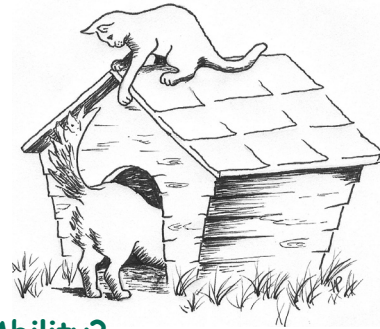


# Tails from the Dog House

The Quarterly Newsletter from the  
Sardis Animal Hospital

Winter 2011  
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## Do Cat's Have Psychic Ability?

The last edition's lead article was about the cognitive ability of dogs. Now it's the Cat's turn. Cat's have long been known for behavior that to us lowly humans appears "other-worldly", hence their association with witchcraft and supernatural phenomena. But do cat's really have extra sensory perception or do they just have such finely tuned sensory ability that to humans whose senses of hearing, sight and smell are not as advanced, cats just appear to have special power.

What appears to us as feline psychic ability falls into three categories, prediction, navigation and intuition. A momma cat's removing her kittens from a building just before a fire or earthquake would make you think she has predictive ability. Stories of cat's returning home over long distances speak to uncanny navigation ability, and what cat owner hasn't wondered about their intuitive cat disappearing on the day of a scheduled visit to the vet even before getting the cat crate out of the garage!

My scientific training would have me believe that there is a logical explanation for the cat's remarkable ability. Let's for a moment consider the owl, another species that in the past had an association with witches and the occult. Before we learned what we now know about the owl's anatomic adaptation for night vision and hearing, we would wonder how an owl can swoop out of nowhere in total darkness and nail an unsuspecting mouse. Three hundred years ago that was a mystery that led to supernatural conclusions. With modern technology and study we have some understanding how owls do this. What about cats?

In the natural world, cats are a very successful predator. Many feline species are also nocturnal, adapted to catch prey when it may not be as alert or visual as in daytime. Cats have an excellent sense of smell, hearing and ability to detect vibration and movement of air. Their vision is acute and they have incredible reflex ability and neuro-muscular co-ordination. Were it not so, they could not succeed as a predator. So does this understanding completely explain what appears to us as supernatural ability? Perhaps our current understanding of the natural world is so incomplete that we just haven't discovered how it all works. Or is there really an unexplainable spiritual essence to cats?

I await an explanation for the cat who was left behind when the owners moved across the country and did the "incredible journey" of 1500+ miles to find his beloved owners in their new home. That goes beyond homing ability that can be explained by alignment in the earth's magnetic field. And what about "Oscar" the nursing home cat in Providence Rhode Island who could predict the death of a resident. Oscar would wander throughout the home in his daily routine and would stop and sit at the bedside of someone who within 4 hours would pass from mortality, like some kind of furry grim reaper. Oscar reportedly did this over 25 times! Did he smell a change in the person? Did he detect some change in electrically charged ions around their body?

Perhaps as science and our understanding of the natural world continues to unfold we will come up with a plausible explanation for these remarkable events like we can now explain how the owl catches mice in the dark. But until then I will continue to advise you to make appointments with the vet for your cat's shots when he or she is no where near the phone!



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The Standard of  
Veterinary Excellence

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## **Sardis Animal Hospital Passes Re-certification Inspection with the AAHA**

The Doctors and Staff are extremely pleased to report that your Animal Hospital has once again passed it's certification inspection by the American Animal Hospital Association. Member Hospitals are inspected every three years. A passing score is required each time in order to maintain certified hospital status.

The inspection process involves an on-site inspection by a field representative of the AAHA, headquartered in Denver, Colorado. The inspection process is very detailed, covering approximately 900 specific points. The general topics covered include house-keeping, safety, staff and hospital management, compliance with local laws and regulations, out patient and emergency services, medical records, in house laboratory, radiology and imaging, anesthesia, surgery, sterility control, pharmacy, continuing education and library, animal housing and nursing care.

