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3 ways to keep your pet safe this fall

Fall is approaching quickly, bringing a flurry of activities and preparations for the changing of the seasons. However, this season can also bring some unexpected dangers for your four-legged family member.

To help you prepare and keep your pet safe this winter, here are three safety tips for pet parents from MetLife Pet Insurance.

Pet allergies need a quick response

Just like their pet parents, dogs and cats are prone to seasonal allergies. MetLife's data from last fall (Sept. – Nov. 2021) found atopy, commonly known as pet environmental allergies, was the most common pet insurance claim during this season – implying heightened veterinary

visits and prescriptions needed.

Prevention is key. Look out for common, fast-emerging allergy symptoms such as sneezing, watery nose or eyes, skin irritation and inflammation.

On the surface, these symptoms may not seem like a big deal. But when left untreated, they can easily lead to larger issues such as inflamed and irritated skin, hot spots (for dogs) or even hair loss and bleeding in more severe cases. If your dog or cat has allergies, try to identify allergy triggers and visit a veterinarian for proper treatment.

Dress for success

As the weather shifts to cooler temperatures and you start bringing out your sweaters, it's a good time to take stock

of what clothing your pet may also need. This is especially important if you live in a cold climate or your furry friend shivers outdoors.

Check your local pet stores for jackets, rain jackets or sweaters for your dog or cat to wear to keep them warm during the colder months.

Halloween is also quickly approaching. When picking out your pet's cute costume this year, make sure it's also cozy and

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Pets have special needs as the weather changes, from allergies to severe weather to escape risks. Make sure your furry friend is protected from elements and safe during the fall and winter seasons.

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Fall 2022

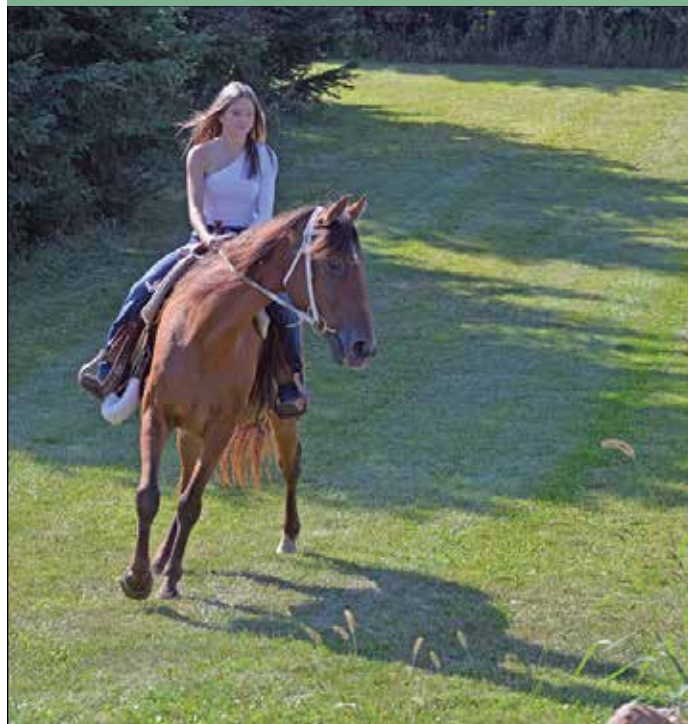
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TAKING STUNTS TO A NEW LEVEL



Equine lover becomes self-taught trick-rider



By **Jason Arndt**
STAFF WRITER

Equestrian sports take many forms ranging from the well-known Kentucky Derby to flat racing, barrel racing, steeplechase and Gymkhana.

However, avid horseback riders have another segment to consider, trick riding, which consists of high-flying acrobatic stunts.

The tricks include the rider standing upright on the back of a galloping horse using a specially designed saddle with a reinforced steel horn and specialized loops for the hands and feet.

Lia Peterson, of the Village of Raymond in Racine County, took an interest in trick riding a few years ago.

