

# Paw Prints

Winter 2002

The Newsletter of Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital

Volume 4, Issue 1

"We cherish the human-animal bond. Our goal is to provide our patients the highest quality medical care available. We strive to deliver the best possible service to our clients. Our team will work hard to treat you and your pet in an open, caring and compassionate manner."

## YOUTH SCIENCE INSTITUTE

The community of Los Gatos is fortunate to have an institution dedicated to science education and nature. The Youth Science Institute (YSI) has three Nature Centers that are open to the public. The closest is located in Vasona Park in Los Gatos; the two additional campuses are the Alum Rock Center in San Jose and the Sanborn Center in Saratoga. Although their programs are geared toward children, there are also plenty of opportunities for adults to participate. The Vasona center has classrooms and exhibit areas in addition to administrative offices. The exhibit room houses many species of animals including snakes, turtles, fish, frogs, and two beautiful chinchillas. It is currently undergoing an expansion and revision - the new exhibit space will focus on the 400 year-old oak on one side and the lake on the other, bringing more beauty and more space than the current area. Science classes are offered for all ages (pre-school to about 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) in the afternoons for approximately \$16-20 per class. Topics are varied: from studying the homes of different animals and underground creatures, to discovering the magic of camouflage and the mystery of migrating animals. They even offer classes on the study of volcanos and discovering the magic of flight! YSI also offers outings such as whale watching trips in Monterey, night hikes in Sanborn park and boat rides through Elkhorn slough. YSI's animal curator, Dorothy Johnson, cares for the animals with the help of a junior animal curator (a young volunteer interested in learning about and caring for animals). LGD&C provides free medical advice and care for the animals at the center when needed. YSI offers many ways to learn about and explore nature. We encourage you to visit their website at [www.ysi-ca.org](http://www.ysi-ca.org) or any of their Nature Centers: Vasona 356-4945; Alum Rock 258-4322; Sanborn 867-6940.

Have you ever wanted to work with animals or volunteer for an animal shelter or veterinary hospital? Would you like to learn more about nature and the animals in it? Do your kids express an interest in animals, but you don't know how to get them involved? To help you explore fun ways to become involved, Paw Prints will feature some helpful ideas in each of this year's issues. We encourage you to open your hearts to animals in new ways in 2002.

## FEBRUARY IS PET DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

February is a month dedicated to educating the public about the importance of dental health for their pets. Remember to ask for an evaluation of your pet's teeth at your next visit, and for ways to help keep his or her teeth clean and disease-free for better health in the future. If a dental cleaning is advised, your veterinarian will discuss it with you in detail.

## FOR THE BIRDS HAS FLOWN THE COOP!

**Ally Jang**

### THE ULTIMATE HEELER FROM DOWN UNDER

The breed's name says it all; the Australian Cattle Dog has the tremendous endurance, love of work and strong desire to please that is necessary for a herding dog in Australia's varied and sometimes rough territory. The Australian Cattle Dog is highly intelligent, readily trained and possesses an uncanny problem-solving ability that enables it to determine how much "heeling" (the quick grip and release on the lower leg of a herd animal), one of its charges requires. For example, adjusting for the amount of heeling needed to get a wayward "troublemaker" to mind, vs. a gentler approach for a younger or older animal that may be doing its best but is naturally slower than the rest of the herd.

As with many of today's dog breeds, there are numerous theories as to the development of the Australian Cattle Dog. The modern cattle dog is believed to be a cross between smooth-coated blue merle Scottish Highland Collies, selected dingoes, Dalmatians and black and tan Kelpies. The Australian Cattle Dog was officially recognized by the American Kennel Club in 1980 and is sometimes referred to as the Blue Heeler or Queensland Blue Heeler. The Australian Cattle Dog is strong, compact and symmetrically built. Its expression is bright and alert and its eyes are dark brown in color. The breed's muzzle is of medium length and its ears are pricked and moderately pointed. It has a smooth double coat with a short dense undercoat and the coat color can be blue, blue-mottled, blue speckle or red speckle. The tail is moderately bushy, low and hangs in a very slight curve. The breed's height ranges between 17-20 inches at the withers. Hard-working, energetic, and loyal, the Australian Cattle Dog is also multi-talented. In addition to its outstanding herding ability, the breed does well in obedience, agility and tracking activities.

#### SOURCES CONSULTED

"Australian Cattle Dog." 2002. American Kennel Club. Online. 24 January 2002.

"Australian Cattle Dog." 2002. Australian Cattle Dog Club of Amerca. Online. 24 January 2002.

For nearly 12 years Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital and For the Birds enjoyed a symbiotic relationship; we shared office space, laughs, clients, staff, and admiration for one another. Over time both practices grew tremendously and we found ourselves literally bumping elbows and wings in the office. So over the New Year, For the Birds moved to higher ground with more space to care for pet birds. The room this has created in our hospital will allow us to improve the quality of care we can give our dog and cat patients. We wish For the Birds much success in their new home!

Their new location is at 1136B De Anza Boulevard, San Jose, CA 95129. Their new phone is (408) 255-1739.

### NEW LOOK FOR OUR WEB SITE

We have made some changes that will help our clients navigate around the site a little easier, added a list of services, and updated the biographical section. We have also added a hospital tour. We have removed the "prescriptions" section from the site as many prescriptions require an office visit before being refilled. For those of you with slower modems, you will find that the site will load faster on your computer! We will be updating our site monthly, incorporating new graphics and photos of the goings on in the hospital. Please feel free to let us know if there is any particular information you would like to see on our site- [www.losgatosvet.com](http://www.losgatosvet.com).

