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FEATURE STORY

THE JOY OF GIVING

Emmanuelle Gattuso's personal story of how her love for her dogs motivated a \$2.5-million leadership gift to help the pets we love - live longer, healthier lives.



KIM ROBINSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PET TRUST WITH HER DOG JUNO.

This month we are excited to announce a \$2.5-million leadership gift from La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso to Pet Trust's Friends Together for Longer campaign. This gift will support the creation of the James Slaight Advanced Surgical Complex, a significant component of the new facilities being created at OVC and named in memory of Emmanuelle Gattuso and Allan Slaight's beloved dog: James. As someone who has worked within the charitable sector for my entire career, I am motivated and inspired by Emmanuelle's generosity and the love she demonstrates for her pets. I admire her drive and desire to give back in so many ways. Emmanuelle's story reminds me that we all have the ability to make a difference. I hope you enjoy reading more about her inspiration to give to OVC Pet Trust in this issue of Best Friends.

I am very happy to report that in Fall 2016 we broke ground in the OVC Health Sciences Centre – construction has officially begun on our \$9-million capital campaign to create new surgery and anesthesia facilities at OVC. With the support of Pet Trust donors, the changes to our hospital and the support of companion animal research will ensure that OVC continues to be a centre of excellence in the world of animal health and remain at the forefront of veterinary education, science and medicine.

Pet Trust also recently invested more than \$142,000 to fund 10 new research projects at OVC. Each study aims to improve diagnoses and treatments of a wide variety of health conditions in pets. From using stem cells to understand canine epilepsy; examining cartilage cells to develop better treatments for joint injuries; and investigating predictors of how well dogs with bone or mammary cancers will do after treatment; the questions our researchers hope to answer are ones that may have benefits for pets and humans alike (see Cancer Game Changer story on page 3 and Your Gifts at Work on page 16).

Thank you again for your ongoing support. Don't forget to connect with us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ovcpet) and Twitter (@OVCPetTrust) to stay up-to-date on our latest news and happenings.

Kim Robinson
Managing Director, OVC Pet Trust

P.S. Please also take some time to watch and share our new campaign video found at www.pettrust.ca. While the construction is now underway, our work isn't over yet. Every donation matters and you can help us move that much closer to reaching our goal of raising \$9 million to complete these state-of-the-art facilities.

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PHOTO CREDIT: CHRISTINA GAPIC.

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CANCER GAME CHANGER

OVC Breakthrough
Leads to Human
Clinical Trials



Cancer treatment in people could be transformed thanks to a study on treating cancer in animals led by researchers from the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) at the University of Guelph. Their findings, published in the *Journal of Immunology* this June, are already leading to clinical trials to treat people with various forms of cancer.

The researchers found that injecting oncolytic viruses (viruses that target cancer cells) intravenously into the spleen boosts immune response faster and higher than traditional vaccine methods. Typically, physicians need to wait weeks or months to administer a booster vaccine, with the down time potentially deadly.

"Normally, you have to wait until the immune response is down to administer the booster vaccine, but this means that, with severe and dangerous diseases, the response would wane," says Dr. Byram Bridle, lead author of the paper and a Pet Trust funded researcher whose projects aim to develop targeted biotherapies for the treatment of cancers, as well as using viruses that replicate and kill cancerous cells in the body.

"You don't want to give cancer any time to spread. What injecting the viruses into the spleen does is it allows us to bypass the regulatory mechanism that would limit its effectiveness. When we conducted

these tests in animals, we saw high success rates in treatment of cancer." He said the findings apply to many types of cancer, including breast cancer, leukemia, prostate cancer and osteosarcoma (bone cancer), and tumours in the brain, liver and skin.

"By getting the vaccine to this unique location in the body (the spleen), we were able to get an unprecedented immune response in minimal time," says Bridle. "This is a fundamentally new way to treat cancer that bypasses many common side effects. These therapies are safer and more targeted."

After bench research was completed, the team from Guelph and McMaster University conducted a clinical trial at OVC's Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer. Fifteen cats with mammary carcinomas, which is equivalent to breast cancer in humans, were treated as part of the study. In all cases, the cats had been diagnosed with mammary carcinoma by their referring veterinarian and were presented with the options of no treatment, standard of care only (surgery), or enrolling in the clinical trial.

Bridle says that since this was the first time testing a novel biotherapy in cats, an emphasis was placed on safety during treatment. "The cats tolerated the treatment very well. Typical side effects were limited to mild flu-like symptoms for a couple of days post-treatment," he says. "Importantly, the experimental portion of the therapy only required two immunizations, a dramatic difference from the intensive treatment regimens normally applied to cancer," he adds.

The findings are already leading to clinical trials for people in Ottawa, Hamilton and Toronto.

Bridle says the study could help researchers in other fields, including those looking to treat virulent diseases such as dengue fever and Ebola.

"My research focuses on cancer, but certainly these findings would be applicable to other diseases. We just need to connect with people in those fields," he adds.

He is optimistic that the human trials will help improve cancer treatment.

"We are living in a world where diseases seem to be growing faster than treatment, so we need to outpace them. Time is of the essence. It's a race we have to win." 🐾

WHAT IS TRANSLATIONAL MEDICINE? How Advancements in Veterinary Medicine May Benefit Human Health

The Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) is a leader in veterinary health care, learning and research for the health of all species, including our own. Researchers are currently studying naturally-occurring diseases and their progression in animals with the goal of improving the health of both pets and people.

Translational medicine, the transformation of scientific discovery into health care advances to benefit multiple species, is a rapidly growing discipline. This area aims to expedite the discovery of new diagnostic tools and treatments by using a "bench-to-bedside" approach.

Pet Trust is helping to fund promising research currently underway at OVC with the potential for translational benefits in the areas of: heart disease; nutrition; cancer; advanced surgical techniques; and patient safety, which includes post-operative infectious disease control. 🐾



HELPING TO DETERMINE PANCREATITIS IN CATS

Cats may soon benefit from a new student research project at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) aimed at developing a better understanding of how chronic kidney disease, and its progression, might affect the interpretation of blood test results for pancreatitis. Lipase, a pancreatic enzyme responsible for breaking down fats, is measured as a test for pancreatitis, but it is believed that it may also be affected by kidney disease.

