

the NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA • COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
veterinary
page

New rehabilitation and fitness center launched at UF small animal hospital

BY SARAH CAREY

Veterinarians at the University of Florida Veterinary Medical Center now have a new tool for helping Fido get back on his feet: an underwater treadmill.

A ribbon-cutting to celebrate the launching of this new rehabilitative treatment modality, part of the UF Veterinary Rehabilitation and Fitness Center, was held Sept. 15 and included a demonstration of the new treadmill, which is housed in the VMC between the small and large animal hospitals and adjacent to the equine treadmill room.

Several UF faculty and staff members, along with special guests Victoria Ford and Dr. Janine Tash, owner of Aalatah and Aalatah West veterinary hospitals and a member of the UF CVM class of '83, attended the event. The treadmill was made possible through financial gifts from Ford, who is past treasurer of the Pals & Paws dog agility group in Jacksonville and a dog agility friend of Tash's.

"After competing in agility for 12 years, I observed all the injured dogs going to Aiken, S.C. for treatment and wondered why the UF veterinary school was not their choice," Ford said. "I learned that UF had no such program and the agility dogs needed special treatment."

Tash was meanwhile working on Ford's two competition dogs and mentioned the need for an underwater treadmill.

"I saw a need and was able to assist the veterinary school in acquiring it with a gift of \$60,000," Ford said.

After a meeting with college administrators, Ford learned that not only did agility dogs have rehabilitation needs — so did other canine athletes as well as surgical and neurological patients.

She subsequently decided to support this goal by establishing the James Edmundson Ingraham Endowed Fund in Veterinary Medicine with an additional gift in memory of her great-grandfather, a businessman, entrepreneur, and railroad company executive whom Ford describes as "a moving force in the development of the state of Florida from the 1880s through the early 1900s."

"I am excited to be a part of the development of the small animal rehabilitation area in the veterinary hospital and look forward to its growth," said Ford. She also made an additional donation toward creating a small animal rehabilitation area in the soon-to-be-constructed new Veterinary Educational and Clinical Research and Center, which includes a new small animal hospital.

Directing the new rehabilitation program will be staff surgeon Kristin Kirkby, a 2003 graduate of the UF veterinary college who recently completed her residency in small animal surgery. Kirkby is now pursuing a Ph.D.

Under Kirkby's direction, limited hydrotherapy services are now being offered to certain VMC clients, primarily animals suffering from joint problems or muscle loss, which often results from orthopedic or neurologic disease.

"There is a huge benefit for dogs with spinal cord injury that are unable to or have difficulty walking on land," Kirkby said.

Large animal patients are also benefiting from the new treadmill.

"The goal is to reduce pressure on the muscle groups and to allow for weightless movements as part of physical therapy to improve muscle strength," said equine resident Johanna Elfenbein, a 2007 graduate of the UF veterinary college. Elfenbein added that the major problem with recumbence — the inability to stand — in large animals is that their large muscle groups have decreased blood flow, causing muscles to die over time.

"Certainly having the treadmill available to us for this purpose is great," Elfenbein said.

Kirkby would like to see the service expand in the near future make use of other rehabilitation modalities such as low level laser therapy, therapeutic ultrasound and shock wave therapy.

"One of the big things we plan to push for is weight loss," she said. "Most overweight dogs have some form of arthritis; picture the overweight Lab with bad hips. We envision a wellness center that would provide exercise and nutrition therapy, along with pain management and rehabilitation."

Kirkby said the buoyancy of the water decreases the impact of an animal's weight on its joints, and the resistance provided by walking in water builds muscle.

"Depending on the height of the water, you can target different muscle areas and joints," she said.

Many other veterinary colleges and hospitals are now making use of aquatic therapy for

small animals, but UF is the only one in South Georgia and North Florida.

"My vision is that we will become very much a leader in clinical services but also in research to validate why we're doing this," Kirkby said, adding that part of her doctoral work will involve evaluating objective outcome measures to be used with rehabilitation.

"For example, is the underwater treadmill at elbow height for 10 minutes better than for five minutes at carpal height? Certainly thus far, there are big gaps in evidence and there has been very little objective data provided to prove this technique works."