Peterson, 16, the youngest of six children to Jennifer and Eric Peterson, said she has always been around horses; three currently live on her

family's property.

"I have been around horses my whole life. I grew up watching my siblings compete and when I was old enough I wanted to compete, too," she said.

Lia, who had experience competing in barrel racing, became interested in trick riding after watching video clips of people performing stunts on their horses.

"I started trick riding around three years ago and I decided to do it because I watched videos of people doing tricks and I thought it was really cool, so I tried it and ended up loving it," she said.

However, considering the danger of trick riding, her parents voiced initial hesitation.

"Lia came to Jenny and I and asked if she could start doing trick riding," Eric said. "We told her no because it is too dangerous."

But Lia forged ahead and learned to trick ride on her

above: Lia Peterson, 16, of Racine County, rides her horse, Pretty Boy, at her home. **top:** Peterson and her horse have formed a longstanding bond and she decided to start trick riding.

JASON ARNDT *Pet Connection*



above: 16-year-old Lia Peterson hangs off to the side of her horse, Pretty Boy, during a routine at the 2022 Racine County Fair. **left:** Peterson waves the American Flag as part of a trick-riding routine. **far left:** Peterson performs another stunt with her horse.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Pet Connection*

own with a 22-year-old Tennessee Walker named Pretty Boy.

“When my dad was at work, I practiced in the arena with my mom watching,” said Lia, who knew her father would not initially approve.

After a few months, Eric discovered what Lia was doing, but said he didn’t initially watch her perform stunts out of fear.

Lia, who has two other horses on the family’s property, said she found Pretty Boy an ideal fit because she has a deep personal connection to the horse.

“Pretty Boy and I have a really close connection. He is the only reason I am where I’m at with trick riding. Without him, it wouldn’t be possible,” said Lia, a junior at Union Grove Union High School.

“Pretty Boy means so much to me. My love for him is indescribable,” she added.

Backyard training

Lia plays soccer and runs cross country at school. She also previously competed in gymnastics.

In between extra-curricular activities and studies, she started to train with Pretty Boy in her family’s backyard.

“I learned how to trick ride in my backyard. I watched videos and read books about it and then I would go outside and practice them,” Lia said.

According to Eric, Lia asked her sister, Anna, for help rigging her barrel-riding saddle into a trick saddle.

From there, Lia continued to practice and experiment with trick riding, Eric said.

“Of course, mom knew by then and I could tell something was going on,” Eric said. “Then one day, we had an extended family party and Lia asked everyone to come watch her perform.”

Eric admitted he had rattled nerves and said he couldn’t bear to watch his daughter

perform stunts at first.

But on that day of the family party, Lia’s two older sisters urged Eric to come outside and see the routines she had learned.

“Well, I gave in and headed back to the arena. To my surprise, Lia had on a trick riding costume and had fast paced patriotic music playing,” said Eric, noting Lia’s sister, Anna, bought the costume.

“She started her performance for me, and others, and I was absolutely amazed. I looked at my wife in amazement and said ‘as scary as that was, that was awesome.’”

After Lia’s performance, it became clear she had a real passion for the sport so she won support from her family to continue improving her skills at trick riding.

“At that point Jenny and I talked about her obvious passion for the sport, and we could see all that she had put into rigging her saddle and learning all the tricks on her own,” Eric said. “From there, we decided it would be much safer if she had an authentic trick-riding saddle.”

That saddle, Eric said, allowed Lia to expand her skill sets in trick riding.

In retrospect, despite initial protestations, Lia believes her father “is really proud” of her accomplishments as a self-taught trick rider and said she enjoys specific tricks more than others.

“My favorite tricks are the suicide drag, when I hang off the saddle with one of my feet strapped in, and the hippodrome, when I stand up on the horse,” Lia explained.

Performing tricks not only takes skill, but practice and strength, Eric said.

“Lia’s amazing strength to be able to balance and perform tricks that require lots of muscle and practice with her horse,” Eric said. “We are also impressed with the fact that she had learned all of this on her

own.”

