

Northwoods Humane Society – Deanna Persson, President

Last week's article was the beginning of a two part article about having a safe holiday season for our pets. Several memories have come to my mind as I was reading the ASPCA information. The first was a Thanksgiving/hunting season about 18 years ago. An elderly man had passed away and one of his caregivers was going to take his dog. The caregiver had a family emergency and was unable to take the dog so I brought the dog to our home. Mike had a successful deer hunt and the deer was in our garage. I was not paying attention to doors and the dog had time to gnaw on the deer. The dog became very ill, he was treated by our vet, he came home after several days and he was fine. The other memory was of my neighbor in Chicago who invited us to a great party. None of us noticed that their dog, a little schnauzer, had consumed many macadamia nuts. He became very ill, very quickly and was taken to the Veterinarian Emergency Care Clinic. He returned home and macadamia nuts were removed from the shopping list. Both of these situations didn't need to happen if we had been alert to the situation and aware of the danger.

Avoid Holiday Food Dangers

- Skip the Sweets: By now you know not to feed your pets chocolate and anything sweetened with xylitol, but do you know the lengths to which an enterprising pet will go to chomp on something yummy? Make sure to keep your pets away from the table and unattended plates of food, and be sure to secure the lids on garbage cans.
- Leave the Leftovers: Fatty, spicy and no-no human foods, as well as bones, should not be fed to your furry friends. Pets can join the festivities in other fun ways that won't lead to costly medical bills.
- Careful with Cocktails: If your celebration includes adult holiday beverages, be sure to place your unattended alcoholic drinks where pets cannot get to them. If ingested, your pet could become weak, ill and may even go into a coma, possibly resulting in death from respiratory failure.
- Selecting Special Treats: Looking to stuff your pet's stockings? Stick with chew toys that are basically indestructible, Kongs that can be stuffed with healthy foods or chew treats that are designed to be safely digestible. Long, stringy things are a feline's dream, but the most risky toys for cats involve ribbon, yarn and loose little parts that can get stuck in the intestines, often necessitating surgery. Surprise

kitty with a new ball that's too big to swallow, a stuffed catnip toy or the interactive cat dancer.

Plan a Pet-Safe Holiday Gathering

- **House Rules:** If your animal-loving guests would like to give your pets a little extra attention and exercise while you're busy tending to the party, ask them to feel free to start a nice play or petting session.
- **Put the Meds Away:** Make sure all of your medications are locked behind secure doors, and be sure to tell your guests to keep their meds zipped up and packed away, too.
- **A Room of Their Own:** Give your pet his own quiet space to retreat to—complete with fresh water and a place to snuggle. Shy pups and cats might want to hide out under a piece of furniture, in their carrying case or in a separate room away from the hubbub.
- **New Year's Noise:** As you count down to the new year, please keep in mind that strings of thrown confetti can get lodged in a cat's intestines, if ingested, perhaps necessitating surgery. Noisy poppers can terrify pets and cause possible damage to sensitive ears. And remember that many pets are also scared of fireworks, so be sure to secure them in a safe, escape-proof area as midnight approaches.

Date to Save – December 4 – Holiday Shopping for NHS at My Villa located on Hwy 63 N South of Cable – be part of the Cable Holiday festivities – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.