

PET WELLNESS

SASKATOON
STARPHOENIX

MAY 2020

**Local veterinarian
gives advice on how
to keep your pet
happy and healthy.**



PET LICENSING

LICENSING PROVIDES PEACE OF MIND!

If your pet ever escapes, a valid pet license provides identification, safe shelter and direct return home.

Purchase or renew your pet license online at saskatoon.ca/petlicensing or visit one of our pet license vendors.

VENDORS

Acadia Veterinary Clinic
#4 - 3421 8th Street East

Arlington Animal Hospital
3010 B Arlington Avenue

City Hall
222 3rd Avenue North

Critters
2 - 202 Primrose Avenue
3 - 406 Ludlow Street East
90 - 220 Betts Avenue
112 - 110 Ruth Street East
Bay F - 411 Herold Court

Cumberland Veterinary Clinic
#25 - 1501 8th Street East

Early's Farm & Garden Centre
502 51st Street East
2615 Lorne Avenue

Erindale Animal Hospital
#11 - 410 Ludlow Street

Forest Grove Veterinary Clinic
#8 - 415 115th Street East

Lawson Heights Animal Hospital
#120 - 227 Primrose Drive

Pet-I-Coat Junction & Barkery
110 Wedge Road, Unit 6

Pet Planet
40 - 1519 8th Street

Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
1925 Avenue B North

Saskatoon SPCA
5028 Clarence Avenue South

Stonebridge Veterinary Hospital
#5 - 215 Stonebridge Boulevard

Wilson's Lifestyle Centre
303 Owen Manor

PET LICENSING FEES

DOG

Spayed/Neutered	\$30
Not Spayed or Neutered	\$60
Juvenile (Under 1 Year)	\$30
Replacement Tag	\$10

CAT

Spayed/Neutered	\$18
Not Spayed or Neutered	\$40
Juvenile (Under 1 Year)	\$18
Replacement Tag	\$10



DOG DAY OF SUMMER

FREE END OF SEASON
LICENSED POOCH SWIM

MAYFAIR POOL
1025 AVE F NORTH

For updates please visit
saskatoon.ca/dogdayofsummer





PET WELLNESS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pet license vendors	2	Howling for help: nuisance barking	16
How to enhance your dog park experience	4	Comforting tips to cope with the loss of a pet	18
City of Saskatoon Dog Parks Map	6	For the love of cats	19
Animal Services website a great go-to resource	7	On the trail: how to share the Meewasin trails	21
Animal guardians: Saskatoon Animal Control Agency	10	Swim season: Ensure your pet's safety in the water	22
Saskatoon SPCA serves furry friends in variety of ways	12	Pet events	23
Local vet identifies latest pet health concerns	14	Who to call	24



EDITOR WRITERS

Jeannie Armstrong
Jennifer Jacoby-Smith
Tom Eremondi
Elizabeth Ireland
Hilary Klassen
Paul Sinkewicz
Corrie Sherwin

DESIGNER

To advertise in the next edition of Pet Wellness, contact Amanda Ritz at The StarPhoenix. Tel: (306) 657-6244; email: aritz@postmedia.com. This section was created by Content Works, Postmedia's commercial content division.

**Pets like to ROAM.
A license gets them HOME.**

Annual pet licenses as low as \$18/year.
saskatoon.ca/petlicensing



How to enhance your *dog park* experience

BY JENNIFER JACOBY-SMITH

Saskatoon residents are fortunate to have so many dog parks to choose from when it comes to enjoying some off-leash time with their four-legged buddy.

There are 11 dog parks in the City of Saskatoon. Each one boasts a different size and type of terrain. There's surely a park that will suit every type of dog.

The off-leash areas provide an opportunity for your canine to experience some fresh air, exercise, and fun. The naturalized spaces can be stimulating for dog – a chance to see and explore new territory and new smells.

But is your pooch ready for a trip to the dog park?

According to Kevin Sorokowski, a Dog Park Ambassador with the City of Saskatoon, part of being a responsible pet

owner is knowing if your dog is ready for the dog park.

Your dog should know how to come when called, along with other basic commands, and should know how to greet other dogs and their owners (without exhibiting aggressive behaviours).

Sorokowski says it's also important to judge your dog's mood from day to day.

"Be mindful of whether or not the dog's been having a good day," he says. "There are times when it isn't the best day to take them. If that's the case, don't take them. They'll be good the next day."

This is especially true if your dog is feeling unwell or out-of-sorts – if their routine has been messed up, for example.

Before going to a dog park, it's important to find one that suits your dog. If you own a

small dog, or a dog that is shy or not used to other canines, a smaller park might be a better choice. This will enable the owner to be in close proximity to their animal at all times. That way they can intervene should there be a doggy disagreement.

"Dogs being dogs, they don't listen to reason. They don't have discussions. They have immediate full-on arguments all the time. So it's crucial that people are near their dogs when they're visiting the parks, because that's the safest way to make sure nothing bad goes worse," says Sorokowski.

Small dog parks, such as the one in Caswell Hill, are only a half square block. It's a good place to visit with a small dog or a dog that the owner is worried about.

Knowing your own dog's likes and dislikes also helps. For example, Sorokowski



Chief Whitecap Dog Park is the 11th off-leash dog park to be introduced by the City of Saskatoon. With 80 acres to explore, Chief Whitecap Dog Park is the largest off-leash site in Saskatoon. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/CHIEF WHITECAP DOG PARK GROUP





There are 11 off-leash dog parks in Saskatoon, each offering a different user experience. It's a great opportunity for you and your dog to enjoy fresh air, exercise and fun. PHOTO: CITY OF SASKATOON

says his dog loves to roll in mud, so he chooses to take his dog to Fred Mendel Park because it's designed on a slope. This means water can't collect anywhere and create a tempting puddle.

Avalon is a large park with some trees and hills. At times your dog may not be in your direct line of sight. This park is good for easy-going dogs that return to their owner or like to be close to their owner.

"It's really important for people to pay attention to what their dogs are doing" Sorokowski says.

On hot days it might be a good idea to bring water if you plan on spending a lot of time at the park, or if there isn't a lot of shelter. You don't want Fido to overheat.

Bringing along some special treats may entice a reluctant dog to leave when it's time to go home.

But bringing toys? Not such a great idea, says Sorokowski. "Like my dog, if there's someone at the park throwing a ball for their dog, my dog could care less. But if another dog likes to chase balls, then you could have a problem."

If you do take a toy to the park, be prepared to not get the toy back. Another dog might claim it and attempts to get it back might create a problem.

Poop bags are great to take, but the City of Saskatoon does provide them for dog owners at each park.

"Poop bags and garbage cans are strategically located around the parks so you're always not far from a bag or a bucket," explains Sorokowski.

He emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the pet owner to pick up their dog's feces. "Nobody else should have to deal with your

dog's poop."

It keeps the park clean and enjoyable for everyone.

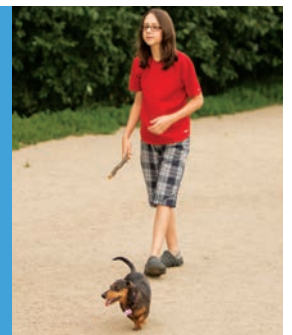
Sorokowski has another caution for dog owners no matter what park you visit: Don't linger at the gate. The gate to the park serves as an entrance and an exit. Dogs arriving are excited to be there and dogs leaving are excited from running around. This transition area might be a trigger point for your dog or another dog, so it's a good idea to move quickly away from the gate when you arrive and when you leave.

To make the most of your dog park experience, it's best to be prepared. Know your dog. Know the park. And most of all, have fun!

For more details on the City's dog parks, users are encouraged to visit www.saskatoon.ca/dogparks.

PLAY NICE!

