

Best friends



THE WELLNESS ISSUE

Fitness. Rehabilitation. Diet. Coping with the loss of a pet. OVC Pet Trust shares health and wellness research and resources for pet owners.

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MADISON

Welcome to The Wellness Issue. This spring, we are exploring a number of aspects of wellness that may affect pets. From clinical nutrition and diet to exercise, fitness and rehabilitation, I hope you find some valuable information in the following pages.

I am also proud to announce that in early 2017 OVC Pet Trust launched a new Pet Loss Support Guide. I know that not everyone copes with pet loss in the same way and that pets can impact each of our lives differently, from protector to companion. My first dog Madison lived to be 16 and a half years old. She came into my life when I was a second year student at the University of Guelph. There were likely a number of factors that led to Madison's long life, but I have to believe that one of them was our commitment to regular preventive care and annual appointments with our family veterinarian.

When the time came to say goodbye to Madison, our veterinarian was there to help us with the questions we had. She came to our home and sat with us, walked us through what would happen and cried with us when Madison died peacefully in our arms. After that day, she answered my numerous phone calls. She helped me with my own guilt and overwhelming grief and assisted me in accepting I had made the right decision.

While everyone deals with grief differently and our need for support may vary widely, I hope you will take the time to read Smudge's story, "Saying Goodbye" (page 18), by OVC'96 alumna Dr. Faith Banks. Dr. Banks has a special interest in geriatric and palliative pet care. You can also learn more about Pet Trust's new pet loss support guide on page 19.

As many of you may know, OVC Pet Trust is currently raising funds towards a \$9-million capital campaign to build new surgery and anesthesia facilities here at the University of Guelph. I am constantly inspired and humbled by the generosity of those who give to support our efforts. In this issue, learn about a new \$1.5-million gift from Kim and Stu Lang. The funds will go towards creating OVC's new Anesthesia and Pain Management Unit, a key element of this capital project. You can also read about a day-in-the-life of OVC's anesthesiology service to appreciate the importance and impact of the Lang's gift on page 8.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help support OVC Pet Trust, please contact us.

Thank you,

Kim Robinson
Managing Director, OVC Pet Trust

OVC 6TH IN WORLD VETERINARY COLLEGE RANKING

UofG's Ontario Veterinary College **ranks 1st in Canada, 3rd in North America and 6th in the world** by Quacquarelli Symonds' (QS) 2017 ranking. OVC's veterinary science program sits amongst the five highest rated programs in any discipline across Canada.

"I'm extremely proud of everyone at OVC and the work they do to advance veterinary medicine and health research for the betterment of animals, people and our planet," said OVC dean Jeffrey Wichtel.

Learn more at www.ovc.uoguelph.ca.

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BACK COVER
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UPCOMING EVENTS

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Animal lover and philanthropist is passionate about making a difference in the lives of pets

Ontario Veterinary College receives \$1.5-million gift to create NEW Anesthesia and Pain Management Unit to minimize pain for pets in need of advanced care

Kim Lang has been an animal lover for as long as she can remember. Kim grew up in Ottawa with dogs and horses from a very young age. She welcomed her first dog at five years of age, a horse when she was eight and competed in the discipline of Eventing well into adulthood. Kim and her husband Stu met as students at Queen's University; their home is now a horse farm south of Guelph. Whether it is finding a loving home for a lost or abandoned dog or cat that has wandered onto their property (she has rescued, funded veterinary care and rehomed a countless number of stray animals over the past 25 years), or donating to OVC Pet Trust to create new world-class veterinary facilities at the University of Guelph's (U of G) Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), Kim continues to be passionate about helping animals.

Giving back to community is very important to Kim, who finds time to volunteer as the Artistic Director of the Eden Mills Writers' Festival, as well as sit as a member of OVC Pet Trust's Board of Trustees. It is the bond Kim has with her own pets that motivates her to support companion animal health and well-being at U of G. In 2012, Kim and Stu's Angel Gabriel Foundation donated \$1.5 million to Pet Trust's cancer campaign to equip the Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer with a linear accelerator (LINAC). The LINAC is the only one of its kind in veterinary use in Canada, allowing OVC to offer state-of-the-art radiation cancer therapy options to patients.

For Kim, this gift was particularly close to her heart, as over the years two of her family's dogs have been treated for cancer at OVC. Remy, a Labrador



KIM AND STU LANG'S YELLOW LAB, TOBIN.

Retriever Kim had rescued at age one, was diagnosed with cancer when she was just three years old. Remy underwent surgery and radiation therapy. "Remy's treatment was such a gift. It allowed her to have a full life spending almost 10 more years with our family," Kim says. Remy ended up passing away at the age of 13 in the late 1990s.

Animal health and welfare continue to be at the top of Kim's list of passionate causes. In 2016 her foundation donated \$1.5 million to support OVC Pet Trust's current \$9-million capital campaign to build new surgery and anesthesia facilities at U of G. The funds will specifically go towards creating a sophisticated new Anesthesia and Pain Management Unit within the OVC Health Sciences Centre.

"To help animals feel the least amount of pain possible is very important to me," says Kim. "Stu and I are pleased to be able to support the meaningful, life-saving work being done at OVC."

OVC treats more than 5,000 companion animals each year. Nearly 75 per cent of these patients undergo anesthesia, as the majority of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures require the pet to be sedated or anesthetized for their own safety, comfort and stress relief. Kim hopes the new facilities will give pet owners peace of mind that their pets are in good hands when they're at OVC and receive the best advanced, specialized care possible.

The Langs are longtime donors to U of G. Through their foundation they financially support a variety

of areas and have invested millions of dollars into OVC Pet Trust, many U of G student athletic initiatives and founded the Summerlee Humanitarian Scholarship program available to undergraduates in any field who demonstrate a commitment to humanitarian efforts.

Today, Kim and Stu share their home with two yellow labs, Tobin and Piper and two cats named Scout and Lucy.

"Animals have always been a large part of my life," Kim reflects. "It's hard to verbalize the impact my pets have had on me. How can I even describe it? The human-animal bond is so important. I can't imagine life without them." 🐾



What Pet Owners Need to Know About... Clinical Nutrition

Did you know nutrition is one of the factors that pet owners have the greatest control over to maximize their dog or cat's overall health and life expectancy? Even so, according to 2016 survey results from the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, it is estimated 59 per cent of cats and 54 per cent of dogs are overweight or obese in the United States.

But why should pet owners be concerned if Fido or Kitty is overweight? How do you even know how to gauge if your pet is over, under or an ideal weight? Veterinarians use body condition scoring to determine what category your pet falls into. An ideal body condition score (which is defined as a score of either 4 or 5 out of 9) is assigned when a pet's ribs are easily palpable with minimal fat covering, their waist can be clearly noted when viewed from above and their abdominal tuck is evident. As a good rule of thumb, if you hold your left hand flat with your knuckles facing the sky and gently run your right hand over your knuckles, you can understand what your pet's ribs should feel like. You should not need to apply a lot of pressure to feel a pet's ribs. If a pet has a body condition score of 6 or greater out of 9, this score indicates the pet has an overweight body condition.

Being overweight can not only shorten a pet's life, it also predisposes them to certain diseases such as diabetes and earlier onset of arthritis and can cost owners financially in avoidable medical costs.

Dr. Jackie Parr, also known as “The Kibble Queen”, is a veterinary clinical nutritionist and adjunct professor at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), University of Guelph. She is one of four small animal board-certified veterinary clinical nutritionists in Canada and passionate about keeping veterinary professionals, pet owners and student veterinarians in the know about how to keep dogs and cats in the best health possible through a nutritious and balanced diet.

In her role at OVC, Dr. Parr helps prepare the next generation of veterinary leaders through the fourth year Clinical Nutrition Rotation elective. As part of OVC’s clinical nutrition team, Parr equips students with the diet and nutritional knowledge they will need once in practice, which includes: learning how to talk to pet owners about nutrition, developing weight loss plans, using elimination diet trials to diagnose for food allergies and managing urinary crystals and stones. Student veterinarians are also taught to use scoring systems to evaluate a pet’s nutrition, including body condition, muscle condition and fecal scoring systems.

“The veterinary team plays an important role in helping pet owners make the correct nutritional choices for their pet,” explains Dr. Parr. “Veterinarians should complete a nutritional assessment at every appointment. Assessments allow pet owners to discuss their diet-related concerns and work with their veterinarian to develop an individualized meal plan to meet their pet’s needs. Each pet should be treated as an individual when it comes to nutrition. Additionally, a comprehensive diet plan may need to be created to help manage or improve medical conditions for pets with more complex or multiple health challenges such as food allergies, bladder stones, kidney diseases, liver diseases, intestinal diseases and more.”

Since not all life stages are the same and growing puppies and kittens have very different nutritional needs than adult dogs or cats, pet owners can ask their veterinarian to advise on their pet’s individual nutritional needs as they age. 🐾

Dr. Jackie Parr graduated from the Ontario Veterinary College in 2009, and became a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Nutrition (ACVN) in 2015. In June 2016 she was awarded the OVC Young Alumnus Award. Connect with The Kibble Queen on Facebook: www.facebook.com/the.kibble.queen

The Ontario Veterinary College is the only veterinary school in Canada with a Chair in companion animal clinical nutrition (the Royal Canin Endowed Chair in Canine and Feline Nutrition). OVC Pet Trust invests to support work examining a variety of nutrition research projects, including investigating the role of Vitamin D in dogs with cancer and the benefits of supplementing patients with thiamine (Vitamin B1).

Tips from the Kibble Queen...

How pet owners can help ensure their pets have a healthy diet

Nutritional Assessment: Ask your veterinarian to perform a nutritional assessment, which is the tool used to determine if a diet change is required. Information needed to complete the nutritional assessment will be obtained from the: **Nutritional history** (i.e. everything your pet eats during the course of the day, including treats, human foods and supplements); **Patient history** (e.g. GI upset, current/past medical conditions, medications, etc.); **Physical examination** (e.g. weight trends, body condition score, muscle condition score, skin and coat health and dental health).

Supplements: As long as your pet is receiving 90% of its calories daily from a complete and balanced diet, it is getting all the vitamins and minerals it needs. Giving a supplement on top of a complete and balanced diet can lead to the risk of toxicity. Consult your veterinarian before adding supplements to your pet’s diet.

Daily Calories: Your veterinarian will help you calculate the proper amount of calories your pet should have in a day. This number of calories can then be divided over several smaller meals.

Measuring Cup vs Gram Scale: Always measure your pet’s food with a gram scale to ensure you are not overfeeding your pet. Measuring cups can be very inaccurate. One study revealed up to an 80% overestimate in the food portion when individuals tried to measure dry pet food using a measuring cup.

Interactive Meal Feeding: Meal feeding is recommended for the vast majority of pets, with a minimum of two meals per day. Try using a kibble dispensing ball or food puzzle to have your pet work for its

food. The use of a kibble dispensing ball or food puzzle helps control the speed at which your pet eats. If your pet is working for its current meal, it is not begging for its next one.

If you have more than one pet, train them to eat in separate rooms using these interactive devices. This strategy ensures each pet only has access to its own food.

Automatic Feeders: Planning to feed your pet using an automatic feeder? Be sure the feeder is a timed food bowl so you can accurately weigh the amount of food to put into the bowl. Automatic feeders that provide a “waterfall” of kibble can result in overfeeding. If you are using an automatic feeder, ensure only one pet has access to the feeder, or try investing in feeders that use a microchip in your pet’s collar to allow access to the food. This option is great for multi-pet households.

Chewing: Avoid giving your pet anything to chew on that would hurt if you hit yourself with it on your kneecap. This simple test helps determine if the toy is too hard for a dog to chew and could risk fracturing your dog’s teeth. Examples of things to avoid include: bones, antlers and hard plastic toys. If you need a safe chewing option, many veterinarians recommend a KONG, a rubber chew toy.

Treats: Treats can add a lot of extra calories and risk unbalancing your pet’s diet. Use the 10% rule, meaning all treats should consist of less than 10% of your pet’s daily caloric intake. Make sure your veterinarian has said “treats” are safe for your pet to eat if your pet has a medical condition. The term “treats” include cookies, biscuits, chews and human foods such as peanut butter and table scraps. 🐾

Tucker's Road to Recovery

It's easy to feel the love Tracey Irving and her husband Randy share with their two-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog, Tucker, and why he holds such a special place in their hearts. Tracey attributes their closeness to all they've been through together over the past two years.

Tucker and Tracey were out on one of their usual six-mile hikes with friends when Tucker suddenly collapsed. Tucker's veterinarian referred him to the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC). Diagnostic tests, including radiographs and a computed tomography scan (CT scan), confirmed a diagnosis of elbow dysplasia affecting both front legs.

"Elbow dysplasia is a developmental orthopedic (bone) disease caused by growth disturbances in the elbow joint of dogs," explains Dr. Tom Gibson, OVC board-certified surgeon who performed Tucker's surgery.

Tucker ended up undergoing a minimally invasive surgical procedure, called arthroscopy for bilateral elbow dysplasia, in July 2015. By inserting a small scope into his elbow joints, through several small incisions, Dr. Gibson was able to observe the condition of Tucker's joint and remove the loose bone and cartilage fragments. The successful surgery was just the beginning of Tucker's road to recovery. Under Dr. Gibson's instruction, Tracey spent

the following weeks encouraging Tucker to rest and applying ice to his front legs to manage his post-surgical discomfort. It was difficult to limit playtime and walks following his surgery; Tucker had always been a very active dog, and was used to going on daily hikes prior to his diagnosis and treatment.

"It takes time for a pet to get back to their regular routine," says Dr. Gibson. "A rehabilitation program can be an excellent way for pets, like Tucker, to ease into their regular level of activity after a surgical procedure."

Through the advice of Dr. Gibson and Tracey's family veterinarian she explored rehabilitation options for Tucker.

Fitness

Just like people, developing a regular fitness plan can play an important role in maintaining the overall health of your pet,

regardless of its life stage. While evidence suggests that dogs should exercise two to three times a day for a total of at least one hour, it is estimated that only 60 per cent of dog owners walk their dogs regularly. Many indoor cats also suffer from being overweight, and in many cases this is compounded by low levels of exercise. Encouraging increased activity through play can help improve your feline's behaviour, reduce the incidence of obesity and prevent future health problems. We sat down with Dr. Tiffany Durzi, lead veterinarian for the OVC Fitness and Rehabilitation Service, to get some tips for owners when it comes to exercise and your pet.

About a month later, Tucker began pool therapy at the OVC Fitness and Rehabilitation Service, which is located within Hill's Pet Nutrition Primary Healthcare Centre (Hill's PHC) at OVC. Since Tucker had not spent much time in the water he was a bit unsure at first. "He eventually got to the point where he would wag his tail and jump right into the pool fearlessly at his sessions. Now he loves swimming," Tracey says.

Dr. Tiffany Durzi, a certified canine rehabilitation therapist, and veterinary lead for the OVC Fitness and Rehabilitation Service says, "the buoyancy of the water can help to decrease discomfort that may be noted with walking on land."

"Pool therapy is an excellent way for dogs that are recovering after a surgical procedure to improve flexibility and cardiovascular health."

The most common goals for pets, like Tucker, that may need rehab after a surgical procedure include improving mobility, strength building, flexibility training and managing or preventing post-surgical pain, Durzi adds.

Tucker's recovery plan involved hydro-therapy in the pool twice a week for four weeks, which Tracey says was "absolutely worthwhile," and she would "never hesitate to go through it again" if it was what Tucker needed.

Since Tucker's recovery he has become a certified St. John Ambulance (SJA) therapy dog and regularly gives back through various volunteer engagements. His friendly demeanor and

lovable personality make him a big hit with everyone he encounters. Tracey and Tucker pay regular, weekly visits to the psychiatric unit of their local hospital. They also volunteer at a local high school, participate in the "Take A Paws" student stress-busting program at the University of Guelph, and attend a camp with adults who have brain injuries.

"When Tucker volunteers, it's usually tough to get from point A to point B without everyone wanting to take selfies with him," Tracey smiles. "Tucker is always by my side. We're a team; he's my best friend. I say he's the one who is the real volunteer – I just chaperone him

because he can't go anywhere without me."

Tucker is now happily back to his regular daily hiking schedule, and Tracey attributes the strength of their bond to everything they have been through together.

