



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Inside this issue:

Wow a year has flown by and this is the anniversary of our first newsletter! Thank you for all the kind comments and input that you as a client have given. We feel that this has been a great form of communication and an effective way of sharing knowledge on the care of your precious beloved animals.

You can find our previous newsletters on the web site www.hiltonvethospital.co.za under "Newsletters". An index of previous articles will soon be included on this site.

"If being alive to the suffering of my fellow creatures is being fanatical, then I am the greatest fanatic alive." William Wilberforce. As veterinarians we have to be sensitive to many forms of pain and suffering. There is the direct and obvious pain caused by major disease and injuries. There is the low grade long standing pain of arthritis. There is the suffering owners endure when their animals are sick. There is the suffering they endure when they pass away or need to be euthanized. We can be really good at controlling direct pain. In the modern world there are five to ten different ways of pain control. All that is really required, is for the veterinarian to understand pain, learn to monitor levels of pain and add pain relief in a logical step up fashion.

Emotional pain and suffering is much more difficult to deal with. Emotional pain is usually not relieved by drugs or procedures. Emotional pain requires understanding and often needs reassurance that everything possible was done.

It is not uncommon for veterinarians to find themselves needing to comfort a distressed pet owner. Few of us are qualified to do so, but through the lessons of life, may have developed such skills out of necessity. There is a saying in the medical world "your patients do not care how much you know until they know how much you care."

All of us receive unconditional dedication and love from our animals. I believe they deserve the same when they are in need. I also think animal owners in need deserve some humanity from their veterinarian.

On a lighter note, congratulations to Bandit for being nominated "employee of the month". Here he is, answering the phone for us.



Kind regards
Martin de Scally.
Dedicated to the health of your pets.

Opening Letter	1
Nurse's Clinic:	2
Speak to me	
Nurse's Clinic:	3
Annual Health Checks	4
Lost Pet	5
New Pet	5
Staff Profile	6
To make you smile	6

After Hours

Emergencies:

Please phone
(033) 343 4602

Contact Details:

If your contact details have changed then please inform us .

This month's theme:
Annual Health Checks

The Nurse's Clinic: Speak to me

Miscommunication is a common enough occurrence for us all to know that although the results can often be funny, they can also end badly. But what about miscommunications with animals? Do you know what your furry friends are trying to tell you, or what about an animal you've only just met? Do you know how to read their body language and are you aware of what your body language is telling them? Just as important as learning their body is, so is learning to "speak" with the correct body language. An act we might see as friendly may come across to them as dominating and aggressive. These are important things to consider in avoiding accidents with strange animals and in building the bond between you and your pet.

So obviously, we can see that the two animals below are clearly in a very unhappy mood and have reached attack mode, definitely not animals we want to pant on the head in case we lose a limb. But do you think they might have been showing signs of discomfort before they reached this stage?

There are times when an animal might attack without warning but more often than not they will give warning signs first. Being able to recognize these early signs and the appropriate response is a great help in preventing trouble.

Animals may not be able to speak our language but they are still very expressive creatures and the more we learn to pay attention to body language, ours and theirs, the more we will understand each other. They have a wonderful way of learning our routines, and teaching us theirs. Running between you and the food bowl first thing in the morning nearly tripping you up is the excitement of breakfast, reminding you that he/she is hungry and where their bowl is.

So there's a few ways they use to speak to us:

They use their body language, the flick of the tail, twist of the ear, how their eyes widen or close amongst many other things including overall posture.

They use their routines and ours, such as an indoor animal pawing at the door asking to be let out to wee. And the meowing, purring, barking, growling, squeaking and any other sounds your loved one has come up with to let you know how they feel.



So if we want the animals in the photo's above to look more like the one below, take a little more time to observe them day to day so you can learn their language, how to hear and speak it.



Just to help you recognize a few of the more familiar common postures we've included a few pictures and diagrams below for you to look through. Whilst having a look at the diagrams look at your own animals and see how you would read their current body language, once you start getting yourself into the habit of listening, hearing will become a lot easier. And yes, when kitty jumps on top of all your work books and settles in for a good cuddle and snooze session she's telling you she's far more important than all that silly work stuff....but didn't you know that already.

The Nurse's Clinic: Speak to me

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"
look away/head turn



STRESSED
yawn



STRESSED
nose lick



"PEACE!"
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED
scratching



STRESS RELEASE
shake off



RELAXED
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"
play bow



"READY!"
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS
head tilt



HAPPY
(or not)



OVERJOYED
wiggly



"MMMM...."



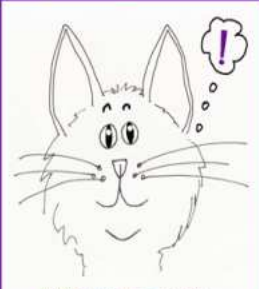
"I LOVE YOU,
DON'T STOP"

Cat Language

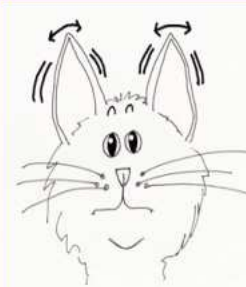
When the Ears Speak, Listen!



