

TIMBERCREST VET GAZETTE



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Hello! I'm Harley, the newest addition to Railsplitter! The staff here decided to take me in and let me make Railsplitter my home I'm still getting used to my new "house" and all of the patients that come in and out every day, but the girls say I'm settling in quite nicely I love to keep an eye on everything happening around the clinic, and I especially like to sit on

keyboards while the girls are working. Everyone here keeps saying the word "spoiled." I don't know what that means, but I think it's a good thing. Come in on a quiet afternoon and I might be sitting on the receptionist's lap, otherwise I like to nap in my kennel or on top of the refrigerator. Please stop by sometime to meet me and say hi!

Professional Pet Pictures=Success!!

By: Sondra Carter

We would like to extend our appreciation to Mary Lieferman, owner of Art Photography by Mary, for the wonderful job done on our Professional pet pictures taken Saturday, March 5th at Railsplitter Veterinary Wellness Center. Mary captured pictures of families, children, and pets. The best part of the event was everyone received a complimentary 4x6 print free of charge. Yes...Free!! Some even took the opportunity to purchase additional prints with no obligation. Mary does a wonderful job and also takes our staff photos that are posted on our clinic websites. We would also like to thank anyone who stopped by to meet our staff, shop in our retail area, and enjoy some coffee and donuts. If you missed this opportunity to have your picture taken with your pet or family, don't get discouraged. Mary will be back to visit us real soon! Keep watching the newsletter and our websites for future photo opportunities.

FURminator Products

By: Kaci Payne

Pet hair is something we all dread to see lying around on our couches and everywhere we look in our homes. Pet hair, unfortunately, is something that we have to deal with on a daily basis with our pets. There is nothing we can do to completely get rid of pet hair, but there is something we can do to eliminate it from coming around so often.

A great brand we recommend and use in our clinics on a daily basis is the **FURminator**. These products may be something that could help with those pet hair problems. The **FURminator** brush is a stainless steel deshedding edge on an easy to use handle that reaches beneath the topcoat to grab the undercoat and loose hair. They are guaranteed to reduce up to 90% of shedding on your pets better than any brush or comb. These products are easy to use for long hair or short hair pets and it comes in a wide range of sizes to best fit your pet.

The **FURminator** line also has other helpful products to help prevent shedding. For your pet's bath, try the Deshedding Shampoo and Solution. This will help to exfoliate your pet's skin and coat in the bathtub and will help to release the undercoat to enhance shine and reduce shedding. For an in between bath solution, the Dog or Cat Waterless Shampoo can be a great way to get your pet smelling clean. This provides a quick, easy, no rinse alternative when putting your pet in the bathtub is not an option.

To help the bath go smoother try the TubNub Bathing Brush. The TubNub has comfortable rubber nubs that massage your pet while helping to stimulate the skin and coat as well as releasing loose hair.

You may pick up any **FURminator** products at either Timbercrest Veterinary Service in Atlanta or Railsplitter Veterinary Wellness Center in Lincoln today so you don't have to see that pet hair lying around your home any longer!



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Featured Employee

~Sondra Carter



Sondra joined the Timbercrest Veterinary team in November 2010 as a Receptionist. As a resident of Lincoln, you will mostly see her at Railsplitter Veterinary Wellness Center. She may be a familiar face to some of you as she comes to us after working at the Logan County Bank for 8 years. After working in banking for over 10 years, the veterinary world is quite different than what Sondra is accustomed to. Although she did not grow up a "farm girl", she does not mind digging in and getting dirty to help where needed!

Sondra grew up in Clinton, IL as the second oldest of six and has all sisters. She lives in Lincoln with her daughter Mackinze. Sondra enjoys spending time with her daughter, playing golf and softball, having family cookouts, spending time with friends, vacationing, and going to see as many St. Louis Cardinal baseball games as possible! You will also see Sondra riding around town or to work on her Red Honda Metropolitan Scooter or as she calls it... "Ruby!"

Sondra and Mackinze own a white and light brown loveable Shih Tzu named Liam who brings so much joy and excitement to the family. He is a lap dog for sure who loves lots of attention and hugs. They also own a grey cat named Sydney. Sydney has a very gentle interior but likes to show her attitude to people and hide until she gets to know them. Then she is the sweetest cat and will beg for attention from them.

