



## VILLAGE VETERINARY CLINIC NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021

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### Letter from Dr Mostert

Welcome to our newsletter

Firstly I'd like to once again thank all our clients for their tremendous support online. We thank you for all your lovely comments on our Facebook page, the ones on the 10 year anniversary of our Facebook Page were so heartwarming.

Thank you for all your Google reviews, they are so encouraging to read and they really do help other people to find our practice online. We truly appreciate all those that have taken the time to give such positive feedback.

Speaking of positive feedback, we would like to welcome Dr Jessica Price to our team. Dr Price has settled in well and has already met a good few of our clients. Dr Price also has experience with exotic pets which is good news for us as the exotic side of Village is always busy.

In other good news, it's Summer! It's one of our best seasons here as mother nature starts showing all her colours. Our skies are graced again by the yellow billed kites and we start looking forward to soft rains to clear the dust and green our gardens.

That's the good side, the flip side is that this is also the time of year that the ticks, fleas and biting flies wake up and start to plague our pets. The trick is to get ahead of the game, if you wait until you've got a real parasite problem it will take a long time to eradicate them completely from your home, garden, bedding and the nooks and crannies they hide in. Start now and you're ahead of the game.

Another excellent idea is to make sure that your pet is well groomed, particularly if they have thick or curly coats. A well cared for coat makes it easier to see if they pick up ticks or fleas and makes it easier for pour on parasite control to work.

Groomed coats are cooler, more comfortable, allow air to circulate more easily and make your pet nicer to be near. We have an on-site parlour that can help with this, give Daphne a call on 031 655 1252 if your pet needs some help to feel good and clean and fresh for Summer.

That's it from me, enjoy the warmer weather and we'll see you soon, online or in person.

Take Care  
Dr Craig Mostert

### Backhome microchip special for November and December - R150

#### Be prepared for thunderstorms and fireworks

With our thunderstorm season beginning, the recent firework celebrations and more in store at the end of the year, you need to plan well in advance and keep a stock of calming tablets for your pets.

Long before a severe storm approaches dogs can be seen pacing, panting and behaving in an agitated manner.



Even though skies are sunny, with their keen ears, canines can hear at much higher and lower frequencies than we do. A dog can hear a faraway rumble of thunder that you might miss. They are also more attuned to changes in barometric pressure than humans. A drop in pressure signals that conditions may be right for a storm to develop. So a dog may learn to associate the *feeling* of a pressure drop with the arrival of a storm.

For animals with more sensitive hearing than ours, these noises are deafening and they often run away out of sheer terror. Dogs can jump through glass windows, scale tall fences, snap chains and hurt themselves in numerous other ways, trying to get away from the noise.

Dog and cat microchipping is a simple procedure. A Veterinarian simply injects a microchip, which is smaller than a grain of rice, beneath the surface of your pet's skin between the shoulder blades. Your pet will not react any more than he would for an injection. Microchipping your pets is the most permanent form of identification and the implanted microchip is there for life. All stray animals that come into our clinic are immediately scanned for a microchip and the majority of them are reunited with their owners within minutes of being scanned. All SPCA's and animal shelters should also be equipped with a scanner.



It is vital that you ensure all your contact details are recorded accurately on the registration form. You should also contact the appropriate microchip company immediately after implantation to ensure that the initial registration has been completed.

### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY:

**Westville Veterinary Hospital 031 267 8000**

## Meet Dr Jessica Price



I grew up in a family of animal lovers, and wanted to become a vet from the age of five. I have always had a particular love for the tiny, weird and wonderful creatures that in practice we refer to as "exotic pets". My interest and love for animals ran deep and veterinary felt like it was an obvious choice.

I qualified from Onderstepoort in 2018. In 2019 I completed my community service in rural Eastern Cape, working on both large and small animals. Thereafter I followed my love for exotics and trained at The Bird & Exotic Animal Hospital in Pretoria, working solely as an exotic animal veterinarian. Although exotics are challenging to say the least, it's where I feel the most at home.

Outside of work I enjoy being creative, be it with interior design projects, home renovations, furniture restoration or vintage fashion.

My menagerie of special-needs and exotic pets also keep me busy.

