Behavioral Medicine Clinic Treats Problem Pets

“Roger,” a two-year-old neutered mixed breed dog, was wreaking havoc on his owners’ home. His fuzzy face and wriggly body had won their hearts at the local shelter, but the first time they left him alone at home, he chewed his way out of his crate, tore open two couch cushions, chewed up the remote control and three pairs of shoes, then pulled out the trash bag and spewed the contents all over the house—all within a period of 90 minutes! To make matters worse, he had urinated and defecated in the middle of the living room.

The owners thought Roger was acting out, but after a careful examination and thorough history taking, Dr. Meghan Herron, DACVB, director of the Behavioral Medicine Clinic at Ohio State, determined that Roger had separation anxiety, a psychological disorder common to recently adopted rescue and shelter dogs. These dogs may go through severe emotional trauma with the abandonment/rehoming process and bond closely (a bit too closely in this case) with their new owners, making separation from the owners difficult, even panic inducing.

Drs. Herron and Gilbert-Gregory have been very successful in addressing the behavior of dogs and cats and helping your clients and their pets live together more comfortably and safely.

As always, I thank you for referring your clients to our specialty services and letting us serve as an extension of your practice. Enjoy the weather!

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From the Director

It's summer! During this time of year we like to recognize our Veterinary Practitioner Boards, who help us in so many ways. Through the years they have recommended many changes at the VMC that have enhanced the experience for our referring veterinarians and clients. We thank them for their involvement and input.

I would also like to encourage you to take advantage of our Behavioral Medicine Clinic whenever you have clients dealing with their pets’ behavioral issues.
“Through a combination of medication, environmental changes and training, we were able to help Roger’s owners implement a plan to get him feeling much more comfortable home alone,” said Dr. Herron. “After eight weeks of therapy, he was able to be left at home without destroying things or eliminating in the house,” she added.

If you have clients whose pets are exhibiting behavioral issues, we encourage you to consider referring them to the Behavioral Medicine Clinic. Drs. Herron and Shana Gilbert-Gregory treat issues such as:

- human-directed aggression
- inter-pet aggression
- separation anxiety
- inappropriate elimination
- fear/phobias (e.g., thunder, wind)
- compulsive behaviors
- cognitive dysfunction

Initial consultations typically last two to three hours for dogs, or one to two hours for cats. Consultations include:

- physical examination
- observation of pet
- detailed written summary and discussion of pet’s behavior
- three months of unlimited follow-up by email or phone

The written summary will include a diagnosis, behavior modification, training and management plan for the pet’s behavior problem. A copy of the summary will be faxed to you as the primary care veterinarian.

Clients should call 614-292-3551 for an appointment. A behavior assessment form is available on our website: [vet.osu.edu/behavior](http://vet.osu.edu/behavior); please ask your clients to complete this form before their appointment in order to receive a $20 discount.

**What is a veterinary behaviorist?**

To gain board certification in veterinary behavior, a licensed veterinarian must first complete a minimum of three years of accredited advanced clinical training and pass a rigorous comprehensive examination administered by the ACVB. This includes specific and extensive training in medical problems that may complicate behavior problems, behavioral diagnostic procedures, behavior modification protocols based on the science of animal learning, and behavioral pharmacology. Dr. Meghan Herron is the only board certified veterinary behaviorist in the state of Ohio.

**Client Liaisons Enhance Communications**

The VMC’s “client liaisons,” a program initiated last year at the recommendation of the Practitioner Board, has been a great success. Located in the lobby of the Hospital for Companion Animals, the liaisons assist clients by answering questions, providing updates on the status of pets and explaining what happens between patient registration and discharge. They provide resource information to help clients pass the time during their visit – as well as many other duties.

Frances Robbins works from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and Vince Harold from 12:30-5 p.m. Before coming to the VMC, Vince had worked in sales/customer service his entire life, while Frances had extensive customer service experience at Ohio State.
Thanks to our Practitioner Boards!

**Large Animal Practitioner Board Members**

Dr. Bev Anderholm* (Medina, OH)  
Dr. William Crank (Henderson, WV)  
Dr. Dave Crum* (Lancaster, OH)  
Dr. Angie Dahse (Thurman, OH)  
Dr. Chris Gilbert* (Greenville, OH)  
Dr. Jim Honigford (Sugarcreek, OH)  
Dr. Heidi Immegart (Sunbury, OH)  
Dr. Ken Keckler (Burton, OH)  
Dr. Mike Kline (Maplewood, OH)  
Dr. Rob Krueger (Mt. Vernon, OH)  
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Dr. Clara Mason (Winfield, WV)  
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Dr. Gabe Middleton (Orrville, OH)  
Dr. Emily Miller (Ravenna, OH)  
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Dr. Lisa Santa Emma (Bloomington, OH)  
Dr. Brandy Snedden* (Thornville, OH)  
Dr. De Wayne Weaver (Green Camp, OH)  
Dr. James Zeliff (Murrysville, PA)  
Dr. Ryan Zimmerman (Fremont, OH)

