

Paw Talk

A professional publication for the clients of East Valley Animal Clinic

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Erika with Hogan and Orson



Puppy Socialization Class

Our first puppy socialization class was a huge success! Here are some comments from our participants:

"I loved the class and seeing the puppies socialize. All the info packets we received were beneficial."

"I enjoyed the class and all the things we learned. It was fun to see the dogs interact with each other and learn what normal dog behavior is."

"Happy to have a closer relationship with you all at the clinic. Loki will be a better puppy with the socialization."

The next six week series of puppy socialization classes will be held on Thursday evenings starting May 12 through June 9. Call for more information or to sign up!



Brigitte Dapper, CVT, and Dr. Dudley, taught our first puppy socialization class.

Meet Erika

East Valley Animal Clinic is happy to introduce our newest veterinary technician. Erika is originally from California, and recently moved to Minnesota from Arizona. Erika has worked in emergency and specialty

continued on pg. 4



Scent Training

What do police dogs, search and rescue dogs and cancer detection dogs have in common with your dog? A superior sense of smell!

Across the country, more and more people are unleashing their dog's inner hound, and learning about scent detection.

Some scent detection sports have existed for a long time, for example the American Kennel Club (AKC) has long sponsored competitions in tracking, earth dogs and field events. A relatively new sport, called K9 Nosework, is opening this fun pastime to everyone. As it states on their website: "Inspired by working detection dogs, K9 Nose Work is the fun search and scenting activity for virtually all dogs and people. This easy to learn activity and sport builds confidence and focus in many dogs, and provides a safe way to keep dogs fit and healthy through mental and physical exercise."

Because it provides such unique and interesting mental stimulation for dogs, scent work is an exceptional outlet for dogs who are recovering from surgery or any dog whose mobility must be restricted, because you can practice on a leash or indoors. Even in the comfort of your living room, you can vary the level of difficulty according to your dog's skill level and mobility limitations.

Scent training is fun for all dogs and all handlers. Consider giving it a try. Your dog will be glad you did!



Spring Fever

Ahhh, spring! Longer days, warmer weather, fresh air and the wondrous feeling of stretching our legs outdoors inspired someone to coin the term "spring fever." Humans aren't the only ones who feel it; animals do, too. Spring fever can get pets in trouble, so wise pet owners will use caution this season.

As with humans, pets can have seasonal allergies. If your pet displays frequent scratching, licking (especially the face and paws) or inflamed ears, allergies may be the culprit. Some pets will develop "hot spots," or "acute moist dermatitis," in response to an allergy. Left untreated, these symptoms may get progressively worse and lead to more complicated problems. Seek veterinary care if you notice these signs, because medications can help alleviate your pet's discomfort.

As your yard bursts into bloom and you're enjoying the view, your pets may be drawn to take a nibble or two. Lilies and azaleas are toxic to pets, along with many other plants. Pesticides, fertilizers, cocoa mulch and other products used to beautify your yard can sicken and even kill pets.

While fleas and mosquitoes can live in your home and be a problem year round, the warming spring soil makes outdoor parasites more active. Parasites can all carry dangerous pathogens. Be sure to keep your pet current on flea, tick and heartworm preventives.

"Love is in the air" in springtime. Unspayed female cats are likely to cycle (see the article on Kitten Season), causing them to yowl and complain, and potentially go in search of a mate. Unneutered males will be attracted to their scent and calls. While dogs tend to have more regular heat cycles, studies have shown that canine reproductive cycles are also most active between February and May.

Spring fever affects wildlife, too, which means more critters may be roaming the trails where you may walk your dog, and also nearer to your home. Porcupine and skunk encounters increase in the spring and fall. Dogs should see a veterinarian within 24 hours of a porcupine encounter, as quills can migrate inwards, and complications may occur.

Kudos to you if you've decided spring is the time to get your dog back in shape. To avoid injury, be sure to gradually build up your dog's level of fitness.

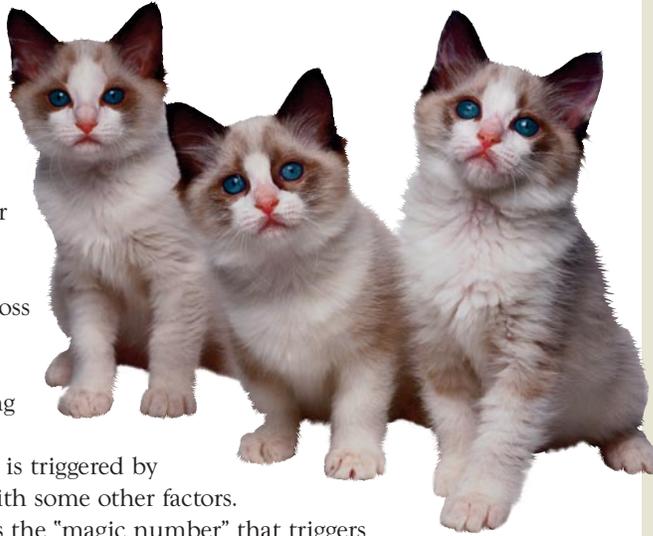
Finally, be sure your pet is restrained or contained! The urge to get out and explore brings a sad ending to many pets in this country. Be sure your pet has identification, including a collar, tags and a microchip, in case it does manage to escape.



