

SHAMROCK DIGEST

January/February 2010

2009 IN REVIEW

As we look forward to 2010, it is also important to reflect on the past year.

We would like to acknowledge the passing and loss of many of our patients. We also euthanized Joan's dog Sherlock, Saskia's dog Gus and Pam's dog Santana. Lynn's cat Tony and Kristina's cats Matilda and Jasper also died in 2009. They are all missed.

Our reception team changed in 2009. When Brenda left on a once in a lifetime opportunity in the late spring, Christy joined the front desk.

We supported the local community with donations of both time and funds. Mountaineer Avian Rescue, Kitty Cat PALS, Santa's Workshop and the Dawn to Dawn Society are a few of the groups we have assisted.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The New Year is a time of change, and we have a few changes to make you aware of.

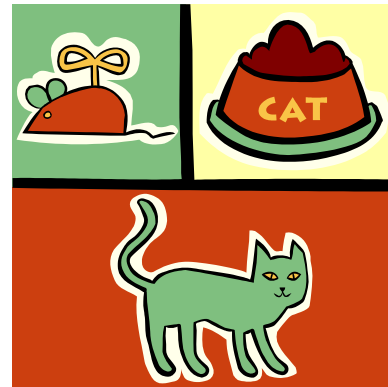
Starting in January, Dr. Saskia is taking a 6 month sabbatical. Although she has no definite plans, there is sure to be some traveling and visiting with relatives.

The AHT's at Shamrock will be providing care for in clinic patients after hours as of January 1st. The technologist will come and check on your companion, administer medications as required and ensure that your pet is comfortable.

Also starting in January, Pam Arlitt will be moving into the office manager position as Barb moves into retirement. She will continue as a receptionist on Saturdays. Brenda has rejoined our reception team after returning from her Australian adventure.

NEW FELINE PRODUCT

Our arthritic feline companions have a new product that may assist them in being comfortable. We are pleased to announce that MediCal Royal Canin Veterinary Diets has begun distribution of their new Feline Mobility Support Diet. This dry food contains reduced levels of sodium and phosphorus, additional Omega 3 & 6 fatty acids, green-lipped mussel powder (GLMP) and additional glucosamine and chondroitin.



Optimal omega 3 & 6 fatty acid levels decrease inflammation and promote healthy skin and coat.

GLMP is clinically proven to decrease joint pain and swelling in cats with osteoarthritis. It contains omega 3 fatty acids (DHA and EPA), antioxidants, and minerals that are important to cartilage health such as zinc, copper and manganese.

Glucosamine and chondroitin are beneficial to the health of joint cartilage.

This new product is only available in a dry formulation as the GLMP cannot maintain its' efficacy if heated. It has been formulated to help prevent struvite and calcium oxalate urinary crystal and stone formation.

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FAT CAT?

We have been recommending a great new food dispensing ball for our 'chunky monkey' cat pals. The SlimCat cat food dispenser ball makes a hunting game out of dinner time.

To use the SlimCat, the caregiver simply puts the proper amount of food into the ball, adjusts the size of the hole the food can fall through, and then steps back to let the fun begin. This is an exceptionally fun toy for indoor cats that need 'hunting' stimulation, and of course provides exercise for many cats that have become couch potatoes.

The advantage this dispenser has over others is that it is adjustable – you can choose how easy or difficult it is for your cat to work the food out of the ball. The SlimCat cat food dispenser is available at both London Drugs and Bosley's (we are sure there must be other places also).

CONTINUING EDUCATION

January is providing the opportunity for our staff to attend two different lectures.

A veterinary neurologist, Dr. Mike Higgins, will be presenting information about vestibular disease, seizures and paresis in mid January.

In late January, Dr. Michael Dryden, a veterinary parasitologist, will be discussing flea control – a very timely topic on the west coast.

In February, Dr. Pam, Chris and Cris will be attending four days of lectures in Las Vegas. The annual Western Veterinary Conference provides up to eleven small animal lectures at a time to choose from! Even though each will be attending separate lectures, they will hardly begin to take in all that information.

SHAMROCK SLIM AND FIT

Shamrock Veterinary Clinic is helping our patients start 2010 off on the right paw by introducing our "Slim and Fit" program.

We recognize that excess weight is not just a human health concern – some studies estimate that as many as 80% of companion animals are overweight or obese. Just as with humans, many diseases are caused or exaggerated by excess body fat.

As the caregiver, you play the most important role in keeping your pet healthy. We have come up with some steps to enable you to help your pet shed some of those extra inches.

Our first job is to make you aware of your pet's Body Condition Score (BCS) out of ten. This is done by both visualizing and touching your pet. You will notice charts in the exam rooms of our clinic that demonstrate how to do this. The next time that you are in an exam room with your pet, guess his or her BCS, and then discuss it with your pet's doctor.

If it is decided that your companion does need to shed some of those excess kilograms, we will discuss how to go about this – the process will be different for each animal based on the BCS and food preferences. Some animals may be able to continue with their current food, while others may require any one of a selection of foods that will aim to decrease weight in a slow, steady manner.

And there is the 'treat factor'. Some animals may be getting a significant percentage of their calories in either pet treats or human foods. The problem is that these treats do not offer balanced nutrition, often only empty calories.

Together, we can achieve success!