Ellen Everson, OVC 2018 student veterinarian recently won a top prize for her summer research project in this area - the Comparative Gastroenterology Society Abstract Poster Presentation Award - at the 2016 American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) Forum this past June. The competition for these awards is tough, and places undergraduate research, like Ellen's, on par with the work of residents and senior clinicians and faculty from other universities across North America.

Veterinarians know cats to be very stoic and often only show subtle signs of pain, such as slight reductions in activity level and appetite. Studies show that these behavioural changes can result from a wide variety of sensations that are different from pain such as nausea, fatigue, and even fear or stress – creating a real challenge for veterinarians to pinpoint the major source of the problem when our feline friends present as feeling "off".

"In these instances, analysis of a general blood panel can help give veterinary teams the information that patients cannot such as 'it's my digestive system that's giving me trouble', or 'there is a problem with my kidneys'," Ellen explains. Chronic kidney disease affects approximately 30 per cent of cats over the age of 12, and up to 80 per cent of cats in the 15-20-year-old age range, making diagnosis of pancreatic disorders even more difficult as a cat gets older.

Ellen says: "A better understanding of how chronic kidney disease and its progression might affect the interpretation of other blood test results is important information to know."

Ellen's research is part of a broader study led by Dr. Anthony Abrams-Ogg and funded by OVC Pet Trust. Abrams-Ogg's research aims to better characterize the wide range of signs caused by, and the usefulness of, specific diagnostic tests for pancreatitis in cats.

For cat owners, the most important impact of this work will be the optimization of appropriate individualized care plans for their pets.

The value summer students like Ellen bring to the University of Guelph researchers is beneficial for all. "Working with young and aspiring veterinary scientists goes well beyond a mentorship role," says OVC's Abrams-Ogg, who is the advisor on Ellen's project. "The work our students provide genuinely helps further our core research."

In the present study, early results indicate that elevated lipase in a cat with insufficient kidney function should not automatically be attributed solely to decreased kidney function. Often, the presence of elevated lipase in a blood test could in fact indicate pancreatitis, which would call for a different treatment plan.

For cat owners, the most important impact of this work will be the optimization of appropriate individualized care plans, says Ellen.

"Ultimately, we hope our research will have practical applications and help the practicing clinician with the interpretation of blood tests for pancreatitis that have been performed on a cat with kidney disease, in order to prioritize the acute, as well as long term, management of the patient." 🐾



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New Outreach Coordinator joins OVC Pet Trust team

Meet Bailey Kagan, pictured here with her dog Hyde, OVC Pet Trust's newest staff member. "My role at OVC Pet Trust is to make sure our veterinary hospitals receive support," Bailey says. "If your hospital has questions about the OVC Pet Trust Pet Memorial Program, needs resources to host an event in support of Pet Trust, or if you're simply looking for more information, I am at your service. I look forward to ensuring your support of Pet Trust is a rewarding and worthwhile experience," she adds.

This fall, the Pet Trust Vet Portal, the most efficient and user-friendly way for hospitals to make a donation in memory of a client's pet online, will be updated with a new look.

Have questions about the Pet Memorial Program? Need help with the online Vet Portal? Looking for news or information about Pet Trust? Interested in running an event in support of Pet Trust? Connect with Bailey by email: bkagan@uoguelph.ca, or telephone: 519-824-4120 ext. 58214.

A NEW LOOK ON LiFE:

been a special part of Jean Paul's life since he welcomed him into his home as a puppy. As Steve enters the exam room for his post-operative check-up at the OVC Companion Animal Hospital this past May, the nine-year-old white Labrador Retriever makes his way around the room, as if to say hello to everyone gathered in the Ophthalmology Service. His wagging tail greets Dr. Chantale Pinard as she asks JP how Steve's been doing since his last visit and prepares to examine him. It's been nine months since Pinard performed surgery on Steve and she is happy with the progress he's made.

Following a diagnosis of Diabetes mellitus in the summer of 2014, Steve lost the vision in his right eye in December of that year. Two months later he'd lost vision in both eyes due to the development of cataracts, rendering him functionally blind. A once happy and gentle dog that was always up for going on a walk or playing with his tennis ball, drastically changed. Steve's behaviour became panicked

as he struggled to adapt to his blindness; he often bumped into furniture around the house, and was hesitant to participate in any of his usual hobbies.

"When Steve became blind, my wife Dawn Marie and I spent a lot of time guiding and helping him to adjust to the uncertainty of his surroundings," JP says. The couple taught Steve how to navigate around the house, including verbal cues to walk left or turn right to get around, and helping him up and down the stairs.

"Steve has done so much for us; we owed it to him to help him however we could. We decided if his blindness was a fixable issue, we would explore every possible option to correct it," JP explains.

JP affectionately refers to Steve as their 'uncertified' therapy dog. While Steve has not been formally trained as such, JP emphasizes the companionship Steve has provided to his family throughout his life. "My wife and I are both advanced care paramedics. Steve is always there to greet us at the door after a long shift,"

don't know what we'd do without him."

Steve's family veterinarian Dr. Suzi Peters at Grimsby Animal Hospital referred him to the Ontario Veterinary College where he met with Chantale Pinard. Pinard graduated from OVC in 1993, and has been a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists since 2003. She has been a faculty member for the past nine years as an Associate Professor, and divides her time between teaching, research and clinical care.

An electroretinogram, an eye test used to detect abnormal function of the retina, and ultra sound determined Steve would be a good candidate for cataract surgery in his left eye; however, tests were not conclusive that the right eye would be visual once the cataract was removed. It was decided that cataract surgery would first be performed on the left eye, and if Steve was stable enough, the procedure would then be performed on the right eye. Steve would already be under general anesthesia and Pinard was hopeful the cataract removal, even with a less functional retina, could still restore some vision.

STEVE AND JP VISIT THE OVC COMPANION ANIMAL HOSPITAL NINE MONTHS POST-OP AFTER STEVE'S BILATERAL CATARACT SURGERY.

Steve's Story

JP reflects.
"He is the
best dog.
I honestly

"In my experience, dogs can do quite well and have a very good quality of life despite loss of vision," Pinard says. "However there is certainly a group of dogs that, like Steve, do better with vision due to less anxiety and more sense of stimulation."

Cataract surgery is the same in dogs as it is in people and the procedure takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes per eye, Dr. Pinard explains.