"The road has been long and certainly unexpected. I am so blessed to have my best friend back." 🐾

PHOTO (LEFT): RVT JANINE WITH TUCKER DURING HIS WORKOUT AT OVC. THE OVC FITNESS AND REHABILITATION SERVICE IS EQUIPPED WITH A SWIMMING POOL, WATER TREADMILL AND DRY REHAB ROOM. MANY PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM REHABILITATION POST-SURGERY, FOR WEIGHT CONTROL OR TO INCREASE THE ACTIVITY OF ELDERLY PETS WITHIN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT.



Tips for walking with Fido

Plan ahead. Decide when, where and for how long you are going to walk your dog. Location is everything. Put your running shoes and leash by the front door to make it easier to remember to take your dog for a walk. Find help. Explore dog obedience training in your area for help with disruptive walking behaviours.



Encouraging fitness for Fifi

Use an interactive feeding ball to promote exercise for your cat. Attach a toy to a shoelace or string, hang it from a doorknob and shake it. These techniques can lead to hours of cat-tainment. Join in the fun. Encourage your cat to run up and down the stairs along with you. Teach your cat to play fetch by attaching its favourite toy to a line and reeling it back in. Reward your cat if it brings the toy back to you.

Learn how OVC's Anesthesia and Pain Management Unit plays a critical role for pets in need of advanced care and what a difference a new \$1.5-million gift to OVC Pet Trust will do to help the pets we love.

A Day in the Life...

on OVC's Anesthesiology Service

Standing for just 10 minutes on the floor of the anesthesiology unit at the University of Guelph's Ontario Veterinary College, it quickly becomes clear how important this team is in ensuring pets referred to OVC receive the care they need. Much like a subway station, patients from all services pass through this room and a member from the anesthesiology team follows each one through every step in its care journey; from procedure preparation, to monitoring vitals, through to recovery. Our writer went behind-the-scenes to get a glimpse into the complex world of anesthesia and pain management.

7:45AM

A Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) is a highly educated and trained professional working as an integral member of the veterinary health care team. Their education provides them with the theory and practical skills essential to deliver a gold standard of veterinary care.

Learn more at
www.oavt.org

RVT Lucy Siydock's day starts. She is one of the first staff to be on the floor. Anesthesiology resident Dr. Alicia Skelding also prepares for the day. Dr. Andrea Sanchez, the faculty anesthesiologist, oversees the team and service today; she is currently on rounds with fourth year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) students who are on their anesthesia rotation. As many know, the OVC Companion Animal Hospital is a teaching hospital.

Lucy is the RVT team lead on the service today. She has a print out of the day's tentative schedule and lays out 3 or 4 pages of cases, each paper with multiple patients and procedures on it.

First things first: Lucy sorts the cases by OVC specialty service. Services include surgery (soft tissue and orthopedic), medicine (oncology), neurology, cardiology, avian and exotic and diagnostic imaging such as MRI, CT scan and X-rays. She points out there is an RVT dedicated to OVC's Large Animal Hospital and also one responsible for radiation therapy patients in the Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer, both of which are located outside the main hub.

It soon becomes clear the white board in the anesthesia room will be the roadmap for the day. Anesthesia requests for each case are placed on the board with a magnet, organized by service and staff member from the care team.

Each RVT's job is to monitor and support the vital functions of his or her patient, using advanced and specialized equipment.

"Time coordination for sedation is one of the most important aspects of my job," Lucy says. Planned cases make up the majority of the board, but shuffling inevitably happens, especially when emergency cases present themselves.

Everybody has to be prepared to shift gears at any given moment. Patients are varied: some are healthy, here for routine procedures, while others suffer from a medical emergency or critical condition. Communication amongst the team is vital.

PHOTO (TOP): DR. ANDREA SANCHEZ, RVTS LUCY SIYDOCK AND CINDY STOATE.



8:20AM The board rapidly fills up and Lucy assigns cases to different RVTs as they begin their shift. She coordinates the priorities and timing, providing direction to her team. The intricate logistics of running an anesthesiology department are quickly becoming obvious.

Lucy explains some of the paperwork as the first patient of the day is brought into the room, an

eight-year-old Golden Retriever named Chloe. Chloe suffers from left hind limb lameness and is here to have a TPLO procedure. A TPLO, or a tibial-plateau-leveling osteotomy, is a surgery performed on dogs to stabilize their knees after a rupture of the cranial cruciate ligament and is similar to a torn ACL in humans. A complete anesthesia work-up is conducted and the protocol is approved by Dr. Sanchez. The individualized protocol takes the

patient's health, physical exam and procedure into account and is tailored to meet its needs.

More paperwork. The anesthesiology plans include information about which premedication, induction and analgesia will be used, as well as dosages, use of all the relevant drugs and equipment. Lucy fills out a drug card to keep track of what medication is being dispensed to maintain safety standards.

8:29AM The room gets busier. There is a lot of discussion about the case order. Lucy is on the phone to other services to coordinate timing.



9:08AM Lucy updates the colour-coded board and assigns RVTs to new cases as three more patients enter the room. She has been working at OVC since 1989 and says that each and every day always brings a new adventure. The 10 o'clock coffee breaks are quickly approaching, which are important to most of the team. "We always try to take a coffee break in the morning, because sometimes, depending on caseload, we don't know when or if we will get a lunch break," one RVT says.

9:27AM A five-year-old black Pug named Bewdley, who is here for a hemilaminectomy, a type

of spinal surgery, is induced by RVT Cindy Stoate and her DVM student Claire Clements, as Chloe returns from radiology. There are now five dogs in the room, all at varying stages of treatment, as one more arrives with another RVT.

A whirlwind of teaching, learning and care happens everywhere. "It's a crazy day; it must be Friday," Cindy smiles, as she wheels Bewdley off to accompany him into surgery. The service may be busy, but there is no shortage of love and compassion towards each and every animal that comes through the door. Each patient stays on track, monitored by its care team and each on its own journey.

8:45AM Multiple patients and about 15 people are now crowded into the room with numerous stations set up to assess and deliver care to various dogs. Chloe has had her front leg shaved by DVM student Rianne Kamula, who is being supervised and taught by Lucy and another RVT on the team. She applies alcohol and a pink surgical scrub solution before inserting an IV catheter, the device that will deliver medication and fluids to Chloe during her procedure. Chloe is then intubated with a tube into her trachea. This device will deliver oxygen and an anesthetic drug to her during her scans and subsequent surgery. Chloe's vitals are assessed, and she is hooked up to a blood pressure monitor, pulse oximetry, which measures the level of oxygen in the blood, and an ECG which records the electrical activity of the heart. The whole process takes about 20 minutes. Chloe is ready to be wheeled over to radiology by her care team.



9:59AM As quickly as the room filled up, it slowly empties out, leaving two dogs in the room. One is being prepped for surgery, another is being anesthetized. The most important goal is always to make sure the patient is safe, and provide comfortable, excellent care, Lucy says. "Since we are a teaching hospital, it is also our priority to ensure our students are always learning." In general, RVTs on the service try to stay with their case all the way from the beginning to the end, whether it's going into surgery, travelling to another area of the hospital for diagnostic tests, or accompanying them into a procedure. Their job is to monitor vitals,



administer the necessary drugs and keep them warm. The constant flow of patients continues.

10:15AM

A two-year-old domestic long-hair cat named Simon is being prepared for an esophageal endoscopy. An RVT explains the process of how intubating a cat differs from a dog. "We spray the cat's throat with lidocaine, a drug used to numb tissue in a specific area to prevent spasm. Humans who need to intubated also require lidocaine." Dogs don't require this drug due to their anatomy.

11:00AM

The board is a roadmap; its routes constantly change. The anesthesia service resembles a central hub, or nucleus, of the entire hospital. It is certainly not an ideal environment for someone who can't multi-task, think on their toes and find quick solutions.

11:45AM

Lola, a four-year-old American Bulldog here for an elbow and shoulder arthroscopy, is part of a Pet Trust-funded study examining specific targeting of analgesia and pain control during forelimb surgery in dogs.



While there are now 13 people on the floor, Lucy continues to direct the organized chaos; she has a calmness about her that is reassuring, even with people walking briskly throughout the room. Surprisingly, the busy early morning hours are just the calm before the storm.

