

FALMOUTH VETERINARY HOWLER



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PET SPOTLIGHT THIS MONTH IS *Funny Bunny Goldsmith!*



We have been told that some of Funny Bunny's finest attributes are the love and companionship that she provides for her owner, Luke, who is 27 years old and has Down's syndrome. Their story truly is remarkable and it is best told through the words of their mom, Tammy.

"Two years ago, while home visiting from college, Luke's sister Faith felt it was time for Luke to have another pet. Molly, our beloved Golden Retriever who lived life to the fullest for 15 years, had been gone from our lives for four years. Faith found and rescued a two year old, female Dutch Bunny who has come to be lovingly known in our family as "Funny Bunny"; a perfectly fitting name for a four pound ball of fur, energy and personality.

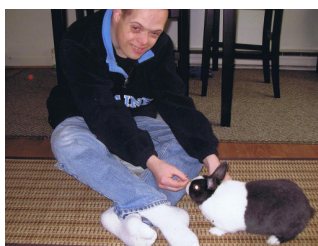
Funny Bunny goes from cuddling with Luke on the floor or in their favorite chair, to a full blown track star racing around our kitchen and dining area, while briefly dancing and performing her little bunny-butt swaggers in mid-air.

This wasn't always the case. Last year Funny Bunny had the misfortune of a relentless pasturella infection that required several procedures including a delicate surgery performed by Dr. Wack. Dr. Wack utilized her vast medical resources to find a cure for Bunny and never gave up! Bunny's set back was temporary and today she is as rascally as ever....maybe more!

Luke and Funny Bunny have become the best of friends who share, play and rely on each other, without using any words. Though their communication is silent; their affection for each other speaks volumes, loud and clear."

The Power of Pets!

Stories like Luke and Funny Bunny's remind us how healthy having a pet can be – not only physically, but mentally as well.



If you stop and think of all the healing qualities your pet possesses, it truly is amazing.

Here are just a few of the fabulous reasons we love our pets:

- Our furry (or not so furry!) companions are non-judgmental, intensely loyal, non-demanding, and uncritical. You can share innermost dreams, secret thoughts, and private moments without reservation.
- They offer companionship during lonely or stressful times.

Please see Power of Pets on page 4

Senior & Geriatric Pets

It may seem like just yesterday when you brought home your puppy or kitten. You remember him frolicking around the yard, full of energy and curious to explore his new surroundings. But as the years pass, you begin to notice a slowdown in your pet's daily activities.

This is when you begin to wonder if he might be showing signs of old age. Generally, dogs and cats are considered geriatric after eight years of age. Did you know it's not uncommon for dogs and cats to live 14 to 15 years these days?

How will you know when your pet has entered the geriatric stage? Like people, pets are individual in the way they age. One of the most common signs of aging is slowing down. It will take your dog longer to get up



from a lying position and climbing stairs won't be as easy as it used to be. Problems with vision and hearing are also common as your pet ages.

Having Senior or Geriatric wellness exams are very important for your pets' health. Underlying issues or concerns can be found and treated before further damage is done.

Just like you, we want all of our furry children here at FVH to be as healthy and comfortable as possible. Call to make a senior wellness exam today!

Noise Phobia

Just like humans, all pets experience fear and some suffer from phobias and anxiety.



Although fear and fearful behavior is a normal part of animal behavior and helps the animal to survive by causing it to avoid harmful objects or situations, some animals may exhibit abnormal fears or exaggerated responses to harmless objects or situations.

Probably the two most common causes of noise phobia in pets are thunderstorms and fireworks. Other causes include snoring, gunshots, cars backfiring, and airplanes landing or taking off. Pets with noise phobias start with drooling and panting and can escalate into full-blown panic mode, jumping through windows and glass doors, digging through carpet at doorways or digging out of the yard and running away.

What can be done to help? Although there is no specific cure for a noise-phobic pet, behavioral modification techniques and the careful use of medications may help lessen the severity of the signs.