## MUSINGS AND MEMOIRS OF A MIDDLE-AGED NURSE

It was January 1984. I'd graduated from the Foothill College Animal Health Technician Program in 1978. I had worked at a few other hospitals and was looking for something new—a focus, a challenge, some like-minded people. I walked into a tiny veterinary hospital on University Avenue and asked for a job. (When I say tiny, I mean tiny...you could talk on the phone, go to the bathroom, and develop x-rays all in the same room).

The employment interview was casual, conducted across the surgery table by a young veterinarian named Kyle Frandle. He was, and still is, completely unpretentious and unassuming, relaxed, jovial, and confident. He treated me with respect—unlike any other veterinarian I'd met before. I thought to myself “who IS this guy?”

At the time the hospital staff consisted of two part time technicians, and veterinarians Kyle Frandle and Helen Power. Dr. Martin Fremont, founder of Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital in 1947, was phasing out his work schedule. The place just FELT right...Nurse Strom had found a tiny new home. Well, that tiny home moved in 1989 into a large building (and soon to be larger). Now we have over 20 staff and 5 doctors! Quite a difference...but the basic pretext has always remained the same: *Treat others as you would like to be treated* (One of many “Kyle-isms”).

This philosophy is why I have been hanging around for 17 years. Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital is a place like no other and it is because of Kyle and the people he has surrounded himself with. In a way, they are all reflections of him—some stronger in certain traits than others, and each bringing to the mix their own type of talent. He is generous beyond measure, especially if it will benefit the common good. He is a visionary who is never content with status quo. And he has created a nurturing, caring and supportive work environment—we are all encouraged to be self-starters and to express ourselves openly with confidence.

I love our exceptionally high quality of veterinary medicine, the tender nursing care we give our patients, our casual professionalism, and the emphasis on continuing education. Most of the time, work feels like play to me (what could be better?).

Career lives change. I went from being in charge of virtually all facets of the hospital and working 5 days a week, to being blissfully relieved of most of these tasks and cutting back to a lovely part-time schedule. I am SO proud to be a part of this fabulous group of dynamic individuals. It's amazing to see all that has transpired and continues to unfold. I look on in amazement. I used to feel like the “hospital mum”, and now as years pass I feel like the “hospital grand-mum”. Whew! I think I'll stick around as long as I can still bend down and clean those lower cages. Hurray for yoga!

Written lovingly by Marie Strom

## ASK THE DOCTOR

**Q:** I've just learned that my dog may be at risk for hypothyroidism. Can you explain how this condition is detected and if there is treatment available?

**A:** Hypothyroidism is fairly common in dogs, especially the Golden Retriever, Labrador, and Doberman breeds. Affected dogs have a low level of thyroid hormone, which may result in weight gain, poor coat quality, sluggishness, increased thirst and urination or excessive panting. A simple blood test is used to diagnose the condition and results are usually straightforward; occasionally additional testing is necessary to confirm the diagnosis. Supplementation with thyroid hormone is given by the pet owner at home. It is usually given twice a day and lifelong supplementation is required. Treatment is very effective and has few side effects, but does require monitoring. We recommend a blood test about one month after starting treatment to be sure the correct dosage is being given and then periodically thereafter.

**Q:** Can cats get bone diseases?

**A:** Bone diseases in cats are rare but do exist. Congenital skeletal problems are most commonly seen in purebred cats, although any cat can be affected. Hip dysplasia (incongruity of the hip joints), fused vertebrae (common in the Manx cat) and other congenital problems can lead to arthritis or cause trouble with locomotion. Joint injury can also result in arthritis. Hypervitaminosis A can cause severe skeletal changes, whereas vitamin D imbalances, poor nutrition, or defects in metabolism can cause a decrease in bone density and increased risk for fractures. Diseases of the bone marrow are varied, but include cancer and some forms of leukemia. Signs of bone disease in cats are extremely variable, ranging from lameness or stiffness to general malaise, or anything in between. If your cat is diagnosed with a bone disease, the treatment options and prognosis will depend entirely on the type of bone disease present.

## STAFF NEWS

A new year is beginning. Tom is bringing it in with a new home he purchased in Felton. He and Dr. Condrey will be neighbors! We say good-bye to our receptionist, Lissa. You can still see her if you are also clients of For the Birds, as she has moved with them to their new home to answer phones and greet clients. The entire staff and their families gathered together Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, for a New Years/Holiday brunch at Pasatiempo Golf Course in Santa Cruz. Much feasting and visiting was done by all! Several of us staff will be making the annual trek to Las Vegas in February for the Western States Veterinary Conference. Our hospital kitty, LooLoo, has been with us one full year. You can see her perched on her stylish condo just beyond the dog scale.

## TRIVIA CHALLENGE

### "Furry Felines"

1. There are four tabby patterns. Can you name them?
2. What is a locket?
3. If a cat is referred to as a grade 0, what does this mean?
4. Pencillings refer to what coat characteristic?
5. What is a self coat?

## TRIVIA CHALLENGE ANSWERS

1. Striped, Spotted, Classic, and Abyssinian.
2. A white or contrasting color patch under the neck.
3. A cat with no white in its coat pattern.
4. The delicate, pencil-like markings on the faces of Tabbies.
5. A cat that is considered to have a coat that is solid in color.

Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital  
17480 Shelburne Way  
Los Gatos, California 95030  
Phone (408) 354-6474 Fax (408) 399-4552  
[www.losgatosvet.com](http://www.losgatosvet.com)

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

#### HOURS BY APPOINTMENT

8 AM TO 8 PM MONDAY -  
FRIDAY

8 AM TO 5 PM SATURDAY

KYLE FRANDLE, DVM, MS

MARILYN PACHOREK, DVM

KATHERINE KASPAR, DVM

KEVIN SHEEHY, DVM

JENNIFER CONDREAY, DVM