

Humane Society of Elmore County News – 4 Apr '16
Rea Cord
Executive Director

April is National Heartworm Awareness Month - It just takes one bite

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association wants to remind pet owners to protect their pets against heartworm disease. Pets are susceptible to heartworms all year round in Alabama. Heartworms are transferred through mosquito bites by depositing the larvae into the bloodstream of the dog and the worms eventually migrate to the heart and lungs. Depending on the size of the dog, as many as 30 or more heartworms can live in a dog's heart for up to seven years, some reaching a length of a foot long. All it takes is one bite by a mosquito infected with the heartworm larvae for your pet to become infected.

The key to preventing heartworms is to be proactive and administer veterinary prescription preventive medication so that your pet won't develop heartworms. Dogs newly infected with heartworms may not exhibit any symptoms which is why an annual blood test by your pet's veterinarian is necessary. Signs of advanced heartworm disease include a persistent cough, reluctance to move or exercise, fatigue after only moderate exercise, reduced appetite and weight loss. While there is treatment for heartworm infected dogs, it is expensive, can be risky and takes several weeks for your pet to recover.

The good news is heartworm prevention is safe, easy and inexpensive. There are a variety of options for preventing heartworm infection in both dogs and cats, including monthly tablets and chewables, monthly topicals and a six-month injectable product (available only for dogs), all available from your veterinarian. All of these methods are extremely effective, and when administered properly on a timely schedule, heartworm infection can be completely prevented. These medications interrupt heartworm development before adult worms reach the lungs and heart and cause disease. It is important to never give your pet heartworm medicine until they have been tested by your veterinarian and cleared for prevention and if you miss giving your pet its medication please consult your veterinarian for advice.

An added benefit from keeping your pet on heartworm preventative is it protects your pets from other parasites like roundworms, whipworms and hookworms, and some products also prevent fleas and ticks.

Cats can also get heartworms and while there are preventives for cats, there is as of yet, no treatment for a heartworm positive cat. Prevention is always the best way to keep your pet healthy!

The Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 429 are holding TWO Supply Drives this weekend at the Wetumpka Walmart to support our shelter! Please stop by to drop supplies by their table this Sat, 9 Apr from 8 am - noon and then again on Sun, 10 Apr from noon - 4pm. Items such as Dry & Canned Pet Food, Bleach, Fabuloso, Liquid Dishwashing Detergent, Ammonia, Cat Litter, Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, etc greatly help us so we can use our donated monies for direct animal care and veterinary expenses. We are certainly thrilled to have these Scouts supporting us & Cruisin' fer Critters like this

Make sure you have Saturday, 7 May marked on your calendar to join us for the 14th annual CRUISIN' FER CRITTERS 2016! This key fundraising event for our shelter is all because of the hard work and support of the Predators Riding Club, their pet loving members & supporters!

There is a BIG change this year as the ride will START at the Thirsty Turtle, 4884 Main St in Millbrook, AL and then it will END at DeJa Vu, 121 N. Burbank Dr. in Montgomery, AL! Registration at the Thirsty Turtle starts at 11 am with the last bike out at 12 pm. Bikes are NOT required to join in the fun and Cruisin' is open to everyone. Sponsorships are still available so for more information please contact John West at 334-294-7154.