



VILLAGE VETERINARY CLINIC NEWSLETTER

January 2018

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Message from Dr Craig Mostert

A very warm welcome to the first newsletter of 2018.

Last year was certainly an eventful one on a local and global front and we hope that this year is more settled and kinder to us all.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new additions to everyone's families that we met over the festive season and to the new clients that have joined Village. Thank you for choosing us. Together, we will be able to keep your animal companions happy and well.

We are also pleased to welcome Dr Tony Zugravii to the team. We are now back up to the full complement of four Veterinary Surgeons and we are delighted to have someone with his expertise on board.

Thank you to all those that have made Dr Zugravii so welcome as he joins our Village family.

That's all from me. For those with children heading off to new schools or university we wish you all the best and may this year be a successful one for everyone.

Warm regards

Dr Craig Mostert

Thank you so much to the many clients who brought gifts for the staff over the Christmas period.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the delicious shortbread, cup cakes, mince pies, cakes and chocolates



which we eagerly ate over the festive season.

Thank you for supporting us during 2017. We are truly blessed to have such awesome clients.



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Happy New Year from the Village Vet team!

We hope that your festive season was a safe and happy one and that your year is off to a good start.



Let's Learn Puppy School

Do you have a new member of the family? A fur child who is getting bored or struggling to understand the rules of the house? Now is the time to help educate your new puppy and form life long bonds. Come and join in the fun at the Let's Learn Puppy School held at the practice on Saturday afternoons. It is a stimulating 6 week course designed to teach you and your family how to train your puppy in basic obedience as well as build confidence in a controlled environment. Remember, the time and effort you put in now will be a lifelong achievement. Don't delay your puppy's education!



If you would like to join or require any further information, please contact Vicky on 073 877 2135 or email letslearnk9@outlook.com



Meet Peaches the hamster!

Most people were incredibly shocked to hear that a HAMSTER was going to have a hysterectomy, but Peaches is a one of a kind hamster. When she got a uterus infection, a simple hit over the head with a spade was not going to cut it. Peaches had to have an operation.

Peaches is a Syrian hamster bought from a pet store. She was the oldest one there and nobody would buy her because the baby hamsters were much cuter. When Saskia, a 19 year old Stellenbosch university student came back to Durban for a holiday, she decided to get a hamster because her dorm room got very lonely. Peaches immediately stood out to her from the rest as she didn't run away or bite, and she was bright orange with big black ears (one ear had been nibbled a bit by the other hamsters). The babies couldn't compare to Peaches and Saskia had to have her.



This was the start of their love affair.



Peaches has since been on a road trip around the Karoo, visiting places such as the Owl House in Nieu Bethesda and stopping to take photos by mountain passes. She had a special spot on the floor of the van under Saskia's feet and when the road got too bumpy, peaches got to sit on a pillow on Saskia's lap and look out the window. There was never a dull moment with Peaches on their road trip.

When that was over, Peaches had to go on her first flight to Stellenbosch. She travelled with Kulula on their pet lounge and has happily been on many flights since then.

Peaches is a well-seasoned traveller and is loved by all that meet her. She is incredibly friendly and sweet, and is potty trained too! She never bites and she loves her playtime with Saskia.

Following her operation, she has recovered quite well and is becoming more like herself every day that passes. No one can argue that she is an amazing hamster, and she continues to captivate people everywhere she goes.

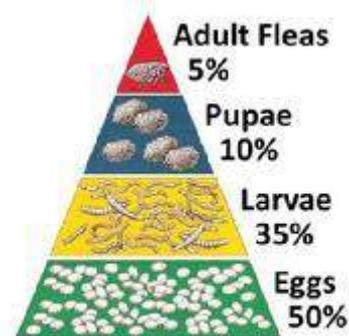
Who knew you could have this much love for such a small creature!

Saskia Wartnaby

Fight those fleas!!

We know that fleas love heat and humidity which, due to global warming, is around for longer periods of the year than previously. Thus, certainly in our coastal regions, fleas are able to breed happily almost all year round, even in the cooler months when they simply batten down the hatches and wait for spring or someone to turn on the heater.

Each adult flea will lay 50 — 60 eggs a day on your pet and each female flea can have more than 2,000 descendants. The itchiness caused by flea bites induces your pets to scratch, which in turn causes the eggs to fall off everywhere the pet goes. After hatching, the tiny larvae will crawl under carpets, behind skirting boards, into small holes in grouting and into sand, where it spins a cocoon and pupates. Once in this form, the flea pupae are indestructible and can survive in the home environment for months. This means that not only do you have this season's fleas to contend with but possibly a crop of last year's late bloomers too! The only way to get rid of the fleas is to break the life cycle.



