The fall holiday season is a wonderful time for fun, food, family and friends all of which can be overwhelming for you family pets. The extra activities of the season can dramatically change the household routines, sights, and smells around the home. Therefore, it is important to consider these holiday activities from your pet’s perspective and safe guard your furry friends to ensure that everyone in your family enjoys a happy and healthy holiday season.

First it is important to understand the hazards that our pets face as the holidays approaches. The following are some basic hazards that each pet can face during the holidays:

• Rich, fatty foods can be very dangerous to both cats and dogs. Many holiday foods such as turkey, smoked ham, garlic, onions and chocolate can cause GI upset, vomiting, diarrhea and even death.
• All bones, especially turkey bones, can cause intestinal tears and obstruct the digestive tract.
• Even grapes and raisins can be dangerous for dogs and can lead to kidney failure.
• Caffeine and alcohol can be toxic and should never be given to our pets, no matter how funny Uncle Pete thinks it might be.
• Cooking aids like aluminum foil, string and holiday decorations can all be very enticing for any pet, but each can be very dangerous and potentially deadly if ingested.

In addition to these specific hazards, the fact that the family routine can change dramatically can be very stressful to any pet. As parties occur, or when family and guests spend the night, pets can be overwhelmed with the noises and interactions which often leads to unwanted behaviors such as aggression, soiling and possibly running away.

With all these hazards to contend with my recommendation is to develop a simple and direct plan that everyone, both young and old, family and guest, can quickly understand and support.

**Holiday Game Plan:**

**Post the Rules:** How often have you heard your guest say “Oh, just one bite won’t hurt”? The problem is if everyone offers your pet a little nibble there is no way to know what might have caused your pet to get sick. Preventative safety measures are the best strategies. By simply letting everyone know the rules your pet will be safer and there won’t be any confusion about your expectations from both family and friends.

**No Table Scraps:** With so many holiday health hazards involving food and diet, this simple recommendation will ensure a healthy and well fed pet throughout the holiday season. Discourage family members and guests from indulging your pets with inappropriate treats. Food that is high in sodium and fats, such as peanuts, chips, poultry skin and other meats can cause an inflammation of the pancreas which can lead to pancreatitis, a potentially life threaten condition. Always try to maintain the same feeding schedule as the rest of the year and if Uncle Pete just can’t resist, have a small amount of veterinary approved pet treats on hand.

**Tidy Tidy Tidy:** This means everything from food to decorations. I know that this is easier said than done, but if everyone knows the game plan you will be more successful than you might expect. Decorations might not seem like a good meal, but the holiday season can seem like a buffet smorgasbord to some pets. Keeping the house neat with decorations out of reach will discourage bad behavior and help you keep track of the ornaments that go missing. Keep leftover foods out of reach and in tightly closed containers and make sure garbage cans are secure and all trash bags and places in trash can. It only takes a couple of minutes for a pet to tear up a trash bag and devour whatever is inside.

**Time Out:** When animals are stressed they can often become unpredictable and behave erratically. This is never good for a party. Be mindful of how scared you cat might get with a house full of strangers or how hyper Fido can be when all of the cousins are over. Providing a quiet out of the way spot for your pet to relax and get

(Continued on Page 3)
**Dishin’ with...**

**Molly Fowler**

**Easy, Elegant, Holiday Appetizer**

Holidays are just around the corner! Whether friends drop by or you're invited out, it's always great to have a recipe for an appetizer! Here’s one you can make on a moment’s notice from ingredients you keep on hand. A package of tart shells in your freezer, brie cheese in your refrigerator, cranberry chutney and pistachios in the pantry – this is everything you need to be an enviable host or hostess in your neighborhood. These Brie & Cranberry Canapés are ideal! They are beautiful and delicious – but most of all, they’re easy to make.

**Brie & Cranberry Canapés**

*Makes 15*

1 pkg  Frozen Mini Phyllo Shells (Athens brand), thawed

10 oz  Brie cheese

½ Cup  Cranberry chutney (or cherry preserves)

½ Cup  Finely chopped pistachio nuts

Preheat oven to 350°. Place shells on a baking sheet. Cut the rind off the brie cheese then cut the cheese into 1-inch cubes. Place a cube of brie in each shell. Top each with a teaspoon of cranberry chutney. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted. Remove from oven and sprinkle each tart with chopped pistachio nuts. Serve warm or at room temperature.

