



Autumn 2013

## New Equipment – The Tono-Pen

We are very excited at TVH this month to add another piece of state of the art equipment to the hospital – the Tono-Pen!

If you have had your eyes checked at the optometrist, you may remember the machine that blasts some air into your eyes and makes you blink – this machine is measuring your Intra-Ocular Pressure (IOP), known as tonometry. Unfortunately, most of our furry patients would not tolerate this well... and would have trouble keeping their eyes open when we ask them to! To overcome this, a new piece of veterinary equipment was made – to accurately, quickly and with minimal stress to the patient – attain a value for their IOP.

So why is it important to be able to measure such a value? There are many eye problems which will cause an *increase* in IOP – and early diagnosis is very important as early treatment can be the only way to help save the vision of an affected eye. The most common cause of an increase in IOP is glaucoma – where the pressure builds up within the orbit of the eye due to impaired aqueous humour outflow (this is the fluid in your eye which helps the eye keep its round shape). This can be caused by trauma, infection, a congenital problem or even simply just a breed predisposition.

There are many breeds of dogs which may suffer from glaucoma. The Vets at TVH are all aware of the breeds which are more prone, so will include an eye exam with the tono-pen at your yearly vaccinations and annual health checks, or if you have an eye problem that needs veterinary attention.

### **Did you know... Chocolate is toxic to dogs & cats?**

At Easter time especially, it is important to remember that as much as we love eating chocolate, we should not share these treats with our pets and be extra mindful not to leave chocolate in a place where your pet can access it!



Chocolate is very toxic to dogs, especially dark chocolate which is higher in the compound theobromine, which has adverse effects on various organs in the body, most importantly the heart. If you see or suspect your pet has eaten chocolate, it is important to contact your vet immediately. It is possible to induce vomiting in your pet to bring up all the chocolate they have consumed, as long as they are seen soon after they have eaten the chocolate.

The signs of chocolate toxicity in dogs include muscle tremors, seizures, an irregular heartbeat, internal bleeding or even a heart attack. Eating a large amount of chocolate or other fatty food can also lead to a condition called pancreatitis, where the pancreas goes into overdrive trying to produce more enzymes to digest the increased fat in their system, and in doing so leaks these enzymes which then damages the pancreas itself. It is very painful – just ask a person who has suffered pancreatitis – pain relief, IV fluids (fluid into the vein) and supportive treatment is required.

If you are concerned about your pet over the Easter break, do not hesitate to contact us on 4632 8333 as we offer a 24 hour emergency service.



## TVH In the Community ~ 40km walk for AEIOU Foundation



On Sunday March 10, 2013, the Toowoomba Vet Hospital team participated in the third annual Take a Hike Toowoomba challenge to raise funds for children with autism. Spanning 40 kilometres over nine hours, us and a team of hikers set out at 4am on this challenge to help eliminate the funding deficit at AEIOU Foundation's Toowoomba Centre and change the lives of children with autism in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs.

Autism impacts families emotionally, financially and socially. Early intervention gives children the building blocks, and



coupled with support over a child's lifetime, we can break the bubble of autism and pave the way for school, employment and greater independence and change the trajectory of their lives.

Around 90% of children who complete the program at AEIOU are able to communicate functionally, and around 73% of children transition to mainstream schools. All children are supported to reach their maximum life potential.

Take a Hike was a huge mental and physical challenge but in comparison to the daily challenges faced by children with autism it was a truly rewarding experience. Thank you to our clients who donated and supported us, and the AEIOU.

*'I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at TVH for the outstanding treatment and care you have given Jack over the past weeks after he broke his leg. Louis & Paul have been outstanding and they kept me well informed every step of the way. A very special mention has to go to Tiffany who has been a great support to me through Puppy Preschool and Jacks accident. Just saying thank you to all of you does not seem to be enough but that is all I can say. It is very comforting to know that I have chosen a great Vet and I would not go anywhere else.'*

**Maureen - Toowoomba**

### Staff Profile Alice Murray

Alice has recently been accepted to study Veterinary Science at the University of Queensland Gatton campus and we are lucky enough to have her caring for our patients here at TVH on the weekends.

Born and raised in Lismore, Alice always knew she wanted to work with animals and is the sixth generation on her family beef cattle property in Lismore. Alice's interests outside of study and work include showing cattle, horse riding and tennis. Alice's fur family consists of 14 year old Maltese cross, Sashy (pictured), Darcie the Border Collie, Bella the Burmese and all her cattle.

