



RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERS MONTH

February has its share of animal-related days, from **Love Your Pet Day** on Feb. 20 to **World Whale Day** on Feb. 13. But throughout February, **Responsible Pet Owners Month** reminds us not only of our tremendous affection for furry family members but also our obligations to our pets.

The American Kennel Club's **Responsible Dog Owner Pet Promise** encourages owners to make a pledge to always treat their canines well. Their **Pet Promise** highlights ways to keep dogs healthy, starting with their essential first pledge, *"I will never overlook my responsibilities for this living being and recognize that my dog's welfare is totally dependent on me."*

During this month, pet parents are urged to reflect on whether they're up-to-date on annual vet check-ups and vaccinations, current ID tags and microchips, and pet-proofing exercises to make sure harmful houseplants or dangerous objects are removed from a pet's environment, with a fresh look towards bio-friendly products.

For those planning a trip that involves their pet, **IPATA** (The International Pet and Animal Transportation Association) offers valuable guidelines for pets on the move:

- Be sure to acclimate your pet to its travel carrier prior to a flight.
- Don't give pets solid foods in the 6 hours prior to the flight. Do remember to provide a moderate amount of water and a wonderful walk!
- Do not sedate your pet for his or her trip.
- Be sure to put your name, address and phone number on the travel kennel. As for car travel, **WorldCare Pet** suggests that you consider a pet harness that clicks into your seat buckle so your pooch can safely enjoy being a back-seat passenger in the family ride!