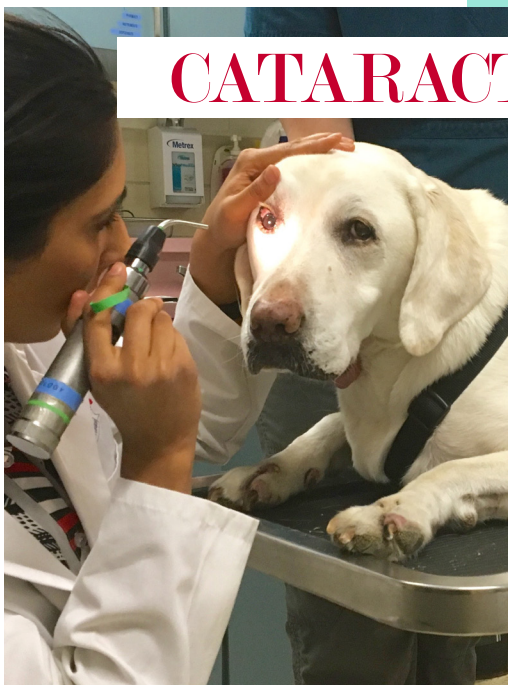
Steve's bilateral cataract surgery took place on September 28, 2015. JP documented Steve's journey on his Instagram account – from a 90-day countdown to his surgery date, to the first time Steve was able to track a tennis ball with his eyes following surgery.

Steve's post operative regimen includes eye drops to decrease inflammation in his eyes, and to stimulate tear production, as diabetic dogs are known to have

dry eye syndrome. The artificial lens in his left eye has restored functional vision in that eye, while the sight in his right eye is limited to high contrast objects or shadows, due to scarring of the retina discovered during surgery. Since Steve is an insulin-dependent diabetic dog, he requires one needle twice a day – after breakfast and dinner, something that JP and Dawn Marie are comfortable administering.

While Steve will require ongoing appointments every few months to monitor his eye pressure and healing, he has gained muscle mass with increased physical activity and he's been getting back to his old self.

"I can't thank Dr. Pinard and the OVC enough for everything they did for Steve," JP says. "They gave me my best friend back." 🐾



UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF DR. CHANTALE PINARD, STUDENT VETERINARIAN NOREEN SUMAR PERFORMS STEVE'S NINE MONTH POST-OP EYE EXAMINATION.

CATARACT FACTS

While dogs can usually see right after surgery, it may take up to one month for full appreciation of eyesight as healing progresses.

Unlike humans, dogs eyes are very reactive and need additional follow-up and months of medication after surgery. Whereas humans typically only require two weeks of medication following surgery, dogs usually need four to six months of follow-up, or more.

In general terms, cataract surgery in dogs has a success rate of 80 to 90 per cent. Possible complications (10 to 20 per cent of patients) may include infection or inflammation, glaucoma and retinal detachment, which may all lead to blindness.



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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black blazer and black leather pants, is smiling and holding a small, fluffy brown dog. She is standing in a minimalist gallery space with white walls and a light-colored floor. A large, white, birdcage-like sculpture hangs from the ceiling, and a red traffic cone sits on the floor in the background.

The Joy of Giving

New \$2.5-million gift to OVC Pet Trust
in memory of cherished companion

Emmanuelle Gattuso and her husband Allan Slaight remember James as the love of their lives. The black-haired, white-bearded Poodle was a special part of their family since he was a puppy.

Gattuso had been trying to convince her husband to get a dog for about five years, when she and a friend happened to drive by a sign labelled “Puppies for Sale” on a trip to the Niagara region. The black poodle walked straight over to Gattuso, and she quickly made up her mind to bring him home.

“James chose us,” Gattuso recalls.

Gattuso remembers James as being an “incredible, sweet, well-behaved dog, who always wanted to please us.” Shortly after James joined their family, Gattuso and Slaight welcomed Stewart into their lives – a red toy poodle (James and Stewart are named after Slaight’s favourite magician – Canadian Stewart James). When James passed away in 2013 at the age of 12, Gattuso struggled with the loss. She keeps James’ ashes in a marble box on their coffee table in their Toronto home and says that even though he is gone, a part of him will always be with her family in their hearts.

It’s the love Gattuso has for her pets that has motivated her, through her philanthropic foundation, La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso, to lead the way for OVC Pet Trust’s Friends Together for Longer Campaign at the University of Guelph’s Ontario Veterinary College. The new \$2.5-million gift will construct the James Slaight Advanced Surgical Complex, a significant part of a \$9-million project to create new surgery and anesthesia facilities. This state-of-the-art surgical area, named in memory of Gattuso’s poodle James, will include multiple suites of operating rooms equipped to offer a vast number of routine and advanced surgical

procedures, which will allow OVC to provide the highest standard of care possible to pets. Gattuso says she’s fortunate to be able to help

It’s the love Gattuso has for her pets that has motivated her to lead the way for OVC Pet Trust’s Friends Together for Longer Campaign.

others, and feels that giving isn’t about recognition. Rather, giving should be an attitude – and satisfaction comes when you know you have done something for somebody that has



GATTUSO’S POODLE JAMES’ MEMORY WILL BE HONOURED WITH THE NEW JAMES SLAIGHT ADVANCED SURGICAL COMPLEX AT OVC. JAMES (PICTURED ABOVE) PASSED AWAY IN 2013.

helped them in one way or another. Whether it’s supporting a cause that’s close to her heart in the arts, culture or health (such as making a historical \$50-million gift to the Princess Margaret Hospital to support personalized cancer medicine in 2013) Gattuso’s philanthropy is a catalyst for progress and innovation.

“There are a million ways to give – whether you give time or money. Money is not always the most important thing,” Gattuso says. “In this day and age, we are constantly looking inwards – looking at our phones, checking our messages, trying to improve our own lives; sometimes all we need to do is open our eyes

and look outward – look across the street and see what needs there are. All you need to do is look around and you’ll find them,” she says,

when asked about her advice for giving back. When asked why she supports Pet Trust, Gattuso highlights the importance of the human-animal bond, and the passion she has felt during her visits to the OVC. “Pets are so important in peoples’ lives. One of the reasons that inspired me to give is the passion I experienced that all of the veterinarians and team members at OVC have for their patients,” she reflects. “I have had the opportunity to talk with some of the surgeons and oncologists on staff, and they all have one thing in common: they are passionate about the work they do, and they love animals.”

