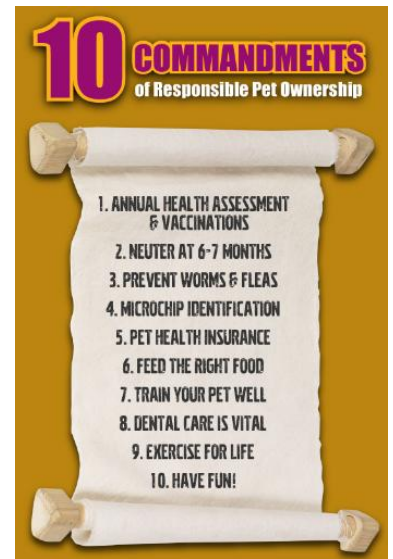




Responsible Pet Owner Month- February

Here are a few tips to share with your clients to help them understand what a responsible pet owner is. A list of tips and below are suggestions to promotions you can do in your clinic to help educate your clients.



1. Make an appointment to get an annual exam for your pet. Just like humans checking your pets' health on an annual basis is important. This will avoid health issues before they become painful and costly for the pets and owners. February is also Dental Month for pets, this is a great time to get a full exam and take care of your dental needs.

Offer dental special, educational tips and hold a contest on social media, 'why my pet needs a dental cleaning'

2. Make an appointment with to have your dog or cat spayed or neutered, if you haven't already. Spaying and neutering not only helps control animal population, but it can also protect dogs and cats from various diseases, including cancer and helps the euthanasia of over eight million dogs and cats annually.

Offer special pricing on spaying/neutering of pets.

3. Train your dog; this is extremely important. The Number One reason for dogs ending up in shelters is behavior problems. By training and socializing your dog you can greatly reduce the chances of your dog ever getting lost or ending up in a shelter.

Consider educational sessions for your clients about animal behavior and introduce new products on the market for animal behavior.

4. Feed your pet a well-balanced and nutritious diet. There are many quality dog and cat food choices on the market today. With a little research you can find a lot of information on food, and the food that would be best for your pet.



Offer educational tips on proper nutrition, weight management and treats.

Host a weight management event, a "fit club" and track and post on Facebook.

5. Clean up after your dog. Whenever you take your dog for a walk or to play at the park or beach, make sure you bring some bags to pick up after your dog. Needless to say, it's very irresponsible and unhealthy to not clean up dog waste (aside from being against the law)

Offer poop bags and containers (with your logo) as part of a new client package or as a giveaway for an exam scheduled. (Hint, partner with a vendor to provide as a give-away)

6. Groom your dog on a regular basis (although some dogs don't require as much grooming as others). Keep your pet's coat clean with regular trimmings if he requires it, nails trimmed, ears clean and teeth free from plaque and tartar.

Offer grooming specials, makeovers or nail trims specials. Take before and after photos and post.

7. Give your pet plenty of exercise and feed a proper diet to protect against various diseases. By feeding a nutritious diet you can boost the immune system, which will help keep your pet healthy and vibrant.

Offer vaccine educational tips, do your clients know that the vaccines and fecal exams you provide help with zoonotic diseases?



8. Let your dog live in the house with you. You need to provide shelter for your dog; dogs are extremely social animals and need contact with their human "pack."

Isolating your dog from the household is detrimental to your dog's mental well-being. It is unfair to get a dog and then banish her to a backyard kennel.

Offer dog beds and special bedding ideas for your clients. Create a contest, ask how they can recycle

something in their home and make a pet bed. See the ideas for suitcases:



9. Make sure your pet has up-to-date identification tags on his collar. Check them every once in a while, as pets (dogs especially) do have a tendency to lose their tags. It's also important to make sure the information on the tag is up-to-date.

Offer specials on microchips, collars and ID tags.

10. Get pet health insurance for your pets. It allows you to manage costs and when it is necessary take care of your pets health needs.

Offer a special on pet insurance and educational flyers and information to how it can be cost effective.

Finally,

These are just a few tips to offer on your website or post on Facebook. Consider hosting a few events to educate your clients. Post photos and offer contests from your clients. Consider adding videos, tips and host educational events on your website, in your newsletter and use your industry partners to help provide content and prizes. Write an article for the local paper or send press releases to the local TV and radio stations, or start a blog.

Write an article and get it published, send press releases to TV and Radio stations, they are always seeking human interest stories.

Are you a responsible pet owner?

Pet ownership is a rewarding privilege, but the benefits come with many responsibilities

Owning a pet is a wonderful and rewarding privilege for us humans; however, with this privilege comes an extensive list of responsibilities. To care for a pet requires a continuous commitment of keeping them healthy and happy.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Foundation, there are six actions a responsible pet owner must take to care for their pet: **commit, invest, obey, identify, limit and prepare.** Committing to a pet



means accepting a change to your everyday life. Finding a pet that fits into your lifestyle will make this change easier. Owning a pet requires an investment of both your

time and finances. To invest responsibly, create a budget for emergencies and make sure your pet is receiving preventative healthcare. Obeying the laws of your

area and cleaning up after your pet will save you from possible fines, as well as keeping your community safe and clean.

Proper identification for your pet is essential, and will prove useful if you and your pet are separated.

Do your part in limiting the nation's pet overpopulation by spaying or neutering your pet.

Preparing for an emergency will help to keep you organized if an accident does occur. To find out how to create an emergency plan, read our "Plan & Prevent" article on page 3.