

Rainsbrook Veterinary Group Ltd and Hydrotherapy Centre
Small and Large Animal Veterinary Surgeons

Welcome to another Rainsbrook Newsletter. If you have any suggestions on articles you would like, or if you and your pet have a story, please contact Stacey Hammond via email on sch@rainsbrook.com or in writing to the Leamington Spa surgery. Thanks!

Some new faces! Over the past couple of months there has been some changes to the Rainsbrook staff. Sadly we said goodbye to our Head Nurse Liz Rothen (right) who now works at a veterinary practice closer to her home in Mancetter. She wanted to spend more time with her husband and less time on the road, so a reduction from sometimes over an hours commute to 10 minutes has provided that. It was a difficult decision for her to make and it was very difficult to see her go as she has been working here for over 7 years; since she was 16! She has left her mark for she was the training assessor for our nurses: Becky Boag, Charlotte Glasbey and Tristan Smith. We wish her all the best.



We welcome 2 new student nurses to our medical team: Gemma Archer (top left) and Charlotte Wildman (bottom left). Gemma joins us after completing a two year National Diploma in Animal Management, a four year BSc Combined Hons in Animal Behaviour and Welfare and will now study Veterinary Nursing at Warwickshire College. Her course starts in January 2009 and she is currently absorbing as much practical experience as possible under the watchful eye of Becky Boag RVN. A fan of all things small and furry, Gemma has 2 rats and 2 rabbits at home.



Charlotte is currently enrolled on the 3 year Veterinary Nursing and Practice Management Degree course at Warwickshire College. This involves working at the practice on placement for 3 days a week—2 days at our Hillmorton surgery and 1 day at our Leamington site. Out of work she is kept busy teaching Korean Karate, of which she is a black belt! Charlotte is interested in all things equine, has a German Shepherd called Ozzy and a snake. We warmly welcome both of them and hope they settle into the Rainsbrook life with ease!



Wedding Belles! Veterinary Surgeon Helena Kadow (right) has jetted off to South Africa for her wedding to long term boyfriend Matt. Vows were exchanged on an African reserve surrounded by spectacular nature. Still on her honeymoon, we hear that the wedding went without a hitch and the couple are delightously happy. Congratulations!

Some of you may know that we provide veterinary care for the Dogs Trust rescue kennels in Honiley, Kenilworth. Our vets go to the site twice daily to perform operations in the morning, and to give health checks to the inhabitants in the afternoons. Aiding our vets is Dogs Trust Veterinary Nurse Louisa Cooper (pictured left with Sian Davies). She ensures that all the dogs at Honiley have their medication, keeps their records up to date, and ensures the theatres are prepared and stocked. Louisa is currently on her honeymoon after marrying her long-term boyfriend Andrew at The Chapel of The Flowers in Las Vegas. We've seen the photos online and the ceremony was beautiful, the bride stunning and the weather unbelievably sunny! **We wish both couples all the best for the future!**



Changes to Written Prescriptions

In 2005 the Competition Commission prohibited veterinary practices from charging for a written prescription for 3 years. From 1st November 2008 veterinary practices will be permitted to charge for this service. In consultation with the RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) and SPVS (Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons) we have decided initially on a charge of £ 4.99 for each written prescription (this fee will be reviewed in line with all our service charges on a regular basis). The fee we have set is lower than the figures recommended by the SPVS (information sheet available upon request). The charge is the same as our dispensing fee for repeat prescriptions and will be payable upon collection of your pet's script. Please be aware that all pet's under our care need to be examined at least every six months, depending on the veterinary surgeons advice. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Mid-Warwickshire Branch
Contact: 01926 334849
Email: midwarwickcats@hotmail.com
Website: www.midwarwick.cats.org.uk

Rugby Branch
Contact: 01788 570010
Website: <http://rugby.cats.org.uk>

Home Needed!

Fizz and Snoop are striking sisters looking for a home. Both gorgeous, they are aged about 5 years old and looking for a home together. Fizz is the white one, and Snoop is the black one winking at the camera! They are both friendly girls and are looking forward to being rehomed and moving from their outdoor pen. They have both had some dental work and are now ready to go. They have been waiting for a homes for MONTHS. Please help them!



Interested? Call the CP on 01926 334849.



CAPTION COMPETITION!

Up for grabs is up to £50 worth of *dog or cat goodies* (depending on winner's preference) for who can come up with the best caption for this photo of my cat Loopy! His unflattering pose is asking for trouble—so bring it on people!

