

Welcome to Barkers Vet Clinic

Welcome to the Barkers Veterinary Clinic Newsletter!

My personal good news is that my husband, Robert, and I have finally extended our family, after a very long wait—we have adopted a three-year old boy named Waranthon (nickname Ran) from North-Eastern Thailand. We travelled to Thailand to pick him up in late July, and so far he is settling in very well. Robert has taken twelve months paternity leave to look after Ran, and I am hoping to cut my hours back to less than 50/week to enjoy our new son.

Other news from around Barkers is the purchase of a new ultrasound machine (see page three for more details), that will aid in our diagnostic imaging, and hopefully minimize the need for more invasive procedures and make some referrals less necessary. I have spent some time at the Southern Animal Referral Centre in Highett with Dr Richard Woolley, an eminent veterinary cardiologist, to improve and update my cardiology knowledge and learn some basic echocardiography techniques (heart ultrasounds), and also completed an abdominal ultrasound course to advance my general ultrasounding proficiency. I have also attended the WSAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Association) conference in Geneva in June (someone has to do it!!), which was a fantastic conference.

All the staff are constantly striving for improvement in their skills and knowledge base, including the nursing staff, whom I consider to be an integral part of our health care team. You can expect the nurses to be doing more nurse consultations in the future, such as surgical admits and discharges, nutrition clinics for obesity and weight management, blood pressure monitoring, dental checks, post-operative rechecks and suture removals. They are trained to be extremely efficient anaesthetic monitors, are capable of taking blood samples and administering injections under the skin, into the muscle and intravenously (into the vein), and insert intravenous catheters for fluid administration. The nurses at Barkers are NOT glorified cleaners wearing a uniform, they are trained and dedicated health care professionals.

See you all soon

Jane Kohler

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Microchipping Success Story

In October 2009, Murray was shocked to receive a phone call from the Lost Dogs Home asking him to pick up his dog, Kip, who had been picked up by a ranger in St Albans. Why was he surprised?

Kip had been missing for 18 months, and Murray had given up a long time ago that his beautiful long-haired tricolour Border Collie would turn up alive and well. But thanks to being microchipped at the time she was desexed, Kip was able to find her family again.

One of the most important and responsible actions for an owner is to ensure their pets are microchipped. If your pets are ever lost or stolen and recovered, then you can be contacted and your pets returned as quickly as possible. Make sure your details are kept up to date, by contacting Central Animal Records directly on 9706 3187, or online at www.car.com.au.

Specialist and Emergency Referrals

When your pet is sick or injured it can be a stressful time. At Barkers, we aim to provide the very best care possible for your animal, which sometimes means that we may need to refer you and your pet to a more specialized veterinarian or clinic for further tests and treatment. With the increase in the number of Veterinary Specialists and more advanced technologies available to aid our diagnoses, it can sometimes become confusing as to which Referral Centre to go to. The vets at Barkers liaise with

many of the specialists, and know which one is ideal for your pet and their specific problem. The Veterinary Specialist that we refer you to is not only going to provide the best diagnosis and treatment for your pet, but is going to work closely with the staff at Barkers to ensure continuity of care.

We also work closely with the **after hours emergency centres** and we only refer to clinics that we know are able to give you premium 24 hour care for medical or surgical emergencies, and communicate

directly with Barkers as soon as your pet is able to be discharged into your care or be transferred back to Barkers for further treatment. Your history will be emailed and faxed to us as soon as your pet is admitted to their facilities, ensuring that we are kept in the "diagnostic loop". For this reason, we recommend the **Animal Emergency Centre** in Mt Waverley, and **Advanced Vetcare** in Kensington. For more contact details for these clinics, please refer to the 'Links' page at www.barkersvet.com.

Facebook Page

We have never been afraid of embracing new technology at Barkers—so now we have formed a Facebook Page for friends of Barkers Veterinary Clinic!

Just use the Google Search Engine to locate "Barkers Vet Clinic Facebook Page" and become a Fan.

You can post photos and videos of your pets, discuss problems with other pet owners from the area, compare the best dog parks and beaches and cafés. We are going to keep you updated with interesting cases and discuss some common problems that you may have with your pet at home, such as cleaning your dogs ears, giving tablets to your cat or dog, and clipping nails. If you have any ideas, just post a note on the Wall to let us know what you would like to know about.

