

# CedarSnippets

SPRING ISSUE 2006

## SURGERY OPENING TIMES

All surgeries run by  
appointment only

### RINGWOOD

01 425 473683

Mon-Fri 8am to 6.30pm  
Sat 8am to 5pm

### VERWOOD

01 202 825217

Mon-Tues 8.30 to 7pm  
Wed-Thurs 8.30 to 6pm  
Fri 8.30 to 6.30pm  
Sat 8.30 to 12.30

### FERNDOWN

01 202 861622

Mon-Fri 8.30 to 6pm  
(closed 1 to 2pm)  
Sat 8.30 to 10.30am

### CANINE CARE CENTRE

01 425 480721

Tues-Fri 9am to 4pm  
Sat 9am to 1pm  
Mon & Sun Closed

### EMERGENCIES OUT OF HOURS

01 425 473683

Out of hours emergencies will  
usually be seen at our Ringwood  
Hospital. Please phone first.

## Makinga Splash

As many of you will already be aware, our hydrotherapy unit at the Canine Care Centre was opened in September, and has proved invaluable for many pets getting back on their feet after orthopaedic operations.

Swimming is a fantastic way of providing fun exercise, and can also be helpful as part of a weight loss programme or for arthritis control. The warm water provides extra buoyancy, reducing strain on the joints and muscles and the warm water encourages blood flow. It is important not to over-do it, as continuous swimming can be very strenuous if your pet is not used to it. Hence sessions will often include rest periods, and all animals are closely monitored by our experienced staff to make sure they get the most from their swim!

We are currently offering fun swims for £12.50 and weight loss swims for just £10. We hope this will encourage you to come and meet the team and give it a try!

The Canine Care Centre is just off the A31 at Hangersley Hill. Turn left at In Excess Garden Centre and it is found 100m down on the right hand side, on the Forest Corner Farm estate.

Phone the Centre on 01425 480721 for more information.



## Welcome...

to our new-look newsletter. We hope you all enjoy reading about the developments at Cedar Veterinary Group, and our various new projects. Since the Canine Care Centre opened at Hangersley in September we have been able to offer our clients access to a wider range of services including hydrotherapy, physiotherapy, behaviour assistance and a grooming service, to complement the existing veterinary facilities the practice provides.

## Your call is important to us

Many of our clients will have noticed a change in our telephone system at our Ringwood Hospital, and may initially be disappointed to realise that it is not Vikki who answers the phone, but a recording of her voice instead.

Whilst most of us dread the automated telephone answering service, we hope to direct your calls to the correct department, making our service more efficient and freeing up our reception staff to give you more attention at the desk.

As with any new system there are bound to be a few teething problems, so please bear with us whilst we try to get it running smoothly. But we would like to reassure you that your call really is important to us... honestly!



## Easter eggs are not for everyone

With Easter fast approaching all sorts of chocolate goodies are already appearing in the shops. However, unbeknown to many well-meaning owners, a chocolate treat can be very dangerous to your pet. Chocolate contains a substance called theobromine, which is a stimulant similar to caffeine. It is absorbed much slower in dogs than it is in humans, and can cause drooling, vomiting, excessive drinking and urinating. In severe cases the heart can start beating irregularly, patients can have seizures, and very rarely chocolate poisoning can be fatal. The higher the percentage of cocoa solids, the more dangerous the chocolate, so dark chocolate or cocoa powder should definitely be avoided! The occasional piece of milk chocolate should not usually cause a problem, but if you are concerned that your dog may have eaten a large quantity of any sort of chocolate you should seek veterinary advice.



Photography AcclaimImages.com Photography

## Francesca makes an miraculous recovery

*"I honestly thought when I visited Francesca at Ringwood that she would never be able to walk properly again."*

Francesca is a 6-year old Spinone dog who was referred to Harry Scott, our orthopaedic specialist, on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006. She had suffered an acute spinal crisis, leaving her hindlimbs completely paralysed. Francesca was immediately admitted and X-rays showed that she had slipped a disc in her lower back. This was severely compressing the nerves in her spine. Francesca could feel no pain at all in her back feet, which is an indication of a very low chance of recovery, and hence Harry was only able to give her a 50% chance of regaining some of the use of her back legs.

