



WINTER 2015 NEWSLETTER

HELLO WINTER!

The cold weather is upon us! VRCC wishes you, your clients, and your families a warm, safe and festive winter season.

This issue of the VRCC newsletter highlights our Surgery, Oncology and Ophthalmology teams, and provides news about the hospital, including special holiday hours for our practices.

Learn more about our newest board certified surgeon, Dr. Josie Mallinckrodt. She joined the VRCC Surgery team this past summer.

The VRCC Oncology department discusses 3 cases of patients diagnosed with canine Lymphoma, one of the most common diseases seen by VRCC Oncology.

Our Ophthalmology team wants you to get to know them a little more in the specialty highlight.

Cheers to the new year!
Your VRCC Team

VRCC HOLIDAY HOURS

Cardiology

Closed on the following dates:
December 24th & 25th
January 1st
Closing at 3pm on December 31st

Dermatology/ Allergy

Closed on the following dates:
December 25th
January 1st
Closing at 12pm on December 24th & 31st

Internal Medicine

Closed on the following dates:
December 25th
January 1st
Closing at 12pm on December 24th & 31st

Surgery

Closed on the following dates:
December 25th
January 1st
Closing at 12pm on December 24th & 31st

Daytime Emergency & Triage Services

Open December 24th from 8am - 2pm
Open December 31st from 8am - 2pm

After Hours Emergency Services

Open December 24th at 2pm thru 8am on
December 28th
Open December 31st at 2pm thru 8am on
January 4th



Neurology

Closed on the following dates:
December 24th & 25th
January 1st
Phones are open 24 hours.
Dr. Lane will continue to accept all emergency cases throughout the holidays.

Oncology/ Radiation Therapy

Closed on the following dates:
December 25th
January 1st
Closing at 12pm on December 24th & 31st

Ophthalmology

Closed on the following dates:
December 25th
January 1st
Closing at 12pm on December 24th & 31st

STAFF HIGHLIGHT: SURGERY

Josie Mallinckrodt, DVM, Diplomate ACVS

The VRCC Surgery team had a new addition this June. Dr. Josie Mallinckrodt is excited to be a part of the VRCC Surgery team, and to provide the best care for your furry family.



Josie grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah. She graduated from Dartmouth College with a degree in biology and a minor in education. She was accepted to Colorado State University School of Veterinary Medicine and graduated in 2006. Josie did a one-year rotating internship in Los Angeles, CA. She then spent the next four years in the Bay Area of California doing a surgical internship followed by three years of surgical residency at a 12-surgeon, busy, referral practice. She considers herself very lucky to have had exposure to a wide variety of cases and techniques. She obtained board certification in 2012.

Josie moved to Vermont and practiced for two years after completion of her residency. She moved back to glorious Colorado two years ago. She is excited to be back among the Rocky Mountains and meet back up with old friends.

Josie enjoys all types of surgery but is most excited by oncologic and reconstructive surgery. What she loves the most is getting her patients back home to their families.

When not working Josie enjoys exploring all that Colorado has to offer via hiking, biking, and skiing with her family. Her furry family is filled by an amazing group of dogs; Morceaux, Mia, Cooper and Doofus, as well as a regal kitty named Jasper. Her two-legged family consists of her husband and her two stepsons, all of whom keep her on her toes!

Please call the VRCC Surgery department's direct line at 303-874-2073 if you would like a consult with Dr. Mallinckrodt, Dr. Devitt or Dr. Van Vechten. Surgery has appointments available Monday through Friday to serve your client's busy schedules.



SPECIALTY HIGHLIGHT: OPHTHALMOLOGY



Bumble bee is a yellow bellied slider who saw VRCC Ophthalmology for an infection of his eyelid

VRCC Ophthalmology has always been guided by the simple principle that: “We treat our patients, clients, referring veterinarians and each other as we would want to be treated.”

We wanted to take this opportunity in the practice highlight and talk about our team members in a little more detail. The Ophthalmology team is made up of 3 doctors, 2 client coordinators, and 7 Certified Veterinary Technicians.

All 3 of our doctors are board certified by the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists.

Dr. Matt Chavkin founded VRCC Ophthalmology in 1994. His special interest is Onchocerca Lupi, or eye worms. He is known at the hospital as the eye worm king! Dr.

Chavkin says, “The thing I love best about performing [cataract] surgery isn’t the technical aspect, but the moment when the pet is finally able to see its family again. It’s great to be a part of that happiness.”

Dr. Tanja Nuhsbaum joined VRCC Ophthalmology in 2001. When asked for her special interest, Dr. Nuhsbaum replied with something she hears pretty often, “You are an eye doctor for animals?” – some might say that is specialized enough but when asked to put a finer edge on it, my area of “special interest” include communication skills, corneal disease and intraocular surgery, specifically cataract removal.” She adds, “I feel very fortunate that I love my job. I enjoy coming to work every day and meeting my new patients. It is a pleasure to work with clients with a common goal in mind: to assist and benefit the visual needs of their special, four-legged family members.”

Dr. Bradley Graham joined VRCC Ophthalmology in 2011. His special interest is corneal health, specifically dry eye. Dr. Graham says, “While veterinary ophthalmology deals with a very specific organ system, ocular disease impacts many facets of life, for the patient, and his or her human family. I find it rewarding to be part of helping the patient maintain a good quality of life.”

When you give us a call on the phone, you are likely to speak with one of our friendly client coordinators, Mandy or Chelsea. Mandy has been with Ophtho since 2013, and her special interest is team building. Chelsea, who recently joined the team a couple of months ago, has a special interest of the human/ animal bond and client relations.

VRCC Ophthalmology has 7 Certified Veterinary Technicians that keep our team working like a well-oiled machine.

