



# WRVC

## FALL 2017 NEWSLETTER

### *Welcome Dr. Kyle Ruedinger*

Dr. Kyle Ruedinger graduated from the University of Wisconsin Veterinary School in May and joined the staff at WRVC in June. Dr. Kyle grew up in Oshkosh, WI and is therefore a “local”. He spent most of the summer in training, but is now up and running. He is seeing appointments and performing routine surgeries.

Dr. Kyle has an outgoing, friendly personality and has already been well received by the staff and clients! We at WRVC are glad to have him on board!



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## *Immediate Care Services*

Dr. Ziegler

Trying to get a same day appointment for a sick or injured pet can be a frustrating experience for a client. When a pet does not feel well, an owner does not want to be told that there are no appointments available that day, the next day, or whatever. This can also be stressful for a veterinary clinic if they are double booking appointments to accommodate a sick pet.

The WRVC will now have much more flexibility to accommodate immediate care cases. We will have a doctor assigned to see these cases on a scheduled basis during our normal working hours. Appointments will be scheduled to accommodate any needed diagnostic tests such as blood work, x-rays, etc. that may be needed. Day admission services will continue to be available for the busy owner who would prefer to leave the pet in our care until you are able to return later in the day.

Please keep in mind that we prefer to not have walk-in appointments unless completely necessary. If you have questions about this service, please call the clinic at (920) 982-2733.



## New Faces

Mandi-Receptionist

T.J.-Front Desk Manager

Savannah-Veterinary Assistant

If you would like to learn more about our staff visit our website for individual bios!

# **JOIN US FOR OUR DOGTOBER DOGWALK IN THE PARK!**

The Dogwalk will be taking  
place October 7<sup>th</sup> at

10:00A.M. in Hatten Park

Food, raffles and fun for the  
whole family!

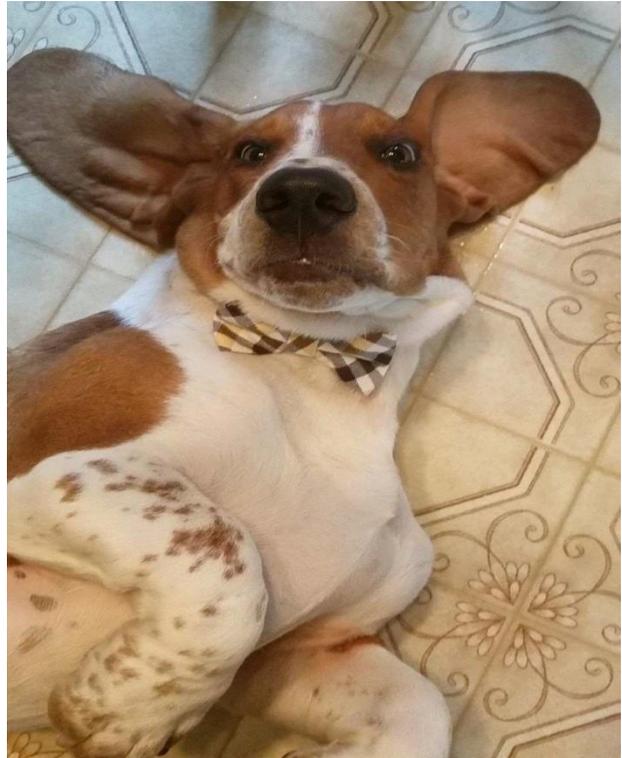


## *Stanlee the Outlier*

Shaunna Ferge, Vet Assistant

I've always had dogs in my life for as far back as I can remember, and up until a year ago, they have always been labs. Labs are one of the most popular breeds out there and you can't go wrong with them. As a kid I had labs, and even as an adult I have always had the trustworthy, loyal, lovable companion we all know as the Labrador Retriever. But last year, Stanlee came to change all that for me.

Last Christmas, my husband and I decided we wanted to add another addition to the family and of course his first statement made was "what color lab are we going to get?" We already have two wonderful 3-year-old labs which made us hesitate slightly to the question asked. I said, "I know I may be going out on a limb here but how about we consider a different breed?" I was expecting him to completely disregard my question but surprisingly, he was very open to the idea of a new breed of dog in the family. So, after a few days of contemplation we came to the mutual agreement (and don't ask me how we got there) of getting a Basset Hound puppy. We had no idea what kind of impact he was about to have on our lives.