"I think it's time to have our cat neutered. I found his picture on Yahoo Personals, MySpace, Match.com, E-Harmony and Great Expectations!"



Kitten Season



Spring is a favorite season for many. We glory in the flowers blooming and feeling of new beginnings. Shelter workers across the country often have mixed feelings about spring, though, because it heralds the beginning of "kitten season."

The breeding season for cats is triggered by the length of daylight, along with some other factors. Ten hours per day of daylight is the "magic number" that triggers the hormones that induce the heat cycle, or estrus, so March through September is the peak mating season for cats here in the Northern Hemisphere.

Cats are "induced ovulators," which means that their bodies naturally release eggs if copulation occurs. If they are not bred, cats can go in and out of heat multiple times, and may even exhibit continuous heat cycles. For these reasons, cats are known as "seasonally polyestrous," which means they can have multiple heat cycles which are induced by seasonal changes.

Female cats (or queens) in heat will become quite vocal, and their yowling is intended to attract toms (unneutered males) from near and far. The female will also urinate more frequently and show other behavior changes. Cat owners often find this quite troubling, as the queen can sound like she is in quite a bit of distress.

If you have an unneutered male cat, the dangers of the season are perhaps even greater for him. Mother Nature has made it close to impossible for toms to resist the lure of females in heat, and if there is one nearby, you can expect your cat to do everything possible to escape the safety of your home to find her. In his quest for the female, he's at risk of getting hit by a car, taken by predators, and for fights with other males who are potential suitors for the female.

Female kittens can experience their first heat cycle, or estrus, as early as four to six months of age. They can become pregnant during that early estrus cycle, although it is roughly the equivalent of a ten-year-old girl getting pregnant. An adult female cat can produce three litters per year, with an average of four to six kittens per litter. In theory, that one female cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 cats in seven years.

According to the ASPCA, approximately 3.4 million cats enter shelters each year, and approximately 1.4 million of them are euthanized. They also estimate that there are 70 million stray cats living in the United States.

You can be part of the solution, which is to spay or neuter your cat. There are many benefits: Female cats spayed before six months of age are 91% less likely to develop mammary tumors – the third most common form of cancer in cats. In addition, neutered pets are less likely to roam, and neutering reduces the tendency of urine spraying or marking.

"No matter how much the cats fight, there always seem to be plenty of kittens."

– Abraham Lincoln

Animals and the FBI

"Acts of cruelty against animals are now counted alongside felony crimes like arson, burglary, assault, and homicide in the FBI's expansive criminal database," according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In January, they began tracking cases of animal cruelty through their National Incident Based Reporting System, or NIBRS.

According to the NY Humane Association, studies have shown that "Animal cruelty is an indicator and predictor of possible human violence and prosecuting it can prevent future crimes and suffering."

Many studies have shown a correlation between animal abuse and crimes towards people, including domestic violence. "If somebody is harming an animal, there is a good chance they also are hurting a human," said John Thompson, deputy executive director of the National Sheriffs' Association.

John Thompson of the National Sheriffs' Association, noted "By paying attention to [these crimes], we are benefiting all of society."

Tick Alert!



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced the discovery of a new species of bacteria (*Borrelia mayonii*) that causes Lyme disease in people. To date, this species has only been seen in the Midwest, and to our knowledge has not been documented in pets.

This discovery is an important reminder that the incidence of tick-borne diseases in the U.S. is continuing to increase.

Keeping your dog current on tick preventives helps protect your dog and your family, because dogs can carry ticks into your home after exercising outdoors.

For more information, go to www.cdc.gov/ticks



The "Wave" of the Future!

East Valley Animal Clinic is excited to announce that we have recently purchased a cold laser system for our patients.

Cold laser therapy is a non-invasive therapy that uses light waves to enhance cell healing. Its primary use is for orthopedic and muscle pain. It can be used for acute and chronic pain, such as sprains, strains and arthritis, and it can help with wound healing.

Although cold laser therapy has been in use for decades, it is considered an alternative therapy. It seems to be gaining acceptance in mainstream medicine as we are seeing good results with its use.

Our first test case with our laser was with two patients who had lick granulomas. These are a stubborn, non-healing

continued below



Captain Jack enjoying a laser treatment with Bobbie and Melissa, CVTs



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"WAVE"... *continued from above*

wounds caused by a dog's persistent licking. They become chronic and very frustrating to the owners. The owners of both dogs reported that their dogs stopped licking almost immediately after their therapy!

We are still discovering all of the things that we can help our patients with using cold laser therapy. If you think your pet may benefit from cold laser therapy, please call the clinic or speak with your veterinarian when you are in for your pet's annual exam.

left: Jerry rocking the laser gogs

ERIKA *continued from pg. 1*

practices, but is excited to move into general practice.

Erika shares her home with her fiancé and her two dogs, Orson, an English lab, and Hogan, a hound. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring her new home state, hiking in the state and local parks. She also enjoys painting.

Erika is excited to be here in Minnesota, and prefers the weather here compared to Arizona. Let's ask her how she feels after a really cold winter!