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# THE QUARTERLY PAWS

**WELCOME!...**

to the first issue of “The Quarterly Paws”, Riverside Drive Animal Care Center’s way of keeping you up-to-date on the latest and greatest of activities, information, and fun facts at our center! We truly are honored that you have chosen our health care team to provide the best and most advanced medical care for your pets and we do not take this responsibility lightly.

So take a “paws” in your day and relax with our new newsletter. Be sure to notice the Client Questions column where we will be answering general questions you may have. Just email us with anything you are wondering about and we will try our best to include it in a future issue. We thank you for allowing us to be a part of your animal’s life and for being part of our wonderful family!



#### LOOK INSIDE!

- Allergy relief
- Lifesaving surgery
- Get to know the Crew
- Skunks!
- Music to Calm





## DID YOU KNOW???

April was adopt a greyhound month! But it's never too late to open your home to one of these beautiful animals. Here at RACC we are fortunate enough to house The Greyhound Health Initiative blood bank in central Ohio. Most Greyhounds are universal blood donors in the canine world. We also are lucky enough to have the president of Team Greyhound, Courtney Kindler, as one of our

lead veterinary technicians. Team Greyhound is a rescue organization that brings retired track racing dogs from the south up to Ohio to find new homes. Courtney does a wonderful job helping these terrific dogs make the transition from race animals to loving pets. Interested in learning more? Contact Courtney at [courtney@teamgreyhound.com](mailto:courtney@teamgreyhound.com)

*"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."*

*- Anatole France*

## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN...ALLERGIES!

The birds are chirping, the flowers are blooming and Rover is itching. It's spring. So with all the wonderful things spring brings, the red eyes, itchy paws, scooting, and sneezing are all allergy symptoms we'd rather leave behind! Of course the first thing you want to do is make sure your dog is on flea prevention and that all that itching isn't because of nasty little buggers! If, however, your dog is suffering from the pollen they come in contact with out in the yard it can very likely show up as the symptoms listed above along with possible hair loss, skin infections and ear infections as well. Allergies can occur at certain times of the year, but can turn into a year-round problem for older dogs and because food allergies can often mimic the symptoms of seasonal allergies, doctors usually will start by putting the pet on a limited ingredient food. According to our own Dr. Sarah Graham, if your pet's allergies turn out to be related to the changing of seasons, then we will treat with medications such as Apoquel, which is given orally or with Cytopoint injections, both of which inhibit inflammation and itching at the cellular level. It is also sometimes necessary to prescribe steroids for itch relief. Should the allergies get so bad that the pet starts to lose hair and develop hot spots then antibiotics will be included in the treatment. If you think your pet suffers from allergies, don't waste time in getting relief, call our office to schedule an exam and stop the itching madness!





## IT'S NOT JUST FLOWERS YOU'RE SMELLING...

Ahhh, you can smell the meals on the outdoor grills, the fresh scent of a recent rain, the flowers in bloom and unfortunately the unmistakable odor of skunks. They seem to be everywhere and it's only going to get worse as the warm weather continues. So what do you do? For starters, if you live in an area where skunks and other wildlife are prevalent, it would be wise to make sure your dog is up to date on the leptospirosis vaccine. Leptospirosis is a potentially fatal disease that is often carried by wildlife and if your dog should happen to come in contact with any water or urine infected by one of these diseased critters, it could be quite dangerous. This one is simple, talk with one of our doctors and protect with the vaccine. Another good idea is to always have the ingredients for giving a "Skunk Bath" on hand. Should Spot mistake that black and white ball of fur for a playful kitten and end up on the wrong end of its wrath, you don't want to worry about having to run to the store last minute to pick up supplies. There are two things you can do to prepare:

1) Have all the ingredients on hand and in a safe place should they be needed (recipe below)

2) Have a bottle of "Skunk Off" shampoo, which can be purchased at our vet center, close by.

Either way, the bottom line is, be prepared! Chances are, you and your dog are going to need it!

### SKUNK BATH RECIPE

It is always recommended to wipe off excess skunk spray with an old towel first and do not get pet wet before applying the shampoo. Use a cloth to wipe mixture around eyes and mouth. Be careful to avoid getting mixture into eyes and mouth

- 1 Qt. Hydrogen Peroxide (be aware this may bleach fur)
- ¼ cup Baking Soda
- 1 tsp. Liquid Dish Soap (Dawn is preferred)
- 1 Lemon juiced (approximately ¼ cup)

Mix ingredients

Lather on dog, use wash-cloth around face

Let sit 5-10 minutes

Rinse well

Of course if you have any questions, don't hesitate to call our office!