Amanda, our lead technician, has been at VRCC since 2000. Her special interest is alternative medicine and canine nutrition. Kristine’s special interests include the human/ animal bond and anesthesia. She has been part of VRCC since 2005. Anne has been a CVT with Ophtho since 2011. Her special interests are surgery and anesthesia.

We have had several great CVTs recently join the Ophtho team. Jennifer and Ashton both started in 2014, and Whitney and Sarah joined the team earlier this year. Jennifer’s special interests are surgery and anesthesia, Ashton has a soft spot for shelter medicine, Whitney is fascinated by ocular imaging, and last but not least, Sarah’s special interest lies in preventative care.

VRCC Ophthalmology is available for appointments Monday-Saturday. Scheduled surgeries are performed 3 days a week. We see dogs, cats, rabbits, the occasional bird, and recently, we even saw a turtle! We can be reached by calling 303-874-2070 or via email at eyes@vrcc.com.

CASE STUDY: ONCOLOGY

Advances in Lymphoma Today

One of the biggest changes in Veterinary Oncology over the past several years has been our increased understanding of the many different clinical presentations of lymphoma in dogs. Complete staging of the lymphoma patient, along with advanced classification of the lymphoma tumor cells, can now provide us with details that allow for more accurate prognostication and treatment individualization and optimization. While we still have a long way to go, the case studies below highlight how this new information can improve patient treatment and outcomes.

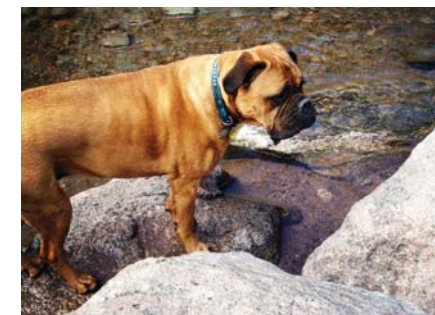


Hanna enjoying the sunshine after a swim

Patient 1: Hanna is a 7-and-1/2-year-old SF chocolate Labrador retriever who was presented to VRCC Oncology in September 2012, at 4 years of age, with a cytology confirmed diagnosis of lymphoma. Clinical signs consisted of lethargy and decreased appetite, but she was in otherwise very good body condition. Staging was performed confirming stage Va disease with generalized lymph node enlargement, liver and spleen enlargement, sternal node enlargement, neutropenia and thrombocytopenia. Immunophenotyping was done using flow cytometry, confirming a form of T cell lymphoma with the markers: CD4+, CD8-, CD45+, CD3+, and CD5+.

Based on the preceding information, personalized treatment was begun with a multidrug protocol, MOPL, was initiated consisting of mustargen, vincristine, prednisone and lomustine. Remission was quickly achieved, resolving the cytopenias, improving appetite and energy level. After 4 months of treatment with MOPL, maintenance chemotherapy was initiated consisting of vincristine and lomustine every 6 weeks, which has been continued to the present. Hanna continues to enjoy an excellent quality of life and based on recent staging, her lymphoma remains in complete remission.

Patient 2: Emma was a 7-year-old SF Bull Mastiff when presented to VRCC Oncology in October 2011 for evaluation of peripheral node enlargement. Lymph node cytology was inconclusive. Flow cytometry of the node tissue was done, confirming the diagnosis of a T cell lymphoma expressing the markers: CD4+, CD8-, CD45-, CD3+ and CD5-. This result was diagnostic for an indolent T cell lymphoma. Treatment with oral chemotherapy was given for one year and was successful at maintaining remission, until Emma’s quality of life became unacceptable from severe osteoarthritis, necessitating euthanasia in January 2015, at the age of 10.5 years.



Emma exploring a creek

Patient 3: Capone is a 10-year-old NM Labrador mix who was presented to VRCC Emergency in January 2015 for acute gastrointestinal signs. Surgery was done for removal of a foreign body at which time a 5 cm diameter mid-jejunal mass was found and resected. Capone recovered uneventfully from surgery. Initial diagnosis of the tumor was an undifferentiated round cell tumor. However, advanced immunohistochemistry analysis confirmed the diagnosis of T cell lymphoma. The tissue samples were reviewed and the lymphoma was classified as a low grade enteric T cell lymphoma using the WHO classification system (Valli et al. Vet Path 2013). Once Capone had healed from the surgery, treatment with low dose oral chlorambucil was initiated, together with a short course of prednisone. This treatment protocol has been continued, maintaining his current remission status.


Implications for personalized management of lymphoma in dogs


Canine T cell lymphoma is reported in the literature as a generally aggressive and rapidly progressive cancer, associated with short survival times despite committed treatment regimens. However, it is important to realize that there is a subset of patients with T cell lymphoma, (estimated to comprise up to 30-40% of all T cell lymphoma in dogs) that respond well to newer treatment protocols, resulting in much longer survival times. Our challenge is to correctly identify these patients and optimize their treatment protocols for maximum quality and length of life.


Robyn Elmslie, DVM,
DACVIM (Oncology)




VRCC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

 Our medical oncology service is now offering a new treatment for TCC and other urinary tract tumors: non-invasive urethral stent placement to alleviate urinary tract obstruction. Please call if you are interested in offering this service for any of your patients.

 Congratulations to Dr. Jeremy Bachtel who passed his exam (on his first attempt) to become board certified in Dermatology this past November!

 Thank you to everyone who joined us for our CE at Howl at the Moon Denver on Tuesday, October 20th. Keep a look out for future CE date announcements, coming soon.

 Dr. Stephen Lane recently became certified to perform the Cervical Disc Arthroplasty procedure through Applied Veterinary Technology, LLC. Way to go Dr. Lane!

