



Arbor Animal News

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Trending Now

Our recent Dental Month was a great success with **ninety three** cats and dogs undergoing a professional teeth cleaning and some having more extensive dental work performed. This is a big increase over last year when we had **sixty five** of our patients receive the dental month discount offered. It is wonderful to see so many of our pets have the often painful oral disease addressed and we thank everyone who participated.

We now have about twice as many canine patients in our practice as felines. We consider patients we have seen within the last two years as active and we saw 4,359 dogs and 2,124 cats within the last year. Many of them were seen multiple times throughout the course of a year. We continue to grow and the addition of a sixth doctor to our practice has increased our capacity to serve more patients.

Some of the trends affecting our profession are getting a lot of attention recently. The cost of becoming a vet has skyrocketed and student debt following graduation can be astronomical with the average graduate with debt in excess of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Our workforce is changing with women making up 50% of veterinarians nationwide presently and expected to reach 78% by the year 2030. Another trend is in supply nationwide. Although there appears to be an adequate supply of vets, there are severe shortages in rural areas, mostly affecting large animal practices but also affecting availability in rural small animal practices.

Our profession has traditionally had much longer work weeks than most professionals and thankfully this is improving. Presently the average work week for all vets is 47 hours a week. When I began practice in 1983 it was common to work 55-65 hours a week and I am glad to see this trend improving although vets under the age of 30 still average around 54 hours on the clock per week.

Doctor's Corner: Recent Gems in Practice

From time to time, I ask myself, "What did we do before we had this or that?" We come to take for granted many of the advances and conveniences that simply were not available only a few years ago. Some of these are:

⇒ Reversible Anesthesia: for minor surgical procedures such as laceration repair or small tumor removals, we have injectable forms of anesthesia that can be quickly reversed after the procedure is completed with another injection of a drug which reverses the anesthetic given.

⇒ Long-acting antibiotic: we can now offer a single injection of an antibiotic which lasts for 10-14 days, preventing the need for giving oral antibiotics two to three times daily for the same period. It is not for every situation or type of infection but has changed how we treat many patients, especially owners who find it difficult to give oral medications to their pet.

⇒ Effective heart medications: one of the most effective medications to treat the many forms of heart failure that we see in dogs and cats has vastly improved the quality of life and longevity in our patients. It did not prove to be a useful human medication but has greatly improved the lives of our dog and cat heart patients.

⇒ In-house technologies: it would be hard to imagine vet medicine without being able to provide the lab testing, ultrasound examination, digital radiography and so much more right in our office that we all have come to expect.

Myth Busters Fact or Fiction?

- ▷ **A dog's mouth is cleaner than a human's mouth.** Not so fast—although dogs saliva is toxic to some bacteria, dogs mouths are full of bacteria just like humans. The difference is the types of bacteria they contain are just different types than inhabit human mouths. **Fiction**
- ▷ **If a cat is purring that means they are happy.** Cats do purr when they are happy but they can also purr when they are stressed, sick, injured, painful, and even when they give birth. **Fiction**
- ▷ **Cats need their whiskers to maintain their balance.** No, cats do use their whiskers as feelers but they have the same type of organs for equilibrium that we do located in the inner ear. **Fiction**
- ▷ **Dogs can detect storms before they happen.** This one is a little more complicated because it can be hard to be sure how they do it but it is clear that dogs often know that a storm is coming before it comes, and before we do. They may hear it and smell it but I believe they are also sensing changes in the ionic makeup of the atmosphere and detecting barometric pressure changes. **Fact**
- ▷ **Cats can see in the dark.** Cats do see better in dim light than people and their pupils dilate more, letting in more light. Sometimes cats are seen to have "glowing eyes" when we see them in darker circumstances and this is the light being reflected from the back part of their eyes but does not give them the special ability of seeing in the dark. **Fiction**
- ▷ **Cats and dogs can make wonderful pets, can love us back, be part of our families, and are generally just awesome.** OK that's an easy one. **Fact!**

