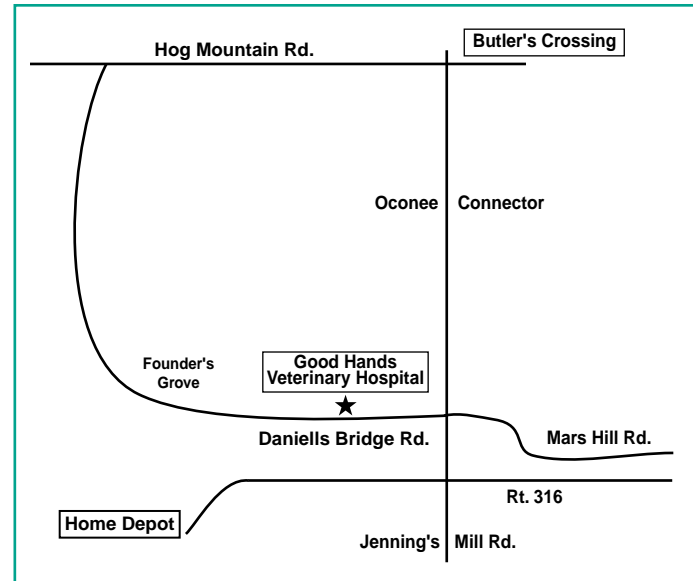


Hospital Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:30 am – 6:00 pm
 Saturday 8:00 am – 12 noon

Patients may also be “dropped-off” for evaluation and treatment. Appointments are preferred and may be scheduled by calling: **706-613-1880**.

We will continue to schedule house visits on Wednesday mornings for those clients that would rather have us come to their home. The schedule for these visits however, will be limited, and a “trip” fee will be charged in addition to the standard exam fee.



2391 Daniells Bridge Road
 Athens, GA 30606-6160



Good Hands Veterinary Hospital News

Saying Goodbye to our dear friend Harry

As some of you may already know, the Good Hands family lost one of its own this summer when our sweet Harry Dog passed away. As news of our tragedy spread, the love and support that our clients extended through their cards and letters eased our sadness and reminded us all just how special Harry really was. Dr. Kucher and her family would like to sincerely thank you all for your kindness and wishes to remind you that although Harry will be greatly missed, he will never be forgotten.

In-house Digital Ultrasound Examination Suite

We are proud to announce the addition of our digital ultrasound examination suite complete with telemedicine capabilities. Ultrasound is a non-invasive diagnostic method used to image soft tissues and organs that are not readily detectable on routine radiographic examinations. Some of the common uses for ultrasound are early detection of pregnancy, evaluating heart function, early detection of kidney and bladder stones, and early detection of thoracic and abdominal soft tissue masses or tumors. Drs. Kucher, Coleman, and Dailey have completed advanced courses in diagnostic abdominal and cardiac ultrasonography. If necessary, the data and digital images obtained may be transmitted electronically to board-certified specialists for additional consultation and treatment recommendations. Please feel free to ask any of the doctors and staff for more details.

Thanks for Voting!

We would like to thank you for once again voting Dr. Monica Kucher and Good Hands Veterinary Hospital the “Best Veterinarian” for the 2004, Athens Banner-Herald Reader’s Choice Awards. This is the second year in a row you have chosen us and we are honored and humbled. We will continue to strive to be the best for you and your pet. To better serve you, we are now offering the ability to perform in-house ultrasound examinations and complete blood cell count (CBC) and chemistry laboratory evaluations. The doctors and staff are regularly attending continuing education classes to keep up on the latest disease processes, diagnostic modalities, and treatment regimens. Please feel free to let us know what additional services you would like to see us offer. As always, any feedback, both positive and negative, is welcome so we can continue to serve you.

In-house Complete Blood Cell Count and Chemistry Laboratory Evaluation

In order to provide you and your pet with the highest quality veterinary services, we are proud to announce that Good Hands Veterinary Hospital is now able to offer in-hospital laboratory services. Our state of the art complete blood cell count (CBC) and blood chemistry machines use the same technology as in major human hospitals and laboratories and enable us to provide accurate and fast laboratory results while you wait. This will provide more rapid and accurate diagnostic and treatment capabilities, as well as allow us to more efficiently monitor the response to treatment.

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We now offer complete pre-anesthetic blood screens for pets under the age of 8 years. Routine evaluation of blood and serum chemistries may alert the doctors to the presence of sub-clinical (non-symptomatic) underlying problems that may only be detected by complete blood and chemistry analysis. Kidney or liver problems, anemia (low red blood cell count), diabetes, or dehydration, all affect how your pet processes anesthetic agents. Pre-anesthetic blood evaluation may detect early abnormalities in these body systems that may not be apparent on a routine physical examination. These tests are similar to those that your own physician would run if you were to undergo anesthesia.

For pets 8 years and older, we do require complete blood and chemistry laboratory evaluation before any anesthetic episode. Previously, that would require an additional visit to the hospital 1 to 10 days prior to the procedure. Now we perform these tests the day of the procedure. The information obtained from the results enable us to select a safer anesthetic protocol that better suit your pet's metabolic needs.

