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## The Pet Professionals

Anthony J. Viganò (Paterson) & Associates.  
Veterinary Surgeons

### Winter 2006

#### MAINE COON: Road Test



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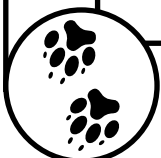
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Visit our website: [www.petpro.com.au](http://www.petpro.com.au)  
E-mail us at: [tony@petpro.com.au](mailto:tony@petpro.com.au)

#### Swanbourne Veterinary Centre

2 Devon Road Swanbourne 6010	Monday to Friday: 7.30am to 7.00pm
Tel: (08) 9384 2644	Saturday: 8.00am to 4.00pm
Fax: (08) 9383 2846	Sunday: 8.00am to 1.00pm
	Public Holidays: 8.00am to 1.00pm





## Road Test

# The Maine Coon (the gentle giant)

(as featured on the Gary Carvolth & Jenny Seaton Talking Perth Show Thursday 31.7.2003)



One of the largest of the domestic cats this gentle giant's origins are shrouded in mystery and intrigue with myths and folk lore abounding.

One theory is that domestic and semi wild cats mated with racoons, another is that they originated from descendants of long haired cats belonging to Marie Antoinette, and yet another and possibly

more plausible origin is that they evolved from long haired cats brought to America by the marauding Vikings.

Whatever their origins they are one of the favourites of the felines in America, noted for their gentle, affectionate natures whilst being a beautiful and larger than life domestic cat.

### History:

As mentioned, the exact origins are unknown but they go back to the 1700's and are North America's only native long haired cats.

They are generally regarded as being native to the state of Maine (in fact the Maine Coon is the official Maine State cat!).

They were originally a working cat and their abilities as mousers are legendary.

They have become well adapted to the cold winters of their native New England and even their feet have tufts of hair between the toes (like snowshoes) and their ears are also protected by tufts of hair.

### Appearance:

These are beautiful, heavy boned, muscular cats with long rectangular bodies.

The males can grow to 10kg whilst the females are slightly smaller.

They come in every colour except pointed (lilac and chocolate) and the best known colour, the brown tabby, gives these individuals a similar appearance to the racoon as does their love of water, hence their name.

There large physique and shaggy coat gives them a larger than life appearance and along with the frontal ruff that some of the males have, they could pass for a small lion.

### Characteristics:

These are a gentle, affectionate cat that adapt well to most surroundings and get on well with dogs and other cats.

They are patient with children, can be taught interactive games like fetching objects, and whilst being athletic are quietly so and therefore are not a demanding animal enjoying perching on high places away from the action.

They are slow to mature and may take 3-5 years to attain full size.

Their easy going nature and characteristic clown-like personality have ensured their popularity.

### Who should own one:

As they are good with children and families they make ideal pets and are not high maintenance as far as attention is concerned.

They do however require weekly grooming and a bath once a month is a good idea to keep the coat under control. This procedure is generally carried out by breeders from a very young age and so they accept it well.

A Maine Coon will be your companion, your buddy, your pal, but hardly ever your baby.

### Veterinary problems:

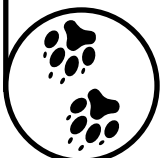
Individuals within any breed are fairly closely related, and have many characteristics in common.

These include genetic strengths and weaknesses. So it is with the Maine Coon and so when choosing a breeder one needs to ask questions about the breeding program and so on.

The most common inherited problems are hip dysplasia causing hindquarter lameness, and cardiomyopathy which can cause severe heart problems in some cases.

These conditions are screened by good breeders but should be investigated before buying.

All in all these are a delightful cat and come highly recommended.





# Cat Talk



The Cheshire cat explained to Alice in Wonderland "A dog growls when it is angry, and wags its tail when it is pleased. Now, I growl when I am pleased and wag my tail when I am angry. Therefore, I am mad".

All cat owners will be familiar with the warning sign of a swishing tail when "Puss" is displeased and the purr of contentment when everything is going "Puss's" way, but there are many other ways in which the cat expresses its emotions or communicates with its owner.

Owners may notice that when the cat is sitting on their lap it slowly blinks and momentarily shuts its eyes. This is a cats way of saying "I feel safe and I trust you" and has sometimes been described as a "cat kiss". If the owner gives a soft smile and blinks slowly many cats will respond by blinking back. When the cat is in this mood it will often appear mesmerised and knead the owners lap or arm with its front paws, often the claws extended which can be quite uncomfortable for the owner. Nonetheless it is a sign of affection and contentment for the cat!

Cats also pat with their paws. In contrast to the defensive or angry swipe with claws out, the gentle pat

with claws retracted is the cat's way of getting attention or inviting play. Many cats will gently tap their sleeping owners eyelids when the cat believes it is getting up time!

