

# Willow Creek Veterinary Services, P.C.



## Introducing.....

Monday October 8th was the first day for Dr. Sherri Merrill to begin work here at WCVS. We are happy to introduce her to you.

Dr. Merrill's parents have a farm near Scotia, Ne., which is around 60 miles west of Albion, Ne. The main crops they raise are corn, beans, and alfalfa, along with a cow/calf operation. She has a married older brother who also lives by Scotia with his family.

Earning the American FFA Degree in cattle production is an honor Dr. Merrill achieved while attending North Loup Scotia High School. She graduated from Kansas State University in May of 2007.

While in college, she was an officer in the student chapter of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners; her freshman year a justice and her senior year a chancellor on the College Ethics Board; and received a graduate certificate in Feedlot Production.

Husband Matt and Dr. Merrill are living on an acreage NE of Norfolk. There is plenty of room for their two dogs, Molly, a black lab and Trixie, a blue heeler, to run and play. Matt has trained at Heartland Horseshoeing School in Lamar, Missouri for his business, Merrill Farrier Service. Playing softball, volleyball, basketball or gardening are among Dr.



Merrill's favorite things to do, along with camping and fishing with Matt.

Dr. Merrill is a member of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners and the Academy of Veterinary Consultants. She is BQA certified and has a special interest in beef production and medicine.

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### Important dates:

- Nov. 4-Daylight savings
- 6-Election day
- 11-Veterans Day
- 22-Thanksgiving
- Dec. 22-Winter begins
- 25-Christmas
- 31-New Years Eve

### ATTENTION:

As of January 1, 2008- there will be no more charging of small animal services and products. We are sorry for any inconveniences that this may cause you.

## Holiday Gift Ideas

If you are looking for ideas for Christmas gifts for that special person on your list, please give us a call or stop by the clinic.

We can put together gift ideas with a unique array of special items.

Whether it is a gift certificate, puppy treats and pet food or large animal vaccinations, sorting sticks, or maybe a new automatic syringe.

We also have a variety of scented candles, including

"Pumpkin & Spice."

Let us know if we can help you put together something for that person that has everything.

## Holiday Hazards for Pets



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**THE TREE-** A typical Christmas tree is bursting with dangers for your pet. Keep light strands high enough on the tree to prevent burns if they contact your pet's skin. Dangling electrical cords can be a tempting, and dangerous- toy. Avoid decorating with glass ornaments which can be knocked down and broken, resulting in cut feet or mouths. Consider purchasing a portable exercise pen to enclose tree and protect your pets from mishaps. It may not "look the best" it could save a life.



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your pets.

**Poinsettias, mistletoe, holly, and Christmas roses** can all be toxic. The best advice with holiday plants is to keep them away from



**Holiday doggie feasts:** No matter how good they have been this year, fatty foods, and turkey bones can spell danger for your pets. Holiday binges can cause problems ranging from simple indigestion or a touch of diarrhea to potentially life- threatening pancreatitis.

Other toxins like **Antifreeze:** At Christmas and all winter long, remember antifreeze is a danger for your pet. Even in very small amounts, ethylene glycol, the most common ingredient in antifreeze, can cause crystals to form in an animal's kidney, ultimately leading to kidney failure and death! Pets should always be kept away from driveways, garages, and any place that anti-freeze may have spilled. It is also important to make sure your car isn't leaking antifreeze. Rapid treatment is the key to successful treatment for antifreeze toxicity. If you see your pet ingesting antifreeze or think she may have, please call the clinic immediately! **Rock Salt:** Ice and the rock salt used to melt it off of sidewalks can be irritating to your dog's feet. Check their feet frequently—especially after walks. Rinse off any salt or ice and dry thoroughly. Dog boots can help protect sensitive feet.

## How Many Open Cows will You Feed this winter?

We hope that pregnancy checking your herd is an annual ritual for your cow herd. If you don't practice this management tool, this may be the year to start. With the summer being so hot and dry hay prices are going to get high, so not having to feed those unwanted or open cows through winter is something most people are thinking about.

By pregnancy checking in the fall or at weaning, it may save you about \$180 per cow through the course of a winter. It will also help you determine some of the poorer producers in your herd. Whether you want to cull because of pasture reasons or to improve your herd, getting rid of those cattle before they eat you out of your winter feed supply is a great idea. This will also give you more time to look for some good replacement cows to add, if that is what you want to do.

We also recommend to vaccinate and pour your cows at pregnancy check time to help them maintain weight during the winter with no parasites and to help prevent diseases. Recommended vaccinations include a 5 way viral with vibrio/lepto and a scour vaccination for your cattle.

This year for the scour vaccination, we are using Guardian. This product you can give now and still have immunity there at calving time. Of course, with heifers and cows that have never had a prior scour vaccination, a booster vaccination is highly recommended. The closer the vaccination is to calving time the better protection you will get.

So this year think ahead about your cow herd, your plans, and be sure to get those cows pregnancy checked before the snow flies.



## Max: A Success Story

Max is a 2 year old male Sheltie that was brought to us in July of this year for complications on fight wounds sustained from a Great Dane. The wounds opened into the chest cavity and exposed the lung through a hole about the size of a golf ball. This opening made the right lung collapse and made it extremely difficult for Max to breathe. The night of the emergency, we had to place a chest tube and closed the wound surgically and with a bandage to expand the lung again. After we stabilized Max, we thought we were going to be ok, but later more complications kept cropping up.



Max was stable for the first three days. We continued to drain blood off the chest tube and we put Max on antibiotics to help with the infection that was in and around the

lung. After the three days, it came time to check his chest wound and change the bandage. When we removed the bandage, we saw that the infection in the wound had killed several of the surrounding tissues, making it impossible for us to completely close the chest cavity without a bandage. In addition to that, when we removed the bandage Max's lung collapsed again and made it extremely difficult for him to breathe again. We had to quickly change the bandage and work with the chest tube to make it easier for him to breathe again.

