

WYOMING VETERINARY TECHNICIAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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The main goal of the Wyoming Veterinary Technician Association is to promote the professional and educational advancement of Veterinary Technicians and the Veterinary Support Staff.

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President's Message

Greetings!

It's been a while since we've put a newsletter together; hopefully this is the first in a long succession.

This is the beginning of the WyVTA's 11th year as an organization. It's hard to believe that we have been around for a decade. Thanks again to the folks that worked so hard in those first few years to get things up and running. All their efforts have led to us being able to certify technicians in Wyoming, have a Continuing Education conference each year and to establish a scholarship for Wyoming residents attending accredited Technician programs.

Late last summer, it appeared that the Veterinary Practice Act was going to be opened and addressed during the 2010 Legislative Session. At this time, it does not look like it has been introduced. The 2010 session is a budget session, so it was a little bit odd that the Practice Act would be introduced. On a positive note, the draft did address technicians for the very first time. Our goal as an organization has been to have technicians recognized in the Practice Act, establishing us as a valid part of a veterinary team. We will continue to monitor this legislative session and will make sure our voice is heard if the Practice Act somehow manages to sneak in the back door.

This is my second term as the President of the WyVTA. This is my eighth year as a member and I have been a board member for each of those eight years. Over the years, many of the previous board members have moved out of state, or have left the field of veterinary medicine. Deana Baker has been there since the beginning, and Jody Fay is entering her sixth year on the board. It is getting difficult to know what we need to do to serve the technicians in Wyoming without some fresh voices. To better serve the members of the WyVTA, we need to hear from you! We are not asking for a commitment to a board position, just your input. Please help us help you.

If you have Internet access, please try to attend one or more of our monthly meetings. They are one-hour sessions through VSPN once a month on the first Sunday at 8pm. They are semiformal meetings, but very open to the public.

Has the economic slow down affected your business? Here we seem to be seeing fewer elective surgeries, but are making up for it with the weird and difficult cases. What are you doing at your clinics to help improve business? Are you running specials, improving client relations, calling old clients?

Share your interesting cases and your tips for improved service. You can email, mail or call anyone on the board. Your participation will help improve our organization.

Thanks,

Jackie Van Noy, CVT
WyVTA President

Secretary's Notes

The meeting was held January 10, 2010. Carol Larson (Evanston), Deana Baker (Cody), Jaime Voelz (Sheridan), Andy McKnight (Cody), and Jackie Van Noy (Cody) attended the meeting. Deana said that she has sent Jody Fay the Treasurer's records and that she received the Secretary's records from Jennifer Albrecht. Deana realized that the WyVTA was in its 11th year of existence due to a glitch in getting the bank account transferred.

Carol indicated that she had not received a newsletter for a couple of years. Jackie said that a newsletter hasn't been produced for at least two years because of a manpower shortage. Deana is getting stuff ready to start producing a newsletter again. She needs other members help in doing so. She gave it up a few years ago because of being overwhelmed and burnt out.

Jackie brought up the letter about opening the practice act. She said that it didn't make it into the legislative session. This is the first time that technician were actually being defined. Jackie figures that it'll be another 3-4 years before the issue is brought up again. Deana mentioned that the AA VSB (American Association of Veterinary State Boards) might be pushing for a change. Andy mentioned making the WyVTA more prominent in the veterinary community. Jackie felt that with too few active members that would be difficult. Carol commented that she has discussed the association with other technicians in her practice. They feel that they don't get anything out of belonging to the association. Jackie said that it was difficult to do a lot with three to four active members. Jaime mentioned that she sent some meeting notices to other members as well as told some Sheridan technicians about the meeting. Carol said that she does enjoy the continuing education that is put on. Deana said that three or four members with only one member doing most of the organization and legwork organized the CE sessions.

Some ideas for increasing member input of the organization included:

Jaime: Have the secretary send out meeting notices by email;

Andy: Call clinics and hospitals in the area that we reside in;

Jackie: Change the meeting time/day;

Jaime: Try to get Eastern Wyoming College to promote us more to their students;

Jaime: Lower the membership fee;

Andy: Pose a question on VSPN for more suggestions.

Jackie offered to contact the Veterinary Medical Association to try and get something started there. Jaime offered to contact EWC. Carol offered to help Deana with the newsletter. Andy offered to post a quest in VSPN in getting more people active in the association.

