

# YOUR VET



## SUMMER 2013

### SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS VETERINARY CENTRE

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#### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

**W:** www.southernhighlandsvets.com.au

www.facebook.com/SouthernHighlandsVets



#### OUR VETS:

**Dr Bill Beresford**

*BVSc (Qld)*

Special interests: Large animal practice especially cattle

**Dr Charlie Carter**

*BVSc (Hons) (Syd)*

Special interests: Cattle and small animal surgery

**Dr Alex Johnston**

*BVSc (Syd)*

Special interests: Small animal medicine especially feline medicine

**Dr Chris Watson**

*BVSc (Univ. Pretoria)*

Special interests: soft tissue and orthopedic surgery

#### OUR SUPPORT STAFF:

**Barb, Catherine, Aimee, Aimee, Erin and Megan**

Are eager to help you with your appointments, food supplies and any other questions you may have about the care and welfare of your pet.

Our clinic has a full range of Royal Canin pet foods. We also stock Weatherbeeta dog rugs, Fuzzyard dog beds and shampoos and Rogz collars and leads.

#### CLINIC HOURS:

The clinic can be contacted between 8.30am and 6.00pm weekdays, and between 8.30am and 12.00noon on Saturdays.

Sundays – now open between 10-11am

Consultations are by appointment

#### AFTER HOURS:

After hours emergencies - at night, on weekends and Public Holidays - will be attended by the rostered Vet from this practice. Call our number and this will be diverted through to the duty vet on call. If we are attending another call we may not answer but please leave a message and we will ring you back as soon as possible.

## HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DOG IN SUMMER

We all love summer, especially taking your dog out for a lovely run around at the local beach or park. But just as you need protection from the sun, so do your pets. It's important to know the limits of what your dog can handle and to see the signs of heat stress. Some of these heat-related illnesses include heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps, but thankfully they can all be prevented if you know what to look for.

#### HEAT STRESS

Dogs can get overheated very quickly, as they can't sweat like us. Panting partially helps, however when they are in summer sun, they can develop hyperthermia and heat stroke. The elevation in body temperature makes them release substances that cause inflammation. Hyperthermia is when a dogs body temperature goes above the normal range, and normal values in dogs vary, but levels above 39°C are abnormal. Heatstroke is a form of non-fever hyperthermia that occurs with excessive exposure to heat. With temperatures of 43°C, and without signs of inflammation, heatstroke leads to weakness, lethargy, and potentially including failure of vital organs.

#### THINGS TO REMEMBER

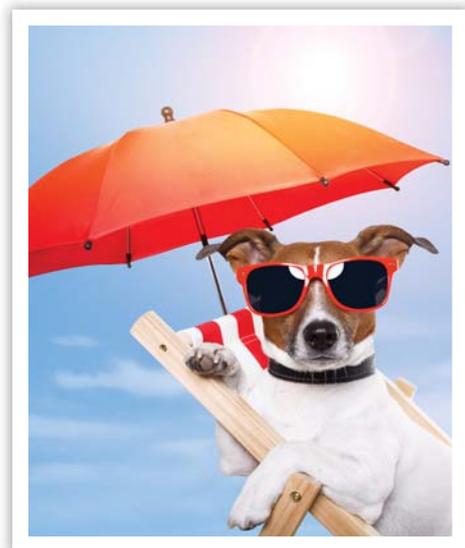
Dogs at risk are, puppies up to 6 months old, large dogs over 7 years, small dogs over 14 years, dogs that are overweight, overexerted, ill or on medication, have poor circulation, a history of heat-related disease and dehydrated dogs with restricted access to water. Signs of overheating are sluggishness, unresponsiveness, disorientation, bright red gums or tongue and eyes, excessive panting, high body temperature, noisy breathing, rapid heart rate, muscle tremors, wobbly movement and some extreme signs include vomiting, seizures and collapse.

