



Presents for pets

This is a fun time of year when people make a special effort to find that perfect gift for the ones who mean so much.

That often includes our own pets or pets that belong to friends and family members.

There are countless choices out there, so it's important to make sure the gift will not only make you happy but will be a safe and meaningful purchase for your pet as well.

Dogs especially seem to enjoy toys that keep their minds busy, particularly when there is no one home to spend time with them. Puzzle toys are a great idea as they challenge the ani-

mal to solve problems and can be used over and over again. Some puzzle toys, such as the Tricky Treat Ball, release individual treats when they are rolled in just the right way. Other toys, like the IQube, have soft squeaky toys tucked inside, acting as hidden treasures to be discovered.

Make sure the puzzle toy is sturdy and washable as it will likely get a lot of use. It's also a great way to keep a dog entertained in a separate room if the home is crowded and noisy with holiday visitors.

Cats have a natural instinct to play/hunt so some of the best gifts for a feline friend will encourage

There are plenty of options for gift-giving to furry friends at Christmas

that activity. Toys on sticks that incorporate a feather, fake insect or other eye-catching objects that can be manipulated in the air or along the floor are usually a big hit. Cats also enjoy puzzle toys such as the smaller Tricky Treat balls which reward them with individual treats as they are rolled

An Airedale is shown with Tricky Treat Ball, one of the many toys on the markets that dogs will enjoy.

PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN BY OMEGAPAW

small donation of just \$10 per month will fund two dog neuters over the course of one year. For more information, visit www.spayaidpei.com.

Cat Action Team (C.A.T.) is a registered charity that assists the thousands of stray, feral and barn cats on P.E.I. It is holding its annual Christmas Cheer raffle, featuring three individual prize baskets of spirits, wines and liqueurs. Tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5 and are available at veterinarian clinics across the Island. The draw date is Dec. 16, and details are available at www.cats-pei.ca.

The P.E.I. Humane Society (www.peihumanesociety.com) has a kennel sponsorship program that provides funds for important cage and kennel upkeep and maintenance. Sponsorships range from six months to one year, start at just \$75 and are eligible for an official tax receipt.

And every pet on P.E.I., whether it is an indoor or indoor/outdoor pet, would benefit from an annual veterinary exam, a collar with an ID tag and more permanent ID such as a microchip, all of which can be provided by one of the many local vet clinics. Check out www.peivma.com.

If you'd like to see them "in action" before buying, YouTube is filled with videos of pets playing with most of these toys. Staff at local pet supply stores will also be familiar with their best sellers and can provide great gift guidance.

Gifts in Kind
If, like many people, you're aiming for a "no more stuff" holiday, there are other ways to celebrate the season while helping pets in need, right here on P.E.I.

SpayAidPEI, a registered charity which operates a low-cost spay and neuter program in this province, has a Sponsor a Spay program that helps responsible pet owners sterilize their pets to ensure they won't produce unwanted litters. A

AT A GLANCE



Toffee is being very patient about the goofy hat at the PEIHS where she is available for adoption. PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN BY SHAWN BANKS.COM AT RED DIRT PHOTOGRAPHY

Fast Facts

- **Where can I find ideas on new ways to keep play with my pets throughout the entire year?** www.dogplay.com, www.littlebigcat.com/behavior/play-therapy/, www.rabbits.org.
- **What toys should I avoid?** Be careful about any toy that has small parts that can easily break off or be chewed off and be ingested by a pet (such as bells, plastic eyes, string). Quality is always more important than quantity and this is one instance where you really do get what you pay for. Avoid very inexpensive toys.

is to improve the welfare of owned and unowned companion animals on P.E.I. CAWI consists of the P.E.I. Humane Society, SpayAid, Cat Action Team, P.E.I. Veterinary Medical Association, Department of Agriculture and Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre at the Atlantic Veterinary College. Links to each of these groups are at gov.pe.ca/agriculture/CAWI. Readers are invited to send questions related to the well-being of owned and unowned companion animals to cawipei@gmail.com.



Animal Talk

Kelly Mullaly



Cherry is shown enjoying some play and exercise while at the P.E.I. Humane Society where she is available for adoption. PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN BY SHAWN BANKS.COM AT RED DIRT PHOTOGRAPHY

Holiday wishes from Texas



This is Morgan and Dr. Jennifer Fowler who came into each other's lives in October 2009 when Morgan was recovering from extensive injuries from a car accident and Fowler was a student at the Atlantic Veterinary College. Fowler graduated from the AVC in 2012. This inseparable pair now live in Texas and sends everyone in P.E.I. their warm wishes for the holidays.

PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN FROM HECKBERT STUDIO & GALLERY

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We're bringing the holiday cheer with gift-giving ideas, festive decorations, seasonal sweets, Christmas traditions, plus much, much more!

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