The AAHA is the world-wide originator and pioneer in the area of standards for small animal hospitals. The standards are the highest in the veterinary profession and generally exceed the requirements of state and provincial licensing bodies. Achieving certification requires not only added expense in keeping up with trends and technology, but also attention to detail and commitment by the entire veterinary health care team.

There are about 25 AAHA certified hospitals in BC out of approximately 500 veterinary practices in the province. The Sardis Animal Hospital was first certified in 1982. We are extremely proud to have maintained continual certification for the last 30 years!!

Only certified member hospitals are allowed to display the AAHA logo on hospital literature and advertising.



The Standard of  
Veterinary Excellence



*Standing left to right:* Helen Turner, Dr Jack Anvik, Pat Webster with “Twitch”, Dr Christa Dunsford, Lynn Burks with “Skully”, Lana Powell, Dr Arden Powell, *Kneeling in front:* Justina Webster with “Eva”, Jocelyn Lavoie with “Baxter”, Joyce Fairley with “Ceilidh”, *Missing:* Coreen Lunt

## Dr Ron Moller Announces His Retirement

### Staff News



It is with both sadness and joy that we announce the retirement of Dr Ron Moller. We are sad that we will have to learn do without his professional excellence, his dedication, his kind, friendly manner and his warm sense of humour. We share in his joy inasmuch as he will finally be able to dedicate his time more completely to personal and family matters and to do the many things that a long busy career has kept him from.

Dr Ron has been both a helpmate and lifesaver to many 4 footed creatures under his care. He has also been an example and mentor to many 2-footed younger animal caregivers who have been privileged to work with him over the last forty years.

Dr Ron was born in Lethbridge Alberta in 1942 of part Swedish and part Icelandic heritage. His love of animals led him to a career in the veterinary sciences. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Utah State University in Logan, Utah in 1967 and his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1971. It was in veterinary college that he and Dr Anvik became friends. After graduation Dr Ron went to work at the White Rock Veterinary Hospital where he practiced until 2006. After a year sabbatical, Ron came to work for us in 2007. He enjoys reminding Dr Anvik who worked for him part time in White Rock in the 70's, that it was his turn to return the favour later in his career when he came to work part time in Sardis.

Ron's life has been a life of service on many fronts. Not only has he had a sterling career in veterinary medicine, but he has been actively involved in community and church volunteer work. As a young man he served for 2 1/2 years as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints in Sweden. He spent over 20 years as a Scout Leader and organizer with Scouts Canada and filled many volunteer church assignments. One of Ron's loves is Geneology and Family History. He currently volunteers as a phone support resource for a world-wide phone help line in geneology and receives calls from all over the world from people who are engaged in researching their family history.

Ron and his wife Kristina have 5 children and 13 grandchildren and have moved to Kakawawa Lake near Hope for a quiet retirement. They are looking forward to spending more time with their family and doing some travelling. They are currently planning a trip to Iceland where Ron can delve further into his family roots.

**Congratulations Dr Ron!!!** You will be missed!



### Banjo Says:

*"One nice thing about being a dog is that if you gain weight, it's always someone else's fault!"*

## Xylitol artificial sweetener found in sugar-free gum is toxic to dogs

### Doggy Doo-Doo

What may be good for man may not be good for man's best friend!



Xylitol is found in many products

Veterinarians are seeing a disturbing increase in a frightening toxicity in dogs. The Poisonings are due to the ingestion of human foods and products that contain the artificial sweetener Xylitol. Often promoted as an "all natural sweetener" because it is extracted from birch, raspberries, plums and corn. It is found in many so called "sugar free" products such as chewing gum, candies, soft drinks, and other sweets. It is commonly found in some packets of sweeteners for coffee. Generally considered safe for humans, it can be fatal for dogs. (We are becoming increasingly sceptical of products that are promoted as "natural.") Even though the source of Xylitol is plant based, it is in fact a highly processed product that is concentrated through the extraction process.

