

Northwoods Humane Society – Deanna Persson

Beautiful winter! I love winter, I do not mind the cold. However, Mike often reminds me that I do very little outside other than to go to the car, get out of the car to go to Art Beat, the NHS Shelter or the NHS Thrift Shop, the grocery store or to retrieve frozen dog toys. Mike does not like winter, but he goes hunting, fishing, outdoor projects and goes to the grocery store and gas stations. He has been winterizing himself, his boat, his deer stand, his motors..... And then there is the necessary clothing for these winterizing projects. Orange and camo are not my favorite fashion statements – but he is warm and safer and that is how it should be.

Chip and Lola our little Yorkie and Yorkie wannabe. They love the snow – but just for shorter time periods. I have some darling boots and coats for them. Well, I have them but they do not want to wear them and they are able to get the boots off before I open the door. Our cat, Belle, sticks a foot out the door and then looks at us in disgust. Belle is an indoor kind of girl – like me.

Our pets need winterizing too. The temperatures are falling, outdoor water bowls are freezing and we have seen our first snow. We winterize our homes, our vehicles and we must also winterize our pets.

It is best if pets are kept inside. Pets should be brought indoors when temperatures reach 30 degrees with or without the wind-chill factor. Dogs and cats can get frost bitten ears, nose, and feet if left outside. Chemicals used to melt snow on sidewalks can irritate pet's paws. Know what kind of salt treatment you and your neighbors are using. There are some choices that are not harmful to your pet's feet. Indoor pets get less exercise in the cold months, so keep an eye on their weight.

If you live near water, make sure you have your dog under control when outside. Currently, the lakes are not frozen – they are not safe for animals or for you – same is true in the spring.

If you have to keep your pets outside check to see if you have the following for them: An outdoor dog needs a dry, elevated house with clean, dry bedding and a flap over the opening to keep drafts out.

Consider adding a dog door to the garage with a soft cushion in the warmest corner. Make sure water bowls are not frozen. Check periodically throughout the day. There are water bowls that can be heated. If the bowl is not heated make sure you use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal; when the temperature is low your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal. Give outdoor pets more food. Outdoor dogs and cats need more calories in the winter to produce body heat, so increase the amount fed to these pets.

If you have an outdoor pet or a feral cat that stays near you, NHS has a Community Outreach program for providing housing for outdoor animals. Call the shelter and talk to the staff – 715-634-4543.

All pets – indoor and outdoor need the following: Make sure a cat hasn't crawled under a car seeking shelter and warmth near the engine. Slap the hood of the car noisily before starting the engine to startle any animal sleeping there. Wipe pet's paws when they come back into the house because he can ingest salt, antifreeze or other potentially dangerous chemicals while licking his paws, and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice. Keep your dog on a leash and under your control during a

snowstorm – dogs can lose their scent and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season. Make sure your dog has an ID tag on. Try using “pet friendly” antifreeze products and thoroughly cleaning up any spills. Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, causing the animal to freeze to death.

When the ice and snow arrives – winterize your own feet to prevent slipping and sliding. Enjoy the winter with your pets!

Dates to Save – December 1 – Shopping for NHS at My Villa – Hwy 63 N – 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Cookies For a Cause – Place your orders by going on-line – www.northwoodshumanesociety.org -by December 17th