



MEDIA RELEASE

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Pamper your pet on World Animal Day

Veterinarians are asking Australians to give their pets some extra pampering on Monday as people across the planet celebrate World Animal Day 2010 (4 October).

“World Animal Day is a great opportunity to celebrate the special bond between people and animals,” said President of the Australian Veterinary Association, Dr Barry Smyth.

“Whether it’s a working dog or a family cat, our special relationship with animals is something worth celebrating.

“Companion animals in particular play an important role in keeping Australians healthy and happy, and have been shown to contribute to an active and healthy and lifestyle.

“Owning a pet relieves stress, makes us fitter, and decreases the likelihood of obesity. Pets help connect people with their communities, provide a social outlet, and can even deter burglars.

“A great way to show you care is to take your pet for an annual health check at the vet. It probably doesn’t sound that great if you’re a dog or cat, but vets often pick up painful conditions like ear infections or dental problems during regular checks.

“Animals often suffer in silence, so it’s our responsibility to make sure they get a regular once over from their local friendly vet,” he said.

It is estimated that around 63 per cent of Australian households own some type of pet, with 53 per cent owning a cat or a dog.

The pet population of Australia to be around 38.2 million, this includes 3.75 million dogs, while the cat population was 2.43 million. The remainder is made up of fish, birds and other pets (including rabbits, guinea pigs, and other small animals).

World Animal Day started in 1931 to highlight the plight of endangered species. October 4 is significant in the Christian calendar as the feast of St Francis, the patron saint of animals.

Useful information about pets and other animals is available on the Australian Veterinary Association’s new website at: www.ava.com.au

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