THOUGH WE DO ENJOY OVER 300 DAYS OF SUNSHINE IN COLORADO, SPRING IS ALWAYS A WELCOME SIGHT AFTER THE FREEZING TEMPERATURES OF WINTER. WE CELEBRATE THE CHANGING OF THE SEASONS WITH THIS EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTING OUR CARDIOLOGY, NEUROLOGY, AND DERMATOLOGY/ALLERGY TEAMS AS WELL AS UPCOMING EVENTS AND NEWS.

OUR CARDIOLOGY DEPARTMENT SHARES ITS SERVICES AND PROCEDURE CAPABILITIES, AS WELL AS SHOWING THEIR DEDICATION TO CLIENT AND PATIENT CARE.

WE HAVE NEWS AND EVENTS YOU’LL WANT TO LOOK AT AND MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR, INCLUDING UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION GATHERINGS, FURRY SCURRY, AND OUR 3RD ANNUAL BATTLE OF THE VET HOSPITAL STARS.

YOU’LL LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WONDERFUL STAFF OF THE NEUROLOGY DEPARTMENT, AND GET A PEEK INTO THEIR DAY-TO-DAY LIFE.

LASTLY, WE HOPE YOU’LL ENJOY THIS EDITION’S CASE STUDY ON A PATIENT RECENTLY SEEN BY OUR DERMATOLOGY DEPARTMENT WITH UNILATERAL OTITIS EXTERNA.

HAPPY SPRING,
YOUR VRCC TEAM

WALK ON THE WILD SIDE WITH VRCC SPECIALISTS

JOIN OUR VRCC SPECIALISTS FOR A LUNCHEON VETERINARIAN CE EVENT AT THE WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE IN PARKER, CO ON SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2014 FROM 12PM - 5PM. CURRENT TOPICS IN SURGICAL ONCOLOGY, CARDIOLOGY, AND DERMATOLOGY WILL BE DISCUSSED, PROVIDING 2 CE CREDITS. TAKE A WALK ON THE WILDE SIDE AND ENJOY EXPLORING THE WILDLIFE MUSEUM AFTER LECTURES. SPACE IS FILLING QUICKLY AND IS LIMITED TO 100 PEOPLE (VETERINARIANS ARE INVITED TO BRING ONE GUEST). CALL JOHN OSLICK AT (303) 874-2069 TO RSVP AND FIND OUT MORE DETAILS.

SPECIALTY HIGHLIGHT: CARDIOLOGY

VRCC’S CARDIOLOGY PRACTICE HAS BEEN PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE, COLLABORATIVE CARDiac CARE TO PATIENTS IN COLORADO SINCE 2005. IN 2011, DR. KAREN SANDERSON BOUGHT THE CARDIOLOGY PRACTICE AT VRCC FROM DR. CARROLL LOYER WHO HAD OWNED AND OPERATED THE PRACTICE FOR MANY YEARS. DR. LOYER REMAINS ON STAFF TODAY, ALONG WITH OUR OTHER FOUR BOARD CERTIFIED CARDIOLOGISTS: DR. SANDERSON, DR. JEREMY ORR, DR. JULIE MARTIN, AND DR. CARRIE GINIECZKI.

WE USE NON-INVASIVE TESTS AND WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILY VETERINARIANS TO DEVELOP TAILORED TREATMENT PLANS FOR ALL OF OUR CARDIOLOGY PATIENTS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF COMPASSIONATE CARE TO OUR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

OUR TEAM OF CARDIOLOGISTS WORKS TOGETHER IN THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF OUR MOST DIFFICULT CASES. WE PRIDE OURSELVES IN OUR CARE AND COMPASSION FOR OUR PATIENTS AND THEIR GUARDIANS, AS WELL AS OUR ABILITY TO WORK WITH FAMILY VETERINARIANS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PATIENTS WITH CARDIAC DISEASE. WE BELIEVE STRONGLY IN HAVING A COLLABORATIVE, OPEN RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR REFERRING VETERINARIANS TO PROVIDE THE VERY BEST MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR EACH AND EVERY PATIENT WE SEE.

