

At Urgent Pet Care, the Doctor Is In for Overnight Emergencies

Doris Starks, DVM, and Debbie Newhouse, LVT, CVPM, are used to burning the midnight oil, getting barked at by their patients, and dealing with hissy fits. Still, the owners of Urgent Pet Care, 8419 S. 73rd Plaza in Papillion, are living their dream.

"Pets are our passion," Newhouse explained. "It's truly satisfying to help people in a crisis situation and hopefully get a pet on its way to recovery."

With business hours from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.



Urgent Pet Care draws clients from Papillion, LaVista, Ralston, Millard, southwest Sarpy County, West Omaha, Council Bluffs and Plattsmouth.

to 12 a.m. on Saturday, and 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday, Urgent Pet Care doesn't perform general practice procedures, such as vaccinations.

"We function as an emergency unit," according to Starks. "We do everything from ear infections, limping, bloat problems and lacerations, to issues with breathing and heat stroke. We also see a fair number of pets hit by cars. And we do surgeries as well."

Since opening in May 2013, Urgent Pet Care has experienced steady growth, accompanied by an increase in staff from three to ten employees. Referrals from area veterinary clinics and rescue groups have accounted for much of that growth.

"If the referring veterinarian has a case that is critical and needs to be monitored overnight from surgery, the patient is brought to us for care through the night," Newhouse explained. "Even after we have closed, our staff is still here until 7:30 a.m. to care for the patients we have. Someone is always here so we can provide optimum care."

"If they're concerned enough to call us, it usually is an issue they need to have checked out because the pet is uncomfortable, and the client is uncomfortable, too," Starks noted.

"You have to understand how important a pet is to its owner, so it is best to take care of the issue at that time."

Both Starks and Newhouse concede that emergency pet



Debbie Newhouse (left) and Doris Starks started Urgent Pet Care with the vision of providing affordable, after hours emergency care.

care can be exhausting, especially around the July 4th holiday when neighborhood fireworks disrupt the normal routine of family pets.

"We see a lot of vomiting and diarrhea cases during that time," Starks shared. "Fireworks are extremely hard on pets because they have no understanding of what's going on, so they get very frightened and stressed out and their body system produces that response. And, fireworks upset the normal balance in dogs because their sense of hearing is so keen."

As an accredited member of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), Urgent Pet Care meets the high quality standards covering all aspects of veterinary medicine. "Only ten veterinary clinics in this area

are accredited by AAHA," Newhouse noted.

Prior to opening Urgent Pet Care, Starks and Newhouse were involved with emergency pet practices at other veterinary clinics, where they dreamed of owning their own business. They credit First National Bank for helping them realize that dream with helpful advice and support throughout their Small Business Administration loan approval process.

"Every step of the way they were there to guide us," Starks added. "They didn't just give us the loan and say you're on your own. They backed us up all the way. They allowed us to fulfill our dream and our passion when nobody else would."



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