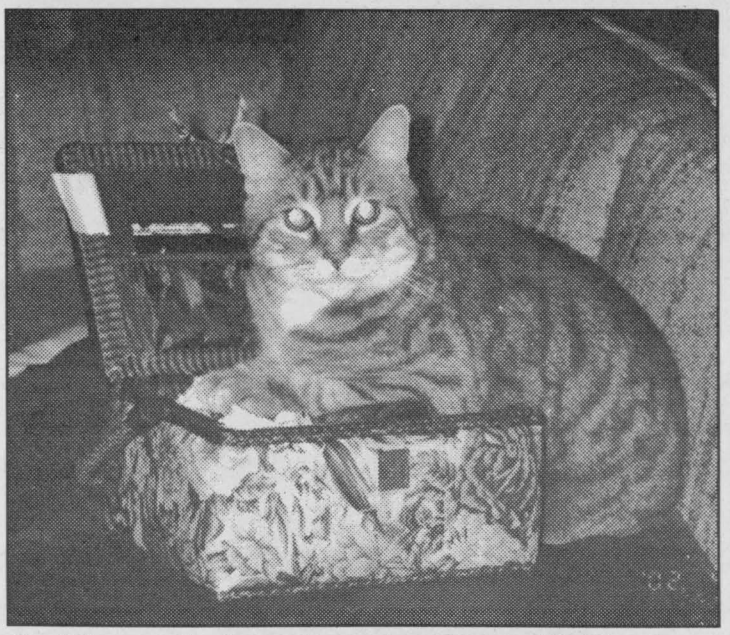
WEDNESDAY, AUG. 14, 2002

YOUR PET 2002



Contest WINNERS Were Drawn AUGUST 9/02

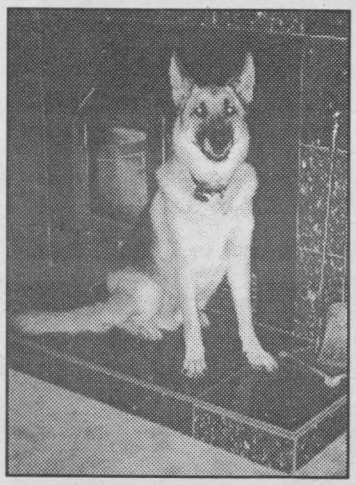


2nd Place ~ Finnigan (Avery Cory Douglas Kirkland)

Pets are an integral part of any family

More than 50% of Canadian households own pets of some kind. Dogs, cats, birds and other companion animals are living in more than five million homes. For their owners, these animal are more than pets-they are a part of the family.

Each year, Canadian families spend about three billion dollars on their pets. This exceeds consumer spending in children's toys, footwear, eyecare and dental plans.



Buddy (Cameron Chayer)

A recent survey of pet owners revealed that nearly 80% of respondants gave their pets holiday or birthday presents. More than 60% signed their pets' names on cards or letters. A slight majority (51%) gave their pets human names.

While virtually all pet owners talk to their pets, an astounding 94% spoke to their pets as though they were human. One-third of respondants spoke to their pets on the telephone or via the answering machine. More than 90% of pet owners believed their pets were aware of their moods and emotions.

As millions of Canadians already know, pets make wonderful, loving companions. In return for proper care and attention, pets offer unconditional love. Consider adding a pet to your household.

Your veterinarian can help you research the best pet for your family. For free brochures about pet ownership, contact the Ontario Veterinary Medical association at 1-800-670-1702 or info@ovma.org. Or, visit the association's web site at www.ovma.org.

Protect your canine companion when visiting or living in cottage country

Pets are considered part of the family, so much so that including them in vacation plans doesn't require a second thought. The trend is borne out by a 2000 suvey of 1,189 pet owners in the US and Canada by the American Animal Hospital Association. Of those surveyed, 77 percent of dog owners reported traveling with their pet.