As if that were not enough, the blood we had been removing from his chest tube, started making him anemic. We quickly went from being a stable patient to a critical patient with what seemed, at first, to be a simple bandage change.

The plan from this point was to keep Max on two kinds of antibiotics and to change his bandage every 3 to 5 days. As soon as the open chest wound closed we would be able to

send him home. The good news was that every time we changed the bandage we saw a noticeable decrease in the size of the chest wound. The bad news was that every time we changed the bandage Max's lung would collapse and there were a couple times that we thought we were going to lose him. However, Max fought on, and everyday we could see his progress. The whole project took about a month of hospitalization with 3 chest tubes, 4 different antibiotics, and several nervous bandage changes.

Today Max is doing great. His hair is all grown back and he has only a small scar where the open wound to the lung was. The open wound left no residual lung damage that significantly affects Max's breathing and no other complications have come about from the whole situation. It has been a long haul for this little guy and he has been a great patient. We look to Max living a long and happy life as long as he doesn't tango with that Great Dane again.

## Boarding Your Pets

The holidays are approaching and many of you are making plans for holiday travel. In turn, we are planning for our boarding rush. It is very important to call for reservations well enough in advance to assure that there is a spot open for your pet.

We do have certain requirements to be eligible for boarding at our facility, which is common among most facilities. The requirements are in place to protect your pet as well as others'. It is advisable to get any vaccinations that your pet may need at least 2 wks. in advance of your boarding appt. That gives your pet time to build up immunities against any virus'. We want your pet's boarding be a happy

and healthy experience.

Our requirements for boarding a canine include: current vaccinations of rabies, distemper, bordetella, and have some sort of flea protection (other than a flea collar). We recommend a topical solution. We can give any/all of the vaccinations and flea protection when you bring your dog in, if needed.

Our requirements for boarding felines include: current vaccinations of rabies, distemper and flea protection. Again, we can take care of all they need at the time of check-in.

The holidays are time to spend with family and friends, which also pertains to our kennel help; therefore we

do not allow your pets to be picked up on a holiday. Your pet will get the utmost care on the holiday and you may pick them up first thing the next day. We appreciate your understanding on this issue.

So, get your pet up-to-date, call and make reservations early and have a safe and wonderful holiday season.



**Willow Creek Veterinary  
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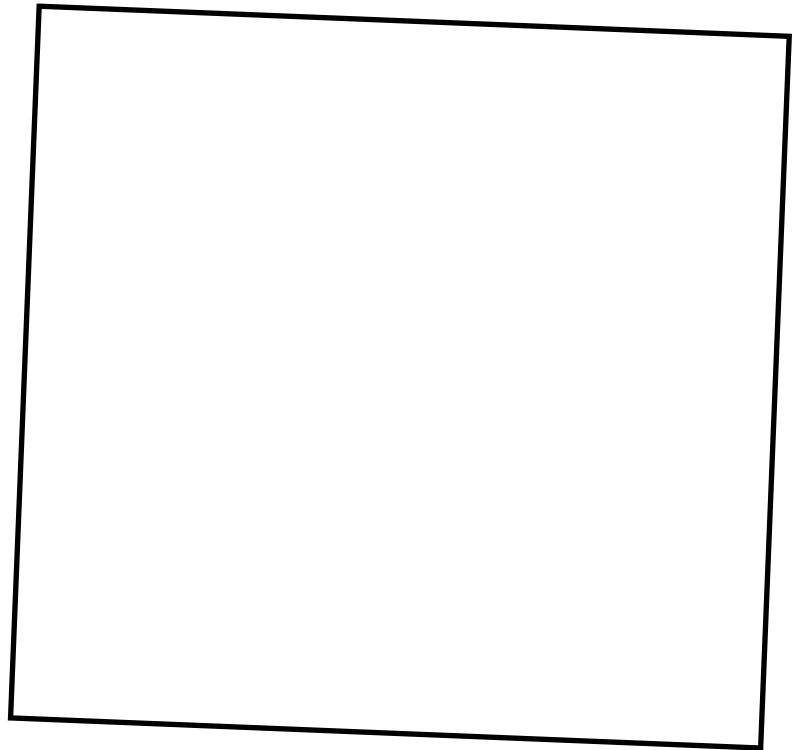
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We're up and running

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

Where your animals  
health is our first  
priority.



## HomeAgain- Keep Track of Your Pet

He's a good listener, your hunting partner or your favorite cuddling companion. If your pet is a part of your family, it's time to join HomeAgain.

Using a tiny microchip about the size of a grain of rice, HomeAgain connects you and your pet to a comprehensive pet recovery service, helping to keep your pet safe and giving you peace of mind. As your pet protection and safety resource the new HomeAgain offers you a suite of services that includes:

**Advanced Pet Recovery.** Should your pet become lost, the HomeAgain microchip helps ensure his safe return. HomeAgain is the only service on the market today

that sends out a lost pet alert to vet clinics and shelters when your pet is lost, and allows for immediate access to his medical information to facilitate the best care possible when he is found.

**Emergency Pet Center.** Gain 24-hour access to their on-call veterinarians who can offer medical assistance or connect you to an emergency vet.

**Online Medical Information.** Traveling with or kenneling your pet is a breeze with convenient access to your pet's health information.

**ID card.** At your request, HomeAgain will send you a wallet-sized identification card for your pet,

updated with vaccination and emergency contact information.

We have the HomeAgain microchips available at our clinic. Keep your pet safe. Call, schedule an appointment, and enroll your pet today.

