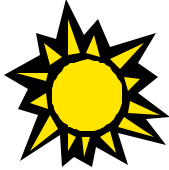


ANIMAL HEALTH ADVOCATE

Lamoille Valley Veterinary Services Newsletter

July 2001

Lamoille Valley Veterinary Services ♦ Owner/Veterinarian: Paula J. Yankauskas ♦ Associate Veterinarians: Valerie A. Yankauskas and Cindy K. Pratt ♦ Veterinary Technicians: Ann Boyea, Freda Pike and Mike Fawcett ♦ Head Receptionist: Claudia Niles ♦ Receptionists: Nicky Tobin and Gail Thompson-Steele ♦ Veterinary Assistants: Kimberly McLean, Carole Younkman, Kati Scott, Crystal Maxham, Lynn Maroot and Owen Durivage ♦ Student Assistant (Veterinary and Administrative): Robert Cookson ♦ Hospital Manager: Deborah J. Beier ♦ Office Manager: Amanda M. Pough ♦ LVVS Pet Food & Supply: Enid Rosenblum, Sarah Martin and Sharon Anderson ♦ Hospital Cats: Luna, Herriot and Rosie ♦ Upward Bound Summer Intern: Jessica Ovitt



As we head into summer and heat, we remind all pet owners of the dangers of the summer sun. Cars are of particular danger to pets, as they can heat up very quickly, even with the windows cracked. Within

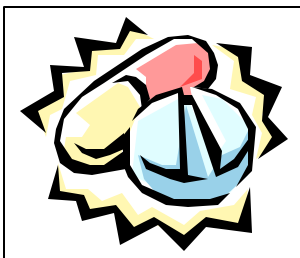
minutes, cars can become saunas, often resulting in overheating or death for pets trapped inside. We recommend you never leave your pet in your car – even for a moment. If you must, a carrier that your pet can be securely and safely inside while car windows and doors are left open may be a safer option. Small battery operated fans and reflective tarps can also make travel with pets safer. Whenever possible, either leave your pet at home in a cool house with plenty of water, or make sure you will be able take your pet inside with you along your way. If you suspect your pet has overheated, make sure to obtain veterinary care immediately. On the way to receiving help, you can start to cool your animal with cool, not cold, water. For more information or if you are concerned that your pet may be in distress, please call LVVS at 888-7911. ♦



LET THE BUYER BEWARE!

If you are like most Americans, you get inundated with catalogs for everything from clothes to chocolates and everything in between. In some pet catalogs and on-line retailers you will sometimes see items normally only available through a veterinarian. We urge you to investigate before you buy from these companies. Some manufacturers (such as Pfizer and Novartis) will not guarantee their products purchased through third-parties. In fact, these manufacturers will not sell to catalog & internet distributors. These distributors use nefarious means to get hold of the product, circumventing the efforts of the manufacturers.

Please call LVVS at 888-7911 if you have any questions. We can either get in touch with the manufacturers ourselves, or give you their customer service number so you can speak with them directly. Together, we can work to ensure the health and safety of your pets! ♦



Meet Our Staff ... Continued

An on-going series to give you a little more information about the people you may only know when they are wearing scrubs.

ROSIE, HOSPITAL CAT

If you have ever been at the hospital after normal office hours, you may have seen a tabby red and white (orange and white tiger is the old definition of her color) cat patrolling our halls. This is Rosie, Hospital Cat Extraordinaire. Rosie was a cat we put back together after she was found badly injured. She eventually came to live here permanently. She is our staff fuzzy therapy when we have had a bad day; our blood donor cat who has saved the lives of other cats; our demo cat during educational tours for local students and much, much more. She knows the schedule of the hospital – ready to be let out to start her patrols after 6pm on weekdays and 2pm on Saturdays. She can often be found near the kennel of a scared hospitalized



patient – somehow she lets them know it will be okay. She also knows when to be there for a scared owner and provides comfort that sometimes humans are unable to give. Rosie loves attention - she'd love to meet you next time you stop by LVVS! ♦

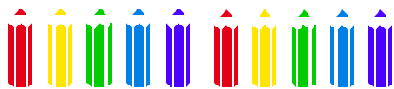
Is Your Pet on the List?

American Kennel Club Top 10 Dog breeds in individual registrations for the year 2000.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| #1 Labrador Retriever | #6 Poodle |
| #2 Golden Retriever | #7 Yorkshire Terrier |
| #3 German Shepherd Dog | #8 Chihuahua |
| #4 Dachshund | #9 Boxer |
| #5 Beagle | #10 Shih Tzu |

Cat Fanciers' Association Top 10 Cat breeds in individual registrations for the year 2000.