While impressed, none of Lia’s accomplishments came as a surprise to Eric, who recognizes she brings many skills to trick riding.

“Lia is a spitfire. She loves to try different things and she pretty much grew up on horses,” Eric said. “Lia also took gymnastics lessons early on in her life. So it doesn’t really surprise us that she took to this sport.”

Day at the fair

Lia, a member of Raymond 4-H, previously participated in swine and poultry shows at the Racine County Fair.

But this year she decided to focus on the horse project, and performed in front of a crowd for the first time.

Lia, wearing a red costume, performed acrobatic stunts including the hippodrome while carrying the United States Flag.

“I performed in front of my family and my first time performing in front of a crowd was at the fair,” Lia said.

“Pretty Boy and I are so in tune to each other’s movements that we tend to compensate for each other. I feel like one with Pretty Boy while I perform the tricks. To me, it feels so good to be a team,” she added.

For Lia, Pretty Boy is more than just a horse. He’s also an equine friend with a remarkable personality.

“Pretty Boy loves to do anything that includes running. He also loves to jump,” Lia said. “He will pretty much do anything I ask him to do and that has got to be one of my favorite traits of my horse.”

Although she has won the support of her parents, not surprisingly they still have some anxiety whenever she performs stunts.

“We are always nervous watching her perform,” Eric said.

How to prepare children to **welcome a new pet**

Excitement is the order of the day when welcoming a new pet into a home. Families often go to great lengths when picking a new pet for their household, spending significant time studying specific breeds and preparing their homes for the new addition. Despite that preparation, no one truly knows how a family dynamic will shift until the pet comes home.

Adults who have had pets in the past may know what to expect when welcoming a new pet to the family, but kids with no such experience may need a little coaching. The following are some ways parents can prepare youngsters to welcome a new pet into their homes.

Show respect

Emphasize respect for the animal. The Animal Humane Society urges parents to teach children how to touch animals with respect. Many children naturally love animals, and that enthusiasm may compel them to be a little overexcited in their initial interactions with their new pet.

In such instances, pets may feel threatened, even by small children, which could lead them to bark, growl or lunge at youngsters. So it's important for parents to teach children how to approach and touch



The day a new pet first comes home is a momentous one for families. Parents can help that transition go smoothly by preparing young children for the newest member of the family.

STOCK PHOTO *Pet Connection*

their new pets prior to bringing the animal into the home.

Explain body language

The American Kennel Clubs notes that deciphering a dog's body language is an important part of communicating with the animal, as dogs utilize posture, facial expression and other physical cues to communicate with their human

companions.

Parents can speak with the adoption agency and/or their veterinarians about body language specific to certain animals and what each gesture may signify. Explain these gestures to children so they can learn when to leave a pet alone or when to engage with it.

Give the pet time

Encourage kids to afford animals a period to adjust. Kids may not be the only ones who don't know what to expect when welcoming a new pet into their homes. The pets themselves may be a little nervous.

Explain to children that the animal's initial days in the home should be seen as an adjustment period and not necessarily a time to engage in lots of play with the animal. For example, when welcoming a new cat or kitten into a home, the AHS urges parents to limit children's interactions to gentle petting when the cat approaches.

This initial adjustment period is not the time to pick up the cat or encroach on it physically. This time should be free of sudden movements and loud noises as the pet adjusts to its new surroundings.

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on the go

Area veterinary clinic serves large animals

By Tracy Ouellette
EDITOR

In rural Wisconsin, large animal vets are on the road providing care for vast areas.

“Most large animal practices are primary ambulatory,” said Christi Schuckman, large animal supervisor at Elkhorn Veterinary Clinic. “They have to have a truck to take to calls and be prepared; we do most of our own emergencies.”

The clinic provides onsite farm call for various barnyard animals, with the vets having experience in treating horses, cows, sheep, goats and alpacas.

