

Plenty of pet events slated for September and October

Continued from pg. 2

Animals service dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of Animals on the banks of the Credit River in St. Alban's Garden Chapel, 537 Main St. Glen Williams. This outdoor service, 2 p.m., is open to everyone.

- Willow Park Ecology Centre observes International Migratory Bird Day, 1-4 p.m. Celebrate this international day with bird-focused activities in Willow Park. Fun for everyone. Call 905-702-9055 to volunteer or just show up and enjoy.

Saturday, Oct. 9

- Microchip and Rabies Clinic will be hosted by Upper Credit Humane Society, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Pet Valu, 235 Guelph St. (Halton Hills Shopping Plaza), Georgetown. Cost per pet: \$20, rabies shot and \$30 microchip. Please bring your dog on leash and cat in a carrier to ensure their safety.

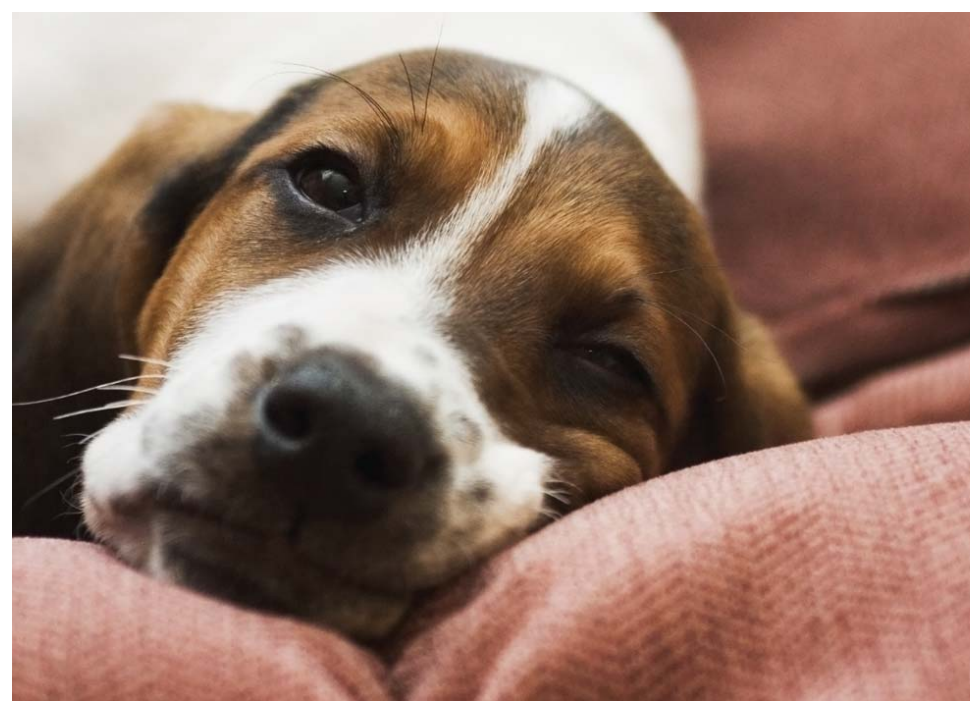
Saturday, Oct. 16

- Lions Foundation of Canada Dog

Guides is hosting its annual Fall Open House, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at its Oakville facility, 152 Wilson St. New this year will be the 'ask an expert' question and answer period; an opportunity for the public to ask experienced staff and trainers dog-related questions. The Open House will also feature demonstrations from all five Dog Guide programs, tours of the facilities, and information on fostering a future Dog Guide or volunteering. In addition, there will be a silent auction with all of the proceeds going towards providing Dog Guides at no cost to Canadians with disabilities. Info: 905-842-2891 or email info@dogguides.com.

Sunday, Oct. 31

- Meet and Treat Halloween Party will be held 1-5 p.m. at the Upper Credit Humane Society Shelter, corner of Trafalgar Rd. N. and Hwy. 124. Celebrate Halloween with the animals with treats for the humans and the animals. Wear a costume and be eligible to win the best costume prize!



