

# Base veterinarian offers healthcare to the pet population

By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith  
437 AW Public Affairs

It's been said that a dog is man's best friend, so there's no better reason to keep them healthy.

Staff members at the Charleston AFB Veterinary Treatment Facility offer services to help dog (and other pet) owners do just that.

"We take care of routine physicals and annual shots," said Army Capt. (Dr.) Larry Shelton, base veterinarian.

There are 3,000 records on file at the base vet and Shelton sees 30-35 pets each Tuesday and Thursday. "We try to keep a regular schedule of two days a week, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., but it doesn't always work out that way.

"My responsibility outside of the clinic is food inspection," he said. "I have a staff of three and we have to inspect all the food that comes through the Naval Weapons Station Commissary and the galley at the Naval Hospital."

Shelton is also responsible for making sure the Child Development Centers here and the CDC and horse stables at the weapons station conform to health standards

Shelton and the vet clinic staff are responsible for healthcare of the military working dogs.

"Regardless of how many appointments we have lined up," Shelton said, "they all get bumped if the military dogs need me."

Though he doesn't perform major surgeries on pets, he performs whatever medical procedures need to be done on the military working dogs.

"They are my priority," Shelton said. "The military dog is why I'm here."

Shelton said that's why it's necessary for pet owners to have a veterinarian off base to turn to if the need arises. "It's important to have a back up in case of a medical emergency," he said.

Bobbie June Griggs has been bringing her black Labrador retriever, Buddy, to the base for eight years and only sees her civilian vet for specialized treatment.

"I've been real pleased with the care here," she said. "It's economical and more convenient for me since I live near here. More than that though, the staff here seems to really care about their patients and that's what's important to me."



Army Capt. (Dr.) Larry Shelton, base veterinarian, takes a look at Sassy during her annual check up while Sassy's owner, Petty Officer 1st Class Robert Stough looks on. Stough is assigned to the Naval Weapons Station in Goose Creek.



(above) Dr. Shelton prepares to take a blood sample from Buddy, an 8-year-old Black Labrador Retriever. The blood sample will be tested for heartworms.

(left) Christy Leek, a Charleston AFB Veterinary Treatment Facility staff member, prepares a vaccination for the next appointment.

## VTF reminders

- Pets must be registered within ten days of moving into base housing
- No person under 12 years of age is allowed in the facility
- Appointments and check ups can be made one week prior to requested date
- For information or to schedule appointments, call 963-4264

photos by  
Senior Airman Valerie Arriaga