Write your caption below the photo, along with your name and contact details, and hand in or post to your local branch. Last date for entries will be Saturday December 6th 2008. The winner will be contacted shortly thereafter and the caption published in the next newsletter. Good luck!

Your caption:



LAST WEEKS WINNER...
Mr M. Grey from Offchurch, Leamington Spa
Congratulations!

“What you looking at? At least its not the toilet seat!”

Ewww! Anyway, thank you to all the entries we had, there were some very good ones! Don't be disheartened, please try again with this newsletter's competition.

- PRACTICE SERVICES
- Appointment system.
- Convenient appointment times.
- Ample parking.
- 24 hour emergency service provided by our own team of vets and nurses.
- Tier 2 RCVS Accredited Practice
- Nurses living on sites.
- Annual health checks.
- Orthopaedic and Small Animal Medicine referral services with certificate holders.
- Modern surgical facilities.
- In house laboratory (Rugby).
- Nurse clinics providing expert advice on tooth care, diet, preventative health care.
- FREE puppy parties (Rugby).
- Hydrotherapy pool and water walker (Leamington)

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday to Friday
8.30am to 7.00pm
Saturday
9.00am to 12.00 noon

SURGERIES
83, High Street, Hillmorton,
Rugby, Warwickshire.
CV21 4HD
Tel: 01788 542221
Fax: 01788 562242

1, Craven Road,
Rugby, Warwickshire.
CV21 3JX
Tel: 01788 562844
Fax: 01788 553642

(and Hydrotherapy)
12, Upper Grove Street,
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.
CV32 5AN
Tel: 01926 422592
Fax: 01926 334084

www.rainsbrookvets.co.uk

24 hour emergency service - call your local surgery direct and follow the instructions.



DAVID WALKER
Veterinary surgeon,
Orthopaedic certificate
holder and Director



SIMON DANIEL
Veterinary Surgeon
and Director



SIAN DAVIES
Veterinary Surgeon,
Small Animal
Medicine certificate
holder and Director



FIONA CLEGG
Veterinary Surgeon



MARY-ANNE FRANK
Veterinary Surgeon



HELENA KADOW
Veterinary Surgeon



CHRISTEL OINK
Veterinary
Surgeon



BECCHI YOUNG RVN
Practice Manager

This is a dreaded time of year for most pet owners as for the next few months we can expect fireworks to be let off at any time. Unfortunately it is no longer the set evenings that fireworks can be expected, but can be from now until well into the New Year. All you can do is be prepared as much as possible and it is best to start NOW.

We would recommend **DAP** (Dog Appeasing Pheromone) pheromone diffuser as a very good start towards dealing with dogs with fireworks fears. DAP is a pheromone which was discovered to be produced by females dogs after giving birth to puppies. This pheromone enhances attachment between the puppy and it's mother and provides reassurance and comfort. The presence of the pheromone gives the puppy confidence to explore his surroundings, but to return to its mother if worried. Research has shown that these properties persist into adult hood where they affect both the dog's emotional state and social interactions. These effects are particularly useful for firework fear where dogs may typically show signs of stress such as: barking, house soiling and destructive behaviour and in particular to firework fear: panting, trembling, cowering and hiding. Research has shown that up to 80% of dogs expressing these signs show an improvement with DAP within the first week of plugging in.

Feeding your dog a **carbohydrate rich meal** on days when you know a firework event is happening can be quite helpful (if your dog has diarrhoea when anxious, it would be best NOT to do this). Pasta, mashed potato or overcooked rice are ideal when given as a late afternoon meal, as it will make your dog feel calm and sleepy as the night draws in. The carbohydrates have the effect of releasing more 'happy' serotonin neurotransmitter in the brain, naturally reducing anxiety (imagine yourself after a large pasta meal when all you want to do is sit on the sofa and doze off).

During the time when fireworks are expected, take your dog out for to **toilet** when it is still light to avoid firework going off and scaring your dog when you are away from home and to avoid creating a fear of going for walks.

Make a **blackened out room** in your home where you can take your dog at sundown and settle him down in there with toys and preferably things for you to do aswell, to make sure he is not abandoned in there—especially important if he seeks you out when worried. Put some **music** on, preferably something with constant drumbeats. It doesn't have to be loud as long as there is a constant distracting beat to the noise.

