



New Faces at PAH

Our practice continues to grow, with the addition of many new enthusiastic people to help give your pet the highest quality of care. Two new veterinarians have joined us this year. Dr. Fiona Reeve is a small animal practitioner, and Dr. Liz Ring is a mixed-animal practitioner. They both are accepting new clients, and would love to meet you and your pet. Also, you may notice another new name on the sign out front—Dr. Robyn Alizzeo recently got married and changed her last name to Eldredge. It is still the same person, so don't dismay—she is still here!

Our support staff is also growing. There are two new smiling faces behind the desk, Kate and Alana. They both have worked in the veterinary office setting for many years. Behind the scenes, we are happy to have Tracy joining our kennel staff. She is one of the many faces that greets your pets in the morning and kisses them goodnight for you while your pets are staying with us.



Dr. Elizabeth Ring & Dr. Fiona Reeve



Tracy & Kate

Winter Weather Considerations

Just remember that while you are inside tucked under that blanket, in front of the wood stove, your four-legged friend has to deal with tromping through the snow to go to the bathroom, or may even live outside all the time. If your animal has a thin coat, such as a greyhound, or Chihuahua, you may consider buying a blanket/jacket for them if you take them for long walks, or if you leave them outside for extended period of times.

Make sure that you always check any outside sources of water to ensure that the water has not frozen over. Animals need constant access to fresh, clean water. Now available are water bowls that plug in to keep the water from freezing. These are good investments for barn cats, who may always be outside.

Even though the temperatures have gone down significantly, it is still a good idea to crack your windows open a little if your animal is going to be staying in the car for extended periods of time. With the sun beaming in the car, the temperature inside the car can still rise to dangerous levels.

We have reminded you multiple times, and will once again — be aware that the salt and sand mixes that are used to prevent slipping on roads and walkways can be slightly toxic and irritating to dogs and cats. Therefore, after walking your dog in areas where these products are used, it is a good idea to clean off your animals paws thoroughly. The substances can be irritating to the paw and pads themselves, and also can be extremely irritating to the gastrointestinal tract of your animal if ingested.

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Fecal Fanatics

Animals can become infested with gastrointestinal parasites, a disease which can cause diarrhea, weight loss and lethargy. Animals are often infected with these parasites after being exposed to the eggs that have been shed by another animal. For example, your dog walks in an area where another dog may have defecated, and even if the majority of the feces has been cleaned up, there may be a microscopic parasitic egg left behind. Your dog may then lick his paws while routinely cleaning himself and coincidentally ingest the parasitic egg. This is why we at PAH are adamant about trying to identify any potential carriers of parasites through routine fecal examination of any dogs boarding with us, or playing out in daycare.

A fecal exam involves taking a small amount of your animal feces, mixing it with a special liquid solution, letting it set for 15 minutes with a cover slip on top of it (thus letting any fecal eggs float to the surface) and then examining the cover slip under the microscope. We can identify any eggs that are found in the sample and then prescribe any necessary medication to treat the problem.

We require this fecal exam be done every six months to try to maintain a parasitic free facility. We appreciate you understanding why we need to perform this test. If at any point you have questions regarding your animal's gastrointestinal health, please feel free to set-up an appointment with one of our doctors. Or feel free to drop off a fecal sample at any time for us to evaluate.



Intestinal Parasite Eggs as seen under the microscope

When and Why to Spay/Neuter

Female animals are spayed, male animals are neutered—why? Having your pet spayed or neuter can help ensure a long healthy life for your pet. It has been proven that every heat cycle that your animal goes through greatly increases her chances of developing mammary cancer. Males that are left intact are much more likely to wander to find a female in heat, which will increase their chances of getting hit by a car, or getting lost. It is recommended to have your animal altered at 6 months of age. Neutering is day surgery, meaning you drop your animal off in the morning and pick them up in the evening. Spaying a female is more involved, and thus we keep the females over one night at the clinic to ensure that they are doing well prior to going home. It is recommended to schedule your animal's alteration when you come to the clinic for their last booster vaccine appointment, this way you will not forget to call to schedule their spay/neuter at the appropriate time. We see many young animals in heat, and sometimes even pregnant, therefore it is really important to spay/neuter as close to six months of age as possible.

“Having your pet spayed or neuter can help ensure a long healthy life for your pet.”

How you can help us!

We at PAH strive to ensure your pet's comfort while staying with us at the clinic. We will always accept your used blankets and towels, and thank you in advance for considering bringing us your old blankets or towels. We go through bedding material rather quickly, and thus are always looking for more. So if you are weeding through your linen closet, please consider putting together a bag, and dropping it by the clinic at your convenience!!



Towels and blankets are always needed here at the clinic!