According to the clinic’s website, it can provide services to certain animals during a farm call, including:

- Routine exams and vaccinations;
- Parasite management;
- Fecal testing and deworming;
- Flock and herd health counseling;
- Sick and injured animal care; and
- Reproductive services and obstetric care.

Schuckman said the large animal vets at the clinic “keep very busy.”

“The hours can be extreme,” she said. “We do have regular business hours for the clinic, but the doctors are on call to see animals after our office is closed. We see all sorts of bizarre things (after hours).”

Working with large animals can be dangerous for the veterinarians, Schuckman said.

“It’s a lot different than small animals,” Schuckman said. “You can’t put a large animal into a carrier or muzzle it. They’re bigger than the vet and could possibly kill them. So they really have to figure a way to handle them appropriately.

“Some times they have to get creative to get the job done. If you’re working with a bovine that doesn’t want to get with the program, you have to find a different program.”

She added that the vets at the clinic are “very good at finding a way to get the job done.”

Working out in the field, the vets get to know the animals and owners, Schuckman said.

“They’re out there to be advocates for the animal. They love the animals and truly care about them. Nobody does this to make money. They care about the animals.”

Small animal services

The clinic also offers small animal services, including vet exams and preventive care for kittens, puppies, cats and dogs.

They also offer dental care, surgical procedures, holistic and alternative veterinarian care, pet ophthalmology, pet physical therapy, pet allergy and dermatology, pet behavior counseling, grooming, emergency veterinary care, pharmacy and pet products.

“The small animal services are mostly in our clinic during normal business hours,” Schuckman said.

Elkhorn Veterinary Clinic is at 205 O’Connor Drive, Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-723-2644 or visit elkhornvet.com.



top: A veterinarian from Elkhorn Veterinary Clinic works with a pig on a farm. The clinic has a thriving large animal veterinary service.

above: Checking out the teeth of a pony is a vet from the clinic.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Pet Connection*



Westosha Veterinary Hospital offers multiple services to keep pets healthy.

JASON ARNDT *Pet Connection*

Veterinarian finds a way through pandemic

Clinic dealt with changing logistics, staffing issues

By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals reported an influx of pet ownership during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic with 23 million American families adopting a new companion.

Since then, the study confirmed a vast majority of people still have these animals in their homes and do not plan on returning them or finding a new owner for them, according to the study.

The surge in pet ownership, coupled with more people working from home, has led to increased demand in veterinary services.

Veterinarian Mary Sue Lux, owner of Westosha Veterinary Hospital in Salem Lakes, has been in business since 1986 with her clinic offering wellness exams, baseline bloodwork and preventive care.

“We have been extremely busy since COVID began,” Lux said. “Initially, we had staff issues because we could not get timely COVID tests done and staff members would stay home for a variety of reasons.”

The rapid tests and COVID-19 vaccines, she said, helped maintain business operations immensely.

However, while the clinic overcame staffing challenges, it encountered other obstacles during the pandemic.

“Our clients were home observing their pets closely, requesting more appointments than normal. When we were curbside, the appointments took much longer as we had to make multiple phone calls to the clients.”

Curbside care typically happened during the Safer-at-Home order, which happened at the height of the pandemic, but veterinary services remained open because it was deemed an essential service.

With curbside pickup, it became more difficult to explain pet conditions to their owners, since they were not on the premises.

However, since then, Westosha Veterinary Hospital and other clinics have returned to in-person appointments, therefore, removing communication barriers.

“We are to have our clients come back in the building with their pets so we can go over our findings, discuss options, go over x-rays face-to-face,” she said.

“We are still very busy and just started taking new clients for routine appointments.”

Multiple services offered

Westosha Veterinary Hospital has a full-service diagnostic laboratory, which provides immediate results, according to Lux.

Additionally, Lux and her staff diagnose and treat medical conditions such as skin and ear infections, allergies, internal medicine problems, like gastrointestinal issues, urinary tract infections, and endocrine abnormalities.