#### PROTECTION / PREVENTION TIPS:

- Your dog needs shade too
  - Never leave your dog in the car
  - Keep your dog hydrated
  - Keep mid-day walks to a minimum
  - Take precautions at the beach (shade, no sitting on direct sand and limit time)
  - Keep old or overweight dogs out of the sun
- If you see either your dog or someone else's dog with signs of overheating, please let them know and call your veterinarian immediately. Keep your dog cool with wet towels, cool water or ice to chew till he/she is at the vet.

## INSIDE

- NAKIO'S NEW LEGS
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- HOUSEBREAKING PUPPIES
- YOUR CATS DIET
- SUBURBAN CHOOKS
- CAT DENTAL CARE



## NAKI'O AND HIS NEW LEGS FOR LIFE



On a cold Winter morning, rescuers from an animal centre found Naki'o, a mix-breed pup malnourished in a puddle with all four paws and the tip of his nose and tail frozen. He was rushed off for medical treatment, but the damage was so severe from the frostbite that he was left lame and unable to play, or even walk. This severely lowered the chances of him ever finding a new owner and home.

But hope came in the form of a Veterinarian Assistant named Christie Pace. Without hesitation, she adopted him at 8 weeks old and began her quest to give him a new life. Christie says "When he was a tiny pup he actually was able to get around pretty well because he was so light weight (only 4lbs!)

As he grew, he became heavier and his bones changed. This is when she started seeing significant changes and could see that he couldn't get around on harder surfaces like concrete so he couldn't go on walks down the street. He preferred playing on his belly and became three legged as one back leg was much shorter and missing more tissue than the others.

Christie raised funds for the rear back leg that was shorter at the vet clinic she worked at. After going to OrthoPets for a consultation she found out that Naki'o really needed all four prosthetics to be able to live a happy and comfortable quality life. OrthoPets was so kind to donate Naki'o's other 3 legs!"

We asked Christie, what has been the most rewarding part of your whole journey with Naki'o? She replied "The most rewarding part of my journey with Naki'o is the bond we've created and seeing how facing obstacles together has changed both our lives. He is my best friend and he's given me a bigger purpose in life to help other animals with disabilities."

We also asked Christie, when owners are making the decision to adopt a special needs dog, what advice would you give them? She said "You will face ups and downs when dealing with a special needs dog but never give up, there are resources out there. I always say if there's a will there's a way and disabled dogs truly can do the impossible."

Christie has founded Naki'o's Underdog Rescue, to allow other beautiful creatures get the help they need. You can visit Naki'o's Underdog Rescue here: [www.nakiosunderdogrescue.org](http://www.nakiosunderdogrescue.org)

Prosthetic products for animals are available in Australia, but please note that all products are custom made and require measurement, casting and fitting by a veterinarian and/or physiotherapist. If you have any further questions please contact your local veterinarian for more information.

## ROCK WALLABIES — NEED TO KNOWS

Australia has sixteen different species of Rock Wallaby, but these beautiful marsupial acrobats are threatened and have disappeared from a lot of their original ranges. WWF Australia has classified the Rock Wallaby as an endangered species, which means that they are facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.

### THREATS TO ROCK WALLABIES

Historically, the fur trade caused a massive decline in many species of Rock Wallaby, and the clearing of native vegetation and weeds changed fire patterns which has deprived them of habitats. Foxes and cats have taken their toll also. Now Rock Wallabies compete with livestock and goats for food, which forces them to other ranges. In New South Wales, a species of Yellow-Footed Rock Wallaby are facing a serious threat of extinction.

Rock Wallabies aren't found anywhere else on earth, so Australians are their natural guardians and need to protect them. But things are being done, and you can do your bit too. Visit [www.wwf.org.au](http://www.wwf.org.au) to find out how you can help.

