

Dear Clients & Friends...

Well, this is it – my final newsletter for Best Friends. As I write this, I have less than 4 weeks before my retirement date. Hard to believe I've been a veterinarian for 41 years now, and I've been the boss of this practice for 33 years! I have been lucky enough to work in the best profession in the world, alongside wonderful people who love animals as much as I do. It's been an honor and a privilege to know so many amazing team members, and of course pet owners, over the years. I will miss you and your pets more than I can say.

Happily, I am leaving my practice in good hands. Our awesome practice manager, Andi, will keep the practice humming along without me. Dr. Paige Wilder and Dr. Alex Ripperger are going to co-manage when I leave. My hope is that you will see no difference in the quality of care or customer service when I'm gone.

You might still see me hanging around, especially in August. I doubt I'll get my desk and file cabinet drawers cleaned out until

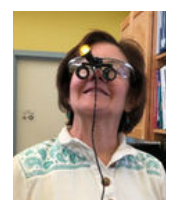
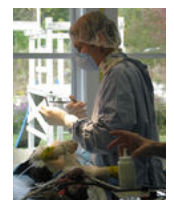
I'm not on the schedule anymore. I have a lot of handouts to revise, some computer file clean-up to do, and of course, there will be weeding. My husband and I still own the clinic building, so repairs and the flowerbeds are still our responsibility.

"The days may last forever, but the years pass by in a blink."

- Jill Smokler

Our new house in Baraboo will be completed around the first week of August, but I'm also having surgery on my neck on August 3rd. I won't be able to do much for a week or so afterwards, so I might as well be here sitting at a computer, with a neck brace on. I'll do all my packing the week between retirement and surgery. If you see me, don't be surprised! I'm weaning myself off slowly!

Once I am gone, Dr. Thoeny will be seeing reptiles. She, Dr. Listopad and Dr. Paige will be splitting up the rabbits and pocket pets. Dr. Listopad will see chickens now, and plans to take on other birds in the fall. In the meantime, we can still do grooming services for birds, such as nail trims and wing clipping. Dr. Ripperger and Dr. Listopad are able to do some of the more advanced surgeries that I have been doing. It's possible they will also be able to do simple rehab, such as what's done following TPLO surgery. I hope we'll be able to maintain some of these services, because there isn't anyone else nearby who does any of them.



I thought I'd give you an update on our entire team. There are a lot of faces here now, both old and new!

Continued on next page.



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Best Friends Staff



Dr. Ripperger &
Jojo



Dr. Boss &
Dr. Listopad



Dr. Wilder &
Ivy



Dr. Hinz &
Caroline, Vet Assistant



Dr. Thoeny



Delaney, Pharmacy
Asst. & Lionel



Danielle, CVT



Hope, CVT



Cindy, CVT &
Trina



Kimberly, CVT



Olivia, Vet Asst.



Elaina, Vet Asst.



Allie, Vet Asst.



Andi, Practice Manager &
Gracie



Katie, Receptionist
Team Leader



Mandy, Receptionist



Mary Beth,
Receptionist



Nicole, Receptionist &
Fern



Meghan, Receptionist



Molly, Our Newest
Receptionist



Chris, Kennel
Manager



Kaylee, Kennel
Attendant



Merrigan, Kennel
Attendant



Ilynn, Kennel
Attendant

Not pictured: Ryanne and Shannon, vet assistants

Hospitalization for Rabbits and Rodents

As prey species, rabbits, Guinea pigs and other pocket pets are very sensitive to stress caused by the sight, sound and smell of predators, like dogs and cats. Stress suppresses the immune system, making them vulnerable to post-operative infection and making existing illness worse. Our goal is to minimize stress as much as possible while they are staying with us.

In an ideal world, we would have a ward built especially for little prey animals, but we don't. We have to juggle things around to find the quietest spot for them to stay. Usually, this is our ICU area. In the wild, animals are used to hearing noise around them – wind, birds chirping, other animal noises. Silence is scary, so we play soothing piano music in their ward, just as we do for dogs and cats.



