

How to Prolong Your Dog or Cat's Life

BY
CATHERINE VANNEMAN

Having worked as a veterinary assistant for a total of about two and a half years, I have noted a few chronic problems experienced by dog and cat owners that could be avoided. The more crucial of these problems concern early care of puppies and kittens, vaccinations, intestinal worms, heartworms, and grooming.

In this article I hope to furnish information that you will find useful in avoiding these pitfalls.

When you first get a dog or cat, regardless of age, the best thing to do is take it to a vet for an exam. If the animal is purebred it's a good idea to have it examined before you buy it if the owner is willing. (You may want to question their reluctance if they refuse.) When you take it to the vet's also take a stool sample. You can probably find one under your bed or even outside. Try to get a recent one and take it in some plastic, or aluminum foil.

If you have the time to wait in the reception room, by the time you get in to see the vet they will probably be able to tell you whether or not your pet has worms. (Please call to find out their office hours.) If it is agreeable to the vet

(again, call to find out), you may be able to leave the animal at the vet's in the morning and pick it up later in the day, after it has been examined and wormed, if worming was necessary. Always take a stool sample with you, if you want the dog/cat checked for worms. It's a lot easier for you to get one.

When you go to get your animal, the vet will tell you the results of the exam, and make recommendations for further care. Concerning shots — they are really necessary. They can be pretty expensive, but they can save your pet's life. Distemper shots are very important, if you're going to scrimp anywhere don't scrimp here. Distemper is a very hard disease to treat, and is a terrible,

pitiful way for an animal to die. Young kittens and puppies are especially susceptible to this very contagious disease. You are taking a chance when you get a pet from the pound, for this reason.

Rabies vaccinations are required by law for dogs. Some people get them for their cats if they are going to be let outside. For cats there is also a vaccine for Pneumonitis, an upper respiratory infection that is very contagious. I have heard mixed opinions about the effectiveness of this vaccine, so ask your vet her/his opinion.

Because we have so much warm weather in which mosquitoes can thrive, your vet may suggest putting your dog on heartworm preventative.

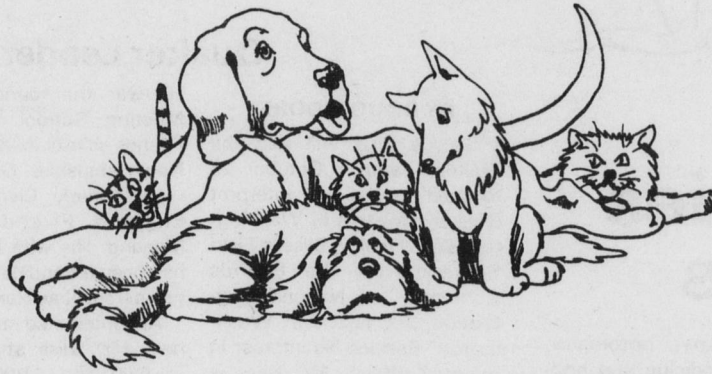
(Cats almost never get heartworms.) Dogs get heartworms when they are bitten by a mosquito that has previously bitten an infested dog. Heartworm larva are contained in the blood of an infested dog. These worms actually live in dogs' hearts and can greatly decrease the heart's efficiency, and shorten the dog's life span. The preventative is a medication you will probably have to give your dog every day for about ten months out of the year.

If a dog gets heartworms, the treatment is lengthy, expensive, and the series of intra-venous injections given in the first phase of treatment can be rough on some dogs. If your dog is young enough you can usually start him/her

on the preventative. An older dog will need to have its blood checked to see if it has heartworms first. Ask your vet what she/he thinks you should do in respect to heartworms.

If your pet has long hair, comb it! An animal's hair gets tangled too. Worst of all, it can get matted. These mats can foster skin sores and diseases, provide a home for maggots in those sores, and/or drive the animal crazy with itching. Typical matted areas are; behind the ears, under the neck, the "armpits" and entire underside, and also along the backs of the rear legs. But mats can be anywhere; between the toes, around the toenails, or inside an ear. During the early summer, dogs such as German Shepards, Collies, Spitzes, Huskies, Chow Chows, Norwegian Elkhounds, and others, need to be brushed or combed frequently to control the huge amount of winter undercoat they lose in that season. Or one can be content to vacuum all day and eat dog hair for breakfast. Naturally, it's best to comb your long-haired dog/cat daily, but try to do it at least once a month in the trouble spots. I think a comb works best.

If your animal has bad mats, get a friend you think it trusts



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Old Political Patterns Emerge Again

BY BOB WELLS

With both the Presidential and Gubernatorial elections just a few weeks off, a look at how they are related shows some old patterns reappearing that will shape the future.

Jim Hunt, the Democratic nominee for governor, has crossed a boundary which no other candidate in this state has done since 1960. He supported a Presidential candidate who ultimately won his party's nomination. The last Democrat to do so successfully was Terry Sanford who was an early and ardent backer of John Kennedy. Their dual Democratic alliance led them to victory and has not been repeated since. This may be an underlying factor in Hunt's strategy, hoping to usher in a new era of Democratic politics under the auspices of Jimmy Carter.

In 1964, Democratic gubernatorial nominee, Dan Moore, waited until the last moment to embrace Lyndon Johnson and it was due to his tardiness that no positive bond between

the two candidates ever emerged. Between elections the Vietnam war reached its peak and it proved to be the downfall of the Democrats and LBJ. Enter Richard Nixon.

The national stage was set in 1968 for a Republican victory while the Democratic nominee for governor, Bob Scott, pledged allegiance to Ed Muskie and stressed his ties to his father, a former Governor, Kerr Scott. Both Scott and Nixon won, resulting in a party split between White House and Statehouse.

In 1972 the Democratic nominee for Governor, Hargrave Boyles, did not even come close to George McGovern and both lost decisively in the tide of Republicanism shown at the polls. At the same time, Nixon had emerged "triumphant" (so he claimed) from Vietnam and his dream of a Republican majority was within his grasp. This can be seen in the victories of two North Carolina Republicans, James Holshouser (the first Republican elected Governor since reconstruction) and

Jessie Helms, U.S. Senator, both of whom rode to victory on the coat tail of Nixon. But then came Watergate and its immense complexities which finally circumvented Nixon and his grand hope.

Despite the resignation of Nixon and the rough primary season, the Republicans have come out fighting and are running an effective campaign. Carter, after a strong showing in the second debate, is still being stalked by Hugh Hefner while Ford is plagued by the Special Prosecutor and the verbal blessings of Earl Butz.

Thus 1976 is a watershed year in party preference. Can the Hunt — Carter coalition bring victory for the Democrats? Will David Flaherty win, thus forgiving the Republicans for a lackluster performance by Holshouser?

Can Gerald Ford overcome the Reaganites who may stay home on election day?

These questions will be answered shortly and the choices that are made will effect both parties future and our own.

Poems

BY RUTHANNA HAINES

EMOTION COLOR

The unseen pianist conveys a mood of somber grey
While I stare into a sky of still blue,
And I hear a familiar knock upon the door,
My inner Mood turning from quiet to cheery hue.

Pinks turn to reds of brilliancy glowing
As one who has knocked gently steps past the threshold.
He draws nearer with arms outstretched,
Oranges turn suddenly, as he embraces me,
To blazing gold.

(untitled)

Trivial thoughts of what might have been said
lay quiet, discarded, as if they were wrong
feelings bring to mind and again they exist
chances recur but no needle to be thread.



Lt. Gov. Jim Hunt



David Flaherty