



Newsletter Winter'11

Hanne Grice in association with
Walk the Dog



Dear friends,

As the temperature drops and shops fill with the sound of Slade, it's time to snuggle down with our loved ones and look forward to Christmas. We've got some inspirational pet gifting for your furries, tips on keeping pets safe in the cold and during the festivities, plus a delicious recipe for your feline friends. WTD's husky girl racer, Emma Cowell shares her latest racing report from Poland while we put our 'trainer in training' Tracie Ryan under the spot light. Thanks for your support this year. And, we wish you and your furries, a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Hanne

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Top tips for having a safe Christmas

As the countdown to Christmas begins, let's take a look at some of the festive pet hazards that lurk within our homes.

Avoid giving leftovers from the Christmas meal, such as turkey bones to your pet; they can splinter easily causing damage to the intestine and cause choking. Christmas stuffing often contains onions and garlic both ingredients contain the toxic ingredient **thiosulphate**. This may cause haemolytic anaemia, where the pet's red blood cells burst while circulating in its body. Symptoms include; laboured breathing, liver damage, vomiting, diarrhoea, and discoloured urine.



Mushrooms should also be avoided as certain types can be fatal. Keep pets away from fat trimmings, these can cause **pancreatitis**. 'Pigs in blankets' (sausages wrapped in bacon) are a delicious addition to any Christmas plate, but the high levels of salt can cause a dog to drink too much water, which can develop into a life-threatening condition called bloat.

While entertaining guests typically brings with it platefuls of nibbles, nuts, raisins, grapes and clementines are bad for our furries. Macadamia nuts, walnuts along with most varieties of nuts contain high amounts of **phosphorus** which can lead to bladder stones. And, as little as six nuts are enough to cause some dogs to develop muscular tremors and paralysis in their legs. Raisins and grapes are toxic; in large quantities have proven fatal, so keep the mince pies to yourself! Clementine pips and the kernels of plums, peaches and apricots are easily dropped onto the floor, these contain a type of **cyanide** compound that can poison a dog if it eats enough, resulting in dilated pupils, breathing difficulties, hyperventilation and shock.

Pets, especially dogs, are particularly curious of mystery packages. So, make sure any edible treats stored safely away; chocolate is bad for dogs - it contains a compound called **xanthines**. Ingestion of chocolate can cause muscle tremors, difficulty in breathing, irregular heartbeats and in some cases it can be fatal. Once you've opened your gifts, make sure you safely dispose of the wrapping, especially plastic bits such as bows and ribbons. Fake snow, tinsel and foil are all potentially dangerous. These can make your pet sick and can cause serious, if not fatal, digestive problems or lacerations in their throat and mouth.

Most of us enjoy a tipple during the festive season, but remember, alcohol should be strictly kept in the hands of humans and away from furry paws. Dogs are much more susceptible to the poisonous effects of alcohol and ingestion can lead to laboured breathing, behavioural changes, hypothermia, seizures and cardiac arrest.

There's nothing better than a kiss under the mistletoe, however make sure your pet doesn't eat any. Mistletoe and holly berries are **very poisonous**, as are poinsettias, a favourite plant to spruce up your home at this time of year. Be aware of your pets drinking habits; stagnant Christmas tree water can be highly toxic to our four-legged friends, especially to cats.

Make sure you keep antifreeze for your car out of your pets reach. Every year many pets are accidentally poisoned by it. The substance tastes sweet to an animal which encourages them to drink it. As a precaution, avoid your pet drinking from any puddles particularly while out on a walk, as it may contain antifreeze.

Have a happy and safe Christmas with your pets.

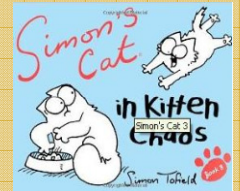
New faces to Walk the Dog...