Other services include an x-ray system designed to help diagnose multiple issues, like orthopedic problems, and eye problems.

“We diagnose and treat dental issues including periodontal disease. We extract

fractured and/or infected teeth,” she said. “We offer diagnostic abdominal ultrasounds and therapeutic laser therapy.”

Westosha Veterinary Hospital, which primarily focuses on dogs and cats, also performs elective surgeries such as spays and neuters.

Meanwhile, clinic staff removes skin growths, bladder stones and intestinal foreign bodies, as well as performing minor orthopedic procedures.

“We no longer perform feline declaws for ethical reasons,” she said.

Critical shortage

While Westosha Veterinary Hospital offers many services, the clinic, much like others locally and nationally, face a critical need for more veterinarians.

Multiple news sources, both statewide and in the United States, have reported a shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians while more Americans have become pet owners.

Lux said many people are unaware of the critical shortage.

“There is a critical shortage of veterinarians nationwide,” she said. “No one knows the reason for this but I am sure it has many reasons.”

Lux said the veterinary profession has a high rate of burnout, depression and suicide.

She encourages pet owners to show kindness and patience to veterinarians and their staff.

“The veterinarian shortage results in

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

'We're not in Kansas anymore, Toto'

Area pup steals the show at the Fireside Theater

By **Tracy Ouellette**

EDITOR

When Patti Muraczewski was called to help find a dog to play "Toto" in the Fireside Theater's summer production of "The Wizard of Oz" she knew just the right doggo to fill the roll.

"A lot of people have really good dogs for plays, but in this case, they needed a dog that could handle the sights and sounds and scary costumes," she said. "You don't want to traumatize the dog every night!"

Muraczewski said when the play's director, Ed Flesch, contacted her about the role, she gave it some serious thought and decided her 5-year-old Bichon Frise, Breeze, was the perfect fit.

"The Fireside called and said they needed a dog, Ed knows I'm a dog trainer and have contacts with people," Muraczewski recalled. "Nine years ago they needed a dog, but that friend's dog was too busy this time; it's a big time commitment, you have to be there to handle the dog the whole time and they couldn't do it this time."

Muraczewski, who owned For Pet's Sake in Mukwonago for many years, decided to take on the project.

"It's a lot of time, there are sometimes two performances a day," she said. "But it's extremely therapeutic too. Breeze just loves it! Bichon Frise loosely translated into 'curly lap dog.' They're companion animals, very friendly and outgoing to a



Breeze enjoys watching dress rehearsal with the Wicked Witch played by Laura Cable during this past summer's production of "The Wizard of Oz" at the Fireside Theatre. Breeze spent a lot of time visiting with cast members while they were in costume to get used to being around them.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATELYN ZELON *Pet Connection*



Breeze hangs out with the winged monkeys, played by Zander Nicholson and Joey Maxwell.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATELYN ZELON *Pet Connection*

fault. She loves it and is so happy because everyone spends so much time with her."

The relationship between the dog and actors is vital for a role like this, Muraczewski said. Breeze spends quite a bit of his time backstage just handing out with the cast members while they are in costume.

"Not only is this a wonderful play, these dogs who do things like this, it's comparable to a service dog," Muraczewski said. "They can handle the stress, lights and sounds. And she loves the cast, she really likes the Cowardly Lion.

But even so, Breeze can get scared.

"Normally she would kiss the Cowardly Lion when she saw him, but the first night with the sounds, sights and lights she just wanted off stage. But now she knows it's just him and she runs to him."

Being an adorable pup, Breeze has stolen more than just the hearts of the cast and crew, some times, she steals the scene, Muraczewski said.

"They had to change the first scene with 'Over the Rainbow' in it," she said. "Breeze was too scene stealing, looking at the audience, kissing Dorothy while she's hitting the high notes. The director said 'You know, I think we're going to have to do this without her, we have a beautiful actress with a great voice and everyone is looking at the dog!'"