12:05PM

More patients are being prepped for procedures. Chloe returns from surgery and wakes up from anesthesia. At the same time, an emergency case is wheeled into surgery. Dr. Sanchez and two RVTs accompany the dog.

12:50PM

Back from surgery, Bewdley slowly starts to wake up. RVT Cindy teaches a student what to look for when a patient is in recovery and the priorities of what needs to be monitored during the process. Cindy

reinforces the importance of keeping patients warm during their procedures and throughout their recovery. "When a patient is cold, its metabolism decreases, which means it doesn't utilize the drugs in its body properly." The room is equipped with blankets, microwaveable oat pads and other warming devices. Discussions continue to happen throughout the room, mostly involving teaching and learning about dosages and prepping each case. The anesthesia team is with the patient from start to finish; They are "the preparer".

1:45PM

This is a marathon.

When Cindy is asked if she is looking forward to the new Anesthesia and Pain Management Unit, part of Pet Trust's \$9-million campaign to build new surgery and anesthesia facilities, she points out that the newly renovated space will have a separate area for patients to be prepped and induced from recoveries. "Our patients will have a quieter environment in which to recover, which will ensure a smoother, more relaxed recovery," she says, noting that some dogs and cats may be more sensitive to noise and activity around them than others.

2:30PM

By this time, most of the team has had a quick lunch break. A bird in the parrot family in critical condition arrives in anesthesia from the OVC's Avian and Exotic Service. Working together the team intubates Pookie, a 22-year-old umbrella cockatoo, in one of its abdominal air sacs. It has

a tracheal obstruction. After almost an hour of meticulous prepping and intricate monitoring, the bird is taken to surgery.

3:05PM

An RVT heads into surgery with a dog for a craniotomy.

4:25PM

Lucy gets relieved by another RVT from her position in surgery to tend to staff planning for the next shift. Dr. Sanchez conducts rounds with students to follow-up on any questions they may have about the cases that were seen on the service this week.

5:00PM

Two RVTs finish their shifts and the activity in the room starts to slow.

6:00PM

As the day ends, faculty and residents take over for the night, checking on patients and preparing for emergencies they might see. The constant flow of activity never stops. The referral hospital within OVC Health Sciences Centre is open 24/7. For Lucy and her team, this is just an average day. Tomorrow it will begin all over again. 🐾





GETTING TO KNOW... DR. AMEET SINGH

Associate Professor, Small Animal Surgery
Department of Clinical Studies,
Ontario Veterinary College
University of Guelph

What is your role as a small animal surgeon at OVC? My main role is seeing and treating surgical patients at the OVC Companion Animal Hospital. I am very fortunate to work at such a comprehensive veterinary hospital that allows us to provide the best care to our patients. Most of my patients are dogs; a small percentage are cats and exotic animals. While on the clinic floor, I also teach fourth year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) students, interns and surgical residents – you might say it's a balancing act... but it's a lot of fun! My academic research, another major area of focus in my role, is largely inspired by my patients. My two main research interests are minimally invasive surgery (MIS) and surgical site infections.

How is minimally invasive surgery (MIS) different from traditional or open surgery? MIS is very new in veterinary medicine and there are various types of MIS. I am particularly interested in laparoscopy and thoracoscopy. This type of MIS involves making small incisions (less than 5mm) and inserting a camera and instruments into the abdomen or chest cavity to perform the surgical procedure. Our objective when performing any surgical procedure is to always keep the best interest of the patient in mind;

the ultimate goal is reduced pain and faster return to function. The challenge with MIS is that the skill sets of a traditional surgeon do not always transfer to MIS; there are numerous unique challenges with MIS compared to open surgery. Not only are you unable to touch your surgical site, you also only have a 2-D view of the procedure (via a monitor), depth perception is altered and there is no tactile feedback. Therefore, it is crucial to practice these skills before performing MIS. My team has set up an endoscopic skills lab where we can practice the unique skill set associated with MIS on a special computer simulated training model. A variety of surgical tasks and maneuvers are performed in the trainer that develop the skills required to perform MIS. It is imperative these skills be learned in the lab prior to attempting MIS in client-owned animals.

What impact does Pet Trust funding have on your research? A tremendous impact! As an early career faculty member, Pet Trust was very good to me as it was the major funding source of my research. Recently funded research by Pet Trust has examined the benefit of using warmed and humidified carbon dioxide to inflate the abdomen of dogs while performing laparoscopy (MIS of the abdomen). My research has allowed me to meet and work with some amazing undergraduate and graduate students who have now gone on to successful careers in veterinary medicine!

Why surgery? I had my first exposure to surgery as a DVM student at the Atlantic Veterinary College. I worked with the small animal surgery service during the summer and had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of people. The advanced equipment, specialized tools and ability to help an animal very quickly initially drew me to the field. I love the technical aspect of the job, and the instrumentation we get to use on a daily basis to help our pets.

What benefits will the new surgery and anesthesia facilities provide to you? These new facilities will mean a great deal to our patients, their owners and our staff. They'll allow us to raise the standard of care in veterinary medicine and operate in a state-of-the-art environment to help our patients. I am particularly excited about the new dedicated Minimally Invasive Procedures Suite. We are extremely grateful for the donations from our supporters that have allowed this to happen, so we can continue to provide the best care for our companion animals.

Do you have any pets? My family has two Brittany spaniel dogs. Abby is 13 years old this year, whom we've had since she was a puppy, and Harold who we think is around 14 years old. We adopted Harold from a rescue organization three years ago. Both dogs have been amazing with our two-year-old son. 🐾

“I promised myself when I brought Elvis home that I would never give up on him...”

SAVING ELVIS

It's safe to say everyone knows when Elvis is in the building. The 11-year-old Plott Hound's unmistakable howl is one of his signature charms, along with his soulful eyes and goofy personality.

When Deborah met Elvis he was four years old, and he had already had 10 homes. Elvis had been rescued from Kentucky via Barlee's Angels Rescue Network, a non-profit rescue group in southwestern Ontario. Deborah felt an instant connection with Elvis the first time she met him. It was love at first sight. She brought him home a few days before Christmas in 2009. She recognized he was a dog who wasn't very trusting of people; he often had his tail between his legs and was always on guard.

Deborah knew rescuing Elvis would be challenging. “He had several failed adoptions before I met him, mainly due to behavioural issues I attribute to the abuse, neglect and cruelty he suffered in his past. He was a broken dog that needed someone to give him a second chance in life.”

While the months and years following his adoption weren't always easy, Deborah and Elvis grew closer. When Scott came into their lives in 2011, Elvis made him jump through several hoops and obstacles before Scott was able to gradually gain his trust, too.





"Elvis just wants to be loved. I promised myself when I brought him home that I would never give up on him," Deborah says, with tears in her eyes.

After a routine dental cleaning at their family veterinarian in March 2016, Elvis' blood test revealed an extremely high white blood cell count, and he was referred to the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) at the University of Guelph right away. About a week later, Deborah and Scott learned Elvis had leukemia, a type of blood cancer.

"We were told Elvis' cancer was a bit unique. Tests and scans showed he had leukemia, but they also revealed he had some lesions on his lungs," Scott says.

The couple decided to begin chemotherapy immediately. "He handled the treatments like a champ, with only minor side effects."

In July 2016, Deborah and Scott got good news and bad news. The good news was that Elvis' leukemia seemed to be in remission. The bad news was that the lesions on his lungs hadn't been affected by the chemo and had grown in size. Chemo protocols were switched from leukemia to drugs that would directly target his lung cancer.

Deborah and Scott celebrated their wedding in the summer of 2016. They were so grateful for the care Elvis had received that they decided to include OVC Pet Trust in their special day. In lieu of gifts, they asked their friends and family to consider supporting Pet Trust instead.



PHOTO: ELVIS RECEIVING HIS CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENT AT THE MONA CAMPBELL CENTRE FOR ANIMAL CANCER, ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE.

"The friendliness, compassion and love we feel when we bring Elvis to OVC for his treatments have made the dozens of trips we've made here that much easier. It doesn't feel like we're coming to an animal cancer centre – it feels like we're going to see our friends."

Their journey today is ongoing. "For the past five months now, Elvis has been on a chemotherapy drug that isn't going to be the cure we'd been hoping for, but is our last option to help him keep fighting," Deborah says.

