

WINTER NEWSLETTER

WRVC-20 Years In New London

Special points of

interest:

- Curiosity Killed The Cat
- Part dog, part cat
- Everyone loves the nice weather, especially the bugs.
- Their cat was stuck in the radiator.

On November 5th, the clinic held an open house to celebrate being part of the New London community for 20 years. Those attending enjoyed a complimentary brat fry, tours of the clinic, and a chance to win a raffle basket. Many of our distributors were very generous in donating numerous items for the raffle baskets we put together. Food was donated by Festival Foods, and water by First State Bank.



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Those who toured the clinic were impressed by how big the clinic is and the equipment that we have. Many people did not realize just how much we are capable of doing in terms of diagnostic and surgical procedures, including our radiology capabilities, our in-house laboratory, our dental suite, our ultrasound, and our surgical capabilities.

Of course we also like to showcase S.A.F.E— Our stray animal rescue organization as well, and the open house generated many donations for assisting with the care of the stray pets we house and adopt out.

The purpose of the open house was not only to promote S.A.F.E and to show off the clinic, but also to extend a big thank you to those who have supported the clinic over the years. Even if you were not able to attend, be sure that, as a client, and pet care giver, we appreciate you very much!

Thank you all who made this a great event and to those who have made the past 20 years possible!

Welcoming Our Newest Kennel Staff!

We would like to welcome our newest member of the Kennel staff team, Sydney!

Sydney is our youngest kennel staff member, attending her sophomore year at the New London Highschool. With a 4.0 GPA, Sydney is already off to a great start in her academics. In the future Sydney wants to be a clinical pathologist or a veterinarian. Her biggest passions include cross country, track, animals, nature and the outdoors! Sydney successfully shows model horses and has volunteered at our local Mosquito Hill Nature Center for years and ran their monarch laboratory for two years. Sydney also has a chocolate lab named Buck and four chickens named April, Roxy, Drizella and Fiona. Sydney's smallest member of the family, however, is their pet fish, named Mary.



Cats- Dr. Mark

Throughout the years I have been amazed at the curiosity of cats. This story while amusing, also serves as a warning for those people who have cats and live in older homes. I got a call from someone who said their cat was stuck in the radiator. At first I didn't understand until they explained they had the old time, big cast, iron, hot water, heat radiators. For those of you who still don't understand, ask your parents or grandparents. The owner said the cat had its front leg caught and could not get it out.

I grabbed some supplies (not quite knowing what I would find) and went to the house. There I found a cat with its front leg stuck in between two fins of the radiator. The cat must have tried to get at something between the fins. As anyone who tried to get something out of a small space knows, when you put your hand in, the skin stretches so you can get it in. When you try to remove your hand the skin bunches up and your hand gets stuck. The cat had extended its leg past the elbow but when it tried to get it back out, it got stuck at the elbow. Now you can't make a cat understand that it has to keep its leg extended to get it out. By this time it may have been enough that I wouldn't have worked anyway. I sedated the cat and was able to get it out by sliding the cat and leg all the way up and out the top.

The old saying, "Curiosity Killed the Cat" may not be true in all cases, but their curiosity sure can get them into trouble. If you have this type of heat radiator in your house you probably have never thought about this as a danger but let this be a reminder to you, never underestimate the curiosity of a cat and its ability to get into trouble.



Saving The World– Dr. Ziegler

I was never under the illusion that I could save the world. I just thought I could save a large portion of it. The illusion was gone a long time ago. Then I thought I could save the community I lived in, which also did not pan out well for me. Now my goal is to have an impact on the community I live and work in, and to save myself. Things are going much better now, and I wish that I had figured it out a long time ago.

Veterinarians, as a group, tend to be driven, motivated, demanding, guilty of perfectionism, afraid of failure, and so on. The hard lesson is that it takes a toll on us as well as those around us. It can become a downward spiral, except for our clients who love the fact that we are more committed to them than we are to our family, friends, and ourselves.

Veterinary medicine has one of the highest rates of suicide of any profession. We have a high burn out rate, and we have a high incidence of substance abuse. This is not a confession- just true statistics. Personally, I have never felt suicidal. I love life. It has its ups and down, and I have had my down times, but I have always bounced back and I have always loved my profession. That is not to say it has not been tough on me at times, and the demands can be overwhelming, but you endure.

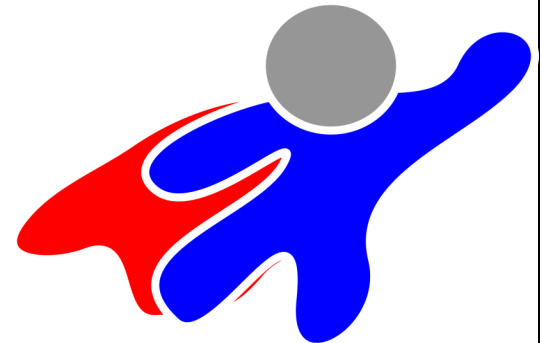
The “new” veterinarian today graduates with the idea that they are not going to work hard and they are not going to make the sacrifices I did. They are going to find the “balance” right away without having to “pay their dues” like I did. It is easy to think of them as lazy, but in the end, maybe they are just smarter. Good for them if they can do it.