Now that summer holidays have arrived, it is time for an annual check-up with your veterinarian before you and your dog travel to cottage country. In determining a protective vaccination program, your veterinarian will consider the lifestyle of your dog, how much time your dog is outdoors or indoors and the degree of contact with other animals. Your pet's lifestage-puppy, adult or senior-also determines the type of care required. and finally your veterinarian will assess risk of infectious diseases factoring in degree of exposure to insect borne diseases and geographic area.

One risk in cottage country is rabies which is deadly, but preventable, viral disease most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. All pets should be vaccinated against rabies. An unvaccinated dog involved in a fight with a wild animal should be suspected of rabies exposure.

Another risk for dogs in cottage country is heartworm. Heartworms are internal parisites which get their name from the adult worms which live in the large vessels associated with the heart. They can block blood flow, damage the lungs and cause other health problems. Heartworm disease can be fatal in dogs. The mosquito is the carrier for heartworm disease. It becomes infected by feeding on an animal which is already infected and had microfilaria (baby heartworms) in its bloodstream. When the mosquito bites another animal, it transmits infective larvae into the new host.

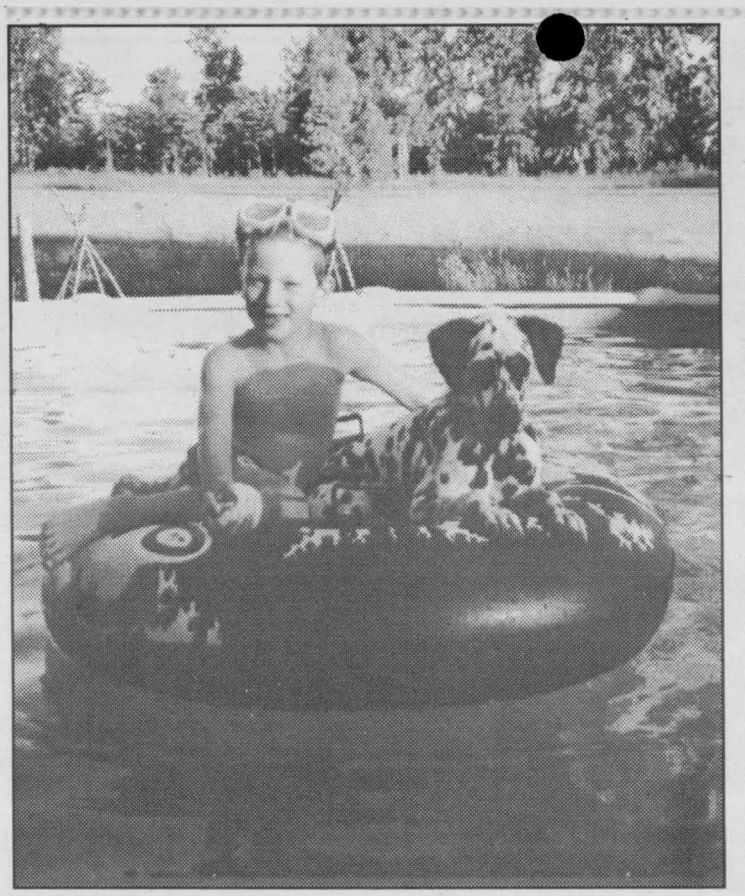
For those Canadians travelling long distances with their dogs, it's always wise to enquire about whether heartworm is prevalent in the local region. Prevention is recommended in Ontario, Quebec, southern Manitoba, parts of the Maritimes and the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia.

Canine travellers are easily protected with a new topically applied product introduced by Pfizer Animal Health. Known under the trade name of Revolution, this product is easy to apply and non-greasy, It is applied by parting the hair at the base of your dogs neck in front of the shoulder blades until the skin is visible. The tip of the tube containing a single dose is squeezed onto the skin. The drug absorbs through the skin and is distributed through the blood to prevent heartworm. This product is very convenient to administer, once a month after the start of mosquito season and continuing monthly until 30 days after the mosquito season. Dogs can swim just two hours after application-a bonus when you are lakeside.

Before heading off to the cottage this summer, consider the needs of your canine companion. Consult your veterinarian for more information of keeping your dog happy and healthy.