Of course, if you have any real concerns about your pet's health, don't wait for an answer on Facebook—call the clinic and speak to the nurses.

Check us out on

facebook

Repeat Prescriptions

Often with an ongoing disease process or illness, our pets require long-term, or even life-long medication. We do not dispense these medications lightly and legally we have many responsibilities that must be met before re-dispensing medication.

Every drug has its own set of guidelines that must be followed, but as a general "rule of thumb", your pet must have a check-up with a veterinary surgeon at least every six months,

and must be monitored for any changes in organ function on a regular basis. Some pets need to have regular blood and/or urine tests to monitor the effectiveness of their medication and any side effects.



As every medication is used for different purposes, in animals of differing ages and health status', please ask your vet or one of the nurses what the monitoring requirements are for your pet's medication.

When picking up a repeat prescription, please give us 24 hours notice to prepare your medication so that you do not need to be kept waiting if the veterinarian is in consultation or surgery.



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Barkers Veterinary Clinic aims to provide excellent professional services and veterinary care to your valued family members - your pets. Our team offers a comprehensive service to you and your pets to ensure they are healthy and happy for as long as possible.

Our clinic not only treats dogs and cats, but birds, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and mice. We also offer a **free wildlife service**.

We also offer a wide range of other pet-related services, such as dietary advice and specialised pet foods.

All of our staff members are kept up to date with current therapies and procedures by regular in house seminars and education programs and by attending conferences.

When your pet has a specific health problem, we have many veterinary specialists available for any referral work. This includes soft tissue and orthopaedic surgery, behaviour, internal medicine, natural therapies, exotic pets and bird medicine.

"Thousands of years ago, cats were worshipped as gods. Cats have never forgotten this."

~ Anonymous

A Day in the Life of a Veterinarian

8.30am Arrive at work and check the hospital cases that stayed in overnight. Today I have a Border Collie with pancreatitis, who had diarrhoea and was vomiting on presentation. She is on intravenous fluids and recovering well. I also have one cat with a mass in his abdomen. He was dehydrated and hadn't eaten for 3 days before coming to the clinic last night.

9am Consulting starts. I see several vaccinations, two cats whose horrified owner found fleas on them yesterday and a 17½ year old Poodle who is recovering beautifully from some dental work last week. Several other medical cases also presented that will need further diagnostics including blood tests.

11am Hospital rounds—the nurses and I go through the cases in hospital and surgical cases of the day so everyone knows what is going on. We also discuss any other relevant outpatient cases, client needs and drug orders for the day.

We have 3 surgical cases today. We have a haematoma and ear flush on a Miniature Schnauzer with a history of ear infections—his ears were irritated so much that he shook his head hard enough that he burst the blood vessels in the ear flap resulting in a large blood-filled pocket that will need to be drained. We also have a dog castration and some x-rays.

I then spend two hours writing up surgical histories and calling back clients with results. I also have a chance to research an unusual case from this morning's consulting session with respiratory problems. I will use the text books, the online veterinary information network (VIN) and any specialists I am able to get hold of on the phone, before reporting back to the owner the differentials for their dog.

4pm Afternoon consults and surgical discharges start. I see some more vaccinations—several of which are found to have dental disease on their clinical exam. It is an easy problem to ignore for pet owners if they don't look in their pet's mouth—but vastly under-rated in its importance to a pet's general health. One old cat presents with weight loss, drinking a lot, a good appetite and is unable to jump onto the bed anymore—we are able to rule out diabetes with a very quick blood test in the consult room, but we take a further blood sample to check kidney function and thyroid disease (very common in old cats) and discuss arthritis in cats. The blood is run in-house, so results are ready in 20 minutes and reported back to the owners—there may be some early kidney disease present, and there is definitely high thyroid levels—so we need to get the cat back again tomorrow for a urine test and to measure his blood pressure before starting some medication.

6.45pm I check over the hospital cases again before heading home to put Ran to bed and maybe get to the park with Darcy and Kaitiee for a late night walk. Sometimes I even see my husband, Robert, before bed time!!