Jackie contacted EWC's Financial Aid Department and told them about offering a scholarship to a veterinary technology student. It will be offered to a full-time student who has at least 12 hours of class prior to application. The scholarship would be available both Spring and Fall semesters,

however only one scholarship would be active at any one time. The deadline would be at least 60 days before awarding since a committee will decide the award.

The next meeting will be February 7, 2010 at 8:00pm in the VSPN meeting room.

Meeting adjourned.
Submitted by
Deana Baker, CVT
WyVTA Secretary

Top 10 Human Medications That Poison Pets

From www.dvm360.com

Encourage clients to keep these drugs far away from their pets.

Jan 14, 2010
By: [Ahna Brutlag, DVM](#)
Pet Poison Helpline



Almost half of the calls we receive at Pet Poison Helpline involve human medications—both over-the-counter and prescription. Sometimes dogs chew into pill bottles or well-intentioned pet owners accidentally mix up packages and give their pets a human medication. However pet poisonings from human medications happen, they can be serious.

Below is a list of the top 10 human medications pets most frequently ingest. Be sure to warn your clients about them. Then go a step further by helping them prevent poisonings by giving them handouts on [poison proofing their homes](#) and [what to do](#) if they suspect their pet has gotten into a poisonous substance.

1. NSAIDs (e.g., ibuprofen, naproxen)—Topping our list are the common household medications called non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), which include common names such as ibuprofen (e.g., Advil and some types of Motrin) and naproxen (e.g., Aleve). While these medications are safe for people, even one or two pills can cause serious harm to a pet. Dogs, cats, birds and other small mammals including ferrets, gerbils, and hamsters may develop serious stomach and intestinal ulcers as well as kidney failure.

2. Acetaminophen—When it comes to pain medications, acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) is popular. Even though this drug is safe for children, it is not safe for pets—especially cats. One regular strength tablet of acetaminophen may cause damage to a cat's red blood cells, limiting their ability to carry oxygen. In dogs, acetaminophen leads to liver failure and, in large doses, red blood cell damage.

3. Antidepressants (e.g., Effexor, Cymbalta, Prozac, Lexapro)—While these and other antidepressant drugs are occasionally used in pets, overdoses can lead to serious neurological problems such as sedation, incoordination, tremors and seizures. Some antidepressants also have a stimulant effect leading to a dangerously elevated heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature. Pets, especially cats, seem to enjoy the taste of Effexor and often eat the entire pill. Unfortunately, just one pill can cause serious poisoning.

4. ADD and ADHD medications (e.g., Concerta, Adderall, Ritalin)—Medications used to treat Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder contain potent stimulants such as amphetamines and methylphenidate. Even minimal ingestions of these medications by pets can cause life-threatening tremors, seizures, elevated body temperatures.

and heart problems.

5. Benzodiazepines and sleep aids (e.g., Xanax, Klonopin, Ambien, Lunesta)—These medications are designed to reduce anxiety and help people sleep better. However, in pets, they may have the opposite effect. About half of dogs that ingest sleep aids become agitated instead of sedate. In addition, these drugs may cause severe lethargy, incoordination (including walking “drunk”), and slowed breathing in pets. In cats, some forms of benzodiazepines can cause liver failure when ingested.

6. Birth control (e.g., estrogen, estradiol, progesterone)—Birth control pills often come in packages that dogs find irresistible. Thankfully, small ingestions of these medications typically do not cause trouble. However, large ingestions of estrogen and estradiol can cause bone marrow suppression, particularly in birds. Additionally, intact female pets are at an increased risk of side effects from estrogen poisoning.

7. ACE Inhibitors (e.g., Zestril, Altace)—Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors are commonly used to treat high blood pressure in people and, occasionally, pets. Though overdoses can cause low blood pressure, dizziness, and weakness, this category of medication is typically safe. Pets ingesting small amounts of this medication can potentially be monitored at home, unless they have kidney failure or heart disease.

8. Beta-blockers (e.g., Tenormin, Toprol, Coreg)—Beta-blockers are also used to treat high blood pressure but, unlike with ACE inhibitors, small ingestions of these drugs may cause serious poisoning in pets. Overdoses can cause life-threatening decreases in blood pressure and a very slow heart rate.

