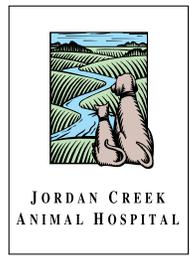




# SUMMER 2009 Gazette

the newsletter for people and their pets



3401 E.P. True Parkway  
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

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## Cats may need heartworm preventive too

When we think of heartworm disease, we usually think of dogs. Though dogs and cats are both bitten by mosquitoes that carry heartworm, cats are considered resistant, as they often spontaneously eliminate the infection before heartworms can mature in the heart and lungs. But new information about heartworm disease in cats indicates they may not escape their exposure to heartworms unharmed after all.

The lifecycle of the heartworm includes a larval migration to the blood vessels of the lungs. Because of the cat's natural resistance, these larvae often experience high mortality. The die-off of the larvae stimulates a strong inflammatory response in the blood vessels and lungs of the cat. This inflammation can lead to symptoms of coughing, rapid respiration and difficulty breathing. This condition is called HARD, for Heartworm Associated Respiratory Disease. It may be a short-term disease, or the lung changes may become permanent. Symptoms can be similar to those of feline asthma, and dif-

ferentiating the two conditions can be challenging.

While we now know that cats aren't as safe from the effects of heartworm disease as we once thought, the good news is that HARD in cats is very preventable. Regular use of a heartworm preventive kills larval heartworms in the very early stage of development, before they reach the lungs and set off destructive changes there. Easy to use products for cats include Heartgard for cats, a chewable monthly heartworm preventive, and Revolution, a topically applied monthly heartworm preventive that also controls fleas and treats intestinal parasites.

Though even indoor cats and dogs can encounter a heartworm-carrying mosquito, cats that go outside are at the highest risk of being exposed to this parasite. Cat owners may now want to consider routine use of heartworm preventives. Talk with your veterinarian about your cat's lifestyle and risk factors to make the best decision for your cat.



Contact us by calling 515-224-9500 or visit our website at [www.jordancreekanimalhospital.com](http://www.jordancreekanimalhospital.com)



# PROFENDER

Is your cat feeling a little under the weather? Mild depression, loss of appetite, diarrhea, vomiting, and poor growth in kittens can all be signs of intestinal parasite infections. You may even see worms passed in your cat's stool. But many adult cats show no outward signs of intestinal parasites and can only be diagnosed with a microscopic examination of a stool sample.

Until now, cats diagnosed with intestinal parasites had to be treated with an oral medication (pill or liquid) or with an injection, depending on the parasite. As many cat owners are painfully aware, getting a cat to take oral medication is never easy. Now, there is a new, easy, and stress-free way to deworm your cat. Profender is a topical solution applied to the skin—no more pills or shots!

Profender is the first and only topical cat dewormer that combines a powerful, broad-spectrum control of intestinal worms with the ease and convenience of a single dose treatment. Profender treats and controls hookworm, roundworm, and tapeworm infections in cats and kittens that are at least 8 weeks of age and weigh at least 2.2 lbs.

Cats become infected with these parasites either by direct ingestion of eggs or larvae in the environment or indirectly by



ingestion of secondary or intermediate hosts. Secondary hosts most commonly are small rodents or fleas (ingested when cats groom themselves).

Ask us if Profender is appropriate for your feline companions and remember to bring a fecal sample in yearly on both dogs and cats to check for intestinal parasite infections.

## Dental Disease in Cats and Dogs



**Y**ou probably know that cats and dogs need dental care too. Most of us recognize a bad case of “dog breath”, but it’s not just the unpleasant smell that is a problem. The smell

comes from the bacteria making themselves at home in our pets’ mouths. Bacteria produce plaque, and plaque begins to harden into tartar in as little as 48 hours. Tartar and the accompanying bacteria cause inflammation in the gums, and eventually cause periodontal “pockets” beneath the gum where more bacteria can live and grow. The end result is infection in the gums, bone loss and tooth loss.

But that’s not where the damage ends. Oral bacteria may be taken up by the mouth’s ample blood supply, and travel to other areas of the body. A recent study of nearly 60,000 dogs revealed a significant relationship between periodontal disease and higher risk of endocarditis

(inflammation of the inner lining of the heart) and cardiomyopathy (heart muscle disease). Other known sites for these bacteria to lodge and cause damage are the liver and kidneys.

There’s little doubt that unmanaged dental disease can cause far reaching health problems in our pets. Preventive dental care is vital to our pets’ health and longevity. At home methods include brushing, use of oral rinses and sprays, and “dental” treats, chews and diets. Most pets will need periodic full dental cleanings by their veterinarian to remove accumulated tartar. Talk with your veterinarian about dental care for your pet. Keeping those teeth clean makes our furry family members’ “kisses” that much sweeter.



## HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR PETS?

Unfortunately, we can't add our pets to our own health insurance policy or set them up with tax-free health savings accounts. But there is another option for handling pet-related healthcare costs.

Pawsitive Savings is a new program designed to help pet owners save for future veterinary care, while earning rewards from Jordan Creek Animal Hospital and participating companies. Saving a small amount each month in a separate account

is a sensible way to prepare for both the unexpected and routine expenses of pet ownership. While pet health insurance policies charge a premium of around \$30-\$60 per pet per month, and often exclude or offer only partial payment on many services, all funds in a Pawsitive Savings account are available to the pet owner at any time for any expense. If you'd like to know more about Pawsitive Savings, talk to one of our staff or visit the website at [www.pawsitivesavings.com](http://www.pawsitivesavings.com).



### Monthly Meetings

The doctors and staff at 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: July 22** and **September 9, 2009.**

## SUMMER VET TECH INTERNS



**Jodi Kincaid**



**Sara Smith**

We are very fortunate to have two Des Moines Area Community College students completing veterinary technician internships with us this summer! Jodi Kincaid and Sara Smith both recently completed their first year of the DMACC Veterinary Technician Program. As part of the program's requirements, each student must complete a 300 hour internship in which they gain hands on experience and knowledge in an animal hospital setting.

Jodi started as a kennel attendant and receptionist with us in December 2006 and then moved into a veterinary assistant role prior to beginning her internship. Sara joined us in January 2008 as a kennel attendant and receptionist and continues these positions while also acting as an intern on our hospital side.

Make sure to say "Hi" to Jodi and Sara the next time you are in!

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



**Dr. Leah Moore**, grew up in West Des Moines before studying Animal Ecology at Iowa State University. She went on to receive her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from ISU in 1985. Before joining the staff at Jordan Creek Animal Hospital in May 1999, she practiced in a small animal hospital in the suburbs of Chicago.

Dr. Moore and her daughter share their home with four cats, Zak, Sylvie, Barney, and Olive. In her spare time, she enjoys wilderness travel, gardening with native plant species, reading, and bicycling.



**Amy King, RVT** grew up in Milford, Iowa near Lake Okoboji. In September 1999, she received her Associate of Applied Sciences degree from the Medical Institute of Minnesota. She moved to the Des Moines area shortly after and began working at Jordan Creek in April 2001.

Amy, husband Rawley, daughter Elizabeth, and son Ethan share their home with their "3 Felines" – Rudy, Buzz, and Ace. When she isn't busy at work or spending time with her family, she enjoys biking, swimming, and shopping.