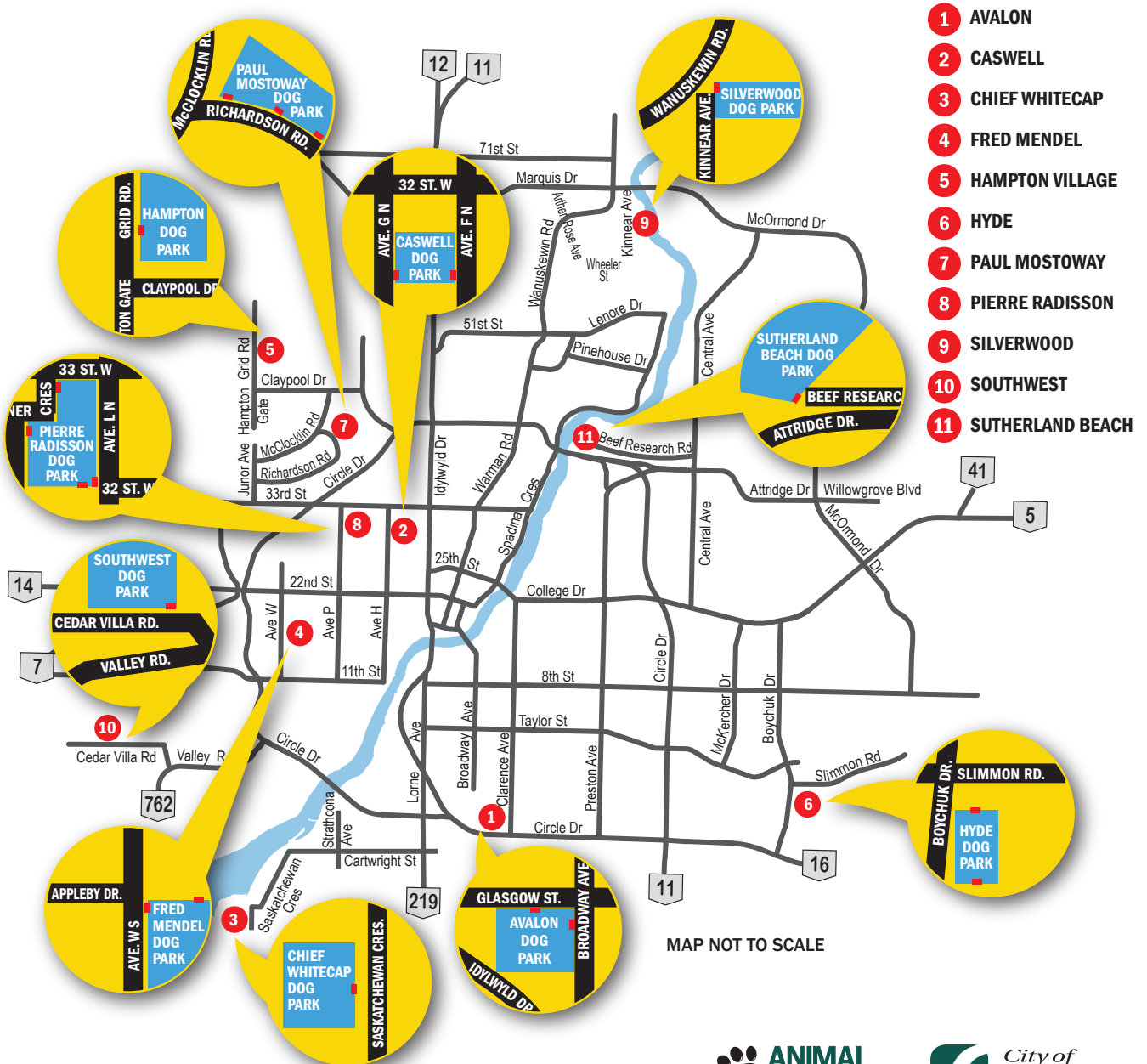
Dog parks are a great place for socialization and exercise. Ensure you and your dog are ready for the off-leash experience. Your dog should know and obey basic commands of come, sit and stay before visiting a dog park. Consider taking obedience classes or hiring a qualified dog trainer.



DOG PARKS

All dogs must have a current pet license to access the dog parks.

For more information on Dog Park openings & closures, visit saskatoon.ca/dogparks.



MAP NOT TO SCALE



DOG PARK ETIQUETTE

- Your pet license is like an all-access pass to Saskatoon’s Dog Parks. Only licensed dogs are invited to play!
- Be a good buddy and interact with your dog, keeping him or her within sight at all times. Off-leash doesn’t mean unattended.
- Scoop your dog’s poop. Bring a few extra baggies, just in case.
- Play nice! Your dog should know and obey basic commands of come, sit and stay before visiting a Dog Park.
- If you take a toy to the park, expect other dogs to play with it. Better yet, leave the toys at home.
- Is your dog hot to trot? The mere presence of a female dog in heat can cause a frenzy among potential four-legged Romeos. It’s best to have your dog spayed or neutered before planning a Dog Park visit.
- If you have concerns about the behaviour of a dog or its owner while at the park, contact the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency at 306-385-PETS (7387).
- Have fun! When dogs and owners play by the rules, everyone has a good time!

Easier than ever to *license* your pet *online*

Animal Services website a great go-to resource for pet owners

BY JEANNIE ARMSTRONG

Everything you ever wanted to know about pet ownership in Saskatoon is just a click away, thanks to the newly improved Animal Services web pages developed by the City of Saskatoon.

Just go to *Saskatoon.ca*, click on “Services for Residents” and click again on “Pet Licensing & Animal Services” or try the quick link at *www.saskatoon.ca/petlicensing*.

“We’ve worked really hard over the past year to improve communication with pet owners through our website,” says Brad Babyak, Recreation Services Manager/Open Space Programming and Development with the City of Saskatoon.

PET LICENSING

All cats and dogs over the age of four months are required to be licensed by the City of Saskatoon. The annual license fee for a spayed/neutered dog is \$30. If the dog has not been spayed or neutered, the annual license fee is \$60. A license for a spayed/neutered cat is \$18; a license for an unaltered cat is \$40.

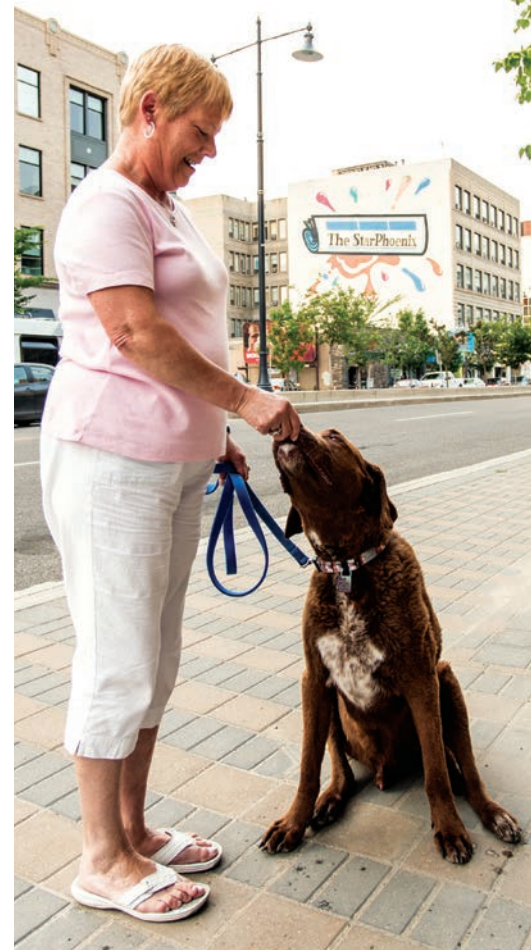
The total number of pet licenses issued by the City of Saskatoon in 2019 was 25,713. Approximately half of those licenses were purchased online or in person at City Hall.

It’s now easier than ever to license your pet online, notes Babyak. “Pet licensing is really the foundation for many of the services that the City provides to pet owners. The upgrades have made online pet licensing more user-friendly, particularly if you’re accessing the site through your mobile browser. Prior to the upgrades, it was difficult to use the website through your smartphone.”

Babyak adds, “The new online system allows people to look up their pet using different options – by last name, license tag number or microchip number. In the past, if you didn’t know your person ID number or license tag number, or needed to make changes to your personal information, you’d have to phone in.”

There are many benefits to licensing your pet. First and foremost, pet licensing helps identify your dog or cat if it is at large, contributing to the pet’s safe return home.

Pet owners who license their dog or cat can take advantage of the Pet-At-Large (PAL) Perk, which Babyak describes as a “get out of jail free” provision that can be redeemed once during the pet’s lifetime. Also, by having your pet licensed, once annually, the PAL Perk can be applied to void your impound fee.