*Happy Holidays!*  

Molly

[www.thediningdiva.com](http://www.thediningdiva.com)
Pet Holiday Tips - (Continued from Cover Page)

away from all of the holiday activities can go a long way to ensuring a comfortable get together for everyone. Consider a pet time out when you sit down to eat. This will serve double duty by limiting the temptations for everyone. Cats are especially well served if they can hideaway in a back bedroom until everyone has gone home.

**Be Prepared:** This is especially true during the holidays. Always have your pet fully vaccinated and maintain your records for easy access. If your pet bites a guest the first question the ER will ask is “Is the animal vaccinated for rabies.” If you can answer yes and provided current documentation you will greatly reduce all medical concerns and your potential financial obligations. Also, keep your veterinary hospital and the emergency veterinary clinic numbers handy. Your veterinarian can provide you with the closest emergency clinic information, this is especially important during the holidays when many animal hospital are not open.

The holiday season should be fun for everyone, including you family pet. By putting together and Holiday Game Plan you can ensure the health and safety of your pet and you guests. Remember to share you plan with all of your family and friends, maintain your pets regular diet and schedule, keep hazards away and be prepared and ready to take action of your pet becomes sick. By following these simple guidelines you can ensure that your pet will be healthy and happy for the holidays.

---

**The Other Side**

**Landscaping & Lawn Maintenance**

"Where the Grass is always Greener!"

Call or Email today for a FREE estimate

972-562-0019

services@othersidelandscaping.com

*Senior and Military Discounts Honored*

- Complete Lawn Maintenance
- Landscaping
- Stonework: Borders and Patios
- Sprinkler Systems and Repairs
- Fences
- Retaining Walls
- Drainage

---

**Not Available Online**

---

**‘Tis the Season to Be Pet Waste Free!**

- We keep yards clean and families happy year round.
- Affordable, friendly, and reliable.
- Twice weekly, weekly, and every other week service options available. No contracts.
- Gift Certificates Available!

1.800.DoodyCalls (366.3922) | www.DoodyCalls.com

---

**ELECTRONIC HANDYMAN**

Local Resident

- Video/Audio Home theater
- Computer selection, repair, installation
- Software setup, training
- Data backups
- Home networks
- Camera security
- Wiring

214-676-8018

FLEXIBLE HOURS!
Tips for Parents of Young Athletes
Ways to Enhance the Child's Experience and Yours!
Submitted by Elizabeth Mirabal

With a new year around the corner, many of us are working on creating our annual list of resolutions as well as preparing for another year of team sports with our children. Aside from less sweets and more exercise, parents may also want to consider a few goals to work toward as they participate in youth sports. Here are a few ideas to consider:

• **Talk to your child about his/her practices and games.** Guide your athlete as he/she discovers personal areas of success and skills that need improvement. You may say, “I’m proud of how fast you ran on the field. What are you most proud of today?”

• **Choose your role and stick to it.** Have you chosen to be a spectator and root for the teams? Did you volunteer to coach? Are you a game official? All are necessary in maintaining a positive environment for children. When compelled to switch roles, remind yourself of the role you’ve chosen. If you’re a spectator, refrain from shouting out a call or play. If you’re a coach, take the lead in ensuring young athletes are demonstrating good sportsmanship-like behavior at all times. As an official, recognize that you are the final frontier when it comes to game rules and team conduct. When all groups work together, the results provide for a supportive and educational experience.

• **Be emotional! Laugh! Cheer! Smile!** Fun isn’t only for kids! Feel free to holler and liven up the environment! There may be times, however, when you believe an unjust call was made or a rule is not being adhered to. Suddenly, your emotions are all but requiring laughter. Reduce the possibility of an outburst by taking a few deep breaths, counting to ten, or by taking a walk to the parking lot. Then, find an appropriate time and place to address your concerns with a league official. Statistics show that 28% of young athletes saw their parents yelling at or arguing with coaches and 31% saw parents arguing with officials (Trends & Tundes, HarrisInteractive, Volume 3, Issue 8, August 2004). That is one statistic you want to steer clear from!

• **Focus on FUN and not winning.** Help children develop self-esteem through their personal improvements and not a game win. Rather than asking, “Did your team win?” Why not ask, “Did you do your best? What did you learn today? Did you have fun?” Emphasize that his/her improvement was related to hard work at practice and listening to the coach. Therefore, the child learns to define individual success as a result of his/her own effort. This turns the focus away from an aspect he/she cannot fully control; the entire team’s win/loss record.