Breeze is a professional, however, and didn't take it to heart.

"It's wonderful for us to get to see behind the scenes and to see the wonderful talent they have in the play," Muraczewski said.

For more information about the theater and current shows, visit www.firesidetheatre.com.

Ways to help your dog live a **happy and healthy** life



People will do anything for their dogs. But, they may not always know how to best care for them. When it comes to furry family members, nothing is higher on the priority list than building a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Here are five ways to help your dog live a happier, healthier life.

Teach new tricks

Dogs thrive on structure. Ensuring your dog understands basic commands is necessary to keep you, your dog and other dogs and people safe. Beyond that, new tricks are a great way to continue to teach your pup engagement and challenge them to keep their minds active.

Once you've mastered "sit" and "stay," try weaving in tougher tricks like fetching, exercise courses and the ever-challenging "stop, drop and roll." However, three-fourths of pet owners believe they wouldn't have been able to teach their dog any commands without using treats, according to a recent survey conducted by Clif Pet.

Reward your dog along the way with easy to tear treats like plant based jerky to reinforce positive behavior. Always remember, treats should only make up about 10% of your dog's daily caloric intake.

Keep up with grooming

Whether your dog has a long shiny

coat, cute curls, short hair or no fur at all, grooming your dog keeps them healthy – and can feel like a day at the spa. Regular brushing, nail trimming and proper grooming should be implemented, especially as the seasons change and your dog's needs change, too. Not only is grooming and maintenance an important part of your dog's overall beauty routine, but it is also a great way to bond with your pet as you continue to build a loving and trusting relationship.

Go on adventures

Dogs need a vacation too! Instead of boarding or leaving your dog with a sitter, keep your whole family together and take Fido along for the ride. Whether you're testing out van life in the great outdoors or opting for the pet-friendly options for your next bucket list destination, your pet will love the uninterrupted quality time that they get to spend with you as you explore the world together.

Meet new friends

While you may be your dog's best friend, it's important that they are exposed to new people, places, dogs and experiences on an ongoing basis to ensure they are properly socialized.

To encourage your dog to be more social, head to your local dog park and meet new dogs for your pet to play with, or

bring them along to a pet-friendly patio for happy hour with human friends.

As always, remember to exercise caution and proper leashing protocols, and follow your pup's cues when it comes to new situations. And, to make sure your pup is the most popular at the park, stock up on treats to share and to give your dog when they make a positive interaction.

Go outside

Whether it's a nice stroll around the neighborhood or a hike through your local mountains, getting exercise is important for your health and your pup's health, too.

A daily exercise routine is necessary for your dog's overall health and wellness, as well as maintaining a healthy weight, and provides a great way to bond and incorporate your dog into your daily life. For life's most exciting outdoor adventures, give your pup treats made with simple, wholesome ingredients like CLIF PET Plant Based Jerky, available at Petco, to keep them fueled while exploring the great outdoors.

(BPT)

From finding ways to bond, to ensuring your dogs have proper grooming, exercise and social routines, pet parents have the important responsibility of helping Fido thrive.

STOCK PHOTO *Pet Connection*

Common conditions affecting house cats

Cats are beloved pets across the globe. In 2020, there were roughly 53 million cats owned as pets in the United States and Canada combined.

Cats are admired for their can-do attitudes. They're independent, quirky and often clever. While some people may describe cats as aloof, plenty of pet cats desire daily affection and cuddle sessions with their pet parents.

It's important for cat owners to familiarize themselves with common feline behaviors and personality traits. That familiarity can help cat owners recognize when something may be "off" with their cats. While cats are good at self-care, there are times when owners must step in and offer assistance.

Here's a look at common conditions that can affect pet cats.

Tick-borne diseases

Cats may not spend as much time outdoors as dogs, but they still can pick up ticks if they are let out from time to time or cohabitate in homes with dogs. Ticks can carry various illnesses, but bobcat fever (cytauxzoonosis) is one to be concerned about. It's quite serious and often fatal.

