

Wolf River Vet Clinic Newsletter



Tis the Season.....page 2
How Much is the Doggie in the Window?.....page 3
When is Tick Season?.....page 5
The Diabetes Crisis.....page 6
Eosinophilic Granuloma Complex.....page 7
WRVC Staff Christmas Poll.....page 8
The Last Newsletter.....page 9

Tis the Season

Dr. James Ziegler



It seems that a very hot, dry summer quickly gave way to a cold, wet Fall. The leaves changed and dropped quickly. The threat of an early winter was real. How it will pan out remains to be seen. And of course, the usual sacrilegious commercialization of the Holidays took over almost everyone's ability to think with common sense. As per every year, I have stood back and watched it all with slack-jawed amazement, trying to focus on my own evolution through the season, and through life.

I have often professed my love for the cold, cloudy, wet weather. I find the challenges exciting and stimulating. To rise above adversity, to me, is to mature and grow. To complain about it only reflects the hollowness and immaturity of present times. I simply want to deal with it all the best that I can. Very few share my perspectives and I am okay with this. As Steve Prefontaine once said, "Just because you are one and they are many, does not make them right."

Winter is a phenomenally beautiful time of the year. I encourage everyone to celebrate "adversity". Take your dog for a walk in the snow—everyday. Revel in cold toes and fingers when you least feel like going outdoors. The wind, rain, and snow might just stimulate something in you. Being alone is a wonderful thing if you let it be. Sharing it with others can be equally gratifying.

The point is that many (most) people see winter as an adversity that cannot be overcome or enjoyed. I, of course, disagree. We all need to enjoy this time of the year for what it can do for us, whether religious, personal, or otherwise. There is so much potential—potential to benefit us all, should we choose to accept it.

I often laugh when I hear a pet owner state, "My dog does not like the snow." That may be true, but I often think that it is the pet owner who does not like the cold and snow. Most dogs, like my four, would be in their glory out romping on a winter day, given the chance.

In all fairness to those who complain about winter, I am equally guilty when it comes to the summer heat and humidity. Many get tired of my grousing about summer weather. I guess that we all have our thing.

In the end, I hope that everyone can find happiness and contentment as we move through a new season, the holidays, and the winter ahead. It all is going to be part of our journey, so we might as well enjoy it.



How Much is that Doggie in the Window?

Chandell, CVT



Over the past few weeks, I have seen an up rise of Facebook posts in search of a new puppy for Christmas. I admit, I am the first to say that a new puppy is always a good idea—but there is a difference between an educated addition to the family and a blind one. I have seen posts, pictures, and memes all stating the same thing; don't let a good-hearted Christmas puppy become the abandoned adult dog. It happens more often than you may think. Most of the time, all the heartache and

disappointment can be avoided by doing thorough research on the breed, proper preparedness and planning, and time for adjustments. This is true for new dog owners and veteran dog owners.

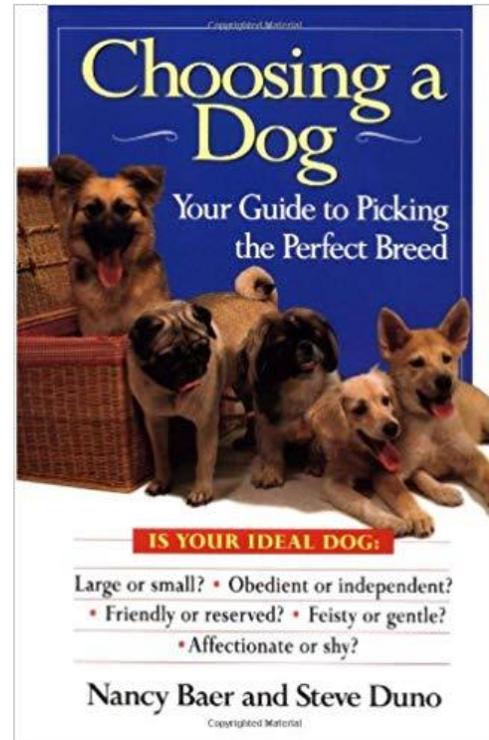
Research. So, you think that Border Collie puppy you saw for sale is the perfect dog for your family. It is just so darn cute—how could you say no? First, research the breed. Border Collies need a lot of physical and mental stimulus daily. They need a job. They need room to run and time to burn some of their abundant energy. With that being known, do you think that puppy will be happy in your 1-bedroom apartment in the city? When both you and your significant other work 10-hour days? Do you think you will be happy when you come home to your couch half eaten and half of the bathroom door destroyed? Probably not. All of that can be avoided by simply researching the breed. Same goes for that adorable mutt that is up for adoption at the local shelter. Sometimes it is impossible to know what breed that stray is, or what mixture of breeds it is made up of. However, most of the time the lovely people at the shelter have some idea of what the pups are mixed with. Research all those breeds and cover all your bases. Things to keep in mind when researching for your future new family member are exercise needs, grooming needs, general size, general personality, and training level. Using the information found on these areas of focus, you can make the best possible choice of dog for you.

