



## SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

### SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Spring is here at VRCC, and we celebrate the changing of the seasons with this brand new newsletter packed full of information about our Front Desk, Cardiology, Dermatology and Neurology teams, as well as upcoming events and news.

Our Cardiology team shares their history and information about their board certified Cardiologists and their community outreach.

Check out our news and events section that includes information about our 5th annual Battle of the Vet Hospital Stars later this year, our participation at the annual Furry Scurry, and Ophthalmology's involvement in eye exams for service dogs.

You'll learn more about our Front Desk team of Client Service Representatives, and changes happening at the front lines to make client experiences better.

Neurology is proud of their new facility and would love to give you a tour!

We hope you'll enjoy this edition's case study on aural polyps written by Dr. Jeremy Bachtel with our Dermatology department.

Happy Spring!  
 Your VRCC Team

### STAFF HIGHLIGHT: FRONT DESK TEAM

#### VRCC Client Service Representative (CSR) Team



CSRs: Lynette, Antwan, Kandice, Lucas, Chelsea, Jenna, Haley, Becky, Kristin, Melanie, Amelia

VRCC is committed to five core values: excellence, patient care, client service, communication and teamwork. The front desk staff exemplifies these values, and each team member takes pride in the quality of work and level of service they provide.

The Front Desk at VRCC only has caring and compassionate staff. Amelia Nuss began as the Front Desk Manager in November 2015 after being at VRCC since 2009 as a front desk CSR and the Dermatology coordinator. Amelia has a unique perspective provided by her B.S. in biology and M.A. in counseling. She believes that the doctors and technicians provide the best medical care for the patients at VRCC, which allows the front desk staff to provide the best customer service to the clients. Amelia also believes that in order to provide the best customer service her staff must be empowered and cared for themselves. She has already made a difference with her staff and with the clients.

Amelia has also been working on creating a hospitable and comfortable environment for all VRCC clients, from adding a variety of teas to creating a charging station. Although the changes are small, she is hopeful that they will be cumulative in creating the atmosphere that VRCC embodies.

The Front Desk is also supported by two lead CSRs,

Staff Highlight . . . Continues on page 2



### SPRING CE IS BACK

VRCC will be hosting a Spring CE on Wednesday, April 20th at the History Colorado Center. The event will start at 6pm for registration, with dinner and lectures to follow. Lectures in: Cardiology, Dermatology, Oncology and Surgery. After the lectures,



explore the History Colorado Center and learn more about our beautiful state's rich culture and history. Due to limited space, this CE is open to DVMs only at this time. Please RSVP to Ruby Post at 303-874-2053 or rpost@vrcc.com. This event is limited to 100 DVMs on a first-come first-served basis. Reserve your spot today!

### PRACTICE HIGHLIGHT: CARDIOLOGY

Dr. Karen Sanderson has been providing exceptional veterinary cardiology care in Colorado since 2005, when she began as a single doctor mobile cardiology service to local veterinary practices. During this time, she established a reputation with referring veterinarians and clients alike that has allowed for Rocky Mountain Veterinary Cardiology's (RMVC) growth in both mobile and clinical settings.

Practice Highlight . . . Continues on page 2

In 2011, Dr. Sanderson started RMVC's second clinic when she purchased the cardiology department at VRCC, which expanded our comprehensive cardiac care, including advanced hospitalization for critical cases, to the Denver Metro and surrounding area. Despite the growth RMVC has undergone, Dr. Sanderson remains committed to community outreach. During our first collaboration with PetAid, RMVC provided cardiology consults, complete with echocardiograms, to twelve deserving pets and their families. Each of these patients walked away with comprehensive cardiology treatment plans, allowing for the best quality of life possible. The opportunity to volunteer in this wonderful event was so popular amongst our staff; we had to draw names out of a hat! We will keep you posted on another Healing Hearts collaboration with PetAid in the near future.

In addition to events like the PetAid day, RMVC gives back to our community on a smaller scale by providing specialty cardiology services to our local animal shelters and rescue organizations. Dr. Sanderson has even had the privilege of providing cardiac screening to the primates at the Denver Zoo.