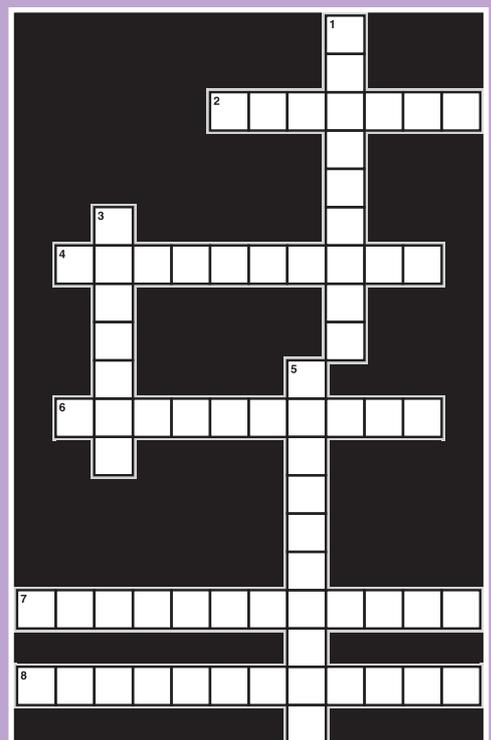
## Clever CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

- What sort of gas does discarded fruit and vegetables cause in landfills?
- What is a form of non-fever hyperthermia?
- What sort of legs has Naki'o been given?
- Naki'o's Underdog Rescue is a charity for animals with \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is the condition that makes a dogs body temperature goes above the normal range?

### DOWN

- A dogs \_\_\_\_\_ patterns could give an early warning sign that their owner's health is deteriorating.
- What are attached to dogs to study their behaviour?
- What can chicken droppings be used as?



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF "YOUR VET".  
ANSWERS ARE SHOWN ON BOTTOM OF THE BACK PAGE.

## CATS AND MOVING HOME



If you're planning a move, you should definitely take time to think of how this will affect your cat. They're territorial creatures, and can find moving a very stressful experience. But there are a few things you can do to make sure puss has an easy transition.

### THE JOURNEY

Firstly, you will need to make your cat as comfortable as possible while travelling to your new location. It's recommended that you ask your local vet to inform you more about what is a suitable amount of distance to do this yourself, as you may need to have the cat transported properly by professionals if the distance is too long. To help the cat be as comfortable as possible during travelling, you will need to get a suitable cat carrier, and fill it with familiar smelling blankets, favourite toys and a little treat food. Most cats hate travelling so they will often be on edge and meowing a lot, so keep them calm by talking to them along the way. And don't be surprised if they leave you a little treat to clean up after too!

### THE NEW PLACE

When you get to your new address, make sure the place closed up tight, as cats will find any kind of exit, even fireplaces and high windows. Try and keep quiet, once you let them free as they will be scared of

any unfamiliar noises, and wanting to be stereotypically "curious" of every nook and cranny. Prepare ONE room for your cat with some food and water, this gives them a good beginning territory. Put a familiar bed in there too with toys and litter as they won't be going outside for at least a week. Depending on your situation and the age of the cat you may need more or less time inside, but definitely ask your vet for their professional opinion.

While inside, you can encourage your cat to explore the rest of the house comfortably but putting a little bit of dry food in the corners of some rooms. But they may need more time inside if they're not relaxing. Your cat will beg to go outside, but don't give in as they might try and go back to your old location, or get lost, fall or come across an aggressive cat, so definitely stick to your guns.

A good tip is to get to know your new neighbours and their animals. And when you do decide to let them out, do it in the morning and monitor them as much as possible. Good luck!

## DOGS BEHAVIOUR COULD GIVE AN INSIGHT

Dogs and their owners have a very strong emotional and social mutual bond. But could dogs behaviour patterns give an early warning sign that their owner's health is deteriorating, or they are struggling to cope?

Researchers have recently performed a study into the behaviour patterns of dogs, by attaching movement sensors and monitoring them while indoors and out. These sensors give back numbers that show when sitting, digging, barking and other basic dog behaviours. By mapping out the normal movements and behaviours of healthy dogs, they now have a benchmark to study how they then vary from their normal behaviour.

These changes could then be linked to changes in their owner's health or wellbeing, which could be useful if applied to owners with special needs or are elderly. Possibly allowing people to live independently of help for longer, and have a helping hand if in need.

