

Dot Gazette

FALL 2007

A newsletter for people and their pets



Jordan Creek Animal Hospital • 3401 E.P. True Parkway • West Des Moines, Iowa 50265 • 515-224-9500

in this issue:

AAHA

Allergy Update

Meet the Staff

Senior Wellness

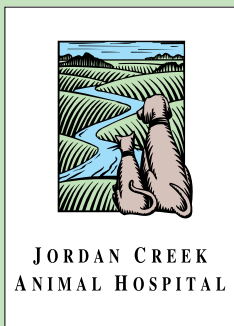
Canine Obesity

CE

Heartworm/Parasites

Hospital News

AAHA ACCREDITATION RENEWED



We are pleased to announce that our American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) accreditation has been renewed. Jordan Creek Animal Hospital has been accredited by AAHA since 1994; renewal inspections are performed every 3 years. Nationwide, only 1.5% of hospitals have achieved accreditation through AAHA. It is an entirely voluntary process. To be AAHA accredited, we must meet stringent standards involving both the care of patients as well as the operations of the hospital. Some of those standards involve: cleanliness and operation of hospital facilities, nursing care, surgical procedures, maintenance and operation of our pharmacy, anesthetic and pain management protocols, radiation quality and safety, medical records, emergency services, and much more.

The doctors and staff at Jordan Creek spent numerous hours preparing for the recent inspection. The inspector spent a half day here and followed up with a letter a few weeks later. He commented that he was impressed by our great team spirit and our procedures for ensuring the best in patient care and smooth hospital operations. He also gave recommendations for how we can become even better. We are currently in the process of evaluating and implementing those recommendations.

We are proud of our AAHA accreditation and hope that it is an outward sign of our commitment to provide you and your pet the best possible care and service!

The doctors and staff of Jordan Creek Animal Hospital feel that monthly employee meetings are essential to promoting communication and educational opportunities. Because of this, we will be closed from **1:30-2:30 pm** on the following Wednesdays: **October 10, November 7** and **December 12**.

Contact us by calling 515-224-9500 or visit our website at www.jordancreek.myvetonline.com

ALLERGIES: UPDATE

It's that time of year again. Many of us humans are suffering from allergies. Did you know that allergies are very common in our pets as well? **Any** dog can develop allergies, but some of the breeds most commonly affected are: Beagles, Boston Terriers, Cairn Terriers, Chinese Shar-peis, Cocker Spaniels, Dalmatians, English Bulldogs, English Setters, Golden Retrievers, Lhasa Apsos, Miniature Schnauzers, Scottish Terriers, West Highland White

Terriers, and Wirehaired Fox Terriers. While people with allergies tend to get runny noses and watery eyes, dogs get skin inflammation. Inflamed skin is itchy skin. Have you seen your pet licking at his feet? Scratching at his ears? Chewing on his skin? These can all be signs of allergies.

However, it doesn't stop there. Once your dog's skin gets inflamed, it becomes more susceptible to overgrowth of the bacteria and yeast that are normally present on the surface. If your pet gets a secondary bacterial or yeast infection, he becomes even *more* itchy.

If you are concerned that your pet may have allergies, you should bring him in for an evaluation. We will likely test for bacterial or yeast infections, as well as look for fleas or other external parasites. If an infection or parasites are found, medication will be prescribed to treat the problem.

Just as in humans, allergies cannot be cured in pets. However, a lot can be done to make your pet more comfortable. We may prescribe a combination of treatments, including: hypoallergenic diet trials; topical shampoos, conditioners, or sprays; antihistamines; fatty acid supplements; or in the most severe cases, steroids. Allergy desensitization, commonly called "allergy shots," is another option. We also have a wonderful medication called Atopica, which many dogs have used with great success, avoiding the common side effects of steroids. We may discuss this medication with you if we feel it could help your pet.

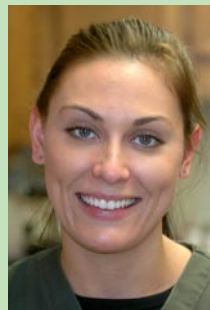
If your pet is suffering from allergies, take heart. For many dogs, allergies are only a seasonal problem, and subside substantially once the colder months arrive. In the meantime, please call us. There are many things we can do to make your pet, and therefore you, more comfortable during this time of year.



MEET THE STAFF/our editors for this issue of Pet Gazette



Dr. Wendy Johnson is originally from West Des Moines and attended veterinary school at Iowa State University. She is married and has two beautiful daughters who are in third and first grades. She also has two golden retrievers, Makena and Maggie. When not working, she loves to spend time with her husband and children doing outdoor activities such as swimming, camping, and bicycle riding.



Mistee Hendricks, RVT is originally from Horton, Iowa, and has lived in the Des Moines area for two years. She received her Associate of Applied Sciences degree in Veterinary Technology from Kirkwood Community College. She has two bichon frises, Jester and Shamee. Mistee enjoys being outdoors, biking and walking, playing sand volleyball, going to concerts and I-Cubs games, and spending time with family, friends, and her pets.

SENIOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

When is a pet considered to be a "senior"? While it is different for each individual pet, we consider most dogs and cats to be seniors at around 7 years of age.



Our new *Senior Wellness Program* is based on our longstanding belief in the importance of providing specialized care for our senior patients. As part of the *Senior Wellness Program*, your pet comes in semi-annually for a thorough examination and consultation with one of our veterinarians. During these visits, you and the veterinarian work together to determine which, if any, additional diagnostic tests should be performed. Since 1 year of your pet's life is equivalent to approximately 7 years of your life, it is important to have certain preventative screenings done on at least a yearly basis. Checking blood work every year is an excellent diagnostic tool that allows us to stay up-to-date on your pet's organ functions. In addition to blood work, we may recommend urinalysis, x-rays, EKG, blood pressure, or eye pressures.

While our *Senior Wellness Program* is completely optional, we highly recommend taking part in order to give your pet the best medical attention possible. The earlier we are able to detect a medical issue, the more likely we will be able to help your four-legged family member!

CANINE OBESITY: THERE'S HOPE!

Have you done everything possible to help your dog lose weight? Have you tried prescription weight loss diets along with exercise and seen no results? Has your dog's thyroid been checked and is normal? Has a veterinarian examined your pet and reviewed all weight loss options but nothing works? Well, now there is a new drug called *Slentrol*[™] to aid in the battle of canine obesity.

Slentrol[™] works by naturally reducing your dog's appetite and ability to absorb fat. In research studies, 97.8% of dogs lost weight after 4 months on the drug. In the studies, the #1 side

effect from *Slentrol*[™] was vomiting. Vomiting usually lasted a couple days and resolved on its own. *Slentrol*[™] is meant only for use in dogs. It is **never** to be used in humans; cats; or dogs with liver disease or those currently on corticosteroids.

Slentrol[™] is not meant to be used for the life of your dog. There are 3 stages we will use to get the best weight loss results. Phase 1, or the weight loss phase, is the most aggressive. During this phase, your pet will get to his desired weight. Phase 2, or the weight stabilizing phase, is designed to keep

your pet's weight within the desired range. During Phase 3, *Slentrol*[™] will be discontinued. Throughout all of the phases, exercise and a healthy diet are extremely important.

We are very excited to begin using *Slentrol*[™] to help our overweight canine patients!



SLENTROL[™]
dirlotapide

CONTINUING EDUCATION UPDATE

Two doctors and two staff members recently spent four days in Kansas City at the *Central States Veterinary Conference* (CVC). Drs. Dan Whitney and Wendy Johnson, and technicians Mistee Hendricks and Tanya Harrington spent the days learning new treatments, techniques, and information to keep their skills sharp and enhance their knowledge.

CVC is held every year in August or September. The conference is one of the largest in the Midwest, with over 3,000 veterinarians, technicians and veterinary staff attending. Lectures focus on the latest developments in internal medicine, surgery, dentistry, dermatology, behavior, nutrition, radiology, practice management, and much more. Separate programs are geared specifically for technicians to allow them to focus on their roles as caregivers.

Although it means some time away from the hospital, we feel it is very important to attend continuing education seminars. Each time we return, we feel we have gained valuable knowledge that we can put to good use caring for our patients. We also share what we have learned in staff meetings, so that those who didn't attend the seminar can benefit from the education as well. So if you call and the receptionists tell you that we're out of the office at continuing education, you can be assured that we'll return even better equipped to care for your pet!



HEARTWORMS AND INTERNAL PARASITES

Fall is here, but that doesn't mean heartworm season is over! Mosquitoes, the transmitters of heartworms, are still found in Iowa until November. Some of the most popular heartworm preventatives, such as Heartgard and Interceptor, provide 100% protection against heartworms when taken as directed.

Heartworm preventatives also provide the advantage of internal parasite protection. Your pet can become infected by internal parasites, such as roundworms and hookworms, through fecal/oral contamination. Stepping in the stool of another animal and then grooming himself is one way in which your pet can contract these parasites. Protecting your pet from internal parasites is not only important for your pet, but also for you and your family. Humans can contract certain parasites from animals; parasites that can be transferred from an animal to a human are termed zoonotic.

If you have young children or your pet goes to the dog park, we highly recommend that your pet stay on heartworm prevention (with the added benefit of internal parasite control) year round. Keep your pet and your family healthy by giving your pet a monthly heartworm preventative!



WELCOME, KELLY!



We're proud to welcome **Kelly Kiburz** to our veterinary family. Kelly joined us as a receptionist on September 17 and has been quickly learning all aspects of her position. She comes to us with vast experience working in various office environments. With her strong detail orientation, organizational skills, and love for animals, we are confident that Kelly will provide fantastic service and care to you and your pet! Please say "hi" to Kelly the next time you stop in!

Time Saving Tip

For your convenience, call ahead for prescription refills and food pickups. We will gladly have them ready to save you time when you arrive!