1st Place ~ Lassie (Erin & Evan Fawcett)



4th Place ~ Sparky & Cole Hoogwerf

Pet ownership; It's good for your health

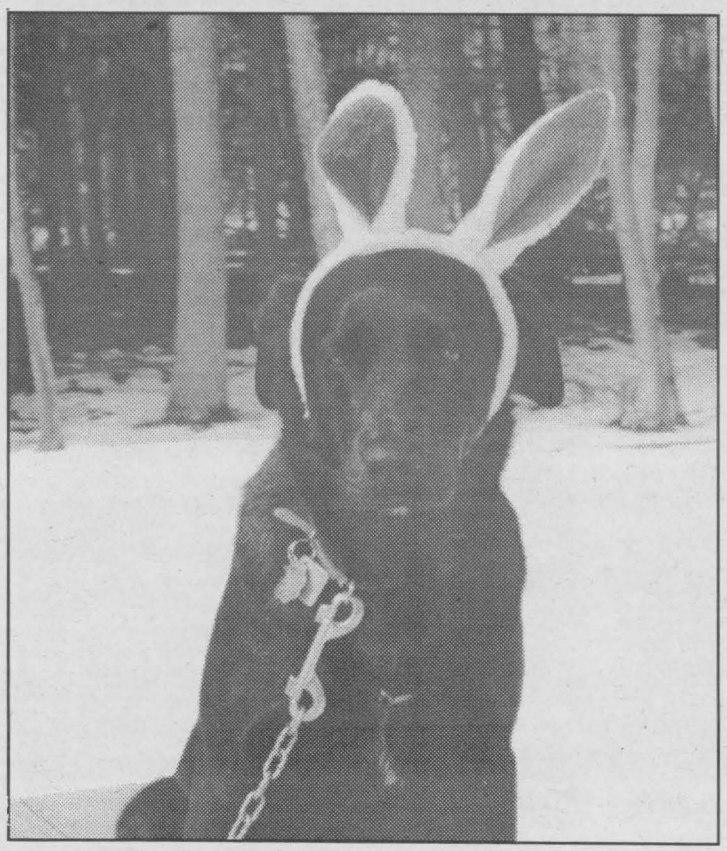
Chances are you'll live longer and feel better if you own a pet. Medical studies on the human-animal bond reveal that pet owners are more likely to have reduced stress levels, cholesterol levels and blood pressure. They also experience fewer heart attacks than people without pets.

Researchers have found that the mere presence of an animal has a beneficial effect on heart function, and stroking and talking to a pet reduces blood pressure and stress. Many hospital and retirement homes engage in animal therapy. This may involve visits from volunteer animals or a pet that is kept at the facility.Seniors with pets are much less lonely than non-pet owners. Consequently, they do not make unnecessary visits to their doctors out of lonliness.

A study of women undergoing stress tests demonstrated that the presence of a dog had a greater effect on lowering blood pressure than the presence of friends.

Companion animals also provide psychological benefits. Pets are sympathetic, supportive and non-judgemental listeners. Pets provide us with a distraction from our worries; they encourage social interaction and provide a soothing presence.

Pets make wonderful, loving companions. Consider adding a pet to you household. Your veterinarian can help you research the best pet for your family.Contact the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association at 1-800-670-1702 or info@ovma.org for free brochures about pet ownership. Or, visit the association's web site at www.ovma.org.



3rd Place ~ Jake (Krista & Jenalee Thompson)

PET FACTS

The 10th annual survey of the American Animal Hospital Association was conducted with 1189 pet owners in 35 states and three Canadian provinces in 2000. Results indicate the human-animal bond is stronger than ever, with pet owners going to great measures for their pets. Of the survey respondants:

*74 per cent would go into debt for their pet's well-being.

*83 per cent acquired their pet for companionship.

*93 per cent buy presents for their pets. More than half of pet owners purchaseat lest four presents annually.

*Of those pet owners who have a will, 27 per cent have included provisions in their will for their pets.

*37 per cent talk to their pet on the telephone or through an answering machine.

*44 per cent of pet owners have acquired a pet simply to keep another pet company.

*78 per cent of dogowners and 68 per cent of cat owners allow their pet to lick their face.

