



PAW prints

Volume 7

No. 3

This month...

- the 'Prez' retires
- how to clean those 'nasties'

Let's go visit the veterinarian!

Can your pet enjoy trips like these? Yes! Try this technique, and he might even 'ask' to go!

Most dogs and puppies are hesitant when introduced to new situations and new places. This is a normal reaction – part of their survival instinct. Our job is to teach them that new places can be fun, or at least tolerable.

The first place you should visit after bringing puppy home is your veterinarian. The overall good health of your dog needs to be determined at this time. It's also a good time to start a positive relationship with the veterinarian and his staff. Find a small, easy-to-chew treat that doesn't upset puppy's stomach. These treats will only be available to puppy when he encounters a "scary" situation. Give a couple of treats to the veterinarian to give to the puppy. Give a few treats to the technician to give to the puppy and also any other people he encounters. He gets the treats when he approaches the person, but not when he hides, and not as a lure to get him out of hiding. As puppy realizes treats come from all the people at the vet's, he will become happy and eager to return. If your dog continues to be fearful in subsequent visits, continue bringing treats and have only the staff give them (none from you!). Make extra visits to the vet when you don't have an appointment (call ahead to make sure they aren't too busy)

Never stroke your dog and pet him and use what you feel is a reassuring voice to tell him: "It's OK, Rover! They're trying to be nice to you! It's alright!" When you do that, you're reinforcing his fear: you are giving him all the praise signals that tell him his behavior is exactly what you want! (soft voice, quiet petting, etc.). Instead, with a fearful dog, he will only get a treat or petting or both, when he acts less fearful and approaches. Sometimes a favourite toy will get the puppy to forget his fear a little and "loosen up" a bit. Fearful puppies may also try to climb on or claw at their owner in seeming desperation. This should not be allowed or praised! Inadvertent praise for this can be something as simple as using your hands to gently remove him from your body. Instead use his leash and don't touch him at all, or turn away, or stand up.

Any time your dog goes to a new and "scary" place, be prepared! These places can include the groomer, boarding kennel, pet

store, friend's house, park. Always have your dog on leash – no leash = no control! Have your "special" treats handy, and give them to people to give to your dog appropriately.

If your dog is not used to or does not tolerate car rides, then he is already worked up even before he arrives at his destination. Early and frequent exposure to car rides can make transportation a whole lot easier. Dogs (and cats!) quickly learn to hate car rides if they only go to the vet or to the groomer.

The safest way to travel with your dog is in a crate or with a seatbelt. Some people like to use the plastic enclosed crates because they contain the hair, dirt, drool, and any accidents that might happen. Seat belts allow a little more freedom, but don't allow the dog to run all over the car. Dog seat belts are sized to fit, and can be easily obtained at Pets First for any size dog. We also have kennels for sale. Both will protect your dog should you have to stop fast or get into an accident.

The 'joy' of catnip

Most cats find catnip (*nepeta cataria*) simply irresistible – even the big cats. A component of the oil in the catnip leaves acts as a nerve stimulant in the cat's brain lowering inhibitions and promoting relaxation.

Catnip is a relative to peppermint and sensitivity to it is genetically predisposed. However, with overuse your cat may lose interest. Catnip should not be compared to narcotics, it has no physiologically addictive properties and none of the damaging side effects.

Family: Labiatae Genus: Nepeta

Nepeta Cataria, a wild English plant belonging to the large family Labiatae, of which the Mints and Deadnettles are also members, is generally distributed throughout the central and the southern counties of England, in hedgerows, borders of fields, and on dry banks and waste ground.

The plant has an aromatic, characteristic odour, which bears a certain resemblance to that of both Mint and Pennyroyal (also known as Pudding Grass). It is this scent holds a strange fascination for cats, who will destroy any plant that may be bruised.

There is an old saying about this plant: 'If you set it, the cats will eat it. If you sow it, the

cats don't know it.' And it seems to be a fact that plants transplanted are always destroyed by cats unless protected, but they don't meddle with plants raised from seed, only being attracted to it when withered or bruised.

This commonly grown plant exudes the chemical Nepetalactone, a very effective insect repellent but one which induces almost addictive behaviour in some adult cats, although kittens seem unaffected by it.

Nepeta cataria is the common catnip; other *Nepeta* species have varying amounts of "active ingredient". A good one is *Nepeta mussini*, a miniature-leaved catnip that makes a good rockgarden plant. There are about 250 species of catnip, plus a bunch of hybrids between species. Unfortunately, only a few are available commercially.

Valerian root is another herb with effects similar to catnip and it generally makes cats a bit nuts as well. It is, however, not as readily available and perhaps a bit more potent.

Interestingly enough, Catnip and Valerian both act as sedatives on humans, and are often used as an herbal tea.

If you think your cat would appreciate some organic catnip, call Pets First for details.



New 'naturals' cat food

We now have our newest generation in quality cat food available. The formulation is modeled after our very successful holistic dog formulation. The main ingredient is chicken, lots of chicken. We use two types of human grade chicken in this formula, fresh chicken as well as a low ash chicken meal. We use brown rice and barley and use a high quality chicken fat. We also use Salmon and Flax. Our Omega profile is balanced for a healthy skin and coat. We also have added whole potatoes and whole carrots as well as whole cranberries to this awesome formula. The cranberries contain a substance that helps eliminate possible concerns with urinary tract problems.