### Interesting facts about parrots



1. Parrots are members of the order Psittaciformes which includes over 350 bird species
2. There are many types of parrots but they all have a few things in common, such as a curved beak and zygodactyl feet (four toes on each foot, two of which point forward and two backwards)
3. Males and females of most parrot species look exactly alike. An exception is the eclectus parrot, the males are vivid emerald green and the females are crimson or royal blue.
4. A third of the World's population of parrots are endangered.
5. The largest parrot species can weigh as much as a house cat.
6. Parrot feathers contain natural antibacterial agents. The brilliantly coloured feathers on parrots come equipped with a bacteria-resistant pigment called Psittacofulvins. It's a pigment only parrots produce and it gives feathers their colourful hues.
7. Many parrots are long-lived. Macaws and cockatoos typically live from 35 to 50 years.
8. Many species of parrots mate for life and the mated pair work as a team to raise their young.
9. Parrots typically lay 2 to 8 eggs at one time.

## Survivors - Blue and Bandit

A couple of months before we got Blu and Bandit, we had to send our beloved Sheppi of 15 years over the rainbow bridge. My heart was broken and I remember saying then, This is it! I cannot do this anymore. I don't want another animal ever again. Its too much heart ache when they have to leave us. Anyway my very good friend's dog had puppies, and she kept on sending me pictures of these 3 puppies. I would just say how cute they were and didn't go and see them. In the meantime our house was so quiet. In all our married life Paul and I had never been without a dog or two. I can honestly say that it was terrible. So, I went to visit my friend to see the puppies and it was love at first lick. I took both of them.

Blu and Bandit were with us for less than a week when Blu starting bringing up bile, not eating and sleeping a lot. It was a Saturday afternoon and we thought he just had a tummy bug. Sunday night at about 10 pm he gave us such a big fright, his little tummy worked and it looked like blood. We jumped in the car with him (me in my PJs i might add) and rushed him to the 24 Hour Emergency Vet in Hillcrest.

The Vet there was wonderful, we told her all his symptoms, and she said he might have Parvo. That was confirmed 10 mins later after she had done some tests. I remember her telling us all about Parvo and the low survival rate when a puppy gets it. I was sobbing, there is no ways we can lose this little guy. We hadn't even bonded with him properly. They put him in isolation straight away and started him on a drip with meds. Leaving him there all by himself just about broke my heart. He was so tiny.



Monday morning Bandit didn't want to eat, so we knew straight away he had Parvo as well. We took him to Dr Mostert at Village Vet and he confirmed the parvo. We asked if we could bring Blu to the Clinic as well so the two boys could be together. We fetched Blu and he was put into a cage next to Bandit. The next two weeks were filled with a lot of crying by me. Sad crying and Happy crying.

We would get updates every morning telling us that Blu was responding well, but Bandit was a very sick little boy. I would be happy and sad at the same time. We would call in the afternoon and the news would be the other way around. It really was a terrible time, for all of us. We visited once or twice, but the boys couldn't understand why we weren't picking them up, which was very upsetting. So going forward we just relied on the messages and phone calls. I am sure Sister Pat and Sister Paula got so tired of hearing from us.

Blu responded so well to the treatment he was able to come home a week later, but Bandit was not doing so well. The day we brought Blu home was bittersweet. We were all so happy to have the little guy back home with us but worried about Bandit.

I don't know what treatment Dr Mostert gave Bandit, but I call it a miracle, because a week later Bandit was allowed home as well. To have 2 sick little puppies and have both of them survive is truly a miracle and we are all so thankful to Dr Mostert and his team of dedicated staff.

The love and laughter these boys have brought into our home is just wonderful. They keep us all so busy; what with potty training, teaching them manners, waking us up at 4am to go potty, following us around all day like little shadows, snuggling up to us when going to sleep and taking over the bed, makes it so worth it. I must also say that they are a bit spoilt but they both survived a terrible illness and I am so thankful everyday.

Mandy Wessels



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## **Keep your pets safe during the festive season**

- ◆ Beware of giving bones to your dogs as they can cause blockages in the digestive tract and often splinter into small pieces that can cut or rupture the lining of the intestines. This also applies to sosati sticks as they can be swallowed whole which will result in surgery to remove them.
- ◆ Keep electrical cords, Christmas tree lights, etc. out of the way of puppies and kittens. Chewing on lights and cords will cause electric shocks and burns in the mouth.
- ◆ Don't give chocolate to your pets - it is extremely toxic to them.
- ◆ Don't leave your pets in a hot car when shopping - the temperature rising inside the car can be deadly to your pet.
- ◆ Keep your gates closed at all times to prevent your pets from straying into the road.
- ◆ Pets should have some form of identification, either i.d. tags on their collars or better still microchips. The SPCA and most veterinary clinics have microchip scanners to enable them to identify your pet and return it home safely.



## **Catnip and cats**

Even though cats go crazy and some even seem drugged around catnip, it's not a drug. It's actually a herb that belongs to the mint family. When the leaves are broken it releases a certain chemical that most cats respond to.

