

Features



A Golden Retriever gets the undivided attention of two veterinarians prior to beginning treatment for canine heartworm disease. The potentially fatal canine disease is on the rise in Canada. (Photo submitted)

Canine disease on the rise

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) has issued an alert to Ontario dog owners about the sharp increase in cases of canine heartworm disease.

A study on the potentially fatal disease published recently in the Canadian Veterinary journal reveals that the number of reported cases in Canada rose 45% in 1990 from 1989. While the infection has been detected in almost every province, the research shows that 80% of all reported cases of heartworm disease have been diagnosed in Ontario.

The study was conducted by Dr. Owen Slocombe of the Ontario Veterinary College who confirms that the new findings indicate a reversal of the downward trend of reported cases since 1985.

Canine heartworm disease is spread by mosquitoes. When a mosquito bites an infected dog, it can carry the infection to other healthy dogs. One family pet may become the source of infection for many dogs.

"Statistics show us that in areas where the disease is more prevalent, as many as eight out of every 100 unprotected dogs can become infected," states Dr. Larry Wilder of Toronto, spokesperson for the CVMA.

Canine heartworm disease is caused by parasitic worms that live in the dog's heart, resulting in impaired blood flow and damage to the heart, lungs and liver. In some cases, damage to the internal organs is so extensive that the condition may be fatal.

"Education is the key to slowing the spread of canine heartworm disease," says Dr. Wilder. "With the existence of simple and easy-to-use preventive medications, there is little reason for Canadian dogs to be spreading this serious disease."

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association has launched a major multi-media education campaign to urge Canadian dog owners to consult their veterinarians to learn more about canine heartworm disease and the importance of prevention.



Nutritionist Gabrielle Allison of Georgetown thumbs through some of the low fat recipes included in the 'Think Light! Low Fat Living Plan' kit she's promoting June 4 at Work That Body in Georgetown. (Herald photo)

Nutrition program

Georgetown nutritionist, Gabrielle Allison, says its time to get off the dieting bandwagon and start focusing on healthy eating and to help people eat right, she's promoting the 'Think Light! Low Fat Living Plan' which she'll be presenting on June 4 at Work That Body in Georgetown.

"We have to start focusing on healthy eating, healthy weights, healthy body image and lifestyle. Gimmicks and fads are only detrimental both physically and psychologically," said Mrs. Allison who has a B.A.Sc. in Human Nutrition from the University of Guelph and did a dietetic Internship at Sunnybrook Medical Centre in Toronto.

For the past eight years, Mrs. Allison's experience in the field has consisted of therapeutic nutrition counselling including diabetes, low cholesterol and weight control in hospital settings. She is also a member of the Canadian and Ontario Diabetic Association and soon to be of the Consulting Dietitians of Ontario.

She explained the 'Think Light' plan is a nutritionally sound low

fat, high-fibre menu plan developed by a team of registered dietitians, chefs, physiologists and preventive medicine professionals. The kit includes daily menu cards for a course of 12 weeks long with grocery lists, instructional guidelines and a book and tape that reveal the sensible way to get rid of excess fat.

Mrs. Allison stresses this is not a miracle quick-fix diet but rather, a practical tool to help implement healthy eating principles for the whole family.

"It provides a structured guide for those who find it difficult to apply current health recommendations such as cut backs on fat and increased fibre intake," she said. The kit is presently on display at Work That Body and can be purchased there for \$90.

Mrs. Allison hopes to begin a private weight management practice from her home with the introduction of the kit. She said her service will provide information in private individual counselling sessions and will be offered in the near future.

Engineering student from Georgetown off on African safari

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

Civil engineering student, Andrew Isaak of Georgetown, is off to the country of Zaire in central Africa, to construct a solar-powered water pump for the natives living there.

During the next three months, Mr. Isaak, 22, will be using his engineering skills to connect sheets of solar panels that convert the sun's energy to electricity to run a water pump. The pump will be used by villagers in a town called Aba, situated in a dry region of the small country.

"Now, they use diesel engines to pump the water, which require gas and maintenance," said the fourth-year University of Waterloo student. "Solar panels are more appropriate technology for that country."

From what knowledge he has garnered about the country, he believes the water system in place requires regular maintenance because they don't suit the area. Since there are few skilled laborers to install the solar technology, the country requires outside workers to undertake the task.

Mr. Isaak offered to provide voluntary labor for the project for which he will receive an academic credit from the University.

Since he is in a co-op engineering course, he's required to complete five work-terms to receive his Bachelor of Applied Science in civil engineering. This will be his fifth work term.

He decided in January that for his final term, he'd like to work in a developing country so he visited a meeting of the African Inland Mission International organization. The missionaries at the meeting enabled him to find a placement.

Mr. Isaak will not be paid for his labor but is receiving some of the Africa costs from the University of Waterloo's Overseas Internship fund which is just starting up at the school.

He said he's very excited about the trip because it will give him a chance to really get to know the situation of developing countries and see what their problems and cultures are like.



Civil engineering student, Andrew Isaak of Georgetown waves goodbye to the friends he won't see for three months. Mr. Isaak will be spending that time in the African country of Zaire where he'll be installing solar powered water pumps for the natives. (Herald photo)