

Riverside Gazette

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Issue 3

Bones, Muscles and Joints

Musculoskeletal diseases (conditions that involve bones, muscles and joints) can affect pets of all ages. They can have aches and pains like we do. But sometimes these diseases are hard to spot. Think about your furry friend for a moment...

Have they stopped jumping on you when they greet you at the door? Have they stopped perching on the window sill?

Is your pet acting "old?"

These changes in activity may be due to weather, age or good training. However, to guarantee your pet is at their best, we have to rule out they don't have a hidden musculoskeletal problem. Infections, hormonal imbalances, nutrition, blood disorders and arthritis can all affect your pet's activity—the way they play, move, eat and cuddle!

The good news is we have ways to prevent, cure or manage these conditions, so your pet can continue to have a good quality of life. We are committed to the well-being of your pet for their lifetime. The best way to do this is to book your pet's yearly checkup today. Make an appointment and together, we'll keep your pet's bones, muscles and joints (and the rest of your furry friend) in good working order!



Training Tips & Tricks

Here are a couple of tips to help make training your dog a little easier.

- Be sure to keep your training sessions short and sweet. Try to train for 5 minutes about 2 or 3 times a day. This is a great way to keep your dog engaged.
- Training will be much easier with a tired dog. Take him on a walk or play fetch before training. He will be able to better focus on the training.
- Hungry dogs want treats! Schedule your training before meal time. This way she's hungry and wants the treats; the only way to get them is perform the proper behavior. You can even use her kibble as the reward!
- Always end each session with something your dog does well. This ensures he always makes a positive connection with training. Also try to end each session before your dog gives up. You want him wanting to work for more treats, so he's excited to start the next session.
- Be creative with the treats

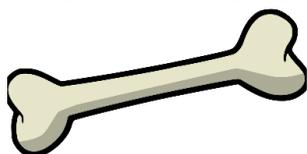
and rewards you use. You could even use yourself as the reward! Maybe your dog likes to chase. Ask for the behavior, mark when your dog performs it and take off running. Chasing you has become the reward for the behavior.

- Practice everywhere. Dogs are not good at generalizing. Just because your dog will sit in the living room does not mean he will obey in another location. You will want to train your dog in every room of your house, the front yard, the back yard, a family member's house, the vet's office and anywhere else you plan to take your dog.
- Remember distractions take time. When you start training, keep the setting quiet and calm. As your dog becomes better at a behavior you can slowly start to introduce distractions. Expecting too much too soon will make training extremely difficult.

Use this tips during your training sessions and give us a call if you need any help!

Some behaviors may be related to a hidden illness...and you may not even realize it.

Nipping. Scratching. Litter box issues. Leash pulling. Meowing at night. Urinating on the floor. Chewing shoes.



Are these behaviors just part of being a "normal" dog or cat, or not? Actually, some common behavior issues are due to underlying medical problems. And these illnesses are tough to recognize even for the most observant owners.

For example, your dog may urinate on your floor. It may be from excitement, but it also can be from a urinary tract infection. Your cat may stop jumping on your lap. Not because she's being unfriendly, but because she has arthritis and jumping is too painful to her joints. If these behaviors are left unchecked, it's a triple issue. The behavior may worsen, the underlying illness may progress (which puts your pet's health at risk), and most importantly, your pet's quality of life as part of your family is compromised.

Here's where we can help. We have the expertise when it comes to analyzing, identifying and resolving behavior issues with your pet. At your pet's yearly checkup:

- If your dog is petrified of fireworks, we can discuss desensitization techniques to give him relief.
- If your older cat is suddenly drinking a lot more water, our physical exam may reveal that your cat has an illness. We'll run the right tests and prescribe medications if needed.
- We can talk about your pet's behavior. Some behavior issues are related to medical problems, but many just require new training strategies. Either way, we can help fix those behaviors and give your pet a new leash on life!

Make an appointment for your pet's annual exam today. We'll check to

make sure all of your pet's behaviors are appropriate and signs of good health. We are committed to your pet's well-being...all the way!

Meet Charlie



Charlie, a black domestic longhair, is one of our resident kitties. He is 4 ½ years old and he's been with us for most of his life.

When Charlie was 8 weeks old, he was found wandering around the Bedford County Landfill. He was a sick little cat that was in desperate need of food, water and love. During the initial exam, Dr. Ryan discovered Charlie was born with microphthalmia, or tiny eyes, causing him to be completely blind.

His blindness does not slow him down at all. Charlie loves hanging out in the lobby or in the cat tree in Room 1. And chances are he'll want to stop by and visit while you're waiting to see the doctor.

Charlie also has a little bad streak! He loves to drink out of the toilet bowls and is why we ask you to, please, put the lid down when you are finished! Stop by and meet Charlie and all our other resident kitties. We shower them with love but it's never enough! They can always use some more!



Doctor's Notes

Howdy y'all! It's hard to believe that Summer 2016 is coming to an end! School is going to be starting soon. As we reflect on summer memories and prepare to go 'back to school' shopping, don't forget about one of the most important family members – your dogs and cats!

It's imperative to schedule annual exams for our furbabies just like scheduling dentist, eye doctor, and physicals for the kids. Also, we need to remember that the creepy crawly insects and parasites are still enjoying the warm weather. Make sure to keep your cat protected with Frontline Gold or Revolution monthly and your dog up-to-date on monthly Heartgard and Nexgard or Frontline. We also offer the ProHeart6, an injection that protects against heartworms for 6 months! (For dogs only.)

Did you know that August 22 is National Bring Your Cat to the Vet Day? Or that August 26 is National Dog Day? Do something special for that special friend, invest in their health!

Don't forget Tidy Tails is open and ready for you to bathe your dog! There is no clean up needed! Come in, bathe, dry and leave. Take as much or as little time as you need and we'll clean up the mess!

One more side note...Riverside Rehab is open and rolling! Consider a 'swim lesson' for your dog – be they old, arthritic, overweight, or just need exercise – we're here to help!

I am very truly yours,
Lora Ryan, DVM