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When he received his identity card from the militia and found his complexion listed as "fair," my 18-year-old son was not happy. The description seemed accurate to me.

I asked him what he thought it should have read. "Well," he replied indignantly, "they could at least have said 'good!'"

–Vorna Butler

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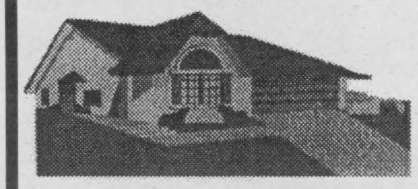

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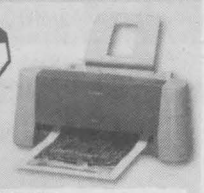

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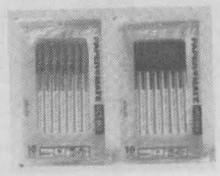

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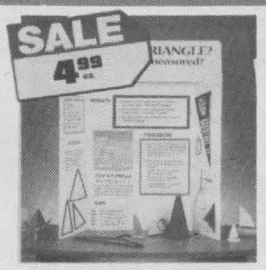

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Pets are enjoyable & fun for kids

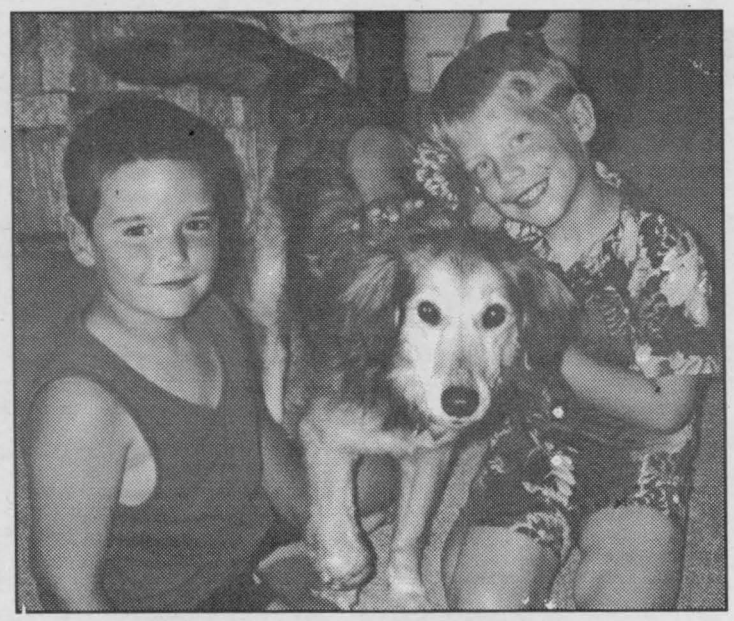
For years, parents have known that pets and children are a good combination. Now, research is demonstrating that children can benefit from animal companionship.

Children with companion animals are more likely to have a higher self-esteem. A US study of 394 university students revealed that those who had owned dogs or cats as childhood pets were more self confident than those who did not.

Pets are a wonderful stress buster for kids. One study revealed that children who had a dog present during their physical examinations had lower heart rates, reduced blood pressure and less behavioural distress that when the dog was not present.

Pets are wonderful playmates and sympathetic listeners. They also stimulate communication skills in children. A study of 455 school children between the ages of 11 and 16 reveled that children with pets had a better ability to understand non-verbal communications. Pet ownership is an excellent way to teach children about responsibilty. Pets require a great deal of attention, guidance and care. In return for feeding, grooming and exercising their pets, children obtain companionship and unconditional love.

For free publications about pet ownership, contact the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association at 1-800-670-1702, or visit the associations web site at www.ovma.org.



Josh Martineau, Lady, & Eric Swank

Walk your dog each day, it's exercise for you both!

Spay or neuter your pet

Early age spay or neuter surgery can protect you and your pet by reducing the risk of unexpected puppies or kittens during the first heat.

Many animal welfare groups support early sterilization of pets over the past decade, the procedure has been popularized among animal welfare organizations in Britain and the United States-and Canada is nor far behind. However, not all veterinarians perform this surgery.