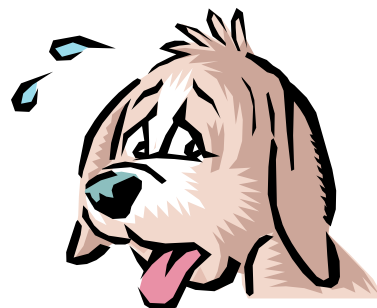
The most common danger for dogs is from sugar free chewing gum which commonly contains Xylitol. Gum can be found anywhere and dogs may be attracted to it. Be careful leaving it lying around on counters, tables, in open purses and pockets. If you have kids, warn them about the danger to Fido. they should not leave it lying around, put it under the kitchen chair or feed it intentionally for a treat or for laughs. There is nothing funny about accidentally killing your dog with a big wad of sugar-free chewing gum or candy.

Signs of Xylitol poisoning can be seen in as little as 30 minutes after ingestion. Xylitol causes a rapid release of insulin (in dogs) resulting in a sudden drop in blood sugar which in turn causes the following symptoms. weakness, uncoordinated movements, twitching, muscle weakness from low Postassium, seizures, coma, liver dysfunction and or failure and death within a matter of hours if the amount ingested is sufficient. This would be most likely to occur in small dogs whose small body mass would react more seriously.

Other products that may contain Xylitol are low carb and diabetic candies, baked goods, some pharmaceuticals, and many dental products including mouthwashes, mints and toothpastes. NEVER use human toothpastes on dogs in case they contain Xylitol. Use only toothpastes specifically made for pets if you are brushing your pets teeth.

If you witness your dog ingesting a package of sugar free chewing gum or candy, call us immediately! It could be a real emergency. Similarly, if your dog shows the group of symptoms described above, you need to seek immediate veterinary attention.

We were disappointed in the Xylitol Canada website where the warning about toxicity to pets was not easy to find. It is buried at the end of the FAQ's. Considering the seriousness of the toxicity, they could have tactfully made the warning more visible without sacrificing the salesmanship of the website.



## X-Ray Case of the Week

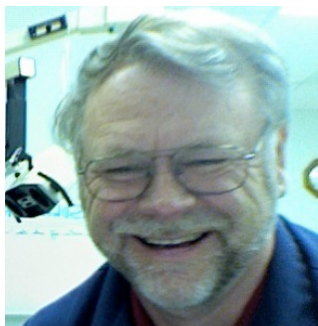
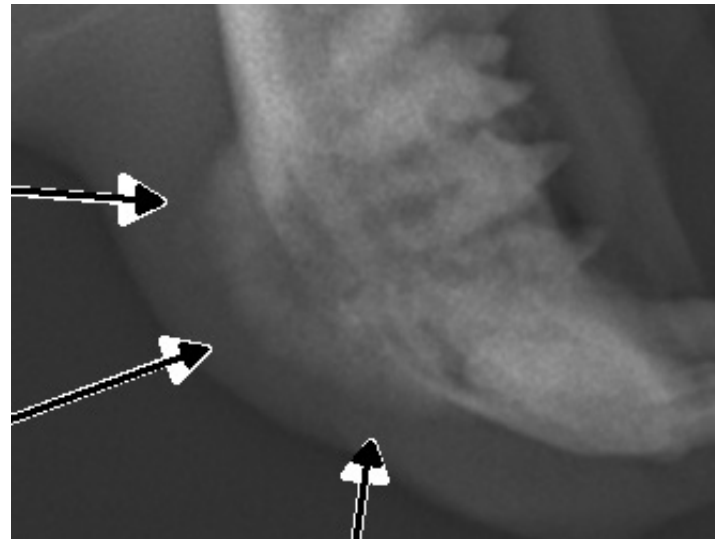
### Jaw Bone Tumor in a Cat.

An elderly cat was presented to the animal hospital with a firm swelling under its chin. The diagnoses that were considered upon presentation were a tooth abscess, bone infection, soft tissue infection, soft tissue tumor or bone tumor.

Examination of the oral cavity showed teeth that were well anchored with normal looking gum tissue, suggesting that this was not likely an abscess. Digital radiographs were taken of the affected area. The X-ray clearly demonstrates destruction of the jaw bone with a halo of new bone-like material being laid down over the dissolving jaw bone.

These features are highly suggestive of a primary bone tumor, most likely Osteosarcoma. A definitive diagnosis would require a deep biopsy of the site, however the radiographic evidence was strong enough to warrant a grave prognosis. The cat was euthanized for humane reasons.

Osteosarcomas are seen occasionally in cats but in our practice would be considered uncommon. They are seen with a disturbing frequency in large breed dogs however. We diagnose Osteosarcoma in a large breed older dog every few weeks. The tumor grows rapidly, can be unbelievably painful, and has a high malignant potential with spread to regional lymph nodes, lung and other organs. By the time we see them, many have already spread. A heartbreaking condition to be sure. Breeds most commonly affected are Golden Retrievers, Rottweilers and giant breeds such as Great Danes, Saint Bernards and Mastiffs. The sites most commonly affected are the long bones of the limbs.

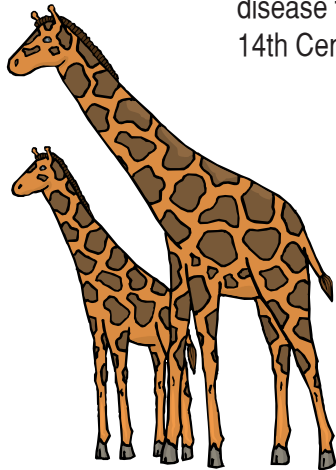


### Dr Jack's Wisdom

"Always speak the truth. But you better leave right afterwards!"

## Animal Trivia

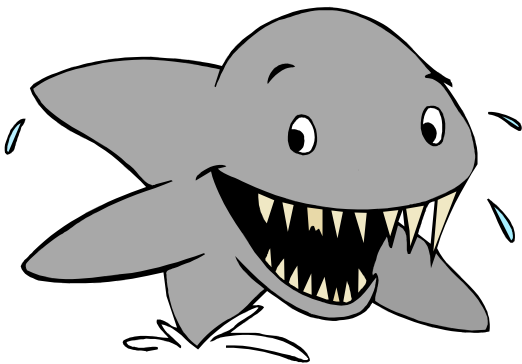
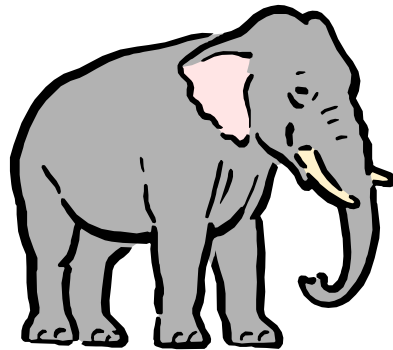
Fleas have had a huge impact on human history. More human deaths have been attributed to fleas than all the wars ever fought! As carriers of Bubonic Plague, fleas spread the disease that killed one third of the population of Europe in the 14th Century.



When a baby giraffe is born, it usually falls from a height of 6 feet without being hurt.



Elephants are the only land mammal that cannot jump



Great White Sharks can go as much as three months without eating. Just don't be around when it's feeding time!!

The last word in many English dictionaries and encyclopedias is "ZYZZYVA" It is actually a weevil first discovered in Brazil in 1922



## Feature Photo

*And they told me I was going to work with **small** animals when I signed on here!*

*Hurry up with that needle Dr Jack!! He's slipping off the table!! I can't hold him much longer.....*

*Hmm... that vein should be here somewhere... I wonder if I slept through that anatomy lecture?????*



Just another day at the office!!