

Pets receive presents for holidays

Pets can be people's best friends, and some feel they deserve presents, too

By Nicole Krueger
Managing Editor

They lick your face when you're feeling lonely. They purr contentedly when the house is too quiet. They curl up next to you and keep you warm.

They're your pets, and don't they deserve a holiday reward for being there for you?

Some pet owners think they do. Wayne Wanta, an associate professor in the School of Journalism and Communication, said on Christmas his pets receive gifts along with the rest of the family.

The Wanta family gives doggie treats and catnip to their dog and two cats on Christmas Day. Each pet has a stocking that is hung over the fireplace.

"The dog periodically checks to make sure his stocking is still full," Wanta said. "They know they are going to get presents as well as we."

On Christmas morning, he said, the family's stockings are laid out on the floor. "Periodically, between presents, we crack open a doggie treat or a catnip," Wanta said.

Wanta said his daughter, who takes care of the cats, believes Santa Claus brings presents for the pets along with gifts for the family. "She feels the pets are part of the family and deserve gifts, too," he explained.

Senior Spanish major Jennifer Schiele's family cat receives similar treatment. He has a small stocking with his name painted on it that hangs with the rest of the family's, and on Christmas he receives small cat toys.

Schiele's family also feeds the cat a special Christmas dinner: turkey and fixings. "He likes mashed potatoes and gravy," Schiele said.

But, she said, the best pet present is discarded wrapping paper.

"He loves to hide in it and chew on it," she said.

Pet stores have picked up on the demand for holiday pet



A miniature long hair dachshund and two salukis tell Santa Claus what they want for Christmas.

COURTESY PHOTO

gifts. Scamp's, located at Valley River Center, offers an array of seasonal pet supplies.

"We have a whole display up front for pets for the holidays," said Nicholas, an employee at Scamps who declined to give his last name. "We sell stockings stuffed with chew toys for dogs and cat toys for cats."

We also have little antlers for dogs' heads so you can make them look like reindeer."

Nicholas said dogs, cats and small animals seem to be the most common pet gift recipients during the holidays. However, this is not always

the case.

"One person came in who was looking for new aquarium stuff for their goldfish," he said.

Nicholas said, however, that sales do not noticeably increase during the holiday season. "It's pretty much the same," he said. "We have a lot of the same people in here, we just have different items out that remind them [of the holidays]."

Some pet stores sell novelty items for the holidays. Wanta said his cats have small, paw-shaped stockings that hang over the fireplace. Sweaters bearing seasonal embroidery and holiday pet hats are a just few others that are available.

"You'd be surprised what kind of garbage is out there for pets," Wanta said.



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