

## BELL EQUINE STAFF NEWS

We are delighted to CONGRATULATE two of our vets, partner **David Sinclair** and **Jos Habershon-Butcher**, a member of our ambulatory team, who have both successfully passed the challenging Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons post graduate Certificate exams recently. David Sinclair was awarded the Certificate in Equine Surgery (Orthopaedics), whilst Jos gained the Certificate in Internal Medicine. These additional qualifications enhance the already advanced level of expertise we can offer you to provide the best possible veterinary care for all your horses, ponies and donkeys.



*Jos Habershon-Butcher*



*David with his family*

### NEW STAFF

We are also delighted to announce the appointment of orthopaedic surgeon **Elizabeth Barr**, who is joining our hospital team. Liz qualified from Glasgow University in 2000, before undertaking further surgical training at the



*Elizabeth Barr*

Animal Health Trust, Newmarket and an equine hospital in Alberta, Canada. She then undertook a three year residency in equine orthopaedics at the University of Liverpool. She also spent some time as a clinician in equine surgery and orthopaedics at Edinburgh University and in a private practice in Lambourn before returning to Liverpool University to undertake research and a PhD on osteoarthritis. Liz holds the European Diploma in Large Animal Surgery and the Royal College Certificate in Equine Surgery (Orthopaedics). She has an interest in all aspects of equine orthopaedics including surgery, lameness diagnosis, imaging and sports horse injuries and an interest in emergency surgery.

We also welcome our newest intern, **Zofia Lisowski** (universally known as Zof), who graduated from Liverpool Vet School in 2008. She then spent 10 months as a voluntary vet for Animal Care in Egypt. She has a special interest in endurance riding and regularly attends endurance rides as one of the vets. Zof has just returned from a successful visit to Italy as part of the Great Britain squad travelling to the European Endurance Championships.



*Zofia Lisowski*

### BEVA CONGRESS

**Bell Equine vets and equine nurses** played prominent roles at this year's British Equine Veterinary Association Congress, which took place in September 2009 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham. This internationally recognised event attracts delegates from all over the world and members of our team were invited to speak on a diverse range of subjects including **Tim Mair** lecturing on cancers in older horses. Registered equine nurses,

**Kelly Russell** and **Jo Gregory**, both gave presentations on different aspects of medical nursing and post operative equine nursing. **Karen Coumbe** also talked on the "the role of the treating vet at the Olympics and Paralympics".



*World Pony Driving Championships*

### PONY DRIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Karen Coumbe** attended the World Pony Driving Championships at Greven in Germany recently, where she worked for the FEI and was very impressed by the skills of all the competitors and the complexity of the course.

### BELL EQUINE VET CLINIC

Mereworth, Maidstone, Kent ME18 5GS

For **general enquiries and all visits**,  
Tel: 01622 813700

For **hospital appointments**,  
please phone Linda Loines on  
01622 816032 or 01622 813700

For **account queries**, please contact  
Pat Oram on 01622 816033 or  
01622 816036

### AND FINALLY...

We would like to remind everyone that we offer a 10% discount for immediate payment at the time of service by cash, cheque, credit or debit card. Alternatively a 5% discount is available if payment is received within 15 days of the invoice being sent out. In recognition of the credit crunch, we are doing our bit to help you by keeping our visit and vaccination costs the same for 2009. We have not increased these fees in 3 years.

## CASTRATION FACTS

For those of you that may have visited the clinic on a sunny day and seen a number of ponies lying flat out in the front field, there is nothing sinister going on... just that you may have arrived on one of our castration days. This is when we geld a group of colts belonging to one owner all at once. Sometimes we will work outside on the grass when the weather is good and there are a large number of small ponies to be gelded. If you have a larger colt or a more mature stallion that needs to be gelded we recommend doing the procedure as an individual operation, simply because they are larger and it is a more complicated procedure. Colts can be gelded standing using local anaesthetic or under general anaesthesia - our vets can advise you about the most appropriate and safest option for your individual horse.

Many colts can have the operation performed in their home yard, provided that you have an appropriate clean area and a competent handler to hold the horse. However, some owners may prefer to bring the colt to the hospital where our nurses are skilled in assisting with the procedure, rather than the vet relying on the owner to assist at home.



*Nothing sinister - just 2 of our horses asleep in the sun!*

### Things to consider when your colt is castrated:

- Horses can be gelded at any age. They must have 2 descended testicles before castration, otherwise the colt will have to go into the operating theatre for a more involved, and more costly, procedure. A rig with a retained testicle requires more complex surgery.
- The operation is usually carried out in spring, autumn or winter when there are fewer flies.
- Ideally the new gelding will need to be kept away from other horses for at least 2 weeks after castration, in a small paddock by himself, while the incisions heal.
- Remember that the horse will remain fertile for a period of at least two weeks after the operation. We usually recommend not turning the new gelding out with mares for six weeks.

Castration of colts is considered a routine surgical procedure, usually performed when they are yearlings. However, although it is very commonly performed and considered to be routine, it is not without risk of complications, including: haemorrhage, infection, herniation of intestine. Also in extremely rare cases a horse may die under general anaesthesia. Some breeds such as Shires or Andalucians are thought to have a higher risk of problems, but in every case we do everything possible to minimise the risks and make it as safe and pain free as possible. The costs will vary depending on the size of the patient and the type of procedure performed from £100, to up to £600 for a big mature horse, with a discount for groups of colts.

Please contact **Bell Equine** on 01622 813700, who can help you make the best arrangements for you and your horse.

## DID YOU KNOW MICROCHIPPING IS NOW COMPULSORY?

Not only do all horses, ponies and donkeys need a passport, but now a new EU regulation has been passed making it



*Vikki Hollands scanning to check for a microchip*

compulsory for all foals born after 1st July 2009 to be microchipped. Microchips are implanted into the crest of the neck of the foal. This can be done soon after birth at the same time as the markings are drawn for the passport. The microchip number is then recorded on the passport and on a microchip database.

### What you need to know about passports and microchips:

- From 1st July, every foal must be implanted with a microchip by 31st December in the year of its birth or by six months of age.
- Owners of horses over six months old who do not have a passport must apply before 31st December 2009 and the horse must be signed out of the food chain. They will also need a microchip.
- Horses for whom duplicate or replacement passports are required must also be marked out of the food chain.
- Only vets may microchip horses and chips may only be implanted in the neck.
- The keeper of a horse is responsible for ensuring it has a passport.

- Only the horse owner can apply for a passport. Changes of ownership must be notified to the passport authority within 30 days.

All passports must include a page labelled section IX which states that the horse is or is not intended for human consumption - this should be signed by the owner. Without a signature, vets must assume the animal may be intended for human consumption, and medicines must be recorded. To benefit all concerned we would ask all our clients to **sign every passport** to confirm that their horse is not going to enter the human food chain. If you are unsure, ring us and we will explain.

To help make it easier for everyone we can provide the appropriate passports to get your horses registered promptly. We are also continuing our special promotional price for implanting a microchip of £20 + VAT per horse.

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