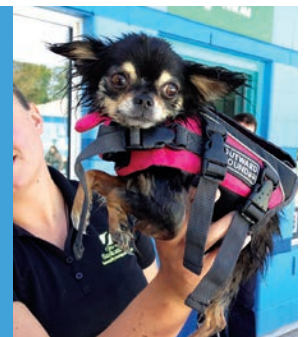
Pet owners who license their dog or cat can take advantage of the Pet-At-Large (PAL) Perk – a “get out of jail free” provision that can be redeemed once during the pet’s lifetime. (PHOTO: CITY OF SASKATOON)

“The Pet-at-Large Perk can potentially save a pet owner hundreds of dollars in fines,” says Babyak. The fine for a dog caught running at large starts at \$100. If you don’t license your pet, the base fine is \$250.

PET LICENSING

What your license pays for:

- Bylaw enforcement
- Pound services
- City-wide pet events
- Subsidized Spay and Neuter Program (SSNP)
- Dog park programming and development



DOG PARKS

Licensed dogs are also invited to enjoy the City of Saskatoon's 11 off-leash dog parks. "Each dog park provides its own unique experience," says Babyak. "There's quite a size range. The Caswell Dog Park is a neighbourhood park approximately one acre in size. Our newest dog park, Chief Whitecap Park, is the largest at 80 acres. And there's everything in between."

Only dogs with valid licenses are allowed to visit the off-leash parks. Owners must accompany their dogs, observe them and keep them under control at all times. And don't forget to clean up after your dog!

The Animal Services website, www.saskatoon.ca/dogparks, provides listings and a map featuring all 11 dog park locations in Saskatoon.

The site also answers questions such as "Are you ready for the dog park?" – stressing the benefits of obedience training. There's even advice on what to do if you and your dog encounter wildlife while exploring a dog park.



The City of Saskatoon's Dog Day of Summer event is a pool party open to well-socialized dogs with a valid license and up-to-date vaccinations.

(PHOTO: CITY OF SASKATOON)

DOG PARK AMBASSADORS

Are you an enthusiastic dog park user? Consider becoming a Dog Park Ambassador. "The Dog Park Ambassador is able to communicate to us any issues or concerns they have about the dog park, as well as positive comments," says Babyak.

"Typically, we rely on the Dog Park Ambassadors to help coordinate the spring and/or fall clean-up of each dog park. We provide the supplies, such as bags and gloves. It's another opportunity for people who go to the dog park to meet and socialize."

Interested in becoming a Dog Park Ambassador? Click on "Becoming a Dog Park Ambassador" for sign-up information.

HERE KITTY, KITTY

Did you know cats must also be licensed? And unless it's on a leash, your cat can't roam off your property? Cat owners can refer to the section of the Animal Services website devoted to furry felines. The "Essentials of Cat Ownership" section includes information on licensing your cat and the importance of having your cat spayed or neutered to help bring the city's cat population under control.

The section on "Outdoor Play" is particularly helpful for cat owners looking for tips on giving their felines more exercise and safe ways to enjoy the great outdoors.

SUBSIDIZED SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM

Pet license fees help to support the City of Saskatoon's Subsidized Spay and Neuter program. This program assists low-income pet owners who might not otherwise be able to afford to have their pet neutered or spayed. The website provides information on who can apply and how to do it.

GOOD DOGS BITE TOO

In 2019, the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency received 209 reports of people being bitten by dogs. The Animal Services website provides helpful tips on preventing bites and recognizing the warning signs dogs exhibit when they feel stressed and could bite. You'll also learn what to do if you are bitten, which includes reporting the incident to the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency, as well as the Department of Population and Public Health.

INJURED OR DECEASED ANIMALS

A new addition to the Animal Services website is the "Injured and Deceased Animals" section. "We get quite a few calls about injured or deceased animals. Typically, many have been struck by vehicles," says Babyak.

The site provides information on which agency to call if you find an injured or deceased animal.

If your pet is lost and you are worried it has been injured or is possibly dead, the website advises calling the 24-hour Customer Care Centre at (306) 975-2476.

The Saskatoon SPCA can also provide information and assistance on locating your lost pet.

ENFORCEMENT

The City of Saskatoon wants to ensure the happiness and wellbeing of both people and pets. That's why they have established a number of regulations under the Animal Control Bylaw.

The Bylaw is enforced by the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency (SACA). Pound services are provided by the Saskatoon SPCA. The revenue collected through the issuing of dog and cat licenses by the City of Saskatoon supports both services.

If you have a concern about an animal running at large, nuisance barking, animal abuse or hoarding or an animal in distress, this site will tell you which agency to contact.

The site also links to the Animal Control Bylaw (Bylaw 7860) and the Dangerous Animals Bylaw (Bylaw 8176).

DOG DAY OF SUMMER

On an annual basis, barring unforeseen events, Animal Services hosts the Dog Day of Summer event at Mayfair Pool.

This pooch pool party is open to well-socialized dogs with a valid license and up-to-date vaccinations. Last year, the event drew approximately 290 dogs.

Babyak says the Dog Day of Summer pool party increases in popularity each year. As a result, pre-registration is required.

"We divide the day into different sessions, from mid-day to early evening. The number of dogs that are allowed in the pool for each session is limited," says Babyak.

"Our lunch hour and evening sessions fill up the quickest. Now we're hearing about people who are taking the whole day off work so they can bring their dogs to the afternoon sessions." One of the sessions is reserved exclusively for service dogs, he adds.

For complete information, check out the Dog Day of Summer section on the Animal Services web pages.



All cats and dogs over the age of four months are required to be licensed by the City of Saskatoon. It's now easier than ever to purchase your pet's license through the City of Saskatoon's Animal Services web pages. (PHOTO: CITY OF SASKATOON)



RIVERSIDE RESORT:

Pets on Vacation



Boarding * Daycare * Grooming

Your Pets next Vacation Spot!!

“Cause sometimes they just need to get away!”

Voted Saskatoon's Best Kennel 2019

Our Facility Features:

- 24 Indoor/Outdoor Dog Suites
- 4 Premium Cat Condos & Sun Room
- Cozy In-Floor Heating
- Supervised Large Exercise Areas
- Retail Department

Book your accommodations NOW by calling:

(306) 665-7387 (PETS)

Bonus: Doggie Daycare

Now offering convenient daycare 7 days a week!

Drop off and pick up with No Direct Human Contact

Daily Rates and New Short-Term Packages to save you money

Managed Play Groups with outdoor courtyards and indoor access!

Mon-Fri 8am-6pm Sat 9am-5pm Sun 11am-4pm

Call to reserve a spot today or inquire at

(306) 665-7387 or

BookNow@RiversideResortForPets.ca

Location can be found on our website

www.RiversideResortForPets.ca





Animal guardians: **Saskatoon** **Animal Control Agency**

The Saskatoon Animal Control Agency (SACA) team is motivated by their love of animals. Their goal is to ensure a safe community and promote responsible pet ownership. (PHOTO: SACA)

BY JEANNIE ARMSTRONG

Imagine the anguish and confusion that a dog or cat experiences when it is lost and running at large. Consider too, the physical discomfort the animal suffers – including hunger, thirst and exposure to the elements.

In 2019, 381 lost cats and dogs were happily reunited with their owners by members of the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency (SACA). These animals were able to be identified because their loving owners had purchased an annual pet license from the City of Saskatoon, and some had also had their pet microchipped.

Another 1,763 dogs and cats who were found running at large by SACA officers did not have any means of identification. As a result, they were impounded at the Saskatoon SPCA.

The Saskatoon Animal Control Agency is contracted by the City of Saskatoon to enforce the Animal Control Bylaw and the Dangerous Animals Bylaw, and to provide animal control services. Pound services are

provided by the Saskatoon SPCA. These services are supported through the revenues collected through the issuing of dog and cat licenses by the City of Saskatoon.

Eva Alexandrovici, SACA president, says the Animal Control Bylaw is in place to benefit pet and non-pet owners alike. “We want to have animals and people live in harmony in our city.”

It is important to be aware of all of the City’s animal-related bylaws. With the summer months approaching, citizens are reminded that while off your private property it is against the bylaw to tie your animal to an inanimate object. Please ensure your pet is on a leash no more than two metres in length and under proper human control at all times.

TOP FIVE ANIMAL BYLAW INFRINGEMENTS IN 2019

1. At large

The most common infraction in 2019 involved dogs and cats running at large. “If we

receive a complaint about or see an animal at large, we will impound it. If it has a license or a microchip, or other form of identification, we will try to return it to the owner. Any time we impound a cat or a dog running at large, a ticket is issued,” says Alexandrovici.