As a team member of Timbercrest Veterinary Service, Sondra has learned and experienced many new things. She really enjoys watching large animal



By: Alison Pharis

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Heartworm Disease

By: Michelle Godziewski

What is it?

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease caused by parasitic worms (*dirofilaris immitis*) living in the arteries of the lungs and in the hearts of dogs.

How is it transmitted?

The parasitic worm is transmitted by mosquitoes. Adult heartworms release their young (microfilaria) into a dog's blood stream. Mosquitoes ingest the heartworm babies while taking a blood meal from an infected canine (domestic dog, coyote, wolf or fox). Over several days the microfilaria mature into a larval stage within the mosquito. During the mosquito's next blood meal, they inject the infective larvae into the next dog; which could be your precious Fido. It takes a little over six months for the infected larvae to mature into adult worms. These adult worms then migrate to the arteries of the dog's lungs and into the dog's hearts where they reproduce in mass numbers until they eventually kill the dog.

Where is it found?

Heartworm disease has been found in all 50 states. All dogs regardless of their age, sex, or habitat are susceptible to heartworm infection. Although outdoor dogs are at a greater risk for infection, there still have been hundreds of indoor dogs diagnosed with the heartworm disease.

Clinical Signs

Some dogs will not show any clinical signs, especially in the early stages of the disease. The most common clinical signs associated with heartworm disease are cough, exercise intolerance, abnormal heart and lung sounds, difficulty breathing, fluid accumulation in the abdominal cavity and even death.

How is it diagnosed?

The most common way to diagnose heartworm disease is with a specific blood test that only requires a few drops of blood. This test can be performed within the clinic and results are available within 10 minutes.

Timbercrest Veterinary Service follows the American Heartworm Society's recommendation for heartworm testing by testing every year.

How is it treated?

Adult heartworms are killed using a drug called an adulticide that is injected in the muscle through a series of treatments. Strict confinement for a minimum of six to eight weeks after treatment is an absolute must! Any strenuous activity can cause the dead heartworms to lodge in the arteries of the lungs and block essential blood flow. If heartworm disease is left untreated the increasing number of adult worms will overload the heart and lungs and eventually cause death.

How is it prevented?

The great thing about heartworm disease is that it is easily prevented! By giving your dog an oral heartworm preventative like Interceptor or Trifexis every month, you can prevent your dog from getting this potentially fatal disease.

Heartworm prevention can be given to puppies as young as eight weeks of age. It should be given every month, all year round for the best protection.

Heartworm disease is a very real threat in central Illinois. All it takes is one bite from an infected mosquito. Remember, even your indoor dog is still at risk because mosquitoes can make their way into your home. Prevention is key; a preventative given every month all year round can keep your dog from facing this potentially fatal disease.

In the past twelve months, Timbercrest Veterinary Service has diagnosed and successfully treated 5 heartworm positive dogs, 2 in 2011 alone!

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Fertilizer Poisoning

By: Dana Daughterty

After the daunting winter we had this season, we are all eagerly anticipating spring. It is about time to get ready for mowing the lawn and tilling the garden. With these spring lawn and garden activities also comes the use of commercial products and chemicals designed to make grass greener, flowers bigger, and eliminate pests. While fulfilling these roles, however, some of these fertilizers and pesticides are very poisonous. We are not here to encourage you to “go green” and use all-natural lawn and garden products. We simply want to remind you that these products are, in fact, chemicals and can have devastating effects on your family pets.

There are 4 common lawn and garden products that are often reported causes of pet poisonings. They all work differently and affect pets in different ways. Here’s a quick summary:

Insecticides: Usually contain carbamates and organophosphates which impair the nerves’ communication with muscle tissue and decreasing function. This even includes the muscles of the heart and the intestine.

Herbicides: Commonly used to kill weeds in lawns and gardens. These are the most toxic when ingested directly from the bag. After application, toxicity reduces.

Fertilizers: Some contain calcium cyanamide which can cause breathing difficulty and blood pressure changes.

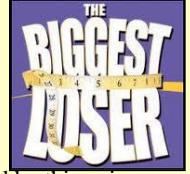
Baits: Used to eliminate those pesky voles and gophers leaving trails through the yard.