## SPOTLIGHT ON LINDSEY!

Sometimes you come across a person who can do it all and our very own Lindsey Vadala is definitely one of those people! Lindsey has been with us for five years now, the first one as part of our reception team and the past four as a vet tech assistant in the hospital. She has never doubted her abilities since day one and neither have we! Married for only five months to her true love John, she loves to play video games, go out with friends, listen to John play guitar with his band, and eat! Together they have Jade, a sweet, 5 ½ year old shepherd mix and two great cats, Gary and Seifer.

Around the hospital, she is truly one-of-a-kind with her crazy expressions and goofy dances, she makes us all laugh.

But don't think it's all fun and games with Lindsey, she is a fantastic vet tech assistant who has her eyes on continuing her education by attending sonography/ultrasound school. While growing up, her neighbor could tell how much Lindsey loved animals and even made her a Dalmatian costume to match her own dog. Lindsey would run around and bark pretending to be a dog, making everyone laugh and when she got her very own vet tech play set in elementary school, she was hooked! Thanks for being such a fun and valuable part of our team Lindsey!



*"What greater gift than the love of a cat."*

*- Charles Dickens*

## MEET ALEXA!

When you walk through the front doors of Riverside, you will be met by the many smiling faces of our reception staff and one of the biggest smiles of all belongs to our very own Alexa Shumay. Alexa has been with us for over a year now and is certainly a bright spot in our practice. Having previously worked at Disney World (she was actually a pirate on the Pirates of the Caribbean ride! Arggg!) Alexa knows how to combine fun and great customer service with helping your pet get all the great medical attention he needs. It should also then come as no surprise that in Alexa's fantasy world she would be Princess Jasmine and her husband of only one and a half years, Paul, would no doubt be her Aladdin.

Alexa is a huge sports fan particularly when it involves the Boston Bruins or the Cleveland Browns (that's loyalty!) She and Paul even named their four-year old Beagle mix Bruin and their two year old Australian cattle dog mix Blitz, who was adopted on Super Bowl weekend. What else does Alexa love? Well, she's been to over 10 different countries with Italy being her favorite so travel is high on the list and of course all the animals she gets to love on here at RACC! If you haven't had the opportunity to meet Alexa, we highly recommend it!



## PROCEDURE OF THE QUARTER— GASTROPEXY

We've all heard the term "bloat" but do you know what this painful and potentially fatal condition is? The medical term is gastric dilatation-volvulus (GVD) and it is a digestive disorder that comes on suddenly and can kill quickly. When this happens, the stomach twists and fills with gas, cutting off blood and oxygen to the stomach. Without immediate treatment, shock and a painful death can occur within hours. While any dog can develop GVD, it is mainly deep-chested breeds like Great Danes, Doberman Pinschers, Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs and Old English Sheepdogs that are affected. Oddly enough, Standard Poodles are the second most common breed to suffer from this condition. Sounds horrific because it is but the good news is that this is preventable with a minimally invasive surgery. According to our own Dr. Michelle Wisecup, symptoms

include restlessness, pacing, expanded abdomen, painful abdomen, distress, excessive drooling, rapid breathing, shock and the urge to vomit. However, with a prophylactic gastropexy procedure the stomach is surgically attached to the abdominal wall which prevents twisting. Here at Riverside we have been performing this life-saving procedure since we opened and for the past 10 years we have been doing laparoscopic gastropexy surgeries which allows for a much less invasive procedure and also allows for a much faster recovery time. This is a horrible disorder but with our laparoscopic procedure, it's one that can be prevented.



## ON DOGS AND MUSIC

By Bethany Wong, Client Services

I've been thinking a lot recently about how music affects a person's mood. Why does a particular song immediately take you back to a specific moment, time, or place, to a specific memory, and cause you to feel something? Why is it that you just can't help but get up and dance when that one song comes on? (We all have one.) Why does a pregnant mother wear headphones on her belly to soothe her unborn child? And why does the movie *Jaws* take us to heart-pounding anxiety, simply because of a two-note musical theme brilliantly added by composer John Williams? Because music has the ability to connect our senses with our emotions and awaken a response—which got me thinking. Is it possible that the same could be true for our fur babies? With a particularly anxious pup in my own house, this is something I have definitely been interested in exploring further.