On returning home a dog owner will be greeted with joyous bounds, barks and wagging tail. The cat owner will be greeted by a "meow" which with a little imagination may sound like "Hello". This particular meow will be quite distinctive and used only as a greeting. It is quite unlike the "meow" as a reminder that it is meal time. The cat will also rub around the owner's legs and purr and the tail will be carried flag-like in greeting.

The owner who has upset the cat will also be familiar with the rear view of their departing cat with the erect tail stiff legged haughty walk which very clearly demonstrates the distain with which mere humans should be treated.

Although grooming is an important part of the cat's toilet it is also used to express contempt. Who hasn't noticed the cat sitting just out of reach of a dog and washing behind its ears with a look of total disinterest!

The cat is a most complex creature which has learnt that there is mutual benefit in living with man who will provide food and warmth and comfort. Man gains the benefits of companionship and entertainment from a pet which is quiet, clean and undemanding in terms of cost and exercise.

## New Weekend and Public Holiday Hours:

As of immediately the Weekend and Public Holiday opening times will be as follows:

### SATURDAY:

Office Hours: 8am until 4pm

Consulting Hours: 8am until 4pm

### SUNDAY:

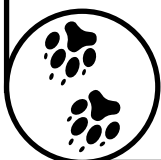
Office Hours: 8am until 1pm

Consulting Hours: 8am until 1pm

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

Office Hours: 8am until 1pm

Consulting Hours: 8am until 1pm





# Vaccinations... to do or not to do

Over the past few years there has been increasing discussion about the need to vaccinate our pets annually as has always been the protocol.

At the Swanbourne Veterinary Centre we have long since ceased to call our annual reminders vaccination recalls, preferring to look at them as annual health checks.

In fact we have, over the last few years, offered a wellness check 6 months after the annual health check as part of the fee as we feel strongly that all pets should be examined at least every 6 months.

All that aside the debate to vaccinate or not has been the subject of intense "chat room" discussion on the net (if you have the time to delve into all that).

Vaccination reactions are few and far between and generally take the form of either the animal being a little off colour for a few days, or more commonly, developing facial swelling as we see when dogs are bitten by bees and the like.

Anecdotally some veterinarians report many more "reactions" than others and vaccination manufacturers are of the opinion that based on their figures there are only 1:50,000 reactions.

Somewhere in between these widely differing views lies the real figure and before we can say anything we need to register all reactions with batch numbers of vaccines hence our use of batch number stickers on all vaccination cards for the last 12 months or so.

Rather than throw the baby out with the bathwater (few practising vets these days have seen clinical distemper... I have and I never want to see it again), and before we change our protocol radically we now offer a serological blood test for the three core diseases (distemper, hepatitis and parvo) in dogs, and panleucopenia, herpes and calici viruses in cats.

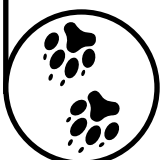
This means that rather than just vaccinating annually as we have been advocating in the past, we can now for

about the same cost as the vaccine, blood test your pet to see if the immunity levels warrant the booster. Interestingly enough our results to date have been that some animals do not need the booster and others do, even from the same household. This is in line with our original feelings that annual vaccination was based on the fact that we can never tell in every animal the level of response to a vaccination in each individual case.

So, whilst there is now a vaccine available in dogs that covers the core diseases (distemper, hepatitis and parvo virus) that can be given every 3 years (canine cough vaccine still has to be given annually), we have adopted the stance of the manufacturer whose vaccinations we use and will continue the annual regime until the true situation becomes clear, but in the meantime will be happy to blood test your best friend, if after considering the facts you would rather go this way.

Please ask the vet when you next attend the practice for the annual health check.

Tony Vigano





# The Puppy Plus Package:

The most important thing you can do for your new puppy is to properly socialise him/her particularly in view of the stringent new application of the Dog Act.

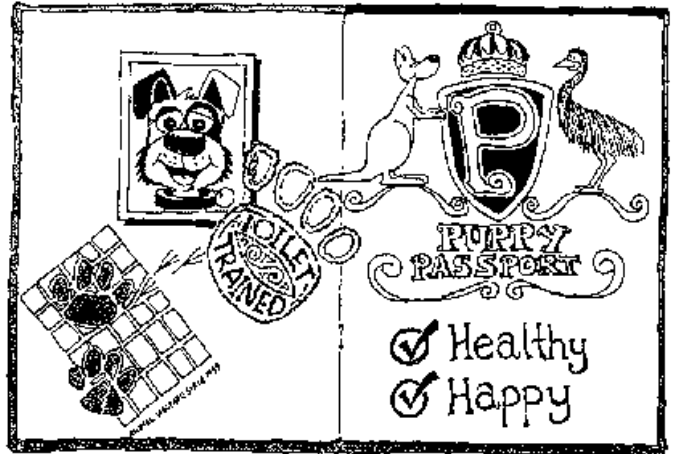
Legislation however is only a small part of the story and the benefits you will obtain from a well mannered dog in later life are far more important.