Dr. Colin Burrows, Victoria Ford and Dr. Kristin Kirkby visit prior to the ribbon-cutting for the new underwater treadmill, one of several treatment modalities to be available through UF's new Veterinary Rehabilitation and Fitness Center. Ford holds a plaque she was presented with for her generous support of the new center.



Dr. Kristin Kirkby smiles at her dog, Bailey, while veterinary technician Wendy Davies monitors operation of the new underwater treadmill. Bailey gamely participated in the treadmill demonstration during the ribbon-cutting event.



Dr. Deke Beusse

*Former marine mammal program director, longtime friend of veterinary medicine
Dr. Deke Beusse dies*

Dr. Deke Beusse, who served for three years as the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's first director of the marine mammal medicine program after its inception in 2001, died Sept. 20 in Lakemont, Ga.

He was 76.

An Atlanta native and 1958 graduate of the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine, Beusse established and operated a small animal practice, Trail Animal Clinic, in Orlando for 23 years. He also served as a contract veterinarian for Sea World in Orlando for 23 years.

He served at UF's marine mammal medicine director from 2001-2004 before moving to Rabun County, Ga., where he then became a contract veterinarian with the U.S. Navy Aquatic Animal Program. He served in that capacity until earlier this year.

He served as president of the Central Florida Veterinary Association in 1966 and was president of the Florida Veterinary Medical Association in 1977. He won many awards from the FVMA, including Veterinarian of the Year in 1984 and the group's Distinguished Service Award in 1991.

Beusse had long-standing roots with the UF veterinary college.

Soon after being hired to direct the marine mammal medicine program, he shared in an interview how he had been "in the middle" of the political struggle to build the UF veterinary school back in the 1970s.

"Me and (Dr.) Wy Cripe and Dean (Charles) Cornelius, along with other members of the FVMA — we just fought those battles until the school was built," he said. "After the vet school was formed, I spoke to the first freshman class during orientation and I think I've talked to every class but one since then."

He said he told students who commented about his "luck" in hooking up with Sea World that luck had nothing to do with that professional relationship.

"I think you have to donate your time, and things happen from that," Beusse said. "I was a practitioner in Orlando back in 1960, a couple of years after graduating from veterinary school at the University of Georgia, and there weren't but 10 or 12 veterinarians in Orlando at that time. There were rumors that something big was going to happen in Orlando and that turned out to be Disney."

Beusse traveled all over the world working as a consultant for different marine life parks.

Flying high again



Lynda White, EagleWatch coordinator for Audubon of Florida (left), and Copper Aitken-Palmer, a resident at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, prepare to release an American Bald Eagle into the wild near Cross Creek, Fla., on Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2008. The eagle walked several steps before it flew to the top of a nearby tree, where it was joined by another bald eagle. Originally, a good Samaritan found the bird unable to walk near Cross Creek and transported it to the University of Florida Veterinary Medical Center, where it was treated until it regained its strength and was later discharged back to Audubon.

(Photo by Sarah Kiewel)



Audubon's Eagle Watch coordinator, Lynda White, releases the eagle, who flew to a nearby treetop, where it was soon joined by another eagle, presumably its mate.

(Photo by Sarah Kiewel)

In 1980, after being treated for Hodgkin's Disease, Beusse and his son, Doby, a former professional water skier, rode their bicycles across the nation from Oregon to Florida.

"Back then, there were heavy helmets and no clip-on pedals," he recalled. "We rode 10-speed bikes and we did more than 100 miles per day. It took us six weeks."

During his years at UF, Beusse participated actively in Team VetMed, riding for several years in the Horse Farm 100 ride and completing the full 100 miles one year on his recumbent bicycle.

"As the first director of the UF marine mammal program, Deke Beusse was key to the successful development and national recognition the program enjoys," said former veterinary college

dean, Dr. Joseph DiPietro, now vice president for agriculture at the University of Tennessee.

