

# PIPESTONE

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## FEATURE STORY

# FROM COMMUNITY PROJECTS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, VET CLINIC TEAMS WITH PFIZER TO SUPPORT FFA

If you're a Pipestone Veterinary Clinic customer who purchases Pfizer products for your livestock, you're doing more than supporting your own farming operation. You're encouraging local FFA members who, in turn, share with the community. It's the sort of effort that keeps giving and giving.

Local livestock producers can look with pride at the accomplishments of the Pipestone Area FFA Chapter knowing they played a part in sending the meat team to compete in Denver. Funds donated to the chapter by the Vet Clinic underwrite chapter travel expenses for state and national events (including the Minnesota State Fair). Those trips enable students to broaden their horizons.

Meat judging team competitor Kayla Quincy certainly won't forget her experiences at the National competition. "We met FFA members from every state and we were able to show what we've learned." The team did well in competition and so did Kayla, who finished as top individual competitor.

Sylvia Wolters at Pipestone Vet Clinic works with Pfizer to supplement the budget that the 45 FFA members have available for travel and special projects. Those projects include planting flowers throughout the community, updating the Children's Barnyard at the county fairgrounds, and sponsoring the FFA Week pancake breakfast. Some of the money also goes to FFA Scholarships.



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AFTER FFA MEMBERS REFRESHED THE CHILDREN'S BARNYARD AT THE PIPESTONE CO. FAIRGROUNDS, IT WAS TIME TO MAKE THE BEDS IN THIS LITTLE HOTEL. KARLA NELSON (LEFT) AND SHAYNA DeGROOT PREPARE A STALL FOR DUSTY (A HORSE BELONGING TO KARLA'S SIX-YEAR-OLD SISTER, EMILY).

G. F. Kennedy, D.V.M.  
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C. W. Vlietstra, D.V.M.  
N. L. Weber, D.V.M.  
J. L. Nerem, D.V.M.  
C.A. Odland, D.V.M.

D. F. Peterschmidt, D.V.M.  
B. B. Myers, D.V.M.  
A. M. Emme, D.V.M.

Veterinary Voices

# WHY WE VACCINATE DOGS

Pipestone Veterinary Clinic clients take time to ensure their dogs are vaccinated. Yet you may not know for certain what you're preventing when you bring your dog to us for initial shots or boosters.

Dr. Nicole Weber knows the worst that could happen when pet owners don't vaccinate. She says. "Some diseases spread from dog to dog but also from pet to human. Vaccinations prevent the spread of very real health threats to animals and their people."

According to the World Health Organization, rabies annually kills 55,000 people worldwide—most of them children. It's difficult to know how many rabies-infected dogs die because unvaccinated animals are usually undocumented.

Don't assume the upper Midwest is rabies-exempt, adds Dr. Weber. Every year, dogs are bitten by infected skunks, raccoons, and bats. Vaccination is your pet's first defense but if you suspect your dog came in contact with a rabid animal, you should immediately call a veterinarian.

Dogs should also be vaccinated for leptospirosis, a dangerous bacterial disease that can spread from wildlife to pets through urine. When infected deer, squirrels, and raccoons urinate, dogs—being dogs—follow along sniffing lepto bacteria into their noses and mouths.

Sometimes pets can spread this disease to people who come in contact with their urine, or with water or soil contaminated by bacteria-infected urine. Wild animals that pass through your garden or favorite swimming beach can spread the bacteria, too.

"For dogs, leptospirosis symptoms include—but are not limited to—vomiting, diarrhea, refusal to eat, and abdominal pain. Untreated, the outcomes of leptospirosis are typically kidney and liver failure," Dr. Weber explains. "All of which explain why the Center for Disease Control recommends vaccination."

## REASONS FOR THE DISTEMPER/PARVO/HEPATITIS/ADENOVIRUS VACCINATION

A combination distemper vaccination prevents deadly viruses which can be spread from dog to dog through their feces. Dr. Weber emphasizes it takes very few virus particles to spread parvovirus. Unvaccinated dogs can die from parvo or distemper and from the other diseases prevented by annual vaccination.

Puppies and unvaccinated adult dogs should get at least two vaccinations three weeks apart starting at 6 weeks of age. Puppies typically are vaccinated at 6, 9, and 12 weeks of age with at least one vaccination being after 12 weeks of age. It's especially important protection if your dog will be boarded or will visit a pet-grooming facility—or other places where dogs congregate.

Finally, there's the kennel cough (bordetella) vaccination which prevents a persistent cough dogs can contract while boarding, during grooming, or even when they meet other dogs on walks, at dog parks, or while visiting friends and relatives. Though kennel cough is treatable with antibiotics, Dr. Weber reminds that if left untreated, may result in pneumonia. ■

## VET CLINIC TEAMS WITH PFIZER TO SUPPORT FFA

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Ryan Van Hoeke plans chapter activities. He's glad for the financing that backs projects such as upgrading pens and painting at the Children's Barnyard. "These projects foster teamwork," he explains. "And we always have fun when we get together!" FFA members gave the building exterior a new look with paint and landscaping, then they added secure fencing inside. During fair week, livestock owners such as little Emily Nelson appreciate knowing their pets and farm animals will be snug and safe when kids come to visit.

