Tis’ The Season For Giving!

Looking for a good cause this holiday season? We're now accepting donations for the Portland Veterinary Medical Association’s Holiday Pet Supplies Drive. All donations will benefit the Portland Animal Welfare Team (www.pawteam.org), the Coffee Creek Puppy Program (www.cci.org), and the members of the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland.

Really Needed: Warm pet clothing, leashes/collars/harnesses/halters, unopened bags of pet food under 10lbs, canned food or pouches, new or gently used dog/cat toys, cat litter, bleach, laundry detergent, recently expired or unexpired medications (no controlled substances please). For more information, please feel free to call us at 971-371-4024 or visit www.portlandvma.org. We will be collecting donations through January 5th.

PUPPY PLAY DAY

Interested in joining the fun? Puppy Play Day is every Saturday from 10 AM to 11 AM. Call to reserve your spot!

D.I.Y. TUG TOY

Materials needed:
- 1 to 2 T-shirts
- Pair of scissors

1. Start by cutting little 2 to 3 in wide slits at the base of your shirts. After you’ve cut your slits, just rip along the slits and your t-shirts will have the perfect strips of fabric for the next step.

2. Gather your t-shirt strips and tie off one end. Divide your strips into thirds and braid them together.

3. Once you’ve braided down to the other end, tie up the bottom and cut any straggling t-shirt strips.

Above: Cooper and Skylar have a stare off over the ever popular squeaky bone.

On the left: Keeva and Jade play rough and tumble with Tinker.
Top 5 Holiday Dangers to Pets

3. Gift Wrap Ribbon

You may be tempted to fashion your pet with a decorative ribbon “collar” but beware that this could become a choking hazard.

Also, it’s best to quickly discard ribbons and bows wrapped around holiday gifts so that your curious companions won’t be enticed to chew or swallow them. Ingested ribbon can cause a choking hazard and ultimately twist throughout the intestines, leading to emergency surgery and even death.

4. Food Hazards

Festive events often mean edible treats — and lots of them. Unfortunately, some of the most popular holiday goodies, such as chocolate, bones and nuts, can be extremely toxic or fatal to pets.

Different types of chocolate contain various levels of fat, caffeine and the substances methylxanthines. In general, the darker and richer the chocolate (i.e., baker’s chocolate), the higher the risk of toxicity. Depending on the type and amount of chocolate ingested, dogs might experience vomiting, diarrhea, urination, hyperactivity, heart arrhythmias, tremors and seizures.

Fat trimmings and bones are dangerous for dogs. Fat trimmed from meat, both cooked and uncooked, may cause pancreatitis. And, although it seems natural to give a dog a bone, a dog can choke on it. Bones can also splinter and cause an obstruction or lacerations of your dog’s digestive system.

Abundant in many cookies and candies, certain nuts should not be given to pets. Almonds, non-moldy walnuts and pistachios can cause an upset stomach or an obstruction of your dog’s throat and/or intestinal tract. Macadamia nuts and moldy walnuts can be toxic, causing seizures or neurological signs. Lethargy, vomiting and loss of muscle control are among the effects of nut ingestion.

Keep your pet on her regular diet and caution visitors against giving your pet special treats or table scraps. For a full list of toxic foods, visit our toxic food guide for pets.

5. Toxic Holiday Plants

They may be pretty, but some holiday plants are poisonous—even deadly. As little as a single leaf from any lily variety is lethal to cats. Others to avoid:

- Holly, commonly found during the Christmas season, can cause intense vomiting, diarrhea and depression.
- Mistletoe, another Christmas plant, can cause significant vomiting and diarrhea, difficulty breathing, collapse, erratic behavior, hallucinations and death when ingested.
- Poinsettias can cause irritation to the mouth and stomach and sometimes vomiting.

Taking precautions with pets during these festive times can help ensure that you and your family will enjoy a happy — and healthy — holiday season!