Pet nutrition 101

We all love our pets, that goes without saying but how much do we really know about feeding our beloved pets. In most cases, not much. In this article Pet Nutrition 101 we'll try and shed some light on this important subject.

First let's start with a bit of controversy. Dogs are omnivores, which means they get their nutrition from a variety of sources. Dogs, like people, have the ability to digest and obtain their requirements from a number of different food sources. History tells us that dogs have been domesticated for approximately 10,000 years and in this time they have adapted to life with humans and their diet has changed from that of their wild ancestor.

So the question arises what should I feed my dog? Canned food, dry food, prepared diets, raw diets? There are so many choices and conflicting messages it can be difficult to decide. Let's start with the fact that dog nutrition is not that different than human nutrition and the old adage garbage in garbage out is very apt in this case. Dogs need six nutrients to survive and it's the quality of those nutrients that determine how well the dog does. The six nutrients are water, carbohydrates, fats, proteins, minerals and vitamins.

When reading a pet food label have a look at which ingredients are first on the list. Those will be what the food is mainly comprised of. A good food will have a meat meal such as poultry meal or lamb meal as the first ingredient. Often you will see an item like fresh chicken as the first ingredient but don't be fooled. Fresh chicken can be as much as 90% water and since the ingredients are listed in order of weight this can give the false impression that chicken makes up the bulk of the food. Not necessarily so, when cooked down to the 10% moisture level of most pet foods chicken would end up as a smaller portion of the diet.

In this situation in all likelihood

the second ingredient is the primary ingredient.


Next on the list look for a carbohydrate source. These can take many forms from grains like corn and barley to starches like potatoes. Unless your pet has a sensitivity to a specific grain or carbohydrate it may not matter which of these are used. Recently there has been a shift away from grains like corn and wheat to other grains or even grain free diets that substitute other carbohydrates such as potatoes.

Next look for a fat source. These can either be animal based such as poultry fat or from other sources such as safflower or vegetable sources. Avoid food that contain a statement like animal fats. These can be from mixed sources and of unknown quality.

The ingredients listed after fat are generally not the main portion of the diet but are still extremely important. They include ingredients like fruits, vegetables, vitamins and minerals. Avoid foods with artificial colours, preservatives like Ethoxyquin and BHT, sugar and propylene glycol (plumbing antifreeze) used to provide those moist chewy bits in some foods. These ingredients are completely unnecessary and can lead to health problems in your pet. Why do companies but them in? Not for the dog, it's strictly to appeal to the consumer.

Next time you go shopping for your pet's food stop and take a minute to read the label. If there is something your don't understand ask questions. Staff at Pet Centres are trained in pet nutrition and will be up on the latest trends in pet food ingredients. A good quality premium pet food can actually cost less per feeding than many of those bargain brands and your pet will be healthier and happier too.


—Written by Mark Reynolds,
President, Ruffin's Pet Centres,
140 Guelph Street, Georgetown,
905-873-0933



Credit Valley Conservation's Landscapes for Learning

AT TERRA COTTA CONSERVATION AREA'S WATERSHED LEARNING CENTRE

Nature Photography 101



Saturday, Sept. 25
1 - 3:30 p.m.
For adults and children 13 +

Ever try to capture the perfect picture but always end up with your thumb in the shot? Brush up on your photography skills with the help of Ernie Silhanek, an instructor of nature photography at Fleming College. Bring your own camera and gear and learn the basic tips and tricks in this beginner level program.

Enjoy a complimentary beverage.

Registration is required. To register or for more information, e-mail: education@creditvalleyca.ca or call: 905.670.1615 ext 221. Free with general admission to Terra Cotta Conservation Area. Donations are appreciated.

Please dress appropriately for the weather. In the event of adverse weather conditions on the day of the event, call for a notice of cancellation. Walks will be on maintained trails, however, some terrain may be steep and/or uneven.

www.creditvalleyca.ca/education