



# PAWS

Volume I Issue I ~ February 2014

# Creston Pet Adoption & Welfare Society

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT:

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### VICE-PRESIDENT:

PAT MAY

### SECRETARY:

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### WEBSITE:

[WWW.PAWS-CRESTONBC.ORG](http://WWW.PAWS-CRESTONBC.ORG)

### HOURS OF OPERATION

MONDAY - SATURDAY 10 AM - 3 PM

## President's Message

by Carol Freeman-Ryll

Hello to all our members and supporters. May I first wish you all the very best for 2014.

This is the first of what we hope will be regular communication for interested parties. It is a way in which we feel the members and supporters can be kept up to date as to what is happening at the shelter and our other programs.

Although we continue to have General Meetings five times a year at the shelter, we have noticed the attendance is not as great as in the early years. No doubt there are many reasons for this...information is readily available on our website, many volunteers at the shelter or bake sales etc. pass along information, to name but a few.

However, I personally feel it is always better to get information first hand whenever possible. As such, I will do a brief overview of the major events of 2013 here. As March 20 is time for our AGM, (I hope you can keep this open) an update will also be presented there (along with elections for V.P., Secretary and 1 Director at Large) and I urge you to attend.

What comes to mind for last year...no doubt the item which jumps to mind first is the intense feelings raised by the introduction of sustainable funding for PAWS by the RDCK areas. As you know, this idea was consequently withdrawn. But every cloud has a silver lining and the elected Executive Board really had a good eyeopener as to the wishes of the population which we serve. Not always as we thought. But it is certainly helping with our strategic planning for the future.

But there have been other events and issues which are worthy of mention. The bake sales of this past season have been awesome! Hats off to all those volunteers who make this happen. In the Christmas season people have generously opened their wallets for PAWS with generous donations. As have three of the foundations which have traditionally supported us, with larger than usual grant money. All of which has helped us continue the services we provide to the community.

As we gather statistics on the animals we have encountered, we see in particular many more lost/found animals reunited without actually being admitted into the shelter and some of this appears to be a direct result of the use of social media. The use of the PAWS I.D. tags certainly plays a part of this too.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED....

If you have visited us in the past few months or have driven by, you will have seen at the east end of the PAWS property the completion of the Memorial Garden. Although this will not be officially open until the spring, there has been interest and commitments to use it already. We hope this will not only be a well used facility as pets ashes may be interred, but a good income stream for PAWS. As you will have remembered from the spring General Meeting, this project was done at no cost to PAWS, via a donation.

Fencing which had begun the previous year has been completed. We still continue with establishing the moveable, emergency only fencing project.

And last but no means least, what would we do without the immense efforts and commitments of the shelter cat and dog volunteers, backed up by the foster parents as needed! We are now tracking hours too, which is a real stunner. Thank you all so much. But let us not forget those volunteers who also hold positions on the Board and work many more hours behind the scene to keep the organization going. **As mentioned earlier, BOD positions are available at the upcoming AGM. I would love to hear from any members who may be interested in running.**

I know this is by no means a complete list of PAWS activities, but hope it wets your appetite for more!

Feel free to contact myself or any of the Board members for more information.

Meanwhile, thank you all for your ongoing support. See you soon.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

Event: **2014 Annual General Meeting**  
Date: **March 20, 2014** Time: **7:00 pm**  
Location: **PAWS Shelter**  
2014 Election of Directors:  

- Vice President
- Secretary
- Director at Large

*Refreshments provided.*

## VOLUNTEER HOURS 2013

On average, 840 hours per month are worked at the shelter. This does not take into account hours not noted by the Directors, done outside the perimeters NOR the many hours applied by volunteers and the bake sales and raffle ticket projects.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

In case some people have missed the last three monthly announcements for the PAWS Volunteer of the Month, following is a list. This continues to be the best received way of getting the message out about the great job the volunteers do in many different categories.

Thanks to....

- All the bakers who work tirelessly working for the bake sales and concessions.
- Carol Wolfe for her thoroughness and dedication to the cat area at the shelter.
- Cheryl Moody for everything she does in the dog kennel area....adopting a Beagle not withstanding!

PAWS would be nowhere without you all.

## 2013 STATS FOR PAWS

### Shelter Dogs:

Admitted	90
Adopted	26
Reclaimed	71

### Shelter Cats:

Admitted	46
Adopted	37

### Others:

2 Rabbits (1 adopted, 1 died)  
Goslings (adopted)  
2 Horses (fostered out)

## CLOSTRIDIUM IN DOGS AND CATS

By: Patricia Huet

The cause of diarrhea in pets can be as simple as a change in food or the pet eating something it shouldn't have. A more serious cause can be from pathogenic microorganisms in the digestive tract. Infection from two species of bacteria, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Clostridium difficile*, may cause diarrhea in pets and people, and they are common in the environment. These bacteria can form spores that are resistant to cold, heat, and disinfectants. Both species have strains that produce toxins that cause symptoms. The toxins damage the gut lining, which results in inflammation and diarrhea.

Because dogs and cats at PAWS are in contact with others of their species, the risk of their developing illness from these bacteria is greater than in the home environment. Healthy animals may have *Clostridium* in their digestive tract without showing symptoms, yet spores can be shed in their stools. This could potentially contaminate the outside area and the kennels.

*C. perfringens* is a leading cause of diarrhea in dogs. Transmission and effects of infection in dogs can vary depending on the quantity of bacterial spores in the environment, the level of exposure, and the general health condition and age of the exposed animal.

### Sources of Clostridium

*Clostridium perfringens* occurs on decaying vegetation and on old or rotting meat. As cats tend not to eat either of these, it is much less common in cats than dogs. These bacteria are one of the most common causes of food borne illness in humans in the United States. As with other intestinal pathogens, pets can pick up both species of *Clostridium* from infected stool. The most common type in dogs is the strain that produces enterotoxin A. These bacteria have been found to be present in up to 37% of healthy dogs and 20% of healthy cats.

*Clostridium difficile* is ubiquitous and present in healthy animals. *C. difficile* bacteria are passed in feces and spread to food and surfaces like floors and counters in the environment. The bacteria produce spores that can persist in a room for weeks or months. The infection often flares up after a course of antibiotics for some other condition. There is some evidence that *C. difficile* can be transmitted from people to pets, for example when therapy dogs visit hospitals or assisted care facilities. It is likely that most people get the infection from contaminated food sources. Each year, more than a half million people get sick from *C. difficile*, and in recent years, *C. difficile* infections have become more frequent, severe, and difficult to treat.

### Symptoms

The main symptom of *Clostridium* infection in pets is diarrhea, which may be associated with:

- Shiny mucus in stool
- Small amounts of fresh blood in stool
- Small, meager stools
- Straining to defecate
- Increased frequency of defecation
- Abdominal discomfort – characterized by standing with lowered front and raised back end, resistant to being touched in abdominal area
- Abnormal amount of flatulence

The infection can lead to dehydration, which must be treated immediately. Older animals, and those with inflammatory bowel syndrome or chronic liver disease, are more likely to develop *Clostridium* infection, and have it recur even after treatment, than healthy pets.

### Diagnosis and Treatment

If you have a pet with severe diarrhea and cramps, take it to your veterinarian. He or she will do a thorough checkup and ask you to obtain a stool sample. The sample will be sent off for testing, usually

with a molecular typing test called polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

Once diagnosed, treatment for both species of bacteria consists of antibiotics, usually metronidazole (Flagyl). This will generally cure the infection, but if the pet has been sick for a long time, it may need to be on the antibiotic longer, even months. Antibiotics for any condition should be used judiciously, because good bacteria in the gut will be killed, allowing the more resistant *Clostridium* to multiply. A wait-and-see attitude should be taken with simple ailments before resorting to antibiotics. An antibiotic with a narrow range is better than one that cures everything, and it should be taken for the shortest time possible to prevent antibiotic resistance.

The dog or cat should be given probiotics (living bacteria and yeasts, such as those found in yogurt) to help restore a healthy balance to the intestinal tract. A yeast called *Saccharomyces boulardii*, in conjunction with antibiotics, might help prevent further recurrent *Clostridium* infections.

A high-fibre diet (fruits and vegetables, or high-fibre pet food) should help dogs with a chronic infection. The fibre tends to lower the concentration of the bacteria and lower the pH in the gut, which helps prevent spore-formation and toxin production.

### Prevention and Control

If PAWS dogs or cats are diagnosed with *Clostridium*, they should be isolated, at least while they have diarrhea. Volunteers looking after them should always wear gloves and aprons, and even those not caring for sick animals should wash their hands frequently and thoroughly (soap them for 20 seconds, then rinse with hot water). Alcohol gel sanitizers will not kill spores of *Clostridium*. Kennels and all equipment should be washed periodically with a disinfectant containing chlorine.

The same thing applies at home. Wash your hands after picking up feces, and keep your pet's living area

clean. These bacteria can be dangerous to you as well as your pet.

### References

Brooks, Wendy C., DVM, DipABVP. 2012. *Clostridium perfringens*. <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?A=2239>

Gould, L. Hannah and Brandi Limbago. *Clostridium difficile* in Food and Domestic Animals: A New Foodborne Pathogen? 2010. *Clin Infect Dis*. V. 51, issue 5, pp 577-582.

Struble, Andrea L., Yajarayma J. Tang, Philip H. Kass, Paul H. Gumerlock, Bruce R. Madewell and Joseph Silva, Jr. 1994. Fecal Shedding of *Clostridium Difficile* in Dogs: A Period Prevalence Survey in a Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. *J VET Diagn Invest* 6: 342

<http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/clostridium-perfringens.html> C. perfringens in humans

[http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff\\_infect.html](http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff_infect.html) C. difficile in humans

[http://www.idexx.ca/pubwebresources/pdf/en\\_us/smallanimal/reference-laboratories/diagnostic-updates/realpcr-canine-feline](http://www.idexx.ca/pubwebresources/pdf/en_us/smallanimal/reference-laboratories/diagnostic-updates/realpcr-canine-feline) Laboratory diagnosis

[http://www.petmd.com/dog/conditions/digestive/c\\_dg\\_clostridial\\_enterotoxigenesis](http://www.petmd.com/dog/conditions/digestive/c_dg_clostridial_enterotoxigenesis) general overview.

<http://www.vetinfo.com/clostridium-in-dogs.html#b> Clostridium in dogs.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/c-difficile/DS00736> Human infections of C. difficile

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/food-poisoning/DS00981> Human infections of C. perfringens.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090507101820.htm> Possible transfer of C. difficile to therapy dog from patient.

For more information on becoming a PAWS member, sponsoring or volunteering please visit our website at **WWW.PAWS-CRESTONBC.ORG** or call the office 250-428-7297.