The study was held initially with collars and cameras to record the dog's patterns, but now the collars work on their own. Researcher's analysed data that included the chewing, drinking, barking, laying, sniffing and shivering which was repeated across many different breeds.

The data is still in its early stages, but already has found that dog's normal patterns reflect their owner's normal patterns. So if a dog starts acting a lot differently than its normal pattern, it could be because their owner has stopped feeding them regularly, or their mood has changed rapidly. For example, some early warning signs of Alzheimer's are confusion and difficulty completing everyday tasks, so rapid mood swings in owners that are being reflected in their dog's behaviour, could be picked up even if the owner doesn't know it.

The more breeds that get studied, the more accurate the predictions could be. In Australia 36% of households own a dog. That's over three million in total. This new technology means that eventually man's best friend could be not just our friend, but our saviour.



## HOUSEBREAKING PUPPIES

There aren't many cuter things in the world than puppies, but housebreaking them can often be filled with nerves and stress for you and your puppy. It doesn't have to be that way though, and in fact you have a helping hand because when puppies are first born, their mother cleans their den, keeping no scent of faeces or urine where they eat and sleep. They learn from mother to use outdoors once old enough, but they are conditioned to keep a clean den if they have a mother present as a puppy.

So, from the age of two or four months, most pick up the concept of housebreaking and crate training quite easily since it's been trained into them by their mother. Plus they have an extremely quick and efficient

digestive tract, so five to thirty minutes after a puppy eats, they'll defecate. Which means in a sense, you can run your eating schedule like clockwork, being careful to maintain regular outdoor trips.

In the early stages, you will need to provide a place for puppy that seems and smells familiar for them to relieve themselves. They will often go in the same exact spot as the scent acts like a trigger, but don't lurk and act nervous around them when they're trying to go, as they will pick up on this and be nervous themselves. Using a high squeaky tone to encourage them and saying "go potty" is actually a distraction so try and avoid talking to them when they are attempting to go.

Every morning you should bring your puppy outside to generally the same area, as it's important to remain consistent with the training process. This is so puppy gets into the habit, and begins to expect it in the morning. Once they have relieved themselves it's important to reward them for it, nothing too big, just a simple and quiet approval or treat to let them know they did something good.

On the flip side, don't punish your puppy for a mistake, or make them feel negative about bodily functions either. Keep calm and remove them from the place they had the accident, and move them to the correct place to go. Putting in a little extra work when they're a puppy, ensures they will keep good habits for their whole lives.

## SUBURBAN CHOOKS

Have you ever thought about owning a chook? Did you know that they could be more beneficial to your household than you think?

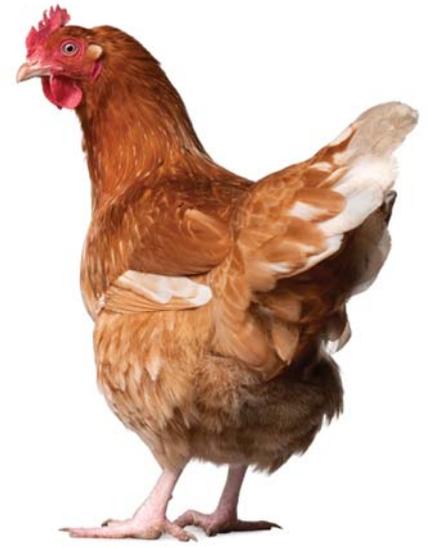
Most of us enjoy an egg for breakfast every now and then, perhaps even more often, but have you ever thought about the ultimate organic egg? Hand picked, by you from your own back yard? Well chickens can do a lot more for you than just lay an egg, they can also be very good for your carbon footprint. Australians currently waste more than \$1.1 billion in fresh fruit and vegetables every year, and landfills create methane gas, which is twenty five times more dangerous than carbon dioxide. Backyard chickens can be a great way to reduce this waste.