RMVC is also committed to helping provide services to animals beyond the local area. For instance, RMVC is proud to announce that this year we will be donating one of our GE Vivid 7 Ultrasound machines to Project V.E.T.S., a non-profit organization dedicated to helping the health and welfare of animals around the globe.

At VRCC, the growth RMVC is experiencing enables us to keep up with the increasing demand for cardiology services required by our patients and their family veterinarians. In fact, we are excited to announce that in the near future, we will welcome a new full time cardiologist at VRCC to add to our four board-certified cardiologists, Drs. Karen Sanderson, Jeremy Orr, Julie Martin, Carroll Loyer and our cardiology resident Derek Hanes. Stay tuned for more details!


Staff Highlight . . . Continued

Lynette (daytime) and Jenna (nighttime). Lynette has been at VRCC for over 11 years and is recognized by many of our clients. Jenna started with VRCC in 2015 and has helped revamp how our emergency clients are cared for during their time with us.


We have nine unique team members who each contribute differing perspectives and personalities. Lynette has an amazing memory and knows many of our clients by name, she also has a knack for empathy and compassion. Jenna has previous restaurant experience and is an artist – both things have helped her improve processes at the front desk. Melanie is very caring and kindhearted; if she isn't at the desk she can usually be found comforting a client who is worried or received bad news. Lucas is an artist and regularly draws cartoon animals on the in-patient whiteboard, creating a less sterile feeling at the front desk. Antwan provides the southern charm that so many clients and staff members appreciate. Kandice is the easygoing presence. Becky and Haley provide a very sweet presence to the front desk. Kristin, our newest addition, brings design experience with her.


The front desk at VRCC is an indispensable team of amazing individuals. Daily they comfort, encourage, educate and care for our clients. Many other staff members at VRCC marvel at the work they do and how they handle the different stresses of helping so many different people in so many different situations. VRCC is proud to have a strong and compassionate team manning the front lines.


## VRCC NEWS & EVENTS

 Mark your calendars! Sunday, September 11th, 2016 is the 5th Annual Battle of the Vet Hospital Stars! Registration opens in June, so keep a look out to be a part of the Colorado veterinary community's largest FUNdraising, team-building and networking event.

 Furry Scurry is on Saturday, May 7th at Wash Park in Denver, and we are proud to be a sponsor for our 15th year! Stop by to see us, and step into our photo booth with your pet!

 We will be sending more and more updates digitally to clinics and hospitals. Do we have your correct email address? Please send a message to rpost@vrcc.com to ensure that you are on the email list, with the correct address to stay up to date with the happenings at VRCC!

 Our Ophthalmology department is proud to once again be participating in free service dog eye exams during the 2016 ACVO National Service Animal Exam event taking place throughout the month of May. Visit ACVO.com for more details.

 VRCC would like to introduce some new doctors to you! Dr. Audra Fenimore (DACVIM) started with Internal Medicine on October 1st, 2015. Dr. Derek Hanes, Cardiology Resident, also started this past October. Dr. Andrea Zitkovitz started with ER in December, and Dr. Luanne Strom (also with ER) is starting in April. Welcome to the VRCC team!



## CASE STUDY: DERMATOLOGY

### An Overview of Aural Polyps

By Dr. Jeremy Bachtel, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVD

A two year old cat presented to the VRCC Dermatology service for a six month history of head tilting, scratching at the right ear, and purulent discharge from the right external ear canal that was not responsive to traditional topical ear medication. Primary differentials prior to evaluation include a variety of etiologies including allergic otitis, infectious otitis (parasitism and secondary bacterial and/or Malassezia infections), foreign body, or inflammatory/neoplastic masses.

In this cat, video otoscopic evaluation demonstrated a large, pink mass (pictured below) extending into the canal from the depths of the ear. Primary differentials for an aural mass include a variety of neoplastic (most commonly adenoma, adenocarcinoma) and inflammatory (ceruminous gland hyperplasia, fibrosis, inflammatory polyp) masses, all of which can look very similar visually. The cat was subsequently anesthetized for a deep ear cleaning to remove debris and infection, and the mass was removed via video otoscopy and sent for histopathologic analysis. The mass was diagnosed as an inflammatory aural polyp with secondary bacterial otitis, and the cat was additionally treated with oral and topical antimicrobials and oral steroids with complete resolution without recurrence.