"Deke was a gentle, humble man whose expertise and knowledge as a veterinarian far outshined his reservation about ever being the center of attention," DiPietro said. "In addition, his strong commitment to family and community provided those around him with an outstanding role model. I recall his riding the Horse Farm 100 gamely every year with Team VetMed with the conviction that we must help provide stronger support of veterinary student scholarships through that effort."

"I, his friends, family and the veterinary profession will miss him terribly," DiPietro added.

Beusse is survived by his wife, Carole, and two children.

*Former faculty member
Dr. Richard Bradley dies*

Dr. Richard Bradley, a longtime member of the faculty at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine, died Oct. 6, a week shy of his 81st birthday, in Morganton, N.C.

A parasitologist, Bradley held D.V.M., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Georgia. He joined the UF veterinary science faculty in 1965 and remained at UF until his retirement in 1990.

While at UF, he was active in the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Florida Veterinary Medical Association and the Eastern States Veterinary Association. He also chaired many college committees.

Since 2003, Bradley and his family owned and operated Kustom Kare Kennel in Morganton, N.C. He is survived by his wife, Alla, and four children.

“Auto” now en route to recovery, thanks to UF vets, Humane Society

A badly injured young stray dog that happened to wander into the bushes near the Alachua County Humane Society is alive today and at home with his new adoptive owners, thanks to caring Society workers and surgeons at the UF Veterinary Medical Center.

“He was discovered Monday morning, Oct. 6 by staff members and he was obviously dehydrated and in shock,” said Kirk Eppenstein, the Society’s executive director, adding that while no one saw the accident, it appeared that the dog had been hit by a car.

“The Humane Society made him comfortable until he could be transported to Alachua County Animal Services for mandatory holding to see if an owner would come forward,” Eppenstein said.

No one did. After consulting with a few local veterinarians who gave the dog — nicknamed “Auto” — a poor prognosis, members of the Humane Society went to the media and to the general public seeking donations to help pay for the dog’s medical care.

“Staff from the Humane Society refused to give up on Auto and worked with him daily,” Eppenstein said. “He had the presence of mind or the luck to wander into the bushes near our offices, and although our resources are always spread thin, we just felt he deserved a chance.”

Eight days later, Auto arrived at UF’s VMC, where he was evaluated by orthopedic surgeon Dr. Antonio Pozzi and resident Dr. Alastair Coomer.

“Radiographs showed a fracture of his left femur, a left hip luxation, right pelvic fracture and small fractures of the left femoral head,” said Christine Ross, the junior veterinary student who served as part of the treatment team.

Surgery was performed Oct. 14 to repair the fractured femur.

“Five pins and two screws were used to stabilize the multiple fractures,” Ross said.

Two days later, Auto received a total hip replacement, removing small bone chips and replacing his left hip joint with a new titanium joint.

“He is a young dog and has soft bones, so we are taking multiple precautions during his recovery,” Ross said, adding that Auto would be in a sling for the next few weeks to prevent him from bearing any weight on the injured limb.

Accompanied by a Humane Society technician, Eppenstein came to the UF VMC Oct. 20 to pick Auto up. He said that the good Samaritan who came forward to cover the lion’s share of Auto’s veterinary expenses — estimated to have been between \$6,000-\$7,000 — had decided to give the dog a permanent home.

“His recovery will likely be long and slow, but his prognosis is very good,” said Coomer.

In an interview with local news station WCJB, TV 20, Pozzi thanked the members of the surgery team, the Humane Society and the community for their help.



Pictured outside the Small Animal Hospital with Auto at center are Kirk Eppenstein of the Alachua County Humane Society; Dr. Alastair Coomer, surgery resident; Dr. Antonio Pozzi, UF clinical assistant professor and orthopedic surgeon; and UF veterinary student Christine Ross. (Photo by Sarah Carey)

Paul Davenport named interim chairman of college’s department of physiological sciences

Paul Davenport, Ph.D., a professor in the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, has been named acting chairman of the college’s department of physiological sciences.

His appointment was effective Oct. 1.

College dean Glen Hoffsis appointed Davenport, who had been associate department chairman, to the acting chairman position after former department chairman, John Harvey, D.V.M., Ph.D., was named executive associate dean at the UF veterinary college.