Many owners actually compound their pet's problem by trying to reassure the pet when it is experiencing a severe fear or panic reaction. Unfortunately, the animal may interpret this attention as a reward for the abnormal behavior, which will only reinforce the animal's fear.



It is very important that an owner never punishes their animal for exhibiting noise phobia or for any destruction that the animal may cause while it is in the panicked state. It serves no purpose and will not prevent the problem from happening again.

Fortunately, there are several medicines available to help our pets with noise phobia. Sedatives are longer acting and can be given in the morning if storms are predicted and the owner is not going to be home during the day. Anti-anxiety drugs are also excellent choices but work best if given 30-60 minutes before the storm or a fireworks exhibit.

Since these drugs are metabolized by the liver and kidneys a chemistry profile is recommended before starting any medications, especially in older animals.

Summer Safety Tips for Your Furry Friends!



In summertime, the living isn't always easy for our animal friends. Dogs and cats can suffer from the same problems that humans do, such as overheating, dehydration and even sunburn.

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center offers the following tips:



A visit to the veterinarian for a spring or early summer check-up is a must; add to that a test for heartworm if your dog isn't on year-round preventive medication.



Never leave your pet alone in a vehicle—hyperthermia can be fatal. Even with the windows open, a parked automobile can quickly become a furnace in no time. Parking in the shade offers little protection, as the sun shifts during the day.



Always carry a gallon thermos filled with cold, fresh water when traveling with your pet.



The right time for playtime is in the cool of the early morning or evening, but never after a meal or when the weather is humid.



Street smarts: When the temperature is very high, don't let your dog stand on hot asphalt. His or her body can heat up quickly, and sensitive paw pads can burn. Keep walks during these times to a minimum.



A day at the beach is a no-no, unless you can guarantee a shaded spot and plenty of fresh water for your companion. Salty dogs should be rinsed off after a dip in the ocean.



Provide fresh water and plenty of shade for animals kept outdoors; a properly constructed doghouse serves best. Bring your dog or cat inside during the heat of the day to rest in a cool part of the house.



Be especially sensitive to older and overweight animals in hot weather. Brachycephalic or snub-nosed dogs such as bulldogs, pugs, Boston terriers, Lhasa apsos and shih tzus, as well as those with heart or lung diseases, should be kept cool in air-conditioned rooms as much as possible.



When walking your dog, steer clear of areas that you suspect have been sprayed with insecticides or other chemicals. Also, please be alert for coolant or other automotive fluid leaking from your vehicle. Animals are attracted to the sweet taste, and ingesting just a small amount can be fatal. Call us or the **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** at **(888) 426-4435** if you suspect that your animal has been poisoned.



Good grooming can ward off summer skin problems, especially for dogs with heavy coats. Shaving the hair to a one-inch length – never down to the skin – helps prevent overheating. Cats should be brushed often.



Do not apply any sunscreen or insect repellent product to your pet that is not labeled specifically for use on animals. Ingestion of sunscreen products can result in drooling, diarrhea, excessive thirst and lethargy. The misuse of insect repellent that contains DEET can lead to neurological problems.



Having a backyard barbecue? Always keep matches, lighter fluid, citronella candles and insect coils out of pets' reach.

POWER OF PETS from page 1

- Pets can help teach children the responsibilities of daily living, compassion for other creatures who share our planet, and the cycles of life and death.
- They may help build self-esteem and self-confidence.
- They shower us with unconditional love and complete adoration.
- They make us feel like we're the center of the universe.



**“An animal's eyes have the power to speak a great language”
(Martin Buber)**

HOT DOG from page 3



Please make sure that there are no open, unscreened windows or doors in your home through which animals can fall or jump.

We all love spending the long, sunny days of the season outdoors with our furry companions. By following these easy suggestions, you can keep your pets happy and healthy all summer long!



Stay alert for signs of overheating in pets, which include excessive panting and drooling and mild weakness, along with an elevated body temperature.



Do you want your pet featured in the Howler?

Send us pictures and your pet could be chosen to be on the front page like Funny Bunny is this month!

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“We will treat your pets with the same care and concern as we would our own”