Minimizing slippery flooring makes these pets feel safer, more able to escape if they need to. A box to hide in or a cover over the cage front also provides security. Small creatures often come in their own carrier cage, which is great.

Guinea pigs are prone to stop drinking and dehydrate if their water isn't provided for them like it is at home. We use water bottles for them unless they are more used to drinking out of bowls. It's also helpful for pet parents to bring in a lunchbox of their rabbit's or Guinea pig's usual greens, pellets and hay. We can provide these things, but they are more likely to eat their own food.

Big problems can arise if a pet has a bonded cage mate who doesn't come with them to the hospital. Anorexia and increased stress can result, in the pet left at home as well as the one in the hospital. Even worse, sometimes they fight when reintroduced. Most animals recognize each other by scent. A pet who comes home smelling like a hospital and medicine may be perceived as a different animal altogether. Be assured, we are doing our very best to make sure every furry friend who stays at the clinic has a good experience and compassionate care.



Hill's Metabolic Mobility

The only US therapeutic diet specifically formulated to help obese and overweight cats with degenerative joint disease

We finally have a combination weight control and joint diet for cats! Since about half of all cats are overweight and 90% of cats over age twelve have arthritis, there has been a huge unmet need for a pet food made for the combination of these two common health problems.



Hill's developed Metabolic Mobility diet for dogs years ago, but the cat version has taken a long time. Now it's here!

- Nutrition clinically shown to improve cats' ability to run, jump, and play in as little as one month.
- 88% of pets lost weight in two months at home when fed Metabolic nutrition.
- The nutrition of Metabolic is clinically proven to work with cats' unique metabolic response activating the body's natural ability to burn excess body fat and affect calorie utilization.



PET CARE,
DELIVERED TO
YOUR DOOR!

Keeping your
pet healthy
should be
simple.

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- ✓ Convenient Recurring Shipments
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- ✓ Save 15% on First Autoship

Contact us today to learn more or click here to get started:
<https://shop.bestfriendsvet.com/>

Tidbits...

SpotitEarly has launched Lucid 2.0, an upgraded platform to enhance the use of beagles in cancer detection. The platform uses a multimodal sensor array and AI to monitor and analyze the dogs' behavioral and biological signals as they sniff masks for volatile organic compounds associated with cancer.



Veterinarians at Wildlife Safari in Oregon performed double cataract surgery on an African lion named Tsavo, with the help of international expertise and equipment. The operation involved removing cataracts and inserting custom-made lenses, restoring Tsavo's vision and improving his quality of life. The procedure itself is almost identical to human cataract surgery, but a lion's eye is much larger and requires a larger lens and tailored calculations, says veterinary ophthalmologist Cassandra Bliss, who led the surgery.



The Pet Poison Helpline has reported a 1,064% increase in calls about pets ingesting hallucinogens since 2020, and a 9,543% increase from 2015 to 2023, when reports leveled off and began to decline slightly. The surge is attributed to wider public acceptance and legislative reforms regarding psychedelics. The helpline also noted increases in cases that involved chewable Apoquel and acetaminophen, as well as common pet toxins including chocolate and lilies. Cannabis and xylitol topped Trupanion's list of toxicant-related claims.



Children and teenagers with asthma who live with a cat had no worse asthma severity or exacerbations of lung function than those without cats, researchers reported in *Frontiers in Allergy*. Researchers found no differences in asthma outcomes associated with the number of cats in the home or the cat's sex or age.



Xylitol in asthma inhalers can poison dogs who chew on the canisters. Be just as careful with inhalers as you would be with other pharmaceuticals or products containing xylitol.



A self-service outdoor microchip scanning station in West Richland, Wash., reunited a lost dog with its family within a day of installation. Marissa Adamson, animal and code compliance officer for the West Richland Police Department, said the initiative will prevent dogs from going to shelters, since anyone who finds a pet can scan it and contact the owners. Hope more stations like this one become available!

