

Clark Fork Veterinary Clinic Newsletter



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Upcoming Promotion Months

January– Spay/Neuter Awareness, 10% off Spays and Neuters

February– Dental Health Month, 10% off Dental Procedures

March– Preventative Health Care Month, Healthy Weight Focus

April– Spring Parasite Awareness Month, 10% off Heartworm Testing

May– Equine Health Month, Call to get on the outcall day schedule!

June– Feline Health Month, Call to get on the out call day schedule!



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CANINE RESPIRATORY OUTBREAK

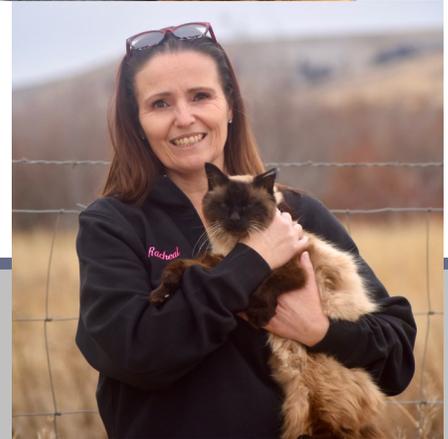
There have been cases of respiratory disease in our canine species in Montana and other states this winter. The cold months historically have more respiratory illness (traveling, boarding, indoor activities). The state is being vigilant in watching the cases. At this time it does not seem to be a new pathogen. Possibilities are several pathogens at once or one changing to do more damage. Symptoms include: coughing, inappetence, lethargy and fever. Dogs seem to be recovering, just taking longer than usual to do so. Please try to avoid dog interactions (dog parks, stores, boarding, etc) as the coughing dogs spread disease in the air, exposing everything in their path. Call us if you have questions or need to schedule an appointment for your dog!

Visit the Department of Livestock newsletter for more information. https://liv.mt.gov/_docs/Animal-Health/Newsletters/2023/2023-4th-Quarter-Newsletter-Vol-16_Issue4.pdf

New Staff Spotlight

Kate- Kate was born and raised in Alaska before settling in Montana with her family in 2014. Her love for the outdoors was nurtured by these wild places, and she is happy to now call Butte her home. Next to adventuring, Kate's nature is driven by her love for animals. If she could, Kate would fill her home with any animal in need - no matter the size. She is currently momma to four dogs, a large cat, four mules, and a flock of chickens. Kate's love for animals led her to pursue her dream career as a Veterinary Technician, and she is currently completing her coursework with Penn Foster. She looks forward to a career helping animals. During her free time, Kate enjoys the company of her husband, three daughters, fur babies, and a stack of books.

Racheal- Racheal is a wife, mother and grandma. She was raised in the Pacific Northwest. She fell in love with Montana and made it her home 12 years ago. She loves to paddleboard, fish, hunt, and hike. She loves all animals, but Sugar Gliders are her favorite; she has 5! She joined the Clark Fork Team in December 2023.



Management Minute– Laretta Kolbeck

We hope this message finds you and your pets in good health. At Clark Fork Veterinary Clinic, we are committed to providing the best possible care for your animals. As our practice continues to grow, we have encountered some challenges that we believe our incredible community of pet owners can help us address.

Our schedule has become increasingly busy, with routine appointments being booked 4-6 weeks in advance and surgeries scheduled 6-8 weeks out. We are also working diligently to attend to emergency cases promptly. One challenge we face in managing our schedule efficiently is the occurrence of no-shows for appointments.

When clients miss scheduled appointments without providing advance notice, it has a significant impact on our ability to provide timely care to all our patients. If we are aware of cancellations in advance, we can rearrange our schedule to accommodate other pets in need of care. This not only helps us serve more animals but also minimizes wait times for those seeking our services.

We understand that life can be unpredictable, and unexpected events may lead to changes in your plans. We want to emphasize the importance of calling to cancel or reschedule appointments if you are unable to make it. By doing so, you are not only respecting the time and effort our team puts into preparing for your pet's visit but also contributing to a smoother and more responsive healthcare system for all our clients.

We appreciate your understanding and collaboration in this matter. Our goal is to ensure that every pet receives the care they need in a timely manner. Your proactive communication makes a significant difference in achieving this goal and allows us to continue delivering the high level of service you and your pets deserve.

If you have any questions or need to reschedule an appointment, please don't hesitate to contact our team. We are here to assist you and provide the best possible care for your beloved pets.