Signs of poisoning from any of these categories can vary greatly. The most common include vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, trouble breathing, muscle tremors, weakness, and paralysis.

In general, lawn and garden products pose the greatest threat when in a concentrated form. Please store these items in a clean, dry place away from pets and neighborhood animals. After application of these products, try not to let pets immediately roam in the treated area. Common sense can go a long way with these chemicals. Always follow the manufacturer’s instruction on the label for application, storage, and disposal.

If you have any questions about the products you plan on using this season, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Our staff would be happy to talk to you about your concerns. If you suspect your pet has been exposed to any harmful chemicals, call our office immediately.

NBC’s hit show The Biggest Loser has forever changed Tuesday night television. Every week, thousands of Americans tune in to see the inspirational stories of the contestants and follow their weight loss journeys. The team members of Timbercrest Veterinary Service and Railsplitter Veterinary Wellness Center have also been inspired by this unique show. As an office, we recently began our own The Biggest Loser competition amongst ourselves.



Every Friday the team will weigh in to track our progress. We all have different individual goals from losing weight to building muscle to exercising more frequently. We have made the commitment to try to live healthy and work hard for three months in order to meet our collective goal. If everyone is able to turn their goals into reality, we all get a group prize.

Our hopes in creating our Biggest Loser contest were to help increase awareness of pet obesity and possibly host a Biggest Loser competition for our patients. According to Hills Pet Nutrition, approximately half of the pets seen in veterinary clinics are classified as obese. Just like on the TV show, the best way to combat pet obesity is to help your pet eat right and exercise. Our doctors have several recommendations of lifestyle and diet changes that can help make this battle a little easier. From going on more walks, to avoiding table scraps, or even a prescription weight loss diet, there is an individualized plan we can make for your pet.

Hills Pet Nutrition makes over-the-counter and prescription diets that are ideal for pets looking to drop a few pounds. For pets that are just slightly over weight, the “Light” formulations can help get those pounds off and then maintain a healthy weight. You might have seen commercials for the new Hills Weight Loss Systems for dogs. These over-the-counter systems contain the same “Light” diet, but are perfect for anyone with a busy schedule or those who just can not say “No” when their pet is begging for a few extra treats. These diets and any other information you need to know about pet obesity are available at both our Atlanta and Lincoln clinics. We encourage you to try these diets and add exercise to help your pet lose weight. We are also open to the idea of hosting a second Biggest Loser contest for our patients, if anyone needs a little extra motivation. So what do you say? Should we hold a Biggest Loser for pets?

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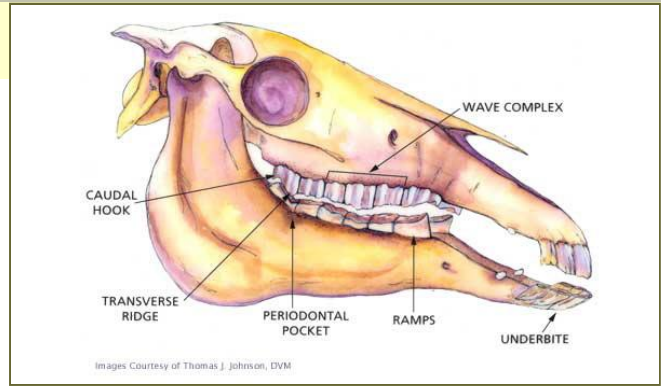
By: Dr. Teal Summitt

The history of equine dentistry has dates as far back as the 16th century with the first recorded dental examinations and dental disease descriptions. Since then it has evolved into an important part of veterinary preventative medicine for the horse. A horse's tooth has similar anatomy to human's – both have a center pulp surrounded by dentin and then an outer enamel layer. Unlike humans, horses have hypsodontal teeth, which means they continually grown and erupt throughout life. As horses age, the shape of their teeth change, most notably being the front incisors are angled outward as opposed to a young horse's. Dental disease poses a problem in any age of horse. Common signs seen are dropping feed as they eat, losing weight, quidding (pocketing hay in the cheek), undigested feed in the manure, head tossing, bit chewing, or resistance with the bit, foul odor from the mouth, and nasal discharge or swelling.