If the animal has a valid pet license, then the Pet-At-Large (PAL) Perk could be applied. Redeemable only once during the lifetime of the animal, the PAL Perk waives the at-large fine the pet owner would normally have to pay upon reclaiming their animal. These fines can be a minimum of \$350 and as high as \$650 if the dog or cat is at-large without a license.

2. Failure to license

In 2019, the second most frequent bylaw infraction dealt with by SACA was failure to license a dog or cat. “Under the Animal Control Bylaw, all dogs and cats are required to be licensed when they are four months old,” says Alexandrovici. By having your pet licensed, the Pet-At-Large (PAL) Perk can be



applied once annually to void your impound fee. The base fine for not licensing your dog or cat is \$250.

3. Nuisance barking

Number three on the top five list of bylaw violations in 2019 is nuisance barking. "If we get a barking complaint, it may not result in a ticket. It could just be a warning. It depends on what the complainant is requesting," says Alexandrovici.

The City of Saskatoon has refined the process residents need to follow to file a complaint about a barking dog. In the past, the person filing the complaint was required to complete a five- or seven-day bark log.

"Sometimes people would not complete those forms properly," says Brad Babyak, Recreation Services Manager/Open Space Programming and Development with the City of Saskatoon.

"Any time we give a fine for barking or howling, there's a chance the case will potentially go to court, so the information has to be recorded properly. We've revised the form to ensure the information is being collected properly, with stop and start times," says Babyak.

Alexandrovici suggests that individuals who are upset by their neighbour's barking dog begin by having a conversation with the pet owner. "You can approach your neighbour and just let them know their dog is barking excessively. Sometimes they have no idea this is going on if they're not home. You can let them know you are uncomfortable with the level of barking.

"If you'd rather not talk to your neighbour, we can take your complaint over the phone and send you the documents to fill out. Those include a questionnaire and a bark log where you document the dog's barking and send it back to us."

SACA staff members will then go to see the dog's owner and either issue a warning or a ticket. "We provide educational material to

help the owner try to prevent the barking," says Alexandrovici.

What can help reduce nuisance barking? "Don't leave the dog unattended in the yard. Proper training, socializing and exercising the dog also helps reduce nuisance barking. It also helps to introduce your dog to the neighbour. If your dog knows the neighbour is supposed to be there, the dog is less likely to bark at them," says Alexandrovici.

4. Feces accumulation

Number four on the list of top five violations is failing to clean up pet feces. This includes accumulation in the owner's yard, a neighbour's property or public spaces. "Spring is always a busy time for receiving complaints about feces accumulation. If owners clean up after their animals throughout the winter, they won't have such a huge accumulation to deal with in the spring," she says.

"When you take your dog for a walk, make sure to clean up after it immediately. Always have a poop bag with you. It's also very important to clean up after your dog if you're in one of the off-leash dog parks." The minimum fine for each offense is \$100.

5. Animals in prohibited areas

Rounding out the top five list of bylaw infractions involves animals being in prohibited areas. "There are parks in Saskatoon which are prohibited to animals, including Kiwanis Park, Kinsmen Park and the Forestry Farm Park. Playgrounds, cemeteries and some sports fields are posted off limits for pets," says Alexandrovici.

The fine for a first offense is \$100; second is \$200; and subsequent offences are \$300.

This regulation is in place to help protect the public, she explains. "Playgrounds are prohibited to dogs for safety reasons. We want our children to have safe places to play. There are a number of enclosed sports fields that are prohibited to dogs. That's because sports fields are places of action and excitement. If



The most common violation of the Animal Control Bylaw is allowing an animal to be at large. In 2019, over 2,000 cats and dogs were found running at large by Saskatoon Animal Control Agency officers. (PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES)

a game is going on, a dog can react to that excitement. We want everyone to be safe and not get bitten."

Know More

To learn more about the Animal Control Bylaw and Dangerous Animals Bylaw, visit the City of Saskatoon's Animal Services website, at Saskatoon.ca. You can also call the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency at (306) 385-7387.

POOP IS NOT FERTILIZER!

Dog feces do not fertilize the ground and have negative effects on grass and plants. Be a good neighbour and clean up after your pet.



Saskatoon SPCA

serves furry friends in variety of ways



Graham Dickson is the Saskatoon SPCA's new executive director. (PHOTO: SPCA)

BY PAUL SINKEWICZ

Graham Dickson is taking the helm of the Saskatoon SPCA at an interesting time for the city.

Saskatoon has been growing rapidly in every direction, and with that growth has come a greater demand for the critical services the SPCA provides.

The Saskatoon SPCA is the city's lost and found for pets, the ever-vigilant advocate against cruelty to animals and the agency that matches adoptable pets with their new homes.

Dickson became the new executive director in March, bringing with him 15 years of experience in the non-profit sector. He will need it to guide the organization during its next phase.

"The Saskatoon SPCA must grow and adapt to meet the needs of a growing city,"

Dickson said.

His immediate goal is to develop a sustainable business model that meets the needs of the city and to grow strategically the SPCA's relationships with individuals and organizations within the community.

"The best way to manage our animal population at the shelter is to look at the bigger picture and increase the rate of pets in Saskatoon being spayed and neutered. We must collaborate with the City to promote the Subsidized Spay Neuter Program, continue to educate the public about responsible pet ownership, and in the long run develop our capacity to perform spays and neuters in-house."

One of the most satisfying services provided by the Saskatoon SPCA is its pet adoption program. Animals come into the SPCA's adoption program through owners surrendering their pets because they can no longer care for them, through the stray animals retrieved by Animal Control Officers or members of the public and through animals rescued from situations of neglect or abuse.

Jasmine Hanson, SPCA Communications Coordinator, says the next step once an animal reaches the safety of the SPCA is to do what it takes to prepare that animal for adoption.

"If it comes in ill or injured, we will assess what is needed to treat the animal and will then do it. We also do a behaviour assessment on them. It's a little bit more extensive for dogs than for cats, but we want to know as much as we can about that animal's personality, what they are comfortable around, what they prefer in terms of socialization with people and other animals. And that will help us find them their best possible match in an adopter."

When all that is complete, they are ready to go up for adoption.

"Once we have a good match and we've approved someone's application, they can take that animal home as soon as that animal is spayed or neutered."

The adoption fees vary depending on the animal's age and breed.

Animals that are a little bit older are slightly cheaper to adopt than puppies and kittens. The SPCA also charges a little bit more for certain desirable breeds, like a Chihuahua or a Shih Tzu.

For cats the fees range from \$85 to \$225, and for dogs they range from \$295 to \$430.

"That fee includes a ton of great benefits," says Hanson. "It includes the spay or neuter, the microchip, deworming, all vaccinations, complimentary checkup at a local vet clinic, and four weeks of free Pet Plan insurance. So, it's actually a value that ranges from \$500 to \$1,500."

The SPCA will occasionally run adoption drives when the shelter population spikes. Specials on adoption fees help make room for new animals.

"If we just have too many animals in our shelter and we need to make space for more, we will lower the adoption fees to encourage more people to come and adopt."



Saskatoon SPCA alumni Dumpling is a four-month-old shih tzu mix who found safe shelter when he was surrendered to Animal Protection Services on March 3. The Saskatoon SPCA helped Dumpling find a happy home when he was adopted on March 14. (PHOTO: SPCA)



Saskatoon SPCA alumni Murray is a two-year-old domestic shorthair cat who found safe shelter when he was rescued by SPCA emergency after-hours staff on January 24, 2020. He found a happy home when he was adopted on February 29.

(PHOTO: SPCA)

Regardless the adoption fee, the process remains the same, ensuring the owners are financially and emotionally prepared to take on the responsibility.

“We don’t actually turn a profit on our regular adoption fees, so those adoption drives are actually extremely costly for the SPCA.”

As advocates against animal cruelty, the SPCA employs two Animal Protection Officers who will investigate complaints alleging abuse or unhealthy environments.

The organization also employs two staff members who are certified professional dog trainers and certified canine consultants, said Hanson.

“Not only do they serve as a huge

resource to us when we are dealing with difficult behaviour in dogs, but they also provide the Polite Pups class to both adopters and members of the public who want to learn more about positive reinforcement based training, which is the method we endorse as an animal welfare agency.

