

Moving puppy from naughty list to nice with obedience training

December 3 2010, By Amy Patterson Neubert

It might be cute to watch a puppy chew up a holiday stocking on Christmas morning, but pet owners might want to consider the gift of behavior training to ensure a happy life with their pet, says a Purdue University veterinarian.

"Millions of pets are given up to shelters because of behavior issues, so consider investing in professional animal training to prevent problems," says Lorraine Corriveau, a wellness veterinarian in the School of Veterinary Medicine. "Yes, you can teach an old dog new tricks, so obedience training can be beneficial for dogs of all ages. Also, a veterinarian can be a great resource about behavior issues in cats such as problems with litter box training."

Corriveau also suggests that [pet](#) owners keep health and wellness in mind when selecting gifts.

"This is especially true during these tough economic times when people's budgets may be tighter than usual, and a gift that would keep an animal healthy would be very appreciated. Plus, even though our pets don't know the true meaning of the holidays, they do enjoy the attention and special presents that owners give them."

Corriveau offers the following ideas for pet health and behavior gifts:

* Don't underestimate pet toys. They keep pets occupied, active and out of trouble. A great idea for cats is a laser pointer. Dog chew toys also

can help with [dental hygiene](#), and new products, such as GoughNuts, turn colors when the toy chew is ready to be replaced.

* Millions of pets wander off each year. A microchip, along with proper registration, can ensure your pets will always make it home for the holidays.

* Being prepared for any emergency may not be a flashy gift, but it could save a pet's life. Pet insurance or a pet health savings plan is a way to help out during a serious illness or injury.

Corriveau also says that the busy holiday season is not always the best time to give a pet as a gift because of holiday stress and schedules. If someone is interested in giving a pet to a loved one, they should consider giving a book about taking care of a pet, a gift certificate for future obedience classes, or a gift certificate to a shelter or humane society to pick out a pet.

Provided by Purdue University

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