

Tails from the Dog House

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Sardis Animal Hospital



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What's in a Pet's Name?

One of the many things I enjoy about my job is hearing how pet owners name their pets. It's a daily source of amusement and amazement. Would you believe that how we name our pets says as much about us as about our pet? A review of our pet files quickly reveals the most common monikers and also shows fads, what's new in pop culture, and who the latest teen idols are. For example when the musical "Cats" came out we saw a flood of kitties named after the characters in the play. The movie "Lord of the Rings" gave us a run of "Frodos" and "Gandalfs".

Human names are the most popular for dogs. Cats tend to have more artistic, descriptive and even spiritual names, often reflecting the ethereal nature of that species. The most common names for male dogs are Max, Jake, Buddy, Bailey and Sam. Females are most often tagged with Molly, Lucy, Maggie, Daisy, and Sadie. So what happened to Lassie, Snoopy and other K9 celebrities? Hardly ever see them any more.

It's human nature for us to name things and give them human qualities. We name our boats, our cars, our real estate and even musical instruments. (Blues legend BB King's guitar "Lucille" is as famous as he is.) How we name things shows the psychology behind it all. So its important to choose just the right name for our new puppy or kitty.

Experts say that a dog's name should be short, preferably 2 syllables so the name won't be confused with single syllable commands like "sit" or "stay". It should not sound like any other name in the household. For example if your hubby's name is "Gus" don't call your dog "Goose". It's also important to choose a name that reflects the dog's role and conveys the proper image. So "Fluffy" is not a good name for a Rottweiler. Try maybe "Sadam" for the Rottie.



Gender of the owner plays a role in naming. Men tend to name their dogs masculine names like Rocky and Buck. Women tend to name their pets softer names like Tammy, Ginger and Brandy, and other coma-inducing names that sound like members of a girl pop band. Pets are sometimes named after a behavior trait, like "Humpy" and "Howler" One of our family's Golden's, Molly, was nicknamed "Ditch-Pig" after her love of rolling in every mud puddle and stinky thing she found. Veterinarians and physicians sometimes name their pets after a disease. My Epidemiology Professor's dog was named "Ricketts". A physician had a dog named "Herpes", so named because he wouldn't heel (heal)!

Politically incorrect names would include anything obscene, irreverent or names of nefarious historical characters. Since the Simpson trial we have not seen any dogs named "OJ".

I'm holding my breath for the day I neuter a black cat named "Michael Jackson."



Staff News

Like the Ever-Ready Bunny, Dr Jack just keeps going and going and going.....

Dr Anvik Celebrates 30 years in Veterinary Practice

"Say Doc, the old boy is getting a little gray around the muzzle and he's a little slow in getting going in the morning. He's gained a little weight, his coat is thinning a bit, he's got a few lumps & bumps and I don't think he sees quite as well as he once did, but he still loves to play and go for walks and his mind is still as sharp as a tack. Is there something wrong or is he just getting old?"

That's a conversation we hear a lot at the animal hospital, but this time the "old dog" referred to is none other than our Hospital Director and boss. Yes Dr Jack has just this month passed a major milestone in his career. He has reached the 30 year mark!! and is still standing!



It was May of 1975 that he walked across the podium at the University of Saskatchewan to receive his DVM at the hands of then U of S Chancellor and former Prime Minister of Canada, John Deifenbaker. "I'll never forget that day" recalls Dr Jack, "It was a great honour to receive my degree at the hands of such a famous Canadian. I looked into that incredible face and saw all the lines and jowls that cartoonists loved to caricature, and shaking with Parkinsons, he took my hand and said "Well done young man!" Could Graduation Day ever be better?!"

Highlights from the last 30 years would include his many years of working as an Area Director for the American Animal Hospital Association, BC Vet Assoc Councillor, and as a member of the editorial review board for the profession's top veterinary journal. He has lectured at numerous veterinary conferences and seminars, authored over a dozen scientific and clinical papers, has been on numerous radio talk shows and produced an educational series for Knowledge Network Television.

Dr Jack was also the first Canadian Veterinarian to become Board Certified as a companion animal clinical specialist shortly after the discipline became a recognized and certifiable specialty. (The Animal Hospital staff has always considered him quite "certifiable" if you get my drift!) In 1988 Dr Jack was honoured nationally by his peers with the Canadian Vet Assoc Small Animal Practitioner Award, and internationally by the AAHA in 1992 with the Northwest Regional Service Award.

"I have always considered veterinary medicine as my calling in life, rather than just a job," says Dr. Jack. "I would do it all again." "I still like animals after all these years, and even like most of their owners," he says with a chuckle. When asked about plans for retirement, he just smiles and says, "Well, I may choose to slow down a little, but Vets are Lifers," It's just too much fun!!"

