



"Your Local Pet Specialist!"

**250-758-3908**



**February 2013 Edition**



Grooming



Obedience & Rally-O



AGILITY

## WELCOME TO EDITION # 2



### *Importance of pet insurance*

Why should you keep your dog on health insurance coverage? There are many reasons that people pay a monthly rate for health insurance coverage for their dog. Often breeders will send their puppies to their new home with six weeks complementary coverage of health insurance and many rescue groups will do the same, and your veterinarian can supply a healthy dog with 4 weeks worth of complimentary insurance coverage as well.

**Bad day at the groomers?  
Naaah, just power napping!**

Sometimes the new owners do not see the need to continue this insurance since their puppy is healthy happy and nothing can ever go wrong.

This is the story of a lovely healthy puppy from a reputable breeder that had carefully screened the parent dogs for health. The pup went to its new home at nine weeks of age.

The new owners did everything right, proper feeding, proper veterinary care, lots of love and training and proper exercise for the pups age.

They stopped the insurance coverage when the pup was four months old, thinking that since they were not poor, they would put some money aside every month to cover for any emergencies.

The puppy was growing well and at seven months had an enormous growth spurt and started to limp just a little bit . After waiting for a few weeks, they noticed an improvement and thought that everything was okay again.

Another few weeks went by and after another growth spurt there was limping again. This time they took the puppy to the veterinarian and it was determined that through no fault of anyone the puppies front leg bones were not growing at the same rate which created pain and inflammation.

Treatment to help this young dog be free of pain and discomfort costs over \$8000. In order for any treatments to be successful, it had to be started immediately.

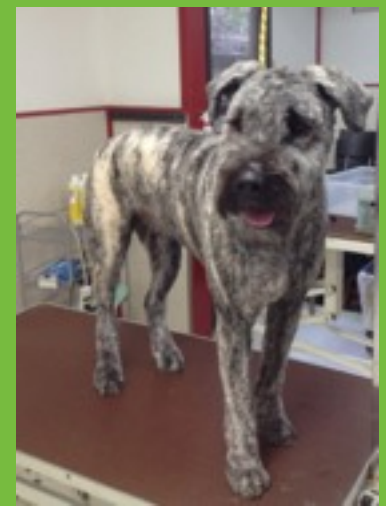
They were not prepared for that kind of expense, and if friends had not supported them, the future of this puppy would not have been pain free. After surgery and eight weeks of rehabilitation, the pup was moving much better and pain free, turning into a beautiful young adult dog who can live a normal life without discomfort.

The worry about making a choice between Dollars and doing the right thing could have been prevented by maintaining insurance coverage.



Stephanie is drying Piper

## CUSTOMERS!



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Trick Training Classtraining programs at:

[www.nanaimopetservices.com](http://www.nanaimopetservices.com)

continued from page 2

We all love our pets enormously and I could not imagine to have to postpone or cancel treatment for our furry friends due to financial restrictions. For most of us our dogs and cats are more than just pets, they are members of our family.

There are many insurance companies that have medical coverage packages for dogs.

Please check with your home insurance company, or look into coverage from Trupanion, BCAA, Pet Secure and many others.



**We are so not getting groomed!!!!**

## *Do you know what your dog is saying?*

Our dogs are amazing.

Most of us only understand one or maybe two different languages. Dogs on the other hand understand many different languages: language of smell, taste, sound, touch, gesture, body language.

Dogs know what we are up to, they read the cues for dinner time, going for walk, playing ball, sleep time, family coming, the mailman or garbage truck arriving long before we do. It almost looks like they can read the clock!

They know how we feel by the way we look : upset, happy, tired, lazy, excited, scared.

Can we tell from looking at our dog what our dog is feeling? it is a skill we can all learn and we would be wise to spend some time educating ourselves!

If your dog wags his tail does that mean he's always happy or will he also wag his tail when he is under stress and upset, for instance when his nails are being clipped? The answer is yes! A dog can and will indeed wag his tail when he is upset. So be extra cautious when you approach a dog that is wagging his tail but is otherwise not displaying signs of joy and happiness.

It could well be that the dog is under stress and is trying to communicate to you that approaching at that time is not a good idea.