Outdoor pet cats are three to five times as likely as indoor cats to carry zoonotic pathogens, and cats that are allowed outdoors are as likely as feral cats to carry at least one zoonotic pathogen, according to a study in *PLOS Pathogens*. Researchers analyzed data from more than 400 studies and found nearly 100 zoonotic pathogens in cats, including rabies and roundworms. Parasitic infections should be treated, and cats should receive vaccines such as rabies, but allowing them outdoors only in "catios," on a leash or otherwise supervised is the best way to reduce zoonotic risk, the researchers write.



California two-spot octopuses have used mirrors to find hidden prey in the first demonstration of an invertebrate animal using reflections for spatial navigation, according to a study in *Current Biology*.



After several practice trials, the three octopuses learned to interpret the mirror's reflection, often overriding their instinct to move directly toward the visible image and passing a test that had previously been solved only by monkeys, birds and other vertebrates.



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Interactive CAT Play

by Dr. Mikel Delgado

BORING



Toys that are left lying on the floor are “dead”. They are boring. Fun toys are like **prey**! They are usually small and quiet, and **they move**!

Playing is an **interactive** experience: a simulated hunting experience that gives cats physical exercise and stimulates their brains. We tailor our play to our individual cat’s needs. Are they a generalist or a specialist?

Playing is also a way to bond with our cat. Not all cats like to be cuddled.

Make play a daily habit or activity. eg, before their dinner or bedtime, and whenever they have the zoomies! Just as dogs need to go out for walks and to sniff, cats need **enrichment** and shouldn’t be sleeping all day.

Prey Types

for the SPECIALIST HUNTER*

feathers eg, Da Bird



mouse-like eg, Cat Catcher

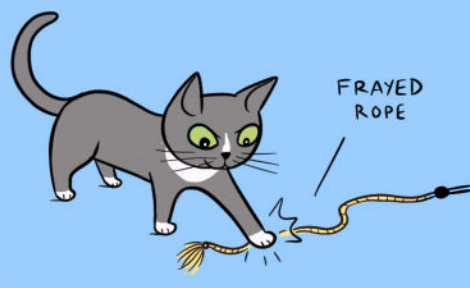


drag it away or across

bug-like eg, Cat Dancer

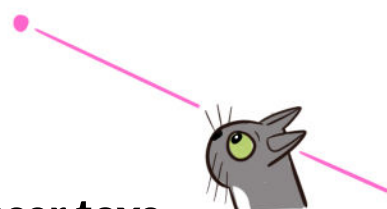


snake-like eg, Bamboozler



food puzzles

Introduce as a choice and never force. Many cats enjoy these. foodpuzzlesforcats.com



laser toys

...can be frustrating because cats can’t catch them. Best use for short periods as a warm-up, then switch to a real toy.

NOVELTY: Rotate the toys to keep things interesting!

*For safety reasons, interactive toys with string/wire should be stored securely after play.

Play Tips

- **ALTERNATE SPEED OF MOVEMENT.** Try slow movements. Barely moving.

- **MOVE AWAY** from your cat or along a L-R plane.

- **MOVE UNDER SOMETHING.**



- Sounds of **RUSTLING** or **CRUNCHINESS** are exciting!

- **LET THEM WAIT.** Don’t make it too easy or it will be boring.

- **NOT TOO CLOSE.** Cats can see the toy best when it is a few feet away.

- **Give the FULL HUNTING EXPERIENCE** - paws, mouth, and whiskers!

- Most importantly, **HAVE FUN** playing with your little hunter!



Have you played with your cat TODAY?





Dr. Boss's Top 5 Things for Every Pet Owner to Know

1 Pain in pets doesn't look like most people expect it to. The fact that your pet is still eating and is not crying doesn't mean he's not painful! We treat our pets like children and expect them to behave like kids, but they don't. Unlike a toddler, beyond the initial yelp when their tail gets stepped on, they don't usually keep crying. They will hide their pain instinctively, so even you, who loves them, may not see it. If something would be painful in a person, assume it's painful in your pets. Their nervous system works exactly the same as ours does. And if we tell you your pet hurts and we send you home with medication, you should give it!