1) Relaxed and Happy



2) Alert, Listening Intently



3) Agitated and Nervous



4) Frightened, in Attack Mode

catsmeowblog.com

FRIENDLY, CONTENT 	NON-THREATENING, UNSURE 	DERISIVE "**** YOU" 	QUIVERING, VERY PLEASSED TO SEE YOU
HOOKEE TAIL 	AMICABLE, NOT AGGRESSIVE OR FEARFUL 	DEFENSIVE AGGRESSION 	THRASHING TAIL, EXCITED OR ANGRY OR IRRITABLE
FRIENDLY BUT UNSURE 	POTENTIALLY AGGRESSIVE 	SUBMISSIVE 	TWITCHING TAIL - ALERT, INTERESTED
BRISTLING WITH ANGER 			

Annual Health Checks by Dr Derek Clover

With the current rabies situation in KZN, the importance of annual vaccination against rabies has been brought to the forefront of many of our minds. Whilst the benefits of having your pets vaccinated are obvious, the annual health check that your pets should receive at the time when they receive their vaccination is just as essential.

Many of us will see the dentist, ophthalmologist, and dermatologist on an annual basis as a preventive measure. As 1 human year equates to approximately 7 dogs years, it stands to reason that our pets should receive at least 1 health exam per year.

As our pets cannot tell us if there is a problem, an annual health check / wellness exam give us as vets an opportunity to evaluate your pet's health, and aids in the early detection of disease. It is also an opportunity to discuss preventive health care measures such as diet, parasite control, weight issues or any other questions that may arise throughout the year

A health check starts with a thorough history. Has there been any strange or unusual behaviour such as coughing, vomiting, inappetence, weight loss, drinking a large amount of water etc? We then proceed with the physical exam. In early disease often only minor abnormalities are detected so it is important to be detailed and systematic when performing the physical exam.



Your pet should be examined from the top to bottom. Mouth, teeth, ears, eyes, heart, lungs, abdomen, skin, coat, joints, reproductive organs, mobility, and many other parameters should all be checked. If indicated, additional tests such as blood pressure, urine analysis, a scan or blood tests can also be done.



Your pet may then be vaccinated if needed. How frequently you should have your pet vaccinated against certain diseases depends on many factors. These, as well as any other questions you may have, can be discussed during the health check.

Do not underestimate the importance of regular comprehensive health checks / wellness examinations for your pets. The sooner irregularities are detected and dealt with the more favourable the outcome, and this will in turn lead to your furry friends living a longer, healthier and happier life.

With the festive season fast approaching and that hard earned leave you are looking forward to, please take some time out for your beloved pets and bring them along for their annual health check. If it is not something you have done before, now is a good time to start.

What do you do if your pet is lost? By Dr Trish Mills

It's that time of year again when we have to worry about storms and fireworks causing distress in our pets.

It is important to take all precautions to ensure that your pet doesn't run away, but sometimes situations occur that are out of your control. So what can you do to try find your lost pet?

- ✎ Start searching in your neighborhood - unfortunately there is no way to predict the direction or path your pet may have followed so you will have to systematically cover the area around your house. You may even need to cover the same areas multiple times.
- ✎ Check local shelters like the SPCA, Vets and even pet shops and groomers. Make sure they take your details in case someone does bring in your lost pet.
- ✎ Get your community involved - spread the word using things like posters, and Face book.

In order to try ensure your pet is returned to you, make sure they have some kind of means of identification. Collars and identity tags are great, but remember that they can come off. So to be extra sure your pet is identifiable, consider putting in a microchip which can be scanned and which will then provide your contact details.



New Pet? By Dr Trish Mills

At this time of year, giving a pet as a gift or adopting a new pet might seem like a great idea, after all, who doesn't love an adorable new puppy or kitten? But the gift of a pet should never be a surprise. You need to make sure the recipient truly wants a pet and understands everything that goes in hand with being a pet owner. Owning a pet is a big responsibility and it is a long-term commitment. You'll need to think about many things, including lifestyle and cost considerations, as well as what type of pet is right for you and where to get your pet. Be prepared to dedicate time, finances (vet bills, food, supplies such as a bed and toys, and maybe training), energy, as well as a good amount of patience to your new pet over his or her lifetime. Being a responsible pet owner involves more than providing your pet with basic needs such as food and shelter. It involves keeping them **safe**, keeping them **healthy** and keeping them **happy**. Making a decision about a pet can be daunting, but contemplating the pros and cons of pet ownership before bringing the pet into your home is important. While choosing the right match for you and your family, is not an exact science, it is important that it is a well-educated and a carefully considered choice based on as much information as possible. For those who are ready, adopting a pet may be a rewarding, nurturing lifestyle for both you and your new pet.

Please feel free to contact us at Hilton Veterinary Hospital for advice to help you make this important decision.



Staff Profile

Justice Phoswa

Justice joined the practice in 1997. Justice is one of our very dedicated and capable kennel hands who assists in looking after your precious animals.

Justice is married to Prudence and they have 5 children. Ntunthuko, Andile, Sli, Zethe, and Ntethelelo.

Justice enjoys holding your animals and assisting with scans and x-rays. He particularly enjoys listening to the vets when they explain the diagnosis's to the clients. He says he feels that he has learned a lot.

In his spare time, Justice enjoys working at home, doing household maintenance and gardening. He enjoys watching soccer and Westerns on TV.



To make you smile

Inner Peace

If you can start the day without caffeine,
If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles.

If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,

If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,

If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

If you can conquer tension without medical help,

If you can relax without alcohol,

If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

Then you are probably the

FAMILY DOG!



If you have a story about your pet that you would like to share with us, then please e-mail it to lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za