

ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

A Refuge Since 1965



AWS NEWSLETTER

Meet Ranger



Ranger is a adventurous 40 pound Fluffy Terrier mix. He is currently being treated for heartworm. He won't be available to adopt out until he completes his treatments, which will be sometime after January 2020. He was really matted when he came into rescue and had to be shaved down. So when his full coat grows in he'll need regular grooming.

To learn more about Ranger, call the shelter at 860.354.1350



Thank You to everyone who celebrated the holidays by donating funds and all kinds of food, supplies, treats and toys for our dogs and cats. Our most sincere "meow" and "woof" to all!

9 New Year's Resolutions for You and Your Pet

Perform a Diet Audit



The New Year is the perfect time to evaluate what, when and how much your pet is eating.

“Many owners ‘eyeball’ their pet’s daily intake and pour that into a bowl, usually resulting in overfeeding and weight gain,” says [Dr. Jessica Vogelsang](#), a California-based veterinarian.

Instead, use a measuring cup to ensure that your pet is receiving the proper amount of food at every meal, says Dr. Vogelsang. The food bag can provide general guidance, but your veterinarian can advise you on the appropriate portion for your pet.

This is also a good time to ensure that your pet is eating the proper diet for their age and nutritional requirements. “Choosing a diet specifically tailored to your pet’s life stage is a great way to keep them in optimal health,” says Dr. Vogelsang.

Try a Puzzle Feeder

Even small changes can improve your pet's day-to-day life. To easily engage your dog or cat, spice up mealtime with a puzzle feeder, says Jessica Gore, CPDT-KA, a certified professional trainer in the Los Angeles area.



“Puzzle toys increase your pet's mental stimulation and daily life enrichment,” says Gore. “Simply switching up your meal delivery by using a puzzle feeder is a wonderful and easy way to improve your pet's life and encourage good behavior.”

Get Serious About Your Pet's Weight Loss



If you've been noticing your dog or cat seems extra “fluffy” lately, take this opportunity to face the scale and make a weight loss plan.

“The rise in pet obesity can primarily be attributed to feeding habits—including overfeeding, high-calorie treats and table snacks,” says Dr. Joyce Login, a veterinarian at Zoetis.

“Obesity has detrimental effects on the overall health and life span of pets, including osteoarthritis, diabetes and dermatological problems affecting skin, hair and coat.”

But many diseases can be avoided by maintaining a healthy weight, says Dr. Login.

Work with your veterinarian to determine the best weight loss regimen for your pet.

They can calculate the appropriate amount of calories your pet needs for daily requirements as well as the percentage of caloric decrease that should be done for weight loss to avoid hunger or losing weight too quickly.

Add an Extra Walk to Your Dog's Potty Schedule

If you're resolving to get in shape this year, add more walks to your exercise regimen. They're great for your health and offer numerous benefits for your dog.

“Walks provide exercise, but they also

provide a big helping of enrichment through the smells and sounds of the dog's environment," says Kristi Benson, a certified professional dog trainer based in Manitoba, Canada. "A walk is a great way to bond with your dog, and it's a nice bonus that walking is healthy for us humans, too."



However, during the winter months, discuss these walks with your veterinarian. Care should be taken to use dog booties or certain paw care waxes to avoid extreme heat, cold, rock salt or foreign objects that can cause irritation or trauma to the paw.

Get Creative With Exercise



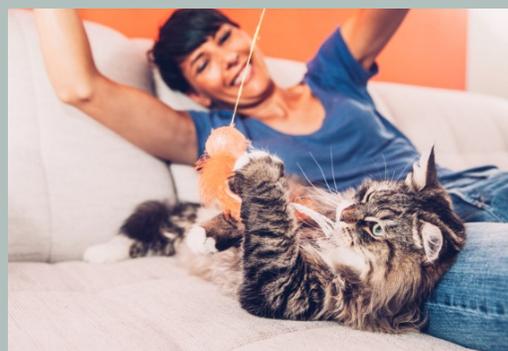
Walks are great, but it can also be fun to engage your pup in other forms of dynamic exercise, such as agility training.