**Emeritus Board Members**

Dr. Larry Agle (Burton, OH)  
Dr. Cheryl Dewitt (Bluffton, OH)  
Dr. Jon Ellis (Xenia, OH)  
Dr. Galen Johnson (North Lewisburg, OH)  
Dr. Jane Kennedy (Butler, PA)  
Dr. Heather Plum (Lebanon, OH)  
Dr. Dan Stradley (Grove City, OH)  
Dr. Stephen Walker (Chesapeake, OH)

**Small Animal Practitioner Board Members**

Dr. Tracy Arvin* (West Jefferson, OH)  
Dr. Dawn Bookmyer* (Powell, OH)  
Dr. Diana Cron* (Cincinatti, OH)  
Dr. Mike Dyer (Proctorville, OH)  
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Dr. Jeanne Eisenhour (Perrysburg, OH)  
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Dr. Ann Greenwald* (Canal Winchester, OH)  
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Dr. Theresa Hartig* (Lancaster, OH)  
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Dr. Beth Kellogg* (Worthington, OH)  
Dr. Mark McCloskey (Columbus, OH)  
Dr. Brandy Morgan (Wheeling, WV)  
Dr. Phillip Puskarich (St. Clairsville, OH)  
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Dr. John Talmadge (Dayton, OH)  
Dr. Daniel Tonne (Reynoldsburg, OH)  
Dr. Richard Vesper* (Hilliard, OH)  
Dr. John Worman (Gahanna, OH)  
Dr. Scott Yancey* (Marion, OH)

**Emeritus Board Members**

Dr. Tod Beckett (Hilliard, OH)  
Dr. Steven Carbaugh (Cincinnati, OH)  
Dr. Brad Carmichael (McMurray, PA)  
Dr. Leah Carpenter or Dr. Adam Ballard (Delaware, OH)  
Dr. Joy Dvorak (Columbus, IN)

**Recent Board-Driven Enhancements at the VMC**

**Improving the experience for referring veterinarians**

- Overnight monitoring and nursing care service at VMC–Dublin
- Emergency fee waiver program
- Outpatient imaging at VMC–Dublin
- Streamlined release of medical records process
- New small animal estimate guidelines, to prepare clients for VMC financial responsibilities
- Improved referral forms

**Improving the client experience**

- New financing options
- Opening of second VMC location (Dublin)
- Additional parking spaces at VMC–Columbus
- Farrier on site for equine podiatry issues (Wednesdays)
Welcome Dr. Yardley!

Dr. Jonathan Yardley joins the Equine Field Service/Ambulatory Care Service as an assistant professor. He received his DVM from Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2005, and following graduation, completed a rotating internship in surgery, anesthesia and field service at Ferguson, Hammock and BonenClark Equine Hospital in Ocala, FL. Dr. Yardley began his career working in private practice, most recently as the equine director for a mixed animal practice in Millersport, Ohio. His passion is ensuring that performance horses compete at their full potential and helping geriatric horses have a long and healthy life.

“Cat Mastery” Merges Research with New Technology

Dr. Tony Buffington, DACVN, has spent the past 30 years learning about cats – their nutritional needs, diseases and response to environmental enrichment. Now, he shares his knowledge through “Cat Mastery,” an interactive book and course available through iTunes.U.

Dr. Buffington welcomes feedback about the book and the course in order to continue to make changes and tweak content to make it even more relevant for readers.

“It’s a living course,” he said. “I believe this is the future of curriculum.”

- The Veterinary Medical Center is certified as a “cat-friendly” practice by the American Association of Feline Practitioners.

Staffing Changes at VMC–Dublin

Dr. Karen Tefft, DACVM, has taken over the internal medicine duties of Dr. Cory Brown and the daytime emergency duties of Dr. Sarah Graham, who have left the practice. We thank Dr. Brown and Dr. Graham for their integral roles in the establishment of the VMC–Dublin and wish them well in their future endeavors.

In addition to being a highly skilled, experienced and popular small-animal internist with the VMC–Columbus, Dr. Tefft is an experienced emergency clinician. At Dublin, she will see any daytime and emergency cases that present.

Dr. Tefft will have internal medicine appointments and will be the principal doctor Monday-Thursday to field your calls regarding transfer of patients for our Overnight Monitoring and Nursing Care Service. She will be working closely with our radiologists to provide consultation, when requested, on patients undergoing outpatient ultrasound and same-day CT. She will also provide endoscopic imaging services.

By combining the two positions, we believe we can provide a more integrated and consistent level of service and better communication with you and your clients. As always, our goal is to be an extension of your practice and a partner in the care of your patients.

Departures

Dr. Elizabeth Santschi (Equine Surgery) left the VMC on May 23 to take a position with Kansas State University.

Dr. Andrea Monnig (Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care) resigned at the end of May to take a position in private practice in Nashville, TN.

Dr. Sam Hurcombe (Equine Emergency and Critical Care) will leave the VMC at the end of June to join Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialists.