

## WHATS NEW?

### NEWS - UPDATE

The Doctors and staff of Meridian Veterinary Hospital are now settled into our new facility. It took many years of dedicated clients, planning, and hard work to accomplish the completion of our new building. It's hard to believe that we have already been in here a year and a half!

Thanks to all of you who patiently endured any inconvenience during our exciting but sometimes messy project.

Many of you might be wondering what has happened to the existing building after the move? Well, the existing building is still in use as our boarding facility, "The Pet Inn Place". aka (The Pet'n Place).

There are a few changes within our boarding facility to improve and update the building. Suites are now available along with a safe play ground for our furry friends to play in.

### HEARTWORM DISEASE

Heartworm is an internal parasite in which the adult worm lives within the heart. The microfilaria, or larval stage of the worm, is found within the bloodstream of an infected animal. Mosquitoes transmit the microfilaria from animal to animal through their bites. Heartworm disease can be deadly to an animal which has contracted the worms.

There are treatment options for animals which have been diagnosed with the disease, but the treatment can be dangerous. Animals who survive the treatment for heart worms often have permanent damage to their hearts.

There are drugs available to prevent the disease in our pets.

A recent study by Dr. Baumwart, a cardiologist with West Vet, showed the rising incidence of heartworm disease in the state of Idaho. The study reported that there were 27 dogs diagnosed with heartworm last year, and 132 cases in the past five years.

Dogs from endemic states, whether visiting or moving to Idaho, often acts as a reservoir for the increased spread of the disease.

Heartworm antigen tests are the best method for screening dogs for potentially being infected. A positive antigen test should then be confirmed with microfilaria test for final confirmation.

Cats can be infected with heartworms, but they appear to be at a much lower risk. There are preventatives for cats as well.

### OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL OF YOUR PETS:

We recommend starting all dogs on a preventative and leaving them on the medication year round.

We recommend testing all dogs, older than six months, prior to starting on a heartworm preventative. We then recommend retesting the dogs one year later and then every three years while on year round preventative medication. If animals are only on preventatives part of the year we recommend testing annually prior to starting back on the medication. We recommend that cats, because of their lower risk level, should be evaluated on an individual basis to determine the benefits of starting on a heartworm preventative.

We recommend that you talk with one of the technicians or doctors if you have any further questions regarding heartworm disease.