Feline immunodeficiency virus

This slow-acting virus may not be noticeable until the disease makes the cat ill years after initial infection. A weakened immune system can open the cat up to a number of other illnesses and secondary infections. With good care, a cat could live months or years before the chronic stages of FIV.

Vomiting

Cats groom themselves and can get fur stuck in their throats and digestive tracts, producing hairballs that are ultimately spit up. However, cats may vomit for other reasons, including ingesting something poisonous or dangerous, like string. Cats that are vomiting often can become dehydrated, which could lead to a medical emergency.

Feline urinary tract diseases

The pets division of WebMD indicates roughly 3 percent of cats visiting vets are diagnosed with FLUTD. Cats can develop it for a variety of reasons, including stress in a household, eating dry food, and being overweight. It's always an emergency if a cat can't urinate or has pain doing so.

Fleas

Cat owners may lament fleas, as they can be a problem and spread fast. A cat is at risk of developing anemia if it becomes infested with fleas. Topical treatments and oral medications can help prevent or eradicate fleas.



Cats are susceptible to various illnesses and injuries. Awareness of these conditions can help cat owners protect their cats more effectively.

STOCK PHOTO Pet Connection

Heartworm

The ASPCA warns that, like dogs, cats can get heartworm from the bites of mosquitoes. Despite its name, heartworm primarily causes lung disease in cats.

High-rise syndrome

Cats that reside in urban areas in multistory homes may be susceptible to

falls. Windows without screens or where screens are not well-secured can pose risks to curious cats who want to take in the sun and fresh air. Falls can cause serious injuries, even death.

The problem has become so prevalent that vets gave the condition the name "high-rise syndrome."

(METRO CREATIVE)

How to pet proof your home when decking the halls

The holiday season is a special time of year. Many factors combine to make the holiday season so unique and festive, and that includes all the effort people put into decorating their homes.

Much thought is giving to holiday lighting arrangements and which tree to buy, but it's equally important to consider pets when decorating. Many common household pets are naturally curious, and that curiosity can make it difficult to decorate safely come the holiday season. But various pet-proofing strategies can ensure holiday decorations and displays aren't compromised by four-legged friends this season.

Secure the Christmas tree

Much like other residents of the home, pets may be mesmerized by a glowing Christmas tree. Pets may sniff around the tree or investigate it closely, which can increase the chances that it tips over. That poses a significant safety hazard and underscores the importance of using a sturdy stand. Fastening the tree to a wall, much like one might do with a television that isn't mounted, adds a further layer of protection from tip-overs.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

PET SAFE • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

safe! Look for costumes and outfits that fit properly and don't restrict their movement, hearing or breathing. Make sure to steer clear of dangling pieces or extra parts, which can pose a choking hazard or cause a throat blockage if ingested.

Prevent accidental escapes

Fall is a busy season, between children heading back to school and the holiday season just around the corner. People are constantly coming in and out of the house as a result, so it's particularly important to

keep a close eye on your pet's whereabouts to prevent an accidental escape and injury. Some key spots to consider are your front door, garage door and backyard – especially if it isn't gated.

To ensure your pet isn't lingering by an exit point as you and your guests come and go, designate a safe, comfortable play space for them to go to, along with some of their favorite toys for distraction. A pet or baby gate may also be helpful to prevent these accidental escapes. Additionally, don't forget to inform your guests about

your pet so they can be more cautious when arriving and leaving.

While some of the preventative measures of protecting your pet this fall can be costly, you can consider taking measures to help offset some of the costs of health issues such as allergies or accidental injuries. Pet parents: if you want to invest in your pet's safety and health this fall and beyond, consider getting a pet insurance policy – to help keep you and your pet prepared.

To learn more, visit MetLifePetInsurance.com.

(BPT)

VETERINARIAN • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

longer wait times to get appointments and has significantly effected the ability of 24-hour emergency clinics to see pets in a timely fashion," she said. "We highly encourage clients to be prepared so you can lower your chance of having to go to a veterinary ER."