Brandi Raatz, in her role as Pipestone Area FFA Chapter treasurer, is already considering this year's project list. "We want to give back to the community that gives to us so we're thinking about improvements to livestock buildings at the Fair Grounds. In fact, you may see us at work very soon!" Brandi says.

Kayla adds this, "On behalf of all local FFA members, Brandi, Ryan, and I want to thank Pfizer, Pipestone Veterinary Clinic, and local livestock producers for their generous monetary contribution supporting our FFA projects. ■

## WHAT ABOUT BOB?

He was a wanderer, taking chances, living wild on the Texas Gulf. He ran with a tough buddy from the wrong side of the tracks and made enemies. But happily, Bob also made friends who, working together, saved his life!

This is a dog story full of humanity. Suzlon wind power company employees, stationed in Rosharon, TX, noticed a pit bull and a smaller terrier running loose on the job site. The stray dogs were wary—they'd clearly been ill-treated and discouraged from hanging around. When the larger dog was run over, workers coaxed Bob indoors. He was lonely, though. Mourning his more-dominant pal, Bob did what any native Texan would: he howled at the moon!

Enter Ali Klose of Flandreau, SD, a Suzlon employee and dog lover. She took stock of the little dog's homeless state, spent two weeks worrying where he went at night, and decided Bob needed a real home. And lots of spoiling.

Fortunately, Ali emphasized good health before cuddling. "As soon as we arrived home, I brought him to Pipestone Veterinary Clinic," Ali explains. And a good thing, too, because Bob's health issues were urgent.

Dr. Nicole Weber saw heartworms in his blood test—lots of them. Bob had an enlarged heart and, even though he's a stalwart Texan, Bob has to agree there'd been too much shootin'. (All the buckshot he'd collected wasn't doing Bob any good.)

Still, those heartworms worried Dr. Weber most and she warned Ali the prognosis wouldn't be as rosy as a sunrise over sagebrush. Preventing heartworms is painless; killing the parasites once they're established inside a dog can be a death sentence.

"Ali understood the risks but she wanted the best possible life for her new pet, so we began heartworm treatment in January," says Dr. Weber. "We started preventative medicine first, to lessen the chances of a reaction. Then, January through March Bob was on the first stage treatment to kill immature heartworm. In April, we gave Bob his first dose of immiticide to kill male adult heartworm; finally, in May, we killed the female adult heartworm."

Through it all Bob needed to stay very still because

dying worms were breaking apart in his lungs and could have lodged anywhere. His hospital stays were timed to safely dissolve those worm carcasses.

Meanwhile, more humans started to worry about Bob, the little dog on mandatory bed rest. Even now, months later, Vet Clinic clients and employees ask Dr. Weber, "What happened to Bob?"

If Bob could answer he'd drawl, "Ah am jus' fine and dandy, y'all!" Having completed the final round of treatment and hospitalization, he's cleared to run with his neighbor, six-year-old Karisma Rennich, anytime he wants.

Now his friend is a kid and his bed is a couch. Bob eats like a king and is perfectly content to stay close to home. And yet...every now and then when he knows Ali is leaving for another job-related road trip, he reverts to an old habit. Yep. Bob howls at the moon! ■

DR. WEBER AND BOB CELEBRATE HIS SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY FROM AN EXTREME HEARTWORM INFESTATION.





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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

# ALL WRAPPED UP IN THE PAPERWORK

There are those who call it “red tape” but not Janice Van Roekel. She’s all about the paperwork. Janice sees to it that health papers that must accompany any load of hogs as it moves across state or national lines is in the hands of the driver. “Federal law requires the Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, documentation of a veterinarian’s final check, before pigs go onto the truck,” she explains. “The health papers I create tell the buyer, and the USDA, the vet has been there and the pigs are healthy.”

You might wonder how creating health papers keeps Janice busy all day. Well, she’s accounting for shipments in excess of two million pigs per year! Though Global Vet Link, the online software she uses, tallies pigs as she accounts for them, Janice hasn’t had time to check the total in quite awhile. “The first year we used this software I saw the number reach one million. Then it moved to two million and after that I stopped looking.”

In general, livestock producers know where and when they’ll be shipping pigs a week in advance. That way the vet can arrive on schedule and Janice can prepare health papers early. Different states and countries have different regulations, Janice verifies what is required for each shipment based on the destination.

“I like to work here because, having run our own business, I appreciate the full value of benefits we have here—items I used to pay for myself. Also, I’m fortunate to work with a group (the Pipestone Information Bureau) of all different ages and stages of life. We have fun together and take time for a joke now and



then.” *Editor’s note:* It’s clear to anyone who spends five minutes in the Pipestone Vet Information Bureau, when it comes to joking Janice is the obvious leader.

It’s no joke that Janice feels blessed to have Willis around home these days and semi-retired. (He heads the house committee for the Legion Club in Pipestone.) “And I don’t know how we got so lucky as to have both of our children and our four grandchildren right here in town. We hit a milestone this summer when the youngest grandchild grew taller than me!”

Janice spent a lot of time watching ballgames all summer and predicts she’ll be back on the bleachers again this fall as grandchildren switch to other sports. She loves phone calls that begin with, “Grandma I have a game tonight.” Once she’s done the paperwork, Janice will be there. ■