



Tips, advice and some fun facts about our best little friends who mean so much to us!

Isn't it great that March has arrived and it's so good that Spring is just around the corner. With a little luck we've seen the back of all that snow and cold weather for a while. Hopefully you weren't affected by it too badly.

While it did cause problems I have to say it was lovely to see all the children out playing in the snow. Kids' doing what kids should be doing is great and of course, there were plenty of 'big kids' out building snowmen and throwing snowballs too! Oh what fun!

But now Spring is coming and I can't wait. That's what I like so much about March, it always feels like a fresh new month where there's an expectation of change and better things to come, (warmer weather at least I hope!). The lengthening of the evenings marks an end of the dark winter months and the change of the season brings with it a sense of newness and hope for the year ahead. Even just seeing the early buds on the trees and the flowers starting to appear seems to lift everyone's spirit.

March is also a really eventful month. Wales and Ireland celebrate their Patron Saints, there's Mother's Day, the changing of the clocks and a few more events to boot. So many that I thought I'd list them on the back page for you.

Oh and speaking of Mother's Day. That's at least one day that all you Mothers out there should be able to put your feet up, sit back and enjoy being looked after for a change. Come on all you Fathers, Sons and Daughters, give Mum a nice Mother's Day (Sunday Mar 22nd) - you know she deserves it!

Anyway, as always I've tried to pack this newsletter full of fun, interesting and useful information for you and your dog. So why don't you go make yourself a cup of tea, sit yourself down, relax and enjoy the rest of this newsletter.

Have yourself a lovely March and I'll speak to you soon.

Joan

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My Boys 'Big Adventures':

'Pram Power'



"What am I doing in a pram you may ask? Mum thought it would be a great idea to put me in it after I had leg surgery in 2005 and couldn't walk for a while. So I still got to go 'walkies' with the others and had lots of people giggling and making a fuss when they saw me. Everyone said I was such a 'cute baby' - go figure!"

Luv Charlie xxx

Why does my Dog Bark so Much?

Some dogs bark more than others, maybe even to the point where it's a total nuisance. Different breeds of dog, such as terriers and the smaller breeds, tend to have higher levels of barking. Also, the personality of your pet can play a part as dogs that are bubbly and excitable do tend to bark more.

But in many cases there is an underlying reason for excessive barking that must be addressed before the behavior can be corrected. For instance:

- Dogs that bark at night or while they are on their own may be suffering separation anxiety!
- Dogs that bark at noises, postmen or people coming to the front door may be assuming the role of 'den' protector or 'territory defender'.
- Dogs that bark when other dogs bark may have simply learnt from imitation. Especially if they have spent time in kennels or near other barking dogs when they were young.

But regardless of the cause, what's really important is that you address the underlying problems before doing any training to correct the behaviour. If you don't then you'll find it difficult to get the correction you want and may even create more problems in the process.

Speak to a reputable dog trainer and spend time studying dog behaviour before doing any training.

"Man's best friend that we love lots, keep them brushed to remove those knots"

Price Increase from 1st April 2009!

I have endeavoured to keep costs down for as long as I can and without any compromise in the quality of products or service. But with the huge increases in the price of electricity, together with the high increases for products such as shampoos, grooming equipment, cleaning materials and all the other things it takes to bring a quality service to you, I have now got to the point where I have to increase each groom by a small amount. This will take effect as from 1st April 2009.

I hope you understand and please be rest assured that your pet will continue to receive the highest quality of service that he/she is accustomed to.

Of course if you have any questions or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dogs in the News!

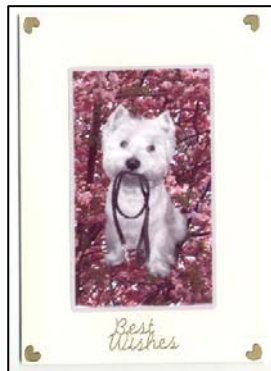
! A Jack Russell in Wolverhampton has become an expert tree climber. Penny, who was recently featured on the BBC news channel, has decided that's it's much more fun to scale the trees in her local park than have a run around on the ground like most dogs. Penny's owner Gwen told the BBC that Penny likes to chase squirrels in the trees, even though she has no chance of catching them. For passers by it's quite a spectacle seeing a dog run along the branches of a tree, 30 feet in the air!

Personalised Pet Cards

Best Friends Dog Grooming is pleased to offer a 'personalised' pet card service. You can get a photo of your pet printed on the front of a card, be it a birthday card, thank you card, sympathy card, get well card or even your chosen 'greeting' card. You can also include your own verse or comments inside.

Prices start from £1.25 plus p&p, depending on design. This includes a fast turnaround so you get your 'unique' card delivered to your home address or chosen address on a date that suits you.

Here are some examples but you can be as creative as you like and design your own card to make it even more extra special.



To find out more just call me or ask the next time you're in. I'll happily talk you through the process of obtaining your own unique 'card' that your family and friends will just love.

Pet Bereavement!

As a groomer, I become close to my client's dogs and I treat them like I treat my own dogs. So it's always sad to hear when one of them passes on. I dread the phone call that says 'sorry to have to tell you that my dog has passed away'. Sometimes it's hard for me to hold back the tears as I feel the loss the owner has at loosing their beloved pet.

