



# THE SOUTHTOWNS JOURNAL

## A Quarterly Newsletter

Prepared by the staff of the Southtowns Animal Hospital

Newman, Editor-in-Chief

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SUMMER, 2003



### Is a Reptile the Right Pet for You?

Reptiles can be good pets, but they require specialized care and specialized medicine. We see reptiles here at Southtowns, but sadly, since these fascinating animals are adept at masking their symptoms, we often see them when they are critically ill.

Many people are surprised to hear that we can care for reptiles here. Veterinary care for reptiles is a growing field, and one I am pleased to offer.

If you have or are considering a reptile as a pet, take a few things into consideration. They need very specific living enclosures which must be kept scrupulously clean. All reptiles need a source of heat, ultraviolet light, and the humidity must be carefully controlled, and these can be difficult requirements to meet, especially in a Buffalo winter.

In the wild, reptiles are able to search for a place to bask, and are able to get away from their waste material. In captivity, disease organisms and parasites can accumulate in the animal's enclosure to dangerous levels if it is not cleaned often enough--and that means daily.

Take care too before purchasing a snake, because many of the snakes available in pet stores are babies. Those tiny baby iguanas grow too. These species can grow to a considerable size, and contrary to popular belief, zoos do not accept personal pets that have outgrown their owners.

I suggest to all reptile owners that you schedule an appointment at least once a year for a check up. Like a dog or a cat, we would like to check a stool sample. Reptiles can have intestinal parasites too.

The staff and I can help you keep your pet healthy, and we can detect some illnesses that reptiles may be hiding. We can also inform you of the latest findings in keeping these fascinating creatures.

If you are thinking of purchasing a snake or lizard as a pet, we suggest that you call the office for some information before you do so. We welcome your concerns. Our number is 824-4108.

Our goal at Southtowns Animal Hospital is the care of all pets, not just cats and dogs.

## A Month of Microchips

It's back by popular demand!

During our celebration of SPCA Tag Day, we had a fabulous response to the AVID Friendship microchipping program. We want to make as many pet owners aware of this high tech service as possible.

So, for the entire month of July, we will be giving a patriotic red, white and blue leash to every pet who has a microchip installed!

Placing the chip is easy, just like giving a vaccine, and the chip is only the size of a grain of rice.

For more information, visit our website:

[www.SouthtownsAnimalHospital.com](http://www.SouthtownsAnimalHospital.com)

To schedule an appointment call 824-4108. Protect your pet. Identify him permanently.





# Happy Birthday Newman!



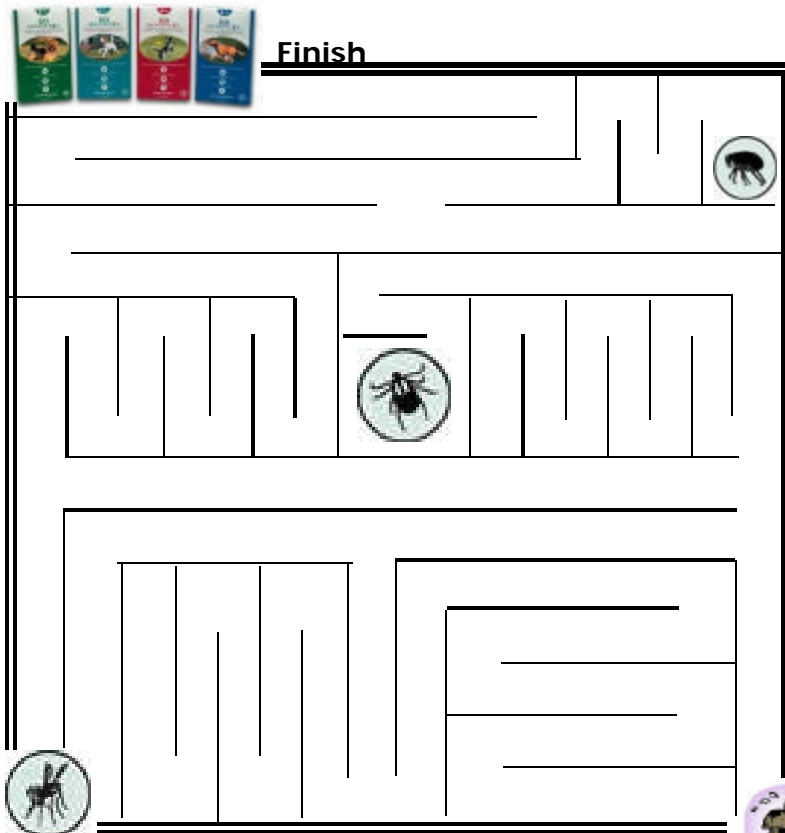
On May 7th, 2003, we celebrated Newman's 6th birthday! Thanks to Michelle G., Newmie and the staff had wonderful birthday cakes-- one of the Fancy Feast variety for Newman.

After much present opening and hugging,

Newman got to settle down for his mid-afternoon nap. Then he was able to resume his job of keeping an eye on things here at the hospital.



I HATE birthday hats. Birthday hugs don't help!



Protect me from Fleas Ticks and Mosquitos!  
Help me find K9 Advantix!



