

Celebrate Seniors: Living Longer, Living Better

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Points of Interest:

- October is "Celebrate Seniors" month
- \$5400 raised for the Farley Foundation!
- Keep your pets healthy this holiday season
- Check out our new website!
- Pet portraits taken here!

Beginning at around age 7, your pet enters his or her senior years. Often, pets begin to develop diseases common to their senior human counterparts, such as diabetes, heart disease, endocrine disease and cancer. These diseases can go unnoticed in their early stages; therefore, preventive health care is very important.

Early detection can help minimize suffering. If left undetected, many diseases can put your pet's health at risk. The best approach to caring for your senior pet includes preventive diagnostics such as:

- Establishing baseline bloodwork

- Identifying existing health problems
- Monitoring progress during treatment

Together, we can help your pet. You know your pet better than anyone else and can alert us to any changes in your pet before they become serious. We can help you understand the common medical conditions that your senior pet faces, and discuss a regular monitoring plan.

Signs to watch for:

- Just not acting like himself/herself
- Interacting less often with family
- Responding less often or less enthusiastically

- Showing changes in behaviour/ activity level
- Having difficulty climbing stairs
- Exhibiting increased stiffness or limping
- Drinking more often
- Urinating more often
- Changing eating patterns
- Noticeably gaining or losing weight
- Losing housetraining habits
- Changing sleeping patterns
- Becoming confused or disoriented
- Changing hair coat, skin, or new lumps or bumps
- Scratching more often
- Exhibiting bad breath/ red or swollen gums

Give us a call to schedule an appointment for your senior pet's health evaluation.

Farley Fundraising: A Huge Success

During the month of October, our team members collected funds for the Farley Foundation.

The Farley Foundation assists seniors and disabled persons on limited incomes with the necessary treatment of their pets.



Our fundraising initiatives included:

- Selling miscellaneous Farley items such as collapsible pet bowls, re-useable shopping bags and pet tags
- Clients writing their pets name on a Farley paw print to help decorate our reception counter
- Pet nail trims
- Sponsoring the spay or neuter of a homeless pet

In addition, a portion of the proceeds from our Annual Pet Charity Leash-a-thon was donated to the Farley Foundation.



Our total contribution to the Farley Foundation for 2011 is \$6175!!!

Holiday Hazards for Pets



Some holiday plants are hazardous to our pets.

“If ingested, treats containing large amounts of the sweetener xylitol can produce a sudden drop in blood sugar, resulting in depression, lack of coordination and even seizures.”



Poultry bones can splinter and cause damage or a blockage in your pet's gastrointestinal tract.

The holiday season is quickly approaching.

Most of us will soon begin our holiday preparations, involving such activities as decorating, baking, gift wrapping, entertaining, etc.

Those of us who share our homes with four-legged companions should be aware of the many holiday-related hazards our pets could become exposed to.

Chocolate: Depending on the amount ingested, chocolate can potentially cause vomiting, increased thirst and urination, diarrhea, hyperactivity, elevated heart rate and seizures - and can even be lethal in large enough doses.

Coffee and Coffee Grounds: All forms of coffee can produce the same effects as chocolate, depending on the dose.

Yeast Dough: If swallowed, yeast dough can rise in the stomach and cause extreme discomfort. Pets may experience abdominal pain, bloat, vomiting, disorientation and depression. Many yeast ingestions require surgical removal of dough.

Onions, Garlic and Chives: Ingestion of both fresh plants and dried powders can cause destruction of the pet's red blood cells. Symptoms include weakness, vomiting, and trouble breathing. Cats are more susceptible than dogs.

Macadamia Nuts: In dogs, ingestion can cause vomiting, weakness, depression, lack of

coordination, tremors or seizures.

Grapes and Raisins:

Ingestion of grapes and raisins have been associated with acute kidney failure in dogs. Initially, dogs can develop vomiting and begin drinking large amounts of water, followed by diarrhea.