Francesca needed immediate surgery on her spine to remove the affected disc and decompress the nerves. She needed to stay at our Ringwood hospital for ten days following surgery, during which time she needed help to move and go to the toilet. We enlisted the help of physiotherapist Fay Fretton in devising an intensive physio programme, and also began Pulse Magnetic Therapy under Fay's guidance. Francesca initially made very slow progress but was able to feel her back feet and move them very slightly when she was discharged. Francesca's owners, Mr and Mrs Kelman, made a huge effort to continue Francesca's physio at home, even building a makeshift hoist from the roof of their garden pergola to get Francesca up and keep her back feet moving. At this stage the Kelmans

were afraid that Francesca would never regain the use of her legs, but they remained incredibly determined to do all they could to give her the best chance. They used a trailer to transport her to the park and to her old haunts where she was able to enjoy seeing her old pals and their owners, all of whom provided much needed encouragement.

By the third week after surgery, Francesca was able to start hydrotherapy at the Canine Care Centre, where intensive rehabilitation swim sessions kept her moving weightlessly. From here she started making progress in leaps and bounds, and we were all delighted when five weeks after surgery Francesca walked back in to the Ringwood surgery for her check-up.

*Continued on next page...*

Francesca enjoying a run on the beach six weeks after surgery



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Four weeks on, Francesca is still continuing with her physio and hydrotherapy, and has made almost a one hundred percent recovery. She now enjoys regular walks in the park and down on the beach at Highcliffe, where she recently managed to walk all the way down to the beach from the castle, played in the sand and paddled in the sea, then walked all the way up to the castle again with minimal use of her pelvic support belt. Mrs Kelman said " I honestly thought when I visited Francesca at Ringwood that she would never be able to walk properly again."We would all like to say a huge "well-done" to the Kelmans, Harry and of course Francesca for being such a star patient.

# TickedOff!

One of the disadvantages of living near the New Forest is the huge number of ticks we see. Apart from being pretty repulsive to look at, they can of course carry disease. In dogs and humans, they can cause Lyme Disease, a serious arthritic condition. Fortunately, this is rare, and the more common problem is a reaction to their bites. In Europe, ticks carry diseases, such as Babesiosis, which can be fatal, and this must be considered if you are taking your pet abroad.



Treatment is difficult. We usually use Frontline spot-ons or sprays - every month during the Summer tick months. This will also kill fleas. Alternately, for dogs, there is a treated collar, called Scalibor, which lasts for about 6 months. This will protect against ticks ( and also sandflies if you go abroad). Unfortunately, none of these is 100% effective. We also sell tick removers, which look a bit like a crochet hook, and these are good for removing the ticks without leaving their mouthparts in place.

## Could your pet help save a life?

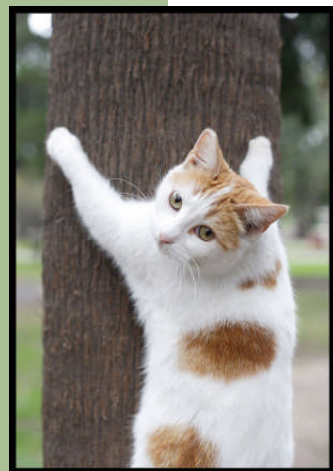
Unlike in human medicine, we are not allowed to collect blood from animals and store it for future use. This means that if a dog or cat loses a lot of blood through accident or illness, we need to find a suitable blood donor at very short notice.

In dogs we can usually give blood from any one dog to another, as they do not tend to have reactions from a one-off transfusion, even if they are different blood types. However, cats can experience very severe reactions if they receive blood from a cat from a different blood group, hence we have to do a simple test first to make sure this does not happen.

We are hoping to build up a list of dogs and cats we could call upon in an emergency. Dogs need

to be large or giant breeds in healthy condition, and will not require any prior testing. Cats will need to have a simple blood test to determine their blood type when they join the register and also need to be fairly large build and healthy. As well as the need for domestic short/longhaired cats, we are interested in hearing from owners with British Shorthairs or Rex cats, as they are often a different blood group from domestic moggies, and either type of group may be needed specifically.