Blanketing Debate

Some horses don't like being blanketed, and some owners HAVE to put a blanket on their horse to feel better about their horse being outside in the snow. Horses that have a nice thick winter coat do just fine outside even when the thermometer plummets. It is important however that your horse has some form of shelter or windbreak out in their turnout area. Wind and rain can slick down or part their hair coat so that they are not insulated well anymore, which is why it is important that in wind and rain the horse has access to a windbreak or shelter. Horses that are exercised heavily all year round may need to be body clipped, in which case they no longer have a nice warm hair coat to protect them from the elements, therefore these horses need to be blanketed. You may notice that some horses out in the pasture on a snowy day have snow built up on their backs, this is because they are so well insulated that their body temperature is blocked from melting the snow. As long as your horse is in good flesh (at an appropriate weight), and has a nice thick hair coat, they probably do not need a blanket routinely in the winter. However, if a Nor'Easter is blowing in, and you don't have a good wind break in your paddock, your horse may appreciate an extra layer. If you do blanket your horse, please routinely take the blanket off, check for weight loss, wounds, and occasionally brush them well, as their hair can get matted down, which is very uncomfortable. If your horse is blanketed early in the winter, then you probably will have to keep a blanket on them, as their coat will not fully develop. However, if your horse is left unblanketed, they will develop a nice wooly coat that will keep them warm all throughout the winter!



Most horses do well in the winter without a blanket!

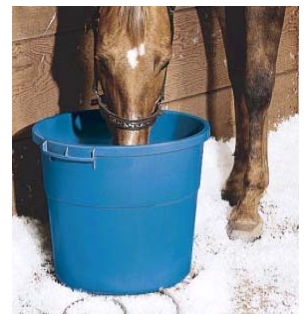
Bare feet vs. Borium Shoes

In the winter, with slippery conditions inevitable, we horse owners must consider what we are going to do to help our four-legged companions stay safe and sure footed. Regular shoes are not an option in the winter. On slick surfaces they only act as ice skates, and snow builds up in them very quickly. Your farrier can add borium cleats to the shoes which act just like soccer cleats and give the horse more traction. These shoes are often used in conjunction with "pop-out pads", or similar pads, that help stop snow from clumping up inside the shoe. The other option is to pull off your horses shoes and let them go barefoot through the winter. Horses' hooves naturally dig into the snow and ice, and usually minimal snow will build up in a barefoot hoof. Although if your horse's hooves are in need of a trim, they may develop a rim of hoof wall around the edge, which will allow for snow to build up within the hoof. Some people will put borium shoes on the front feet and leave the horse barefoot behind, however, sometimes the horse will feel a false sense of security when they have good traction up front, but when they go to gallop across the field, they may lose their footing behind and fall down. Each horse will respond to shoes with extra traction or barefeet differently, so see what works for your horse, and talk to your farrier about what option is best for your situation.

"Regular shoes are not an option in the winter."

Impaction Colics

In the winter, some horses will not drink as much water as normal and they do not move around in their turn-out areas as much as when the footing is better. These two factors alone, added to the fact that in the winter many horses stay in their stalls more than other times of the year, can cause your horses gastrointestinal tract to slow down. A GI slow down means that normal food and feces will build up on top of itself, and then sometimes form a fecal impaction. Symptoms of an impaction include decrease fecal output, signs of abdominal discomfort, and lack of an appetite. If you see any of these symptoms in your horse, please call your veterinarian right away. If caught early, we often can treat these horses successfully with pain medications, and mineral oil administration. We will often decrease the amount of feed you are giving your horse, until the horse starts to defecate a normal amount. Make sure that your horse gets as much turn-out time as possible, and always make sure your horse has a constant supply of clean fresh water.



Heated water buckets are helpful to make water available to your horse even when the temperature drops!

13 Sheep Davis Road
Pembroke NH 03275
Phone: 603-228-0019
Fax: 603-228-9378
www.pembroke-animal-hospital.com

Drs. Julian, Peck, (Alizeo) Eldredge, Reeve, and Ring are available for your large and small animal needs. Our facility on Sheep Davis Road services our small animal patients, and Drs. Peck, Eldredge, and Ring are available to come to your farm for large and small animal patients. We do routine surgeries in-house, and are associated with many referral clinics to send our patients to if the necessity arises.

Pembroke Animal Hospital also has boarding and daycare facilities.

Please feel free to contact us at the clinic regarding any information that you may need to ensure your pet's health and longevity.

Spring Thoughts

Before we know it, the temperature will slowly rise, the horses will start shedding, and the daylight will stay around long enough for us to catch a quick ride after work! Things to start to think about as those great days approach—in the springtime, we at PAH try to make scheduling your routine vaccine farm call visits as easy as possible. We will be sending out a post-card stating which days we will be in your town. If you choose to schedule us on one of these days, you will receive a \$15 discount of your total visit bill. However, these spots fill up fast, so be sure to call early to ensure that you can take advantage of this great discount. We usually send out the post-cards in late January, so if you don't receive one, but anticipate needing us to come out to your farm, be sure to call and check the scheduling arrangements.

We recommend foals get vaccines about 4-5 months of age, as this is when studies have proven that their maternal antibodies will start to wane. We then need to booster these vaccines one month later. We recommend gelding colts at 6 months of age, or whenever it is not fly, or black fly, season.

It takes up to two weeks to get the results of a coggins test back in the spring. We have to draw the blood sample at your farm and then mail it to the state lab. The lab then runs the test, and mails us the results. We then mail the results to you. The mail is often the slow part, as well as in the spring, the lab is very busy. Please plan accordingly to make sure that you get your tests results in time for your first horse show deadline. Most shows require a negative coggins dated within the last 6 months. Some shows require a negative coggins dated within the last year.

If you have any questions regarding what vaccines your horse needs, feel free to contact the clinic at any time. As of now, all horse vaccines are only proven to be effective for one year, so it is necessary to have annual vaccines.



Spring will be here before we know it!