She suggests pet owners find an established local veterinarian, schedule annual exams and yearly bloodwork and parasite prevention.

"If you are registered and current with your vet, it will be much easier to get an urgent care appointment," she said. "Your regular exam may prevent an emergency in the future. If your pet is not feeling well, don't wait until the last minute to call."

Regulatory changes?

Lux, meanwhile, hopes the veterinary

profession can develop a position similar to a physician assistant for humans.

A physician assistant role, she said, would help veterinarians offer better services.

"This would allow credentialed non-doctors to perform some exams and procedures that only veterinarians can perform at this time," she said. "This may include such procedures as wellness exams, diagnosing and treating GI upset, ear infections."

"This would still be done with a veterinarian on site to oversee."

Lux grew up in the St. Paul, Minnesota and attended Mankato State University, where she earned a degree in immunology/virology.

She worked in an immunology research lab at the University of

Minnesota for four years before enrolling at the school's College of Veterinary Medicine.

After graduating from veterinary school, she moved to the Kenosha area, where she initially began caring for small animals and horses.

"During the Dairyland Greyhound Park era, I spent a lot of time working with greyhounds," she said. "To this day, we still work with greyhound adoption groups. I still work four days a week and enjoy my career."

Westosha Veterinary Hospital, 26851 7th St., Salem, is open 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Fridays and 8 a.m. until noon on Saturdays.

For more information, visit westoshavet.com or call 262-843-4271.

PET PROOF • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Block off the base of a live tree

Live trees need water to stay green and keep their needles throughout the season. That water could prove enticing to thirsty pets. Drinking water from a tree stand could increase the risk of the tree tipping over and the water could upset the stomach of pets if the tree was treated with pesticides prior to being brought home.

When decorating with a live tree, make sure the base of the tree where the water will be is blocked off. A small fence around the tree could keep curious pets away. The room where the tree is located should be locked or inaccessible when pets are home alone.

Inspect and conceal light wires

Wires can become frayed over time, and that could pique pets' curiosity. Lighting wires should always be inspected prior to decorating and frayed or damaged wires should be thrown away, even if it means replacing lights. If wires are still sturdy, conceal them

along the base of the wall using a cable concealer, which prevents pets from chewing on them.

Avoid lighting candles

Candles should not be lit in homes with pets. Even candles on shelves that are seemingly beyond pets' reach can be hazardous, as pets, especially cats, have a way of accessing spaces they seemingly shouldn't be able to reach. Use electric candles in lieu of traditional ones.

Talk to your vet

Speak to a vet about seasonal plants and flowers before bringing them into the home. Pet owners can speak with their veterinarians before bringing poinsettias, holly and other seasonal plants and flowers into their homes.

Some pets could suffer allergic reactions if they eat certain seasonal plants, so it's best to err on the side of caution and speak to a vet before including live plants and flowers in decorative displays.



(METRO CREATIVE)

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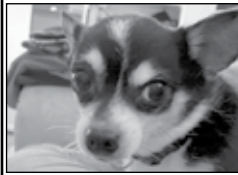


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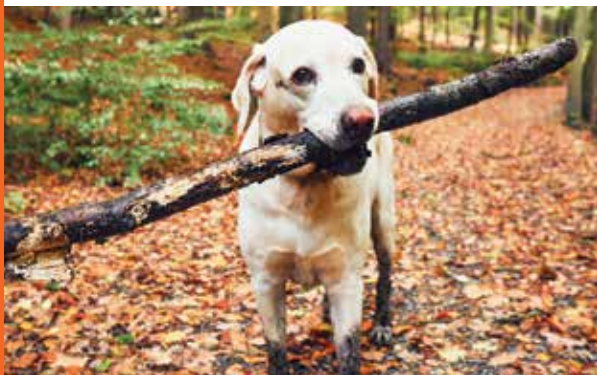


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