Preparedness and Planning. You have made your choice. You will have your new pup at home in no time. So now what? Prepare for life with a new dog. If it is a puppy you may need to buy a new kennel, dog bed, puppy food, a few quality chew toys, and a collar and leash. “Puppy proof” your home. Put up baby gates or other blocks where you do not want your puppy to go. Maybe arrange some of your furniture or decorations so they won't be in reach of the puppy. Make an appointment with your veterinarian for your puppy's first wellness check and vaccines. Start a savings account specifically for your new dog and put away money for vaccines needed, spay/neuter, and for possible (inevitable)

emergencies. Are there common health problems associated with the breed of your new puppy you may want to save for? Will your dog need grooming? Look up your local grooming options. Do you want to take your pup to training classes? Ask your veterinarian for local options for training classes. Remember that owning a dog is a long-term commitment. Do everything you possibly can to prepare yourself for life with a new dog—think ahead. Plan.

Time for Adjustment. Everything worthwhile takes time and effort. With time, effort, and a little patience your bond and routine with your new pup will develop. Taking longer than you thought to potty train? Adjust how often you take him outside to go potty or adjust feeding times to better fit your schedule and availability. Not all dogs are the same. What worked for your previous dog may not work for your new dog. That's okay. Adjust and have patience. Is your new pup motivated by food or by toys? Find out and use that to your advantage. As your puppy grows up a little, they will need a little bit more exercise. Work with your new dog and allow them to tell you when they are tired. Again, this is for both a new puppy or a new adult dog.

Following these guidelines should help you make the best choice for a new dog and the best chance of a happy forever home. So, before you find yourself exclaiming, "Oh my goodness, I'm taking that puppy home!", do your research and avoid heartache, bad experiences, and disappointment. The bond shared between a human and their dog is worth the time and effort put into it.





When Is Tick Season?

Mark Baetke, DVM

When is tick season? This is an easy question to answer. Tick season runs from January 1st to December 31st. You may think that I am kidding but I will explain. Ticks do not hibernate or go dormant. If the temperature gets above freezing during the day they will become active. This means on that nice 40-degree day in January when you and your dog want to get outside the ticks will be there too. Since our most effective products are usually given every 30 days (12 weeks for some) that means to be able to skip a month you need to be guaranteed that the temperature will not get above freezing for at least 30 days. With climate change this is not going to happen. Most people think ticks are most active in the warm months when we worry about fleas too, but the tick that carries Lyme disease is most active from October to March.

Everyone worries about the ticks that carry Lyme disease, but in our area, we also must worry about Anaplasmosis and Ehrlichia. When we look at a product we carry we are most concerned about the ticks it kills and the speed it kills them. All these products will kill fleas. On the spectrum of difficulty to kill fleas are easy, ticks are the hardest. While we have a vaccine for Lyme disease and recommend it, we do not have vaccines for Anaplasmosis and Ehrlichia and that is why the kill speed is so important. All diseases take time to be transferred from the tick to the dog. If you can kill the tick before it can spread the disease you can stop the dog from getting sick.

So, what do we recommend to protect your dog? Have your dog vaccinated for Lyme disease even if you live in the city. I have diagnosed Lyme disease in a dog that never left its yard in the city. Use a product that has a fast tick kill time year-round. I had a client that I saw in November whose dog we pulled 4 ticks off. They had stopped their tick protection because it had gotten cold. Remember if its above freezing the ticks can be out. Unfortunately, the ticks are here to stay and with climate change we are starting to see the spread of some new ones from the South. In the case of ticks an ounce of prevention may save your dog's life.

The Diabetes Crisis

Dr. James Ziegler



We all know what is happening with the incidence of diabetes in the human population—it is skyrocketing and expected to continue to do so. On the animal side of things, I am not aware that the incidence of diabetes is changing, but I do know that the contributing factors are obesity, poor diet, and lack of exercise are prevalent.

I read an article recently that predicted that by 2030, all forms of insulin will be in very short supply, and what is available will be expensive. From a veterinarian's perspective, we have already seen the spikes in prices of insulin over the past 18 months.

