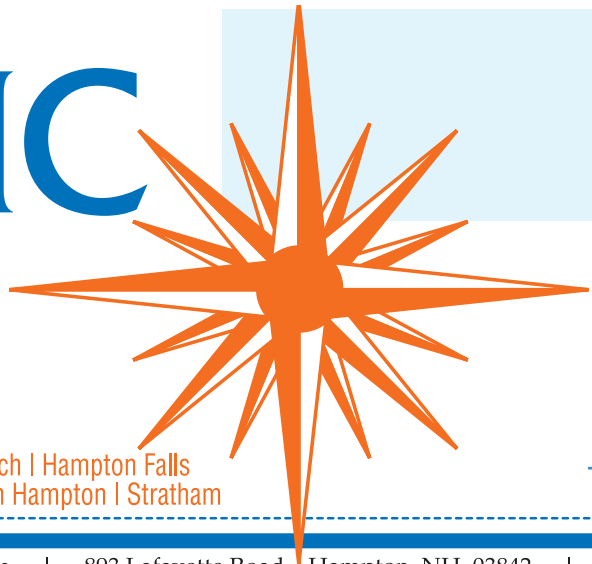


ATLANTIC NEWS



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'A good crew' at the Greenland Animal Hospital

By SCOTT E. KINNEY
ATLANTIC NEWS STAFF WRITER

GREENLAND | For more than 10 years, Mark and Sara Richards have been letting their business go to the dogs (and cats for that matter).

But, in this instance, that's not a bad thing.

Because during that time the two have been operating Greenland Animal Hospital where Mark serves as chief veterinarian and Sara is head technician and practice manager. The Richards are celebrating their 10-year anniversary as owners of the business. And it's not just about dogs and cats. It's also about people.

"No pet comes in here without a human on the other end of the leash," said Mark. "It's really a people business along with a medical business."

Richards took over the business, which was originally in the MicroArts building next door to the hospital's current location in 1996, deciding to go out on his own after working at Stratham-Newfields Veterinary Hospital. From that point things took off for Richards.

"Within one year of us taking over we outgrew the place," he said.

So Richards walked next door and asked the homeowner if she would like to sell her house. Three months' worth of renovations later, Greenland Animal Hospital found a home where it continues to reside today.

"It's a much homier environment," said Sara.

Over the course of their ownership the Richards have witnessed more than a few changes in veterinary science. Laser surgery techniques, pet diets and dentistry are among a host of medical options to increase overall pet health. Mark attributes the implementation of these procedures to educational tool such as the Internet and



FOR THE ANIMALS — Associate Veterinarian Randy MacNeill joins Sara and Mark Richards (and their furry friend Myleck) at Greenland Animal Hospital. The Richards' are celebrating the tenth year of ownership of the veterinary hospital this month.

— Atlantic News Photo by Scott E. Kinney

the popular cable television channel Animal Planet. Pet health care is way better than when we first started," he said. "People understand that pets don't talk so

vets have to run diagnostics. They're a lot more informed and willing to get the treatment."

Mark said a recent survey showed that 65 percent of pets sleep with their owner.

"Pets are now regarded as a member of the family," he said.

In addition to celebrating 10 years in the pet health biz, Greenland Animal Hospital is also happy to announce the addition of a new member to their family.

Dr. Randy MacNeill joined the team at the end of April. He is the hospital's first associate veterinarian.

"It's a good crew here," said MacNeill. "I like small clinics and this one is run well; very efficiently. I've known Mark for a few years so I knew what I was getting into."

The two men play league hockey in Maine together on a team called "The Mighty Docs."

"I've been talking about hiring a second vet for six or seven years. It wasn't like I was out searching for a vet, but the right one came along," said Mark.

As a result, the hospital will be expanding its hours, including opening on Saturday. The additional help also lends itself

to the acceptance of new clients.

What's the secret to success? "I think it's the great staff," Mark said. "A competent staff is really key in knowing how to respond to people's questions and problems. It's being honest and up front with people; treating them the way you want to be treated."

Greenland Animal Hospital is located at 667 Portsmouth Avenue. For more information call (603) 433-5665 or visit them online at www.gahvet.com.

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