Instead of a stressful situation whenever your dog interacts with other people and animals on those wind down walks in the park at the end of the day, it will become the pleasurable experience it should be.

Your heart rate is said to go down when you pat a dog but is this always the case if your best friend is hell bent on tearing out the throat of everyone he/she sees on that walk?

The answer is simple. Puppy Class is the place to start when your new companion is malleable and receptive to new experiences of the pleasurable kind and a good start here sets him/her up for life. The next stage however is as important and so we have positioned John Connell's Dog Obedience classes to follow on and compliment puppy class.

After 6 weeks on the beach front at Swanbourne (what could be more enjoyable, even on these brisk Sunday mornings than an hour spent with like-minded dog lovers under the guidance of big John) you and your dog should be set up with a real understanding that will set the pattern for the rest of your relationship (maybe the next 15 years).



For our part we are keen to be part of this and so offer you the third part of the equation - an affordable package which includes a discount on the sterilisation of your new pet.

Therefore if you have just acquired a new puppy and are about to embark on the road to responsible pet ownership by attending the Swanbourne Puppy Class, ask about our package of puppy class/dog obedience class and discounted sterilisation. This plus the Petpro card which gives you 10% on all your over the counter products (wormers, flea products, and heart wormers) plus dog food make owning a dog much more affordable.

Ask Dot or Nickee at reception next time you visit the Swanbourne Centre.

Tony Vigano



## Petpro Veterinary Centre

Swanbourne

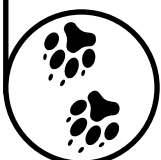
# Puppy Plus Package



This voucher entitles the bearer to:  
 10% discount on puppy class (4 class block), PUPi management (4 class block), dog obedience (6 class block) and sterilization package (within 6 months of issue).  
*\*Not to be used in conjunction with other offers*

**Authorised:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Expiry September 30th 2006**





# www.petpro.com.au - your vet online

What's new at Swanbourne Veterinary Centre

## 1. Dog Obedience Classes:

To cater for the changing weather patterns in Perth and now that the College Park evening classes in Claremont (Wednesday evenings) have taken off, John has refined the usage of the two venues (the other being the Swanbourne oval above the surf club on Sunday mornings).

It is envisaged that the Swanbourne oval venue on Sundays will be used in May/June/July/August/September/October and November, thus avoiding the hot summer months. The College Park venue on Wednesday evenings will be used in February/March/April/May/September/October and November, thus avoiding the bitterly cold winter months.

Please ring Dot or Nickee on 9384 2644 for more details.

## 2. The UWASH dogwash.

This is a DIY dogwash which enables you to take control of your dog's bathing needs using our equipment 7 days a week.

Quick and easy to use the Hydrobath takes the work out of the exercise and contains the dog while you get on with it. We also offer a free ampoule of ADVANTAGE flea control if you buy a standard pack of 4.

If you would rather have us do it for you we still offer this service 7 days a week but only until 12pm on weekends.

## 3. Our Pet Tags.

With the revival of our former complimentary service of identification, we are now offering a numbered tag to identify your best friend in the event he/she goes missing in the local area. The finder rings us 7 days a week and we can pass on your details. We of course still strongly recommend all dogs and cats be microchipped as this is the only sure and permanent method of identification.

## 4. Ambulance Service.

For those people unable to come to us we can arrange same day pick up and delivery home of your best friend should the occasion arise. This service is run in conjunction with our visiting vet service for vaccinations and the like.

## 5. Adopt-a-cat program.

We have beautiful kittens available most of the time for re-homing to the right person. They are all vaccinated, dewormed, sterilized and microchipped for around 50% of the normal cost of these important procedures. You will be giving a little stray a home but please, no surprise gifts. It is essential that the recipient of the gift of a kitten (or a puppy) be in on the selection process and the decision

to take one on in the first place.

## 6. Petpro card.

Be sure to ask for your petpro card when next you come into Swanbourne. This covers all purchases other than professional fees and drugs, and after 10 registered purchases we will give you 10% of the total value back redeemable against your next purchase.

## 7. Puppy Plus Package.

The details are covered in this newsletter and offers you a 10% discount on the starter package when you buy a new puppy. Puppy school, PUPi management, Obedience Classes and sterilization are all included.

## 8. Premium Pet Food Offers:

There is always something on offer when you buy premium pet foods from the Swanbourne Veterinary Centre. Igloos and carry bags for your cat, ball throwers, halti collars and so on for your dog, to name just a few of these value added promotions.

Just ask Dot or Nickee when next you come in.