Aural polyps are mixed inflammatory, fibrovascular masses consisting of either

ciliated columnar or stratified squamous epithelium. They have been reported as the most common "external" ear canal mass in the feline patient, accounting for 1.3-28% incidence in a hospital setting. Strictly speaking, they are not true external ear canal masses in that they are thought to arise in the respiratory epithelium of the auditory tube or tympanic cavity. The ultimate etiology behind their appearance is unknown, but congenital, viral, and anatomic causes have all been previously proposed. There is no sex or breed predilection, and though they often occur in cats typically younger than two, they have been found in cats as old as 18. Clinical signs are typically clinical manifestations of otitis interna, media, and/or externa.

Treatment of polyps has traditionally included removal of the stalked polyp through traction or surgical excision followed by curettage of the tympanic cavity, historically achieved with ventral bulla osteotomy, total ear canal ablation, or endoscopic curettage through the external ear canal. In general, bulla curettage has a higher success rate when compared with simple traction/excision of the polyp. Recurrence with aural polyps after traction has the highest reported incidence of recurrence, historically reported as up to 50%.

While at Colorado State University, I and my mentors, examined the possibility of treating these ears medically post-avulsion rather than with traditional bulla curettage, which can have complications such post-operative nerve and hearing impairment. We found that several weeks of systemic steroid therapy after traction/avulsion led to a lack of recurrence that was just as effective as traditional osteotomy and curettage. This exciting finding has led me to adopt this strategy at VRCC with great success and lower complication rate than with a surgical approach.

Aural polyps can be challenging, as it is vital to not only remove the extent of the polyp extruding into the external ear canal, but also appropriately reduce the almost ubiquitous secondary middle and external ear infections

while completely resolving the inflammation.

Some valuable tips:

1) Though a polyp can be removed with traditional hand-held otoscopy, video otoscopy can allow for greater visualization of the external canal, particularly when the ear can be concurrently flushed after post-avulsion hemorrhage.

2) CT evaluation of the middle ear is important to evaluate the bulla, as evidence of osteomyelitis may require up to 12 weeks of systemic antibiotic therapy.



3) Ear cytologies are not optional in any case of otitis; secondary yeast and bacterial infections can lead to significant and unrelenting inflammation until appropriately treated, regardless of primary etiology.

4) Histopathology is required due to the visual similarity of masses within the ear. I have removed "polyps" that returned as adenocarcinomas, which carries a decidedly different prognostic and therapeutic outcome.

5) Remember that polyps can be bilateral and pharyngeal; examination of both ears and the pharyngeal region/soft palate is important to remove all polypoid material.



Dr. Jeremy Bachtel  
DVM, MS,  
Diplomate ACVD

### Check out the new Neurology Building!

Since 2000, Dr. Stephen Lane has been the Board-Certified Neurologist for VRCC Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Hospital. Dr. Lane's expertise in neurology and neurosurgery has made the VRCC a well-rounded complement of talented specialists.

As with most budding hospitals, VRCC grew and expanded, and the need for more space became quite apparent. In June of 2015, Dr. Lane's vision of a dedicated neurological/neurosurgical veterinary center became a reality when we opened the doors to our new facility.

If you have a neurological emergency during business hours Monday-Friday, we are happy to accept your clients directly at our new facility, just across the street to the east of the main VRCC building. This way, your client and their pet will be assured of seeing Dr. Lane in a timely fashion. With a staff of 13 certified technicians, we are able to provide 24-hour round-the-clock care to our patients. As always, Dr. Lane is available for consultations for all veterinarians in our community.

We invite you to stop by and see our new facility – just call our Practice Manager, John Oslick, at 303-874-2081 to set up and take a tour. We look forward to serving you and your clients and assisting with any neurologic cases in the future.