An additional advantage of having on-site blood work capabilities is to better monitor your pet's response to therapy. As pharmaceutical manufacturers provide us with medications to treat your pets medical needs, they also provide recommendations and guidelines for monitoring response to these medications and avoiding the development of potentially harmful side effects. This often involves simple blood tests to make sure the different body systems and organs are functioning properly. We are able to test your pet before prescribing a specific drug, monitor laboratory values during the course of treatment, and adjust treatment protocols as dictated by clinical signs and laboratory values.

Importance of Testing your cat for Feline Leukemia (FELV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

These two diseases are caused by viruses that are highly contagious. Both viruses are found worldwide and are spread primarily through saliva, but also through other bodily fluids such as blood and urine. Once a cat is infected with the virus, their immune system becomes depressed, resulting in non-specific clinical signs involving many body systems such as:

- Gingivitis/stomatitis (inflammation of the gums and mouth)
- Weight Loss
- Poor appetite
- Fever
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea

Some cats can be infected with either of these viruses for years before any symptoms are apparent. These diseases can be diagnosed with a simple blood test that can be done in the hospital while you wait. There is no "cure" for FELV or FIV infections, however, if detected and treated early in the disease process, these diseases may be managed successfully for many years. Therefore, taking precautions early in the course of the disease can help us ensure your pet a longer, healthier life. The test for these diseases is recommended for cats that are showing signs of non-specific illness, as well as annually for asymptomatic cats, especially those cats that go outside and may be exposed to other cats.



Enter to Win Clifford the BIG Red Dog!!

Purchase either a 6 month supply of Frontline or a 12 month supply of Heartgard, and you will be entered in a drawing to win a hugely soft, plush Clifford. The winner will be chosen on Monday, December 20 – just in time for Christmas!

What all pet owners should know about Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease of dogs and other mammals that primarily affects the kidneys and the liver. Leptospirosis is found worldwide, but especially in warm and moist environments of temperate regions. Standing water and neutral or slightly alkaline soil promotes its' growth. Dogs (and very rarely, cats) become infected by drinking water or ingesting soil infected with the bacteria. Leptospirosis can also penetrate intact, cut, or abraded skin or mucous membranes. Outdoor animals, hunting dogs, and dogs that swim are at increased risk.

Many infections go undetected, but other cases can be life-threatening. There are three main forms of disease: hemorrhagic (bleeding), icteric or jaundice (liver), and renal (kidney). High fever, lethargy, inappetence, vomiting, increased thirst, and increased urination are the most common clinical signs. Leptospirosis is usually treatable, but only if it is caught early in the course of the disease and treated aggressively.

There are many strains (also called serovars) of Leptospira. The four most common ones are: L. canicola, L. icterohaemorrhagiae, L. grippityphosa, and L.

pomona. For many years, there was no vaccine available to prevent Leptospirosis. When a vaccine did become available a few years ago it contained only L. canicola and L. icterohaemorrhagiae. Shortly after the vaccine came out, many studies showed that the most common serovars that were infecting dogs and causing disease were L. grippityphosa and L. pomona. It was hard to justify vaccinating against strains that were not causing the disease. There was debate about whether the dogs would mount an immune response (build up antibodies) to all the strains (this is called cross-reactivity) when they were vaccinated for only two of the strains. Additionally, it was pointed out that we may not be seeing disease caused by the ones we were vaccinating for because they were protected by the vaccine.

Thankfully, all this debate ended recently because a new vaccine was developed with all four of the Leptospira serovars. Leptospirosis is included in the dog's routine DHLPP (distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parainfluenza, and parvo) vaccine. Here at Good Hands, we are excited to be carrying and offering this new, improved vaccine.

Obedience Training a Huge Success at GHVH

Kirk Thomas and his training classes are going very well. Here are some of the parents' quotes from recent "graduates":

Stephanie Wallace re: individual training with Kirk:

"The one-on-one sessions with Kirk helped a lot. Shadow is much calmer, not as unruly, and she actually listens to me. Shadow really benefited from the concentrated training. Kirk is very consistent, and his time with Shadow has made a world of difference. In fact, I need to call him again so that we can continue to reinforce what she's already learned".

Meredith Williams re: group classes with Kirk:

"Kirk is incredible. He is kind but firm and he teaches the owner as well as the dog. I really think I can continue Clapton and Monkey's training at home using Kirk's tools."

Kathy Daniel re: training house calls with Kirk:

"My favorite thing about Kirk is his flexibility.

He is always available by phone to answer questions when I need him, and he allows me to schedule Brutus' training when it is convenient for me and my family. Also, he is great at reading dogs' personalities and understanding their needs, and he always puts their health and happiness before anything else."

Make your Holiday Reservations Now!

With the football weekends and holidays approaching, our boarding facilities are rapidly filling. Please make your reservations now. As with all holiday boarding, we do require a \$25.00, non-refundable deposit. This will be credited to your account when you come to pick up your pet.