In the past, safe pediatric anaesthetic techniques were not as developed as they are today, so waiting until your pet was older increased the safety of surgery. Pediatric or early age spay/neuter is performed by a veterinarian when pets are very young. Kittens must be a minimum of two pounds and puppies must be eight weeks old. Proponents believe that very young anilmals may recover more quickly than adults.

To learn more about pediatric spay/neuter, talk to a veterinarian, visit your local humane society.



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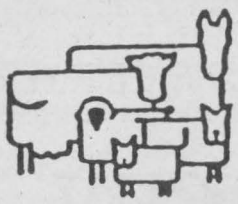

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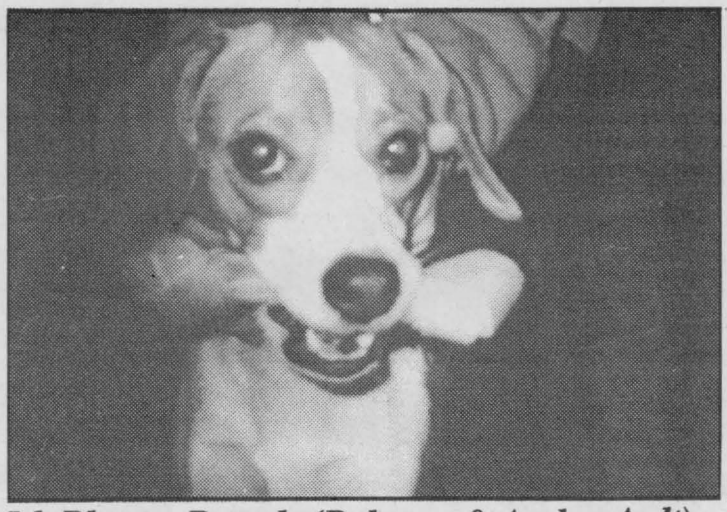

5th Place ~ Brandy (Rebecca & Amber Ault)

Does your pet have fleas? odds are he/she does

Although there are over 2,000 species of flea, the most commonly encountered today is the cat fleas (Ctenocephalides felis). Despite its name, it is adaptable and is found on both cats and dogs.

Fleas are responsible for a variety of problems ranging from simple itching and infections to allergic skin reactions and the spread of tapeworms.

Contrary to popular belief, the female flea always lays her eggs on the pet. The Merck Veterinary manual confirms that "When attached to a host (adult fleas) fed voraciously, but digest only a small percentage of ingested blood, the remaining being excreted as small black fecal "flea dirt." Feeding stimulates egg laying while on the host and adult female fleas will lay several hundred eggs during their lifetime. The small, white eggs do not adhere to skin and hair, but fall freely off the host to contaminate bedding, floors, carpets and the external environment."

The adult flea represents only a small percentage of those present in your home. In fact, the vast majority of the flea population is actually either in egg, larval or pupal stage, which you cannot see!

Effective elimination of fleas, requires control at all levels of the life cycle...egg, larvae, pupae and adult.

Vicious cycle

Before you can effectively control fleas, you have to understand a little about their biology...more specifically their life cycle.

The flea life cycle consists of 4 very distinct developmental stages. Adult fleas comprise about 1% of an infestation. Pre-Adult fleas make up the other 99% and they consist of ...Flea Eggs (34% of the infestation), Flea Larvae (57% of the infestation) and Flea Pupae (8% of the infestation).

Adult Flea

The biting, reproducing and most annoying stage, the adult flea is the most visible stage and feeds on the blood of your pet. Adult fleas feed on the pet and most adult fleas will remain on the same host pet throughout their entire life. For every flea you see, there are about 99 pre-adult fleas you cannot see. Adult fleas can cause your pet health problems like tapeworms, various skin disorders, infections and allergies.

Flea Eggs

Flea eggs fall from your pet into your home and your yard. A female flea can lay up to 2,000 eggs in her lifetime and all eggs are laid on the animal. They are barely visible to the human eye. The eggs do not adhere to the animal, but soon fall off into your carpeting, furniture, yard or anywhere your pet roams. Flea eggs can develop into the larvae stage within 10 days under optimal conditions.