2 95% of what you read or hear about pet nutrition is nonsense, exaggeration or meant to make you think you're getting more than you are paying for. Unless you are prepared to take a dozen credit hours of college education in nutrition, you should take your veterinarian's advice on what to feed your pet. Seriously. You would save so much money in unnecessary health care problems if you listened to us instead of your television, your hairdresser or your pet's breeder.

3 Obesity is preventable! You should know what a healthy weight pet looks like – it has a waist – and realize when your pet is getting too heavy. We assign a body condition score to every pet we see. On a scale of 1-9, 1 being skeletal and 9 being obese, 5 is perfect. The majority of pets over age two that come to see us score a 6, 7 or 8. We can help you, if you follow our nutritional advice. Normal-weight pets live at least two years longer than overweight ones. Two years!!

Visit our website or YouTube and watch our nutrition videos to learn more about protein sources and evaluating pet food label. There are two videos, each about 10 minutes long.

Nutrition in Pet Foods

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xzdjjug0SzM&feature=plcp>



Protein in Pet Foods

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xzdjjug0SzM&feature=plcp>



4 Your pet's prescription diet or heartworm preventives cost the same from us as they do from Chewy. Please buy it from us. Support your local veterinarians instead of a huge corporation. We appreciate it so much.

5 Veterinarians want the best for your pets. Everything we recommend is because we think it will improve the health or longevity of the patient. Preventive care, especially, is the best way to a longer healthspan – the length of time your pet is healthy and comfortable. We aren't here for the money and we have no ulterior motives. We will never lie to you, and what we tell you to do is the same as what we would do for our own pets. If there is one thing I know, it's that everyone in this hospital is here because they love animals, including yours.



Good friends share everything...even veterinary care



Re-furr a friend and you'll BOTH get rewarded



Kennel Cough in Dogs



Canine infectious respiratory disease complex (CIRDC), more familiarly known as "kennel cough," is a highly contagious illness affecting the respiratory tract in dogs. All breeds and ages are susceptible. As the name "kennel cough" suggests, dogs at particular risk are those exposed to settings where multiple dogs are typically gathered or housed, such as kennels, shelters, and daycare facilities.

Several different types of bacteria and viruses can contribute to CIRDC, and dogs can be infected by two or more of these organisms at the same time. A few of the more commonly involved organisms include *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (a bacterium) as well as canine parainfluenza virus and canine adenovirus type 2.



Organisms that can contribute to CIRDC Viruses:

- Canine parainfluenza virus*
 - Canine adenovirus type 2*
 - Canine influenza virus (subtypes H3N2 and H3N8)**
 - Canine respiratory coronavirus
 - Canine herpesvirus-1
 - Canine distemper virus*
- Bacteria:
- Bordetella bronchiseptica***
 - Mycoplasma* species
 - Streptococcus equis subspecies zooepidemicus*

*Protection available through standard vaccines.

**Protection available through additional vaccines.

The classic sign of CIRDC is a frequent, honking cough that comes on suddenly. This cough has also been described as gagging or retching, and it can involve froth that looks like vomit. Coughing generally worsens with activity or exercise, which can irritate the airways.

Even so, not all dogs with CIRDC will have a cough. Other common signs include sneezing and a runny nose or eyes

In most cases of CIRDC, the illness is mild and dogs fully recover within 7 to 10 days. However, depending on the infecting organism(s) and the dog's ability to fight them, some dogs may develop more severe signs like lethargy, decreased appetite, fever, productive cough, and rapid or labored breathing, which can signal that bacteria have infected the lungs (bacterial pneumonia) and immediate veterinary attention is needed.

Most dogs with CIRDC are contagious before they start showing signs. Because of this, the disease can be difficult to control. It can spread rapidly, leading to outbreaks—particularly in multiple-dog settings. Some CIRDC-associated organisms are also quite hardy, able to survive in the environment for weeks, making controlling spread of infection even more challenging.