It is not hard to figure out what is going to happen—treating diabetic pets is going to get more difficult and more expensive as available insulins are channeled towards human health. Given that treating a diabetic pet is often a financial decision, I foresee more pets being euthanized following a diagnosis of diabetes.

Sometimes, diabetes just happens to a pet. Sometimes it is caused by lifestyle. The latter cases mean that it is a preventable problem (sometimes). While we always preach preventative medicine, in the case of diabetes, I think that we will have to start emphasizing this more and more.

So, what can be done to try and prevent diabetes? Just like in humans it is weight control, good nutrition, and exercise. This sounds simple, but if we do not even provide it for ourselves, how will we provide it for our pets? A dog will not walk itself several miles a day. A cat is content to do nothing unless we enrich its environment to make it want to do something. Feeding is in our control—amounts, types of food, etc. While pet diets have exploded over the years, I see a whole new horizon for preventative diets. These will come with a cost, as everything does.

Another extreme area of importance which is often ignored is routine blood testing. This is done for many reasons, all of which focus on the early detection of diseases. Routine blood work, especially in cats, can detect a pre-diabetic state in which early intervention may ward off the need for future insulin therapy.

Diabetes is a tough disease, in both pets and people. The future looks intimidating for insulin therapy to be a feasible option. We must head off a crisis by starting to focus on a preventative lifestyle now. It might cost a bit more along the way but maintaining a healthy pet will make it a very worthwhile investment.

Eosinophilic Granuloma Complex

Ashlee, CVT

Last winter while I was down at the Oshkosh Humane Society with Dr. Ziegler helping with a spay/neuter day, one kitten that we neutered caught my eye. The following week we went down there again, and I asked if the kitten was still there (expecting it to be adopted already), but he was still there! That same week we went down and got him (plus his sister) for a foster-to-adopt trial. Long story short, I fell in love quickly with that little guy (we didn't keep his sister) and we named him Oatmeal.

Oatmeal had loose stools since he arrived at my house which I associated with different foods, stress etc. But it persisted. After a few weeks his sub mandibular lymph nodes enlarged (very large) for a kitten! I was so worried! We did a biopsy of his lymph nodes which came back as just being reactive lymph nodes. But why???

A few short weeks later he started with his first of many lesions. These lesions started on his face and inside his mouth (inside of his cheeks and gums). They made his lips puff up and smelled horrible. They also had a yellow appearance with occasional secondary infections to top it all off.

Dr. Pete Gasper happened to be at the clinic the day I brought him in for his first lesion. He took some samples and made slides and immediately diagnosed him with eosinophilic granuloma complex due to the large number of eosinophilic white blood cells on the slides (we also later did biopsies of the lesions for confirmations). I have been working in the clinic for over 10 years and I have never seen a case until now!

No one really knows what causes this syndrome, but research points in the direction of an allergic response/hypersensitivity reaction. We quickly switched his diet to a hypoallergenic diet and have remained on that diet to this day. It did help his skin and his loose stools (which was also a symptom) but he still gets flair ups about once a month with a new lesion (since it can be a hypersensitivity to anything!). They tend to pop up anywhere, on his ears, in his mouth, his chin/neck area and even his legs. Usually they will go away with time but occasionally, we need to use some antibiotics to clear up secondary infections. If the lesions are really bothering him, I will sometimes also take him into the clinic for laser therapy treatments with our Cutting-Edge Therapy laser because it has a setting for these lesions!

This month my little Oatmeal turned a year old and I wouldn't trade him for anything! I'm so happy I work in the veterinary field because someone else might not have wanted him for his issues or he wouldn't be receiving the correct treatments. I like to think that he chose me...which he kind of did, I guess.



WRVC Staff Holiday Poll

Chandell, CVT

I will be the first to admit that I include my dog, Mossy, in everything possible during the holidays. Gifts, pictures, special dinner, you name it she gets it. So, I thought it would be a fun idea to find out how many of my co-workers do the same. Most of the staff at WRVC have at least one pet. Some of them have many pets of different species, shapes, and sizes. I asked the staff to complete a short questionnaire on their own Christmas traditions.

- Do you give presents to your pet(s) for Christmas?
 - Yes: 14 No: 1
 - Of those staff members that said yes, 6 said they wrap the gifts, and 2 said they sometimes wrap the gifts.

- Do you have stockings for your pet(s)?
 - Yes-6 No-8
 - Out of the 6 staff members that have stockings for their pets, 2 of them have put their names on them.