Our feeding trials have gone extremely well so it is with great confidence that we tell you that cats of all ages will love and thrive on this new food.

Give us a call for more details or if you would like to try it.

From the Prez



Here I am sitting in my dad's float tube in 20' of water. Sure glad I didn't have to swim to shore!

Hello friends. This will be my last message to you. I am taking early retirement. It's time to start taking advantage of being a dog and taking life a little easier. I plan on having some exciting times napping in the afternoon waiting for my dad to get home from work. He took me fly fishing last month and I really loved it. Didn't catch anything but had a good time. The whole family went and we had some great hikes in the woods.

We were in Spokane in early June for the Bernese Mountain Dog National Specialty and had a great time. Halo (my daughter) and I earned our Novice Brace Draft title. I had to keep an eye on Halo as she is very rambunctious and carting is serious work. We met lots of great people.

Speaking of Halo, she is going to take over my duties as President. She is almost four years old and is very qualified. She was the first female Berner to achieve dual versatility status. A versatile Berner is one who has achieved a championship, an obedience or agility title as well as a draft title. Halo has done this in both Canada and the United States. Halo has also produced ten lovely puppies, one of her puppies (they are now 18 months old) won the futurity at the National Specialty in Spokane, pretty impressive. Halo is a ball of fire and is sometimes a little noisy but she really gets the job done. We have nicknamed her 'Hurricane Halo'.

So Hurricane will guide the company into the next phase of expansion. We have progressed into several states and are looking forward to opening our US corporate offices later this year. Our new web site is up and running smoothly. We will have a new 'Pet Forum' section open in the fall so look for it. If you would like your picture on the web site just submit it to us along with your name and we'll get it into our 'happy customers' section. Let us know how happy you are with the food and keep up the great work letting all your friends know about Pets First.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all the great times over the last seven years. It's been fun guiding a company that stands for quality and service. I've made some great friends and look forward to hearing how successful the company is over the coming years.

Good bye and take care,
Bandit

The Prez's photo album



Three generations!! There's me (Bandit) on the left, with my daughter (Halo) in the middle and the Halo's daughter (Passion) on the right.



Here's Halo posing for the camera. It was hard to get her to stay still long enough!



... and I couldn't resist showing off one of my baby pictures! Damn, I'm cute!

Cats lose almost as much fluid as saliva during grooming as they do through urination.

Contact us

"Paw Prints" is published regularly by Pets First Products and Services Inc., *the Pet Store to your door.*

Please feel free to contact us at:

Pets First, #106 – 12824 78th Avenue
Surrey, B.C., Canada V3W 8E7
Tel: 604 590-7387 or 1-800-PETS-1ST
Fax: 604 590-5578
email: pets1st@pets1st.com
Visit our web site: www.pets1st.com

Although usually associated with dogs, the term mongrel is the correct way to describe a non-pedigreed cat.

Oops!

Anyone who shares their home with a pet will have to deal with a potty accident or stomach upset at one time or another. Here's a few tips to help deal with these problems.

If the accident occurs on something washable like a blanket, clean up any residual mess and spot-treat the stain. Wash the item with your regular laundry detergent, adding some vinegar to the load.

An accident on your carpet is a bit more challenging. The most important tip is to clean the area immediately. Blot the stain thoroughly with clean, white cloth or paper towels. Use only white towels, otherwise towel dyes may bleed onto your carpet, making the problem worse. Continue to blot with fresh towels until the area is dry.

After soaking up as much liquid as you can, thoroughly clean the area with a product specifically designed to eliminate pet stains and odors. Pets First carries some excellent products. Using cleaners not designed for this purpose will only mask the smell, and your pet will be attracted to the spot again and again. Be sure to test an inconspicuous area of your carpet first!

Unfortunately, some pet owners may find that their carpet is too damaged for cleaning to effectively remove pet odors. This may happen if your pet "hides" his accidents. If stains are not cleaned immediately, urine can not only discolor your carpet, but can seep down into the carpet backing and padding.

In this situation, many pet owners replace their carpet with an alternate flooring like tile or hardwood, rather than having their rooms re-carpeted.

And lastly, if your pet is experiencing problems with inappropriate elimination, even when his problems seem to be clearly behavioral, it is always necessary to consult your vet to rule out any medical reasons for his elimination difficulties.

Cat 'cookies' – mmm-good!

Earlier this year we published a recipe for homemade dog 'cookies' and received a tremendous response. Not wanting to leave out all you cat owners, here's a 'cat approved' recipe for cat cookies!

1 cup whole wheat flour
1 tsp catnip
1/3 cup milk
1/3 cup powdered milk
2 tbsp butter or vegetable oil
1/4 cup soy flour
1 egg
2 tbsp wheat germ
1 tbsp unsulfured molasses

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix dry ingredients together. Add molasses, egg, oil and milk. Roll out flat onto oiled cookie sheet and cut into small, cat bite-sized pieces. Bake 20 minutes, let cool. Store in a sealed container.

\$\$\$ earn extra \$\$\$

We are looking for people to join our pack. If you enjoy being around our four-legged friends, and want to have fun, call Pam at 1-800-738-7178 for details.