Here are some of the signs of a dog stressing down and shutting down, trying to prevent the potential for a conflict to escalate by using calming signals or avoidance signals:

**Ignoring handler**

**Looking away**

**Sniffing**

**Offering different behaviour then asked for**





continued from page 3

**Leaving handler**

**Not accepting treats or toy play**

**Yawning**

**Licking lips**

**Tail tucked in and drooping ears**

**Slowing down when in motion**

**Shaking or trembling in extreme cases**

Here are some of the signs of the dog stressing up, getting aroused, trying to stop by intimidation or redirect away from the potential conflict by acting out the stress

**Drooling**

**Hackles up**

**Making full eye contact**

**Tail high**

**Ears perked up**

**Standing tall**

**Jumping up on handler**

**Nipping at clothing or body**

**Grabbing toy**

**Barking**

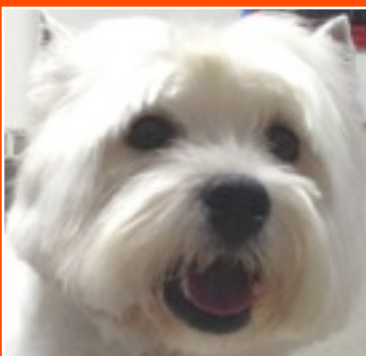
**Locking in on a “target” or toy**



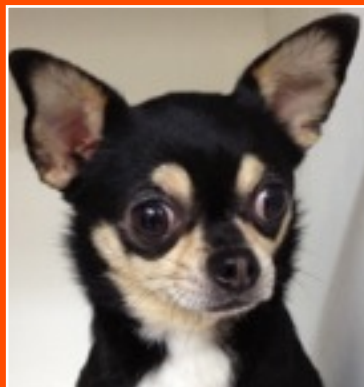
Linda and muffin

A low level of stress will actually help your dog to learn, however if your dog is in a state of high stress, it will be impossible for the dog to follow your instructions or commands successfully. We will need to find ways to get the dogs to relax before we can ask them to perform in sports or in every day situations. Play and touch can be very successful. If your dog has issues with being reactive to other dogs, people, or situations, there are great and very positive ways to help you and your dog succeed in overcoming these hurdles!

If only we could understand our dogs as well as they understand us, let's start to observe and learn from them!



NANAIMO PET SERVICES



## How to reward your dog

Reward with not just any reward, use something with value!

Find something that your dog likes. Some dogs like cheese, or small meaty treats, **try out different things to get the most eager response out of your dog!** Keep the high value treats for new or difficult behaviour, keep the simple food or kibble for easy exercises. Make a list of different items your dog likes and rate them on a scale from 1 to 10.

If your dog has a few favourite toys, this is a great reward. **Making the reward to be interactive between you and the dog has greater value towards YOU!** . If your dog loves the ball, instead of just throwing it, put your ball in a sock or put it on a rope and make it a game of tug, so the fun and reward is still an interaction with you.

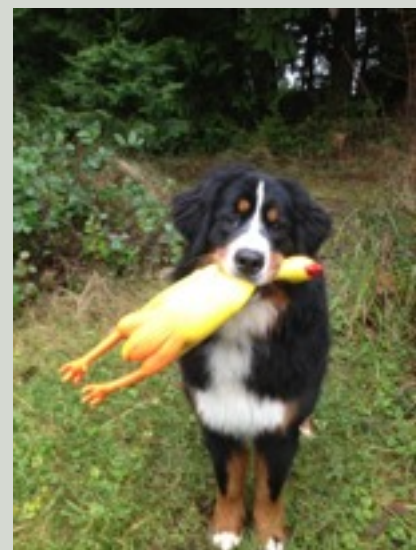
Dogs love praise and **some dogs LOVE to be touched or petted.** If your dog is one of these, please experiment what part of their body they like touched best, belly, bum, face, neck, ears, shoulder rub? Use it often to reward or calm your dog down when stress is around. the interaction creates a stronger bond.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could say good dog and the dog would be completely satisfied? That may actually happen later on. To begin with most of us would not continue to work if no one ever showed their appreciation for what we do in the workplace. If all we got for our efforts was a "good for you" once a month, most of us wouldn't continue to show up for work, we want our paycheck so we can buy our own rewards!

**So make sure that you PAY your dog appropriately for the work it is doing!** When the work becomes easier, the reward can become intermittent, since most dogs will eventually find the work to be rewarding and they will be looking forward to the next action or command.

**Body language is an important aspect of playing with your dog!** Do you know how to play without toys? Can you get your dog excited by ruffling up its fur? You are exhibiting doggie body language when you are getting your dog to play with you. You will not always have treats or toys on you and still want to be able to show your dog that you are happy with him and his behaviour. Try sweet talking your dog and see if you can make his tail wag and his ears perk up!

Importance of success! The frequency of the reward you are able to give is a key factor in having a happy dog that is willing to work more often and longer if it takes just a second of behaviour to get a reward and a few more seconds for the next. **The RATE OF PAY** will be enough for your dog to want to do more. If, however, it takes several minutes between each reward your dog will soon choose to do something they find more rewarding. As a child you did not understand the value of money, if you were offered a one time reward of a \$100.00 bill versus \$10.00 in shiny pennies handed over one by one, I am pretty sure you would take the pennies. More (frequent) is better when it comes to rewarding new behaviour. **To this day I still prefer a nice apple pie or cheesecake over a \$50 bill when I am hungry, I can not eat the \$50 bill, there is no instant gratification.**



Delta likes her chicken!