All cats respond differently to catnip. Some of them walk away as they couldn't care less, but others go ape. The cats that do go crazy are responding to the active ingredient in catnip called Nepetalactone which stimulates a cat's five senses (touch, smell, sight, sound and taste.)



Those cats that do react will eat it or lick it; some roll in it and others just sniff it. The catnip reaction is inherited so not all of them respond. Young kittens and old cats rarely respond although large cats like tigers will. If your cat's behavior doesn't change around catnip it's nothing to worry about. About 10 to 30 percent of cats don't go berserk over catnip.

Catnip is completely safe and isn't addictive to cats so give your feline friend a treat every now and then. The most amusing thing about giving cats catnip is the behavior change. Although it's safe, keep in mind you can have too much of a good thing. If a cat eats lots of fresh catnip it could vomit or have diarrhea but this is rare. If it does happen don't give your cat as much catnip or any at all.

## **World Diabetes Day**

Diabetes is not only a human medical condition but often occurs in dogs and cats as well. The body needs insulin to use sugar (glucose) from the diet for energy. Without insulin, sugar accumulates in the blood and spills into the urine. Sugar in the urine causes the pet to pass large amounts of urine and to drink lots of water. Levels of sugar in the brain control appetite and without insulin the brain becomes sugar deprived. This makes the pet constantly hungry yet they may lose weight due to improper use of nutrients from the diet by the body. Untreated diabetic pets are more likely to develop infections and commonly get bladder, kidney or skin infections.



There are three forms of diabetes, all of which display very similar symptoms, the most noticeable being:

- Drinking excessively (much more than usual)
- Urinating excessively (much more than usual)
- Having a ravenous appetite
- Losing weight rapidly or suddenly
- Pet is often tired, lethargic or sleeps more often.

**Note that these symptoms are not exclusive to diabetes, but they are often the earliest signs detectable by owners. To prevent dog diabetes, pet owners should be very observant of their pets health.**

Whenever you think that your pet is not doing things that it normally does, please take him to the vet for a check up. Most diseases are controllable if treated in their early stages.

## **When to say goodbye**

This is a question that no-one can really answer for you. Not all pets will pass away gently in their sleep when their time has come (though we wish they all could). Because you know your pet better than anyone else, you will probably have a gut feeling when the end is approaching. One general guideline is to look at the "good days" versus the "bad days". If your pet is experiencing more bad days than good and your vet cannot offer any further treatments, then the time is near. Or, if treatments for a disease are so hard on your pet that they are hurting their quality of life, it may be time to consider humane euthanasia.

This will be a difficult time that requires a lot of soul searching but remember, it is all because you love your pet. If they could, they would thank you for being their advocate.

Now the process of grieving will begin. Grief is a little different for everyone and there is no right or wrong way to do it. Remember the good times you had with your pet and know that they would thank you for relieving their suffering.

Consider doing something special to memorialise your unique and much-loved companion. You may wish to plant a tree or other plant in remembrance of your pet. Another therapeutic exercise during grief is to write about your pet. A poem, story or written tribute can help you say goodbye to your beloved companion.



## Fight those fleas and ticks!

### Fleas

We know that fleas love heat and humidity which, due to global warming, is present for longer periods of the year than previously. In Durban, fleas are able to breed happily almost all year round, even in the cooler months when they simply wait for spring or someone to turn on the heater.

More than 90% of pet owners never see the first 2 or 3 fleas that their pets acquire outdoors. The females then begin laying eggs after 24hrs and carry on laying 50 eggs per day for up to 40 days. Those 2000 eggs per female emerge over the next few months to become the next generation of fleas seen on your pet!



The failure of long term control appears to be the single most important contributor to the breakdown in flea control programs.



Most pet owners run into trouble because they stop treating for fleas when they stop seeing fleas on their pets. If one considers that only 5% of the flea problem resides upon the pet, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that treating only at this level is like trying to empty the ocean with a teaspoon!

The only way to get on top of the situation is to treat your pets throughout the year. If you are having flea problems come in and discuss the problem with our staff. We have a wide range of products available. We can also put you in touch with a representative of the product in question and they will be able to help you further.



### Ticks and biliary

Biliary, also referred to as "tick bite fever", is a disease that is caused by a parasite named *Babesia canis rossi*. Certain types of ticks transmit this parasite to pets when they take a blood meal and remain attached to your pet for over 24 hours. The parasite enters the red blood cells and damages/destroys them while replicating and spreading rapidly throughout the blood stream.

