range and a grain free range for both dogs and cats in a range of flavours including Kangaroo.

BlackHawk also passed the Radish test but to be fair our cat is not that fussy and is not exactly skinny either.

So if you are looking for a healthy natural option for your pet ask one of our staff about BlackHawk the next time you are in to see us.



## **Cytopoint– game changer for itchy dogs**

I don't think I have gone to work in the last thirty years and not seen at least one itchy dog a day. The amount of research that has gone into this problem is absolutely massive but to be honest the number of truly great drugs developed has been limited. I started my career back in 1991 prescribing steroids for itchy dogs and in 2017 am still prescribing steroids for itchy dogs.

Steroids can be very helpful in controlling that inflammation and itch but are not without side effects especially if used long term.

Then along came Cytopoint. I was initially very skeptical because I never believe anything unless I actually see it work. Cytopoint is a monoclonal antibody. It binds to the inflammatory proteins that are released during the allergic reactive process. This effectively blocks the pathway that creates itch.

The data from the studies says it works great but I needed to try it. So my Guinea pig was Mac a five year old male Miniature Schnauzer. Poor Mac had suffered all his life from a condition called Atopy. Atopy is a condition where by Mac is allergic to environmental allergens that cause him to chew at his coat. If you look closely at the photo you can see the brown feet and legs where Mac chews at himself.



Cytopoint is given by injection, and lasts one month. Mac's owner said the next day after the injection Mac stopped biting and scratching. He had never done this before. He started to become itchy again in a month and the injection was repeated.

Mac's owner is delighted with Cytopoint and intends to give him monthly injections.

I have since used Cytopoint on several patients with similar results.

The thing I like about Cytopoint is it is very effective but also very safe.

If you have an itchy dog, and I know there is a lot of them out there, feel free to discuss whether Cytopoint may help your dog.

Don't forget though, if your dog is itchy due to fleas, you need to treat the fleas to stop the itch.

## Toto's cautionary tale.

I thought this month I would write about a case we had recently at the clinic. Hopefully it will be interesting and also act as a warning to others and maybe even save a life.

One evening we got a call from a client to say she thinks her dog has eaten a box of slug bait. We advised her to come straight down. Toto is a female, ten-year-old Border Collie. Her owner had been doing some Spring cleaning and had put a box of slug bait amongst other things in a bucket. To her horror she came back to find the box torn open and most of the contents gone. Toto was already shaking and looking distressed so a quick call to the vet was made. Toto was immediately put in the car and brought down to the clinic. I mention the phone call for a reason. Many people rush into the clinic without an appointment because it is an emergency so feel the phone call is wasting time. A quick phone call can often actually save a lot of time. In this case Geoff, one of our vets was about to go home for the evening. Once we got the call Geoff decided to stay and started getting ready what we needed to treat Toto.

If Geoff had gone home we would have had less staff to deal with Toto immediately, so phoning ahead made a huge difference to the speed we could treat Toto.

So, what do you do with a dog that has eaten slug poison? Do nothing and Toto would certainly die. The main principles of treatment are to remove as much poison as possible, reduce absorption of the poison, rehydrate and maintain blood pressure and electrolytes while controlling any seizures caused by the poison.

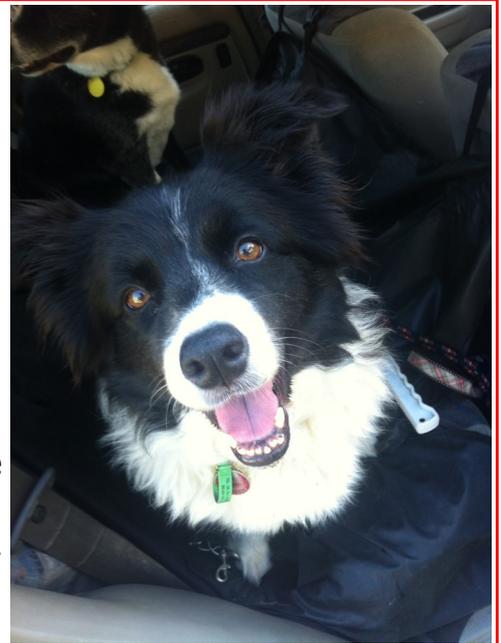
Toto had an intravenous catheter inserted into her vein and was connected to an electrolyte solution. She was then given a general anaesthetic. Now comes the messy smelly part. Toto had a stomach tube passed down her oesophagus and had the contents of her stomach flushed out. It was full of green slug poison. It gets worse though; the next bit involves an enema to remove poison from the other end. We could already see green poos coming through. We then flushed the colon with activated charcoal to absorb any of the poison left behind. This stuff is black and sticky. I told you it was a messy affair.