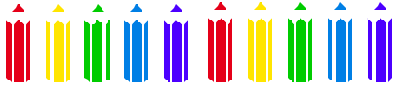
- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| #1 Persian | #6 Oriental |
| #2 Maine Coon | #7 Birman |
| #3 Siamese | #8 American Shorthair |
| #4 Exotic | #9 Scottish Fold |
| #5 Abyssinian | #10 Burmese |



**National Pet Week Drawing
Contest Winner**

Congratulations to the overall
winner:

Julia Mackay of St.
Johnsbury (age 7)



A Porcupine ,,, continued from page 3 ...

as time passes: There's a good reason veterinarians usually give an anesthetic before removing porcupine quills. "It can really hurt," says James B. Dalley, D.V.M., associate professor of small animal clinical sciences at the Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine in East Lansing.

When your pet is brought to LVVS with quills, we will do all we can to drop other cases to treat your pet as soon as possible in order to alleviate your pet's discomfort and to increase the chance of locating and removing as many quills as possible. An injectable anesthetic is administered so that the quills can be removed safely and without discomfort to your pet. Quills are removed and a thorough search over your pet's entire body is done to try to find any that may have broken off and are underneath the skin. Unfortunately, quills do not show on x-ray or via ultrasound, so part of your at home instructions will be to monitor for any emerging quills that could not be located or which had broken off and could not be removed on the initial exam. If indicated, your pet may be placed on antibiotics. If your pet is "quilled," we urge you to contact us as soon as possible and arrange to have your pet treated. Remember that we are available 24 hours a day with on site staffing and emergency services. 888-7911 ♦



Special Thanks to the following:

Senator Susan Bartlett - for judging at our Open House.

The Ladies of Copley Terrace - who save us days of time by preparing our newsletters for the mail (our apologies to anyone we missed): Eleanor Miller, Gloria Cote, Evelyn Monte, Annie Schweidenback, Opal Farnham, Lucille Labree and organizer June Allaire.



RUB- A- DUB- DUB
your pet in OUR tub!
Self Service Baths at LVVS

Enjoy the convenience and ease of bathing your pet in our raised tub with the patented HydroSurge™ bathing system. We'll supply the shampoo, conditioner, blower and towels - you supply the pet and the time!

RUB - A - DUB - DUB HOURS:
Saturdays & Sundays 2 - 6 p. m.
Tuesdays & Thursday 7 - 9 p. m.
(additional times by appointment - please call)

COST: \$12
Includes: ½ hour of bathing time
(\$3.00 per every quarter hour past the first half hour)
Shampoo & conditioner
Raised tub with ramp for an easy walk up for your pet (no lifting a struggling dog into a tub!)
HydroSurge Therapeutic Bathing System and Blower
Towels
Brush or comb for after-bath grooming
(Medicated/conditioning shampoos or Skunk-Off may be used and are available for an additional charge.)

If you can jump into your day without caffeine; if you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains; if you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles; if you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it; if you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time; if you can forgive a friend's lack of consideration; if you can overlook it when those you love take it out on you when, through no fault of your own, something goes wrong; if you can ignore a friend's mistake and never correct them; if you can greet every one you meet with a smile and a kiss; if you can live without judgement and control; if you can face the world without lies and deceit; if you can conquer tension with a sun bath; if you can sleep easily; if you can honestly say that deep in your heart you have no prejudice against creed or color, religion or politics; then, my friend, you're almost as good as your pet.

Almost, but not quite.

A Porcupine and its Quills

A pugnacious porcupine didn't like your pet poking her proboscis into his personal business. And now your pet is stuck -- quite literally -- with a bit of a prickly problem.

The porcupine is well protected. A large porcupine can have over 30,000 quills covering its body. Quills cover most of the porcupine's body but are not located on its head, belly, or the inside parts of its legs. On the back of the porcupine, these quills are hidden from view by thick hair that covers the porcupine's body. When in danger, the porcupine uses special muscles under its skin to make the quills stand up. The quills are now ready to protect the porcupine's body. The tips have hundreds of tiny little microscopic barbs that make the quills stick into the body of the attacker. These quills are very difficult to remove as the barbs make the quills act like fish-hooks – designed to stay in any animal foolish enough to mess with a porcupine.

There are a few old wive's tales concerning porcupines and their quills. One of them falsely says that porcupines can throw their quills. What actually happens is that the porcupine thrashes its tail back and forth and hits the attacking animal. The loosely attached quills are easily removed from the porcupine's tail and can lodge themselves into the mouth or body of the attacker. Another fallacy is that the quills are full of air and cutting them releases this air and will then facilitate their removal. In fact, cutting the quill does not make it easier to remove but just makes it a shorter quill to pull out. If the quill is shorter it is easier to break off and get lost in the animal. Lastly, quills are not full of poison.