## Nail care for cats and dogs

There is more to grooming a dog or cat than running a brush or comb through their hair. Keeping your pet's nails at the proper length is crucial for their well-being and good health.

Younger cats are usually able to keep their own nails in good condition by scratching on sturdy objects, and by doing so they will remove the top layer of the nail, when it is ready to be replaced.

An indoor-only cat can easily destroy your furniture by scratching repeatedly. You can trim off the sharp tips of their nails to prevent damage, but must repeat this process every 3 to 4 weeks in order to keep the nails in shape. For this problem there are also rubber nail caps available that get placed over the nail to prevent damage to your furniture. These will need regular replacement.

A cat that has access to the outdoors will be less likely to be scratching up your furniture and in most cases does not need a lot of maintenance on nails. When the cat gets older, you need to check nails once a week. Often older cats do not use scratching posts properly and the danger of getting ingrown nails and subsequent infections increases.

Since cat nails can retract, in order to clip them one needs to put gentle pressure on the pad of the foot to expose the nail tip. Make sure to use a very sharp good working animal nail clipper or ask a pet professional to do the work for you.

All dogs benefit from regular nail trims. Dogs that do a lot of running on pavement need less work. Dog nails are considerably different than cat nails. They keep growing and the blood vessel and little nerve that is inside the nail also grows. Nails that are too long and are touching the ground can cause arthritic changes to the bones of the feet of older dogs by repeatedly putting pressure on the joints. There's also the chance of painfully split nails or broken nails or in extreme cases the nail will curl around and grow back into the pad. You will know when the nails are too long when you hear the nails clicking on your hard wood or linoleum floor. All this can easily be prevented by clipping or filing or grinding the nail down on a regular basis at least once a month. Gentle handling and desensitizing while handling his feet, will get your dog more comfortable with the process of a nail trim.

Sometimes using a Dremmel grinding tool is the fastest and less traumatic way for your pet to have his nails done, or ask a pet professional to do the work for you.



**Nails are way too long. They are curling in and splaying the foot.**

## Warming up & Stretching

When engaging in physical activity with your dog it is important that you both warm up and stretch correctly. Warming up helps to get your dog's blood flowing, once you have warmed up you can then engage your dog in dynamic stretches.

Warming up should involve running your dog through a variety of gates, walk, trot and gallop.

Dynamic stretches are where we encourage gentle movement through ranges of motion. Here are some of the most common stretches:

Playing tug (engaging the body)

Puppy push ups

Spinal Curls (and neck warm ups)

Leg stretches (extension and compression)

Weaving

Circling the handler (both directions)

Play bows

Lifting paws

Crawling

Spinning circles

Walking backward

Your warm up routine should take 5-15 minutes directly before a session of physical exercise. Remember to only stretch your dog as far as they are comfortable and to warm up symmetrically so both sides are worked evenly!

**This month we had promised a free grooming for one dog and we have also added a set of six classes for our March session.**

**The winners were drawn from people that have listed themselves to receive our newsletter.**

**The winners this month are:**

**free grooming for one dog: Leslie Graham with Monty and Spencer**

**free set of 6 weeks of classes: Sandra Greer and Lexi (your choice of obedience, agility or our new Tricks class).**

TO BOOK UPCOMING CLASSES AND EVENTS - [WWW.NANAIMOPETSERVICES.COM](http://WWW.NANAIMOPETSERVICES.COM)

EVENT	DATE	SIGN UP	WHERE
AGILITY TRIAL	<a href="#">FEBRUARY 24TH, 2012</a>	SPECTATORS ARE WELCOME!	AGRIPLEX BUILDING, BEBAN PARK
OBEDIENCE CLASSES	MARCH 4, 2013	<a href="#">OPEN</a>	AGRIPLEX BUILDING, BEBAN PARK
"NEW" TRICK DOG CLASS	MARCH 8, 2013	<a href="#">OPEN</a>	AGRIPLEX BUILDING, BEBAN PARK
AGILITY CLASSES	MARCH 7 & 8, 2013	<a href="#">OPEN</a>	AGRIPLEX BUILDING, BEBAN PARK

IF YOU WISH TO OBSERVE ONE OF OUR TRAINING SESSIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US AT: [INFO@NANAIMOPETSERVICES.COM](mailto:INFO@NANAIMOPETSERVICES.COM)

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

- teaching your dog a new trick!
- getting in shape with your dog
- canine good neighbour certificate program
- parasites on your pet



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