“They are available to members of the public, but those classes are also included in the adoption fees of dogs under the age of one year. We’ve had great feedback from people about the program.”

With all of those services housed under one crowded roof, it’s clear Dickson really does have his work cut out for him.

SUMMER TIPS FOR PET OWNERS

Sadly, the animal protection officers of the Saskatoon SPCA are all too busy in the summer with calls about animals being left unattended in vehicles. They responded to more than 200 calls involving that dangerous situation in each of the last two summers and have measured temperatures as high as 60°C inside vehicles.

“Some people just don’t realize how dangerous it is. Animals – especially dogs – are much more susceptible to heat stroke than humans. And the temperature inside your car can rise 10 degrees in just 10 minutes on a warm summer day,” said Jasmine Hanson, SPCA Communications Coordinator. “We do see situations of dogs suffering heat stroke, and even in just 15 minutes they can suffer irreversible brain damage because they’ve been left in a hot car.”

She says if you have a pet, please just leave them at home when you are running around doing errands in the spring and summer. Don’t bring them with you.

One good plan is to train your dog to be comfortable being kennelled. There are resources available to help owners get them trained. You can also arrange for somebody else who is able to check in on your pets throughout the day.

“If that makes your pet more comfortable, that’s much, much better than bringing them along in the vehicle. It’s just not worth the risk. We don’t want to see people losing their pets in such a preventable way.”

And when you do bring your pet along for the ride, make sure they are safely restrained.

Use a seatbelt harness clipped to the car, or bring a kennel in the back of your vehicle.

“Don’t let your animal roam free in the vehicle. Even if they are well behaved, it’s not safe for anyone and it really doesn’t take much to make sure that they are secured and safe.”

She also advises pet owners to be on top of vaccinations because summer is a time when they are more likely to come into contact with wild animals, or pick up parvovirus from a dog park or just walking down the sidewalk.

“Regular veterinary care is actually your obligation as a pet owner.”



SPAY AND NEUTER!

A female cat that has not been spayed can produce three litters per year with the average litter size ranging from four to six kittens.



Local vet identifies latest *pet health* concerns

BY HILARY KLASSEN



Dr. Adeniran of the Stonebridge Veterinary Hospital warns Canadian pet owners to be aware of the growing threat of canine flu, not just at home, but when traveling across North America.

(PHOTO: HILARY KLASSEN)

Just like humans, pets need regular medical check-ups to ensure good health. Taking our furry family members to the veterinarian is not only a routine preventative measure, it alerts us to any emerging health issues that may be changing the animal health landscape.

Annual check-ups are recommended until animals hit their senior years. “When pets age, we do more regular check-ups, maybe every six months, to check for heart disease or kidney disease,” says Dr. Wole Adeniran of the Stonebridge Veterinary Hospital.

The legalization of marijuana in Canada can pose new risks to our animal friends. Problems arise when particles of marijuana tobacco or edibles are released and fall to the floor. Pets are quick to scoop them up. “We’ve treated several cases of marijuana poisoning in this clinic, arising from this type of situation,” says Dr. Adeniran. Animals are also attracted to the smell of water bong. These substances need to be kept out of reach.

The size of animal and the quality of the product are big factors when determining the impact of the exposure. “The smaller the animal and the bigger the quantity, the more dangerous and possibly lethal it could be,” says Dr. Adeniran. “It’s important to take precautionary measures because some breeds will be more sensitive to this toxic ingredient. The product needs to be stored in a secure location.”

Inhaling second-hand smoke can be a source of toxicity to pets, but Dr. Adeniran says his clinic is not seeing many such cases. Generally, the risk depends on the degree of active cannabinoids the animal is exposed to.

Another disease that is gradually making its way into Canada is the canine flu. This flu is found in nearly every State south of our border, and in 2018, the first cases were reported in Ontario. “The first cases arrived when some rescue dogs were imported from Asia,” says Dr. Adeniran. The flu is highly contagious and can be transmitted from

animal to animal when dogs sneeze, cough, touch noses or share food or water bowls. On a positive note, this canine flu does respond to a vaccine. “When people are about to travel, we make them aware of that possibility and what precautionary measures they can take before they go.”

Dental issues and periodontal disease are on the rise, according to Dr. Adeniran. Often this is because people do not examine their pet’s mouth and remain unaware. Preventative measures are recommended and include having the vet clean your pet’s teeth and brushing at home in the interim.

The incidence of obesity is rising in the pet population as well. “Pets are getting too heavy and we always try and bring that to people’s attention,” he says. Extra weight compounds health issues.

On the rare occasion, animals are inclined to munch on plants they find in their home. Dr. Adeniran gets calls from people who report that their dog or cat has nibbled on this or that, but most of the time pet owners catch the animal in the act and are able to snatch it from their mouth. He hasn’t encountered much danger in this area but offers a caution. “What we know is that lilies are bad plants for cats, so that could prove dangerous.”

Dr. Adeniran has encountered problems when pets accidentally come upon a poison like rodenticide. “It’s what we call ‘dietary indiscretion,’” he says. “We see more of that in terms of poisoning than house plant poisoning.” Medications and chocolate are other items that pets ingest and then end up at the clinic. “We see a lot of chocolate poisoning.”

What should pets be eating? Not marijuana edibles, not medications or chocolate, not plants, not rodenticide, not their neighbour’s kibble, but rather, nutritious, age-appropriate food. “Puppies should eat puppy food, not food for all ages. We do not recommend food for all ages,” says Dr. Adeniran.

Food is a major factor in maintaining a healthy coat for your pet. Regular grooming is critical and can be done at the groomer or at





The Stonebridge Veterinary Hospital has treated several animals for marijuana toxicity since its legalization. (PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES)

home. It's important to brush out any mats to provide aeration to the skin. Otherwise, that soft underbelly of your animal is susceptible to bugs that thrive in oxygen-free environments, including yeast and infections like "moist dermatitis" (aka hot spots). This is especially true in thicker-coated animals. "The skin is the largest organ in the body, and protecting it is very vital. Special shampoos are

available for people to use to care for the coat of their pet and give it excellent, stage-of-life nutrition," says Dr. Adeniran. Vitamin and mineral supplements are also available.

An additional at-home activity for pet care is checking your animal for lumps and bumps. This can be accomplished through regular play and grooming. "Most cases of lumps and bumps that we deal with here were seen by the owner - maybe 90 per cent of them. The next 10 per cent are identified when they come for regular exams," he says.

Dr. Adeniran has been a veterinarian for about 35 years, 10 of those at his current location. "I just love to be with the animals!" he says.



Obesity is an increasing problem in our pet population. Extra weight compounds health issues. (PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES)

Pet Loss Support

The death of a pet can be one of the most devastating experiences an individual or family has to face. If you are having difficulty coping with the loss of a beloved pet or are dealing with an end of life decision, you are invited to gather with other animal lovers, like yourself, in a safe, supportive and informal environment to share your experiences, feelings, stories and pictures.

The Pet Loss Support Group meets the first & third Sunday of every month at 2pm at the Edwards Family Centre 333 4th Avenue North. (There's no cost to participate and no obligation to attend on a regular basis). For more information or to receive bereavement resource material, we invite you to call

Family Pet - 306-343-5322

EDWARDS
FAMILY CENTRE

Family Pet
CREMATION
SERVICES



Howling for help

Nuisance barking often a sign your pup needs more stimulation

BY PAUL SINKEWICZ

If you've ever had the misfortune to endure the seemingly unending barking of a neighbour's dog, just know that you are not the only one suffering.

That dog is likely in a kind of distress, too. Nuisance barking is often the result of needs not being adequately met, says Amber Matthews, a certified professional dog trainer and canine behavior specialist at the Saskatoon SPCA.

"Canine barking is communication," says Matthews. "Dogs bark for many reasons – they bark to initiate play, they bark to communicate discomfort, or they may bark to warn away intruders or threats. But barking should be specific to an occasion and short lived. When it is longer lived or repetitive it can become a problem for owners."

Matthews says genetics, physical needs, social or mental needs and environmental factors all contribute to problem barking. Some breeds are more prone to barking. There can be many factors at play.

"Dogs require warmth, food, water and exercise, and if these basic physical needs are not met, barking can occur. Dogs are also social creatures and prolonged periods of isolation can lead to barking. So can boredom. Dogs may bark when seeking attention from their owners. Improper confinement can lead to barking, as can environmental cues such as loud noises or the sight of canines or humans."