Last week I had one such phone call. Morag was a lovely little Westie and has been coming to me for grooming since April 2007. She was an elderly dog and had been ill for a while. She passed away in her sleep and her owners held a short service after burying her in their garden. I can tell you, I shed a few tears over her death.

Here is a photo of Morag just after she'd been groomed and doesn't she look gorgeous. I've given her owners a couple of photos of her that I'd taken and they are very so happy to have them to look back on when she was fit and healthy.



RAINBOW BRIDGE

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor. Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent. His eager body quivers.

Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together....

~ Author unknown...

Don't delay your Dog's Grooming!

It's really important that your dog gets groomed regularly in order to help keep him happy and healthy.

Different breeds of dog require different intervals between grooming. But experience has shown that leaving even one or two weeks extra between your dogs grooming appointments can create a lot of problems. Here are just a few of the most common:

! A build up of matts and knots on your dog.

The longer your dog's hair gets to grow between appointments then the more likely that it will become knotted. Even with daily brushing it can be much harder to get those knots out. They can easily develop into solid matts which can cause irritation to your dog's skin and damage their coat. Plus when a dog's coat has gotten too long and has become matted then the only option may be to clip off the entire coat. But this will leave your dog looking much, much different!

! Excess hair means more cost to you.

Obviously your dog's hair continues to grow between grooming appointments. So the greater time between clipping then the longer and thicker your dog's hair will be. In most cases it then takes longer to wash and clip, especially if it's matted. This extra work in grooming can therefore result in extra cost for you.

! Potential health issues for your dog.

Not only can matts cause problems for your dog but there are also other potential health problems as well. Ear infections can easily occur because of the extra time between appointments. Hair and dirt will build up in your dog's ears which can cause them pain, irritation and infection which could lead to expensive vet's bills.

Your dog's nails can also grow longer than they should which may lead to complications, especially with dew claws.

! Unnecessary discomfort for your dog.

Most dogs will spend much of their time in the house along with you, where no doubt the central heating will be on to keep you all warm. But just imagine sitting in your living room wearing your warmest outdoor coat with the heating on. You'd feel pretty uncomfortable! But it's no different for your dog when its hair is allowed to grow longer and thicker than it should be. To them it's like wearing a wooly coat on a warm summer's day! Not very pleasant as you'd imagine!

! Reduced chance of finding problems early.

During the grooming of your dog we are always on the look out for any lumps, bumps, cuts or anything that may be a concern to your dog's health. These are things that you may not easily see yourself, especially under a thick coat. But early detection of health concerns can mean all the difference when it comes to your dog recovering again. Therefore, that extra couple of weeks when issues are not detected could be disastrous for your dog!

Overall, allowing more time between your dog's grooming appointments is likely to cost you more money. But most worryingly it may cause discomfort, pain and even lead to health issues for your pet. And that's just not worth it, especially if you add in the worry of having to pay extra vet's bills as well!

Did You Know!

! Brushing your dog regularly will not only help to keep your dog's coat in great condition but it'll also help your dog to bond with you. Grooming and close contact with its pack members is a very natural process for your dog.

! You should never leave any dog alone with young children or small animals no matter how well you think your dog gets on with them. A dog has a natural predatory instinct which cannot be totally controlled, so in some situations a split second left alone could be tragic.

Caring for older Dogs!

Just like people, when dogs get older they need to be cared for a little more delicately. But that doesn't mean that all the fun will end! After all, they'll be a wiser old dog and with the passing years are likely to be even more loyal.

It just means that you'll have to make adjustments in your lives to take account of their aging bodies.

Dogs can also sometimes be older than we think especially if we didn't get them as a pup. Different breeds have different ageing patterns. For example, a Great Dane is considered old at six whereas a terrier may be 10, 11 or even 13 before showing major signs of age.

The important thing is to notice the signs and take into account the age of your pet when doing your normal routine with them. That four mile walk they were able to do last year may be just a little too much for them today.

But you don't need to completely wrap them up in cotton wool. Minor adjustments to account for them getting a little older may be all that is needed. Don't cut out exercise completely as obesity and diabetes are two major health issues in older dogs.

Making sure they have a good routine, a healthy diet, regular checks and the correct exercise to reflect their age, should be enough to make sure their golden years are long and happy.

Dogs in the News!

! A Jack Russell in Wolverhampton has become an expert tree climber. Penny, who was recently featured on the BBC news channel, has decided that's it's much more fun to scale the trees in her local park than have a run around on the ground like most dogs. Penny's owner Gwen told the BBC that Penny likes to chase squirrels in the trees, even though she has no chance of catching them. For passers by it's quite a spectacle seeing a dog run along the branches of a tree, 30 feet in the air!

! An Italian woman had to call police to retrieve part of her nose after her dog had bitten it off! According to Annova.com, the woman was asleep in bed when the pet Poodle inexplicably bit off part of her nose. Police had to chase the Poodle around the owner's garden to retrieve the nose before surgeons could sew it back on. The woman, who will have to undergo a lot more reconstructive surgery, has forgiven her pet but is refusing to let it sleep in her bed again!

