Dear friends and clients,

We are all glad that winter is over and spring seems to slowly be arriving. The clinic is starting to swing into full gear as everyone is getting their spring “tune-ups,” as well as getting adorable new pets. It’s great to see everyone again after yet another long cold winter. If I never see -40 F again, I can live with that. BRRR! All of my farm animals are glad to see that go!

In this issue, we have an update on our rehabilitation program by Dr. Veronica Busick, as well as an article about allergies in dogs by Sarah, one of our veterinary assistants.

Gratefully yours,
Dr. Jenn Berger and everyone at Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails!

**Staff news**

Congratulations to Angela (veterinary assistant) and her husband Reed on the birth of their daughter, Morgan. Dr. LeAnn Anderson and her husband Brian Anderson are also expecting. Dr. Anderson will be out on maternity leave early May through early July. No word yet on if it’s a boy or a girl, but we are all looking forward to finding out. In more baby news (yup, you counted correctly, this is #3): Dr. Jennifer Brown and her husband, Dr. Khurram Khan are expecting a boy in August. As Dr. Khan's job has them “stuck” in NYC, Dr. Brown will start an extended maternity leave mid June, as she won't be allowed to fly after that. We are hoping they can move back to the Midwest soon after.

Dr. Robinette Dunahugh has just joined us full time. Dr. Dunahugh has an interest in theriogenology (animal reproduction), with experience breeding her own Samoyed dogs. We are hoping to upgrade our ability to support more advanced reproductive services in the near future as Dr. Dunahugh settles in. Welcome Dr. Dunahugh!

**Rescue Fun Day 2009!**

Our second annual Rescue Fun Day will be **Sunday June 28 from noon until 4PM at our hospital**. Area animal rescues are invited to show off their pets and their services.

Adopt a pet like Stormy, the 3-legged girl shown here. **Free food, children’s games, and free dog trial runs** on our underwater treadmill!
**Rehab update**

Have you ever had the unfortunate luck of tearing your ACL playing basketball? When it rains do your joints ache something fierce? Do you ever wish your back would just stop hurting long enough to go for a walk with friends, do some gardening or any of the normal activities that cause you pain? Dogs and cats have these same aches and pains as we do but they are often better at putting on a brave face and going on with life. If you were to go to the doctor and discuss these problems with them, they may prescribe you some pain medications to make you more comfortable in the short term. But the really good docs will also recommend physical therapy to relieve pain and strengthen your bones, muscles and ligaments so that you don’t have to rely on medications for as long. With humans, it is almost unheard of to have any orthopedic surgery and not see a physical therapist afterward. While surgery can fix the bone or joint, physical therapy can teach you how to use the muscles that move that joint or support that bone. Physical therapy can help prevent repeated injury or problems arising in other joints from avoiding use of the painful joint.

Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails has opened a canine rehabilitation service (what we call physical therapy for animals) named See Spot Run. Our rehabilitation service provides owners with a way to get their beloved pooch back in shape, relieve pain in achy joints, and strengthen muscles so they can go back to their normal activities that they enjoyed before their injury. Here are a few of our success stories:

**Mocha**, a miniature poodle, was born with a congenital disease that caused a fracture of her right femur just below her hip joint. Dr. Conant performed a surgery called a FHO (femoral head ostectomy) to remove the part of the femur that makes up the hip joint. This procedure is done to relieve pain, as the area the fracture was located could not be repaired. Mocha had become accustomed to walking on three legs and didn’t want to use her newly fixed right rear leg after surgery. Mocha has been coming to see us for regular rehabilitation appointments and has been making significant improvement since surgery. She will now walk on all four legs with comfort and has regained much of the muscle she lost in her right rear leg because she wasn’t using the leg before surgery. During her rehab sessions, Mocha has received massage and therapeutic ultrasound to relieve pain and help with muscle stretching. She has also made use of our therapy balls, ground treadmill, and the underwater treadmill. Mocha’s mom says she should be our “poster child” for rehab because she has responded so well to the therapy!

**Blazer**, a champion field trial German Shorthair Pointer, fractured his right elbow at a field trial competition. He had surgery to repair the fracture and came to see us for post-operative rehabilitation. Blazer had great physical stamina and recovered quickly with the aid of therapeutic ultrasound and exercises to increase his range of motion and muscle mass. He really enjoyed the underwater treadmill, although he thought it was a bit boring to move through water and not “get anywhere.” Now more than eight weeks after surgery you can hardly tell he had surgery on his elbow! He is not painful, has nearly normal range of motion in his elbow, and has just as much muscle mass on the right front leg as the left front.

Working with our patients at See Spot Run has been a very rewarding experience for all of us. It is wonderful to see each one’s progress resulting from rehabilitation and their inner desire to succeed. If you have any questions about the services we provide or would like to schedule an initial rehab evaluation, please contact us at (319) 351-4256.

Veronica Busick, DVM (CCRP pending) & Amy Gerst, RVT (CCRP pending)
Wall of Fame
Has your pet triumphed through adversity? Defied the odds? Bright Eyes wants to tell your pet’s story of success. We want to take those stories and create a “Wall of Fame.” If your pet is interested have them send us their story and picture to:

Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails
3030 Northgate Dr.; Ste B
Iowa City, IA 52245

or email Tina at td2@bebt.com

Allergies
by Sarah Hasanoglu

One of the most common appointments we see is for skin problems. Like people, pets can suffer from allergies seasonally and year-round. There are three main types of allergies for dogs and cats: inhalant, food, and contact allergies. Inhalant allergies are known as atopy. Humans typically react to this type of allergy with respiratory symptoms, but dogs and cats show signs mainly in their skin and ears. Some of the symptoms we see with allergies include: scratching and redness, hair loss, licking or chewing paws, and itchy ears. Symptoms may vary greatly depending on the pet's exposure and individual allergies. The areas of the pet’s body that are most commonly affected are the face, ears, paws, arm pits and flanks. If you notice that your pet has been showing some of these symptoms you may want to bring him or her in for a consult. While some scratching and licking is of course normal, if your pet is exhibiting hair loss or redness he or she may have atopy.

Food allergies can be due to a certain ingredient or many ingredients in your pet’s diet. A pet with food allergies may show similar symptoms to atopy, or may also show gastrointestinal symptoms including vomiting and diarrhea. The easiest way to determine if your pet has a food allergy is to do a food trial. This means switching to a new hypo-allergenic diet and excluding all other substances from the diet.

Allergies are very frustrating for both the animal and the pet owner. It can be very upsetting to see the discomfort our pet is in, and it may be hard to provide relief. There are some things that can help soothe the allergic pet. In some cases medical treatment is not the only thing you can do. We always recommend keeping pets on Frontline to rule out any itching due to flea irritation. Bathing with specially formulated shampoos as well as cleaning paws after outside trips may provide some relief. Sometimes using socks or a t-shirt to prevent your animal from reaching the problem areas may help. Also, adding Omega 3 fatty acids to your pet’s diet can make a big difference. Please feel free to come in or call us if you have any questions.

Referral program
$5 referral bonuses! If you refer us a new client, make sure that they give us your name! We will take $5 off the next non-emergency visit for both you and your referral. Additionally, as part of the program each of you will be entered into a quarterly drawing for a $100.00 pet supply coupon from Leash On Life. There is no limit on the number of referrals (or entries).

Our last winner was Paula Kerezsi, who should be getting her gift certificates in the mail any day now!