



# VETERINARY SURGICAL CENTERS

HOLIDAY 2017



## Letter from the Chief



## Time-Talent-Treasure

By John J. Haburjak, DVM, Diplomate ACVS

In November IronHorse VetCare of Dublin, California, hosted famous veterinary dentist Brook Niemiec for a full day lecture and full day wet lab – right here in the San Francisco East Bay. The event was oversold in less than three weeks, and had a very long waiting-list for those hoping for last minute drop-outs. I'm sure many of you are aware of Dr. Niemiec's international reputation, and his award winning company and continuing education entourage [www.dogbeachvet.com](http://www.dogbeachvet.com) – so it was a special treat to host him and his group so close to home for some of the highest quality C.E. around!

While it is true, to pull off this feat of C.E., I leaned heavily on my personal friendship with Brook to secure a date, it simply would not have been possible to host this event without the epic, and monstrous contributions from my staff: Renee McComb (practice manager), Katrina Stewart (Internist) and Mary Gagnon (Happy Veteran's Day Mary!) and our co-hosts without whom – the event would not have come to pass.

First, Mike Volpe with Henry Schein Animal Health – for uber-eats runs, the many meetings, and the event site! Second, Kate LaCroix from Idexx, Jo Clemitson from Hills, Jean Harvey from Care Credit and Daniel Strange from Dentalaire, Roger Shelbourne from Miltex, Tim Hariston from Zoetis and Robert Pahl from Merial. Not only were these folks, and their respective company's committed to our event, they dedicated their entire weekend to being available for the course attendees to interface with and become familiar with their product offerings. Thank you beyond measure for all you do, and did for us, to make this event happen!

And, finally to the course attendees – more than 60 veterinarians, registered veterinary

technicians and paraprofessional veterinary staff who came, invested their precious weekend with us to further advance their education for the benefit of their pet-owning clients, my deepest respect and honor for your attention and engagement throughout the entire weekend.

For me, this weekend is a metaphor for what I've known to be true since I was a little kid: you can tell what's important to folks when you study where they allocate their time, talents, and treasures. Furthermore, you can measure their generosity by the size of the "scoop" they use to dole out each! Remembering my Grandmother Elizabeth is easy to do at this time of year. It's the month of her birthday, and was always her favorite season. The month of Thanksgiving & Gratitude was where her gifts of Time-Talent-and-Treasure always found fertile ground – her model of a generous heart, and abundant giving were on full display this past weekend, while hosting the local continuing education event with Brook Niemiec.

I would like the staff of [www.dogbeachvet.com](http://www.dogbeachvet.com), the staff of IronHorse VetCare, my co-hosts for this past weekend C.E. and especially the attendees of the event, to know that I count you among the many blessings of my professional life! You make all the hours and all the sacrifice worth it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being so abundantly generous with your Time-Talent-and-Treasure. It was surely noticed!

Please enjoy these fleeting days of 2017, and the family memories of the upcoming holidays! Maybe you have a story to share? Where someone in particular was generous with their Time-Talent-or-Treasure, and it made all the difference? Please drop me a line, I'd love to hear from you!

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## NOTABLE NEWS

### Medical boarding available locally at IronHorse VetCare

Short- and long-term boarding options for patients needing nursing care or procedural care while pet owners are out of town or temporarily unable to administer medications or perform the requirements necessary for post-operative care is available at IronHorse VetCare. Services include:

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- Complex wound care: VAC, dressing changes, transportation for Hyperbaric O<sub>2</sub>
- Post-operative: orthopedic restriction, sedatives, leashed and chaperoned during exercise restriction, cage-less confinement available
- Seizure watch: medication administration
- 24/7/365 environment with trained professionals and paraprofessional staff available at all times
- Pick-up and drop-off 24 hours a day
- Tier-level pricing – based on care necessary
- Pricing advantages for patients under our direct medical/surgical care
- Separate area available for medical boarding from hospitalized patients

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## Featured Medical Case

# Artificial Urethral Sphincters

By Andrew Grange BSc BVetMed Diplomate ACVS



I was recently asked by an ER doctor to evaluate Akamaru, an 8 year old male neutered Rhodesian Ridgeback that presented to me with a 7-8 year history of urinary incontinence. He had undergone a full work-up (including urine pressure profilometry and urethroscopy/cystoscopy) for the urinary incontinence at a Veterinary Referral Hospital when he was 1-2 years old. No inciting cause for the incontinence was identified and

it was assumed that he suffered from urethral sphincter mechanism incompetence (USMI). Akamaru was started on medical management (phenylpropanolamine) but this unfortunately did not provide any improvement in his leaking. His owner had recently taken him to the ER for treatment of a urinary tract infection, and Akamaru was referred to me to discuss advances in treatment of urinary incontinence and to see if anything could be done for Akamaru. When Akamaru presented to me he appeared to be in otherwise good health aside from some urine scalding on his ventral abdomen secondary to urine contact from the diaper he had been wearing for several years.