Nobody likes to have the sanctuary of their home invaded by unwanted noise. The

Saskatoon Animal Control Agency (SACA) receives more than 300 complaints of nuisance barking or howling each year. When that happens, SACA lets the complainant know the steps they must take to document the problem. It may require logging two or three days (or more) of occurrences of nuisance barking or howling.

Ultimately, it may result in a warning, and then a fine for the pet owner related to the City's Animal Control Bylaw. The first offence fine is \$100, the second offence fine is \$200 and subsequent offences will cost \$300. In 2019, 37 tickets were issued by the City.

Matthews often hears from pet owners who don't know what to do about their situation, but they are anxious to solve the problem.

"A common concern for pet owners is disturbing neighbours with the noise. Some owners find dogs that bark on walks embarrassing," she said. "And dogs that bark to seek attention can be very disrupting to the owners' schedule."

Problem barking can be a behaviour on its own or may be linked with impulse control



To stop problem barking, owners must make sure all the dog's physical and social needs are being met. Appropriate exercise should be included each day, as well as interesting activities to engage the dog's mind. (PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES)

problems such as jumping up or mouthing. But unwanted behaviours can be corrected, Matthews says.

To stop problem barking, owners must first make sure all the pet's physical and social needs are being met, says Matthews. Appropriate exercise should be included each day, as well as interesting activities to engage the dog's mind.

"Don't leave dogs locked in the backyard or a separate room for long periods of time alone, as this can lead to boredom and anxiety," she says. "For dogs that bark at environmental cues, a process of desensitization may be necessary. For dogs that bark for social

SUBSIDIZED SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM

Prevent a litter, fix your critter! Financial resources are available to assist low income pet owners who could not otherwise afford veterinary services to have their pets spayed or neutered. For more information or to download an application visit saskatoon.ca/animalservices.



attention, you need to remove any reinforcement of the behaviour for it to become extinct. That usually means ignoring the dog.

“Training a ‘quiet’ cue may also be appropriate in some instances. The training method is very specific to the type of barking. It is usually best to consult a certified, knowledgeable trainer if there is any doubt why the dog is barking, or what is currently reinforcing the barking.”

Matthews says in many cases, pet owners have inadvertently created their own situation. In some cases, they are simply unaware of the tendencies and needs of the breed they have chosen, while in others, owners have delayed beginning training or seeking help until the behaviour has become an established pattern.

“For the most part, owners are well meaning, but don’t know where to seek reliable answers to their questions or get help with training,” Matthews says. “Dogs are individuals and the most appropriate training for problem behaviours should be tailored somewhat to the dog. For some behaviours, a well-run group class may be appropriate. For others, booking a private session with a certified behaviour consultant would be more beneficial.”

The Saskatoon SPCA offers a five-week program, Polite Pups, which emphasizes positive reinforcement and science-based methods to teach manners and skills such as attention and focus, self-control, polite public appearance, communication, and teamwork between human and canine. The course is taught by a certified professional dog trainer and a certified canine behaviour consultant, providing dog owners with access to a wealth of knowledge and years of experience. The course is included in the adoption fees of all puppies under the age of one-year adopted from the

Saskatoon SPCA. The course is also available to members of the public, with enrollment available on the Saskatoon SPCA’s website. Where group classes may not be appropriate, dog owners are encouraged to contact the Saskatoon SPCA to discuss one-on-one consultation opportunities with the instructor.

Matthews recommends that dog owners avoid trainers that explain behaviours in terms of dominance or that insist they use punitive methods.

“These types of training are not backed by science. When looking for a professional, look for certification that requires both a knowledge assessment (such as testing) and hours accrued working with dogs for it to be reached. Certification boards should also require a commitment to continuing education and require it for renewal. Certifications should also include a code of ethics and standards of practice, and trainers you approach should be open and clear in explaining both.”

For anyone thinking about getting a canine companion, it is wise to take the time to match the best breed to your lifestyle in order to avoid behaviour issues in the future.

“Before getting a pet, do your research,” says Matthews. “Become informed on how to physically and mentally meet the needs of a dog, and if looking at a purebred, learn about different breed tendencies. Be realistic about the amount of time you will have for daily exercise and training. Can your lifestyle handle the needs of a puppy? If not, consider adopting an older or senior companion. For purebreds, once you have narrowed choices down to a few breeds you think may fit, talk to responsible breeders. They should be forthright and happy to discuss the needs of their breeds or consult a trainer for advice.”



Amber Matthews is a certified professional dog trainer and canine behaviour specialist at the Saskatoon SPCA. (PHOTO: JEFF LYONS)

AN ECOFRIENDLY ALTERNATIVE TO CREMATION...

Aquamation

 *Passing Paws*
Your Pets Final Journey



306-978-7297
#3-825 48TH ST. EAST
WWW.PASSINGPAWS.CA
PASSINGPAWS@SASKTEL.NET

 @PASSINGPAWS_YXE
 @PASSINGPAWSAFTERCARE

Comforting tips to cope with the loss of a pet

BY HILARY KLASSEN

The loss of a pet can trigger tremendous grief. Nothing compares to the companionship between a human and a pet. When that furry family member is gone, we are left with a giant hole in our hearts.

Beverly Ashwin says a lot of people don't give themselves permission to grieve adequately. Ashwin facilitates the Saskatoon Pet Loss Support Group, which helps people acknowledge and move through their grief.

those who are grieving to stay away from people who are negative, "if they're saying it's just a cat, it's just a bunny or whatever." It's better to be around people who give credence to your loss rather than those who minimize it.

Another way to cope with the loss of a pet is to attend a support group, such as the Pet Loss Support Group that meets twice a month at the Edwards Family Centre. Sharing your loss with others is therapeutic and will help to heal

process the loss. "Write down your feelings to make them real. Write a letter to your pet, telling them what your feelings are. You can also write a letter from your pet – how you think your pet felt about you. I've done that also." Ashwin has grieved the loss of five animals and is no stranger to this kind of grief.

Finding a quiet space, lighting candles and sitting with your memories, perhaps with a photo of your beloved animal, or having other people talk about your pet can be helpful. "Try not to focus on the last day of their life, which is hard enough. What were the good things? Think about all those funny things or happy things over the years that made your life brighter."

Something Ashwin doesn't recommend is racing right out to get a replacement model. It's tempting to try and fill that void with a new pet. "It won't get you through the grieving. You need to grieve the loss of your pet before you go out and get another one," Ashwin says.

Ashwin is a registered celebrant and has officiated at a couple of pet funerals. A lot of people simply do something comparable in the privacy of their homes, she says. Watching a collection of videos of your pet may trigger both laughter and tears.

Some ways to memorialize your pet include creating a shadowbox or a scrapbook. "Some people will put pet belongings away immediately and others may leave them out for years." Ashwin lost her pet, Frankie, seven years ago but still has his little jacket hanging in the front closet. What might be jarring for one person will make another person smile. "It's whatever gives you peace. I do not judge whatever people want to do." Ashwin has five urns in her living room.

Ashwin has been helping people cope with pet loss at Family Pet Creation Services for 15 years. She says people need help even with simple basic ways to grieve. "When they're grieving, people don't even think and they need somebody to help them."

The Saskatoon Pet Loss Support Facebook



When their much-loved shih-tzu/Japanese chin-cross known as Misty passed on, Hilary Klassen created a shadowbox of memories to keep her alive in her family's hearts.

(PHOTO: HILARY KLASSEN)

She says there is no one 'right' way to grieve the loss of a pet. "You can't let anyone tell you, 'this is the way you should grieve,'" she says. There is no right length of time either. People can grieve in their own way.

It helps to talk to people about your loss. "Don't be alone and don't suppress your feelings," Ashwin says. Talk to family and friends who are sympathetic. "Call people who have lost pets," she adds. She cautions

that wound. Ashwin brings her dog, Annie, to support group meetings to serve as a therapy dog.

She also provides a lot of one-on-one support. "People will come into the Family Pet Cremation Services office with their pet that needs to be cremated. They will sit here, and we'll just talk for an hour or two with their pet that has recently passed," Ashwin says.