Like many pet owners, their dog has had a profound impact on both Deborah and Scott.

"Elvis is a special part of our lives because we know we likely truly rescued him and saved his life. But it's so much more than that: it's the way he greets us when we come home, his tail wagging excitedly; his nightly silly play time; his hilarious howling. He's a faithful companion who always wants to be by our side."

And while Deborah knows this time she may not be able to save Elvis, she still isn't giving up on him. She and Scott are making the most out of the time they have left together by checking off items on Elvis' bucket list, which includes swimming at the beach, getting his picture taken with an Elvis tribute artist and indulging in a Starbucks puppuccino.

"Elvis' comfort is what is most important to us. As long as he's happy and has a good quality of life, we will continue to help him fight," Deborah reinforces. "We are not sure how long that will last, but we are taking it day by day, week by week, treasuring each and every moment we have left with him." 🐾



PHOTO: DEBORAH AND SCOTT INCLUDED ELVIS AND OVC PET TRUST IN THEIR WEDDING THIS PAST SUMMER.

The Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer was created at the University of Guelph's Ontario Veterinary College thanks to \$13.75 million raised by OVC Pet Trust.

Pet Trust invests in new projects and equipment at OVC to advance pet health

Researcher	Project	Pet / Disease Type	Impact
Scott Weese	The Lifetime Lyme Study: Phase 1	Dog Infectious disease	In dogs, Lyme disease can result in disease ranging from in apparent to fatal. This comprehensive, landmark study hopes to examine the incidence and impact of the disease to guide important decisions about who to treat, how to treat, how to reduce exposure and what the clinical consequences of exposure are.
Alexander Valverde	Use of a local anesthetic to treat a slow heart rate and depressed cardiac function from using the sedative dexmedetomidine in dogs	Dog Cardiovascular function during sedation and anesthesia	This study will investigate the specific effects and outcomes of using lidocaine to counteract dexmedetomidine's adverse cardiovascular effects.
Noel Moens	Minimizing implant failure by optimizing the placement of screws in fracture repairs using a bone plate	Dog, Cat Surgery, Trauma	The study will investigate several plate-screw configurations to determine which configurations are the most durable and least likely to fail. Understanding the complex relationship between the fractured bone, the plate and the screws will lead to better fixations of fractures and reduce complication rates after fracture fixation.
Stefan Keller	Predicting survival in dogs with lymphoma	Dog Cancer	This project aims at establishing a novel method in veterinary medicine that can accurately quantify tumor burden in response to therapy. This method will be utilized to investigate if tumor burden is predictive of relapse or survival and may be used to investigate the efficacy of novel treatment modalities in future studies
Brenda Coomber	Can Rapamycin improve radiation therapy while reducing side effects for canine cancer?	Dog Cancer	Results of the study may allow short-term Rapamycin treatment to be added to palliative radiation care for improved outcomes for dogs with cancer.
Brigitte Brisson	Non-invasive identification of tumour cells in the blood circulation of dogs with bone tumours (osteosarcoma)	Dog Cancer	Osteosarcoma is the most common bone tumour in dogs. Improved methods for early detection of cancer spread could allow for earlier intervention, more accurate monitoring of disease progression, and evaluation of a patients' individual responses to treatment. In turn, this could allow for timely adjustments in protocol as well as improved estimation of overall prognosis for our canine patients.
Hugues Beaufre	Investigating the effects of various bandages and perching surfaces on foot weight bearing in a species of bird in the falcon family	Avian Infectious disease, musculoskeletal	Will be able to provide more standardized guidelines for bandaging and improving perching surfaces for falconry birds suffering from foot diseases.
Hugues Beaufre	Comparison between minimally-invasive and standard spay surgery in pet rabbits	Rabbits Surgical, prevention of cancer	Research may be able to provide an alternative to the classic surgical spay in rabbits with an option that is minimally invasive and induces less pain during and after the surgery.

Equipment			
Brenda Coomber	Ultracold freezer for Companion Animal Tumour Sample Bank, Institute for Comparative Cancer Investigation	Dog, Cat	This biobank is used by researchers at the University of Guelph and elsewhere to improve our understanding of cancer in companion animals. The knowledge gained from studies using these banked samples benefits future companion animals diagnosed with cancer by improving diagnostic tests, treatment options and predicting responses to treatments.
Shane Bateman	Instrument to measure body fluid compartments using low-grade electrical currents	Dog, Cat Metabolic disease	May help us design safe and more effective fluid delivery plans to sick patients

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

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

SPOTLIGHT: OVC PET TRUST FUNDED STUDIES

New research is aimed at earlier and more accurate disease diagnosis and treatment, to keep pets active and healthier longer.

Is medication effective for preventing hypotension?

The popular allergy medication diphenhydramine (DPH) is used during certain veterinary surgeries to prevent hypotension, or low blood pressure, in dogs affected by mast cell tumours (MCTs).

These tumours contain many mast cells that during manipulation in surgery release excessive amounts of histamine, a substance involved in immune response.

When released into the circulatory system, histamine may cause blood vessel dilation and hypotension.

DPH, an antihistamine, is used during surgeries intended to remove MCTs. But Pet Trust funded researcher Dr. Alexander Valverde in OVC's Department of Clinical Studies says the medication may be less effective at preventing hypotension as once thought.

Hypotension can be prevented by blocking histamine from binding receptors on target cells. Receptors on or inside the cell receive and bind specific substances in a lock-and-key fashion. Histamine acts as a key, fitting into the lock of histamine receptors and triggering a series of signals that can lead to vessel dilation and hypotension.

Dr. Valverde worked with then DVSc student, now faculty member, Dr. Andrea Sanchez, and her advisory committee members: clinical studies professors Drs. Melissa Sinclair, Conny Mosley, Tony Mutsaers and Ameet Singh; and Prof. Brad Hanna, Department of Biomedical Sciences. Funding for this research was provided by OVC Pet Trust.

DPH also acts as a key by fitting into histamine receptors in blood vessels and blocking other substances from binding. By "locking out" histamine, the medication may prevent hypotension.

"The issue is that there are four types of histamine receptors, but DPH only blocks one of them. This means that some histamine is still able to cause blood vessel dilation," says Valverde.

He compared cardiovascular signs and blood histamine levels of 16 canine patients with MCTs. He found similar cardiovascular function whether patients received DPH before surgery or not.

He also found that dogs not given DPH maintained better blood pressure during manipulation of MCTs than dogs receiving the medication.

Valverde says further research is needed to find an antihistamine that may block all histamine receptors and prevent hypotension.

More sensitive genetic test for lymphoma

Prompt and accurate diagnosis is crucial to improve treatment for animals with lymphoma, a cancer of the lymphocytes (white blood cell involved in the immune response).

Prof. Stefan Keller, in OVC's Department of Pathobiology, hopes to advance diagnostics for canine B cell lymphoma — the most common type of canine lymphoma — by developing a more sensitive genetic test.

Keller is testing the cells via their lymphocyte antigen receptors, which are highly variable protein structures on the cell surface that recognize infectious agents.

A group of cancer cells will have identical lymphocyte antigen receptors, while a group of healthy cells will be genetically diverse.

Healthy lymphocytes travel throughout the body and concentrate in certain areas to fight pathogens, and can mimic lymphoma.

Sometimes, it's difficult to determine whether those lymphocytes are part of an inflammatory response, or whether they result from a single lymphocyte dividing uncontrollably, as in lymphoma.

This is where genetic testing comes in. Keller will use clonality testing, which involves genetically testing the cells in an affected area, to distinguish between cancer and inflammation.

This method of genetic testing will allow the researchers to work toward earlier and more accurate diagnoses of lymphoma.

Stefan Keller is working with Dr. Nikos Darzentas, genomics researcher at the Central European Institute of Technology, Czech Republic; Prof. Dorothee Bienzle, clinical pathologist at OVC; Dr. Peter Moore, pathologist at the University of California Davis; and SHARCNET, a high-performance computing network. OVC's Pet Trust and an NSERC discovery grant are providing funding for this project. The Canada Foundation for Innovation is providing infrastructure for Keller's lab.



