



The McClave Tailwagger

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A Welcome Spring

We, Southern California dwellers, are not suited for rainy and cold weather. We bundle up when the mercury dips below a chilly 70, and after the first droplets of rain, here comes the scarves and the Ugg boots. A desire for fashion or lack of habit, who knows? And in some way, who cares? Los Angeles has never been bashful about its attitude towards weather, so we sport our fashion simply based on a calendar.

So what happened when we truly needed that winter wear for a change? We bundled up quite fashionably, and so did our pooches! I know that my dog has an assortment of sweaters, usually reserved for his Lake Tahoe escapade, but this year he wore them all, in LA! I, for one, love the rain, and I simply loved this winter— much to my dog's dismay. I dragged him through mud and hail, poor guy. But I am ready to hit the outdoors, and plant my tomatoes.

The tortoise is awake, the foxtails are already rearing their ugly heads— albeit still green - and we had our first rattle snake bite of the season with a young Jack Russell Terrier who responded nicely to treatment. Make no mistake though, spring is here!

Our hospital is already gearing up for summer. Our technician training is in full swing; some of them will soon be sitting for their accreditation exam and we have already accepted three veterinary students for summer externships. While most of the animal kingdom plans its reserves for winter, we veterinarians gear up for summer. When the pets go out, we diehards go to work!

Spring is a brief and lovely season, so enjoy it while it lasts. With the super blooms and the grass being high, please watch out for rattlesnakes when you hike. **KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEASH, ON THE TRAIL!** Although we have not seen fleas and ticks as of the writing of this newsletter, it is only a matter of time. If your pet is not on flea or heartworm medicine, the time to start is now! And please do not forget your kitties, and remember that cats are not little dogs and need products that are safe for use in and around them.



Let the Sunshine In

Dogs! A Science Tail Exhibition

Are you a dog lover? A new exhibition is now open at the California Science Center: "Dogs! A Science Tail" explores the science behind the human-dog bond through family-friendly hands-on activities. Watch live demonstrations of rescue and service dogs, role play as an archeologist and dig-out wolves bones, test your canine pop-culture knowledge in a Jeopardy show, enjoy original dog-themed artworks and the IMAX movie Superpower Dogs in 3D and many more... Log on to <https://californiasciencecenter.org/exhibits/dogs-a-science-tail> for more information.

Awakening

He started stirring slowly, a little more each day. He opened his eyes and looked out, but it was still cold and the rain kept coming. So he retreated into his little house and waited patiently for the sun to shine.



...And then the sun came out and dried out all he rain, and like every March, year after year, he stuck one foot out, then another, and let the sun slowly bask his little shell. And when the warm sun made his blood flow, he cautiously peaked his head out and... chomped on a dandelion...Ahhh Spring! Good Day My Little Walnut. Spring Has Sprung!

Walnut is a 26yr Old Desert Tortoise Who Lives in Dr. Khalaf's Yard. She adopted him as hatchling in November 1992, He was the size of a walnut!

The Cannabis Revolution: Friend or Foe?

With the legalization of marijuana (*Cannabis* spp.) and the popularity of medical marijuana in humans, the use of the drug in animals has increased. While such use is still anecdotal and without direct veterinary supervision or recommendation, the veterinary community is seeking more information and research about a potential emerging field.

Little is known about marijuana's merit, and while veterinarians are seeking evidence based medicine, there is no doubt that emerging marijuana use in humans is strongly correlated with increased use in animals and, unfortunately, an increase in accidental pet ingestion or overdosing. The Pet Poison Hotline has reported a 448% increase in animal-related marijuana poisoning within the past six years while the ASPCA Poison Control Center reports witnessing a 765% increase in calls. Most of these incidences in pets are accidental and associated with edibles; toxicity is also often compounded by ingesting other concerning substances such as choco-

late. Marijuana toxicity is fortunately treatable and pet death from marijuana ingestion is rare.