“Passion inspires passion,” Gattuso adds.

Gattuso’s dogs have undergone various types of surgeries during their lives, and she champions the importance of quicker recovery time, and less pain following surgery, which will be made possible with the creation of the new facilities at OVC.

“Our pets give us so much; they’re our family members, and they bring out the best in us,” Gattuso says. “I feel very fortunate that I can help.”

While it’s clear Stewart is an important member of the family, the impact James has had on Gattuso and Slaight’s lives is special, and his memory will live on through their gift to OVC.

“I think anyone who owns a pet should understand the importance of giving to OVC Pet Trust. People love their animals so much – you don’t have to talk to them about Pet Trust for very long before they ‘get it.’” 🐾



Celebrating 30 years of giving back

2016 marks OVC Pet Trust's 30th anniversary of helping pets and the people who love and care for them. Burlington Animal Hospital and The Kingsway Animal Hospital were both established in 1986. The Pet Trust team paid both hospitals a visit this summer to say thank you.

KINGSWAY ANIMAL HOSPITAL



The Kingsway Animal Hospital (KAH), located in the heart of The Kingsway neighbourhood in Toronto, has always placed an importance on being there to support and provide guidance to clients and care for the health of their pet through all stages of life. Built in 1946, the hospital operates out of a small stone house that could easily be mistaken for another home in the area – the location is known for its homey feeling and comfortable atmosphere inside. The KAH has been a proud supporter of OVC Pet Trust since 1986, and has donated more than \$60,000 over the past 30 years.

Dr. Wendy Van Slyke, OVC 1981, says The KAH began donating to Pet Trust as a way to honour pets after they performed a euthanasia, and they continue to support OVC because it's significant to their clients. "It means so much to

our clients that we've donated to a cause that is helping the health and well-being of companion animals, and veterinary medicine as a whole," Van Slyke explains. "A donation in memory of

a pet is a wonderful way to honour the bond our clients have with a family member they've had to say goodbye to," she adds.

Alysha Peterkin, office manager at The KAH, says she often gets client feedback after her hospital makes a donation, which is one major reason they've continued to support Pet Trust over the years.

"We know that pets are like family. Supporting Pet Trust is a way of giving back, while remembering a pet – our clients know that the gift is going somewhere where our veterinarians have studied, and to a place where our patients may need to go for advanced care. It's great to support that."

"Our clients tell us they see our hospital's donation as a way for their pet's memory to live on," says Dr. Rosemary Draganic, OVC 1995. "We are so happy to support a world class institution that helps our animals and supports our veterinary community." 🐾

3 Things Pet Owners Need to Know About...

Clinical Trials

The Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph is currently conducting over 25 companion animal-related clinical trials. Each study aims to help advance medical treatments that can improve the health or quality of life for our pets.





Back to companion animal health

and The Kingsway Animal Hospital have been supporting innovative discoveries, healthcare and education at OVC since Pet Trust was estab-

Burlington Animal Hospital (BAH) was built in the late 1960s, and today they're owned by Associate Veterinary Clinics (AVC) – a network of more than 80 hospitals across Canada. The feeling of family throughout the hospital is obvious – something the team always aims to extend to their clients and patients as well. Honouring the memory of a pet by donating to Pet Trust is just one of

clients to offer their pet, as well as posting signage to alert other hospital staff that a euthanasia is being performed in the building,” says Lindsay, BAH’s practice administrator. Lindsay says pet owners are always grateful after BAH makes a donation to Pet Trust in memory of their pet. “They are thankful their hospital contributed to such a great cause. It helps take a very sad, challenging situation

“The fact that a client trusts me to be present at one of the most intimate moments of their pets’ life is truly an honour; I’m very happy we can, in turn, honour the life of the pet by donating to OVC Pet Trust and the future of veterinary medicine.”

the ways BAH comforts its clients during this difficult time. BAH has donated more than \$50,000 to OVC Pet Trust’s Pet Memorial Program over the past 30 years.

“When it’s time for one of our clients to say goodbye to their pet, we create a soothing environment in our hospital – our team puts a lot of work and care into preparing the waiting room and exam room including providing comfortable blankets, treats for

and put a positive light on things – they feel comfort knowing the gift in memory of their pet may help other animals.”

Dr. Andrea Pechey, OVC 2011, often hears from pet owners after her hospital has made a donation to Pet Trust as well, and says she’s grateful when she does receive thank you cards from clients after such a challenging time. 🐾



What is a Clinical Trial? Clinical trials are research studies used in all specialties of human and veterinary medicine to evaluate new medical devices, vaccines, diagnostic tests and treatments. These trials may investigate new types of surgical or other procedures as well as novel medical therapies for patients.

What are the benefits of participating in a clinical trial? Clinical trials allow clinicians to discover new and improved ways to prevent, diagnose or treat patients. By participating in a clinical trial, your pet may benefit by: gaining access to new treatments that are not yet available to the public; obtaining

expert medical care at a leading health care facility; playing an active role in developing a specialized healthcare plan; and helping others by contributing to medical research.

How can my pet take part in a clinical trial at OVC? Pet owners should talk to their family veterinarian about clinical trial treatment

and referral options to OVC. To see the full list of current clinical trials please visit the OVC Health Sciences Centre website:

<http://bit.ly/OVCClinicalTrials>

Referring veterinarians email: **clinical.research@uoguelph.ca**

In spring 2016 OVC's Dr. Danielle Richardson was out for a walk with her four-month old baby and husband when her 10-year-old Golden Retriever suddenly collapsed...



When the Doctor Becomes the Client

By Dr. Danielle Richardson

DANIELLE RICHARDSON COMPLETED AN INTERNSHIP IN SMALL ANIMAL MEDICINE AND SURGERY, FOLLOWED BY A RESIDENCY IN SMALL ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE AT OVC, AND ACHIEVED BOARD CERTIFICATION IN 2009. DANIELLE HAS BEEN A STAFF INTERNIST AT OVC SINCE 2008 AND SPENDS HER TIME ON BOTH THE MEDICINE AND ONCOLOGY SERVICES AT THE OVC HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE.

