

Pet Gazette

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**Cookie and
Pikki Muphy**

Heat Stroke and Hyperthermia

August is the hottest month of the summer. In Florida we see temperatures that reach over 100-degrees Fahrenheit. These high temperatures are great if you are laying on the beach getting a tan. But for an animal left outside on these hot days, heat can be fatal.

Hyperthermia is a condition where an animal's body absorbs more heat than it dissipates. Animals are susceptible to hyperthermia due to their body's inadequate cooling mechanisms. As owners need to provide water and shelter, and select times which are cooler for exercise when the pavement has cooled (morning and evening).

Hyperthermia can occur quickly. For example, a pet can overheat while you get groceries if they are left in the car with no air conditioning, even if the windows are down and you park in the shade.

Signs of heatstroke or hyperthermia can include:

- Rapid panting
- Bright red tongue and gums
- Thick sticky saliva
- Lethargy
- Vomiting (with or without blood)
- Diarrhea
- Disoriented

If you notice that your pet is exhibiting signs of heatstroke contact your veterinarian immediately. Prompt action is necessary to help the chances of your pet's survival.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly on Pet Friendly Parks and Beaches

One of the wonderful things about summer time is being able to go to the nearest beach or park and enjoy the beautiful weather. We're also very lucky that a lot of these places also accept our four legged friends. Although it's not always just fun and games at these places. Also lurking under those shady trees, bright sunshine and lush, just cut grass are some things that are not so attractive.

The Good- Parks and beaches are a great place for Fido to run around, get exercise, wear off extra energy and meet new friends. They also provide a good opportunity to work on some minor behavior issues like learning how to interact appropriately with other people and other animals. Before going to the parks just be sure the your pet is up to date with all vaccines. Dogs don't just need a rabies vaccine and a county tag. They also need their distemper, bordetella vaccine, fecal checks and annual heart worm/Lymes tests.

The Bad- Even though Fido may seem happy and healthy on the outside many things may be going on inside that even Fido is unaware of at first. Intestinal parasites can be picked up very easily in high traffic areas where many different animals share the same playing and potty areas. Parasites like hookworms, roundworms, coccidia, whip worms, and giardia can be transmitted from one pet to another just by stepping where another dog may have defecated days or even weeks prior. Another thing to watch out for is fleas, ticks and mosquitoes. A way to avoid these and the diseases they carry, is to be sure to give Fido his flea and heart worm medication every month, just like clock work every thirty days.

The Ugly- When going to dog parks, Fido may have the time of his little life, but there is a down side when your dog interacts with the other park goers. You, as an owner, have no control over what another dog or owner does. Use caution when entering these unfamiliar territories. Dog fights can begin with seemingly no warning, yet there usually are some body language you should watch for. These warning signs include: hair standing up on their backs, ears pinned back, lip lifting, snarling, growling, unwanted rough play, your dog or other dogs acting as if they are afraid.

Did You Know

1. There are sunglasses made just for our canine friends called "Doggles"? www.doggles.com
2. There is a sunscreen just for dogs? www.pawshop.com
3. Dogs only have sweat glands on their feet so it is a lot harder for them to cool down on a hot day.
4. On an 80-degree day the temperature inside your car can reach 100 degrees in MINUTES!
5. You should change your pet's outside water often. Parasites such as Giardia can live in standing water.

Adoption Alley

Animal Care Center, Country Oaks Animal Hospital, and Best Care Animal Hospital all have their own adoption programs. We currently only adopt out cats and kittens, but we do occasionally get dogs that need to be adopted too. We are currently full at all three clinics and are in need of loving homes for cats and kittens of all shapes and sizes. Our kitties are spayed, neutered and up to date with all of their vaccines before they leave our hospital. Our adoption contract states that kittens and cats we adopt out will stay indoors, stay current on vaccines, and have yearly examinations by a veterinarian.

These are a few pictures of kittens looking for permanent loving homes. If you have questions about adopting one of our cats or kittens feel free to contact one of our offices for details.



Jersey from Country Oaks Animal Hospital needs a loving home!

Pet Super Star

Whipper Czekaj

Cocoa (chocolate lab) and Whipper (golden retriever) are both 5 years old. They joined our family when they were three months old and have been inseparable ever since. Puppy hood with two young pups was an adventure and one that continues every day.

Cocoa loves swimming, boating, walks in the park and chasing lizards. Whipper loves going to the park, boating, beating up his sister and being the sole recipient of any and all attention.

Cocoa is the best sister to Whipper. See, although Whipper is the happiest little guy you could ever know, he was dealt a bad set of genes. When he was six months old, Whipper was unable to walk very well and was diagnosed with severe arthritis and advanced hip dysplasia. He underwent bilateral femoral head ostectomy (FHO), which is essentially where they removed part of his hips. Whipper doesn't realize he is handicapped and loves to run and jump, even though no one expected him to be able to. He is even able to jump up on the couch or the bed and sneaks up there anytime mom and dad aren't watching!

