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Animal Crackers

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Admissions

In 1992, 560 student from 56 different institutions applied to the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, including 166 Pennsylvania residents. Two hundred nineteen offers were extended to fill the class of 109 students. Of the acceptances, 55 were accepted without an interview. Sixty-three, or 58% of the first-year class, are Pennsylvania residents. The largest feeder school was Cornell, with 11 students, and six are University of Pennsylvania graduates. The mean age of the entering class is 25.2 years.

New Jersey provides funds to support 12 veterinary students at Penn and Puerto Rico supports one student every other year.

Antifreeze Poisoning

Cats may climb into car motors to hide, find warmth and lick antifreeze that has been spilled around the radiator cap. The ethylene glycol in antifreeze has a sweet odor and taste and seems to lure animals. A very small amount of antifreeze can be lethal. If an animal has had contact with contaminated surfaces, seek veterinary attention immediately.

Australian Cattle Dogs

In January 1993, the Australian cattle dog will become the 135th breed competing for championship points at AKC-licensed dog shows in the herding group.

This is a medium-sized dog about 21 inches in height at the withers. The tail is natural bobtail or docked short. The recognized colors are blue merle, red (liver) merle, solid black and solid red (liver) all with or without white markings and/or tan points.

The breed was introduced in the United States in the early 1900's. It is

believed to have originated in the Basque country of Spain and France and migrated with shepherds to Australia and the United States, where it became a favorite of sheep and cattle ranchers.

It is a highly intelligent and adaptable breed and has been used for tracking, narcotics detection, search and rescue and as hearing dogs. They are excellent companions and are easily trained for obedience competition.

It has been said "There's nothing like an Aussie. Once you've shared your life with one of these dogs and let them into your heart, you'll never own another breed."

Companion Dogs

It can be difficult to find a particular breed and the American Kennel Club has established a national Breeder Referral Program to help potential dog owners find breeders within their geographical area. By calling 1-900-407-PUPS (7877), you can obtain the name of a local breeder who can supply a list of sources.

It is advisable to do some research about a breed before you buy. The dear little puppy may be too much for the owner when it matures. Always investigate the amount of grooming required to keep a dog looking like those seen at shows and in television commercials.

Over-population is a serious problem and companion animals should be spayed or neutered. Responsible breeders plan their programs to eliminate genetic defects and produce animals which can be properly placed in good homes. Often you will have to wait for a puppy.

When a female is spayed, two problems are avoided. There is far less possibility of development of breast

tumors and confinement during heat periods is no longer needed.

Bitches have their first season or "heat" at about six months of age, although it may not occur until 18 months of age. Usually there are two seasons a year. There is no hard fast rule. The first stage (proestrus) when bleeding occurs lasts about nine days but may range from three to 17 days. The second stage (estrus) is the time of receptivity to mating and usually lasts about nine days but may range from three to 21 days. Confinement and careful watching may be necessary for short or long periods in unspayed bitches. Coping with this can be too much of a problem for many families.

A neutered male is generally a better house dog. He will not have as great a tendency to roam and, of course, cannot contribute to the overpopulation problem. Neutering may prevent development of prostate problems which are fairly common in older dogs.



Book Reviews

Dog Painting 1840-1940 - A Social History of the Dog in Art by William Secord (Antique Collectors Club, c/o William Secord Gallery, Inc., 52 E. 76th St., New York, NY 10021, \$79.50).

This book belongs in the library of dog lovers. Superb reproductions include the lapdogs of Queen Victoria and many others - pampered pets and early sporting dogs. The text covers the

origins of dog painting in Greek, Roman and European art. There is a chapter on dog painting in America. There are over 450 illustrations with 150 in full color. A perfect holiday gift.

Peak Performance - Coaching the Canine Athlete by M. Christine Zink, D.V.M., Ph.D. (Howell Book House, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, \$25.00)

This is a book for the layperson on sports medicine for the companion dog. It covers the special health needs and conditioning required for the dog to meet its fullest potential.

A chapter on how structure affects function covers physical differences in various breeds and simple details of the dog's anatomy. There are chapters on selection and routine management. There is a recommended format for a dog's record book which includes examinations for hereditary conditions, vaccinations, health checks, weight and medical history. A chapter on lameness classifies the causes as congenital, degenerative, genetic, traumatic, infectious or unknown and discusses these conditions. Nutritional disorders affecting bones and joints are obesity, the effects of feeding an all meat diet, and oversupplementation in large and giant breeds of dogs. Suggested contents for a first aid kit are given.

There is a discussion on performance-enhancing drugs (stimulants, depressants, anabolic steroids, drugs to modify heat cycles and drugs to modify appearance). How strictly should rules be enforced. It is suggested that perhaps it should be permissible and ethical to administer drugs that cure, control or comfort, but any drug giving an unfair advantage in performance should not be permitted.

The final chapter deals with stress and how to reduce it. A stressed dog will become tired and not be able to concentrate on its performance, just as in humans. Abnormal behaviors thought to be a reflection of stress in dogs include self-mutilation, tail chasing, destruction of property and aggression.

The book has a "new" approach to canine problems and should be of interest to dog owners and trainers.

Merck Summer Research Fellowships



Shown here are, from left to right: Dr. Jeffrey A. Wortman, assistant dean for academic affairs; Dr. Jan A. Bergeron, V'66, of Merck; Chris Hunsinger, V'94; Leila Worth, V'94; Steve Suter, V'95; Lisa DiPaolo, V'95; Mary Costenbader, V'95; Catherine Mullin, V'95; Jeunine Rubin-Mantione, V'95; Dr. Michael Atchison. Alysia Sinrad, V'94, the eighth participant in the program, is not shown.

The Merck Company Foundation supported eight Merck Summer Research Fellowships at the School this year. The goal of the fellowships is to provide *bona fide* research experience to the students, as a potential career alternative.

At Penn the program is coordinated by Dr. Michael Atchison, assistant professor of biochemistry. "We held a competition, students submitted brief research proposals and the committee selected the participants," he said. "All summer long the students worked on their projects in the laboratories of their sponsors. The group met once a week for informal presentations by faculty sponsors.

"At the end of the summer each student gave a brief presentation of the project and submitted a paper describing the research. These papers will be

submitted to the veterinary students' Phi Zeta Day research competition in the spring. Last year three of the winners at this event were former Merck Summer Research Fellows."

The faculty sponsors of the 1992 Merck Summer Research Fellows were Drs. Mark Haskins, Paula Henthorn, Virginia Reef, Phillip Scott, Gail Smith, Dwight Stambolian, Robert Washabau, and John Wolfe.

On July 17, the students visited the Merck facilities in Rahway, New Jersey. Here Merck veterinarians discussed their career paths and described their current positions with the company. The Penn students also met the Merck Summer Research Fellows from Cornell University, Colorado State University and the University of Georgia.