

## Welcome

Hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. In this month's newsletter we will share some information in honor of "National Dog Bite Prevention Week". If you have any questions or have a topic you would like to hear about please contact our staff at 630-365-9599 or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net

**National Dog Bite Prevention Week** takes place during the second full week of April each year. It focuses on educating people about preventing dog bites.

With an estimated population of nearly 85 million dogs living in the U.S., millions of people - mostly children- are bitten by dogs every year.

The majority of these bites are preventable.

The insurance information institute reported that in 2020, insurance companies paid \$853.7 million for 16,991 dog bite claims.

While the number of dog-related injury claims decreased 4.6% compared to the previous year, the amount paid for these claims increased 7.1% - a record high. The average claim payment was \$50,245 in 2020, up from 12.3% from \$44,760 in 2019.

According to State Farm's claim information, there were more dog-related injury claims in March 2020 than in any other month of last year, with a reported 21.65 increase in dog bites compared to March of the previous year.

The increase seen in March 2020 was likely due to the disruption in routines at the start of the pandemic lockdowns, when dogs were dealing with owner stress and more people around the house throughout

the day. Experts fear another disruption - this time caused by the easing of restrictions for activities outside the home - could lead to another spike in bites.



To help our pets with this transition, the National Dog Bite Prevention Coalition recommends the following tips:

\*Make sure your pet is healthy. Not all illnesses and injuries are obvious, and dogs are more likely to bite if they are sick or in pain. If your pet hasn't been to the vet in a while, schedule an appointment for a check up to discuss your dog's physical and behavioral health.

\*Take it slow. If your dog has only been interacting with your family this past year, don't rush out into crowded areas or dog parks. Try to expose your dog to new situations slowly and for short periods of time, arrange for low stress interactions, and give plenty of praise and rewards for good behavior.

\*Educate yourself in positive training techniques and devote time to interact with your dog.

\*Get outside for leash training and allow your dog to do more socializing.

\*Gradually start arranging play dates with other dogs and people as allowed, and carefully increase the amounts of time and freedom together. This will help your dog to get used to being with other canine

companions again.



\*Be responsible about approaching other people's pets. Ask permission from the owner before approaching a dog, and look for signs that the dog wants to interact with you. Sometimes dogs want to be left alone, and we need to recognize and respect that.

**If you have any questions or comments, please email us at [31burn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:31burn@sbcglobal.net) or call 630-365-9599! If you have a subject you would like covered in our newsletter please let us know!**