This past March, I had the experience of being a client. As a veterinarian and internal medicine specialist who normally treats patients at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), I unexpectedly found myself in an unfamiliar situation. My husband Mike, four-month-old son and two Golden Retrievers, Autumn and Stanley, were out for a walk, enjoying the sunshine. We were about a kilometer from home and headed up a fairly steep hill. Suddenly, Autumn, our sweet 10-year-old Golden collapsed on the sidewalk. She was pale and tremoring and appeared to have lost consciousness. In that moment I was both terrified and helpless. My husband and I quickly came up with the plan that he would rush home with our son

and I would stay with the dogs and wait for him to come back with the car. As I sat on the sidewalk with my sweet girl I worried that we might not make it to the OVC in time. She was extremely pale and made no effort to get up. I remembered that my friend and colleague Dr. Shauna Blois, a small animal internal medicine specialist and Associate Professor at OVC, was working that day and I called her immediately. I have never been happier to hear someone's voice. Somehow she managed to understand me through my tears. She was able to be the rational one and reassure me that she would be waiting for us when we arrived. Moments later I saw our neighbour's car speeding towards us. Fortunately, she had arrived just as Mike was

Despite how terrifying this experience was for my family, it was a reminder of what a truly fantastic place the OVC is and how fortunate we are to work here.



running home with the baby and immediately offered to come and get us so Mike could get our son ready to come to OVC. As we approached the OVC Companion Animal Hospital, I could see Shauna and Deb Cloutier, one of our Registered Veterinary Technicians, waiting outside for us with a gurney. They immediately took charge of the situation and rushed Autumn to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) where Dr. Shane Bateman, Emergency and Critical Care Specialist, and ICU resident Patricia were waiting for her. Within minutes Autumn was being stabilized and her colour was improving.

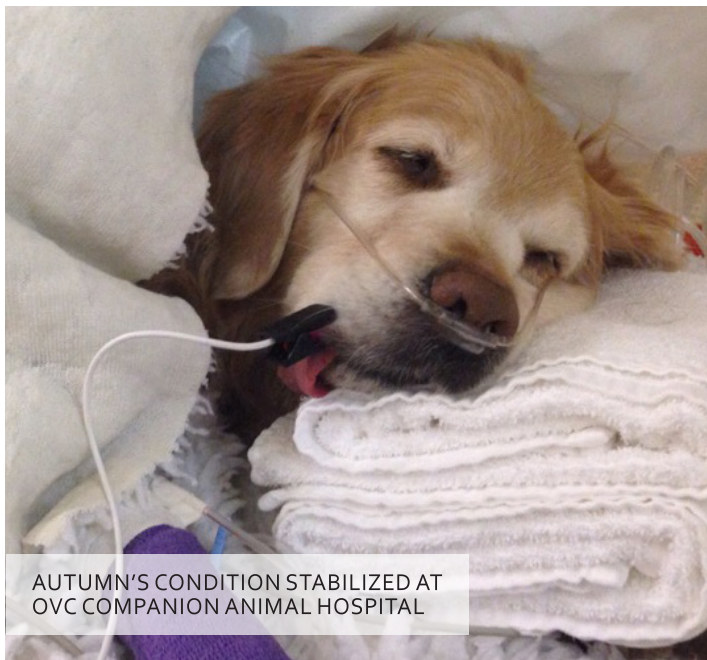
Unfortunately, as we suspected, the news was not good. Autumn had both pericardial and abdominal effusion – which is the build-up of fluid in the sac around the heart, as well as the abdomen. The goal then became trying to determine the cause of the effusion and determine if it was

reasonable to put her through surgery. Despite being late on a busy Friday afternoon, Autumn soon had thoracic radiographs and

a CT scan done, and our fantastic surgeon, Dr. Ameet Singh suggesting that we proceed with a thoracoscopic pericardectomy right away. This procedure removed the sac around her heart to prevent the re-accumulation of fluid that had impaired the ability of her heart to pump and had led to her collapse. Fortunately, Autumn recovered well from surgery. We received constant updates and photos from her surgery resident Jackie. We

Vicky. Autumn was treated like a princess by the fantastic team in the ICU and she was able to come home to us less than 48 hours after surgery.

Despite how terrifying this experience was for my family, it was a reminder of what a truly fantastic place the OVC is and how fortunate we are to work here. I was in awe of how everyone came together to help our sweet girl in a situation where minutes really do count. From my first call to Shauna, to triage, ICU, radiology, anesthesia and surgery, everyone really went above and beyond and words cannot express how thankful we are. Countless friends and colleagues were offering to help in any way and were checking in throughout the weekend to see how Autumn was doing. It's not that this situation was any different from how any other patient would be treated, it just reminded me of how truly lucky I am to work with such an amazing group of people. I hope they know how special they are and that what they do really does matter. Thanks to them, our princess came home. Autumn continues to do well. Her energy has been better than it has been in months, and several follow-up visits at OVC have not revealed any concerns. She is such a lucky girl and my family could not be more thankful. 🐾



AUTUMN'S CONDITION STABILIZED AT OVC COMPANION ANIMAL HOSPITAL

were even able to visit her right after surgery thanks to the kindness and babysitting offer from our friends and Oncology technician,



GETTING TO KNOW... DR. BRIGITTE BRISSON

Surgeon, OVC Companion Animal Hospital, Professor, Small Animal Surgery, Department of Clinical Studies, Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph.

Please tell us about your role at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), University of Guelph.

Clinical care is a major part of my job. As a small animal soft tissue surgeon, I treat all soft tissue conditions including oncology and neurology patients who have been referred to OVC for advanced care. The majority of my patients are dogs and cats, but I also treat a variety of pocket pets—bunnies, ferrets and guinea pigs. I teach fourth-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) students, as well as graduate student residents on the hospital floor, and when I'm on clinics, I'm usually in surgery for 4-6 major procedures on a surgery day, sometimes more. One of my main areas of focus is minimally invasive surgery (MIS). Interventional procedures, a sub-category of MIS, is the diagnosis and treatment of diseases through a small incision or no incision and using imaging technology such as fluoroscopy (a real-time X-Ray device) to deliver devices such as stents. OVC is one of the few places in Canada that does interventional procedures, as it's still a relatively new area of veterinary medicine. Lectures, clinical skills teaching labs, research projects and service activities such as continuing education and

speaking engagements get fit in around my clinical obligations. Every day is different, which is one of the most exciting parts of the job.

What is the best part about your job?