Toto was then woken up from the anaesthetic. When she was awake and swallowing we gave her activated charcoal by mouth to again absorb more poison.

Toto was taken to the afterhours that night for ongoing care. She made a full recovery and is now back to normal.

I would like to say this case is rare, but it is not. Toto was ten years old and had never done anything like this before. The slug poison was supposed to be dog friendly and not likely to be eaten. Clearly Toto could not read and did not know she should not want to eat it. I am amazed what some dogs will eat. I had a Labrador earlier this year who found a litre bottle of two stroke oil and chewed the top of the bottle off and drank the contents!

The take home message is, be very careful with poisons. Dogs are curious animals. They can also open cupboard doors and jump up on tables. They can also sometimes do things that seem out of character but can be potentially fatal.



## Meet Morwenna (Mo)

Morwenna has recently joined our team of vets at Blockhouse Bay. Morwenna grew up in Raglan on a 25 acre 'lifestyle block' surrounded by everything from cats, cockatiels and dogs, to pigs, dairy goats, cattle and horses so animals were a huge part of her childhood. Usually found with her horse or 'out on the farm' this lead naturally to the decision to become a vet.

Morwenna completed her veterinary degree at Massey University, graduating in 2001 with distinction. She then spent 3 years in the South Waikato in mixed practice before heading to the United Kingdom for her 'OE'.

Initially doing locum vet work and some travelling, the opportunity arose for a partnership in a new small animal practice. This went very well and extended the 'OE' a little... However, Morwenna always had the desire to return home and be closer to family. After nearly 12 years living and working in the UK she moved back to New Zealand 18 months ago, bringing her English partner and their young daughter.



## Radish's column-going green.

My male servant said I could write the column this month. I asked what he wanted me to write about? He said anything you like just avoid politics or religion. Being a cat, and by definition contrary, decided to write about politics.

Now not knowing much politics I had to do some research. My first most alarming, finding was that an election had just been held and cats did not have a vote.

I even found out that one guy wanted to get rid of cats, but luckily nobody voted for him. Big relief on that one.

I then tried to work out which political party would suit me best. I don't work and have everything provided for me. I don't like to be groomed and prefer my coat matted and unkempt. I also don't like cars so it turns out I am a Green Party supporter.

As a newly joined up member of the Green party I decided to become an activist. I am not sure who my servants vote for but my male servant doesn't seem to like anything green. We live in the bush and everything is green, the paving stones, the deck, the walls, roof, windows; literally if it doesn't move it turns green. Personally I like it, especially now I am a Greenie but the servants are always trying to remove the green often with nasty CHEMICALS.

I have made it my mission whenever I smell that "Wet and Forget" to run out the house and start walking in it. The really fun part is to pretend to drink it. You should see the panic on his face.

Being an activist is not easy. My servants drugged me and clipped all my hair off.

Being a Greenie I don't mind the drugs but the hair cut is just rude.

Well that's all from me, will look at religion next time.

Radish



## Changes to our Vaccination policy for dogs

We will be making some changes to our vaccination policy for dogs based on the latest science.

The first change is we will be giving our final vaccine at 16 weeks rather than 12 weeks. The reason for this is slightly complicated but the simple version is some dogs do not have adequate protection if the final vaccine is given at 12 weeks.

The second change is we will be giving the core vaccines that include Parvo virus every three years rather than annually. The reason for this is the newer vaccines have been shown to last longer. We will still be vaccinating for Leptospirosis and Kennel Cough annually as these last a much shorter time.

The good news is you don't have to do anything. We will work out which vaccine your dog needs and will still give them a thorough check over every year.

If you want your dog to have the full vaccines every year, we can still do this but kennels and day care should not require this.

Cat vaccines will remain unchanged.



## Christmas Holiday Hours

Sat 23rd Dec	= OPEN 8.30am to 12.00pm
Sun 24th-Tue 26th	= CLOSED
Wed 7th-Fri 29th	= OPEN 8.00AM to 7.00pm
Sat 30th	= OPEN 8.30AM to 12.00pm
Sun 31st-Tue 2nd	= CLOSED
Wed 3rd	= OPEN as usual.

For emergencies phone  
8492121 for the Animal Emergency Centre or  
8207273 for Western After Hours Emergency vet clinic.