Could Marijuana be useful as an adjunct treatment in pets with arthritis pain, cancer, nausea or epilepsy?

Let's back up a bit and review its history in human medicine and the property of the plant. Marijuana refers to the dried leaves and tops of the hemp plant (*Cannabis Sativa*). "Hemp" is commonly referred to the

stem of the plant and variety of hemp plants are commercially harvested to produce rope and various textiles. Unique to the Cannabis leaves are multiple phenols or oil products that are extracted from the plant: among them Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is the main culprit behind the plant's psychogenic producing behavior, and cannabidiol oil (CBD oil) which is the targeted oil behind the plant's medicinal effects. When CBD was first isolated from the plant in the 1930's, CBD oil was employed as an anti-seizure drug until the DEA classified the plant as a

schedule I drug (highest restriction) and removed it from the market. Other human uses for CBD include pain management, anti-nausea, antianxiety, appetite stimulation and glaucoma among others.

While industrial hemp has been legalized by the Farm Bill of 2018, marijuana leaves and their derivatives remain federally classified as schedule I and hence illegal. Furthermore, any state law that legalized marijuana did so strictly for human use and not for pets. Regardless of the potential benefit of CBD oil in pet diseases, its use in veterinary medicine remains illegal. No veterinarian to date in California is legally able to recommend marijuana. In addition, until the plant is removed from schedule I, research studies on its efficacy, dosing and application will remain scarce.

While some veterinarians look forward to using a new agent in pet pain relief, others worry that without regulation and rigorous research, the public, as well as some well intended practitioners, will continue using CBD oil and simply see what they want to see without any evidence of efficacy.

"Legalization of Marijuana in Various States has Yet to Include Veterinary Medicine"

Summer Parasite Control

With the warm weather approaching, it is a must to place dogs and cats on parasite preventatives. However, with all the available options, how is one supposed to choose what is best?

There is a variety of products available, both prescription based and over-the-counter: in general, they are divided into those who prevent fleas and ticks, and those who prevent fleas and heartworm. With the exception of a new product for cats (Revolution Plus by Zoetis), there are no effective products that prevent fleas, ticks and heartworm simultaneously, and currently there are none for dogs. Another distinction are oral products which work via systemic absorption, meaning the medicine is in your blood stream, or topical products that may or may not be systemically absorbed. Please note that for a medicine to be an effective heartworm preventative, it **must** be systemically absorbed. All products that contain a heartworm preventative also require a prescription.

So how do you select a product? The purist would say that you should prevent for everything, always; however, not everyone shares that philosophy. So if you are selective in your product choice, you must look into your pet's lifestyle and risk factor.

Here are some things to take into consideration:

- Are you retired, living a local sedentary lifestyle with a small, mainly indoor dog? A flea preventative may be enough for you; topical or oral is essentially a choice at this point.
- Are you an avid hiker who only hikes locally? Your flea preventative **MUST** contain an effective and quick tick killer as our local mountains are a reservoir for ticks and wildlife.
- Do you often camp with your dog, travel outside the area and lead a very outdoorsy

lifestyle? You need an agent against fleas and ticks and another for heartworm prevention.

Please remember that effective flea control requires treating all pets in the household. "Revolution" or its VCA label "Paradyne" is our recommendation for all cats.

We know that this is not simple, that's why we recommend discussing lifestyle and product selection with your veterinarian who will be current on local risk factors or outbreaks and will be the most educated to inform you.

Afraid you may forget to give the monthly or quarterly preventative? Have us enroll you in VCA's "Never Forget Home Delivery Plan" which delivers your product, to your home, right before it is due....



Don't Let Me Get Infested. Protect Me by Calling the Hospital. 818-881-5102.

March is Pet Poison Prevention Month

March is National Pet Poison Prevention Month, so we would like to take some time and warn you about the most common accidental animal poisonings that we deal with.