Last year Whipper was diagnosed with immune mediated thrombocytopenia, a disorder where his body attacks his platelets. He had a very tough year, but his spirits were never down. He is a fighter and is now doing very well. He will continue to be monitored to ensure he does not relapse.

Whipper doesn't know anything is wrong with him and doesn't let anything get him down. He is extremely happy, full of energy, and always ready to romp and play. Cocoa doesn't stand a chance when Whipper gets rambunctious. But she is a very willing participant. Though she is much stronger than him, she lets him torment her.

Whipper & Cocoa are best friends and whether they are playing together, sleeping or just hanging out, they are such a great duo that have brought us both so much joy. In a few months we are expecting our first child and look forward to watching these two rugrats enjoy their new human sister! They will both be so wonderful with her!



Whipper (golden) and his sister Cocoa (lab) from Country Oaks Animal Hospital

A special thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Czekaj for sending in this months Pet Super Star! Please keep sending your pictures and bios to tiffany@countryoaksah.com. We LOVE reading them and seeing your wonderful pets

Cats and Petting-Induced Aggression

There are cats that willingly accept their owner's love and affection. Then, when they have had enough, they turn around and bite or scratch the hand that feeds them. These cats will often seek out their owner's attention, crying or jumping onto their owners lap for social interaction. But these cats have a threshold of how much petting and social interaction they will tolerate.

Once this threshold is reached they bite and then run away with their owner wondering, "What did I do?" While some owners may pick up body language that tells them their cat has had enough, most are at a loss when their sweet little Fluffy turns around and bites them.

Owners of these feisty felines should identify their cat's threshold for petting and try to avoid crossing it. Cats will usually give us signals such as hissing, stiffening of the body, ears lying flat back, quivering of the tail, growling, or leaning away from the owner. If a cat is showing you these signals, she should be left alone. By avoiding a cat's "petting threshold" we can lessen the risk of injury from a bite or scratch.

Physical punishment and verbal punishment should be avoided at ALL costs. Physical punishment, such as a smack on the nose or whack on their back WILL make matters worse and the risk of injury will be greater. The cat will also learn that an owner's hand means punishment and she may retaliate when an owner goes to give her affection.

Prevention of petting-induced aggression starts as a kitten. Kittens that are handled and socialized while they are young have a higher threshold for social interaction, brushing and petting. Because grooming is required for some breeds of cat, early socialization to brushes and handling play a large role in avoiding petting-induced aggression.

Positive reinforcement and clicker training can be used with behavior modification to reduce petting-induced aggression. If you feel you and your feisty feline would benefit from some behavior modification, please contact one of our three hospitals.

Bufo Toad Poisoning

What is a Bufo Toad?

A Bufo Toad is a large, usually nine inches in length, toad that is brown to grayish brown, with a creamy yellow belly. They are found in tropical areas and like to live near buildings and in yards. They feed on insects, vegetation, and small birds, but also will eat table scraps and pet food. They excrete a toxin from glands located on their back that is highly toxic to dogs, cats, and other small animals.

What are the symptoms of a Bufo poisoning?

Symptoms of Bufo Toad poisoning are hypersalivation, pawing at the mouth, vocalization, bright red gums and seizures.

What do I do if my pet comes in contact with a Bufo Toad?

First and foremost stay calm. Then rinse your pet's mouth out thoroughly with water. The toxin from a Bufo Toad is thick and sticky, and will stay on your pet's gums, teeth, and tongue. Use caution when rinsing out your pet's mouth, even the nicest dog can bite when in pain or if is having seizures. Then take your pet to a veterinarian immediately.

If you have any questions about Bufo Toads please call one of our animal hospitals for further information.



Meet the Staff

Yolanda

Yolanda has been at Best Care for 2 years. Yolanda is one of our technicians who will be specializing in dentistry. Yolanda started as a receptionist here, but her drive and commitment pushed her to broaden her knowledge and work to become a technician.

Yolanda has a 7-year-old daughter, Kiersten and a cat named Baby. When not at work (which is rare) Yolanda likes to live on the wild side riding her ATV, motorcycle or jet skis. Many a Monday morning she will limp in with bruises from the previous weekends spills, but she still makes it to work with a smile on her face.



Art

Meet Art Cook. He has worked as a technician at Animal Care Center for the past four years, but worked at Best Care Animal Hospital for approximately 10 years before that. Starting off in the kennel like most of our staff, he quickly worked his way to become a technician. Art is currently our only male technician, so us ladies always seem to abuse his muscles, lifting and restraining heavy animals for procedures. We also love the fact that he always brings us chocolate! In his spare time, Art enjoys working outdoors and spending time with his family, which include his wife of 27 years, his daughter who is expecting her second child very soon, his son-in-law and his granddaughter who is the apple of his eye.

Art also coached cheerleading for 14 years with Police Athletic League and competitive all-stars, which he led to win two national championships. The thing we love most about Art is he is always in a good mood, ready to help us out with anything WE need and ready to tell everyone a funny joke. He always has us smiling.