We discussed traditional options for Akamaru including cystopexy/urethropexy, or ductus deferenspexy. But neither produces consistently successful results, and both carry a high risk of post-op stranguria/dysuria.

There have, however, been numerous advances in the treatment of both upper and lower urinary tract issues in the past few years. Akamaru was a good candidate for sub-mucosal collagen injections of the urethra to provide bulk and resistance to the flow of urine. This was actually recommended by his doctor at his original USMI diagnosis but the owner declined to proceed with this option due to the only temporary relief of incontinence that it provides (12-18 months) and the need for ongoing treatments, which was not ideal in such a young dog.

An alternative option that has since become available is that of implantation of an Artificial Urethral Sphincter (AUS). This device is composed of an inflatable silicon cuff that is placed around the proximal urethra (see figure 1). The cuff is then connected to a port that is placed in the subcutaneous tissues of the abdominal flank, sutured to the body wall, and



Figure 1

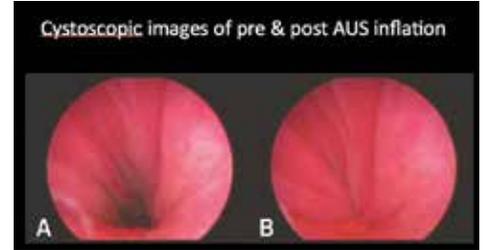


Figure 2

contains a diaphragm through which saline can be injected transcutaneously to inflate or deflate the cuff. As the cuff is inflated, it provides compression of the urethra and increased urethral resistance to flow of urine providing continence (see figure 2).

Akamaru's owner opted to proceed with surgery for implantation of an AUS. The procedure went smoothly and the cuff was left uninflated at the time of surgery (this is intentional to allow revascularization of the proximal urethra post-op). The soonest we consider inflating the cuff is at 6 weeks post-op. Akamaru maintained continence that first night post-op for the first time in 7 years, and was able to urinate normally the next day. His owner was delighted. He went on to make a full recovery from the procedure. Akamaru maintained urinary continence for 9 months without any issues. At that time he then developed some mild urinary incontinence mostly after laying/resting. A small volume of saline was infused into the implant to inflate the cuff, and he is now continent again without the need for ongoing medical therapy.

In a recent study of 18 dogs undergoing this procedure, 92% achieved continence, and we are very pleased to be able to offer this exciting new option to our patients with urinary incontinence refractory to medical management.

If you would like further information regarding this treatment option please do not hesitate to contact me at [agrange@vscdsurgerycenters.com](mailto:agrange@vscdsurgerycenters.com) or 510-548-6684.

[agrange@vscdsurgerycenters.com](mailto:agrange@vscdsurgerycenters.com)

## THE SURGEONS OF VSC



John J.  
Haburjak

Andrew M.  
Grange

# 2017 ACVS Surgery Summit

## Technician Continuing Education

The American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS) Surgery Summit features seminars focused on all areas of patient care from diagnosis, pain management, and anesthesia to surgery, postoperative care, and rehabilitation. The entire practice team can gain invaluable skills and earn exceptional continuing education. The ACVS defines the standards of surgical excellence for the profession, promotes advancements in veterinary surgery and surgical educational programs.

VSC is proud to have sponsored three members of our surgical technician team to travel and attend this year's event. It was inspiring for all of us to see the excitement from Donnetta, Trish (both from our Berkeley practice at PETS Referral Center), and Denise (from our Dublin practice IronHorse VetCare) to head across country to Indianapolis this October for the great opportunity

to develop and grow as surgery technicians. And we are of course equally pleased to have them return to enhance the hospitals with their new knowledge and skills.

The array of subjects they took classes or attended lab for includes NSAIDs, companion animal analgesics, managing airway patients, medication education/compliance, nutritional management for patients with osteoarthritis, surgical toxicological emergencies, craniocervical junction foreign body causing peracute tetraparesis in young dogs, total knee replacement revision with lingering infection, career building and avoiding fatigue, minimally invasive fracture repair, efficiency in the OR, brachycephalic syndrome, perioperative and anesthetic management of adrenalectomies, and surgical management of urethral obstructions.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### Meet our intrepid surgical nurses

#### DONNETTA



Donnetta has always had a strong affinity for animals. Some of her most cherished memories growing up are with her German Shepherd "Daisy" and Orange Tabby "Kizzy," as well as the many small and large pets that have been part of the family throughout the years.

