

Northwoods Humane Society – Nancy Douglas, Volunteer

Last week, I was riding back with friends from Madison to Hayward after a weekend Scrabble tournament, (no, I didn't win anything but I had a lot of fun), when we passed a large sign with a big, fluffy dog that read "K9-5." In my unusual position of being a passenger instead of driving, I had time to open my phone and see what it was about.

K9-5 is a daycare for doggies outside Madison and the pictures online made it look like a lot of fun. Though I never plan to take my little Eliza down 5 hours away for daycare, I did click on the requirements tab, and found the list staggering. Do dogs really need these many immunizations, just to play together? How much of this should I be getting for my own small dog to keep her safe?

The list included: Bordetella, DHLPP (Distemper), Rabies, Canine influenza and a negative fecal result within last 6 months.

Now, Eliza is scheduled this week for Lyme – oral and a Bordetella vaccine. She has 3-year reminders for: Parvo, DHLPP (distemper) and Rabies

I'm taking in a fecal sample (easy enough, as I pick up after her every time we walk), and I don't remember if she's chipped, so I want to check on that.

So, we went to the vet and got her checked out. The vet also took time to explain more about the vaccines. If I understood properly, the viral diseases are rabies, parvo, distemper, and hepatitis. Those vaccines can be given every 3 years and are stable enough to give protection that long. Lepto and Lyme disease are bacterial and need to be vaccinated against annually. Those diseases can lead to liver and kidney failure.

I found it curious that the Madison location didn't require protection against Lyme disease. We discussed that since they are not in the Northwoods, with all the wildlife and ticks, it wouldn't be such a problem there — unless they come up here to visit and enjoy our world!

Though Eliza doesn't play with many other dogs, she does visit the Large and Small dog parks at the Northwoods Humane Society, and walks on paths and sidewalks where many other dogs have walked (and marked). She also travels around with us and stays in dog-friendly hotels.

I opted to keep her fully protected, so she got her oral Lyme vaccine and her Bordetella shot. They checked her for a chip, and gave me the numbers that will let me go online and update her contact information. I also refilled her monthly flea and tick pills, which she thinks are the best treats ever.

The vet reported that she needs some dental extractions, which we have scheduled. Apparently, small dogs tend to have jaws that get more tooth crowding and decay in the back; it's seldom a problem with bigger dogs. When she has her dental work, she will take antibiotics before and after, have a number of self-dissolving stitches, and will need soft food for a week or so. She gulps more than she chews anyhow. Being under full anesthetic is always a bit risky, but as it is,

the teeth are loose and probably somewhat painful, and are definitely sending bacteria into her bloodstream. And once this is done, she will likely have many long, healthy years ahead of her.

Date to Remember – December 1 through December 31 – The Holiday Matching Gift Drive for the Northwoods Humane Society – P. O. Box 82 – Hayward, WI 54843 or Northwoodshumansociety.org