A few weeks later as we were driving down to Illinois to get him all kinds of things were racing through my mind. What if he's a horrible companion? What if he drools all over my house? What if he's a lazy pile that never wants to do anything? What if he barks all the time? These were things that I would have to potentially live with and accept for the next 10+ years! I'm not going to lie, I was panicking a little. Maybe we should've just stuck with what we know and gotten another lab puppy. Whose idea was it to get a Basset Hound anyways!

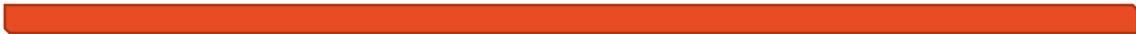
Here we are a year later, and I can easily say getting Stanlee was one of the best decisions we've ever made. He's one of the best dogs I've ever had. He loves deeper than any lab I've owned and he absolutely loves to be social with people and other animals. The guy doesn't have a mean bone in his body, he'd lick you to death if he could, and he has more personality than half of the humans I encounter. He's always the life of the party and not to mention that cute droopy face! Even though he'll never be able to do half the things my labs can do, I love him just the same. When we're down at the cabin going on walks through the woods can he make it over the fallen log...Not so much. When we take the labs down to the river for a swim can he keep up...He'd drown without his life jacket. And can he



come along with me for my 4-mile morning run...Ha-ha yea right! But he will keep me laughing every step of the way as he tries. He just adds this spice to life that I've never experienced with a dog before.

The point of my story is to encourage pet owners not to be afraid to branch out and try different breeds. One of my favorite experiences working at a Veterinary clinic is walking into the exam room and seeing an owner with a Great Dane whose best friend and housemate is a Jack Russell Terrier. There are over 150 different dog breeds in the world and how will we ever know what there is to experience in the

canine realm if you never take a leap of faith. I was very nervous at first, but I am so glad that I took that chance. Stanlee will forever have an impact on my life and in my heart, even years after he's gone.



## *The Only Constant is Change*

Dr. Mark Beatke

I recently moved. It was only a few blocks but I still had to pack everything. Like all veterinarians I read journals to try to keep up to date with the profession. As I read I tear out articles to save. We all think we will organize and file these so they are readily accessible if we ever need them. So, as I was cleaning out the office drawers, of course I found a stack of articles waiting to be filed. In going through them I found some older ones that were no longer relevant and some that seem to have the same information from year to year. It is interesting to see some of the articles proclaiming some new method or treatment that a couple years later are no longer in use. In my almost 30 years (29) of practice I have seen products treated as the best thing since sliced bread only to be taken off the market a year later because of some problem. Some of these products I knew wouldn't make it and I never used. Others stand the test of time and continue to be used.

The only constant in veterinary medicine is change. We are always learning more. As we learn more, we try to incorporate those things into practice to keep pets healthier. There are many times when I suggest some form of preventative care or testing that I hear the question, "Why do I need to do this, I never did it in the past?" The answer is because we know more now. It is not that it wasn't necessary in the past; we just didn't know how necessary it was. Take dentistry for example. When I was in school it was mentioned briefly and we were told how to clean and pull teeth. I got no practical experience. The general feeling was if the pet was eating it was OK. If you a tooth got bad enough you pulled it. Now we know how wrong that was. There are specialists in dentistry now. We know a pet will continue to eat even when it is in pain from bad teeth. The alternative is starving. We also know preventative dentistry (cleaning teeth regularly) has many benefits beyond just better smelling breath. It cuts down the bacterial load on the system, saves teeth needed for proper chewing, prevents the pain associated with periodontal disease and can lengthen the life of the pet. It's not that pets didn't need their teeth cleaned in the past, it's that we didn't know how beneficial it was. Now that we understand this, we need to incorporate dentistry into the recommendations for keeping pets as healthy as we can.

Another test we now have is the SDMA. This is a test that looks at the kidneys. It can tell us if the kidneys are compromised long before other tests do. This gives us time to make changes and help the kidneys do their job for a lot longer.