Wildlife News

rare bird rises
from the dead

North American Woodpecker, long thought to be extinct has been found alive

Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear some depressing news about some species of wildlife going extinct. So here's some good news for a change.

The Ivory-Billed Woodpecker, a large, spectacular bird long thought to be extinct, has been found alive in North America, according to a BBC World News Science and Nature article dated April 28, 2005.

The news has stunned ornithologists worldwide, with some comparing the discovery to finding the Dodo Bird. "This find is so significant that it is really difficult to describe," Alistar Gammell of the UK's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds told BBC News.



Ivory-billed Woodpecker

The stunning red, white and black woodpecker, a large bird with a 3 foot wingspan was formerly distributed across the south-eastern USA and Cuba. The bird carves out a narrow niche for itself by drilling in mature trees, and logging and forest clearance for agriculture began to impinge on its environment. By the 1920's it was assumed to be extinct, although in 1944 there one more confirmed sighting in North America of a lone unpaired female. Since then, decades of searches yielded nothing. Now the bird has been seen again in the Big Woods of Eastern Arkansas. The discovery was made in Feb 2004 by a kayaker. He described the creature like nothing he had ever seen and contacted ornithologists at Cornell University.

The Cornell team searched the area and after a month found the bird and captured it on video. Says team member Dr Gallager: "Just to think this bird made it into the 21st century gives me chills. Its like a funeral shroud has been pulled back, giving us a glimpse of a living bird, rising Lazarus-like from the grave.

"This provides hope for other species classified as potentially extinct." said Stuart Butchart of Birdlife International. "It also offers an extra incentive to protect the habitat of the Ivory-bill, as well as other birds. Amazingly, America may have another chance to protect the future of this spectacular bird and the awesome forests in which it lives. It is the most beautiful bird we could imagine rediscovering. Its a magical bird. For those of us who tenaciously cling to the idea that man can live alongside fellow species, this is the most incredible ray of hope."

Trivia - for the birds

It takes forty minutes to hard boil an ostrich egg, because of their size (6-8 inches) and the thickness of their shells.





Bulldog With Congenital Heart Defect Recovers From Surgery

Medical Miracles

Bulldog survives
high risk surgical
procedure

There was a day when veterinarians would steer well clear of operating on dogs with congenital heart defects, especially if it were a bulldog, a breed that has additional risk factors for anesthesia anyway. Brachycephalic (pug-nosed) breeds can be difficult to anesthetize. Newer anesthetic equipment and techniques has made surgery on this kind of patient possible.

"Phoenix," a year and a half old English Bulldog came to us for a second opinion on a heart and eye problem. Dr Powell made a tentative diagnosis of Pulmonary Valvular Stenosis of the heart and Entropion (turned in eyelids). The eye problem was serious enough to require surgical correction to prevent corneal ulceration and possible loss of vision, so now the question became "can we safely anesthetize Phoenix?"

The first thing we did was to send her to the Animal Critical Care Group in Burnaby for cardiac ultrasound. The diagnosis of Pulmonic Stenosis was confirmed. This is a condition in which the valves of the pulmonary artery are so narrow that ejection of blood from the heart to the lung is impaired creating turbulence, a murmur and changes in the pumping chamber of the right ventricle. Phoenix was then sent to Washington State University for evaluation by a cardiologist and heart surgeon. It is possible to do open heart surgery on dogs like Phoenix, but there is a substantial surgical risk on the repair of the heart defect.

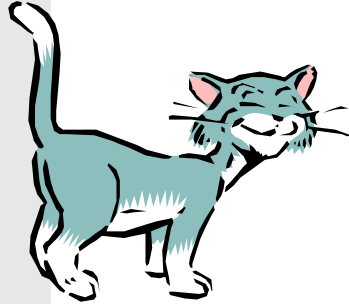
Heart surgery was declined and Phoenix was returned to us, as her owners wanted the eyes corrected and to have her spayed while she was under. Dr. Nancy Brock, a Board-Certified Veterinary Anesthesiologist who specializes in anesthetizing high risk patients came to the Sardis Animal Hospital and anesthetized Phoenix using a high risk patient protocol. Dr Powell corrected the eye problem and spayed Phoenix at the same time. Recovery from anesthesia and surgery was uneventful and she will go on to lead a comfortable, pain free life. The long term prognosis on her heart is uncertain, as there is evidence of some heart chamber enlargement, but she may live happily for many years yet in spite of her condition.