Keeping a journal is a therapeutic way to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20





For the **Love** of cats

Two cats can quickly multiply into 35 within two years. To prevent overpopulation, cats should be spayed or neutered by six months of age. (GETTY IMAGES)

BY ELIZABETH IRELAND

Cats at large, and managing our city's large stray and feral cat populations, continues to be one of the City of Saskatoon's priority areas. In fact, the City offers a Subsidized Spay and Neuter Program (SSNP) for low income pet owners of both cats and dogs.

Chelsea Davidson is a third year veterinary medicine student with involvement in feline-related programs at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) at the University of Saskatchewan. She is a member of the City of Saskatoon's Animal Services working group that addresses all animal-related issues in the municipality. Davidson also has six female cats of her own, including a pair that she adopted as "semi-feral sisters with behavioural issues."

Originally from Edmonton, Davidson grew up as a small animal lover and earned her PhD in immunology from the University of Alberta. While working in a science lab, she realized that her volunteer involvement in rescuing and fostering cats in Edmonton provided a clue for what her next profession should be. When Davidson applied to vet college, the WCVM appealed to her specifically because its Small Animal Clinic is a part of the school.

Since moving to Saskatoon, she has founded a "feline club" for WCVM students to enhance the more traditional vet college curriculum focus on horses, cows and dogs.

"A stray cat is any cat that is found outdoors and off its owner's property, whether it has an owner or not. When stray cats are picked up by Animal Control, typically less than 10 per cent of their owners pick them up. The pickup rate for runaway dogs is much higher. Feral cats are those cats that have reached six weeks of age without human contact, are scared of humans and often only come out at night," explains Davidson.

Female cats are fertile at an early age (often before six months). Their gestation times are short while their lifespans extend for up to two decades. "It is very easy for two cats to become 35 cats in just a year or two. It's easy for a cat population to spiral out of control," says Davidson.

Jasmine Hanson is the communications coordinator with the Saskatoon SPCA and describes actions that can help solve the cat overpopulation crisis in Saskatoon. The Saskatoon SPCA also has a Barn Cat Program for those independent felines that need a job

and thrive in a more free-range environment (instead of settling down in a typical family home). Each barn cat is spayed or neutered before being offered for adoption and is up-to-date on vaccinations, including the rabies vaccination.

"If you're able to open your home to a feline in need, the Saskatoon SPCA has many available for adoption that desperately need families. If you already have cats of your own, be sure to have them spayed or neutered so they don't contribute to the high number of unplanned litters of kittens that inevitably end up at the shelter. It's also critical that pet owners license their animals with the City of Saskatoon – not only is it required under the Animal Control Bylaw, but doing so in addition to microchipping your pet, ensures that the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency is able to return your pet to you as soon as possible should they wander off your property," says Hanson.

Heather Ryan is president of the primarily volunteer-based organization SCAT Street Cat Rescue. "The best way people can help stop the overpopulation problem is to ensure that all cats in their care are spayed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

page provides a forum for the community to express their grief. It's a place to find support and information as well as an opportunity to post photos and comments about your pet. Ashwin is very responsive to comments and welcomes private messages as well. She is available by phone at (306) 343-5322.



Annie is Beverly Ashwin's rescue therapy dog who helps people cope with the loss of their pet, in group sessions and one-on-one meetings. (PHOTO: BEVERLY ASHWIN)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

or neutered by six months of age to prevent more litters. Help support SCAT's efforts to rescue stray, abandoned and homeless cats on the streets of Saskatoon, and stop that population reproducing by donating, fostering, adopting and volunteering whenever possible," says Ryan.

According to Ryan, SCAT Street Cat Rescue took in 576 cats and kittens in 2019. With its active volunteers, fosters and donors, the organization has been able to increase the number of felines that it helps each year. However, Ryan says "the calls for help for cats and kittens in distress never cease."

Crucial final recommendations for controlling Saskatoon's cat overpopulation issue include: ensuring all cats remain at home and don't roam off their owners' property; funding and utilizing low cost spay and neuter programs; and continuing community outreach that educates the public about the fertility of cats and how early they can begin reproducing. Davidson notes, "To be successful, society has to contribute to controlling the cat population."

For more information, SCAT's website is streetcat.ca and the Saskatoon SPCA's



Veterinary student Chelsea Davidson has a special interest in feline-related programs at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. (SUPPLIED PHOTO)

website is www.saskatoonspca.com. Information on the City of Saskatoon's Community Cats can be found at www.saskatoon.ca/communitycats and further information on the City's SSNP can be found at www.saskatoon.ca/services-residents/pet-licensing-animal-services/subsidized-spay-neuter-program.



Technology or Training? With Invisible Fence® Brand you get both.

Our award-winning Boundary Plus® Technology reminds your pets to stay in your yard, while letting them explore right up to the edge of your property. Along with our other innovative solutions and customized training, keeps pets out of trouble inside the home as well as outside for total home protection and peace of mind for you.

**For
Cats
Too!**

Indoors and Outdoors, we have a solution for you.
To them, it's playing freely. To you,
it's playing safe.

Invisible Fence Brand

Invisible Fence Brand of Saskatchewan
306-715-8832 | www.saskatchewan.invisiblefence.com

©2020 Radio Systems Corp. All Rights Reserved.



On the *trail*

Advice for pet owners sharing the Meewasin trails

BY ELIZABETH IRELAND

The Meewasin Valley offers 90 kilometres of accessible, multi-use trails for Saskatoon residents to enjoy. Approximately 60 per cent of the trails are located within the City of Saskatoon, with the other 40 per cent located in the Rural Municipality of Corman Park.

Dog owners can preserve the natural spaces surrounding the South Saskatchewan River by keeping their dogs on a leash and making sure their dog is well socialized.

Amy Wall is Manager, Marketing and Fund Development with the Meewasin Valley Authority. A self-described “active trail user,” she has worked with the organization for more than a year. Combined with her volunteer involvement in the Saskatoon Road Runners Association, Wall says her

current role with Meewasin is “a good fit.”

“We track trail visits and Meewasin has 1.65 million trail visits each year. That’s on par with river walks in larger cities,” says Wall.

She notes some best practices for individuals using the Meewasin trails. These include walking or running with one earbud out, putting a bell on your bicycle and having a general awareness of others on the trails.

Brad Babyak, Recreation Services Manager, Open Space Programming and Development with the City of Saskatoon, shares helpful trail tips for dog owners. “Our recommendations for walking or riding a bike on a path include staying to the right and passing on the left when it is safe to do so. People who are walking their dog should

follow the same etiquette. The only difference is that pet owners must have their dog under control at all times, including placing the dog on a leash no more than two metres in length when walking their dog outside a dedicated off-leash area,” says Babyak.

Besides dogs, Wall has seen Saskatoon residents walking pet rabbits, ferrets and cats (often in a backpack) on the Meewasin trails. While it is permissible to walk a variety of pets on the Meewasin trails, individuals must still abide by the Animal Control Bylaw while within City of Saskatoon spaces. This means ensuring all pets (not just dogs) are on a leash no more than two metres in length, under proper control and kenneled when off private property.