So, when we recommend something "new", whether it is teeth cleaning, senior blood work or additional vaccines such as Lyme, it is because we are trying to do our best to keep your pet as healthy as possible with the latest information we have.

## *The Future of Vaccines*

Dr. Ziegler

Vaccines are, at least, an ongoing sense of controversy. Clinics discuss it endlessly. The profession discusses it endlessly. Clients evaluate the need for vaccines all the time. We are very quickly entering a time when many clients are declining vaccinations for a variety of reasons. These reasons are usually due to their research on the internet.

I am going to be honest—clinics make money from vaccines. So do low cost vaccine clinics (who operate under the concept that the pet owners are saving money, which under most circumstances, they are not). Vaccines are important, but are they essential?

Vaccines act by stimulating the body to produce an immune response that will hopefully protect the body from a clinical infection if exposed to a naturally occurring virulent bacteria or virus. Vaccines work in different ways and while some are very effective, other may not be so. When considering vaccinations, many things need to be considered, from legal issues (i.e. Rabies vaccines), to life styles, risks of infections, potential outcome of an infection (transient illness vs death), and risk-benefit factors, etc. In all reality, there is no “one-size fits all” approach.

Historically, vaccines have helped to control or eliminate many diseases. This is true in humans and in animals. Effective vaccine protocols are one of the biggest weapons we have in fighting infectious diseases. Without them, diseases would run rampant, and morbidity and mortality rates would escalate out of control.

There are many reasons that vaccines get criticized—anywhere from uniformed opinions to adverse reactions to vaccines (rare), an owner simply not assigning importance to them (a common attitude these days), and countless other reasons. For the people who choose not to vaccinate, they are often fortunate to get away with it, but for others, the decision could be catastrophic. I have always maintained that if one of my pets died from something I know I could have prevented, I would be devastated.

So where will vaccines go in the future? They will continue to be essential. While vaccine technology is already great, it will continue to improve. Vaccine protocols will likely change as well, likely requiring less frequent vaccinations for certain diseases. All of this will be good. Where vaccines will be obtained from is another question. The veterinarian is starting to play a lesser role in all of this, which, in my opinion is not good, but that is the trend. It does not help that drug companies, in their endless search for revenue, do little to support the veterinary profession.

Time will tell where it all ends up. I will admit that I enjoy things a bit more challenging than giving vaccines to pets. However, at the same time, the opportunity to educate clients is so incredibly valuable. No one else but a veterinarian can offer this. I always hope that most clients realize this fact.

Our profession is changing and will continue to do. For better or for worse remains to be seen. Vaccines will be part of this evolution.



## *Feline Hypertrophic Myocardiopathy*

Ashlee Schwartz, CVT

Baby Kitty was the youngest of my three cats at 10 years old. She was full of spunk and the only one that still liked to run around the house and play with toys and catnip. (The other cats are 16 and 17 years old). I got her as a kitten from an adoption day in St. Paul MN when I lived there for college. She was so tiny. Just a ball of fluffy orange fur.

She grew up perfectly healthy. That cat was never sick a day in her life. As she got older I always brought her in for exams and ran bloodwork on her to catch anything early that might come up... but she was always perfectly normal. She ate great (hence the 13 lbs she weighed) and was never lethargic.

I've heard of HCM in my days here working in a veterinary clinic, but have never personally gotten to witness a case. Sadly, when I did, it was my own cat.

It was June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017. My dog Lola had a hip surgery that day as well. I got home that night after work and was focusing on nursing my dog whom was still very groggy and painful from surgery. Baby kitty was her normal self, running around and meowing (she was the only vocal cat I had). She kept coming up to Lola to smell her and check on her. I took a picture to send to my mother with the cats all around Lola at about 8:45pm.

Then as it was getting late I jumped in the shower. Afterwards, I got out and returned to the living room and sat on the couch. Baby kitty had her own chair in the living room she always slept in. I looked over at her and noticed she was sleeping in an odd position. I said those words out loud and my boyfriend went to touch her, she didn't move. Panic set in. Being trained for these situations I jumped into action to do CPR, which I continued to do all the way to the clinic where Dr. Baetke was kind enough to come in and meet me. But on my initial assessment, even before we left the house, I knew she was already gone. It was only 9:30pm. She was gone that quick.