According to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, about 1/5th of the calls received by their hotline involve pets who accidentally swallow human medicine. Surprised? You should not be: over the counter medication ingestion accounts for 19.6% of the calls received in 2018. They include OTC vitamins, pain meds such as Ibuprofen (Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol), both of which are toxic to pets. Another 17.6% of the calls involve ingestion of prescription medicine with heart medicine, anti-depressants and ADD/ADHD medicine leading the phone calls. Fortunately, this is an easy situation to remedy: put these medicine FULLY out of reach! Food is number

three with 11.4% of the calls. Xylitol (artificial sweetener), grapes, raisins, onions and garlic make up most of the cases. Chocolate ingestion is fourth on the list with 10.1% of the calls, moving up a notch from the 2017 data when it was fifth. Veterinary drugs are next and encompass 9.3% of the calls. Usually these are due to owners misreading the script or pets chewing up the entire bottle. So again, please make sure that ALL drug vials are out of reach.

So how frequent are these calls? The ASPCA poison control center received 213,773

calls in 2018 and they are NOT the only animal poison control center out there— so do the math!



For Further information about this article and other pet poison prevention topics, log on to <https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>. Another valuable pet poison website is ran by an independent and nationally recognized 24/7 center: the Pet Poison Helpline at www.petpoisonhelpline.com.



Remember Childproof Does NOT Mean Petproof

If you suspect that your pet has ingested a toxic substance, call your veterinarian ASAP and DO NOT attempt to self remedy.

Hoodoo's Diary: My Cat is Sick!

Hi, It's me Hoodoo, the really good Dachshund. I am so sad, I do not know where to begin. My cat is sick, yes, him, my big fat lazy cat; he is very sick and I am very sad.

It all began when I was at Camp Bow Wow (what else is new) and Mom was up north. I came back home and cat was not there. Mom told me at pick up time, but I did not believe her as she always tells me things that are often not true, like cat food not tasting good and children being nice creatures or that it is fun to walk in the rain and other deceptions, so you can't blame me for not believing. This time, it was true

though! I got home and my cat was not there. Mom said that he was in the hospital and he was in kidney failure. I was not sure what that meant, so I looked for him everywhere and sniffed the staircase to see if he went upstairs.



My Cat and I Keeping Momma Company as She Works. I Am on the Right!

I checked mom's office where he likes to hide and he wasn't there. So I crawled into a ball and went to sleep. No one to torment. I did not even have dinner: me, Hoodoo – no dinner!

The second day, mom took me to see him. He was hooked up to all sorts of tubes and he was cranky. I immediately got into his cage, gave him a quick kiss and proceeded to eat his baby food. Cut me some slack will you, remember the skipped dinner?

We all came home that night, my cat too. Mom was very sad. She said that he had a big tumor in his belly on top of his kidneys and things looked bad. She said that we both needed to get ready, and grandpa too, because cat may not be around much longer. What does she mean by that? Where is he going to go? I love my big lazy cat slob and I want him with me forever. I want to fight him for momma's lap when we watch TV. I want to sit outside with him when

the sun heats up the patio and we both roll out on our backs. I want to eat his food when no one is looking and steal his "pounce" when he is slow to pick them up. I want to wake up and run downstairs to see what he is up to and then rush in the evening to tell him all the funky things I saw at work while helping momma. If momma thinks that my tortoise will be enough for me, she is mistaken. She promised me a kitten, but I do not want a silly kitten, I want my big fat slob. I love him.

Mom put him on all sort of drugs and she is giving him a lot of attention; it is like I don't even exist anymore. Double whammy! And he gets baby food daily on top of that. One has to practically die in this household to get some respect.

My cat is trying to hang on. Mom said we should love the time we have together. We both sit with her when she works or watches TV. I am taking it one day at a time. I am being gentle. I am still eating his food when I can so that he does not feel that something is wrong. Did I ever tell you my cat's name? It is Figaro. Figaro Big Fat Lazy Cat. I love that cat!

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**We are open 24
hours with a Doctor
on the premises at
all times.**

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