A physiologist, Davenport’s work focuses primarily on the study of animal and human behavioral control of breathing and respiratory rehabilitation.

His work relating to respiratory function has benefited Parkinson’s patients, asthmatic children, U.S. Navy divers and the actor Christopher Reeve, among others.

Davenport was the recipient of the Pfizer Award for Research Excellence in the UF College of Veterinary Medicine in 2001. In 2003, he received the UF Research Foundation professorship, sponsored by the university’s Division of Sponsored Research.

He has been a member of the UF veterinary college faculty since 1981.



Dr. Paul Davenport is shown in his lab with graduate student Sarah Peiying Chan.

Equine group gives \$5,000 for student scholarships



Dr. Eleanor Green, left, chairman of the college’s department of large animal clinical sciences and chief of staff of the Alec P. and Louise H. Courtelis Equine Hospital, stands with Mary Ellen Kaufman of Ocala Equine Hospital during the recent FAEP annual meeting.

The Florida Association of Equine Practitioners presented the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine with a check for \$5,000 for student scholarships Sept. 27 during the FAEP’s annual meeting in Puerto Rico.

In addition, the FAEP contributed \$2,500 for UF’s course in equine business, which began Oct. 1.

“The FAEP is an excellent organization that is most supportive of UF, as we are of them,” said Dr. Eleanor Green, chairwoman of the college’s department of large animal clinical sciences and chief of staff of UF’s large animal hospital.

Dr. Amanda House, UF’s equine extension veterinarian, is on FAEP’s board of directors and was preceded in her position by Dr. Dana Zimmel, an assistant professor of equine medicine at UF.

VETS team stays sharp by training

In the below photos, members of the Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) team are shown practicing a water rescue exercise at Lake Wauburg. This technique had been taught to team members during a class in February.

The team has since purchased the equipment necessary to handle water, mud, lifting and other scenarios. To stay current in their skills, team members practice various components of technical rescue each month, whether it means lifting a horse with an A-frame device, raising and lowering team members, water rescue or other exercises. Several members have been through the Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue course taught by Dr. Rebecca Gimenez as well as the National Fire Protection Association Rope Rescue Operators course.

VETS team members also train with local fire rescue units, including the Gainesville Fire Rescue and Alachua Fire Rescue teams. In addition, the VETS team works with the student public health service club to put on labs and training for students interested in disaster preparedness and response.



David John and Josh Fleming attach the flotation boom to the horse circingle, which creates a horse life jacket. (Photo courtesy of John Haven)



David John and Josh Fleming suit up in dry suits and safety gear in preparation for the rescue exercise. (Photo courtesy of John Haven)

CVM team helps "Light the Night" for leukemia, lymphoma awareness



Small animal hospital client services manager Dieter Haager and his fiancée, Kelly Buckley, walk with their dog Oct. 16 during the recent Light the Night walk at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. The event was sponsored by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and the CVM's team was "UF/VMC Paws for Life." The team raised \$2,384 this year through a bake sale, a book drive, online donations and cash contributions -- more than double what was raised last year. (Photo courtesy of UF oncology service)



Among those walking in the 2008 Light the Night walk were UF veterinary oncology technician Jessica Noggle; UF veterinary student Kelly Meyer; Mr. and Mrs. Cuda and veterinary oncology technician Samantha Haas. The Cudas walked in memory of their dog, Bessie, who lost her fight with cancer earlier this year. (Photo courtesy of UF oncology service)

Groundbreaking ceremony for new Veterinary Educational and Clinical Research Center/ Small Animal Hospital will be Nov. 21

Everyone is invited to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Veterinary Educational and Clinical Research Center, which includes the new Small Animal Hospital, on Nov. 21 at 10 a.m.

The event will be held on the grounds of the future facility, which will be located at the corner of Shealy Drive and S.W. 16th Avenue.

Refreshments will be served. Come one, come all!

The Veterinary Page is the college's electronic internal newsletter. Story ideas should be submitted to Sarah Carey, editor, at careys@vetmed.ufl.edu.