SPECIALTY HIGHLIGHT: NEUROLOGY

STEPHENV LANE BS, DVM, DIPLOMATE ACVIM (NEUROLOGY/NEUROSURGERY)

EVER WONDER WHAT HAPPENS BEHIND THE SCENES AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN VETERINARY NEUROLOGY, VRCC’S NEUROLOGY DEPARTMENT? PUT ON YOUR RUNNING SHOES BECAUSE IT STARTS VERY EARLY, ACTUALLY AT 3:45AM, WHEN DR. STEPHEN LANE’S ALARM GOES OFF. BUT ENOUGH ABOUT HIM. IT’S ALL ABOUT OUR STAFF!

THE FIRST OF THREE SURGERY TECHNICIANS ARRIVES AT 5:30AM TO BEGIN WORK-UPS AT 6:00AM. PATIENT CARE TECHNICIANS ARRIVE AT 6:45AM AND 9:00AM RESPECTIVELY. PHONES OPEN AT 7:00AM WITH TWO STELLAR CLIENT SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES HOLDING DOWN THE FORT. TWO MORE APPOINTMENT-SURGERY TECHNICIANS ARRIVE AT 7:00AM TO WELCOME ARRIVING PATIENTS SCHEDULED FOR THE DAY’S WORK-UPS AND DROP-OFF RECHECKS. THE 8:00AM TECHNICIAN ARRIVES TO PERFORM OWNER CALLBACKS FROM TWO BUCKETS OF RECORDS BROUGHT IN BY DR. LANE FROM THE NIGHT PRIOR. THE SECOND PATIENT CARE TECHNICIAN ARRIVES AT 9:00AM TO A FULL HOUSE OF PATIENTS, ANYWHERE FROM 8-20 CASES... AND IN COME THE EMERGENCIES.

HOW DO WE DO IT? IT’S OUR STAFF THAT MAKES US UNMATCHED IN OUR FIELD. THEY ARE THE CREAM OF THE CROP, THE VERY BEST. THE WORK IS CHALLENGING, FAST PACED, AND EXHAUSTING BUT IS ALSO EXHILARATING, REWARDING AND FUN. VERY SIMPLY, THEY LOVE WHAT THEY DO.

WE PROUDLY EMPLOY EIGHT FULL-TIME CERTIFIED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS, THREE PART-TIME TECHNICIANS, AND TWO FULL-TIME AND ONE PART-TIME CLIENT SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES. EVEN STILL, WE ARE LOOKING TO EXPAND OUR FAMILY.

SO, THE NEXT TIME YOU CALL, ASK THE STAFF WHAT’S FOR LUNCH. DR. LANE BRINGS IN HOME MADE LUNCH EVERY DAY FOR HIS SKILLED WORKHORSES. THEY DESERVE IT!

YOU CAN REACH NEUROLOGY AT 303.874.2081:
MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:00AM - 6:00PM
SATURDAYS 7:00AM - 5:00PM
SUNDAYS 7:00AM - 12:00PM
We use a variety of tools to diagnose cardiac conditions including Echocardiography (cardiac ultrasound), six lead ECGs, Doppler blood pressure, wireless telemetry, Holter monitoring, event monitoring, digital radiography and an in-house lab. Most heart conditions are treated with medication. However, some conditions require more complicated procedures such as pacemaker implantation, PDA Occlusion, Balloon Valvuloplasty, Angiography, Heartworm extraction, and Electrocardioversion.

We are committed to working with each client to provide a clear explanation of their pet’s diagnosis and treatment options, and to collaborate with the referring veterinarian to ensure that they are fully informed of the diagnosis and understand the recommended treatment plan. We strive to ensure that each patient and client are treated with the highest level of professionalism and compassion, and that we provide treatment options that ensure the best quality of life for the patient.

We offer appointments Monday through Saturday, and on Tuesdays, are open until 8pm.