9. Thyroid hormones (e.g., Armour desiccated thyroid, Synthroid)—Pets—especially dogs—get underactive thyroids too. Interestingly, the dose of thyroid hormone needed to treat dogs is much higher than a person’s dose. Therefore, if dogs accidentally get into thyroid hormones at home, it rarely results in problems. However, large acute overdoses in cats and dogs can cause muscle tremors, nervousness, panting, a rapid heart rate, and aggression.

10. Cholesterol lowering agents (e.g., Lipitor, Zocor, Crestor)—These popular medications, often called statins, are commonly used in the United States. While pets do not typically get high cholesterol, they may still get into the pill bottle. Thankfully, most statin ingestions only cause mild vomiting or diarrhea. Serious side effects from these drugs come with long-term use, not one-time ingestions.

About Pet Poison Helpline

Pet Poison Helpline is a service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for pet owners, veterinarians and veterinary technicians that require assistance treating a potentially poisoned pet. Staff can provide treatment advice for poisoning cases of all species, including dogs, cats, birds, small mammals, large animals and exotic species. As the most cost-effective option for animal poison control care, Pet Poison Helpline's fee of \$35 per incident includes follow-up consultation for the duration of the poison case. Pet Poison Helpline is available in North America by calling 800-213-6680. Additional information can be found online at www.petpoisonhelpline.com.

Editor’s Message

It’s been awhile since anyone received a newsletter. I hope that I can put out a quality newsletter. However I cannot do this without your help. I need articles, interesting veterinary related tidbits, funnies, weird cases, etc.

I have been a member of this association since it started in 1999. It's hard to believe that it's been that long. We have actually done quite a lot since we started. The VTNE (Veterinary Technician National Examination) and our first Continuing Education course were offered in 2000. In fact, our association was so poor that Nanette Walker-Smith (a current and founding member), put the speaker fees on her credit card. She has since been paid back. In 2004, we started certifying veterinary technicians. We included on the job trained (OJT) people in the certification process for two years. Every year, continuing education courses have been offered. We have tried to find topics that apply to everyone as well as good speakers. For the first time this year, we are offering a scholarship to a veterinary technology student. Over the years, one to five people in our organization have put all of this together.

Looking back, I realized that I have held every office except that of Vice President. I also noticed that it is pretty much the same people who have held office. It seems that many of us just kind of switch titles around come election time. We have also begged co-workers to hold office in the lean years. Our organization does not have a paid executive director like many associations. We are all volunteers. This is why I'm saddened whenever I hear that the WyVTA doesn't do anything. We have the potential to become a great association but we need help from our other members.

Help Wanted

Area jobs taken from www.indeed.com. Some of these may already be filled. Jobs in Wyoming are given priority.

Rawlins, WY-Carbon County Animal Hospital, mixed animal

Requirements: We are seeking an enthusiastic, compassionate, friendly, self-motivated and multitasking individual to complete our team and share in our mission in order to achieve our goals. Candidates should have a broad knowledge of animal science and medicine, including a basic knowledge of pharmacology and sufficient mathematical skills to ensure the administration of accurate drug and fluid doses. They must be able to successfully restrain animals, complete clinical laboratory tests, use multiple radiology techniques, knowledge in IV placement, administer and monitor animals under anesthesia, surgical preparation, assist in surgeries and exams, perform dental procedures, and deliver compassionate nursing care under the direction of our veterinarians. Interested applicants please submit a resume and 3 references, at least two professional, to Amy McFarland, Office Manager 921 Airport Rd, Rawlins, WY 82301

Billings, MT-Caring Hands Veterinary Hospital, small animal 533 24th Street West, Billings, MT 59102-6245

Billings, MT-Moore Lane Veterinary Hospital, small animal 30 Moore Ln, Billings, MT 59101

Dillon, CO-Alpine Veterinary Practice, small animal 355 La Bonte Street, Dillon, CO 80435

Idaho Falls, ID-Ammon Veterinary Hospital, small animal 1290 South Ammon Road, Ammon, ID 83406

Please respond to this short Survey:

What would you like to see from the WyVTA this year?

- Newsletters
- CE
- Job listings on website
- Monthly meeting on a different night – which night is best?
- More political activity
- More information on: (you list the topic)

You can mail, email or fax this survey back. Remember that responses will not result in automatic appointment to a board position.

Mail to: Jackie Van Noy, CVT
1532 26th St.
Cody, WY 82414

Email to: it_bytes_bigtime@hotmail.com

Fax to: 307-587-5065 – Attn: Jackie