I didn't know until doing more research afterwards that it is the most common cardiac disease in cats. It can affect cats of any age, even the very young at a few months old. It causes thickening of the walls of the ventricle which leads to a smaller ventricular chamber, which then causes abnormal relaxation of the heart muscle. These changes create increased oxygen usage which can cause oxygen starvation of the heart muscle. The result of the oxygen starvation causes the heart cells to die off. The only way a diagnosis can be made is by ultrasound. Some develop heart failure with symptoms of an increased heart rate, open mouth breathing and lethargy. Some develop blood clots in the heart which can travel to different areas of the body, most commonly causing paralysis or severe pain to the hind limbs. And sometimes, more rarely, it causes sudden death with no warnings or symptoms at all. This is what our doctors believe occurred with Baby kitty.

So here we are, almost 3 months later. We are slowly healing from our loss. The house is much too quiet without her constant meowing and her chair remains empty. This was the first pet I've lost in my adult life and it truly was one of the hardest things I've gone through so far. Being trained to save animals and not being able to save my own, even though I did everything by the book with her healthcare, was earth-shattering. After being reassured by our doctors over and over again that there was nothing I could have done differently, my heart is now just starting to heal. Even though I know a part of it will always be missing...



## *Life's Transitions*

Dr. Ziegler

All of life is a transition. Every day is a transition. The problem is that we do not recognize it until after the fact. What I am mainly talking about is aging—getting older.

Recently, I have found myself in a bit of a mental crisis. Approaching 60 years old, there are many changes. Physically, I am a mere shadow of my former self. Mentally, I feel like I am at the top of my game. From a motivational standpoint, things are waning. I am also very much wrestling with the fact that I am entering the final years of my career. What in the heck happened? The answer is beyond me, but deal with it I must.

I think the same of my old Doolie, who's adventures have been chronicled in the past newsletters. At age 14 years, she is somewhat feeble and often confused. She is not the dog who was my ultimate challenge in what seems the recent past. I look at her and wonder how it all happened so quickly.

I think of this often. Clients get older and some die and some move on. Pets are born and then are suddenly older. It all seems to happen so fast. Life just keeps changing, with no hope of stability because life is life—a continuum. It begins and it ends. It is beyond any of us to change that fact.

A big part of my job is to help guide clients through life's transitions. For the most part, this involves the pet. At times, it involves the client as well. Always, it involves me.

Life's changes are not always appreciated, but they must be acceptable. I always say that there is only one alternative to getting older, and it is not a good one. Because of this, every day is a gift. Every step forward is a blessing. Every opportunity is a chance to grow.

Life keeps transitioning. It never used to bother me, but now it is starting to scare me. A sense of urgency to tie together all of life's loose ends seems to be settling in. It's a hard thing to wrap my head around when only yesterday I was young and invincible.

At the same time, there is a world of opportunities ahead. I can still learn new skills. I can still have an impact on those around me. I can continue to grow, and, if I want, I can still adopt a puppy or kitten without worrying about where they will end up when they grow old. I can still tire my dogs out with a long run or a long hike. This will not last forever. It cannot. There will be more transitions ahead, and I will be preparing for them. Should I worry and get depressed by them? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Moving forward is important. Being functional is important. Contributing is important. If I can keep doing those things, I guess that I am willing to keep getting older.



## *Peanut Butter and Pumpkin Dog Treats!*

### Ingredients

2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup canned pumpkin  
2 tablespoons peanut butter  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

### Directions



Prep  
15 m

Cook  
40 m

Ready In  
1 h 40 m

- 1 Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
- 2 Whisk together the flour, eggs, pumpkin, peanut butter, salt, and cinnamon in a bowl. Add water as needed to help make the dough workable, but the dough should be dry and stiff. Roll the dough into a 1/2-inch-thick roll. Cut into 1/2-inch pieces.
- 3 Bake in preheated oven until hard, about 40 minutes.



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