

KERR VETERINARY GROUP

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AUTUMN 2015 NEWSLETTER

NEWS

An exciting few weeks for Natalie as she gets married then goes off on honeymoon for most of September. We all wish her, and new husband Ian, well for the future. The practice and staff otherwise carry on as normal as we enter our 28th year of being the local vets in Bridge of Weir and Johnstone. We have some clients who have been with us for the whole 27 years so far and are on their third or even fourth pets with us, so a big thanks to them and all our clients for their continued support.



EARLY RETIREMENT – HOW TO AVOID IT!

These days, with advances in veterinary medicine and nutrition, our pets are living longer than ever before – which of course is great news! However, the less good news is that with advancing years their body organs may begin to function less efficiently. As a result, many older pets suffer from a wide range of age related diseases, including impaired hearing and vision, arthritic joints, kidney disease, heart disease, liver disease, incontinence, mental confusion, dental problems, thyroid gland disease and lumps and bumps. The good news is that regular health checks are the best method of looking after your pet – particularly as they grow older. With regular check-ups problems can often be picked up at an early stage. This means treatment can be started sooner, ensuring a much better quality of life for pets as they grow older. A health check consists of a



full physical examination. Because many of the aging changes affect internal organs such as the kidneys and liver, urine and blood tests and sometimes radiographs may be required as well. Happily, having identified any problems, we now have better treatments than ever before. New forms of medication and changes to your pet's diet can make a real improvement to many of the conditions covered in this article. If you would like any further information or if you would like a check-up for your pet please ask a member of staff.

AUTUMN ALERT!

The onset of cooler weather can often come as something of a relief for many pets. However, don't lower your guard against **fleas!** These are a year round problem and can be a major cause of irritation to both pets and their owners at this time of year. Another cause of irritation in late summer and early Autumn is the **Harvest Mite**. Harvest mites are active in long grass and will swarm onto passing pets where they tend to congregate on the ears, eyelids, feet and the underside of the abdomen. They are easily identified as bright orange dots adhering tightly to the skin where they are often a cause of great irritation. Please ask for advice on the best treatment for both flea and harvest mite infestations. Turning to tortoises, now is the time to start preparing your tortoise for hibernation. Please bring your tortoise in for a check-up to ensure he or she is fit and well **prior** to the onset of hibernation.



RADIOGRAPHY: NOT JUST FOR BROKEN BONES!



It is difficult to talk about radiography without firstly taking a look at the underlying technology involved. X-rays are technically a special type of radiation produced by an x-ray machine. X-rays are powerful enough to pass through the tissues of the body, but as they do so the x-rays are absorbed *differentially*, depending on the densities of the tissues being penetrated. So how can radiography be of help in diagnosing problems in your pet? It is a huge subject, but here are just a few examples. One of the structures that is seen best on radiographs is the **skeletal system**. Radiography is very helpful when looking at bone fractures, joint problems (such as hip dysplasia) and spinal conditions – to name just three! Turning to other areas of the body, radiography of the **chest** allows us to access the heart and lungs, whilst radiography of the **abdomen** allows us to visualise internal organs such as the liver, spleen, kidneys, bladder and intestines. As you can see radiography allows us to “look inside” your pet without having to do an operation. The information it gives us helps us to make a diagnosis in a huge range of conditions – not just bone fractures.

BEST WISHES FROM ALL THE STAFF