Donnetta was born and raised in San Francisco and now resides in San Leandro with her three fun loving kids

and a two year old Lhaso Apsa she and her family rescued seven months ago. In her spare time, she loves outdoor activities, music, and being around her family.

Donnetta has an Associate of Science in Veterinary Technology and had worked in General Practice for 11yrs prior to joining the VSCB team in March of 2016. Donnetta is enjoying the opportunity to expand her horizons by branching off into specialty surgery.

#### TRISH



pursue a career that she truly loved. Veterinary medicine was a perfect fit, as she grew up riding horses in the North Bay, and has a 35 year old mare name Cricket, who Trish has had since she was 10 years old. Trish initially thought she would end up in large animal medicine, but small animal medicine stole her heart while she was in tech school. She graduated from Western Career College, Pleasant Hill, CA in 2009, feeling inspired by the science, compassion and critical thinking of veterinary medicine.

Trish and her husband share their home with their two canine "fur children." Charlotte, is a seven year old rescue from San Francisco Animal Care & Control, and has been in the family since three months old. Lilikoi or "Lee Lee" for short is the couples "honeymoon pup," as they adopted her after taking a field trip to the humane society in Kauai during their honeymoon.

#### DENISE



Very early on in her life Denise knew that she had a special place in her heart for animals. In the beginning of her career she was able to work with a wide variety of animals, her favorites being reptiles, pocket pets and goats. Later on surgery became a huge part of her interest. Now being at a Specialty practice her love for surgery has blossomed.

In her free time she loves spending time with her dachshund Ruby, going to music festivals/concerts and playing video games.



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This newsletter is dedicated to Ethan Andrew Grange, the most recent addition to the family of one of VSC's partners and staff surgeon. Dr. Andrew Grange

and his wife Alison. Ethan is the couples' second child, and first son. Ethan was born at 11:24pm on December 4, 2016, weighing 8lbs 9oz. All of us at Veterinary Surgical Centers couldn't be happier for their growing family and wish Ethan and his parents a long life full of happiness, health, and service to those causes they find worthy.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### *More about the talented surgeons of VSC*

#### **Dr. Andrew Grange, BSc (Hons), BVetMed, DACVS**

Congratulations are in order as this year Dr. Grange has become a partner of VSC! We are extremely excited to continue to build the practice with Dr. Grange, now and in the future!

Dr. Grange is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. He attended University College London where he received his bachelor's degree in orthopedic science in 2005. He then graduated in 2008 from the Royal Veterinary College in London with a degree in veterinary medicine. Following graduation he completed a rotating internship at VCA Emergency Animal Hospital and Referral Center in San Diego, and a residency in small animal surgery at Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston, MA.

His professional interests include the application of minimally invasive surgical techniques (laparoscopy, thoracoscopy and arthroscopy) in the management of soft tissue and orthopedic disease, and the surgical treatment of cruciate disease, fractures and angular limb deformity.

Dr. Grange's personal interests include skiing, cycling, ice hockey, rowing, and spending time with his wife, Allison (also a veterinarian), their daughter Amelia and son Ethan, as well as with their dog Abby and three cats: Twiglet, Piglet, and Blackjack.

#### **Dr. John Haburjak, DVM, DACVS**

Dr. Haburjak graduated from UC Davis Veterinary School in 1993 with his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Degree. He practiced for 5 years before returning to academics to complete a combined surgical residency program in San Diego and the University of Illinois.

Dr. Haburjak is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and his research interests include orthopedic trauma and disorders of the carpus. He has several publications in the Veterinary Orthopedic and Traumatology Journal, Journal of Small Animal Practice and the Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association. His clinical surgical interests include surgical oncologic procedures of the face, head and neck, corrective orthopedic procedures and neurosurgery (spinal). Finally, he has dedicated most of his post-graduate emphasis to minimally invasive procedures including: laparoscopy, thoracoscopy and interventional radiology (urethral and tracheal stenting).

Dr. Haburjak's hobbies include SCUBA diving, Oakland A's baseball, road cycling and cooking (not to mention eating, too!). He shares his life with his wife, Aimee (also a veterinarian), daughters Eva and Emery, sons Ian and Isaac, Addison (bubble-headed Japanese spaniel), Poppy (Cavalier King Charles Spaniel with a freckled nose!) and S'mores, the mini-Lop.