When should you have your pet attended to if they have had a porcupine encounter and are "quilled"? The best answer is as soon as possible for a number of reasons. First, having a quill embedded is painful and leaving them in your animal is not a good lesson to deter them from any future encounters. Your pet will probably try to take them out by attempting to rub them off which can result in breaking the quills off and getting them embedded and impossible to find. Second, quills are not sterile so the longer they are in your pet the greater is the chance of them causing infection. Finally, certain areas of the body that are quilled can present more of a problem to your pet the longer the quill is in place. These areas are the fleshy non-skeletal areas of the body, e.g., over the chest, joints, muscles and anywhere near the eyes. These quills are able to migrate deeper into muscle or to vital organs and in some cases have even been attributed to being the cause of death.



It is important that quills be removed quickly because the quills work themselves deeper and get harder to remove

... continued on page 2 ...

Patient Profile: DAN ...leptospirosis in a dog

... A new series by Dr. Paula Yankauskas



Dan, now a 6+ year old Golden Retriever, was brought to us last summer with the complaint that he wasn't doing right, he had no energy, appetite was decreased, and he had been mildly shaking for four days. Although his physical exam didn't seem bad - changes were subtle - his depression was remarkable, as he was not a dog easily subdued. We decided to run basic bloodwork and see what it revealed.

The findings in the blood work were serious - there were changes present indicating that his kidneys suddenly were not working; they were failing to clear toxins from his bloodstream, failing to save water for maintaining hydration, failing to maintain life. Acute renal failure in a dog his age was puzzling - toxin exposure or infectious disease were high on the list of what could be the cause of this.

We interviewed his owners about Dan's lifestyle, looking for opportunities for exposure to toxins such as ethylene glycol (antifreeze). This didn't seem to provide relevant clues, except for being outside a lot and recently having some earth moving equipment on the property. We started him on fluids and monitoring. Over the next nine days we worked for this dog: diagnostics, treatment, client education. His family was very supportive and came in and spent time with him frequently. Dan was started on penicillin in case he had leptospirosis. As it turned out, his lepto titers came back positive for leptospirosis, serovar *pomona*. He has recovered, with some permanent kidney compromise, which is being managed.

Leptospirosis is the disease caused by infection with leptospirchetes, bacteria with bent or hooked ends, that in their reservoir
continued on page 4



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We now carry the entire line of Tidy Cat Litters - all at special, reduced, prices!

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Patient Profile: Dan, continued from page 3 ...

host can live in the kidneys without causing disease, so they wash out with urine and contaminate the environment (ponds, lakes, streams, yards, leaves, etc). Most infections in dogs are not clinically apparent; those that are typically present with fever, lack of appetite, and vomiting that progresses to liver disease and bleeding. In the last several years a new form of lepto, which presents as acute kidney failure, has been identified in dogs most often associated with serovars *pomona*, *grippytyphosa*, and *bratislava*. Humans can get leptospirosis, which makes it an important public health concern.

Dan's owners felt almost blindsided - where did Dan's disease come from? He had been immunized with DHLPP routinely all his life, where L = leptospirosis. It turns out that the serovars commonly present in regular dog vaccines were for *L. canicola* and *L. icterohemorrhagica*; and these do not protect against other serovars (a concept similar to differing strains of flu virus).

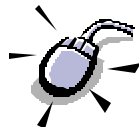
Dogs get exposed to leptospire by coming in direct contact with contaminated urine or by contact with areas contaminated with infectious urine. This can be dog to dog, most often with serovar *canicola* for which dogs are the major reservoir host. With other serovars direct transmission from dog to dog is less common. The reservoir hosts for serovars like *grippytyphosa*, *pomona*, and *bratislava* are usually wildlife--raccoons, possums, and skunks in particular. These species have infection rates as high as 35% and shed lepto for significant periods of time after infection. So if a raccoon wanders through the backyard and urinates, the area becomes contaminated. A dog can be infected by sniffing or licking at the area contaminated with the raccoon urine. The urine can remain infectious for days to a few weeks if it is deposited in moist areas that are protected from the sun. Some examples would be in the areas under and around shrubs or in leaf litter. The infectious dose for a dog is quite low.

Vaccines for prevention of leptospirosis are available and their use makes for a good discussion with your veterinarian. Some dogs may be felt to be at less risk for exposure, so may not need the vaccine at all; whereas for others getting the vaccine with all four serovars that are currently available may be important. As for Dan, he is one of the latter, as we know he got exposed in his environment, and he is a large active dog that still enjoys being outdoors. ♦



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