Whooping cough in humans is caused by *Bordetella pertussis*, a cousin to *Bordetella bronchiseptica* in dogs.

Dogs can catch CIRDC through close or direct contact (e.g., licking or nuzzling) with infected dogs, breathing in cough or sneeze droplets from infected dogs, and exposure to droplet-contaminated items such as toys, bedding, people's hands, or water bowls. The risk of infection is especially high when dogs are in close contact with other infected dogs for long periods of time. If you suspect your dog has CIRDC, it is important to stop the disease from spreading by keeping the dog away from other dogs until fully recovered.

Most dogs with CIRDC are contagious before they start showing signs.

The first step to diagnosis is a visit to the veterinarian. If you suspect your dog might have CIRDC, describe any signs you've noticed when you call to schedule the appointment. Veterinary staff will recommend next steps to help your dog get the attention he or she needs, without infecting other patients.



Most dogs with mild CIRDC will improve fairly quickly, so there's no need for diagnostic tests in those cases. Instead, your veterinarian will make a "presumptive" diagnosis of CIRDC by thoroughly examining your dog for signs of illness, ruling out other causes of cough, such as heart disease, and asking questions about exposure to other dogs or multiple-dog settings. Your veterinarian may also know about other cases of CIRDC in the area, which can strengthen suspicions.

On the other hand, testing is recommended when multiple dogs are affected (as in outbreaks), or if your dog seems to be getting worse despite supportive treatment. In those cases, your veterinarian will collect swab samples from the throat, nose, and/or edges of the eyes and submit those samples for lab testing to confirm infection and identify the specific bacteria/viruses involved. Less commonly, blood tests may be recommended.

The best way to protect your dog against CIRDC is to keep their vaccines current.

Call us to setup an appointment at:
(262) 375-0130

How can I protect my dog against CIRDC?

The best way to protect your dog against CIRDC is to keep their vaccines current. Vaccines not only reduce the chance of your dog becoming ill, they also make your dog less likely to develop severe disease or spread the infection to other dogs. This is why many facilities and events where dogs are routinely gathered, such as dog shows, training centers, and boarding facilities, require that dogs have certain vaccines.

Standard (or "core") canine vaccines are highly effective against some CIRDC-associated viruses and are recommended for all dogs. For optimal protection against common respiratory infections, an annual intranasal or oral vaccine against Bordetella, canine adenovirus type 2, and canine parainfluenza is recommended for dogs of certain at-risk groups, including those whose lifestyles expose them to multiple-dog settings. Where canine influenza is known to be circulating, an injectable canine influenza vaccine also is recommended. (We have never had an outbreak of canine influenza in Wisconsin.) Your veterinarian will help you decide which vaccines your dog needs to stay healthy as possible.

Avian Influenza in Pets, People and Backyard Flocks

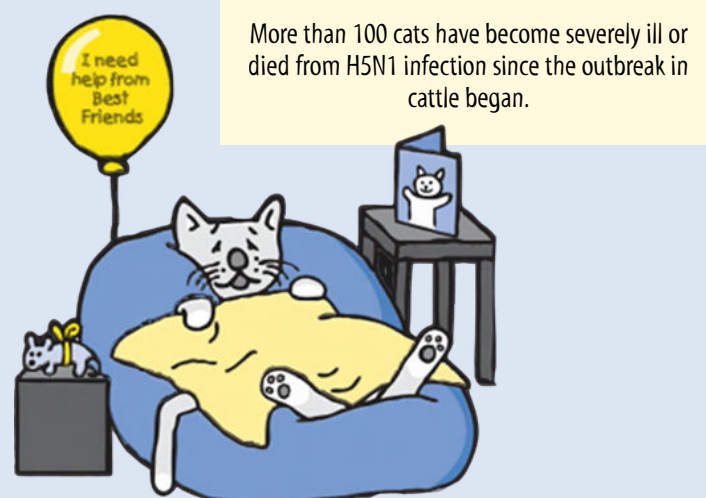
Avian influenza, commonly known as "bird flu," is a highly contagious disease caused by certain influenza A viruses. These viruses mainly infect and spread among wild aquatic birds like ducks and geese as well as domestic poultry like chickens and turkeys. Backyard flocks (poultry or other birds) are also at risk, as are captive or pet birds with access to the outdoors, where they could be exposed to infected wild birds or virus-contaminated surfaces or materials.

