

# San Antonio Tail Mail

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SAN ANTONIO  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Get Active  
With Your  
Pet
- Pet  
Nutrition

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## A Guide To Pet Nutrition



In 2007, several million bags of pet food were recalled in the United States due to contamination. Though some of the recalls were done by the manufacturers voluntarily to "be safe," some of the recalled food was found to have contaminated vegetable proteins. Several pets unfortunately died, and even more were hospitalized.

After millions of horrified pet owners were told by major pet food manufacturers that it was safe to feed their food once again, many pet owners were left with many unanswered

questions including "what am I really putting in my dog's bowl every day?"

Learn to read pet food labels. Look over the ingredients to see what is in the bag you intend to feed your pet. You should see quality ingredients listed first. The higher the item on the list, the more prevalent it is in the food, (i.e. the first ingredient is the largest ingredient while the last few ingredients on the list may only be in trace amounts). The first few items on the list should include meats, vegetables and some whole grains.

Select the right type of food for your pet's stage in life. Puppy formulas are necessary for the growing pooch, while adult formula is for the dog over one year of age. If a puppy is fed a food meant



for an adult dog, they will not be eating the right amount of nutrients to sustain the rapid growth of the small dog's body. Senior formula foods are meant to provide proper nutrition to older dogs whose needs are different than puppies and adult dogs.

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## A Message From Dr. Mattox



I want to invite everyone to a very special event on Saturday, April 24th. The Tails n' Trails Walkathon will take place at Zephyr Park, 38116 Fifth Ave, in Zephyrhills.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

and the walk will start at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds from the Walkathon will benefit Spay Pasco, a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and assisting citizens of Pasco County with the spaying and neutering of dogs and cats (including the homeless and stray cat population) to prevent euthanasia.

The event promises to be lots of fun for pets and people alike.

Planned activities include: a photo contest and Dixie Dancing Dawgs will be performing.

For more information, contact Carol at (352) 232-0617.

Avoid table scraps and feed your dog a healthy, balanced pet food.

## A Guide To Pet Nutrition

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Switch your dog's food to a new brand slowly.

Unlike humans who can eat a variety of different foods in one day, dogs can become ill when their regular pet food is replaced with a new brand of food. To switch your dog to a new food you should plan on continuing their current food and gradually add in the new food while decreasing the old.

Dogs by nature are carnivores and depend on the protein found in meats such as chicken, beef, fish,

and poultry to maintain protein levels. Proteins in the body replace dead tissue and repair injured tissue.

While whole grains are also healthy in smaller doses they should not be in the top 4 or 5 ingredient spaces.

Instead, meats such as chicken and fish or chicken and beef, or lamb and beef, should be the forerunners on the ingredient list.

Take it easy on the treats. While you can be feeding Fido the healthiest pet food available, feeding lots of treats and human food (such as table scraps) will void the good you have done by selecting a balanced

Our dogs rely on us to feed them properly. Many of us feel guilty if we don't share our table scraps with man's best friend when in the end we are only doing them harm.

While the government and large pet food



manufacturing companies are working to prevent future recalls, pet owners should strive to continue to feed their pets the healthiest food available to them.

(Information provided by VetMatrix)

## Ways To Get Moving With Your Pet

Within each of our four-legged friends lies a naturally gifted athlete. Even the tiniest Chihuahua or pudgiest Persian possesses amazing physical abilities. Unfortunately, too many of our pets have been benched, resulting in an epidemic of obesity rivaling that of Americans. About 44% of dogs are overweight or obese and 57% of cats are too heavy. When pets gain weight, they increase their risk of arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer and behavioral problems.

Try to squeeze in a little exercise and fun every day.

Playing find the food is a great option because of your cat's predatory nature. To tap into the instinct and encourage your cat to get on the move, try dividing the food into small bowls placed throughout your house. Have your cat watch as you "hide" the bowls. Your cat will "hunt" the food throughout the day. This is a great way to get corpulent cats on their feet and burning calories.

Another great way to play with and



exercise your pet is by using remote-controlled toys. Many dogs and cats will chase a remote-controlled car or interactive talking toy. Look for a pet-friendly toy or car that has few small parts and is durable enough to withstand a paw strike or bite. Don't scold your pet if it destroys the toy, fun happens.

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# Mac's Mews.....



Mac

It's the time of year when thunderstorms will soon start to settle in over Florida.

I'm terrified of the noise, the flashing lights and the sound the rain makes on the roof. I run and hide no matter how much I meow, my human friends don't

seem to know what I want. This is my chance to tell you what will make me feel better and will probably help your cat too!

Play a radio or turn up the TV to help cover up the noise of the storm. Provide me with a hiding area that will allow me to escape from the sound.

If you leave a closet door ajar, I can hide inside. If you're home when it storms, sit with me on

your lap and reassure me. Distract me by playing



with my favorite toys or catnip. Give me treats and tell me you love me to help the storm seem less scary. I know that some cats will get extremely agitated or wild during the storms and they may need to be confined to a small space such as a carrier or bathroom. I'm able to deal with my fear without

medication, but this may be an option for your cat. Ask your veterinarian for more information.

Don't forget about the dogs, they can be even bigger sissies than cats!

Until next month...

*Mac*

## Beware The Little Stinker



The return of warm weather invites skunks and their terrible smelling spray to roam cities and small towns alike. The furry black and white animals can be a magnet for a dog or cat. Their appearance alone can present an irresistible urge for close up inspection.

Keep a close watch on your pets to avoid an encounter that could require your veterinarian's attention. A skunk's spray is irritating - check your pet's eyes and ears for inflammation or signs of irritation, use cool clean

water to immediately rinse as necessary.

Call your veterinarian to determine whether professional care is needed and be sure your pet's rabies vaccination is up to date.



Ask your veterinarian for product recommendations to remove the odor left behind by the pesky sprayer.

## Just For Fun





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Visit our website:  
[www.sanantoniovets.com](http://www.sanantoniovets.com)

## Adoptable Pets



"Cheetah" needs a loving home. Cheetah's a sweet, loving cat in need of a forever home.

The \$50 adoption fee includes the initial vaccinations, spay/neuter and micro-chipping.

Adoption applications are available at our reception desk.

## Ways to Get Moving With Your Pet

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Walking is a wonderful way to spend time with your pet and get exercise together. You don't have to walk miles at a time, you don't even have to walk very fast. Any activity for a normally inactive dog will benefit him/her. Start slow and build your endurance together.

If your dog likes to swim, indulge. For dogs with joint problems or arthritis, swimming is excellent exercise.

Find an activity that suits you and your pet and do it consistently. While exercise won't replace feeding fewer calories when it comes to losing weight, it is a vital part of a healthy lifestyle for pets and people. Be sure to check with your veterinarian before starting any exercise program in older dogs or those with chronic illnesses or injuries.

Information provided by: HealthyPet