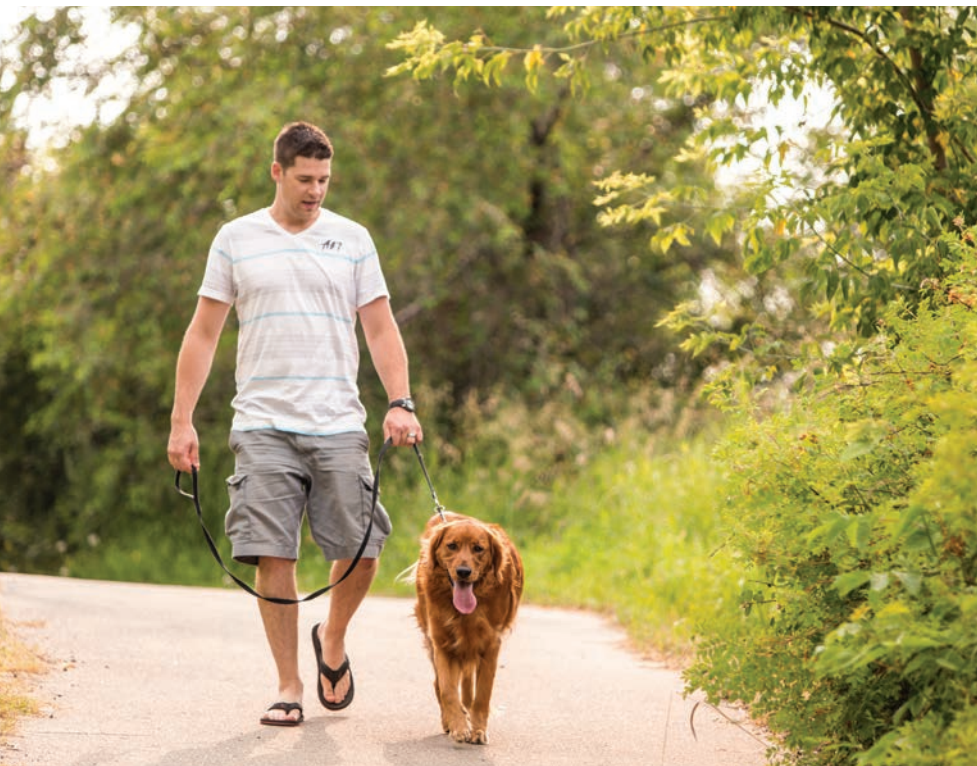
The Meewasin Valley is filled with flora and fauna. Some of the animals and birds that visitors can spot include moose, red fox, meadowlark, snowy owl and sharp-tailed grouse. There are sensitive, natural elements to these creatures’ habitats and value in protecting the surrounding vegetation. Allowing dogs and other pets to run off-leash or off the trails has a negative impact on wildlife and their habitats.

A dog owner herself, Wall is mindful of where it is appropriate to take her 12 year-old chocolate lab, Sage, for a walk. The City of Saskatoon offers 11 dog parks throughout the city where dogs are permitted to be off-leash. Silverwood Dog Park, accessible off Kinnear Avenue or at the east end of Adilman Drive, is Wall’s favourite off-leash area to exercise Sage.

Some parts of the Meewasin trail system do not allow dogs at all. For example, Beaver Creek Conservation Area provides a unique habitat for grassland birds, wildflowers and, of course, beavers.

Across the city, dogs are not allowed in the following areas: playgrounds, paddling pools, spray pads, cemeteries, Kiwanis Park, Kinsmen Park, Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park & Zoo, and the Meewasin Northeast Swale (north of Evergreen).

In addition to providing groomed trails for recreational activity, the Meewasin Valley Authority can help Saskatoon residents commemorate a pet who has passed. Owners can sponsor a memorial brick, to be placed on the trails, with their canine or feline companion’s name inscribed on it. For more information on this option, visit meewasin.com or email donations@meewasin.com.



When exploring the Meewasin trails with your pet, you are required by law to have it under control at all times, including placing your dog on a leash no more than two metres in length.

(PHOTO: CITY OF SASKATOON)

Swim season

Ensure your pet's safety in the water

BY TOM EREMONDI

As Saskatoon homeowners acquire more pets, especially dogs, they're also taking them on more outings. As a city with a river and a province with lakes, there's an increasing likelihood that your furry pal will encounter water.

Rulia Xu, manager of Saskatoon WaterPaws in the Eastview Shopping Centre, offers sessions that are ideal for getting dogs used to water in a controlled setting. Saskatoon WaterPaws is home to a pool that's heated to 32 degrees, an ideal temperature for dogs.

"We work to get dogs comfortable in the water before owners start taking them out. Many people think all dogs are natural swimmers but this isn't true and especially so for puppies who are just learning. They're not the best swimmers."

Every dog is different, Xu adds. "Some dogs take just one lesson while others take multiple lessons but almost all dogs learn how to swim at least comfortably."

She trains the animals but at the same time teaches owners about water safety. "We help owners recognize when their pet is in stress, such as when it might be panic swimming. There are certain things a dog does that will help owners know that."

Other concerns owners learn about include water intoxication, the dangers of blue-green algae and other invisible risks. "There are signs owners should be looking for to tell if their dog has taken in too much water. These include weakness, lethargy, inability to walk, and vomiting," Xu explains.

Water intoxication causes a loss in sodium while making cells fill with water and swell. If this happens in the brain, it can be fatal. "So we recommend owners have Pedialyte or something similar that will help the dog rebound," Xu says. "If the dog doesn't get better with that, you'll want to get it to a vet as soon as possible."

Depending on the dog, Xu says different things can be done to prevent water intoxication, such as using a smaller toy so the dog isn't taking in as much water



Nala enjoys a swim lesson with Rulia Xu, manager of Saskatoon WaterPaws. Swim lessons in a controlled setting can help ensure your dog's safety in the water..

(PHOTO: TOM EREMONDI)

when it's grabbing the toy. "The other most important thing is supervision. Dogs are just like kids; they should be closely monitored. You'll never know when they'll get too much water, too cold or too tired."

Another thing to watch for is swimmer's tail. Xu cautions that "dogs with tails use them when swimming but they can pull the muscle and then not be able to use the tail for a few days afterwards. So breaks are important. Get the dog out of the water, get them to catch their breath, take a pee, take a drink, just make sure they're not getting overtired or overworked."

Weather is also a factor. Owners should pay attention to rain that affects water currents, extreme heat that results in more algae, and other conditions. Owners should also realize rivers, such as the South Saskatchewan that flows through Saskatoon, are different than lakes and potentially more dangerous.

"The river is mostly fine to swim in for dogs, especially near the Sutherland and Chief Whitecap Dog Parks," Xu says. "You just have to be careful when it really, really rains at the Sutherland park because the river is deeper and wider there."

If you're still unsure of your dog's capabilities or if your dog is recovering from

an injury, Xu says a life jacket is always good to have. This is especially important when boating with your dog.

"Know your dog's limitations. I encourage pet owners to take the pet CPR course offered through St. John's Ambulance."

After the swim, Xu advises dog owners to watch for hot spots and ear infections. "These are minor but they're still things that should be dealt with because they're uncomfortable for the animal. A lot of it is just common sense."

While the WaterPaws pool is ideal for teaching dogs and owners water safety, its other important function is physical therapy. Staff at WaterPaws can help dogs with various ailments and use the water to get pets back up to full speed. "We see a lot of cruciate tears but the pool can be used to treat dogs with hip, elbow, and back problems or just to help with weight loss. We also have many clients that are geriatric, so the water is really good for arthritis."

Xu adds that, in some cases, dogs come for socialization or for hunting training.

Located at 3010E Arlington Avenue and also home to full grooming services, you can call Saskatoon WaterPaws at (306) 373-7297 or visit the website at skwaterpaws.ca.

Local Pet Events



Pets in the Park

Kiwanis Memorial Park North
Fundraiser benefiting the SPCA, SCAT Street
Cat Rescue and New Hope Dog Rescue.

petsinthepark.ca

Night to Howl

Saskatoon SPCA Fundraiser
Walk, bike or run with friends and
family. Humans and canines welcome.

saskatoonspca.com



Dog Day of Summer

Mayfair Outdoor Pool
FREE end of season licensed
pooch swim. Registration required

saskatoon.ca/dogdayofsummer

Scoop the Poop

Various dates throughout City of Saskatoon
Dog Parks. Help keep our dog parks beautiful.

saskatoon.ca/dogparks



Saskatchewan Pet Expo

Fun and educational
event about pets.

facebook.com/saskatchewanpetexpo



WHO TO CALL

Directing public concerns about animal welfare.



DOGS, CATS AND OTHER PETS

Concern	Location	Contact
Roaming/at large or stray	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
Injured and at large	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
	Outside of Saskatoon	Bylaw Enforcement or Animal Control for town or municipality
Noise	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
Dangerous dog	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
Suspected animal cruelty or abuse	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon SPCA
Dog bite	City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon Animal Control Agency & Population & Public Health



LIVESTOCK

Concern	Contact
Roaming/at large or stray	Rural municipality
Suspected animal cruelty or abuse	Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan
Immediate threat to public safety	RCMP



WILDLIFE

Concern	Contact
Injured or abandoned	Wildlife Rehabilitation Society or Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
Hunting or trapping violations	Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
Suspected animal cruelty or abuse	Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan

CONTACT INFORMATION

Animal Protection Services Saskatchewan: 306-382-0002
Population & Public Health: 306-655-4612
Saskatoon Animal Control Agency: 306-385-7387
Saskatoon SPCA: 306-374-7387

**Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment:
 1-800-667-7561 or 306-933-6240**
**Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of
 Saskatchewan: 306-242-7177**