Table Food: Poultry bones can splinter and cause damage or blockage in the gastrointestinal tract. Spicy or fatty foods can cause stomach upset and could possibly lead to inflammation of the pancreas. Moldy or spoiled foods could produce food poisoning, tremors or seizures.

Alcoholic Beverages: If ingested, alcohol can potentially result in vomiting, diarrhea, lack of coordination, central nervous system depression, difficulty breathing, tremors, coma and even death.

Candy and Gum: Treats containing large amounts of the sweetener xylitol can produce a sudden drop in blood sugar, resulting in depression, lack of coordination and even seizures.

Candy Wrappers: Ingestion of these can cause gastrointestinal irritation and could lead to an intestinal blockage.

Ornaments, Ribbons and Tinsel: Ribbon and tinsel can cause gastrointestinal blockage that can be life-threatening to pets. Ornaments can be broken or swallowed whole.

Christmas Tree Preservative:

Preservative may contain fertilizer, which, if ingested, can upset the stomach. Stagnant tree water can be breeding grounds for bacteria, which can also lead to vomiting, nausea and diarrhea.

Holiday Plants: Eating holly could produce nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and lethargy. If a dog or cat eats mistletoe, gastrointestinal upset and possibly even cardiovascular problems could result. All parts of lilies (both *Lilium* and *Emerocallis* species) are highly toxic to cats, with the potential to produce life-threatening kidney failure even from small ingestions. While the toxic potential of poinsettia has been greatly exaggerated, mild stomach upset could still occur if ingested.

Toys: Small toys and toy parts can cause choking and gastrointestinal obstruction.

Batteries: Corrosives within batteries can produce oral and gastrointestinal ulcers.

Electrical Cords: Electrical burns are very painful and often life-threatening, so wires should be removed, hidden, buried, or kept out of reach of potential chewers.

Enjoy the festivities, but please be conscientious of what is in and around your home that may potentially cause harm to your precious pets.

Our New Website: www.tbvet.com

In mid October, we launched our new website.

The site has a sleek new design which offers our clients a more enjoyable experience while learning about what our hospital has to offer.

Clients can read about our services, take a “virtual” tour of our facility, as well as get to know the members that make up our veterinary team.

There are many helpful pet-related articles to read, as well as videos demonstrating ear cleaning and tooth brushing.

If you’ve ever wondered how a dog is spayed, there is a “virtual spay” section which explains exactly what happens

with many detailed images. We have also added a video to our dental care section showing what is involved when you bring your pet to our hospital for a dental cleaning.

If you weren’t already aware, we offer some great dog training classes. You can learn about the various classes offered as well as upcoming start dates in the “canine training” section of the website.

Some additional new features are our “fun pet videos” section, as well as a “just for kids” section, with a printable colouring page, activities and jokes.

You can even let us know how we are doing with our online client satisfaction survey! Your feedback is always welcome and very much appreciated.

In addition, we can now be followed on Facebook or Twitter, where we regularly post hospital news, funny pet photos, jokes and helpful tidbits of information. There are links to these pages on our website’s home page.

If you haven’t already had the opportunity to visit our great new website, we welcome you to come browse our “virtual” home!



www.tbvet.com

Pet Portraits for Christmas Cheer

During the month of November, we are offering to take pet portraits to raise money for the Christmas Cheer Fund in Thunder Bay.

The Thunder Bay Christmas Cheer Fund is a recognized charity whose aim is to make certain that no family with children that are in need of a hamper or support are overlooked at Christmas.

For a \$20 sitting fee, one of

our staff members will photograph your pet, prepare the image for printing and upload it to the Wal-Mart Photo Centre for you to pick up.

These portraits are great keepsakes of our treasured pets and they make great Christmas gifts!

We have offered this fundraising initiative to our clients in the past and have

been very pleased with the quality of the portraits. We’re often asked if we will be offering them again soon!

Give us a call if you would like to schedule an appointment!



“These portraits are great keepsakes of our treasured pets and they make great Christmas gifts!”



*Happy Holidays from the staff at the
Thunder Bay Veterinary Hospital*