

# INSIGHTS

NEWS AND VIEWS *from*  
Dr. Heather Brookshire, DVM, DACVO



ANIMAL  
VISION  
CENTER  
*of* VIRGINIA

WHY CHOOSE US | SERVICES WE OFFER | CONDITIONS WE TREAT | REFERRING VETS

*SPRING EDITION: April 2017*

## From the Desk of Dr. Brookshire

Spring has arrived in southeastern Virginia; you can tell by the sprinkling of pollen that coats our porches, cars and windows - and the resulting sneezing and wheezing of allergy sufferers. Just as people are affected by windblown allergens, so are pets. The result for our furry friends can be a bad case of allergic conjunctivitis. Read up on the symptoms and treatment in this issue of *Insights*. In addition, you may wish to mark your calendar if you own a cat or a service animal. In April, we are offering a special rate on feline blood pressure screenings for cats when you schedule an ocular exam. During the month of May, we will recognize National Service Dog Eye Examination Month with free exams for service animals - an offering we provide not just in May, but all year long. Here's to warmer, longer days ahead with your pets. Happy spring!

All the best,  
*Dr. Heather*



## FOCUS on Allergic Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the moist vascular tissue that surrounds the eye (conjunctival tissue). While there are many causes of conjunctivitis, most cases during this

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### April Lunch & Learn Series: The Complete Ophthalmic Exam, April 12

Join us for our next Lunch & Learn series, April 12. Held for our region's veterinarians, these accredited continuing education sessions are

time of the year are caused by allergies. Even if animals do not show signs of allergies in the rest of their body (itchiness of skin/rubbing face, hair loss, persistent licking/biting of the feet), they can still suffer from allergies that affect their eyes. Dogs that are known to have systemic allergies and dogs with large droopy eyelids (that can collect airborne pollen, dust and dander) appear to be more prone to the problem of allergic conjunctivitis.

Conjunctivitis can occur in both dogs and cats, and symptoms include:

- Squinting or intermittent blinking
- Redness of the moist tissues that surround the eye
- Eye discharge
- Swelling of the tissue around the eyes

If your pet has been diagnosed with allergic conjunctivitis and/or displays minor evidence of the symptoms above, you can help improve their comfort with the use of over-the-counter antihistamine drops (Alaway, Zaditor, Vasocon-A, Naphcon-A, etc.) and lubricant drops (Genteal gel, Systane, Refresh pm, Blink, etc.). Be careful though! Sometimes conjunctivitis can be a sign of a more serious ocular problem. If any of the signs persist or worsen, immediate evaluation by your family veterinarian or veterinary ophthalmologist should be pursued.



## Just for Cats - Special Rate for High-blood Pressure Screenings in April

High blood pressure doesn't just affect people. It's a health concern for cats as well, putting them at risk for eye damage that can lead to blindness, among other health concerns. All cats over the age of seven should have their blood pressure measured at least annually for early diagnosis of problems. During the month of April, Animal Vision Center of Virginia is offering a special \$20 fee on feline blood pressure evaluations when you schedule a regular consultation exam or recheck exam for your cat. This diagnostic test is especially important if your cat is over the age of 12 and/or has been diagnosed with kidney disease or hyperthyroidism. Call us for more details at 757-

free of charge, and lunch is provided. The topic of our upcoming program will be "Basic Principles of the Ophthalmic Examination: Tips and Tricks of the Trade." We will begin with a discussion on the importance of the history, signalment and ophthalmic "minimum database."

From there, we will move into tips for the general/distance exam, front-to-back ophthalmic exam and vision testing. Finally, we will end with a short discussion on problem-based ancillary diagnostics. This lecture will be geared towards providing you with specific tools to improve your ophthalmic exam and diagnostic capabilities. Space is limited, so please RSVP by April 8 to [Dr.Heather@AVCVA.com](mailto:Dr.Heather@AVCVA.com) or call (757) 749-4838.

## What our Clients Say

*"We really value our relationship with Dr. Brookshire. Our clients are grateful for the convenience of bringing their pets to our practice for their ophthalmology consult, and our doctors appreciate her attention to detail and follow-up phone calls."*

- Dr. Amanda Hayden,  
Practice Owner, Centerville  
Animal Hospital

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Road, Suite 2  
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## HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday, Wednesday,  
Friday



## Bark if You Love Service Animals!

May is National Service Dog Eye Examination Month, and many board-certified diplomats of the [American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists](#) (ACVO) will offer free screenings for these hard-working and caring animals. At Animal Vision Center of Virginia (AVCVA), we offer free screening exams on qualified service animals every month of the year. Trained to perform tasks to assist people with visual, hearing and medical impairments, service and working dogs also help police and military units sniff out drugs, assist in search-and-rescue operations and comfort patients in therapeutic scenarios.

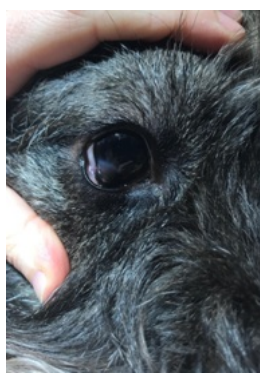
For a third year, our team will have the privilege of performing free ocular screenings off site for the police dogs and patrol horses with the City of Virginia Beach Police and Sheriff's Department.

To qualify for the exam, service animals must be active working animals that are certified by a formal training program or organization, or are currently enrolled in a formal training program. For more information about the referral process, or to schedule a screening, please contact [Dr.Heather@AVCVA.com](mailto:Dr.Heather@AVCVA.com), or see the ACVO National Service Animal Eye Exam webpage at [www.ACVOEyeExam.org](http://www.ACVOEyeExam.org).

## Recently Seen - Lovely Luna

Luna is a four-year-old Schnauzer mix who was referred to us for what appeared to be a cyst or dark protrusion from the lower lateral portion of her cornea. Upon ophthalmic examination, Luna was suspected to have developed a melanoma. The mass was surgically removed and found to be a malignant conjunctival melanoma. So far, following mass removal, Luna remains cancer-free in the rest of her body and we are monitoring the surgery site carefully for any evidence

of return. We are very hopeful that the cancer will not spread and Luna will not lose her eye! Be sure to get any lumps and bumps on or around the eye evaluated by your family veterinarian or veterinary ophthalmologist.



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Visit our Website | Send us an Email | Call us at 757-749-4838



# ANIMAL VISION CENTER of VIRGINIA

*Providing quality ophthalmic care for animals of all shapes and sizes, Animal Vision Center of Virginia is owned and operated by Dr. Heather Brookshire, a board-certified veterinary ophthalmologist.*

*The Center is located at 521 Old Great Neck Road, Suite 2, in Virginia Beach, VA 23454.*

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