

## Medical Notes

InTown Veterinary Group is dedicated to providing clients with an unparalleled range of veterinary care options.

The doctors and staff at Muddy Creek Animal Care Center are always available no matter how seemingly small the question. We care about you and your pets. If you have any concerns please call.

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**Muddy Creek Animal Care Center**  
993 Haverhill Street,  
Rowley, MA 01969

**Phone:**  
(978) 948-2345

**24-Hr Emergency at  
Essex County Veterinary  
Referral Hospital:**  
(978) 725-5544

[www.InTownMuddyCreek.com](http://www.InTownMuddyCreek.com)

### The Wrath of Grapes Raisin and Grape Toxicity in Dogs and Cats

It has long been recognized that common household products such as chocolate, rat bait and antifreeze can be hazardous for our pets. In recent years the veterinary community has recognized a new and potentially deadly toxic risk: gastrointestinal and kidney disease following the consumption of either grapes or raisins. Dogs are most susceptible and comprise the vast majority of cases (since cats are seldom known to eat grapes) but at least one suspected case of grape toxicity has also been reported in a feline.



*Raisins & Grapes can be extremely toxic to some dogs & cats*

The exact nature of the toxin remains obscure. Initially, a pesticide or fungal contaminant was suspected because not all pets who eat grapes are affected. Researchers have since eliminated this as a cause and believe the toxin is within the flesh of the fruit. Another unknown is the specific dose; some dogs have been sickened by eating as few as 3-4 grapes or raisins, others become ill after eating a cup or more, and still others seem to be able to consume large quantities of grapes and/or raisins without any signs of illness. No one can predict which pet is susceptible and which is not. Grape seeds, seed extract and juices are thought to be safe but little information is available, so as a precaution, it is best to avoid these products as well.

Unless the pet was seen eating the fruit, grape or raisin toxicosis can be difficult to diagnose. Initial symptoms develop within a few hours but can be vague, such as vomiting, lethargy, diarrhea or abdominal pain. Partially digested grapes or grape skins might be seen in the stools or in the vomitus. Unfortunately there is no specific test that can be performed to confirm the diagnosis.

The bodily organs most susceptible to the toxic affects are the kidneys. Many dogs will develop acute renal failure within 24 hours of consuming grapes or raisins and will require hospitalization with intravenous fluid support in order to have any chance of survival. Once kidney function has been affected, many pets will die even

*For more information on toxins, go to the [January 2010 Bulger Animal Hospital Newsletter](#), article: "Toxins Update".*

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*For more information, feel free to use the medical index on our website. [www.InTownMuddyCreek.com](http://www.InTownMuddyCreek.com), then click "Medical Index".*

# Dogs

## 2nd Annual Little Paws Loft Holiday Party Saturday, January 16th 2010 4:00-5:30pm

Food, merriment, holiday music, little dogs: it must be time for the annual Little Paws Loft holiday party! Save the date & pretty up your pooch - we'll see you at the Creek on January 16!

Following the great success of last year's party, we will once again be hosting our small dog get together at Muddy Creek. Back by popular demand will be our doggie-themed Yankee Swap. Last year's swap gifts included lots of treats, toys and sports themed jerseys! Participants should bring a dog-appropriate gift that is under \$20.

There will be plenty of treats, both for people and pups! Last year's fare included doggie cookies, doggie popcorn and doggie ice cream. Yes, ice cream. Even given the chilly time of year it was all devoured!

Please see a client care coordinator or email Robyn at [rtownsend@intownvet.com](mailto:rtownsend@intownvet.com) if you and your pup would like to join in the festivities! Hopefully we will see you there!



*Pictures from last year's festivities! A great time was had by all! A special thanks to everyone who came & helped make the Little Paws Loft Holiday Party such a special time. We look forward to seeing you again in January!*

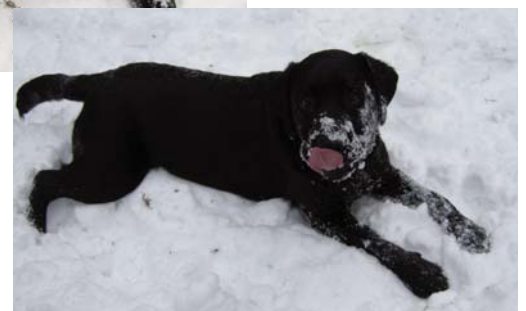


## Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow!

Considering whether or not your dog would enjoy being outdoors given all the snow? Wonder no more, a picture says a thousand words. Check out the pictures of big-dog daycare and all the fun that was recently had playing in the snow.

If you have questions about doggie daycare, give us a call, we're always happy to answer them & give you a tour of the building.

How about a day of fun in the snow with other like-tempered dogs followed by a nice grooming session? Nothing says love like a sweet smelling exhausted dog at the end of the day.



## Cat Tail Inn News

We are proud to announce our collaboration with the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society (MRFRS)! MRFRS adopted over 800 cats last year, and relies on the community and the kindness of over 150 volunteers to help facilitate adoptions.



**Harriet:** is a petite 13 year old Himalayan who craves peace and quiet. She would be best suited for a quiet home with no children or other animals where she can be the center of someone's world. She had one eye removed due to a severe infection but is otherwise healthy and happy. She is quite shy but would thrive in a stable home environment.

The Cat Tail Inn at Muddy Creek is now an official "Meet & Greet" site for cats and kittens who are up for adoption by the MRFRS. Although the actual adoption process is handled by the MRFRS, Muddy Creek will provide shelter, care and love for these kitties in need while they are waiting to find their forever homes. We welcome anyone interested in seeing them to stop by! There are currently two cuties looking for homes: Harriet & Raleigh.

**Raleigh:** Raleigh is a very affectionate 7 year old Ragdoll. He would love the opportunity to find a loving, forever home. He has been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. His health is being managed with a once monthly 10-day antibiotic course and a special diet.



## The Giving Tree

The Doctors and staff at Muddy Creek would like to thank all those who participated in our first annual holiday "Giving Tree" event.

"The Giving Tree" was established as a charitable event to help less fortunate animals during this holiday season. A tree was erected in the reception area at Muddy Creek and was the centerpiece for our holiday adornments.

Ornaments hand painted by Drs Liebert and Reiser were sold to clients for \$3 each. Once purchased, a photograph of their pet was placed in the ornament frame. These were placed on the tree and displayed throughout the season. Once we took the tree down, the ornaments were given to the owners to decorate their homes for the following year.



Thanks to all of your generosity, we were able to raise a total of \$200 dollars for Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society and Ipswich Animal Shelter (\$100 each). The financial success of this event, as well as the festive cheer it brought to Muddy Creek, will make this an eagerly anticipated annual event. Hopefully our doctors and staff will be able to keep up with the demand for ornaments in the coming years.


Thanks again to everyone who helped make this a good year for a few homeless animals. Happy New Year!



## Dogtoberfest 2009

We were heartbroken when we made the decision to cancel Dogtoberfest this year. We didn't think it would be fair to ask our volunteers, our generous vendors or you our wonderful participants to bring your families and dogs out in the middle of a nor'easter.

Due to the many already-scheduled local events in the weeks following Dogtoberfest, and the increasingly cold weather - we were forced to cancel the event all together in 2009.

Despite our cancelled event, we are pleased to have made a donation to the Museum of Science Live Animal Center in the amount of \$750. Next year we will be holding Dogtoberfest in September - hey if they can hold Oktoberfest in Germany in September, then so can we in Rowley! We don't want to compete with the Topsfield Fair, so we'll be holding it before the Topsfield Fair, with a raindate scheduled for after the Topsfield Fair. 



## Muddy Creek News & Updates


**Facebook Fan Page:** Muddy Creek is now on Facebook! To become a fan, go to our website & click the link: [www.InTownMuddyCreek.com](http://www.InTownMuddyCreek.com), or seek us out on Facebook.

Meet the staff and their pets. Get news and updates on upcoming Muddy Creek events and occasional helpful tips from our vets! Become a fan today!

**School Vacations and Boarding:** Phew! We made it through another busy holiday season! But School vacations are just around the corner! If you're planning on taking a family vacation without your pet, in February, March or April, plan early for your pets' vacation at the Creek too! It's also never too early to start thinking about summer plans! Call us to reserve a room today, 978-948-2345.

**Employee Corner:** Muddy Creek would like to recognize Shannon Campbell, Animal Care Attendant, for being an outstanding tour guide and dedicated employee.


Shannon has a welcoming and friendly personality that she extends to both the clients and their pets. Shannon has been with Muddy Creek since August 2008 and has consistently given loving care to the dogs in her care, the pride that she takes in her job, shows everytime.

If you haven't met Shannon or received a tour of the large dog boarding area, please stop by and ask for her! Thank you Shannon! You do an awesome job & we appreciate you for it! 



## Wrath of Grapes, continued from page 1

with intensive care. If caught early, vomiting may be induced to clear the grapes from the digestive system but fluid therapy is still recommended, and kidney function should be monitored via blood work and urine analysis for at least 3 days. In this scenario, the prognosis is much better but abdominal upset may persist for several weeks after the event.

Many clients at Muddy Creek tell us they have given their dogs grapes as a treat for years and are very surprised to hear of the toxic risk. Grapes and raisins are sweet and healthy snacks for people, but until we have a better understanding of the risks involved, we should keep them away from our four-legged family members, *(Please note, this advice also applies to pets with fewer than four legs).* 

# Critter of the Quarter



**Hi, I'm Josh.**

**I'm a 10 year old Standard Poodle.**

The last few years have been pretty rough for me & the ones who love me. Thankfully, my parents love me & take super good care of me! I broke my back leg pretty badly earlier this year. I have had several surgeries to repair it and thanks to that and the physical therapy, I am now fully recovered, walking, and even running, like nothing ever happened! (Let's never discuss the time my leg was shaved. It's too horrifying of a memory; I still shiver at the thought).

Unfortunately, following this ordeal I contracted a heartworm infection. My doctor assured me that this could have happened to anyone. It doesn't make me a bad dog, but I was a bit embarrassed! I mean heartworm! I'm a poodle for goodness sake! I have a reputation to uphold. I had no obvious clinical signs, I was diagnosed during my annual physical exam and heartworm test.

We did not know that heartworm infections were passed by mosquitoes. We have plenty of those around here! I was not on preventative and likely became infected from a mosquito bite that occurred at least 6 months earlier, maybe even two summers ago!

I was very glad we caught it when we did, because without clinical signs, this infection could have been missed. Some of the signs to be on the lookout for include a chronic cough, exercise intolerance, weakness, heart failure, but worst of all, heartworm infections can lead to death! Thankfully, my disease was caught in time.

I was successfully treated here at Muddy Creek. I had to take a month worth of pills, then have three injections over the following month. Right now I'm on an exercise restriction as part of my treatment. Given my fancy new healed up leg, this may be the hardest part of this disease because I love to run.

I am now on my monthly heartworm preventative and am feeling great. My family says I am good as new, and my doctor says I'm doing great.

What a relief, because I have A LOT of living yet to do. 🐾