Human



Canine

Immunolabelling patterns of human breast cancer cell lines serve as positive and negative controls for testing canine mammary cancer cell lines. Photos: Emily Brouwer

A MILESTONE FOR THE ICCI'S TUMOUR BANK

It's 18,000 samples and counting for the Companion Animal Tumour Sample Bank (CATSB), which is located within the Ontario Veterinary College's Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer

The bank, established in 2007, is part of the University of Guelph's Institute for Comparative Cancer Investigation. The CATSB is Canada's only facility storing animal cancer samples for future research. The bank obtains clinical samples, blood, pieces of tumours, normal tissue and urine from animal cancer patients treated at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC). These samples provide invaluable resources for researchers to study cancer in dogs and cats, and to apply their findings to other species.

The bank recently obtained samples from its 900th patient.

Cancer affects many animals, and pet dogs and cats are no exception. "The tumour bank gives us an opportunity to understand the disease in other mammals, including humans, and improve cancer treatment," says Prof. Brenda Coomber, co-director of the ICCI, who oversees the tumour bank with coordinator Kaya Skowronski.

The companion animal tumour sample bank is Canada's only facility storing animal cancer samples for future research.

After a patient's tumour is removed by surgery, samples along with normal tissue which are usually disposed of are conserved and stored in the tumour sample bank.

The researchers record case specific information - age, breed and gender of the animal - as well as treatment information such as diagnosis, aggressiveness of the cancer, therapy conducted and the eventual outcome.

Collecting this range of information for each case allows researchers to complete retrospective cancer studies using samples from the ICCI tumour bank. Researchers hope that new discoveries from cancer in pets will help improve treatment of the disease in all species.

The tumour bank and coordinator position are funded by The Smiling Blue Skies Cancer Fund through OVC Pet Trust.

IMPROVING THE ACCURACY OF LYMPHOMA PROGNOSIS

A provisional patent has been filed for a simple blood test to predict outcomes for dogs with lymphoma, an immune system cancer that so far eludes accurate prognosis.

When tumours shrink or are killed by chemotherapy, they may release microRNAs (miRNAs) into the blood. These tiny molecules can regulate the expression of many genes.

If certain miRNAs are found in blood samples after treatment, are they accurate biomarkers for canine lymphoma?

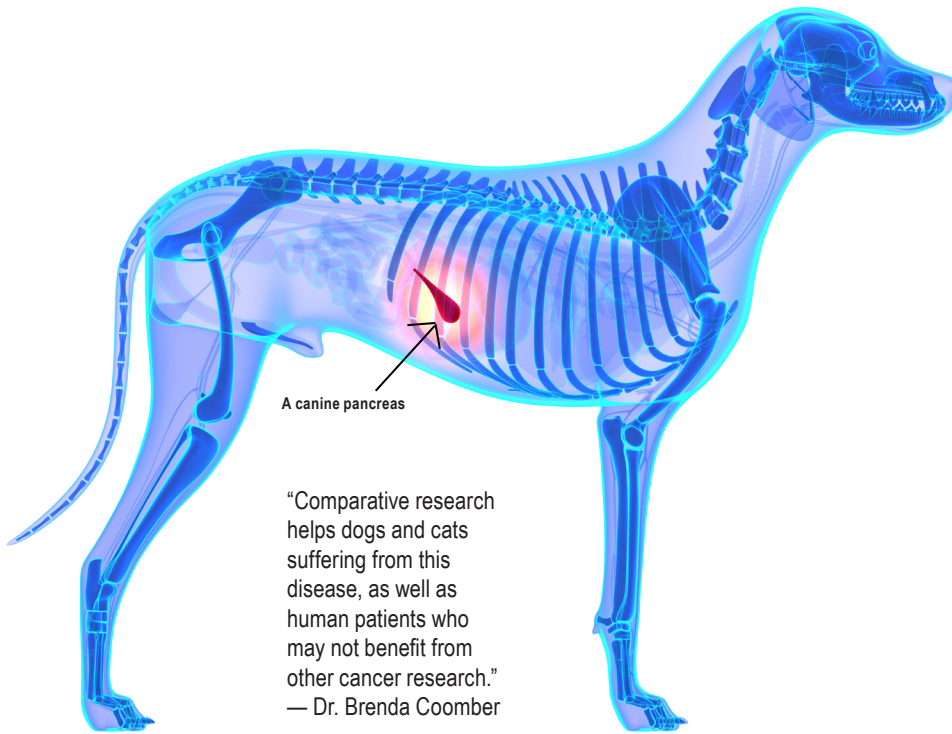
That's what Profs. Darren Wood and Geoff Wood, Department of Pathobiology, want to know. They say that predicting a patient's response to therapy will help clinicians manage treatment more effectively and will help pet owners make better decisions.

The researchers are comparing blood miRNAs from healthy dogs with those from dogs recently diagnosed with multicentric lymphoma. This common type of lymphoma shows up as multiple enlarged lymph nodes throughout the body. From this comparison, they could learn whether specific miRNAs are linked to the disease.

They will also investigate changes in patient miRNAs during chemotherapy to identify patterns in recovery and disease, and to assess how well the molecules predict outcomes.

Former graduate student William Gow is co-inventor in this research, which is funded by OVC's Pet Trust, the Canadian Kennel Club and the Cairn Terrier Club of Canada.

People, pets and pancreatic cancer



NEW IMAGING SYSTEM DESIGNED TO IMPROVE CANINE CANCER TREATMENT

When it comes to cancer treatment, functional imaging technologies such as dynamic contrast-enhanced computerized tomography (DCE-CT) scans can be game-changers.

These technologies provide more information than standard tumour size measurements from conventional CT scans, allowing clinicians to better evaluate chemotherapy treatments and predict patient outcomes, says Dr. Anthony Mutsaers, Department of Clinical Studies at the Ontario Veterinary College.

Mutsaers is investigating low-dose metronomic (LDM) chemotherapy to treat dogs with soft tissue sarcoma, a cancer of the connective tissues.

"Our main focus is to investigate a potentially more clinically relevant imaging system, which could improve and personalize treatment plans for animal cancer patients," says Mutsaers.

Over four weeks, he will give dogs a daily low dose of cyclophosphamide, a drug that inhibits blood vessel growth and restricts the nutrient supply in tumours.

Using DCE-CT scanning, Mutsaers will be able to see real-time blood vessel changes within the patients' tumours before and after the LDM treatment. Comparing those scans with blood and tumour tissue samples will help him determine how the drug may affect tumour blood flow at the chosen dose.

DCE-CT could help identify biomarkers, which are specific molecules indicating how well a patient will respond to a certain treatment. Analyzing these biomarkers would allow clinicians to determine the best treatment for any patient, he says.

He says insights from this project may eventually be applied to human medicine as well.

Rare human cancers are often complicated by limited research and treatment options. However, canine and feline cancer patients may provide answers for rare subtypes of human cancers, and vice versa.

For example, most pancreatic cancer in humans is of the ductal type, but pancreatic acinar carcinoma (ACC) is a rare subtype of pancreatic cancer in humans. While rare in humans, ACC is much more prevalent in dogs and cats.

That's why Prof. Brenda Coomber and Vicky Sabine studied the potential of using companion animals as models for human pancreatic carcinomas.

"Comparative research helps dogs and cats suffering from this disease, as well as human patients who may not benefit from other cancer research," says Coomber.

Specifically, the researchers investigated the KRAS gene, which plays an important role in regulating cell growth and proliferation. Mutations in the KRAS gene are commonly seen in human cancers, including ductal type pancreatic cancer. But human pancreatic ACC appears to lack these mutations.

Coomber and Sabine found no evidence of KRAS mutations in samples of animal pancreatic ACC from 18 dogs and 12 cats. This discovery suggests that human and animal pancreatic ACC are more similar on the genetic level than previously thought.

The researchers believe that pancreatic ACC in companion animals may be a relevant model for human pancreatic ACC, opening doors for further comparative research.

Funding for these research projects was provided by the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research and OVC Pet Trust.

Saying Goodbye... by Dr. Faith Banks, DVM, OVC 1996



I always wanted to be a veterinarian. My love for animals coupled with my interest in science meant veterinary medicine was a natural fit. It was my plan, my only plan and I didn't have a backup. I graduated from OVC in 1996 and worked as a small animal vet in Toronto with a goal of helping animals live good lives. Five years ago, I turned this plan around. Although I am still helping animals, in addition to helping them have good lives, I focus more on helping them die a good death. I had an excellent teacher. Her name was Smudge and although she was part of my family since the time she was seven weeks old, her lessons didn't start until she was over 10 years of age.