Outside of delivering clinical care, one of my passions is teaching surgical skills to our student veterinarians. When I joined OVC as faculty, transitioning a classroom-based curriculum into a hands-on skills lab was one of my priorities. I created an online database of photos and how-to videos that have been important in educating our future veterinarians. The interactive textbook includes everything from how to gown up before surgery, how to put on gloves, basic suture patterns – to advanced skills such as step-by-step instructions on how to perform bladder, stomach and intestine surgeries, and much more. Many of the materials and models we use in our labs emulate real life. Giving students the ability to learn without the stress of moving from a textbook directly to a real patient allows them to practice and build confidence.

What impact does Pet Trust funding have on your research?

OVC is extremely fortunate to have Pet Trust. The quality and quantity of studies at OVC would simply not be possible without Pet Trust – especially advanced clinical research. One early career research focus of mine was studying intervertebral disc disease in dogs. Dogs, like humans, get disc herniation in the spinal cord but often dogs can become paralyzed and the condition is typically acute, requiring emergency surgical intervention. Even with surgery, dogs have a 25 per cent chance of recurrence. Pet Trust funded my project that followed approximately 300 dogs over a ten-year period. The results of this study have had a direct impact on standard of care and are referenced frequently across the literature – this was possible because of Pet Trust.

Why veterinary medicine?

For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a surgeon. I grew up constantly surrounded by animals my whole life. I've had every pet you could imagine: dogs, cats, bunnies, all types of birds and pocket pets, and even turtles and salamanders; my family recently welcomed two Bengal kittens into our home. OVC is a remarkable place to practice veterinary medicine: our colleagues, clients and referring veterinarians are wonderful, and our case load is varied and challenging. Being an animal lover and pet owner gives me empathy and understanding, and has taught me the decision-making process a client often experiences when making health choices for their pet; essentially, it allows me to be a better veterinary surgeon.

What will the new surgery and anesthesia facilities at OVC mean to you?

Historically, OVC has been a place of innovation that has helped to re-imagine veterinary medicine. During my time here I have personally been a part of, or witnessed my colleagues, improve the standards of care we implement and teach our students. It is the support of our donors, grateful clients, dedicated referring veterinary hospitals, our graduates and more who have helped make this possible. This campaign is not any different. It really is investing in the future of veterinary medicine and will help our pets (whether they are treated here or by one of our graduates educated in this new facility) live longer, healthier lives.

What projects are you currently working on?

One of my current projects (funded by Pet Trust) is examining the use of a high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) to target non-resectable tumours without any surgical incisions. In collaboration with The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), our study aims to investigate surgical treatment options for bone tumours in a minimally invasive approach in dogs. The goal will be to use the findings to not only treat canine cancer, but produce results that may potentially translate into benefits for human cancer treatment too. 🐾

TALKING ABOUT EUTHANASIA



How Vets Can Help Soften the Impact of Losing a Pet

BY SYDNEY PEARCE, @SPARKUOG
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH STUDENT WRITER
WITH STUDENTS PROMOTING AWARENESS
OF RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE (SPARK)

The death of a pet is a genuine loss for an owner. A research project funded by OVC Pet Trust at the University of Guelph hopes to help ease the grief of losing a pet by improving euthanasia guidelines for veterinary hospitals.

"Literature equates pet loss grief to human loss grief - we experience the same symptoms of denial, anger, guilt," says Alisha Matte, a master's student at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC). "The difference is that pet loss is largely not socially recognized as a valid form of grief."

"Ideally, we need to improve society's validation of pet owner grief, but until then, vets certainly can and do help to reduce it."

Often, the healing process is prolonged as pet owners return to regular life — and regular stressors — immediately. But veterinarians can make a difference with grieving where it begins; at the clinic.

Little research has been published on euthanasia appointments and management of owners' grief, says Matte. Most procedures draw upon previous experiences and recommendations made by veterinary regulatory bodies and associations. Looking for the best ways to ease client grief, Matte and advisor Dr. Deep Khosa investigated clinic protocols for euthanasia appointments.

Researchers interviewed and conducted focus groups with staff members in local veterinary clinics about practices and protocols before, during and after euthanasia.

Matte found staff members avoided using certain words in post-mortem discussions with pet owners. Storing deceased animals in a freezer is an essential health and safety practice, but staff members might use the words "cooling device" as a less insensitive alternative to "freezer."

Interviews revealed that clinic staff members were generally diligent about assessing owners' previous experience with pet euthanasia. Staff would often navigate each appointment based on the individual owner's experience and comfort level.

Matte and Khosa will analyze the focus group findings and develop guidelines to help manage veterinary euthanasia. The goal is to improve clinic protocols and, ultimately, help owners through the legitimate grief of losing a pet, says Khosa.

"Ideally, we need to improve society's validation of pet owner grief, but until then, vets certainly can and do help to reduce it. This study, and future studies, may help society's progression towards that." 🐾

Pet Trust invests in 10 new projects to advance pet health

Each year, OVC Pet Trust invests nearly **\$500,000** into projects and equipment to benefit companion animal health and well-being



LOVE!
Help the pets we love-live longer, healthier lives.
www.pettrust.ca

Researcher	Lay Title	Scientific Title	Species / Disease Type
Tony Abrams-Ogg	The effect of the concentration of blood thinners in the blood on platelet function tests	Comparison of PFA-200 P2Y, Plateletworks, and Multiplate to detect decreased platelet function in healthy dogs treated with clopidogrel, aspirin or a combination of both. Part 2: Evaluation of effect of drug metabolite levels	Canine Cancer, infectious disease, allergy / immune-mediated, degenerative / geriatric disease
Shauna Blois	Understanding the link between inflammation and blood clotting in dogs with clinical disease	Investigating cytokine abnormalities in dogs with immune mediated hemolytic anaemia	Canine Allergy / immune-mediated
Patrick Boerlin	Antibiotic resistance in bacteria from dogs	Resistance to Extended-Spectrum Cephalosporins and Other Antimicrobial Agents in Fecal Enterobacteriaceae from Healthy Dogs	Canine Infectious disease
Alice Defarges	Development of a novel minimally invasive lung lavage technique in cats	Fluoroscopic-guided bronchoalveolar lavage combined with thoracic computed tomography to characterize respiratory disease in cats	Canine, Feline Cancer, infectious disease, allergy / immune-mediated, degenerative / geriatric disease
Alice Defarges	Comparison of two lung lavage techniques in cats	Comparison of bronchoalveolar lavage suction techniques to sample feline lower airways	Feline Cancer, infectious disease, allergy / immune-mediated, degenerative / geriatric disease
Tom Gibson	Investigation of a novel biodegradable gel for delivery of antibiotics locally in surgical sites	In Vitro Evaluation of Antibiotic Polymeric Gel Stability and Drug Elution Characteristics	Canine, Feline, Avian-Exotic Infectious disease
Thomas Koch	Examining canine cartilage cells to develop better treatments for joint cartilage injuries in dogs	Reprogramming of canine cartilage-derived cells for increased proliferation capacity and chondrogenic potential	Canine Degenerative / geriatric disease
Jon LaMarre & Fiona James	Using stem cells to understand canine epilepsy	Mechanisms controlling GABA – glutamate receptor gene expression during neurogenesis associated with canine epilepsy in a stem cell model	Canine Metabolic / genetic, molecular basis of disease
Glen Pyle	Managing canine heart failure	Micro-Managing Heart Failure: The role of microRNA in canine heart failure	Canine Metabolic / genetic, molecular basis of disease
Geoffrey Wood	Predictors of disease outcome in dog bone and mammary cancers by digital microscopy	Digital microscopy and image analysis for markers of prognosis in canine osteosarcoma and mammary carcinoma	Canine Cancer, molecular basis of disease