When fireworks go off, it is very important that you yourself try to **ignore the noises** as your dog will generally look to you for your response. If you are not worried, your dog will respond to your neutral, unworried body language. Occupy your dog's mind with an active game, try and take his mind off the noises that are going off outside. Above all else, **do not punish** your dog when they are doing something they shouldn't do in response to the noise, any punishment will only make their fear worse and you are only confirming to them that there is actually something to be afraid of. On the other scale of things, try **not to fuss or reassure your dog** when he is showing any fearful signs, this again will reward him for having these feelings and will encourage the fearful behaviour. If your dog is hiding behind the sofa and you go back there to reassure him, he is going to interpret that behaviour in that you are frightened too and are hiding with him! Hiding is a very important coping strategy for fearful dogs, so before time, please make sure your dog has a **hidey hole or den** (which can be in the blacked out room or elsewhere) which is safe, comfy and accessible at all times so that he or she can go in there whenever they feel uncertain.

If when doing all the above your dog is still very afraid and is unable to cope, there is medication available through the vet which will help reduce your dog's anxiety. The medication is called **Xanax** (Alprazolam). Xanax is the drug of choice for a number of reasons, it prevents the formation of new memories thus helping stop the behaviour from getting worse, reduces anxiety and at the higher dosages will produce sedation. Xanax tablets are also most effective when used with DAP pheromone therapy. A small number of dogs, when given Xanax, will show side effects. These are temporary and not dangerous, but to be confident about using Xanax, we must trial a small test dose first. This test dose needs to be given during daylight hours when you are around to supervise. Instructions will be given at your visit to see the vet, so don't worry about remembering everything now. So, there are techniques available that can help you all get through the next few months, so please ask at your local surgery for further details, and to book in with a vet.

Ralf's Research

by Lesley Jones, Leamington Spa



The Animal Health Trust (AHT) in Newmarket is undertaking research in **"the incidence of Epilepsy in Norwich Terrier and its causes; this also includes the condition known as 'Norwich Terrier Cramp'"**. The Norwich Terrier Club commissioned this research, which is funded by the European Commission and the American Kennel Club. Its aim is to discover whether the cause is genetic or neurological and, if possible, to develop a diagnostic test which will help breeders avoid producing affected dogs. Norwich Terrier breeders and owners have completed a detailed questionnaire about their experience of dogs suffering from this condition. The symptoms vary, but include cramped back legs, staring eyes, distended abdomen and loss of balance. A mild episode can be over in five minutes, a severe one will last longer and have a longer recovery time.

Blood and DNA samples have been collected from both healthy and affected animals. The problem for breeders is that the condition does not appear until the animal is fully mature, as much as 4/5 years of age, and by then a stud dog or brood bitch may well have had litters!

As part of this project I took my (now 16 years and 6 months) Norwich Terrier, Ralf (pictured above), to be examined by the Head of Neurology at the AHT. He developed the condition when he was 5 and it lasted some 6 years, fortunately in a very mild form, the episodes then reducing in frequency and eventually disappearing altogether by the time he was 11. His predecessor was not so lucky: he was severely and distressingly affected and after some months of medical management, he developed secondary diabetes and died suddenly at the age of 9.

The DNA sample I had collected were already being tested in the AHT laboratories. After a detailed discussion of the answers I had provided in the questionnaire (during which I was interested and learnt that 'Norwich Terrier Cramps' are in no way related to 'Scottie Cramps'), Ralf was given a simple, non-invasive examination in which his visual and aural responses were checked, as were his heart and his reflexes. It was heartening to find so much professional scientific effort dedicated to identifying and, where possible, alleviating the problems now found in many pedigree dogs.

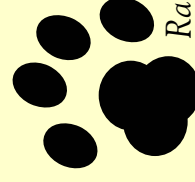
Advances in canine genetics has made it quicker and simpler to find genetic mutations that cause disease. As a consequence, there are already 23 diagnostic tests on offer for genetic disorders, including the first tests for hereditary cataracts.

Thanks to research such as this, there is hope that much of the pain and distress suffered by dogs with hereditary disease may in the future be avoided.

Lesley Jones 2008

Lesley's notes:

1. My thanks to David Walker and the Rainsbrook Staff for providing information for the AHT.
2. The Animal Health Trust contact details: Animal Health Trust, Lanwades Park, Kentford, Neumarket, Suffolk, CB8 7UU.
www.aht.org.uk



Ralf xx



ALISON COXON RVN
Hydrotherapist
& Veterinary
Nurse



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BECKY SIDWELL
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Veterinary Nurse



CHARLOTTE GLASBEY RVN
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TRISTEN SMITH
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GEMMA ARCHER
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CHARLOTTE WILDMAN
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MARIE GUNTON
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