

NEWSLETTER



New Year's Resolutions

2011 has come in with a roar for many of us. We have had family and friends visiting us, or in my case, we traveled for the holidays with our dogs in tow.

Many of you have made New Year's Resolutions for yourselves. I challenge you to consider to make some changes for you and your pets this year as well.

If you are considering weight loss for yourself, most likely your dog can be an integral part of that weight loss. Does your dog pull you on that walk? Come in and talk to us about a **Gentle Leader** collar or harness. In a very short time we can have you walking without stress. Starting a walking program may bring on unexpected rewards for you and your pet. Meeting neighbors and getting fresh air has health impacts beyond just spending a few minutes together each day.

On the subject of weight, according to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, a whopping **45** percent of dogs and **58** percent of cats are overweight! Excessive fat can lead to inflammatory diseases such as diabetes, arthritis, and lower urinary tract disorders.

We know that changing diet alone does not cause most pets to lose weight. Limiting calories, measuring food, and increasing exercise is the only reliable way to take and keep weight off.

While at the North American Veterinary Conference this week in Florida, Dr. Jacqueline Neilson discussed environmental enrichment for our indoor cats and how to help our chubby cats work those calories off. Did you ever think about how many calories it takes to catch all those mice?

Paradise Staff Member's New Years Resolutions for their Pets:

Dr. Auclair:
Give Interceptor on time!

Abby:
Get her teeth to be pretty.

Kimmy:
Trim nails more often.

Amanda:
Give more individual time to each.

Katie:
All of the above!

Dr. Kellner:
*Buy Stella more boots. Give Stella Rimadyl more regularly
Brush their teeth!*

Kim:
For Tyson to continually to get stronger!

Shanna:
To give Raven more exercise.

Rebekah:
To feed raw food.

Jackie:
*To keep anything that might become a
foreign body off the floor!*

Cats are predators in their natural environment. Our indoor cats spend much of their time hanging around from the couch to the food bowl and to a sunny window.



Her recommendations for our kitty family members are to add perches where ever possible in their areas. Cats like to be up on things. They also prefer non-slip surfaces where possible. Adding perches in various areas around the house will add variety to your pets life. Perches can be as simple as moving books from a shelf, or creating a window seat, to a purchasing a pre-made product.

In addition, we have learned that to get cats to lose weight we need to limit the amount of food and feed multiple small meals during the day. For most of us, this is just about impossible! Feeding canned food works, because in part, we make canned food available for only limited times during the day. Dry cat food is still the most common food given to the most cats, due to its convenience.

Recent studies with obese cats have shown that incorporating puzzle toys along with feeding calorie limiting diets improve overall outcomes for weight loss. These puzzle toys work with the natural predator behavior of

cats to chase, paw, and pounce on objects and have a 'reward outcome' (food). Owners initially place half of the days food in the usual feeding area. The remaining food is placed in one or more puzzle toys. Over time, all dry food is placed in puzzle toys.



We are incorporating many new toys into our behavioral/ weight counseling. We are glad to discuss them with you during your pet's physical examination.

For our beloved dogs and cats, we **must** remember. that play is love, not food. For we know, that lean dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives.

— SELECT A BODY CONDITION SCORE FOR YOUR PET —

1	2	3	4	5
 VERY THIN	 UNDERWEIGHT	 IDEAL	 OVERWEIGHT	 OBESE
RIBS - Easily felt with no fat cover TAIL BASE - Bones are raised, no fat cover SIDE VIEW - Severe abdominal tuck OVERHEAD VIEW - Accentuated hourglass shape	RIBS - Easily felt with little fat cover TAIL BASE - Bones are raised with slight fat cover SIDE VIEW - Abdominal tuck OVERHEAD VIEW - Marked hourglass shape	RIBS - Easily felt with slight fat cover TAIL BASE - Smooth contour with slight fat cover SIDE VIEW - Abdominal tuck OVERHEAD VIEW - Well-proportioned waist	RIBS - Difficult to feel under moderate fat cover TAIL BASE - Some thickening, bones palpable under moderate fat cover SIDE VIEW - No abdominal tuck OVERHEAD VIEW - Back is slightly broadened at waist	RIBS - Difficult to feel under thick fat cover TAIL BASE - Thickened and difficult to feel under thick fat cover SIDE VIEW - No waist, fat hangs from abdomen OVERHEAD VIEW - Back is markedly broadened

Image courtesy Hill's Pet Nutrition®.