This season we give a warm welcome to; **Scruff, Holly, Bitzer, Chloe, Cara, Vero, Solo, Ruby, Rollo, Roxy, Pixie, Alfie, Levi, Brooke, Florence, Jess, Daisy, Robert and Ripley**. If your pet isn't on our picture gallery yet, please send us their picture, so they can join our animal hall of fame. Email us at info@walk-the-dog.net

Book review Simon's Cat 3: in Kitten Chaos

by Simon Tofield

The third in the series from Tofield's brilliant character 'Simon's cat'. This book sees the welcome of a cuddly new addition to the family in the form of Simon's Kitten. An adorable read with great drawings. RRP £7.66



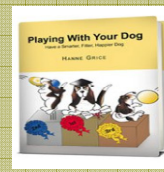
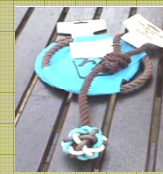
Special appeal – Princess



This black and white beauty is Princess, a 14 week old contented kitten. Princess loves cuddles and was found abandoned outside her foster carer's home. Princess is a healthy girl, fully vaccinated and micro-chipped. If you can give Princess a forever home, then contact the Hemel Hempstead & Berkhamsted Cats Protection branch on **0845 3711851**.

Christmas gifting for your pets

Christmas is nearly here, so why not show your pet how much you care with our festive goodies. From pampering products to edible puds, check out our online shop at www.walk-the-dog.net



Recipe corner: 'Jelly Surprise' for cats

- 3 cups chicken broth
- 4 and 1/2 tablespoons flour
- 1/4 cup diced carrots
- 3/4 cup minced meat or pieces of fish (pre-cooked)

Instructions...

Make the chicken broth, allow it to cool, then add flour and mix together. Heat mixture on high heat until it's thickened. Add carrots and meat/fish. Mix together, then pour this into the cat's dish. Allow the mixture to cool and set.

In the news...

Puppies '12 course dates out now



Our 2012 class schedule is available online at www.doglistener.tv Stage 1 course is aimed at newly vaccinated pups; covers all the essentials from heeling to recall. Stage 2 is aimed at 6 months olds above; helping keep your furry friend 'on track'. Our classes focus on positive re-enforcement and we teach owners how their pet thinks as well as learn fun tricks too. Classes held at Leverstock Green Village Hall HP3 8QG, Tuesdays from 6.30pm.

London Marathon here we come!



WTD's Hanne Grice is running the 2012 London Marathon for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Looking to raise £2012 for this fantastic charity, we're asking for your support to help reach Hanne's target. You can donate however big or small, online at www.justgiving.com/Hanne-Grice Thank you.

"A great stocking filler..."



'Playing With Your Dog' celebrated its 1st anniversary in November. Now available across the globe, it was recently featured in Tring Living and Dogs Monthly as "a great Christmas stocking filler". Available to buy from WTD and other online resellers. RRP £6.99.

Meet Tracie Ryan our 'trainer in training'



Tracie Ryan joined Walk the Dog Puppies in September. A former veterinary nurse, now studying canine behaviour, we put Tracie under the spotlight in our 60 second interview.

How has your veterinary experience helped you with your new role at WTD? Canine behaviour wasn't specifically taught at vet nurse school. However, since most of the dogs that

came through the door really didn't want to be there, I dealt with plenty of problem behaviour/ At WTD the training is fun, but there's a serious side; ensuring owners know how to keep their dogs safe, spot early health problems, and understand how dogs think. I've been able to offer health advice and have knowledge of breed specific issues, so my nursing experience has been really helpful.

How are you finding puppy school? I love it! Some years ago, I had a bad experience at a training school with my own puppy and avoided training classes ever since. The methods used were almost military and certainly in no way relevant to the nervous, apologetic nature of my wonderful best friend. Thank goodness for WTD; small puppy classes mean we can treat each puppy and owner individually and pick up on any issues quickly. There's no shouting just affection, fun and some remarkably quick learning. After 3 months, I'm still reeling from the amount I'm learning from Hanne, the pups and their owners. The behaviour advice is second to none; it's so rewarding to see the relationship develop between puppies and owners as they start to understand each other and bond even more strongly. I'm so happy to be involved in making that happen.