Flea Larvae

The worm-like larvae settle deep within carpet fibres and under furniture. Almost invisible,

Please turn to page 6

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CONTINUED

Fleas

continued from page 5

the larvae must be controlled if any flea treatment is going to be effective, since they compromise the largest segment of the flea population. The larvae have long spines on each segment that allow them to cling to carpet fibres, making it difficult to remove all of them by routine vacuuming. The flea larvae feed upon microscopic organic debris for 5-11 days before producing a silk-like cocoon and entering the pupal stage.

Flea Pupae

Shielded by a sticky cocoon, no treatment can control flea pupae. Concealed by carpet fibres and other debris adhering to is sticky cocoon, flea pupae account for 8% of a typical infestation. Hungry adult fleas emerge from the pupae in as little as 8 days.

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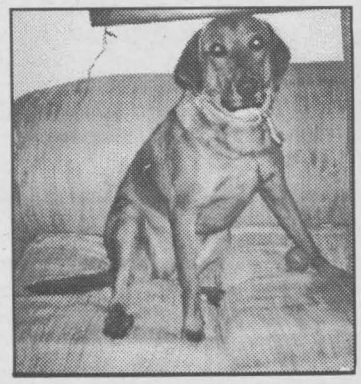
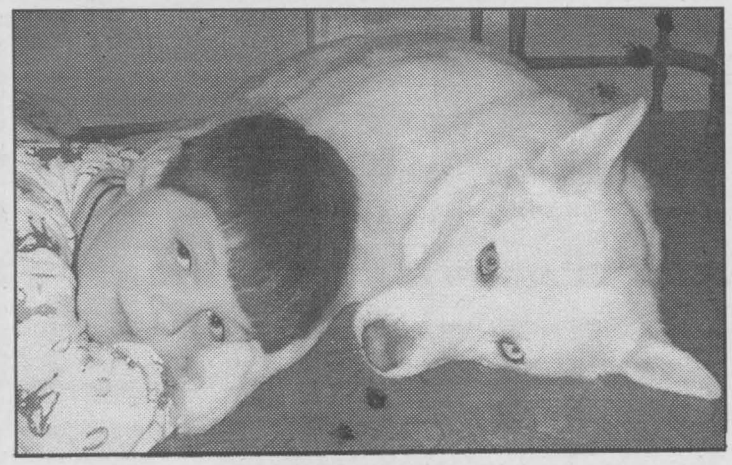


Molson
(Eric & Taylor Saddlemire)



Tyler Beckstead & his best friend Ryley



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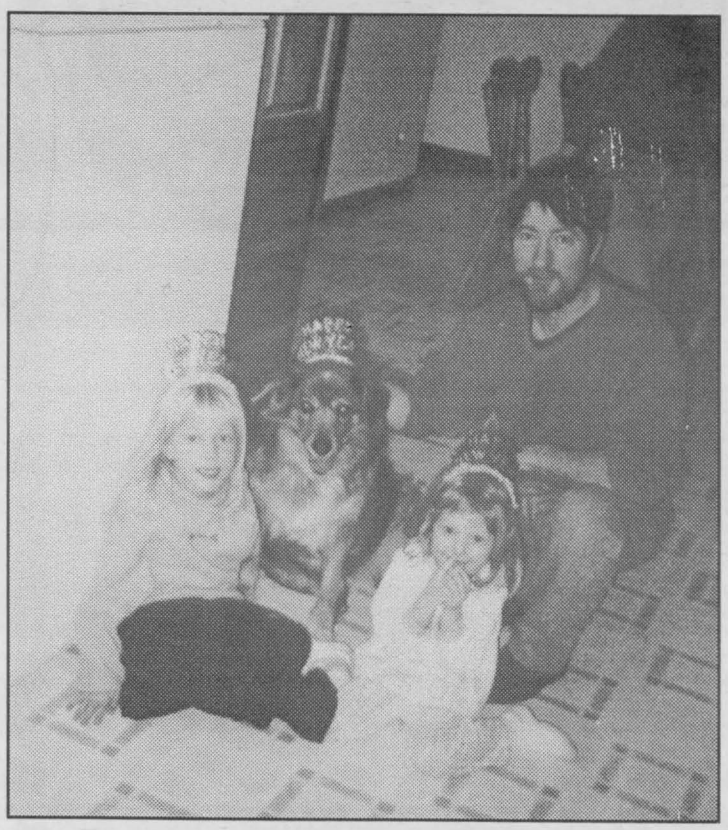
Test Your pet health knowledge