- What kind of presents do you gift your pet(s)?
 - Staff gift their pets with all sorts of things such as: treats, toys, plush toys, beds, blankets, scratching posts/trees, chew toys, new collars and bow ties, and Kong toys.

- Do you get holiday family pictures with your pet(s)?
 - Yes-7 No-7
 - *Some staff members stated that they try to get holiday family pictures with their pets included, but it doesn't always work because they don't cooperate! Other staff members said that they should start.

- Do you take your pet(s) to see Santa?
 - Yes-2 No-11 Sometimes-1

- Do you have any Christmas traditions with your pet(s)?
 - Yes-7 No-6
 - Some traditions include: Opening gifts on Christmas morning, receiving treats and canned food, family members gifting to each other's pets, photo by the Christmas tree, annual climbing of and knocking ornaments off the Christmas tree, dressing pets up with festive sweaters and bows. One staff member mentioned that they have too many pets to gift for, but they are spoiled with love daily!

So, what are your traditions you share with your pet(s)? Feel free to take any of these ideas and add something new to your holiday glee!

The Last Newsletter

Dr James Ziegler

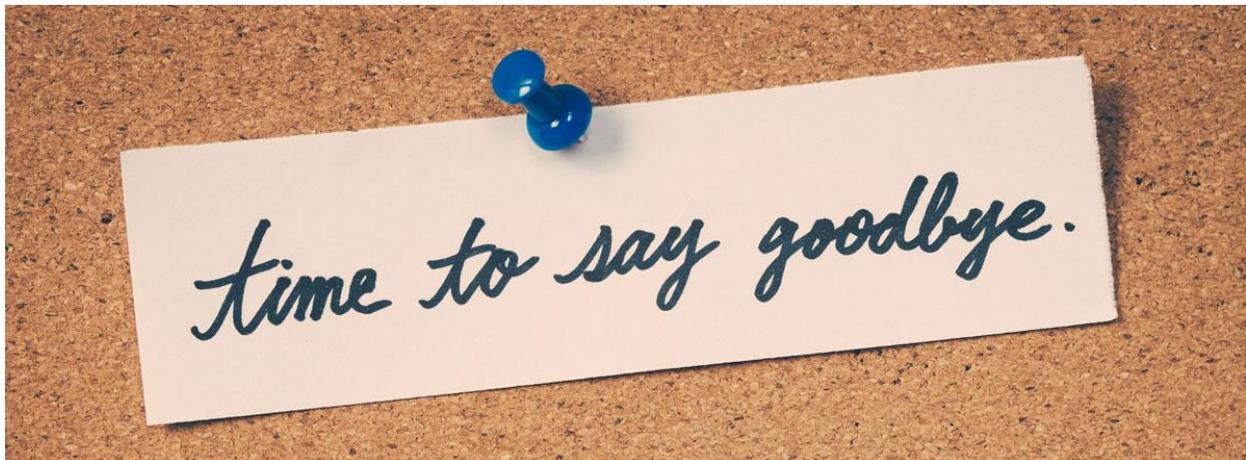
A year ago, one of my favorite magazines quit printing a paper copy of their publication and went to an all-digital online version. It has taken me some time to adapt to it, but I have. I still do not like it, but it is what it is.

Similarly, newspapers and other magazines are headed in the same directions. Very soon, the feel of paper will be an uncommon event. (I still have my book collection, though!)

Over the years, I have very much enjoyed writing a clinic newsletter. The Boomer clientele that initially made the clinic successful loved my articles and the newsletter in general. At one point, we even had a small mailing list for the newsletter. It was fun and rewarding.

Times change, however. There seems to be little interest in a printed newsletter anymore. People simply look for their information elsewhere, and few people have any interest in sitting down and composing an article. As a result, I have made the decision to discontinue the clinic newsletter. I plan on continuing to write articles, and if I create anything worthwhile, I will have someone who knows how post it on our Facebook page.

I have often been told that I should write a book, but I am not that good. Still, maybe someday my stacks of journals, stories, musings, and memories will mean something to somebody. Time will tell, but I will not be here to know about it. That is okay. As it must, life will keep changing. Thanks to all who write and read.





Happy Holidays from
Wolf River Veterinary
Clinic! We wish you a
merry season and a
bright New Year!



216 W. Wolf River Ave
New London, WI 54961

Phone: (920) 982-2733
Fax: (920) 982-3112

411 S. Bridge St
Manawa, WI 54961
Phone: (920) 596-3311

<http://www.wrvet.com>

Visit us on Facebook!