Protect your dog  
all summer  
long!  
Buy 6 tubes  
of

**K9  
ADVANTIX™**

And get 1  
**FREE!**

2  
for 1



## Stool Sample Special

*Here's the scoop on why we check your pet's poop!*

Usually when you come with your pet, our happy reception staff will ask if you brought a fecal, or stool sample with you. You may wonder why we have such an interest in poop?



When testing the small sample with a solution of special zinc floatation media, the technician is looking for eggs, which are shed by intestinal worms during certain stages of its life cycle. Depending on the type of egg seen, we are able to identify the kind of worms which may be infecting your pet, what medication is needed, and how long that medicine needs to be given.

It is important to note that the initial stool sample we see is only 70-90% effective in determining if any internal parasites are present in your pet. If the worms are not at the stage in their life when they are shedding eggs, we cannot tell if it has worms.

We need you to bring in a second sample in about 4 weeks to help us determine if there is an infestation.

If your pet was found to be positive for some kind of worm from its first sample, a second can make sure that the treatment was effective, or if a different infestation has occurred.

To help you keep your pet healthy and parasite free, we are offering 2 for 1 stool sample analyses on all fecal tests we do in August. Just bring in a sample of your pet's stool in August, and 30 days later we will test a second sample at no charge!

Just call the office at 824-4108 for details.

We all know that poop is icky, but worms are ickier, and they can harm your pet! Bring those samples to be tested today.

Learn more  
on the web!



If you would like to learn more about how to prevent dog bites, visit this website:

[avma.org/publth/dogbite](http://avma.org/publth/dogbite)

**There are materials suitable for personal, classroom and community education.**

# BEWARE OF DOG

Summertime means picnics in the park and lazy days at the beach. Hot weather brings the kids outside to play on the sidewalks and front lawns.

With so many folks outside, the chances of encountering an unfamiliar dog are increased. No one wishes to have an encounter with an aggressive dog, but understanding how not to provoke an aggressive response can help people avoid attacks by animals. By behaving appropriately the damage from an attack, if one cannot be avoided, can be minimized. Most serious bites to humans involve dogs, but this information can be used to avoid injury by other animals.

Every one worries about strays, and they can be a problem, but most dogs that bite people in public places are not strays. They are owned by someone and may be a good pet to them. When animals are lost they can be confused and frightened.

Keep these points in mind to avoid being bitten:

- 1.) Warn children to keep away from unattended animals.
- 2.) Dogs in groups may be more confident than single dogs, but single dogs may bite if cornered.
- 3.) Dogs become bolder in or near their home turf, and you may not know where that turf is.
- 4.) Dogs can view a direct stare as a threat.
- 5.) Dogs see anyone who runs away as either an intruder or as prey. Either way, the dog has all the advantages.
- 6.) Throwing any item, or aggressively waving your arms at a pursuing dog will increase the dog's aggression, not cause it to back down.
- 7.) Children who shriek are more likely to be chased than quiet ones.
- 8.) The young and elderly are more likely to be injured as they may not be able to move in a coordinated manner or anticipate the event.
- 9.) Although it is incorrect to say that some breeds are more aggressive than others, larger breeds do more damage when they attack.

Any dog exhibiting fear or threat should be avoided. Threat postures include wide-legged stances with lowered heads, growling and baring of teeth, staring and erect hair in the shoulder area.

If you are approached by a worrisome dog, you should take the following actions: 1--avoid staring at the dog, look at it out of the corner of your eyes. 2--back up slowly, being careful not to trip. 3--keep arms and legs to the side, and do not make any sudden movements. 4--talk to the dog in a calm voice. Some dogs may not like this. If a growl intensifies, stop! 5--remain as tall as possible. Do not hunch down. 6--move as directly as possible to a safe area. These are the same instructions given to anyone likely to encounter dangerous wildlife like wolves and bears.

Never assume that because the dog stands still that you can start to run. Running will start the chase response in a dog. Once you are away from the dog you can call for help and wait until it comes.

Practice this with children. Also, teach them that if a dog jumps at them they should fall silently to the ground and imitate an armadillo:

curled up in a ball with arms covering their heads. This is also a good position for anyone who falls when being pursued by a dog.

Finally, if the dog makes contact with you, stay calm, stay silent, and do not get into a tug-of-war with any of your body parts. In situations involving bites, the majority of the damage is done when a person tries to pull the afflicted area from the dog's mouth. The dog's response will be to tighten its grip and shake. Be calm. Once the dog lets go, follow the above steps.

If children are grabbed by dogs, DO NOT struggle with the dog for the child. The child will only be injured more. Be calm and quiet. Encourage the child to be quiet and go limp. Try to distract the dog.

We hope you never need this advice. We also encourage you to

# SOUTHTOWNS ANIMAL HOSPITAL

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*Visit us on the web!*

***www.SouthtownsAnimalHospital.com***

## THE SOUTHTOWNS JOURNAL



**Happy Birthday Newman!**  
Wishing him the Best



**A Whole Can O' Worms**  
The Importance of Fecal Testing



**Caring for Your Pet Reptile**  
Dr. Winkle gives the Basics



**When Dogs Attack!**  
What You Should Do.

### Just a reminder!



*Past the teeth  
And through the Gums  
Look out organs  
Here it comes!*

Bad Breath Is one of the first signs of Dental Disease. Bacteria in the mouth can eventually damage the heart, kidneys and liver.



Our Mission Statement:

*To achieve excellence in the treatment and care of all pets.*