

Practice makes perfect

Local veterinary hospital encourages staff to advance

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

Visiting Dr. Emmanuel Aziz's veterinary practice at 724 Main Street East in Milton is a good way to learn about what he considers important. On the wall behind the reception desk at Robinson Pet Hospital, you'll find a plaque noting that Dr. Aziz has received accreditation as a veterinarian by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. But on the same wall you'll also see certificates and diplomas for many members of his staff.

Just as often as Dr. Aziz speaks about the importance of advancing veterinary medicine, he talks about his desire to encourage young people in their efforts to learn more about animal care. "We work like a team taking care of the animals as well as assisting a lot of young people to have a career for their future."

Dr. Aziz and his employees talk easily amongst themselves during the interview as music from 104.5 FM plays in the background. Around the front reception area you see a photograph of two Doberman pinschers. There are photos on the walls of Pekingese dogs as well as Bull Mastiff puppies that Dr. Aziz delivered by C-section. Thank you cards from clients are arranged near the reception desk beside a plant given as a gift to staff by one of the hospital's clients. A small thank you letter on one wall describes the "compassionate and professional care" offered at the animal hospital.

As the talk continues, his staff tries to get him to reveal how old he is, but Dr. Aziz is having none of it. He's adamant: "I am 39." They all laugh about how he often mistakenly mixes up the names of Elisha McGee, who works as a receptionist at the hospital, and Melissa Campbell, Robinson's full-time veterinary technician.

PROUD THAT HE'S BEEN ABLE TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Aziz says he's proud that he's been able to give something back to the community. A number of young people from Milton and surrounding areas have benefited from working at his animal hospital; such as Christina Swainson, a former co-op student, who was recently accepted into veterinary studies at the University of Guelph; Michelle Harris, another former co-op student, who is enrolled in a veterinary technician program; Elisha who is embarking on a two-year program to become a veterinary technician next month; and Melissa who received her

veterinary technician certificate last year. Then there are two local students who work part-time at the hospital: Kathryn Drewlo from Milton District High School and Jeff Isaak from Graceway Christian School in Milton. Both Kathryn and Jeff have aspirations to become veterinary technicians.

TAKING CARE OF ANIMALS IS OKAY, BUT TAKING CARE OF SICK ANIMALS IS A GREAT SERVICE

His staff love animals, and that's something that Dr. Aziz, as an animal lover himself, sees as an important requirement for the job. He says he knows instinctively if someone has what it takes to work at an animal hospital. The key, for Dr. Aziz, is finding people that can work with animals but especially with sick animals. At this workplace, cleaning up diarrhea and vomit and examining the stool of a sick dog or cat are all part of the daily routine. "Taking care of animals is okay, but taking care of sick animals is a great service."

Taking the extra time to help pet owners deal with the death of their pets is very important to Dr. Aziz. For him it underlines what he considers an important part of quality veterinary medical care: care that combines professionalism with compassion.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

When you walk into Robinson Pet Hospital in Milton, you'll find friendly staff there to help you with your pet or pets. Staff at the hospital include Melissa Campbell (left), Dr. Emmanuel Aziz, Elisha McGee (second from right) and Kathryn Drewlo (right).

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