**CENTER NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Specialty Highlight . . . Continued**

- **We are open 24/7 for emergency cases, but now our Cardiology, Internal Medicine, and Ophthalmology departments are available on Saturdays for appointments.**

- **VRCC’s Neurology department will be breaking ground on a new, advanced MRI and Neurosurgery facility this summer. The 10,000 square foot facility will include a Siemens 1.5 tesla Espree and 2 specialized neurosurgery suites.**

- **Our Dermatology department welcomes back Dr. Michael Rossi. Dr. Christina Gentry is their new resident, and they, along with Dr. Linda Messinger, Diplomate ACVD, are available for appointments Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:30pm.**

- **Thank you to all of the technicians who attended our “Triage and the ER Patient” technician CE, hosted by VRCC Emergency on February 6th. Thank you for your contributions to VRCC’s Animal Care Foundation! Because of you, over $1100 was raised for ACF.**

- **VRCC’s Neurology department is holding a technician CE on April 23rd. More information to follow!**

- **Our Cardiology department is hosting its annual Continuing Education Dinner on Wednesday, June 26th. Invitations will be sent by email and fax in early May.**

- **Remember, April is Heartworm Awareness Month! As the weather warms and mosquitos start biting, pets are at high risk for contracting heartworm, so make sure your clients are informed and are aware of the proactive medications available to them.**

- **VRCC Internal Medicine has several new staff members that have joined our team since the first of the year. If you have called our department recently, the new voices you hear belong to Nicole and Sandra. These two ladies are our new coordinators, and are the first people you speak with when you call our department directly. Nicole and Sandra bring a lot of great energy and experience to our client service team and we hope you enjoy chatting with them when you call in. Lora and Mara are two experienced CVTs that have also recently joined us. Together they have 13 years of experience in veterinary medicine. We are very excited to have Nicole, Sandra, Lora and Mara with us and look forward to their great contributions to our client service and patient care.**

**GUEST ARTICLE**

_**Dr. Holly Foster, DVM**_

Dr. Holly Foster practices acupuncture, homotoxicology, and osteopathy at VRCC on Wednesdays and she has now added cold laser therapy to her arsenal of healing powers. Cold laser therapy (using a class 3-B laser) is another modality to address inflammation, both chronic and acute. Also, for animals that are restless or frightened by traditional acupuncture needle treatments, acupuncture points can be stimulated more quickly and quietly by laser than by acupuncture needles.

Cold laser therapy is the application of a coherent light, meaning multiple light waves that all support or reinforce each other. It provides a non-invasive way to treat many different conditions involving inflammation. Some examples of these conditions include arthritis, degenerative joint disease, tendinitis, and gingivitis. It has also been shown to be effective in speeding bone and cartilage regeneration and post-operative wound healing, and treating non-healing and chronic skin lesions.

Laser treatments take only a few minutes, and owners can stay with their pets during the treatments. Cold laser therapy provides an excellent alternative or adjunctive treatment choice for animals unable to take anti-inflammatory drugs to help with their painful conditions.
Ears the Deal

By: Dr. Michael Rossi, DVM, MNS

Cooper, a 5 year old, male neutered Labrador retriever presented to the Dermatology/Allergy Department at VRCC Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Hospital with a 6 month history of progressively worsening, unilateral otitis externa and identification of a growth in the right ear.

The dog was prescribed Epi-Otic ear flush and Gentizol at the primary care veterinarian for management of the otitis; however, the inflammation and growth persisted. Cooper was then referred for evaluation of his ears and an anesthetic ear procedure at VRCC. Upon presentation, Cooper appeared very healthy. There was mild erythromelalgia and salivary staining noted over all four paws, which could be suggestive of an underlying allergic disease. A cytology of the paws revealed cocci bacteria consistent with pododermatitis. Handheld otoscopy of the left ear showed mild polyoid hyperplasia of the vertical and horizontal canals. The tympanum appeared normal. Visualization of the entire right external ear canal was impeded by a large, exophytic growth near the junction of the vertical and horizontal canals. There was a mild amount of mucopurulent discharge present in the right ear. Cytologies of the ears revealed multiple coccoid bacteria in the right ear and no significant findings in the left ear.

