

COMPANION ANIMAL NEWS SPRING 2001

REINTRODUCING - OUR SENIOR WELLNESS CARE PROGRAM

What is "senior care"? The needs of older pets are very different from those of puppies and adult pets. One year in a pet's life is approximately equivalent to 7 in a human's life. That means health problems can develop 7 times faster as well – especially in the senior pet. Many health problems may start months before visual symptoms are present. Your pet can't tell you that 'I just don't feel right'. This program is designed to catch a problem before it becomes one!

Many of you with older pets may have noticed that we have different questionnaires and report cards for your senior pet. This is one way we like to make you aware that your older companion has special needs. Our complete senior wellness recommendations include:

- PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS at least once per year. Ill health can develop much faster in an older pet. More frequent exams may help detect problems sooner.

-NUTRITIONAL COUNSELING; as pets age, their nutritional needs change. Your pet may need essential fatty acids, minerals and vitamins. Many ordinary pet foods do not take the nutritional needs of aging into account. We carry two different senior pet food formulations: Proplan® and Eukanuba®. They are both good foods, both lighter in calories, and the Eukanuba® food has extra glucosamine and chondroitin for the joints. We can help you decide which would be best for your pet.

-LAB WORK; the blood is a mirror to the inside of the body. A series of screening tests will be performed to tell us how your pet's organs are functioning. These include a urinalysis, a chemistry panel with electrolytes, and a red blood cell count. For cats, we also include a thyroid test to check for hyperthyroidism. We put all this information together to make recommendations for medications and special dietary needs to help you keep your pet as healthy as possible. The senior wellness lab work package will cost \$45 for dogs and \$65 for cats. We feel it is very beneficial if we can detect a problem early enough to either stop or slow down the progression.

Please call or talk to us if you are interested in having a senior wellness check done on your pet.

HEARTWORM SEASON IS UPON US

As the weather finally warms up, we are reminded of those nasty mosquitoes to come. Of course this means heartworm protection is essential. For those of you not familiar with heartworm, it is a worm carried by the bite of one mosquito that will infect your dog or cat's heart. A blood test will ensure your pet did not pick up the worm last year. Then we recommend starting pets on a once-a-month tablet to protect them from contracting the worm. These pills also protect against most intestinal worms. Many people keep their animals protected year round to avoid those intestinal worms, and so that they don't have to remember when to start and stop the pills. Don't forget we also have heartworm pills that contain FLEA CONTROL called Sentinel®. For TICK CONTROL, we recommend Frontline®.

VACATIONS – Dr. Jean will be gone April 12th-16th, and again June 4th-9th. She has arranged for relief veterinarians to be here and fill in while she's gone.

Our receptionist, Tammy Zickert is going to take the trip of a lifetime to Africa in June with St. Mary's church of Neillsville. We wish Tammy a safe and fun journey. She'll also be visiting with our own Dr. Grade while she's there.

Our office will be closed on Saturday, March 10th so that we can take our staff to our annual winter retreat and team building conference.

THE CLARK COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY RABIES/VACCINATION CLINIC

will be held on Saturday, April 21st at the Clark County fairgrounds from noon until 2 p.m.

GVS STAFF

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