• **Ensure your fueling your child’s engine with the “Good Stuff”:** It has happened to many of us. We ask our child to pick a snack to eat before a game and he/she runs out of the house with cookies. While the cookies may provide a quick burst of energy, it’ll remain just that: a burst (that fizzles out quickly). Why not make a brief list of nutritional snacks your child can choose from THEN allow him/her to choose from there. Your options may include: a banana and milk, apple slices and cheese, or an ol’ fashioned PB & J sandwich on whole-grain bread. This way, you’ve ensured your athlete chooses wisely and he/she maintains his ability to make the final choice. A win-win situation! Don’t forget to rehydrate during practice and games with plenty of water! Frequent small sips of water are more beneficial than gulping down a bottle of water at half-time which may lead to stomach discomfort.
The Miracle Cure....
Submitted by Dr. Tenesha Weine

WATER. It’s not fish oils, not calcium or magnesium, not even vitamin D...but Water. Water is the single most important nutrient in your body. So simple, yet so many of us are dehydrated. Your body loses about two quarts of water a day through perspiration, urination and exhalation. It is important for our bodies that we replenish this.

Water is needed and involved in every function of our body:
- Muscles are about 75% water
- Brain Cells are 85% water
- Blood contains 82% water
- Even your bones are 25% water

By depriving your body of water, your organs and cells can not function to their highest capacity. Water is essential for cell life and existence. You can live five to seven weeks without food but no more than 5 days without water.

Major signs you are dehydrated:
- Joint and Arthritis Pain - water is a main lubricant in the joint spaces.
- Digestion Issues - water helps keep digestive juices in the GI tract supplied in order to create the acids it needs to prevent ulcers, gastric reflux, and constipation, and heart burn.
- High Blood Pressure - when the body is dehydrated it can restrict the flow of blood to non vital organs and only concentrate on vital organs.
- Asthma - bronchial tubes need adequate hydration to prevent constriction
- Poor Memory - Synapses in the brain slow down without adequate hydration.
- Weight Management - When you are dehydrated your body releases a hormone, aldosterone, which causes water retention.

If you are suffering from any of the above Conditions or Symptoms instead of reaching for a big gulp, starbucks, or any of the other unnatural beverages we consume.... try drinking more natural clean water. Gradually increase the amount of water you drink each day and these symptoms may start to subside.

So, how much water do you need to drink? If your weight is 200 pounds, divide it by 2 = 100 ounces per day.

 Classified Ads
Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Craig Ranch residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail articles@peelinc.com.
Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are $50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 888-687-6444 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

NOW ENROLLING
Visit www.KnowledgeBeginnings.com or call 1.877.Childhood to find a center near you.
I’m Texas Energy Analyst Alan Lammey. Maybe you’ve heard me on the radio talking about the market forces that drive energy prices. I’m here to tell you that you’re not stuck paying those high prices to big electric companies anymore! **Stop it.**

Some electric companies talk about “**Simple**” rate plans – that just means it costs you more! Others brag that they’ll “**Send you a Rebate**” – that just means you’re already paying too much!!


Why pay more than you have to? Those days are **over**!

Why would you want to go with an electric provider that charges you more, when you can go to [www.sparkpowerbank.com](http://www.sparkpowerbank.com) and pay far less for the same electricity? **Make sense?**

**SIGN-UP TODAY**

**Right Online!**

Please choose "Newsletter Ad" as your referral on the SparkPowerBank.com website.
Attention KIDS: Send Us Your Masterpiece!

Color the drawing below and mail the finished artwork to us at
Peel, Inc. - Kids Club
311 Ranch Road 620 S, Suite 200
Lakeway, TX 78734

We will select the top few and post their artwork online at www.PEELinc.com. DUE: December 30th

Be sure to include the following so we can let you know!

Name: ______________________
(first name, last initial)
Email Address: ______________________
Age: ______________________

(This information will only be used to notify you or your parents if your artwork was selected.)

Merry Christmas

Merry Christmas
Peel, Inc. would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and say Thank You to our 2008 Dallas/Fort Worth Advertisers!

Peel, Inc.
Printing & Publishing
1-888-687-6444 www.PEELin.com