She was our 'first born' and we adored her. The big sister to our two, two-legged children that came after her, loving and as gentle as can be. Smudge was an 85-pound Bernese Moun-

tain Dog, soft and sweet. As she aged, she developed hind leg weakness that affected her mobility, weight loss, night time anxiety and fecal incontinence. The more I learned about geriatric care the more I realized Smudge was not the only pet out there dealing with these issues and therefore, there were many

to assess Smudge and the night before I chose euthanasia, she dropped from her maintenance score of 72% to 58% to 44%. I knew it was time. She was no longer doing the things she loved to do. She either couldn't do them or didn't care to do them. Either way, I knew I was going to do what was best for her. The

Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened. I try to embrace this motto by Dr. Seuss when I think about Smudge.

worried and frustrated pet owners as well. In my search for understanding, I found the world of veterinary hospice and I have not looked back. Hospice is about loving and maintaining the human animal bond for as long as possible while ensuring your pet has a good quality of life. Caring versus curing.

During an in-home consultation with pet owners, I evaluate their pet using a quality of life scale I developed. I used this several times

selfless act of humane euthanasia, ending her suffering, only for mine to begin.

After such a good life, Smudge deserved a good death and I was honoured to be the one to ensure this. Smudge's favourite place was in a big pile of soft snow. She was a Bernese Mountain Dog, from the snowy mountains in Switzerland. It was January 18, 2014, and the ground was covered in snow. This was where we said goodbye.

COPING WITH PET LOSS

Findings from recent Pet Trust funded research* at the University of Guelph have shown that:

- Pet loss can be complex and emotionally intense.
- Activities such as reading pet loss literature, writing letters and community involvement are grief-coping strategies that may benefit some pet owners.
- Pet owners' perceptions of emotionally supportive people to their grief reaction and memorialization practices are potential coping mechanisms.
- Pet loss is still not universally viewed as a socially acceptable form of grief, highlighting an opportunity for public education.
- Mental health counselors and veterinary staff may be better able to support pet owners through their grief experiences by being open to discussing end-of-life issues such as quality of life and euthanasia procedures prior to the pet's death.

**Liam W. Rémillard, Michael P. Meehan, David F. Kelton & Jason B. Coe (2017) Exploring the Grief Experience Among Callers to a Pet Loss Support Hotline, Anthrozoös, 30:1, 149-161*

DR. FAITH BANKS WITH SMUDGE.

Just as I make donations to Pet Trust, on behalf of all the pets we help to cross the Rainbow Bridge, so did my friend for me, when Smudge passed. I was so touched by this gesture, reinforcing how this donation makes owners feel when we mark the life of their pet, by sending a donation for every family. They are truly honoured and appreciative of how this money will help the lives of others.

Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened. I try to embrace this motto by Dr. Seuss when I think about Smudge. I smile when I think about her and I smile when I look at our new Bernese Mountain Dog, Maple, who joined our family after Smudge died. Maple did not replace Smudge, as that would be impossible. We had love to give and we wanted to give it to another dog that would boomerang it back to us. I know one day we will face another heartbreaking goodbye, but until then, I will continue to help fund the work at Pet Trust, knowing each pet we honour is helping other loved pets live longer, healthier lives. 🐾



PET TRUST LAUNCHES NEW PET LOSS SUPPORT GUIDE

For more information visit
www.pettrust.ca/petlossresources

A Guide for Pet Owners Coping with the Loss of a Pet



park 9

Park 9 UrbanDog Playcare and Resorts is exactly what you would imagine a luxury pet experience to look like. Park 9 has three locations in the GTA and prides itself on offering fully supervised daycare and boarding for dogs and cats, grooming and retail services. Its 14,000-square foot location by Toronto's Pearson International Airport offers overnight accommodation and is equipped with a concierge to accept new arrivals 24/7, 365 days a year. Park 9's founder Susan Rupert established Park 9 14 years ago (formerly under the name UrbanDog Fitness and Spa), and it has grown to become an industry leader in Toronto's animal care scene.

"The least amount of disruption we can have in a pet's life is the number one goal at Park 9," Susan says.

The design of the facilities is intentionally similar to a hotel, where comfort and customizable perks are plentiful. Some of those said perks during a pet's stay include a slumber

room where a human will sleep and snuggle with your dog, grooming and bathing add-ons and a choice of various types and sizes of suites, including a premium pool-side room at their airport location.

The fresh-filtered water indoor pool at their airport location is a canine favourite, and there's also a special spot for senior pets (dubbed "Park 90") to accommodate the elderly, including therapeutic beds and heated floors. Park 9 has live webcams throughout all three facilities for owners to check in on their furry family members during their stay. A separate cat-only zone is the special area for boarding felines, and it includes elaborate climbing systems with sky lofts and lots of toys for entertainment.

A typical dog's day would involve a couple of hours of playtime, outdoor time and lots of socialization, Susan says. Cats enjoy time in a stress-free loft with mental and physical stimulation and lots of human interaction, far away from the

activity and noise of the dog area. She jokes that pets usually have an induced "Park 9 hangover" when their owners pick them up.

Susan is passionate about supporting pet health and is very proud to give back to OVC Pet Trust through holiday and special occasion pet photo events as well as the Pet Memorial Program.

After she adopted Bazz, her yellow lab and the inspiration for UrbanDog from the humane society, he developed several health issues and required advanced care, which Susan says started her on the journey and interest in animal health and well-being.

Susan's goal is to demonstrate community-based values for her business. "My hope is that our clients and staff feel good that the place where they take their pet to be cared for and their place of work is supporting an organization that is advancing health and helping pets," she says. 🐾

Doggie daycare Decisions

Prof. Lee Niel, companion animal welfare and behaviour expert at OVC, shares tips on what pet owners should look for when selecting a boarding or daycare facility for their pet. Niel notes that most facilities offer tours to set owners' minds at ease. If you plan to board your pet this summer here are a few things you should consider:

1. Pets should be carefully monitored throughout their stay. Ensure that someone is always on site, or there is appropriate equipment and alarms for remote monitoring of temperature, ventilation quality and animal health.
2. When boarding, incorporate elements from home. Sending a supply of your pet's regular food or favorite blanket can help reduce stress while it is away.
3. Today's boarding kennels offer a number of different features that might make your pet's stay more enjoyable. If your dog is sociable and enjoys the company of other dogs, you might want to look for daytime play sessions with other dogs, or overnight group housing rather than single kennels. It is important to ask how participating dogs are screened for good behaviour, and confirm that groups are closely monitored by a staff member at all times to keep everyone safe. Proper grouping by size and activity level is also important.
4. If you feel nervous about leaving your pet, choose a facility with webcam access so that you can check in on your pet while you are away.
5. Not all pets are well-suited to boarding facilities. If your pet is anxious in new environments, consider hiring a pet sitter to take care of them in the comfort of their own home. 🐾

WHY LOCKERBY ANIMAL HOSPITAL GIVES BACK

hospital through a variety of interactive activities and stations, including simulated surgery, how to take an X-ray, a pet photo booth and more, while generating awareness and support for Pet Trust.

Lockerby's practice manager Sandy Wilkinson says her hospital gives back to Pet Trust because it is proud to support the cutting-edge research OVC funds and the education and training OVC delivers. She says Lockerby refers patients to OVC for advanced care, and they often hear

back from clients about how compassionate and supportive the team at OVC is while providing specialized, often life-saving treatment.

"We support OVC Pet Trust because they fund important research that investigates better and more ways to deal with pet cancer, as well as numerous other areas in companion animal health and well-being."

"We've had several pets near and dear to our hearts diagnosed with cancer over the course of the past year," Wilkinson says. "We support OVC Pet Trust because it funds important research that investigates better and more ways to deal with pet cancer, as well as numerous other areas in companion animal health and well-being." 🐾

This past fall, Lockerby Animal Hospital in Sudbury raised more than \$2,500 to support OVC Pet Trust through their open house event. Clients explored a behind-the-scenes look at their veterinary

Interested in running your own OVC Pet Trust event or ordering a Proud OVC Pet Trust Supporter banner for your hospital? Contact us at ovcpet@uoguelph.ca.