Learn about these studies and more funded by OVC Pet Trust at www.pettrust.ca.



Therapy dogs help bust exam stress at UofG

Therapy dog programs provide a wide range of mental, social, physical and emotional benefits to people and are often available in a variety of locations including hospitals, retirement or nursing homes, schools and community centres.

More than 640 students at the University of Guelph had the opportunity to “Take

a Paws” and book a session with a St. John Ambulance therapy dog during exam season this spring. Students cuddled, hugged, observed and photographed trained therapy dogs as they spent their 15-minute

session with a canine companion. The Take a Paws event is new this year and is part of the University of Guelph Library’s exam stress-buster program which began in 2011.

Doreen Houston, veterinarian and Vice Chair of the OVC Pet Trust Board, attended a session and reinforced the importance this initiative provides to students in reducing stress. “You could witness and feel the dissipation of stress in the room when you watched the students spend time with the therapy dogs,” Houston

says. “Students today face a great deal of stress, especially when they may be away from home and preparing for exams. The opportunity to develop companionship with a dog may certainly have a lasting impact on emotional and physical health.”

While studies show interaction with animals helps reduce stress in people, University of Guelph researchers are currently investigating how such interactions may affect therapy dogs. Improving understanding of how dogs respond to such human interactions may be used to optimize the outcomes for both people and dogs during

events such as Take a Paws. The study is being led by University of Guelph Associate Professor Katrina Merckies in the Department of Animal Biosciences, in collaboration with Lee Niel, Assistant Professor, Col. K.L. Campbell Chair in Companion Animal Welfare, and Pet Trust funded researcher at the Ontario Veterinary College.

Take a Paws will resume during winter exams this December, and due to popularity, the number of sessions available to students has doubled. 🐾

CANINE COMFORT

How YOU can de-stress with your pet at home

According to Prof. Lee Niel in the Companion Animal Welfare and Behaviour Lab at the Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph, both dogs and their owners can benefit from spending quality time together. If you're looking to reduce the stresses of everyday life, consider the following research findings:

- 🦴 Increased exercise has a number of positive health benefits, including improvements in overall mood, so when the pressures are getting to be too much, take your dog for a walk or run.
- 🦴 Both dogs and owners have been shown to have reduced stress responses during challenges when they have the opportunity for positive interactions with each other, so if you're feeling overwhelmed spend some quality time with your canine companion.
- 🦴 Dogs and their owners release 'bonding' hormones that are associated with positive mood during mutual eye gazing, so spending quiet time together can also be beneficial to your mental health.



SMILING BLUE SKIES' SUZI BEBER WITH PET TRUST'S KIM ROBINSON AT TOFINO WOOF-FIT 2016.

SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION

by Suzi Beber



Suzi Beber founded The Smiling Blue Skies® Cancer Fund in 2001, after losing her Golden Retriever, Blues, to lymphoma. To honour his memory, and in gratitude for the care he received at OVC, Smiling Blue Skies has raised more than \$1.6 million to support Pet Trust's quest to find more and better ways to deal with canine cancer.

Yikes! Where did the summer go? It seems only yesterday, that I was preparing my article for the spring issue of "Best Friends," and, from coast to coast, our wonderful volunteers were getting ready for a variety of fundraising events, including Tofino's first annual "Woof-Fit." Now, in the blink of an eye, the year is drawing to a close.

It is hard to believe that Toronto's Smiling Blue Skies Walk to End Canine Cancer, helmed by the indomitable Kelly Manis and Lorrie Holmes, raised more than \$30,500 (and counting) with more donations still coming in. What an awesome event!!

This year's Top Pledge Earner won an amazing weekend at dog friendly "Woodhaven Country Lodge," along with lots of other great goodies, and there were fantastic swag bags for all participants.



DINA CORREALE AND "SONNY," PHOTO BY HOLGER KONARSKI

It has been such a wonderful year, and none of it would be possible without you – those who organize, those who spread the word, those who volunteer for jobs, big and small. Magic truly happens, when special people come together, to make a difference.



TOFINO WOOF-FIT JUNE 2016. PHOTO BY HOLGER KONARSKI

Take the Alberta Kennel Club, for instance. This year, they donated a whopping \$10,000, and alongside Matthew and Jodie Robson-Calfat, of "Courtlyn Custom DogFood," whose annual "bump up programme" raised \$1,150 this year, helped the Calgary Walk team raise an incredible \$36,157!

Rain and cold couldn't keep anyone away from this year's Guelph Walk. Together, they raised an amazing \$24,500!

One of the fabulous things about Smiling Blue Skies, is the creativity that shines down on fundraising events and goals.

Thank you to the Great Lakes Whippet Club of Canada, for donating 20% of the proceeds from their raffle of an absolutely beautiful Art Deco inspired original stained glass piece, in frost and sparkle glass, framed in bevels, designed by Barbara Crossley.

Then, there's "Teacherspet Pet Retreat," in Paris, Ontario, a beautiful boarding kennel for dogs and cats, where every pet is truly the "teacher's pet." Thank you to Joanne Nimigan and her clients for their very generous donation of \$1,500.