However, if you are thinking about keeping chooks, you must look after their welfare and give them shelter and protection. You will need to fence in your back yard and make a chook house. The chook house doesn't need to be very big, just use basic bits of wood and chicken wire. You can actually use an old children's fort or similar and alter it to suit chickens. Ask your council first before building it, but it can be put together very easily and cheaply. For more information and a guide

on how to build a chook house visit this site: <http://au.lifestyle.yahoo.com/better-homes-gardens/diy/how-to/h/-/16702238/how-to-make-a-chook-house/>.

Chickens living on a natural diet of leafy green vegetables, bugs, grubs and grains have been shown to produce nutrient-dense eggs filled with healthy omega-3 fats, fat soluble vitamins and healthy antioxidants. So while feeding your hen the food scraps you throw away, you're also getting the best quality eggs available. If you have a veggie patch already the chickens actually help them grow, as they scratch around the area picking up snails and any droppings can be used as fertiliser.

Just be conscious of your neighbours, as they may not welcome the idea of you turning your back yard into a mini farm. Neighbours cats can cause the chooks a lot of stress so make sure to fence off your chooks area carefully. Before you make your decision, talk to your local veterinarian as they will have more information. But ask yourselves this question, when was the last time your cat cleaned up after you, and fed you at the same time?



## YOUR CATS DIET

With a wide range of knowledge now available and strong advancements in medical treatments, cat owners are now more conscientious about providing great care for their pets. But what is the best diet for your cat?

Well, in response to the growing education of cat owners, veterinarians and feline health experts have been sharing their knowledge of the latest research into what's the best diet for your cat. The most relevant news is that wet cat food supports feline health as it relates to water intake, healthy weight and urological system functioning. Putting a little thought into what you feed your cat(s) can pay big dividends over their lifetime and very possibly help them avoid serious, painful, and costly illnesses.

Dry cat food can have a couple of negative outcomes if it's the only thing you feed your cat. The water content is low, carbohydrates are too high and the type of protein is too high in plant-based verses animal-based proteins. According to the ASPCA, canned cat food (wet food) contains up to 78% moisture, compared to 10% found in dry food. This is important information as cats lack a strong thirst drive relative to other species. This can assist your cat in receiving some of

their daily fluid requirements and encourage those who don't drink enough water during the day.

A higher water intake can also benefit your cats urinary health. The more the cat urinates, the lower the concentration of mineral ions and less crystal-forming than concentrated urine. When a cat is properly hydrated their chances of battling a variety of conditions that effect bladder and urethra, known as feline lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD) are a lot better.

It can be confusing to decide what do feed your cat and the right balance, so talk to your local veterinarian and do some of your own research to make an educated decision on what's best for kitty. If you are providing your cat with a balanced diet and making sure they get some exercise, they'll be healthy and live a long happy cat life!



## PRACTICE UPDATE



We are very excited to announce that we have moved to our new state of the art purpose built veterinary hospital at 48 Berrima Rd Moss Vale (just before Old Dairy Close)

Our new premises feature the following

- Large reception area with separate waiting area for dogs and cats and children's play area
- Large consultation room with direct access to car park
- Two additional consultation rooms
- Large treatment room with in house pathology
- Large surgery with state of the art monitoring equipment
- Radiology room with digital xray machine and ultrasound
- Separate cat and dog hospital facilities
- Grooming room with hydrobath
- Cat and dog long stay facilities
- Outdoor grassed exercise areas for dogs
- Cat play room for cats
- Stables for treatment and hospitalisation of horses and small ruminants
- Large car park which can accommodate horse floats/ larger vehicles

Please call in and visit us if you would like to have a tour of our fantastic new facilities

Our previous premises at 472 Argyle Street have closed but all our contact details remain the same.

If you would like to make an appointment please call 4868 1310 and for any further information please visit our website at [www.southernhighlandsvets.com.au](http://www.southernhighlandsvets.com.au) or follow us on Facebook – [www.facebook.com/SouthernHighlandsVets](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernHighlandsVets)



Down: 1. Behaviour; 3. Sensors; 5. Fertiliser.  
Across: 2. Methane; 4. Heartstroke; 6. Prosthetic; 7. Disabilities; 8. Hyperthermia.

## ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD