

Equine November Newsletter

Invitation to an Evening Talk on Winter Horse Care

We are teaming up with The Millers, Baileys Horse Feeds and Masta Rugs for an Evening Meeting on Winter Horse Care. With the range of speakers it should be a very informative evening and there will also be a chance for a bit of shopping afterwards. The talk is at the Millers, Midmar on Wednesday 11th November at 7.00pm. Places are limited and to book tickets call the Millers Equestrian department on 01330 830274. Further details are available on our website www.dukesvets.com and you can download a flyer should you wish to put one up in your yard.

Lorna Jowett, Bailey's nutritionist is one of the speakers and will also be staying with us for a few days when she will be available for a free visit to discuss your equine feeding requirements

Staff News

We have just about recovered after Lydia's and then Mark's weddings in consecutive weeks. The only slight casualty was Linda, who managed to break her wrist driving home from Mark's wedding. Thankfully it seems to have mended well and we are delighted she is back to full fitness. Anyone

receiving a handwritten note from Linda in the last 6 weeks may have wondered why her handwriting looked like a six year old's but now she can use her right hand again the message book at least seems to have returned to normal.



Summer seems to have flown by and David has finished his six month contract with us. He is going to work for the Hong Kong Jockey Club; we wish him all the best and hope to find time to visit him at some point. Mark and Jim will share the workload over the winter and then we will be recruiting a third vet to start again in the spring, hopefully for a permanent position.

Mike Barker 1941 – 2009

I am very sorry to have to inform those if you that do not already know that Mike Barker sadly lost his battle with cancer in September. It was a real privilege to have met and got to know Mike and count him as one of my friends.

His knowledge, understanding and ability to communicate with both horses and people was truly remarkable and he will

Equine and Farm Animal Practice

be sadly missed. However his great gift of being able to pass on his skills means that many of us will have learnt from him and I for one will be forever grateful for the insight into horses he has given me. We send our deepest condolences to his wife Sarah and his family.

Breeding newsletter

We have had a reasonably busy and more importantly fairly successful stud breeding season. Most mares went home pregnant including three that had failed to conceive for one or more years previously. If you would like a copy of the stud newsletter please contact Linda by phone or email.

Case report

We have always worked hard at being good at handling horses and it's not often we come up against a horse we really cannot deal with. However in the summer we came across a horse with a large deep wound on his hock that we just couldn't get near. Usually this wouldn't be much of a problem with the range of excellent sedatives we have available but this particular horse would not let us inject him. Due to the small stable with a very low ceiling that he was in and a serious risk of injury to himself or one of us we arranged for him to travel to our surgery.

We have often found that when you take horses out of their own environment they become more manageable but at least initially this was not the case. Just occasionally we have resorted to using a long pole with a syringe on the end primed with a strong sedative to inject the horse from a distance, but although we could manage to do this the horse became so wound up that we still could not treat him safely and we needed a new plan. In any case we didn't want the horse to become any more upset or distrustful of us.

He was however very good so long as he thought we weren't about to inject him or touch his wound. Jim had an idea and spent some time with the horse just speaking to him over the stable door and then getting the horse to lick apple sauce off Jim's fingers. After this we filled a syringe with apple sauce and got the horse to readily take this into his mouth. The sedatives we use are very poorly absorbed by mouth but will work if given under the tongue. Using this method we were able to give him sufficient sedation without unduly stressing him to carry on and manage him in more conventional ways.

Fortunately the wound healed really quickly and after a couple of weeks we had regained the horse's trust so we could change the dressings and treat the wound without sedation. This is one of the potentially most dangerous situations we have ever had to deal with but it shows that sometimes with a bit of care and lateral thinking there may be a simple solution to the problem.

Animal day care

One of our clients, Amie Morrison has set up a business looking after animals when the owners are away covering routine and holiday cover, plus being there to meet the vet with your horse if you can't make it. You can email Amie animaldaycare@live.com or visit our website for more details.