"Highly pathogenic" avian influenza (HPAI) viruses are of particular concern because they cause severe disease and death in poultry. H5N1 viruses are the most notable in this regard. Most wild birds don't get sick from HPAI but can still circulate and carry the viruses wherever they migrate. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) data on confirmed HPAI detection in wild birds and poultry (commercial poultry and backyard or hobbyist flocks) in the U.S., can be used to see if there's an outbreak of HPAI in your county.

Besides birds, can other animals and people catch avian influenza?

HPAI viruses also have been detected in a variety of wild or domestic mammals in the U.S., including dairy cattle and cats. Potential sources of H5N1 infection for cats and possibly dogs include:

- Unpasteurized milk, cream, or colostrum.
- Raw or undercooked meat, especially poultry.
- Sick or dead infected birds.
- People who work on affected farms or their contaminated clothing.



People also may become infected through exposure to infected animals. This is uncommon but does happen, typically involving close or prolonged exposure to infected poultry or dairy cows.

What are the signs of avian influenza in birds, cats, and dogs?

Birds

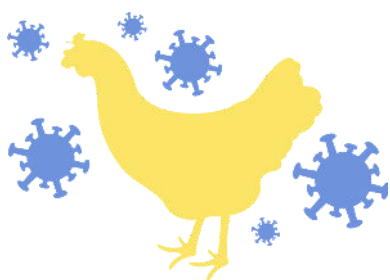
Infected birds in backyard flocks, and possibly pet birds, may show one or more of the following signs:

- Sudden death with no prior signs.
- Low energy or appetite.
- Purple discoloration or swelling of various body parts.
- Reduced egg production, or soft-shelled or misshapen eggs.
- Nasal discharge, coughing, or sneezing.
- Lack of coordination.
- Diarrhea.

Immediately contact your veterinarian if you notice any of these signs so they can help you determine the best course of action.

Reporting Avian Influenza

Bird owners should immediately contact their veterinarian or call the USDA toll-free hotline (866-536-7593) to report sick birds, including backyard flocks and migratory birds like ducks, chickens and geese.



Cats and Dogs

Clinical signs of HPAI infection in cats are better known than in dogs. Signs in either species may include the following:

- Fever
- Lethargy
- Low appetite
- Reddened or inflamed eyes
- Discharge from the eyes and nose
- Coughing or sneezing
- Difficulty breathing
- Neurologic signs, like tremors, seizures, incoordination, or blindness

Immediately contact your veterinarian if you notice any of these signs. Animals with severe illness may die.



Because several of the listed signs are often encountered with common respiratory diseases of cats and dogs, your veterinarian likely will need to run some tests to help determine the cause. If your pet has neurologic signs, the possibility of rabies also must be considered. Be sure to let your veterinarian know if your pet has been fed a raw meat-based diet, consumed unpasteurized cow's milk, or may have eaten a dead bird or other animal. Also tell your veterinarian if someone in your household works with poultry or livestock and if any people or other animals in your household have been ill.

Tips for preventing HPAI infection in dogs and cats are the same as for many other infectious diseases:

- Keep cats indoors.
- Keep pets that do go outdoors away from wild birds, poultry, and cattle and their environments.
- Prevent pets from eating dead birds or other animals.
- Refrain from feeding pets raw meat or poultry and unpasteurized milk.

Parasite season lasts all year. Make sure your pets are protected! Both cats and dogs deserve monthly preventives. We recommend Milbeguard™ or Revolution™ for cats and Sentinel™ or Credelio Quattro™ for dogs. Keeping your pets safe keeps your family safe, too! Pick some up today!