Credit Card Processing Update- Moving forward, you might notice a small adjustment in the way credit card payments are handled at our veterinary practice. To provide you with the best care possible, we've chosen to update our payment processing method. Instead of including the merchant account fees within the cost of our services, we're now implementing a system where these fees will be charged directly to the client when a credit card is used for payment. Debit card, cash, and check transactions will not incur this fee. By choosing this method we leave the choice of paying the additional merchant fee to you, the client. By adjusting our payment process, we can focus even more on delivering exceptional veterinary care while ensuring transparency in our billing.



←Roots exposed, tooth needs to be extracted!!



Tech Topic- Dental Health

by Anna Schilling

With dental health month coming up in February, let's talk about how to help our furry friends. All dogs and cats are prone to dental disease, they don't keep up with their dental care like we do so they may easily and rapidly develop problems.

Signs your pet might have dental disease, Bad breath, red or swollen gums, and yellow or brown teeth are often an indicator. A common assumption is that our cats and dogs will stop eating if they have pain in their mouths. However, this is quite uncommon. Most of the time our patients continue to eat despite severe dental disease.

What causes this to happen? Saliva and bacteria (plaque) build up around the tooth and coat it as a natural process, if we do not brush or clean their mouths this becomes tartar. The tartar pushes the gums away from the tooth and creates pockets where bacteria can become trapped. These pockets can cause the tooth root to abscess and the tooth to become loose and fall out.

How do I know how bad their mouth is? A complete dental examination done by a veterinarian allows us to grade the severity of the dental disease. Once we have determined this grade, we can help you develop the best treatment plan for you and your pet.

Treatment for dental disease. A professional dental cleaning done by a veterinarian is needed when either tartar or gingivitis (inflammation of the gums) is diagnosed during an exam. For us to properly care for your pet we need to do this under general anesthesia (since they can't sit still and hold their mouth open for us like we can at our dentist). This allows us to fully assess their mouths with dental radiographs and perform a full exam of each tooth. Dental radiographs allow us see under the gum line and see if there are any teeth that may need to be extracted, and ensure that there are no tooth roots remaining after extractions. Once these assessments are made, we then scale and polish each tooth, and any necessary extractions are then performed.

What prevents tartar build up. We recommend brushing your animals' teeth at home with a pet toothpaste and brush, be sure that you use animal toothpaste as it has enzymatic action and is non toxic. This is the very best preventative measure. For this to be effective, teeth must be brushed at least 3 times per week. Once tartar is present, it cannot be reversed with brushing and requires a professional dental cleaning. There are water additives and dental chews that can help prevent tartar buildup. Look for the Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) approved products that are proven to be effective.

Tri County Fair Report

The Clark Fork Veterinary Clinic loves the fair like all Powell County residents! We were very active this year. We started by cleaning the exhibit hall in early August as our staff community service event. Boy the cotton gets bad over the winter! We had a booth in the exhibit hall to let fair goers know what we do, how we give back, our new services and our promotion months. On Saturday we enjoyed having a float in the parade with the “Country Roots and Cowboy Boots” theme. We had our horses and a covered wagon!

We entered many exhibits this year too! Dr. Heims led a group exhibit of “Baking with Booze”, they made Margarita Cupcakes. 2 staff members entered quilts. 1 staff member entered garden onions. 1 staff member entered jam and other canned goods.

Dr. Witts child competed in the 4H program with his sheep. Bailee’s siblings also competed in the 4H program. Dr. Price is a 4H leader and helped with the horse program, specifically the Working Ranch Horse Program. Dr. Price competed in the Iron Cowgirl Friday night and thinks everyone needs to enter next year!

Luckily we didn’t see many sick fair animals this year, we love that <3



Isolation Remodel

We wanted to share some important news regarding our ongoing efforts to elevate the quality of care we provide to our patients.

We've temporarily closed our isolation room for remodeling. This decision was not made lightly but was necessitated by the outdated condition of the room. Its current state doesn't meet the high standards we uphold for the safety and well-being of our patients, particularly those diagnosed with contagious conditions like parvo, canine infectious cough, pneumonia, and others.

During this remodeling phase, we will be unable to accommodate cases requiring isolation and specialized care for contagious diagnoses. We understand the inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding and patience during this period of enhancement.

Once completed, the upgraded isolation room will significantly elevate our ability to provide a safe, modern, and conducive environment for pets with contagious illnesses. The improvements will adhere to the latest standards in veterinary medicine, allowing us to offer an even higher level of care and safety for all our patients.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this temporary closure or need assistance with your pet's care during this time, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team. We're here to support you and your pets through every step of their healthcare journey.