



# Paw Prints

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Columnist



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

## Keep Halloween safe for your pets

It's almost the spookiest night of the year. Halloween is an exciting time for children and families, but it can be stressful and dangerous for your pets.

This time of year, with jack o' lanterns, witch costumes, ghosts, ghouls and trick-or-treaters, can be upsetting, frightening, and dangerous for your furry friend.

All but the most social dogs should be kept in a separate quiet room away from the front door during trick-or-treating hours. Masks and costumes change how people look and smell to a pet, so even familiar friends may become frightening. Dogs are especially territorial and may become anxious and growl at innocent trick-or-treaters.

KC Theisen, director of pet care issues for The Humane Society of the United States, warns that "the things that make Halloween a treat for people – noises, smells, trick-or-treaters at the door in costumes – can overwhelm many pets."

Always make sure your dog or cat has proper identification. Many times, when opening the door for trick-or-treaters, your dog or cat can easily dart outside.

Taking your dogs for a walk before the treat-or-treating begins will make them tired and hopefully keep them calmer when things get busy.

During the week of Halloween, calls to the veterinarian at Pet Poison Helpline increase by 12 percent. Most of the calls involve pets accidentally ingesting candy. Any candy is bad, but chocolate is one of the most toxic to pets. Dogs are especially attracted to the smell of chocolate, making it a significant threat.

Chocolate and candy can be poisonous to cats and dogs, so keep it all out of their reach. Sugar-free candy that contains Xylitol is also dangerous. Other candy treats that contain plastic sticks, like lollipops, can be harmful, even deadly, if swallowed by your furry friend. Cellophane and foil wrappers also are potential hazards that could get gulped down along with the Halloween candy.

### Halloween can be a scary holiday for pets.

If your pet is vomiting, breathing rapidly or has diarrhea, take them to the vet.

A good idea is to keep all the candy in a sealed container away from your furry kid. Please make sure that your guests, particularly children, know not to tempt Rover or Kitty with candy.

Since it may not seem fair for your pet to miss out on all the goodies, have a supply of healthy dog and cat treats to give them.

Most pets are happiest wearing nothing but their birthday suits. But if Rover enjoys being dressed up in a costume, please forgo the mask or anything that covers his eyes or ears and anything that might tangle in your furry friend's legs.

Halloween decorations such as candles and jack o' lanterns can also be a hazard when within your dog or cat's range. Frightened cats

zooming through the home can easily tip over a candle or carved pumpkin with a candle inside, causing a fire.

Cats — especially black cats — are particularly at risk around Halloween. Keep them safely indoors on the days leading up to Halloween. Remember that a cat on the street at this time is also at risk of being scared by children wearing costumes.

Halloween doesn't have to be an accident waiting to happen for your furry family member, be prepared and remember to give your pet a safe haven where he can feel comfortable and relaxed, tucked away from any Halloween hazards.

Do not hesitate to contact your veterinarian or the 24-hour Pet Poison Helpline at 1-800-213-6680 if you suspect that your pet has ingested something or might be injured.

## STA invites community to "Toast the Trails"

The Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) invites the community to join them for a "Toast the Trails" event at Cork Cellars Wine and Bistro on Tuesday, November 12 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. This will be an opportunity to socialize with fellow trail-lovers while supporting the organization that keeps local trails in shape.

The November event will also pay tribute to outgoing board members Gary Guttormsen, Chuck Humphreys and Greg Vandehey. Each of them has made huge contributions to the organization and to the improvement of Sisters trails.

Special thanks to Cork Cellars Wine and Bistro for hosting STA and to Blazin Saddles for sponsoring all of the 2019 Toast the Trails events.

STA is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect people and communities to each other and their natural surroundings. The organization maintains the Peterson Ridge Trail system, produces a free trail map, hosts an annual speaker series, and advocates at the local, regional and national level for trail-users and trail-related issues. STA relies on memberships, donations and Toast the Trails fundraising events to support its work.

Tickets for the event are \$10 and include a glass of wine and light hors d'oeuvres. Tickets can be purchased at [www.sisters-trails.org](http://www.sisters-trails.org) or at the door. For tickets or information about Sisters Trails Alliance, visit [www.sisterstrails.org](http://www.sisterstrails.org).

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**CREATIVITY, CULTURE, & FAITH**

**Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch Co-Founder & Local Author, Kim Meeder,** will discuss her latest book, *Encountering Our Wild God*

**Wednesday, November 6, 6:30 p.m. Fireside Room, Sisters Community Church**  
Free & open to all

**Sisters Community Church**  
1300 W. McKenzie Hwy. | 541-549-1201