

# THE PAW PRINT

WELLNESS CARE

OCTOBER 2008

## WELLNESS BLOODWORK:

### WHY IT'S NECESSARY FOR YOUR OLDER PET!

#### YOU'VE GOT MAIL:

The Paw Print needs your input! If your pet has an interesting or motivational story, let us know!

We need client letters for our "You've Got Mail" section. You can address it to a certain doctor about a job well done, or to other clients about something you've learned and applied with your own pet. Pictures are welcome.

Please feel free to make suggestions about topics you would like to see in future issues!

#### JUST THE FACTS:

- One year to people can be as many as 6–8 years or more biologically to a pet.
- The effects of age on a pet are determined by a number of factors including environmental impacts, diet, activity levels, weight control, and especially genetic predispositions.
- A Bull Mastiff at age 7 may be considered geriatric, but at the same age a miniature poodle is just getting warmed up!
- 2/3 of all dogs and cats will experience a potentially serious illness at some point in their lives.

If one of your pets has reached the golden age of 7 years or older, you have likely been faced with an important question at their annual check-ups: "Would you be interested in our wellness care work-up today?" This probably brings up a few important questions of your own: What exactly is this work-up and why is it so important? And of course, the bottom line...Is it expensive?

Taking care of your beloved companion as he or she ages can sometimes be a daunting task. There's nothing you wouldn't do to keep them healthy, but with so much information being thrown at you it can be hard to sort out exactly what your pet really needs. Among the diet and lifestyle changes that come with getting older, detection and prevention of illness before it starts becomes even more important. At DFAH, we consider the wellness care work-up one of our primary tools for keeping senior pets healthy.

The wellness starts with 2 small vials of blood and a sample of urine collected from your pet and sent to a diagnostic

lab. There, these samples are run through a variety of tests that would normally cost a small fortune if paid for separately. These tests include your annual heartworm test in addition to a urinalysis, complete blood count, thyroid evaluation, and several blood panels to evaluate the overall function of vital internal organs such as the liver, kidneys, and pancreas. By grouping these tests into one wellness package, we are able to offer you a promotional combination price from the lab itself.

Age itself is not a disease, but it can make pets more susceptible to disease than they used to be. Aging cats and dogs alike are prone to certain illnesses that can be difficult to detect without blood work until it is too late. These illnesses include cancer, diabetes, hyperthyroidism, pancreatitis, and diseases of the heart, liver, and kidneys. Unfortunately there is no such thing as a "cure" for these diseases, but most can be managed if detected and treated early to give your pet a comfortable and normal life. Performing blood work screens such as the wellness profile

once a year, even if your pet appears to be perfectly healthy, is vital to early detection.

We begin our screening at 7 years of age because this is roughly the beginning of "middle age" for your pet, although every animal ages differently. In order to break up the cost, many of our clients choose to have a wellness check up 6 months after their pet's annual visit. This "wellness follow-up" includes an exam and the wellness work-up. Doing so not only reduces the financial strain of paying for the additional blood work, but also gives the vet a chance to examine your pet twice a year. Our doctors recommend bi-annual exams for aging pets as part of the wellness process to maintain a high quality of life.

So as you can see, when we ask you if you would be interested in the wellness blood work, we are really asking you to let us help you keep your pet healthy for many years to come. These can be the golden years for you and your companion, so let us help you rest easy and enjoy them!

-Colleen Flanagan

### EMPLOYEE PROFILE:

#### CARRIE POPA

Carrie is the head of our Reception department and has been with the hospital since July of 2005.

She and her husband, Chris, share their home with Farley the Jack Russell Terrier, Olive the baby cat, and Badger the Queen

cat of the house.

Carrie enjoys reading, going to the movies, and shopping. She and Chris recently returned from a 2 week cross country vacation where they camped across the Midwest and went white water rafting!





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## T H E P A W P R I N T

### DUTCH FORK ANIMAL HOSPITAL'S FALL FESTIVAL: DON'T MISS IT!

Bring your family, friends, and pets to our Fall Festival! We'll be having the festivities here at the hospital on Sunday, October 26th from 1—3pm.

A costume contest will be held (for pets and people) and there are several different prizes! Dress your cat or dog up in the most original costume you can think of and bring them by for the fun! Or, if you are unable to bring your pet, pictures are allowed. There can be 2 winners: most original and most original pet and owner duo. All entries

must be present by 2pm to qualify for judging.

Project Pet will be joining us with several of their animals that are up for adoption. Feel free to come by and pick out a new little (or bigger!) one in time for the holidays!