DR. DOREEN HOUSTON WITH OBI.

OVC Pet Trust Welcomes new Board Chair

Dr. Doreen Houston has been appointed as the new board chair for OVC Pet Trust's Board of Trustees.

The Ontario Veterinary College and Pet Trust thank Dr. W. Geoffrey (Chip) Coombs for his dedication and commitment to companion animal health and well-being as he completes his term as board chair. Chip remains involved with Pet Trust as past-chair on the Board of Trustees.

Doreen is a 1980 OVC alumna. She has worked in private practice and completed an internship, residency and Doctor of Veterinary Science at OVC. Doreen became a board-certified Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine in 1991. She also spent time in academia at OVC and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and worked in the veterinary industry with Medi-Cal and Royal Canin.

Doreen joined the Pet Trust Board of Trustees in 2012, shortly after her beloved dog Rayner became a patient at the OVC's Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer.

"I firmly believe by raising funds to support learning, healthcare and research at OVC that we are making a difference in the health and well-being of the pets we love," she says. An advocate for studies that impact not only the quality of life for pets but for owners as well, she acknowledges that research to help one species can impact the health of all species.

Doreen's passion for pets has resulted in a menagerie of rescued dogs over time. She and her husband recently welcomed a male Golden Retriever puppy named Obi into their home. 🐾

A person in silhouette is walking a dog on a beach at sunset. The person is holding a leash, and the dog is running ahead. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the wet sand. The ocean waves are visible in the background.

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 \$1.8 million to support Pet Trust's quest to find more and better ways to deal with canine cancer.

Spring is on the way (really, it is!), and with that dream, thoughts of the next fundraising adventures for The Smiling Blue Skies Cancer Fund are swirling around in my mind. It is hard to believe, that we are celebrating 16 years of Smiling Blue Skies. Together, we have raised more than \$1.8 million, helping to change the face of cancer on behalf of the precious pets and people in our lives.

Smiling Blue Skies continues to support the Clinical Trials Coordinator position at OVC. Vicky Sabine works closely with principal investigators, develops strong relationships with pet owners, explains all the steps involved in clinical trials and monitors the process from beginning to end. This means that studies are able to achieve critical mass, collect quality data and help as many pets as possible too.

The number of donations of both blood and tumour samples to the Companion Animal Tumour Sample Bank has increased (see page 16). This growth would not be possible without the ongoing support of people like you, leading to the launch of OVC's first study in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health – National Cancer Institute – Comparative Oncology Trials Consortium.

Right now, there are nine oncology studies seeking participants, from the identification of response to chemotherapy in relapsed canine lymphoma patients, to the microRNA profiling for the diagnosis and prognosis in canine multicentric lymphoma, to a study in acute myeloid leukemia.

After five years at the helm of Toronto's amazing Smiling Blue Skies Walk to End Canine Cancer, Kelly Manis and Lorrie Holmes are hanging up their leashes, as they embark on new and exciting projects. Thanks to everyone who has participated in the Toronto walks, more than \$140,000 has been raised. We wish Kelly and Lorrie the very best.

On the other side of the country, Calgary is celebrating its 15th year of Smiling Blue Skies Walks for Canine Cancer at the end of April, and I am so excited that I will be there to take part in this special event, along with Pet Trust Managing Director, Kim Robinson. Since 2010, the Calgary team has raised an astounding \$193,000!

If you happen to be on Vancouver Island in June, check out the Second Annual "Woof-fit Tofino Beach Walk and Breakfast," featuring DOGA (yoga with dogs) and so much more, on June 18th.

Every evening for the past several years, I have been lighting candles. They are a salve and a prayer, when I am focusing my energy on all those fighting cancer, and on those who have lost their battles. A very exciting new project has been in the works for several months, and will be unveiled in June. Smiling Blue Skies has partnered with prestigious eco-conscious "Tofino Soap Company," to produce a beautiful Smiling Blue Skies candle.

We are so thankful to each and every one of you, who has continued to support The Smiling Blue Skies Cancer Fund in so many ways, from the planning of group events, to initiatives like Smiling Blue Skies Jewelry and annual bottle collections.

We are sorry to see the Toronto journey come to an end. It is such a labour of love that benefits "all" of us! If you are interested in getting involved in a big or small way, please email suzib@smilingblueskies.com. Terrific tools and templates are already in place and easy to follow, and we would love help with a couple of brand new projects too, like "Empty Bowls," which promises to be lots of fun! Peter Pan said, "Life is an awfully big adventure." Together, we can continue to take a big bite out of cancer! Long live blue skies, where hope is a kite and dreams really do come true. 🐾



About Best Friends



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.

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 the Pet Trust team at ovcpet@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

OVC Pet Trust often receives heartfelt thank you letters from pet owners whose veterinarian has made a donation in their pet's memory. Best Friends' "In Memory" column was 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.



LUCKY BROGAN

Dear OVC Pet Trust,

This is a belated thank you for your letter, advising our family that Forest Glade Animal Hospital in Windsor made a donation in memory of our beloved cat, Lucky. As I am sure you can relate, we humans get very attached to our furry companions. It is always a very hard decision to make as to when to end their suffering. We as humans are selfish; sometimes we want to hang onto our friends, but, alas, life isn't always fair.

Lucky was a gorgeous tuxedo cat, whom we were fortunate enough to adopt from the Windsor Essex County Humane Society, who rescued Lucky as a kitten when he was found next to a busy expressway. He was a playful, affectionate and independent cat who loved to explore his surroundings and lay comfortably in your lap. His favourite hobbies were lazing around in the sunlight, playing hide and seek, giving us kisses and purring head nudges.

Lucky was the comforting friend who would always be waiting for us when we arrived home, coming to the

door to greet us with a meow and a leg rub. The impact he had on our family is immeasurable.

We said goodbye to Lucky this past fall. He was 11 years old. There is an empty hole in our hearts, but we will hold onto memories forever. Lucky was a wonderful soul and a testament to the positive benefits of adopting a rescue animal. Rescuing Lucky gave our family a more enriched, happy and loving home.

Thank you for the remarkable work you and your associates do. It means so much to our family that our veterinarian donated to OVC Pet Trust in memory of Lucky. We honestly did not know that Pet Trust existed before we received your letter. We are so glad you have made us aware of the wonderful work that happens at the Ontario Veterinary College. We are pleased and honoured that our Lucky can be a part of it. We will truly miss him every day.

Sincerely,
Tanya Brogan & Family
Windsor, 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](https://www.facebook.com/OVCpet) and Twitter: [@OVCpetTrust](https://twitter.com/OVCpetTrust).



1. Smiling Blue Skies Toronto

In September 2016, the 5th Annual Smiling Blue Skies Toronto Walk for Canine Cancer raised more than \$31,200!

2. Take a Paws U of Guelph student enjoys a hug from Harmony the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog during "Take

A Paws", a bi-annual stress-busting event for students at the UofG Library. In 2016 more than 1,000 students participated.

3. Woof-A-Palooza Pet Trust attended the Woof-A-Palooza outdoor dog festival in Vaughan in September 2016.

4. Fun Fair at the PawsWay
#PetTrustPals Nina and Kingsley came out to the Fun Fair at the PawsWay in Toronto this past Fall. Purina Canada and VCA Canada's Paw It Forward program raised \$3,000 for Pet Trust!

5. Dog Lovers Days (Kitchener) Pet Trust attended the 2nd Annual Dog Lovers Days indoor event at Bingemans in Kitchener in February 2017.

6. OVMA In January 2017, Cypress visited the OVC Pet Trust booth at the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association Conference & Trade Show in Toronto.

7. 7th Annual OTS Dog Jog In March 2017, OVC student veterinarians organized the 7th Annual OTS Dog Jog and raised more than \$12,400 to support Pet Trust!

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 30: 15th Annual Smiling Blue Skies Walk for Canine Cancer – Calgary, AB.

MAY 6-7: KW Pet Expo – Kitchener Memorial Auditorium Complex, Kitchener, ON. Visit Pet Trust in Booth #233/332.

JUNE 18: 2nd Annual Smiling Blue Skies Tofino Woof-Fit - Tofino, BC.

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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