



PET FEATURE

HARLEY SURVIVES HIS SECOND EMERGENCY IN A YEAR

Lucky for him, Harley lives with Mary Diekmann of Pipestone, a woman devoted to keeping her cats healthy. "I've been such a good customer of Pipestone Vet Clinic for such a long time I really should own shares in the place!" she announces.

Harley's spent time at the clinic twice, first with a leg injury and more recently with a urinary-tract emergency. Mary's devotion and rapid response to his symptoms saved him again.

One day she noticed him struggling to pass urine. "He cried," Mary says. "So I brought him to Dr. Nicole Weber who found crystals in his urine—crystals filling his urethra causing a

urine blockage."

This condition could have killed Harley. So naturally Dr. Weber is pleased Mary did the right thing fast. She says, "When your cat is straining but producing no urine you need to visit the Vet Clinic pronto!"

Those symptoms could point to several conditions—all diabolical. Dr. Weber mentions (1) urinary tract infection or (2) a blocked bladder—which could fatally rupture. The cause might also be (3) toxins collecting in the bladder or (4) a potassium accumulation—which commonly results in death. (5) Kidney stones are another possible culprit. (6) Or, like Harley, a cat could be inflicted with crystals that can eventually develop into stones.

At the Vet Clinic, Harley spent two days catheterized while receiving treatment to flush his bladder of any remaining crystals. Then, he went home with a new preventative diet that reduces crystal formation by decreasing urine pH. "He



can only eat Hill's Science Diet C/D from now on," Mary notes. "It's a little bit of trouble keeping the other five cats away from his special food...but I manage."

Five cats. Special diet. Emergency surgery to amputate Harley's shredded right rear leg this spring. ("He went outside and was gone four days. I think it took him that long to work free of whatever caught his leg.") Harley may not realize he's lucky to be alive, but he probably suspects he's fortunate to live with Mary.

Dr. Weber counsels all cat owners to act quickly if a pet shows symptoms of life-threatening urinary blockage. Bring the cat to the Vet Clinic right away. ■

FELINE URINARY TRACT DISEASE

- Average age when symptoms appear: 4 years
- Symptoms include urinating in unusual places
- 66% of older affected cats will be in some stage of kidney failure

G. F. Kennedy, D.V.M.

G. D. Spronk, D.V.M.

J. D. Bobb, D.V.M.

B. R. Kerkaert, D.V.M.

J. L. Goelz, D.V.M.

L. W. Minion, D.V.M.

C. S. Schmitt, D.V.M.

S. R. Wayne, D.V.M.

C. W. Vlietstra, D.V.M.

N. L. Weber, D.V.M.

J. L. Nerem, D.V.M.

C.A. Odland, D.V.M.

D. F. Peterschmidt, D.V.M.

B. B. Myers, D.V.M.

A. M. Emme, D.V.M.

PIPESTONE VETERINARY CLINIC AND PIPESTONE LIVESTOCK AUCTION MARKET: KNOWLEDGE AND COOPERATION REINFORCE A LONG RELATIONSHIP

Geography presents the Pipestone Livestock Auction Market (PLAM) with both opportunities and challenges. Owner Brian Schneider knows his sales attract border-crossing buyers from South Dakota and Iowa as well as Minnesota customers. And that requires attention to each state's specific health regulations.

Brian is busy with twice-weekly sale dates, a variety of livestock and sellers, plus managing the schedules of five full-time and 35 part-time employees. He needs to know somebody will supply proper health papers for each animal sold. That's why he feels really fortunate to work with Nancy Oye of Pipestone Vet Clinic.

"She's more knowledgeable about different state requirements than anybody I've ever met," Brian reports. "I've been to sales at other barns where getting those papers can be a project! Nobody seems to know or care if you have the right documents when you leave. Nancy provides the best service of anybody I've encountered."

Nancy's relationship with the sale barn traces back to Dr. G.F. Kennedy, who began working with John LeBrun, the original PLAM owner for 50 years. In 1976, John took a shine to Brian, a distant relative. "After high school, I went to work for John part-time while also participating

in my dad's business. (Ed Schneider bought and sold dairy heifers all over the United States.) By the late '80s, Dad was already quite ill (Ed died in 1990) and John was ready to retire.

"The old guy kinda liked me and I liked the sale barn. On July 1, 1987, my brother and I bought the business. In the early '90s, I purchased my brother's interest," Brian notes.

Around then the dairy industry changed, requiring that Brian alter PLAM operations, too. Brian says, "I remember when we had one of biggest dairy sales in the U.S. Our business was 90% dairy, but now we've branched out."

In the past two decades, total PLAM sales volume grew by diversifying to other livestock categories—sheep, goats, hogs, and cattle for slaughter. "And hay. We sell a lot of hay."

That's not to say dairy heifers have vanished from the sale barn—two Thursday sales per month fill the show ring with Holsteins. Behind the scenes, Dr. Jay Bobb finds plenty to do evaluating those animals before they enter the sale ring. Then he sticks around, providing

COW PONY? NOPE. SHE THINKS BIGGER



Here are two phrases you've never seen in the same sentence: fancy footwork and draft horse. With his substantial hooves and wide back, nobody mistakes Arne, a sturdy Norwegian Fjord, for a typical 4-H show-ring competitor. Frankly, he doesn't score all that well either. Not that Karli Ryan minds. "If I win, it means there is nobody else in that class! Somebody has to finish last," she remarks with a grin.

An identical smile adorns the Ryan living-room wall in a freshly minted senior portrait of the blonde girl and her taffy-colored draft horse. If Karli looks small posed next to Arne, she looks even more petite astride. Notions of teen conformity evaporate when you meet the young woman who insists on riding the horse she loves despite chuckles and startled looks.

new owners veterinary services after the sale.

Brian contracts with Pipestone Clinic vets, who ensure that the heifers his customers bid on hide no secrets. "Before selling begins, I know Dr. Bobb and his helpers will examine heifers—each and every one—so we can sell them properly. They check for reproductive soundness and health concerns. If Dr. Bobb discovers a problem, we announce it in the ring. Buyers here know exactly what they're getting."

"After the purchase, our customers usually want certain vaccinations or other vet work to prepare the animals they're taking home to raise. A lot of people prefer coming here where they know they can get vet work done before they leave."

"We are fortunate we have Jay Bobb. There isn't a customer who doesn't like him and his work. He can do it all and do it right. As I talk with other people in my business, I realize not everybody has a working relationship with such a skillful vet."

"How often do you see anybody doing western pleasure events on a draft horse?" Karli inquires. "And Arne can even jump...so can Sarah, a Belgian. Actually, she's faster, but she doesn't turn very well." Barrel-racing draft horses. The concept conjures quite a picture.

In his defense, Dan Ryan is not forcing his younger daughter to compete on her atypical steed. "My dad offered to buy me a quarter horse lots of times. I always said 'No. It would seem weird.' Could I clean the gutters while standing on a quarter horse?"

Clearly, Arne is also good around

To illustrate, Brian describes Dr. Bobb's procedure for testing the smallest calves' reproductive capacity. "He couldn't use the standard process because the calves are so little. Yet we didn't want buyers to purchase sterile heifers while believing they would be good for breeding. Jay learned a technique with a little tube." Now on sale day, sterile heifers, known as queens, appear in the ring separately.

Brian doesn't take credit for initiating the sound relationship that first brought Dr. Bobb to the heifer-working facility at PLAM. "Dr. Kennedy set the tone for doing everything the right way. Back when Jay interned, I watched Doc Kennedy guide him through our process."

"Those two vets have been very instrumental in the good reputation we've developed at this sale barn over the years. It's a relationship that goes back generations in my family and here at the sale barn." ■

the house! Don't tell Karli's mom, Terri, but the horse was even in the house once. Just inside the back door—so Karli could keep an eye on him during a definite emergency. Terri is "not into horses" nor are Karli's three siblings. The draft-horse mania is something only Karli and Dan share.

They began with one horse from an Amish team. Before long, Dan and Karli were driving in parades and giving wagon rides. "Then I saw my friends riding horseback and wanted to do that too. The first time, Arne bucked me off but eventually I broke him to ride." She later trained young Sarah as well.



BRANDON WEILAND OF DELL RAPIDS MAKES NEW FRIENDS AT THE SALE BARN.



TIME FOR A TEACHING MOMENT. DR. JAY BOBB COACHES VETERINARY INTERN ANDREA PITKIN IN THE FINER POINTS OF EAR TATTOOS. LINDSAY JOHNSON, A PLAM EMPLOYEE, ASSISTS. BRIAN SCHNEIDER SUPPLIES AN EFFICIENT WORK AREA WHERE VET CLINIC PROFESSIONALS EVALUATE HEIFERS ON SALE DAY.

The two Ryans trekked with the Pipestone Wagon Train for several years. Last year, when Dan had a conflicting obligation, Karli made the three-day trip to Madison, SD alone riding Arne westward alongside the Conestoga wagons.

Next year, as a freshman at South Dakota State, she'll more likely spend spare time traveling eastbound—back to the family's Pipestone acreage where she can help her father with the horses. Eventually, Karli hopes for a career as a large-animal veterinarian—an appropriate goal for a girl who thinks bigger. ■

HEY, GOOD LOOKING!

Bring your pet—any pet—for a holiday photo with Santa Paws.

Saturday, December 4
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Pipestone Veterinary Clinic

Your whole family is welcome to pose with your pet and Santa Paws. Please consider a monetary donation to the Pipestone County Food Shelf.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

ONE YOUNG, ONE YOUNG-AT-HEART: TWO EMPLOYEES SAY JOB IS NEVER BORING

We're told employee loyalties have changed and few people in the U.S. stick with one employer throughout their careers. That's not the way Ed Smidt sees it. After 47 years with Pipestone Vet Clinic, he's still a dedicated member of the team.

Yet, for the first time since November 4, 1963, he's thinking of taking it a little easier. Don't call it retirement or even semi-retirement. Just say Ed might appreciate getting up a little later in the morning—4:30 a.m. isn't as appealing as it once was.

Meanwhile, new large-animal technician Derek TerWee is about

the same age as Ed Smidt was when he started at the Vet Clinic. And Derek already covers at least one task Ed has been doing: he hauls pigs on the early morning runs.

In the afternoon, Derek assists the veterinarians on farm calls. ("I'm kind of like a nurse," he says.) That's also something Ed started doing back when two Clinic employees provided support to three DVMs. "Doc Kennedy arrived only two years before I did. There was a bookkeeper and there was me. When the bookkeeper couldn't make it, I did that job too."

Ed recalls, "I liked my job from the beginning. There are so many things to do—the auction market, chute work, building maintenance, trucking—there was never a chance to get bored. It is a good place to work and I've had excellent bosses."

Derek already understands what Ed likes about the job. "I'm having fun helping the vets in the afternoon, hauling pigs in the morning, and



ED SMIDT

working at the auction market. This is all the kind of stuff I did growing up on the farm (near Inwood, IA)."

Prior to joining the PVC team, Derek attended Southeast Tech in Sioux Falls and worked for Lester Feed and Grain.

Ed is married to Gloria, a retired nurse; their three children and five grandchildren all live nearby. The Smidts may do a little traveling now that he's scaling back, assuming he can bear to be away from the place where he's spent 47 never-boring years. ■



DEREK TERWEE