At the same time, I very much value the years I worked hard. I have always said that everyone at some point in their life needs to know what it is like to work hard. It is a valuable experience. (Plus it makes life easier when you go from 60 hour work weeks to 50!). There is nothing wrong with working hard and knowing how to do so.

So what do the years ahead hold? Hard work for sure. Commitment for sure. But not 24/7 anymore. It is time to start collecting the wisdom of the years and decide how I am going to channel it into the future. Kind of a daunting task when you think about it. In the end, I think it will be beneficial for everyone. I have always said that on the day I retire, I want to be the best I have ever been. I cannot serve everyone all of the time, but I can serve those around me better if I serve myself first. In a way this should be everyone’s goal.

Mother Theresa was once asked if she thought that she could save the world. Her response was “No, only my little corner of it.” The reality, however, was that mother Theresa, through her faith, her personal commitments, and her work ethics, saved herself first.

Life is good. We are all meant to serve others. We were not put on this planet to be idle. But let us do it wisely, with proper insights, and the right work ethics, the right amount of concern and compassion and the proper care of ourselves. If we could all achieve this, what a world we would live in!



The Old Cat-Dr. Ziegler

For many years now, cat visits to veterinary clinics have been on the decline. This has occurred for a variety of reasons and is of great concern to the veterinary profession. It is unfortunately not uncommon to have a client present a cat who is very ill, or even for euthanasia, only to discover that you have not seen the patient for many years. It is also not uncommon to see clients' dogs on a regular basis for years only to find out that they also have a cat, or cats, which you have never seen before.

This is a bad thing. As cats get older, they become susceptible to a variety of things including liver disease, kidney disease, diabetes, thyroid conditions, and arthritis. Many times a cat will not show significant symptoms of these conditions until the disease he's progressed to the point of not being treatable. Some of these conditions may also present as a "behavioral problem" such as inappropriate urination outside of the litter pan, becoming sulen, ornery, vomiting and so on.

The reality of these conditions is that they can be treatable or manageable if detected early. I will now state the obvious- we cannot diagnose a problem if we do not see the patient. To add to that, we also cannot diagnose conditions without lab tests- blood work, urinalyses, etc. I can think of many cats that we have helped live a longer, better quality life by an early diagnosis of a condition that we could manage, whether it be medically or nutritionally. I can also remember endless cats that we had to euthanize because no diagnostics were ever done and when finally presented to us, we are able to do little to nothing that could be of benefit.

The solution to this is quite easy- we need to see older cats at least once a year, and we need to do lab work at least once a year (or more often if indicated). This obviously costs some money and whether a client sees it as being of any value or not is up to each owner to decide. Sadly, it is a relatively small percentage of owners who pursue this option. Of course, we always hope these numbers will continue to improve.

Many clients simply do not appreciate that a cat who looks content could be harboring a serious illness, but in a older cats, this is often the case.

If you have questions or concerns about your aging cat, please feel free to give our clinic a call. There is nothing we would enjoy more than to add some years onto your companion pets life.

Note: Our new partnership with Idexx labs now allows us to perform comprehensive blood work at a much reduced price compared to what we have previously be able to offer.



The Weather-Dr. Ziegler

Everyone loves to talk about the weather. It can be beautiful or it can be terrible. Everyone has an opinion on what they like or dislike, and almost everyone is very willing to discuss it. It is a rare conversation that does not include something about the weather.



By the time this article is read, the weather will however, likely have changed. The ramifications of the prolonged, warm Autumn that we have had will be there for months to come, even if it does become more seasonably cold and snow. While everyone has loved the milder weather, it has also meant that we have been dealing with insects. The fleas this year are out of control and even pets with “safe” lifestyles are becoming infested. There is not a single day that we are not dealing with flea problems in client, pets, and this will likely go into next Spring, no matter what the weather does.

Ticks have also been very prevalent this Fall, most of them being deer ticks, which are the transmitter of Lyme disease. I would guess that the coming months could see an increase in the incidence of Lyme disease in unvaccinated and unprotected dogs. Some of these cases could unfortunately be fatal.



Mosquitoes have also been out very late this year. While they do not bite like they do during the summer, they can still transmit heartworm disease if they do, and preventatives need to be used, even this late in the year. Given how long it takes for heartworm to develop in dogs, we may not see the effects of the warm Fall until up to a year from now.

Everyone loves the nice weather, especially the bugs. This is not good news for our pets. I have always maintained that the cold weather serves a very important purpose in slowing down the transmission of diseases. Without it, we would see many more health problems than we already do.

Many people will be sad when the cold and snow finally come. My dogs and I won't be. My love for winter is partly rooted in the fact that I hate bugs. And if you have a conversation with me, the topic might come up!



Tupperware-Dr. Ziegler

Over the years, you develop many different types of relationships with your clients. Some can be fairly unique. The other day, I was going through a cabinet looking for a container to put some food in. I pulled out an old Tupperware container, and in looking at it, the memories of Mrs. D and her kids came flooding back.