## 9. Pet Accessories:

If we don't have what you want for your best friend we can order it in within 24 hours.....just try us out. We have a comprehensive range of collars, leads, exercise toys, dental exercisers, bowls, beds and so on at the practice at any time. Just ring Dot or Nickee to check first or we can order it for you.

## 10. Our Web Site:

Don't forget to visit our bulletin board at [www.petpro.com.au](http://www.petpro.com.au). Tony road tests dogs regularly on 6PR and these are all available on the site with lots of other practice news, tips and gossip. If you would like a copy of a particular road test you can download from the site or give us a ring and we will send you a complimentary copy.

## 11. Weight Loss Clinics with Kristy.

If you are having trouble keeping your best friend in trim, make an appointment to see Kristy who can formulate a diet to suit your larger than life friend.

## 12. Grooming 5 days a week.

We are now grooming at Swanbourne 5 days a week so it is easier to get an appointment at short notice.

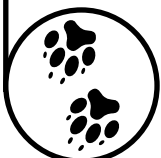
Visit our new **revised web site**  
for up to date information about everything at Petpro

## www.petpro.com.au

- Information
- offers
- all about us
- breed road tests
- links to other sites
- and much more.



**UPDATED EVERY DAY**





# The Woolly Winter Clip

With winter well and truly upon us it is definitely time to make some decisions regarding your winter wardrobe.

Although in the warmer months you choose the full body clip for its comfort and style, winter demands a different approach to dressing.

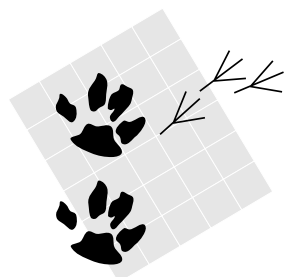
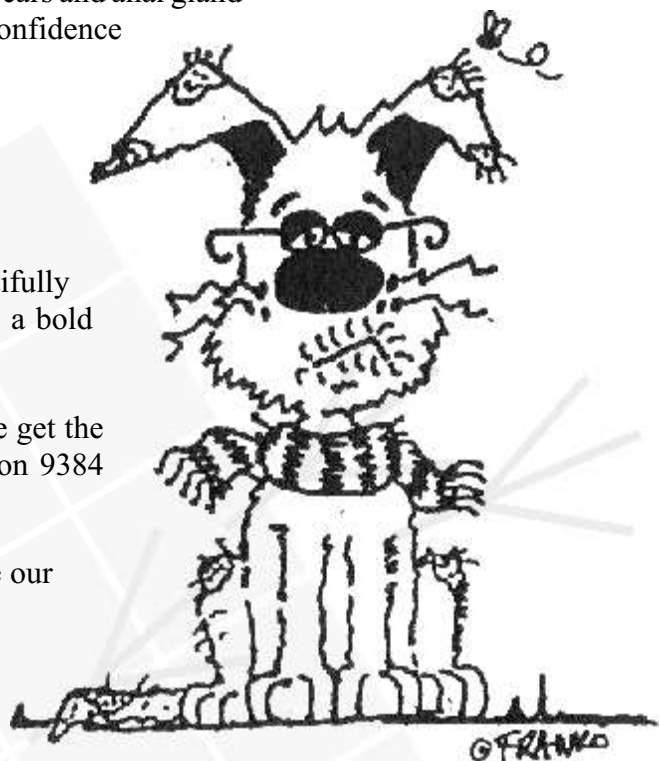
That's why we are now offering our valued clients a "Woolly Winter Clip". It's not a full clip but a trim of your face, backside and paws, as well as a bath, blow dry, nail clip, and ears and anal gland check. You can be sure to strut your stuff at the park with confidence and panache after all this!

The Swanbourne Veterinary Centre also stock a wide range of accessories such as doggy jumpers, collars, and leads so you can co-ordinate your entire wardrobe.

Ask to see our full range of dog coats as well. They are beautifully tailored and come in some great colours so you can make a bold statement while remaining snug and warm all winter.

If you are interested in our Woolly Winter Clip offer please get the boss of the house to ring Swanbourne Veterinary Centre on 9384 2644 for an appointment.

Plus, if you bring in the voucher with you, you will receive our special promotional price of \$35.00.



Petpro Veterinary Centre  
Swanbourne

## Woolly Winter Clip



This voucher entitles the bearer to:  
A Swanbourne Woolly Winter Clip  
at the VIP price of **\$35.00\***

*\*Not to be used in conjunction with other offers*

Authorised: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry September 30th 2006



# Kids★ Corner



## SWANBOURNE VETERINARY CENTRE

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Children up to 12 years are invited to enter our colouring-in competition. Please post or return your entry to Swanbourne Veterinary Centre by 30th September 2006 for your chance to win...*A years supply of Flea Control products for your pet!*



**advantage**  
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Address: .....

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Telephone No: .....

*Good Luck!*