The first signs, most commonly noticed in dogs with biliary, are lethargy and loss of appetite. These dogs can also have pale gums and inner eyelids.

Complicated biliary cases with multiple organ involvement will need hospitalisation with more intensive treatment such as blood transfusions, drips, cortisone treatment, tube feeding, oxygen supplementation, sedation, etc.



Prevention of this potentially life threatening condition is simple and can be achieved by using reputable tick control products on your pet. We have a wide range available in our shop at the clinic. Our ladies at

reception will be able to advise you on the correct product to use for your pet.

It is also recommended that you avoid tick habitats or areas where you know wild or larger domesticated animals inhabit. Keeping grass and weeds cut short, sealing off cracks and crevices within your dog's sleeping areas and regular washing of bedding can also help with the prevention

As good pet owners we need to realise that there are some things that our pets simply cannot do without:

- Yearly vaccinations
- Good nutrition
- Year round flea and tick control
- Regular deworming

THE GREATEST GIFT YOU  
CAN GIVE SOMEONE  
IS YOUR  
**TIME.**  
BECAUSE WHEN YOU  
GIVE YOUR TIME,  
YOU ARE GIVING A  
PORTION OF YOUR LIFE  
THAT YOU WILL NEVER  
GET BACK.

## Dispensing of scheduled drugs

We frequently have misunderstandings associated with the re-dispensing and refilling of scheduled medication.

Our dispensary, just like all pharmacies and hospitals, is strictly regulated by the Medicines Control Council. Drugs are rated on a schedule from Schedule 1 to Schedule 8. Only Act 36 products like dewormers, flea control and medicated shampoos may be dispensed over the counter. However, up the scale, the M.C.C. has stipulated that scheduled drugs may not be issued for long periods without the patient being re-examined every six months. Only a prescription consult fee is charged at these visits provided there are no other new conditions/ complications or problems identified by the vet.



This law protects both us and the patients and is imposed upon both human and veterinary medical practitioners. Failure on our part to observe this law may lead to us losing our license to practice medicine and the privilege to dispense medication independent of a pharmacy.

We would therefore appreciate your understanding and co-operation in this regard.

## Owner Compliance

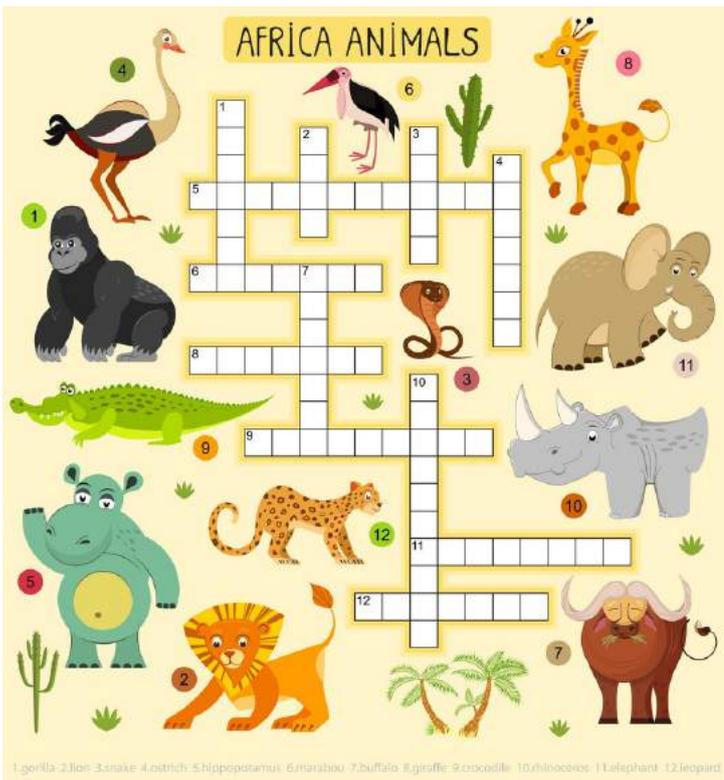


In order for our patients to fully recover from an illness or surgery, it is necessary for owners to listen closely to the instructions given to them during the discharge appointment for their pet.

The surgery or procedure done on the pet is only half of the battle towards your pets recovery - the recuperation at home is just as crucial.

Instructions about care of bandages, dispensing of medication, wearing of collars (to prevent self mutilation), restriction of mobility, to name a few, must be strictly adhered to. There can be possible complications if instructions are not followed, resulting in prolonged discomfort and suffering to your pet and of course, higher costs.

If you have any questions or are not sure of any of the instructions, please do not hesitate to contact one of our nurses.



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