

# It's time to spring clean your pets

By Ross Pezzack, D.V.M.  
Georgetown Animal Clinic

With the onset of warm weather, our thoughts have turned to preparing our lawns, cars and homes for spring cleanups. But equally important is that with a little effort, you can give your pet a healthier and happier summer by acting now to prevent summer ailments.

Over the next few weeks, we will present a series of articles which will outline ways of preparing your pet for summer. For more detailed information, please contact your local veterinarian.

As you have already noticed, your pet is losing large quantities of hair throughout your house. It is essential that the hair be removed by brushing. This may seem like a never-ending process, but unless this hair is removed, proper air circulation will be lost and secondary skin infections can form. As well, it allows you to remove the coat rather than having it left on your carpet.

Breeds that do not shed will often benefit from a clipping of their coats which have grown long over the winter. The benefits are similar to those of brushing, resulting in fewer skin problems later in the year.

Following a thorough grooming, most dogs will benefit from a sham-

poo and rinse to cleanse the coat thoroughly. This may have to be repeated for those dogs which are not done on a regular basis.

Generally it is best to use a shampoo designed for pets rather than a human shampoo, and if your pet has sensitive skin, a hypoallergenic shampoo available from your veterinarian would be advisable. Many cases of post-bathing itching are related either to inadequate rinsing or allergic reaction to the shampoo used. If your pet is used to a hair dryer, you can carefully dry them with being careful not to burn their skin.

Bathing a cat is often extremely stressful to them (and their owner), so unless your cat is cooperative or there is a medical condition which requires bathing, most cats are best cleansed by brushing. In all cases you will have the option of having a

groomer perform these functions for you.

Many of our pets are less active in the winter and have not worn their nails. Rather than risking a torn nail, a quick nail trim (either done by yourself or your local veterinarian) will help to prevent this condition. If you are trimming your pets nails, be sure you understand the technique and are aware how to avoid the blood vessels in the nail. Your veterinarian would be happy to demonstrate this to you.

With lack of activity also comes weight gain and decreased exercise tolerance. Your veterinarian may recommend a reduced calorie food to decrease those increased pounds. Obesity is a major health hazard in our pets which can be controlled if approached early. Be careful not to overexercise your pet if he/she is not used to that level of activity



The cat's out of the bag. Binkie, the cat, that is, owned by Kevin Murphy of Georgetown. Seems Binkie was hungry and just wanted to make sure Kevin had picked up some grub. photo submitted

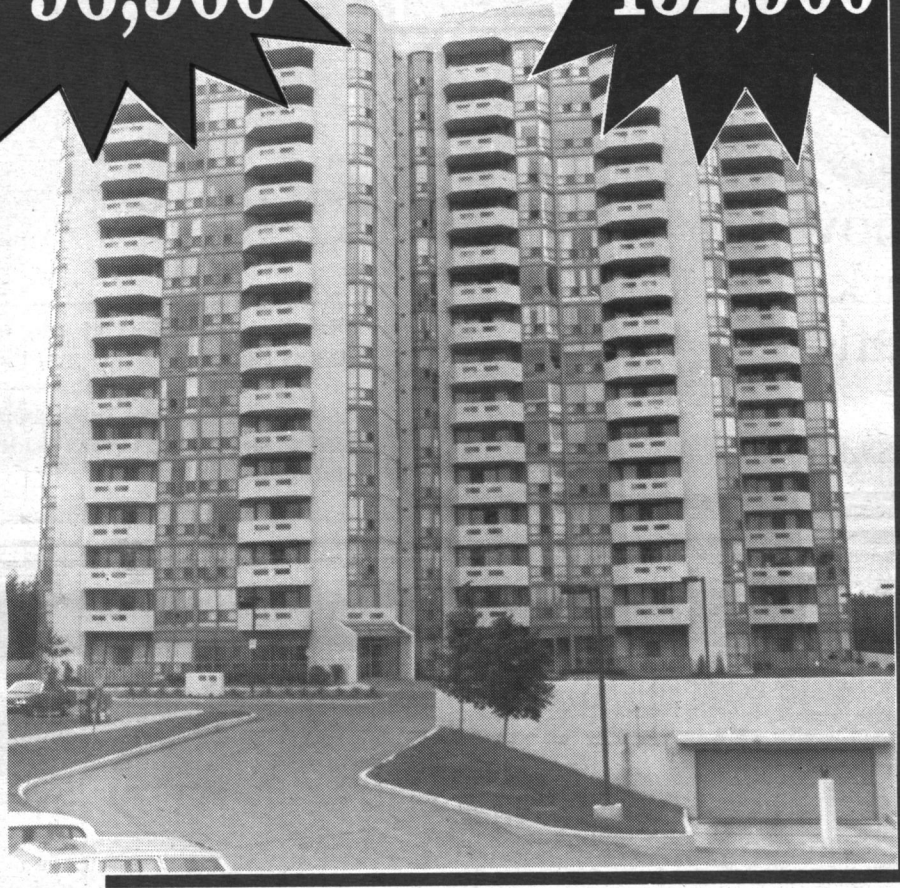
after a quiet winter, rather slowly increase the lengths of your walks through the spring.

In future articles we will explore

flea prevention, heartworm disease and vaccination. If you have any questions, please contact your local veterinarian.

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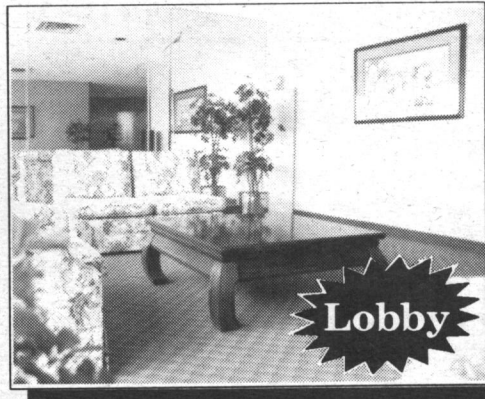
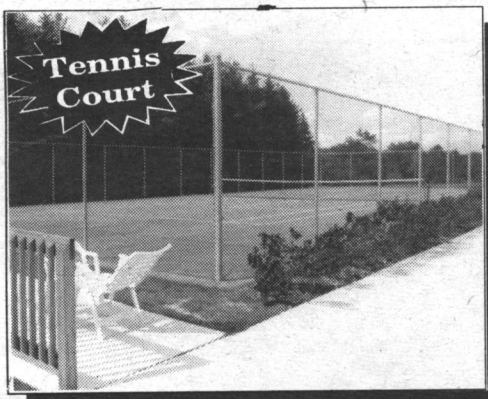
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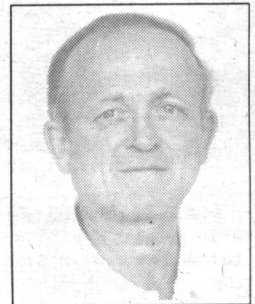
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And as the unknown golfer says:

*The only thing you can learn from a golf book is that you can't learn anything from a golf book and it takes too many golf books to learn it.*

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