And then there is Vancouver Island's "Capital Comets Dog Sports Club," whose summer agility trial's BBQ and awesome raffle, raised \$1,473.75 for research.

The numbers are in. Tofino's inaugural "Woof-Fit," raised \$13,062 this year, \$3,000 more than the original goal! It was so wonderful to have Pet Trust's Managing Director, Kim Robinson, in attendance, and I am happy to report, that we are going to do it again next year, with even more great food, frolic, and DOGA.

Thanks to everyone who is helping to take a big bite out of cancer, on behalf of the precious pets and people in our lives.

Long live blue skies, where hope is a kite and dreams really do come true. 🐾

www.smilingblueskies.com



Best Friends of Pet Trust is published two times a year by the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) for the interest of Pet Trust donors and friends. Articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the OVC Pet Trust Board of Trustees.

About OVC Pet Trust

OVC Pet Trust, founded in 1986 at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), University of Guelph is Canada's first charitable fund dedicated to the health and well-being of companion animals. The Ontario Veterinary College is a leader in veterinary health care, learning and discovery for the health of all species, including our own.

Pet Trust Board of Trustees

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Reproduction of material in this publication is welcomed. Comments, ideas or suggestions for future articles? Please contact our communications team at ovcinfo@uoguelph.ca.

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IN MEMORY



"What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us." — Helen Keller

Pet Trust often receives heartfelt thank you letters from pet owners whose veterinarian has made a donation in their pet's memory. Best Friends new "In Memory" column has been created to celebrate the lives of the pets we love. OVC Pet Trust's 'Pet Memorial Program' invites veterinary hospitals and individuals to make a donation in memory of a pet. Memorial donations help fund research and discovery at the University of Guelph's Ontario Veterinary College aimed at helping our pets live longer - healthier lives.

NANOOK DAY

Dear Dr. Gordon Kirby,

My family would like to thank you for your letter which acknowledges the gift from our veterinarian, Dr. Doug LeGallais, at LeGallais Veterinary Hospital in Aurora, Ontario over the passing of our Siberian Husky, Nanook.

Born in Sunderland, Ontario on June 29, 2002, Nanook has been in our children's lives for their entire lives. The simplistic and symbiotic love our family had with Nanook was magical. Although we are not the first to say this, there is a special bond that one has with their dog. They never judge; they never hold grudges; they only want affection and most definitely, attention. Nanook only wanted love. We gave him that, and he reciprocated tenfold.

Nanook is sadly missed by our cat Shadow, now 15 years old, who was his best friend and companion. The two of them were inseparable. Shadow would often groom Nanook and we would usually find the two of them sleeping beside each other.

Our first born child Kiara was born in 2003. We had heard that Siberians were territorial by nature and therefore, did not know what to expect upon Nanook meeting her for the first time. Like many pet owners who add a child to their family, we were concerned about how Nanook might react to our new baby. We had decided that Kiara should sleep in a bassinet in our bedroom for the first month or so of her life. A few weeks after bringing Kiara home, we inadvertently let our guard down one night. We awoke in the middle of the night to find Nanook standing by her bassinet with his head resting on the side. He was rocking the bassinet with his nose, back and forth, ever so gently. We knew he was, then, and continued to be until the end of his days, a gentle protector of the family.

He was the most obedient dog — so gentle with all, but he loved kids the most. He also was the most beautiful dog, our furry, bi-eyed monster. All who had the pleasure of meeting Nanook, enjoyed his gentle touch and the company he gave. He even made those who were scared of dogs, love him.

We were truly blessed to have enjoyed Nanook for almost 14 years. He will be so deeply missed. There is not a day that goes by that we don't think of him or wish he was still with us.

Sincerely,

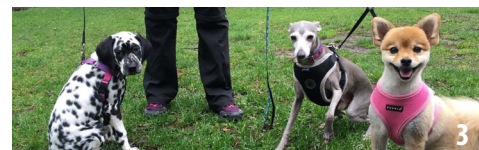
Geoff, Annalisa, Kiara, Ryley, Matthew and Shadow Day
Newmarket, Ontario



If you would like to share your "In Memory" story with us, please contact Pet Trust Writer Ashleigh Martyn via email: amarty01@uoguelph.ca.

#PETTRUSTPALS

Celebrating our amazing supporters and fundraisers from across Canada! Share your event and tag your pics with #PetTrustPals on Facebook and Twitter. Connect with us and find out how your pals can GET FEATURED in Best Friends! Email: OVCpet@uoguelph.ca or visit us on Facebook.com/OVCpet and Twitter: @OVCpetTrust



1. Smiling Blue Skies Woof-Fit Tofino this June. Suzi Beber and her team raised more than \$13,000 at this inaugural event. Credit: Holger Konarski.

2. Dog Lovers Days Guelph invited donations in lieu of an admission fee to support OVC Pet Trust this July. \$1,400 was raised.

3. The 3rd Annual Smiling Blue Skies Guelph Walk for Canine Cancer. More than \$24,500 raised this spring!

4. Associate Veterinary Clinics (AVC) held a pop-up rabies clinic and vaccinated 200 pets in a central Hamilton neighbourhood this spring.

5. Bestselling author Colin Campbell and his 140-pound Newfoundland Landseer George visited the **OVC Class of 2020** this fall during orientation week.

6. The Hamilton Academy of Veterinary Medicine (HAVM) Annual Golf Tournament at Copetown Woods Golf Club raised \$4,360 for OVC Pet Trust this past July.

7. The 14th Annual Smiling Blue Skies Calgary Walk for Canine Cancer this May raised an impressive \$36,000 for canine cancer. Credit: Ellen Kovar.



UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 26-28, 2017: Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) Conference & Trade Show – Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto. Visit Pet Trust in Booth #124

MARCH 2-4, 2017: Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT) Conference – London Convention Centre, London, Ont. Visit Pet Trust in Booth #418

SHARE YOUR STORY

With your help, we continue to advance animal health and medicine. Do you have a story idea or event you would like to share with us? Would you like to learn how you can get involved and create an event to support OVC Pet Trust? Contact us at ovcpet@uoguelph.ca to learn more.

SAVE A TREE

Sign up to receive Best Friends electronically. Email ovcpet@uoguelph.ca to get started. This issue as well as past issues are available for download on the OVC Pet Trust website.

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