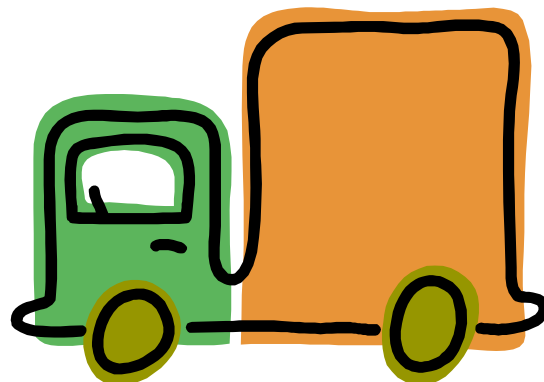
If you are interested in your pet joining the donor register please call us at our Ringwood Branch and speak to Michelle, one of our senior nurses.



## MobileMRI Scanner

A mobile MRI scanner now visits us once a month at the Canine Care Centre. Magnetic Resonance Imaging uses a very strong magnetic field to create detailed scans of areas that other imaging techniques cannot reach, such as the brain and spinal cord.. This fantastic tool should enable us to diagnose exactly what has happened in these complex areas and give a good idea of the outlook for individual patients.

The scanner will be available to our patients and those patients referred to us from other practices in the area.



Our high-tech MRI scanner!

# Bunniesbeware!

With Easter not far away, bunnies are never far from our minds. Of course, this is a great time to let your rabbits and guinea pigs out to stretch their legs after a relatively inactive Winter. However, please beware of letting your rabbit or guinea pig overeat the lush Spring grass. While their eyes may be wide with excitement, their intestines have been relatively inactive for the last few months, and it takes a few weeks for the bacteria which are so important to herbivore digestion to establish themselves properly in their guts. Too much lush Spring grass cannot be coped with, and this results in **EXCESSIVE GAS AND BLOAT**, which can be very serious and even fatal. Our advice is to offer only 1 to 2 hours a day for the first 7 to 10 days, and then slowly allow your pet more time on the grass. Grass itself is fine. It is nutritious, helps the teeth by encouraging chewing, helps the intestines by increasing fibre, and is also a big psychological boost - they love it!

The other thing to watch out for in the next few months is **FLY STRIKE**. The flies, which are attracted to anything

smelly and rotten, head straight for the back end of your pet. They then lay eggs on the skin. These eggs hatch into maggots, and the maggots start to burrow into the skin—a horrific and very painful condition, which can be life-threatening if not dealt with quickly. Flies are more likely to be attracted to your rabbit if his or her back end is dirty. This may be because they are overweight, or having trouble with their mouth and therefore not eating their faeces like they usually do. Hutch hygiene is also very important, especially as some rabbits just seem to like to sit in the same place all the time! There are four things you can do to help prevent fly strike:

1. Keep the hutch and your rabbit nice and clean. Keep any wounds clean.
2. Use a fly repellent strip *outside* the hutch or run (inside may have side effects on your pet)
3. Use a special rabbit spot on - a liquid put next to the tail every 8 to 10 weeks over the fly season. This is available at the surgery on prescription.
4. Check your rabbit twice a day (including between the back legs). We cannot stress too much how quickly fly strike happens - after only 24 hours it can be too advanced for us to be able to treat it.



## Time for a spring clean?

Whether your pet needs regular grooming, or just the occasional trim, Handsome Hounds can provide everything you need. This family business is led by Sarah, who has been grooming for sixteen years and gained her City and Guilds qualification with distinction at the London Academy of Grooming.

Already well established in West Moors, Sarah has recently opened a branch at the Canine Care Centre at Hangersley where she offers a full grooming service for dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs. She even offers a collection and delivery service for owners who find it difficult to bring their pets themselves.

Sarah has helped to teach grooming at a number of local colleges, and is currently doing her teacher training with the aim of setting up a grooming school locally. She is happy to help with all aspects of grooming

and care including clipping nails, cleaning ears, checking anal glands and cleaning teeth.

Handsome Hounds can be contacted at the Canine Care Centre on 01425 478100, or in West Moors on 01202 855755.