What top tips would you give anyone interested in changing careers to become a dog trainer? Do your research, visit lots of training classes as an observer, make sure you're completely comfortable with the methods that are being used, then volunteer! Take a canine behaviour course to complement your dog training. Without doubt, you will become a much better trainer and your doggie clients will be amazed you have learnt their language. And be aware – it's about "owner training" as well as dogs!

What does the future hold for Tracie? Finish my canine behaviour studies and become a qualified behaviourist but I have very high standards; WTD has taught me that there's a massive amount to learn, and there's no substitute for hands-on experience.

'Pole' position for WTD's girl racer

WTD have been the proud sponsor of British husky girl racer Emma Cowell four years. One of the fastest racers around, Emma sends us her report from Poland...



Race report: The St Anne's Mountain in Poland was the spectacular pilgrimage venue for 2011 European Bikejoring Championship. With 15 countries and over 300 competitors taking part, I was under pressure. Competing in a form of racing known as 'Bikjoring', this is where one dog assists one rider on a bike to negotiate their way through forest terrain, against the clock. This year's race was held at Poland's largest amphitheatre; 410m above sea level with a technical, dual hill course of six kilometer. The muddy conditions made the steep half mile starting hill very tricky. However, my hound Azlan and I soon reached speeds of 22-26mph.

The temperatures rose, so I slowed pace on the second flat to avoid Azlan overheating - we still had the grind of the long up hill finish to come. Catching sight of the competitor in front, Azlan found a '5th gear'; we accelerated amongst cheers from the UK team, finishing in a respectable 15th place.

Emma is currently preparing for the UK bikjoring season, and hopes 2012 European Championship's will see her bringing home the gold!

Cold weather safety tips for pet owners

With the recent drop in temperature and snow fall already hitting the highlands, here's our cold weather safety tips for pet owners.

Coats - just because your pet has a fur coat, doesn't mean he won't feel the cold. Small dogs or dogs with little to no hair should have sweaters or jackets for protection against the cold. If your dog doesn't like wearing clothing, then better to keep them out of the cold and provide mental and physical stimulation through play instead. We recommend "Playing With Your Dog" by Hanne Grice.

Water and food - avoid letting your dog drink water from bowls outside as the frigid temperatures could cause stomach upsets and even hypothermia.

Cold - avoid leaving your pet outside or being walked for long periods of time. Even half an hour in freezing temperatures can cause problems. Never leave your pet in the car for more than ten minutes when temperatures dip below freezing.

Your pet's ears, feet and tail are highly susceptible to frostbite, so limit his time outdoors.

Ice and feet - avoid walking near ice or frozen puddles/ponds/canals/lakes, otherwise keep your dog close to you and on the lead to ensure he cannot run across the ice. Recent years has seen an increase in fatal accidents where owners have attempted to rescue their pet from falling through ice. Always wash your dog's paw's after a winter walk to remove any salt.

Shaking - if your pet is out in the cold and begins shaking or shivering, get him back to warm shelter as soon as possible. Signs of hypothermia include; shaking/violent shivering, slow, shallow respiration, a slower heart rate, gums may appear pale or blue. The pet may also appear listless. Call your vet immediately.

Eating snow/ground matter - avoid letting your pet eat snow or anything else on the ground. Dangerous objects or chemicals may be hidden in the snow or ice. Eating snow can cause stomach upsets and even hypothermia. Keep water at room temperature. Pet's become easily dehydrated in winter, so make sure he has easy access to fresh water.

Antifreeze - is highly toxic, can get into puddles on the pavement and roads and tastes sweet to pets. Even the smallest amount is deadly to your pet. If you suspect your pet has had exposure to antifreeze, call your vet immediately.