"Phoenix" with owner Lisa Whitlam

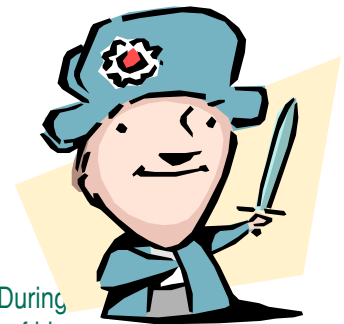
Trivia Page

More Animal Trivia



The only domestic animal *not* mentioned in the Bible is the Cat

The last member of the famous Bonaparte family, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, died in 1945 of injuries sustained from tripping over his dog's leash



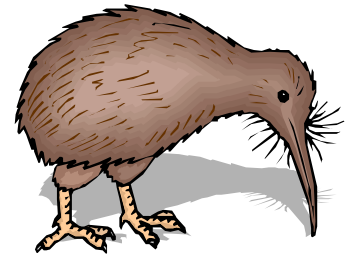
The male penguin incubates the single egg laid by his mate. During the two month period he does not eat, and will lose up to 40% of his body weight. When the egg hatches, the female takes her turn brooding the young while the male goes to sea to eat and rest.



The animal that is responsible for the most human deaths is the mosquito. They spread malaria, encephalitis, yellow fever and dengue fever. Mosquitoes prefer children to adults, and blondes to brunettes. Only female mosquitos bite, and require blood to make eggs. You are more likely to be a target for mosquitoes if you eat bananas!



The Kiwi, national bird of New Zealand, can't fly, lives in a hole in the ground, is almost blind and lays only one egg each year. Yet it has survived for 70million years



The Bloodhound is the only animal whose evidence is admissible in an American court.



"Duh, I swear to tell da troot, the whole troot, and nuttin' but da troot"



Kitty Capers

Catnip- a Recreational Drug for Cats?

"Like man! what a trip"



We have all experienced how some scents produce strong reactions in humans. Colognes, hot apple pie, christmas turkey all produce their positive effects but none compares to what catnip will do for a cat. Cats have a powerful sense of smell, and their brains are wired differently from humans, so it's hard for us to understand how a scent can produce such a powerful behavioral effect. Under the influence of cat nip, a cat will roll, body rub, purr, vocalize, lick and chew, and look totally dazed and disconnected from reality. The effect typically lasts about 5-10 minutes, then the cat is unaffected by further stimulation. Some observers would compare it to a hallucinogenic recreational drug like marijuana or magic mushrooms.

Catnip, or *Nepeta cataria*, is a member of the mint family. It contains a volatile oil called nepetalactone, which triggers the catnip response. The chemical is completely safe for cats, and is non-addictive. No one knows exactly what happens in the cat's brain, but we do know that the response has a genetic influence, as about a third of cats are totally unaffected by catnip. The Catnip response is inherited in an autosomal dominant gene. Kittens under 3 months of age do not normally react to catnip. Humans are totally unaffected by catnip, but large cats like tigers and lions can be!



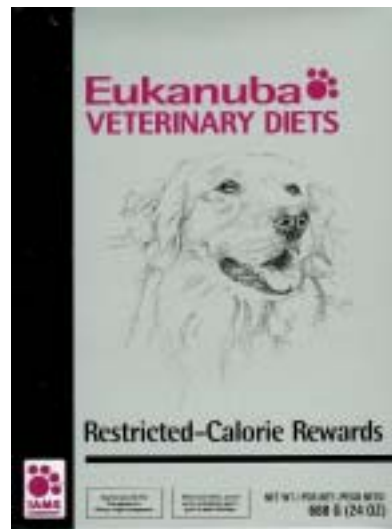
"Hey man, how about some more of that crazy weed!"

Doggy Doo-doo

Here's another weapon in the war against obesity in dogs

Featured Product - "Eukanuba Restricted Calorie Rewards" for dogs

Finding healthy, low calorie treats for your dog can be a challenge. Here is a product that we have been stocking at the animal hospital that seems to fit the bill. They are quite palatable for dogs and contain only 13 calories per biscuit. Your overweight pooch will thank you and if you have a normal sized dog, these will lessen the chance of weight gain that might occur as a result of over feeding of high calorie treats. Other things you can do to keep your dog slim: Feed only once a day (don't leave food out all day), feed weight control diets like Medi-cal Weight Control or weight loss diets like Hills Prescription diet r/d and exercise your dog daily. (That's good for you too!)



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This remarkable photo was taken from the conning tower of the USS Honolulu, a fast attack nuclear submarine that surfaced 280 miles from the North Pole

Feature Photo



"So there we were, just quietly minding our business, gnawing on a seal carcass when..... There goes the neighbourhood!"

Classified Adds - Personals

SINGLE BLACK FEMALE seeks male companionship, ethnicity unimportant. I'm a very good looking girl who LOVES to play. I love long walks in the woods, riding in your pickup truck, hunting, camping, and fishing trips, cozy winter nights lying by the fire. Candlelight dinners will have me eating out of your hand. I'll be at the front door when you get home from work, wearing only what nature gave me. Call (555-1111) and ask for Daisy, I'll be waiting.....

(Over 15,000 men found themselves talking to the Atlanta Humane Society about an 8 week-old black labrador retriever. Men are so gullible!)