

## COMPANION ANIMAL NEWS MARCH 2004

**Dr. Jean** is back at it full time after her shoulder surgery. Her doctor has even given her permission to do some surgeries. Thank you to all of you who sent cards and expressed your concern. She is still looking for another veterinarian to help her in the office, so continues to stay too busy. Vacations planned are from March 30 - April 5, and June 7-12. There will be a relief vet here for two days in March, and hopefully the full week of June. Thank you all for your understanding with the emergency schedule. Because she and her husband are the only doctors who cover small animal emergencies, we will continue to refer emergencies to another practice every other weekend, and during vacations.

**Pain medications** - Because recent studies have proven that animals do in fact feel pain in a similar fashion to humans, pain control medications will be provided for pets with each surgery or painful procedure. This pain control will include pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative pain medications, along with medications to take orally at home for 3 days after surgery. Our primary goal is to alleviate suffering in pets, and without pain medication, we are not able to achieve that goal.

We appreciate your confidence in us, and we will continue to work with you in providing the best care for your pets that we are able to give.

Kudos to all of you who took advantage of **Dental Health Month!** You are to be congratulated for taking such good care of your pet! Good oral health is a very important part of good general health for pets. It is at least as important as what diet they eat. One good source of information about veterinary dental health can be found at the American Veterinary Dental College website, [www.avdc.org/pet-owners.htm](http://www.avdc.org/pet-owners.htm).

Did you know that bad dental disease can sometimes be an indication of other organ problems? If your pet has bad breath, or tartar covered teeth, please call us for a dental checkup appointment.

**FELINE HEARTWORM** – Did you know that cats can get heartworm too? Did you also know that it is as easy to prevent in your cat as it is in your dog? Although the cat is not the definitive host for heartworms, they can be affected by it. Signs often include chronic vomiting or coughing, and heart failure. Many cats may not have any clinical signs, but have sudden death. Even cats that are inside all the time, can be bitten by a mosquito in the house.

Treatment is risky at best. We often just wait out the 2-3 year life span of the worm, and hope that the cat does not get any serious side effects from having it. Blood testing can be done if we suspect a cat has heartworm already. But they do NOT need to be blood tested before starting the preventative. Just as in dogs, the monthly pills also treat intestinal roundworms in cats, as well as prevent heartworm from developing.

Stop in or call us if you have questions about protecting your cat from those deadly heartworms.