Pets are a responsibility that deserve care and attention. Here's a quiz developed by Phizer Animal Health, to test your pet health IQ.



"Shelby", Brianna, Serena & Brian Armstrong

1. Fleas can be killed and heartworm can be prevented by using:a) a pill
   b) an insecticidal collar
   c) a topical solution
2. Saroptic mange in dogs can be transferred to
   a) hamsters
   b) pet owners
   c) birds
3. Flea allergy dermatitis is:
   a) a gastro-intestinal disease
   b) A breathing condition
   c) a skin reaction
4. Heartworm in dogs is transmitted by:
   a) mosquitos
   b) other pets
   c) bad hygiene in handling feces
5. If your dogs limps, yelps in pain when touched, or is stiff after regular exercise, this could be a sign of:
   a) old age
   b) osteoarthritis
   c)calcium definiency
6. If your cat has chronic cough, vomitting, weight loss or rapid breathing this could be a sign of:
   a)feline heartworn
   b)pneumonia
   c)roundworms & hookworms

Answers: 1-C, 2-B, 3-C, 4-A, 5-B 6-A

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PET FACTS

Here are a few facts that attest to the human-animal bond.

PET FACT: The richest cat in the world is named Blackie. This cat was left 24 million dollars in it's owners will! The richest dog was named Toby. He was left 15 million dollars.

PET FACT: 84% of pet owners consider themselves to be their dog's or cat's "mommy" or "daddy".

PET FACT: More than 60% of pet owners celebrate their pet's birthday!

PET FACT: Josh the Wonder Dog is recorded as the dog who has been petted by the most amount of people...478,802 to be exact!

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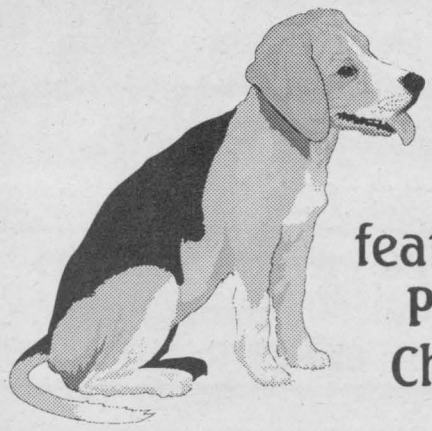

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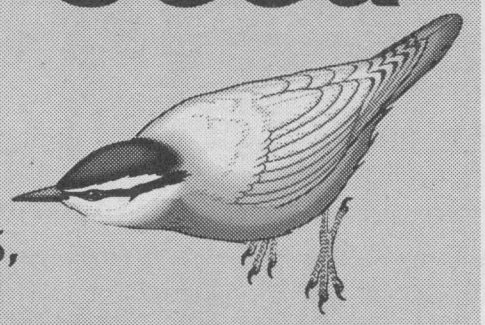

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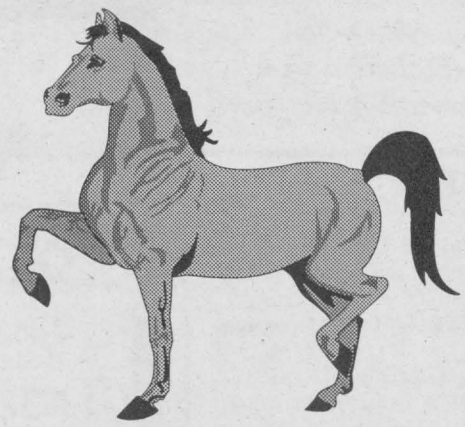

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