"If your dog loves training and agility, take a few extra classes or try competition for the first time," says Dr. Sara Ochoa, a veterinarian in Texas and a consultant for Dog Lab. "It's a great way to spend time with your dog and help them be healthier and happier."

Play Regularly

Everyone knows that most dogs enjoy a good game of fetch. But few pet parents understand how important play is for our cats.

"Interactive play is a great way to bond with cats, give them good physical exercise and reduce many behavior problems," says Jessica Char, a California-based feline behavior consultant. "Regular daily play sessions decrease demanding behavior, build confidence in shy cats and promote positive feelings between cats in multi-cat homes."



Depending on your cat's age and health, schedule sessions anywhere from 5-15 minutes to reap the benefits, says Char.

Take Care of Those Chompers



To start your year off right, one of the best things you can do for your pet is to establish an at-home dental care routine. Both dogs and cats benefit from teeth brushing, says Dr. Ochoa.

“Start by brushing your pet’s teeth a few nights a week,” says Dr. Ochoa, who recommends working up to daily brushings.

Sometimes a very slow introduction to teeth brushing—such as one side once a day—can be helpful. A lot of positive reinforcement should be used.

Additionally, it’s important to have your veterinarian evaluate your pet’s teeth, says Dr. Ochoa. A professional cleaning or more advanced dental work might be needed.

Schedule a Wellness Appointment

If your pet appears to be healthy, it may be tempting to skip that annual veterinary appointment. But regular wellness appointments are crucial for ensuring that your pet enjoys many happy and healthy years.

“Yearly examinations by the veterinarian are a key component of good preventive care,” says Dr. Vogelsang. “Many medical conditions such as diabetes, arthritis or obesity are common in aging pets and much easier to manage when detected in the early stages of the disease process.”



Create an Emergency Pet Plan



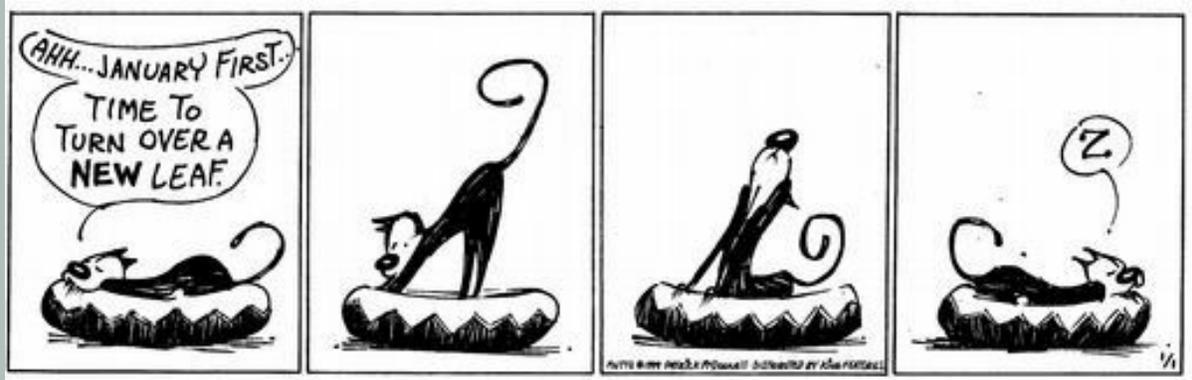
Hopefully, the year ahead is calm and peaceful. But emergencies happen, and it’s important to have a plan in place in the event of an evacuation or natural disaster.

“Everyone should have an evacuation plan that includes their pets,” says Dr. Login. Identify and create a list of places to evacuate with your pets in

the event of disaster, such as pet-friendly hotels or boarding facilities, advises Dr. Login.

Dr. Login adds, “It’s important to create a pet-friendly survival kit that’s filled with food, medicine and medical records. Make sure to talk with your

veterinarian, who can help suggest items for your pet's specific needs.”



Animal Welfare Society | www.aws-shelter.org | 860.354.1350