There are several kinds of conditions that can affect a horse's dental health and bite, and depending on a horse's age, they are more prone to certain diseases. Young horses (1-2 years old) should be examined for brachygnathia (overbite/parrot mouth) or prognathia (underbite/monkey mouth). These are conditions that some foals are born with and may be able to correct within the first 2 years of life. Wolf teeth (first premolars) can cause problems, especially in performance horses, due to their position being where the bit usually sits. They are directly in front of the grinding cheek molars and are often removed when a horse is young as it is easier to extract them. They should not be confused with the larger pointed canine teeth just behind the front incisors. Retained baby teeth ("caps") should be removed as they can alter how the permanent teeth come in. Due to the normal circular grinding motion of the horse's jaws and the fact that their upper jaw is wider than their lower jaw, enamel "points" form on the outside of the upper arcade and the inside of the lower arcade. They are the most common equine dental condition and are the reason we routinely float horses' teeth. "Floating" refers to the removal of the sharp enamel points that can cause sores on the cheek and tongue. Although each horse is evaluated to determine when floating is needed, the chart on the right is a general schedule relative to age.

Mature horses (5-15 years) still commonly have their teeth floated for removal of sharp points. Other wear patterns corrected by floating that adult horses are prone to include ramps (the back teeth having an incline), wave mouth (occlusal surfaces going up and down in a wave pattern rather than straight), and step mouth (one tooth growing too high with the opposite tooth of the bite being too short). Tooth root abscesses can cause a foul smell and swelling of the face and need to be addressed by a veterinarian. Senior horses (18-20 years) have many of the same concerns as the mature horse but also are more prone to oral tumors.

Equine preventative medicine includes a thorough dental examination and routine floats. It is an important part of your horse's health and nutrition. Please let us know any questions or concerns you may have about dental disease prevention.



Age	Frequency of Floating
0 to 2 years	Once annually
2 to 4 years	Twice annually
4 to 10 years	Once to Twice annually
10 to 20 years	Once annually
Over 20 years	Once every 1 to 2 years

Fecal Egg Counts

By: Dr. Teal Summitt

As part of Timbercrest Veterinary Service's Equine Spring Special, we offer a fecal egg count (FEC) as part of the preventative medicine program. This is a microscopic examination for parasite eggs and a very useful tool to determine which horses in the herd are identified as high shedders and low shedders. Common signs of parasite problems in horses are dull/rough hair coat, lethargy, decreased stamina, stunted growth, pot belly, colic, and/or diarrhea.

The overall objective of an equine deworming protocol is to maintain a parasite burden at a tolerable level, not necessarily rid each animal of every worm. FEC also help avoid over treating, which limits the cost of parasite control. Parasite burdens are a reflection of an individual horse's immune tolerance, therefore the high shedders are suspected to have a lower defense against parasites. The other importance of FEC is to identify problem horses in order to prevent parasite resistance. If deworming protocols are used too frequently, worms can genetically develop resistance to drugs so that they are ineffective.

FEC require a small amount of fresh feces (2-3 fecal balls) and are reported in "eggs per gram of feces" (EPG). A horse with levels greater than 200 are considered high shedders and should be treated, whereas any level below this is tolerable. If a high shedder is treated and still no improvement is seen, a parasite identification fecal sample should be ran to know which type of worm is causing the problem and how to effectively treat it. It should be noted if a horse's level returns as zero, it is not necessarily free of parasites due to the intermittent shedding of eggs by adult worms.

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Newest Preventatives at Timbercrest

Trifexis is Elanco's newest all-in-one oral product that combines intestinal parasite control with heartworm and flea prevention. *Trifexis* combines the ingredients of both *Interceptor* and *Comfortis*, two of our currently recommended preventatives at Timbercrest. Now, instead of giving two separate preventatives every month, you can give just

Trifexis. Just like all of our other oral heartworm and flea preventatives, *Trifexis* should be given every 30 days and is best if given with a meal.

Elanco has also designed *Assurity*, a new topical flea preventative made specifically for our feline companions. With *Assurity*, one dose is safely used for all weight ranges. It starts working within 30 minutes of application and kills 98-100% of fleas within 12 hours. Just like any other topical products, *Assurity* should be applied every 30 days and should not be applied three days before or three days after a bath.

Both of these products are only available through a licensed veterinarian. Feel free to ask our staff for more information about either of these new preventatives

Check us out on Facebook!!



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&

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