

Bartels Busack Pet Hospital

Barks & Mews Quarterly News

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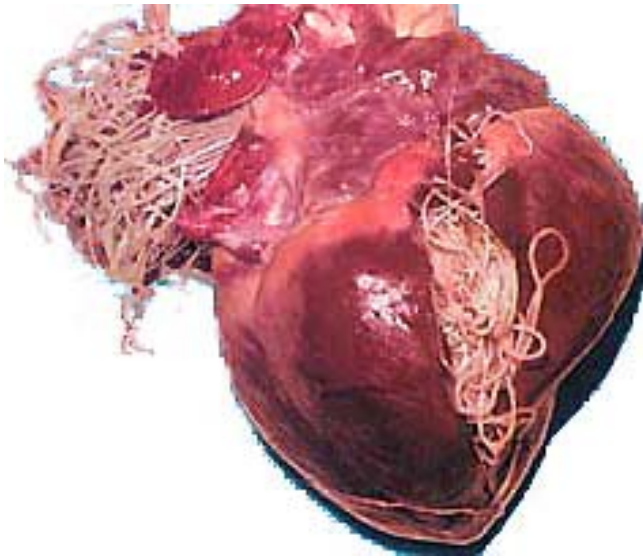
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The grass is not, in fact, always greener on the other side of the fence. Fences have nothing to do with it. The grass is greenest where it is watered. When crossing over fences, carry water with you and tend the grass wherever you may be.
-Robert Fulghum



Protect your pets against heartworm disease



As summer arrives, and mosquitoes with it, we want to remind all pet owners that both dogs and cats need monthly year-round heartworm prevention. This is a serious and potentially fatal disease. We have already seen 3 cases of heartworm positive dogs this spring!

Heartworms are transmitted by mosquito bites. Heartworm disease will cause changes to the heart and pulmonary vessels that lead to coughing, weight loss, heart disease, and lung disease. Without early detection and treatment, these changes can be permanent.

Cats are more naturally resistant to heartworms than dogs are, but they can be infected. Where a dog commonly has as many as 30 adult worms living in the heart and pulmonary arteries, cats generally have 1 to 4. This makes diagnosis more difficult since

the blood test most commonly used to detect heartworms looks for a protein found in the female worm, and if you only have a few worms, you have a fair chance that they are all male. Once the diagnosis is made, treatment is even more challenging. In fact if we use the drugs developed to treat heartworm in dogs, cats are as likely to die from side effects of treatment as they are to die from the untreated disease.

Fortunately, prevention is as easy for cats as it is for dogs. Products such as Heartgard and Revolution will prevent heartworm infection and can also prevent intestinal parasites, fleas, and mites at the same time. We test yearly, even with prevention, because early detection is the key to successful treatment.

1st annual open house was a blast!

Our hospital open house on May 9th was a huge success! Even the windy weather could not disrupt the fun day. We thank everyone who participated in the tours, raffles, and other events. Approximately 800 people came for the event throughout the day. We served over 450 hot dogs and 400 glasses of wine. We also served cake and ice cream from Honey Hut. Raffle prizes included bags of dog food and wellness blood screenings. Over 400 people were entered in the drawings.

We plan to host future events for client appreciation and to encourage community involvement with the hospital.



How much is that puppy in the window?



Have you ever wondered where all of those puppies come from? Many of them are products of “puppy mills,” also known as puppy farms or commercial breeders.

Does it really matter where your puppy comes from? The parents in a puppy mill puppy are unlikely to have been screened for genetic defects. Reputable breeders of purebred dogs try very hard to breed dogs that are genetically sound. Breeders of good quality dogs won’t have to resort to third parties to sell their dogs. In fact, many have prospective owners lined up before their dog is even bred.

The environment is also critical to the social development of the young puppy. Puppies learn most of their social skills before they are 10 or 12 weeks old. Puppies born and raised in a large-scale operation are not given the interaction and training that is so vital for them to grow up to be sociable, confident, and well-adjusted adults. Good breeders will expose their puppies to a variety of situations and people. These pups are much less likely to be nervous or timid around strangers or unfamiliar surroundings.

Puppies raised in commercial operations and sold in pet stores and flea markets are more likely to be harboring infectious diseases, which may be expensive to treat. All veterinarians have stories about pet store puppies with kennel cough, pneumonia, intestinal parasites, and parvovirus. In most states, the only recourse a pet buyer has is getting a replacement puppy.

How do you assure yourself that you are getting a good quality puppy? If you are committed to getting a purebred dog, do some research on the breeds you are considering. Then look for a breeder. Your best bet will be to attend some dog shows where your breed will be exhibited. Ask questions. Most breeders love to talk about their dogs, so getting information shouldn’t be a problem!

Some important questions to ask:

- Can I see the parents? The father may not be onsite, but you should be able to take a look at the mother. Is she healthy? Does she have the temperament you are looking for?
- Is the puppy’s health guaranteed? Be sure the breeder will allow return of the puppy if a vet determines it is not healthy. The sooner this is done, the better (before you get too attached.)
- Can I see the pedigrees of the parents?

But how about considering a mixed breed? If you’re intent on a purebred dog, most breeds have rescue groups, and are always looking for good homes for fostering and adopting. And don’t forget that Humane Societies often have purebred dogs available.

Beware of Sugar-free Gum!

Xylitol is a sugar substitute found in sugar-free gum, candy, toothpaste, and other sweet products (such as frosting). In people, xylitol is very safe and actually has health benefits. But in dogs, xylitol will cause a profound and life-threatening hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) and acute liver damage. A 10-lb dog could be poisoned by as little as a stick and half of gum. Dogs show signs of sickness within 30 minutes of ingesting the foods. This is an emergency situation that requires immediate, aggressive medical attention. Treatment includes causing the dog to vomit the ingested food and supportive care (IV fluids, treating the low blood sugar, etc.). We do not know the effects of xylitol on cats. Keep your dog away from any products with xylitol and let us know right away if you think your dog has ingested it.