Mrs. D was an older woman with two older kids who were special needs. They were all very pleasant people and they had a variety of cats. They were not well off financially, but they took the best care of their cats that they could. On one visit, Mrs. D asked if I would be interested in buying any Tupperware as she was a salesperson for these products. I politely accepted and ordered a few things out of the catalog.



Well, that started a trend. From that point on, every time Mrs. D and her kids came in, she would stand clutching a Tupperware catalog, and at the end of the appointment, she would slide it across the exam table, and I would look through it and order a couple of things. For a number of years, my wife received Tupperware products as gifts for almost any occasion.

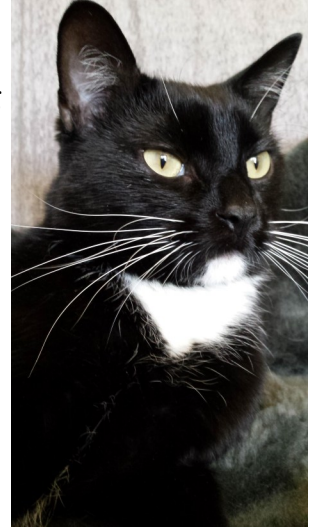
At times, it almost became comical as these folks would make appointments for such trivial things that I often questioned if the intent of the appointment was not simply to have me order more products which I always did, without fail. I never felt put out by the appointments, however, as these folks, while simple, were always polite and friendly.

Finally, the visits stopped. Mrs. D got cancer, declined, and died. I saw the kids a few times after that, but both ultimately moved out of the area and we lost touch. I often think of them and wish I knew where they were and what they are doing now. I would imagine that they have pets as they both loved animals very much. Whether they are into sales or not, I do not know, but their veterinarian likely does.

Like my memories of these people and their pets, the Tupperware persists to this day. In the end, I realized that I was the one who was a good client, but that is okay. It was all worth it.

For The Love Of Cats!-Jannie

I grew up in a town near Boston, MA, in a 3 bedroom apartment with 6 family members in the late 90s. The apartment was terribly crowded, and cluttered, but my dad managed to still be a neat freak, if you could call it that. Despite his temper, he had a soft spot for animals. So being a kid I'd beg for a cat, or any pet I could care for, even a fish! He denied my begging and so I took matters into my own hands. I would look for this stray cat I saw around the apartment complex. I remember him being white, long haired and just beautiful! Long story short, I tried to make contact and received the deepest cut ever. I didn't feel it, and I didn't care I was bleeding! I remember my dad cleaning up my wound and warning me about this cat, but I didn't care, I was happy that I was so close to this beautiful animal. And for some reason despite my mishap, I took a strong preference in felines.



I made friends with a guitarist down the hall from me who owned 2 cats at the time. He was out of town a lot and asked if I could cat sit for him. I was ecstatic. These cats were friendlier. Despite my mishaps with feral cats, I fell in love with the species. Ever since then, I always had a strong passion and connection with felines. Still, I did not get to live with cat until I was 18. Her name was Lily. She was overweight and not very nice. She was impossible to love. Let's fast forward. I'm 25 now, and 2 years ago I adopted my very own cat from the SAFE program here at the clinic. His FULL name is Agent Felix Sniff but we just call him Felix, his original name. His back story was that one of my coworkers found him wandering in a cemetery. He was SUPER friendly. I found him annoying. I would clean cages below him and he would paw at my scalp and back. I didn't understand his neediness and found it annoying that he kept catching onto my threading on my scrub top. I took him home officially after some short thinking with my significant other. Give him a chance. So I gave him a chance. He is so curious of EVERYTHING. He has a sniffer of a canine. Really, he's got a really loud sniff and he *has* to smell everything! Just like a dog! He even walks on a leash when he visits the clinic. When he's happy..His tail floofs out just as big as a snow leopard! He loves belly rubs and to be patted on his back and bum roughly! He also likes to play tag, he'll chase you and vice versa!

I'll never forget the feeling in my chest, my heart the day I brought Felix home. I was so tired from work and wanted to hop right into bed for a nap. He came running up and onto the bed, rubbing his face all over me, making whining noises,(tail floofed up) as if he were thanking me for taking him home. That moment had me in tears, and that was hard for me to do..tear up..in a happy situation.

He wasn't the same cat I thought he was at the clinic, the needy, annoying cat. He and I were destined to be best friends, and on the plus side, he's part cat, part dog. He was *MY FIRST* cat ever. And so far, he's been the best furry friend I could ever ask for. He's goofy, sweet, sassy, and not to mention weird.

So for those of you out there who say cats aren't great because they're just annoying, here's a success story. A very happy one.

Winter

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JINGLE

SNOWMAN

WINTER

HYPOTHERMIA

FROSTBITE

BLISTERY

SNOW

RADIATOR

MITTENS

SANTA

CHRISTMAS

FROST

BLIZZARD

ICE

TOBOGGAN

SNOWBALL

WREATH