While under general anesthesia, Cooper’s ear canals were explored, cultured and cleaned using video otoscopy and saline flush. The large growth was debulked and biopsied to help determine the cause. During the video otoscopy procedure, a large grass awn was noted to be associated with the growth; this grass awn was removed.

Cooper’s procedure went very well and there were no complications. Bacterial culture and sensitivity isolated Streptococcus and Staphylococcus bacteria were both sensitive to fluoroquinolones. Histopathology results revealed lymphoplasmacytic and supplicative otitis with epithelial hyperplasia. These findings would suggest that the growth was not neoplastic, but rather was associated with the body’s response to the grass awn. It was highly likely in this case that the grass awn was the cause of the growth in the ear.

Cooper is currently doing well on oral prednisone for inflammation, tramadol for pain relief, and oral ciprofloxacin/topical Tresaderm for the bacterial otitis.

The video otoscope technique has been used for several years by veterinary dermatologists to assist in diagnosing and treating ear disease. A majority of the ear issues that are addressed here at VRCC are resistant or recurrent bacterial/yeast infections. These are typically secondary to underlying issues, such as endocrine or allergic disease. On occasion, an otic mass will be identified by the primary care veterinarian and the dog or cat will be referred for the video otoscope procedure and biopsy or removal of the mass.

The procedure itself generally takes 30 minutes to 1 hour and uses a fiberoptic scope allowing clear visualization of the external ear canals and the tympanic membrane. The head of the otoscope has an operating channel which allows for passage of instruments into the external canals and aids in removal of debris and/or biopsy of otic masses. An added feature is the ability to record video and take still photographs of the procedure. These images can be recorded onto a CD or used in explaining the condition to the owner. Prior to the procedure, a complete blood count and serum biochemistry profile will be performed to ensure that the dog or cat is a good candidate for anesthesia. If the patient is at an increased risk of complications due to anesthesia, a consultation with our in-house board certified veterinary anesthesiologists is suggested. Patients are placed on fluids and vital signs are monitored as they would be for any surgical procedure. Prior to and after the procedure, patients are often placed on pain medications, as the exploration of the canals and/or mass removal can be painful. The histopathology reports typically are returned within 10 days and the patients are generally re-evaluated at VRCC about 2 weeks after the procedure. Video otoscopy has been extremely helpful in visualizing and treating ear canals.

We welcome any patients you feel may need an ear evaluation or further management of an ear problem. You may call us directly at 303-874-2078.

EVENTS CALENDAR

April 6th
Veterinarian CE – Take a walk on the wild side!
Location: Wildlife Experience (Parker)
Lunch & Registration: 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
Lectures: 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Admission to Museum: 3 to 5 p.m.
Topics: Cardiology, Dermatology, Surgical Oncology
RSVP: (303) 874-2069 - space is limited! Veterinarians welcome to bring one guest.

April 23rd
Technician CE - Neurology
Location: VRCC
Topic: Seizures & Vestibular/Cerebellar Disorder Management.
2 CE credits. Call VRCC’s front desk at 303.874.7387 to RSVP
Cost: $25 donation to ACF.
Dinner and soft drinks will be provided.

May 3rd
DDFL’s Furry Scurry at Washington Park
Stop by our booth and say hi!

May 14th
Technician CE - Emergency
Location: VRCC
More information to follow.

June 26th
Annual Dinner CE - Cardiology
Location: Wellshire Inn (Denver)
Both technicians and veterinarians welcome!
More information to follow.

September 7th
Battle of the Vet Hospital Stars!
Were you a Battle warrior in 2012 or 2013?
Be on the lookout for information coming soon for this annual VRCC event!

October 29th
Veterinarian CE
Location: Dave & Busters (S. Colorado Blvd.)
More information to follow.