For starters, along with facial expressions and body language, dogs primarily communicate through sound. This goes all the way back to wolf packs howling at each other in the wild. These days, when we adopt a dog, we become their pack. We can see this in the way we interact with our dogs at home. Obviously, they bark or howl at us to communicate some need or feeling. But think about how they interpret your tone of voice—even something as simple as the way you say their name when they've done something good, like learning a new trick, as opposed to the way you say it when Fido just peed on your brand new area rug. You better believe they can hear the difference! So doesn't it make sense that they can hear and interpret tones and emotions in different types of music? Did you know that scientists have even developed music for the express purpose of dog therapy? (You can access this on iTunes or Spotify by doing a quick search. There actually is music for dogs!)



Taking this theory even further, Psychologist Deborah Wells at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, researched how dogs reacted to different types of music within a shelter environment. She observed the dogs' behavior while playing different styles of music over a period of time. Her tests included classical, pop, and heavy metal music, and she found that the genre of music did make a difference. In order to confirm this, the dogs were also exposed to recordings of human conversation, as well as a period of quiet when nothing was played at all, in order to compare their reactions. When popular music or human conversation was played, the dogs' behavior was no different than when there was no sound at all. However, Wells observed that while heavy metal was played, the dogs were more likely to become agitated and the amount of barking increased. On the other hand, when classical music was played, the level of barking was significantly reduced and the dogs were more likely to lie down in a relaxed position. Wells concluded that classical music can reduce the stress levels of our furry friends, the same way it can with us.

While I know that classical music isn't what everyone prefers to listen to, it may be worth a try (at least from a scientific standpoint), especially for those of us with pets that tend to be more nervous or easily stressed. I know that I'll be performing a few experiments of my own. Why not give it a try and let us know how music affects your pets!



## THE SHOW MUST GO ON

Way back in 1986 a wonderful woman started her career at our sister clinic Beechwold Veterinary Hospital in Clintontown. After Riverside Drive Animal Care Center opened, she decided to relocate and soon settled in to become one of our most endeared and appreciated team members of all time. Jane Bock served as our office manager until she decided, much to our disappointment, to retire this past March. Jane was not just a wonderful office manager but was also so much

more. She was our comedy relief, our trusted advisor, our benefits educator and most of all, our friend. We miss having her in the office dearly but realize the show must go on without her. It's a good thing she stays in touch and stops by to visit in between caring for her twin grandsons, gardening in her beautiful award-winning lawn, and traveling with her loving husband Roger. Retirement does not mean boredom for this lady! We miss you Jane but love that you're loving the retired life!

*"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole" -Roger Caras*



## CLIENT QUESTIONS

Q: Why should I give Heartgard to my dog all year long when mosquitos (which infect dogs with heartworms) are only around during the warmer months?

A: Heartgard is not just a preventative against heartworms but also helps prevent both hook and roundworms as well. It is the ingredient Ivermectin that kills young heartworms and the ingredient Pyrantel that helps prevent hook and roundworms. Unfortunately, heartworm disease has become much more prevalent in the past few years as rescue dogs from the south, where it is warm year-round, have been dispersed through the rest of the country due to natural disasters. It is highly recommended you keep Rover protected all year long!

Q: If my cat never goes outside, why do I need to have him vaccinated?

A: It is actually more important to have your cat seen every year for a physical exam. It's good to make sure there are no weight changes, make sure there are no abdominal issues, and that the teeth and gums are in a good healthy condition. Cats are prone to many different health conditions that are detected only by a vet. Of course cats are also at risk of disease should they accidentally get loose or have to be boarded due to unforeseen events but vaccinations are something you and your doctor can decide on during the annual exam.



## **‘TILL NEXT TIME...**

Hopefully you enjoyed this “paws” in your day and were able to pick up a few helpful tips along the way! I’d like to thank the wonderful team members that contributed to our very first newsletter, everything is greater when all are involved! Look for the next edition expected in mid-July and please take time to be with your pets today, you won’t regret it and they’ll love you even more for it!

Thanks,  
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