Flea Population Pyramid

The products we supply you with have a prolonged action, work continuously for 30 days and sterilise the flea eggs. This way your pets become walking flea killers. The new fleas hatch, jump onto your pet and die within 24 hours. Bad infestations can take 4 – 6 months to disappear as new fleas will be hatching all the time, jumping onto your pets and then dying before they can lay more eggs that can re-infest your property. It may not seem as if the flea situation is improving to start with, because a heavily infested property will still have a large number of fleas hatching every summer, but the number of eggs is reducing. If for some reason you decide to stop treating your pets for fleas, then more eggs are laid and more fleas become part of the cycle.

The most important fact to bear in mind with regards to flea control is that most flea products are contact insecticides, not repellents. The flea needs to spend a certain amount of time on the pet in order to take in sufficient insecticide before dying. The longer the product has been on the pet, the lower its concentration and therefore the longer the flea will need to spend on the pet before dying.

The reluctance to treat your pets because you think they don't have fleas, the bigger the problem when they reappear and they will do so with a vengeance.

We have a wide range of flea and tick control products available in our shop. Come in and chat to our knowledgeable receptionists who will be able to advise you on the correct product for you to use.

Toxic fumes are dangerous to pet birds

Although we all like to think that we always have our bird's best interests at heart, it is impossible to foresee every single household danger that our avian friends can get into. Many birds die before their time as a result of mistakes made by their owners, either unintentionally or through ignorance.

As a bird's respiratory system is hypersensitive to any type of pollutant in the air, owners should be aware of the following toxic fumes:

1. Non-stick cookware and other household items possessing a non-stick surface made from polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) can be toxic to birds. If overheated (temperatures over 278 degrees C), the gas released is extremely dangerous to birds and can result in death. However, even with normal usage, some fumes may also be released, so non-stick cookware, drip pans, irons, ironing board covers and heat-lamps with a PTFE coating should not be used around birds.



2. Passive inhalation of cigarette, cigar and pipe smoke can cause chronic eye problems, skin irritation and respiratory disease. Birds that live in homes with smokers may develop coughing, sneezing, sinusitis and conjunctivitis, which may resolve spontaneously if the bird is moved to a location free of smoke. Some birds exposed to chronic second-hand smoke will develop secondary bacterial infections as well, which can prove fatal.



3. Many common disinfectants and household cleaning agents release fumes that can be toxic or fatal to birds. Chlorine bleach, phenols and ammonia can all have dangerous vapours that can cause irritation, toxicosis and even death.



4. Common household aerosol products, such as perfume, deodorant and hairspray, can cause respiratory problems in birds. They may cause severe inflammation and difficulty breathing, and after prolonged or direct exposure, death can occur. Any pump spray or aerosol using a propellant can be dangerous to birds, and these should not be used around birds.



5. Natural gas leaks can cause sudden death in birds. Any type of heater, used improperly or with inadequate ventilation, can be fatal.

Symptoms to look out for are breathing faster than usual (panting), open mouth breathing, change in voice or not making as much noise as usual.

Please bring your bird in as soon as possible if you notice any of these symptoms.

Ferrets as pets

The ferret (*Mustela putorius furo*) is the domesticated form of the European polecat, a mammal belonging to the same genus as the weasel. They typically have brown, black, white, or mixed fur.



Ferrets are classified as a highly invasive species according to the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004; Alien and invasive species regulations (NEMBA).

In order to own or import a ferret into South Africa legally, you need to get a permit from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. Even though ferrets were domesticated over 2500 years ago, they are still considered semi-wild. Ferrets aren't illegal in South Africa, however you must meet certain requirements and permits before owning one.

We are seeing more of these comical little creatures being kept as pets, however not everyone is aware of these legal requirements. By law, ferrets must be vaccinated annually and sterilized by the age of 6 months.

Spaying and neutering is extremely important in ferrets. Females suffer from a form of estrogen toxicity and become fatally ill, while intact males become very territorial and fight, not to mention smell more, due to the desire to mark anything and everything.

Ferrets have an odour, plain and simple. This odour bothers some people more than others. Call it musky, call it dank, call it... SPECIAL! Spend some time with a ferret inside a home before you get one of your own!

Ferrets may bite. Some young ferrets require more bite training than others. Most ferrets are not biters, but will try and play with you like a cat or dog would mouth you, just don't let it get out of hand!



They can be great fun as they are loving little creatures, but also very mischievous, extremely inquisitive, will chew everything if given the chance and are hoarders of note.

Ferrets are obligate carnivores. The natural diet of their wild ancestors consisted of whole small prey, including meat, organs, bones, skin, feathers, and fur. Ferrets have short digestive systems and quick metabolisms, so they need to eat frequently. Prepared dry foods consisting almost entirely of meat (including high-grade cat food) provide the most nutritional value and are the most convenient.

A healthy ferret's life span can average between 8 and 10 years.

PUZZLE PAGE

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Ocean Life Word Search

Directions: Circle the ocean life words hidden in the puzzle. The words are spelled vertically and horizontally.

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Word Box

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| dolphin | crab | octopus | seahorse |
| starfish | shark | whale | jellyfish |