Doggy Word Search!

The following Word Search contains the names of 10 breeds of dogs. The breeds included are listed on the back page but can you find them first before looking at the names.

K	G	A	O	D	T	S	N	S	A	E	T	T	J	H	R	O	C	G
C	O	R	D	S	D	I	A	S	O	R	A	L	E	E	N	O	E	O
A	D	E	E	Y	P	T	E	D	T	O	L	E	L	V	U	R	J	D
B	P	D	O	I	I	A	E	E	E	E	S	S	E	Y	M	R	E	P
E	E	C	N	N	R	A	A	P	S	S	T	K	D	A	E	E	E	A
G	E	T	P	O	L	R	T	S	P	D	Y	L	N	Y	S	T	B	E
D	H	O	F	R	W	T	U	R	A	I	R	S	A	M	F	I	U	H
I	S	S	C	A	T	R	A	T	P	H	S	E	W	E	R	F	S	
R	H	E	D	S	K	O	I	N	P	E	L	W	Y	O	L	I	E	D
N	S	I	U	C	M	I	I	L	P	J	S	O	R	N	H	S	E	N
A	I	C	A	F	S	E	P	H	I	B	H	K	T	O	O	H	M	A
I	L	J	M	E	U	U	E	H	T	O	U	P	H	A	T	S	Y	L
S	G	R	S	D	H	R	S	I	E	X	O	L	O	M	I	E	D	T
E	N	O	E	A	D	O	S	T	T	E	W	D	T	U	A	T	O	E
D	E	K	H	E	E	A	E	G	G	R	A	H	D	P	R	T	B	H
O	D	R	G	I	E	F	I	A	D	R	M	T	I	A	O	E	Z	S
H	L	S	C	O	T	T	I	S	H	T	E	R	R	I	E	R	C	E
R	O	R	M	S	O	P	Y	R	T	S	A	O	T	B	T	H	T	T

March – A Month of Freshness and Hope!

In the Roman calendar March was officially the first month of the year, which was only changed in 1752 to January. In lots of ways March does feel like it's the start of something new. It certainly is a month full of freshness and hope.

Traditionally associated with the Wild Daffodil, March is also a busy month with plenty of events to get us out and about enjoying ourselves. Here are some of them:

Mar 1st – St David's Day (Wales)
Mar 8th – International Women's Day
Mar 9th – Commonwealth Day
Mar 17th – St Patrick's Day (Ireland)
Mar 20th – First day of Spring
Mar 22nd – Mother's day
Mar 29th – Changing of the Clocks

More Fascinating Facts about Dogs:

- ! Basset Hounds cannot swim.
- ! It is thought that obesity is one of the most common health problems among dogs.
- ! It is estimated that approximately 70% of Americans sign their pet's name on greeting and holiday cards.
- ! The bible mentions dogs 14 times.

'Pet of the Month'



This is Pepe - he's a Shih Tzu and belongs to June and John Williams who live in Runcorn. They told me that he likes nothing better than to 'chill out' in his favourite spot at the top of the stairs.

Answers to Quiz
Boxer
German Shepherd
Scottish Terrier
Whippet
Shetland Sheepdog
Rhodesian Ridgeback
Old English Sheepdog
Irish Setter
Lhasa Apso
Jack Russell

Doggy Thinking!

Dogs seem to have a great sense of fun. That's maybe why when they're soaking wet and covered in mud, they insist on finding the lightest coloured piece of furniture you have, stand on it and then shake themselves. - *"It just isn't any fun doing it outside because then my master doesn't get to chase me around the house with a towel"*

Puppy's First Groom!

For a puppy it's so important they learn as soon as possible that grooming is nothing to be feared. Getting them used to being brushed, bathed and even the noise of clippers at a young age, can mean such a difference to them when they get older.

While the actual need for grooming of a puppy will vary from breed to breed, the important thing is to get them used to their surroundings and the process of grooming. This should happen as earlier as possible. Anytime soon after they've had their puppy vaccinations.

Waiting till a puppy is 7, 8 or even 11 months old before having their first groom, will be so much more stressful on them. Indeed, it's a lot harder and more work for the groomer as well.

Most situations of dogs being nervous about grooming can be blamed on their first few grooming experiences. That's why I take extra special care with puppies so they learn that grooming is a fun and exciting thing to have done. Oh, you can also be sure that kisses and cuddles will abound when the little cuties are around me!

Thank you for All Your Referrals!

It's always overwhelming and really fantastic to see that so many of you are kind enough to refer me to others. You really are helping to keep my business moving along and for that I am so grateful. Thank you so much.

Please Pass it On!

If you know of anyone that you think could benefit from my services or who may like to read this newsletter then please pass this copy on to them.

Maybe when you've finished reading it you could leave it in a place where others might get to read and enjoy it as well. What about in your hairdressers, dentist or doctors' reception. Or could you take it to your work so that your colleagues could benefit from it as well.

It's always good to reuse and recycle so by passing this newsletter on or leaving it where others could get to read it really would be benefiting everyone.

To make an appointment or if you just want to ask a question please contact me at:

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