

Newsletter

Opening Day at our Dublin Facility Has Finally Arrived!

It was with great pleasure, considerable anticipation, and the joy and satisfaction only achieved toward the end of a challenging journey, that we finally opened the doors to our new Dublin hospital on August 18th, 2008! That evening also brought the grand opening of the newly formed Tri-Valley Animal Emergency Center.

The surgical services that Jeff (26 years) and Dwight (21 years) provided to the Tri-Valley veterinary community were significantly enhanced with the formation of VSA 16 years ago. Those services were enhanced with the formation of Veterinary Medical Specialists in 2002 (San Mateo), 2004 (Concord), and in 2006 (Campbell). And now, our long held plans of opening a Tri-Valley specialty hospital have come to fruition. Our new facility was created to provide both optimal support of our long term relationships with so many of the referring veterinarians within the Tri-Valley community and to foster opportunities to develop new relationships.

Our new hospital, located at 7111 and 7121 Amador Plaza Road in Dublin, has 16,000 square feet of beautifully designed space and was created with one thing in mind - providing the best environment to care for patients and clients. VSA surgeons Tim Sellmeyer and Chuck Walls will be the primary surgeons working out of Dublin; Chuck will maintain a Concord schedule as well. VMS Dublin is supported by internists Jen Clooten and Kris Bruskiwicz (Kris will also be available in Concord weekly) and oncologist Wendi Rankin.

We have always been fortunate to work collaboratively with existing emergency clinics, creating symbiotic relationships that have benefited everyone involved. In Dublin, we, together with long time resident and experienced emergency clinician Bob Lukas, are excited to open Tri-Valley Animal Emergency Center (TVAEC). VSA and VMS will provide supportive roles to TVAEC, including emergency availability and, when the referring veterinarian desires, the direct transfer of cases requiring continued specialty care. Together with Bob, we are thrilled to be joined by April LeBlanc (with 14 years of emergency practice experience here in the Bay area) and the Tri-Valley's own Erin Nohava (who has worked regionally for the last 8 years). Along with these doctors, respected for both their clinical skills and their prioritization of communication, we have brought together an amazing nursing staff - the heart of any veterinary practice.

We ask you to mark your calendar for the evening of September 27th. We will be having a public Open House earlier that day from 10-3:00. That evening, we invite referring veterinarians and their staff to celebrate our opening. Formal invitations and further information will be provided in a few weeks. There will be great food, libations, gifts, prizes and guaranteed good memories. We hope to see you there!



SERVICES

General Surgery
Oncology
Reconstruction
Laparoscopy/thoracoscopy
Portosystemic shunts
Ureteral/urethral surgery
PDA/PRAA

Orthopedic
TPLO
TPO
DARthroplasty
Total hip replacement
Arthroscopy

Neurologic
Hemilaminectomy for IVDD
Spinal tumors
Vertebral stabilization
LS fusion/decompression

Other Services
Digital Radiology
Computed Tomography
Emergency Surgical Services
24 Hour Care Facilities
Mobile Surgery Availability

LOCATIONS

Concord
1410 Monument Blvd.
Suite 100
Concord, CA 94520
Tel 925.827.1777
Fax 925.827.2364

San Mateo
251 N. Amphlett Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94401
Tel 650.696.8196
Fax 650.696.8191

Campbell
907 Dell Ave.
Campbell, CA 95008
Tel 408.364.1777
Fax 408.385.3677

Dublin
7121 Amador Plaza Rd.
Dublin, CA 94568
Tel 925.771.2015
Fax 925.771.2016

Address
Correction
Requested

Veterinary Surgical Associates
VSA

- Dwight Gaudet, DVM, MA
- Sharon Ullman, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVS
- Lissa Richardson, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Charles Walls, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Julie Smith, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Leigh Glerum, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Andrew Staatz, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Martin Aitken, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- Sharon Gottfried, VMD, Diplomate ACVS
- Timothy W.H. Sellmeyer, DVM, Diplomate ACVS
- William Scherrer, DVM, Staff Surgeon
- William Banz, DVM, Staff Surgeon
- Angela Spann, DVM, Surgical Resident
- Sean Wells, DVM, Surgical Resident
- Marco Cervi, DVM, Surgical Resident
- Cassandra Ruthrauff, DVM, Surgical Resident
- Josie Mallinckrodt, DVM, Surgical Resident
- Michael Green, DVM, Surgical Resident

Dedicated to the art of surgery for the benefit of you, your client and your patients.



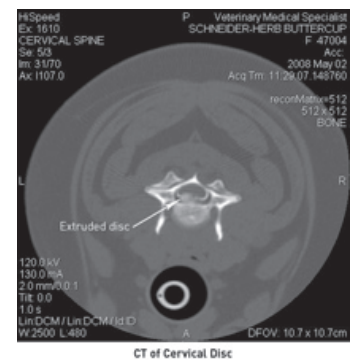
Cervical Myelopathy and Thoracic Limb Lameness; The Nerve Root Signature

Timothy W.H. Sellmeyer, DVM, DACVS
VSA Dublin



Pathological irritation of a thoracic limb's nerve roots results in pain and lameness of that limb. About 50% of cervical myelopathies have a nerve root signature sign. This lameness is usually the presenting complaint by the client. The differentiation between an orthopedic lameness and a neurological lameness can be challenging.

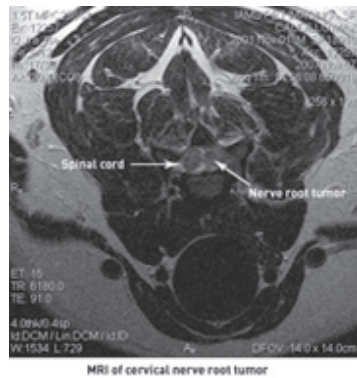
A complete historical account of the lameness is necessary, including the duration, onset,



progression, previous treatment and response, and any past trauma. Observing the animal gait both in a straight line and circling to each side is important to observe any pelvic limb ataxia as well as to fully characterize the forelimb lameness. Then, complete physical, orthopedic,

and neurological examinations are essential to differentiate a neurological etiology from an orthopedic one. After performing a complete physical examination with the patient standing, conscious proprioceptive deficits can be assessed. Often, CP deficits can be seen in the pelvic limbs with a cervical myelopathy. Observing a CP deficit in the thoracic limb that is lame strengthens the suspicion of a neurologic problem, as orthopedic disease rarely causes a reluctance to place the paw appropriately. Next, it is important to palpate for spinal hyperesthesia. Beginning caudally, the spine is palpated for pain directly. Compressing the neck laterally often results in vocalization. Maximal range of motion of the neck is performed to confirm cervical spinal hyperesthesia. Movement of the head toward the side of the lameness usually results in the most severe pain and is reserved for the last movement of the neck.

The neurological and orthopedic examinations then continue with the patient in lateral recumbency. If CP deficits were observed in the pelvic limbs, reflexes are expected to be increased (upper motor neuron sign) with cervical myelopathy. All joints should be palpated to assess range of motion and any ligamentous laxity. The final aspect of the examination should be careful palpation of the limb exhibiting lameness. Again, each joint of the limb should be palpated for range of motion and any ligamentous laxity. Long bones should be palpated for pain. Myotatic and withdrawal reflexes should be assessed. In patients that have a severe lameness due to nerve root compression, pain induced by manipulation of the joints can be unremarkable, especially given the severity of the lameness observed. Alternatively, severe pain may be elicited in most phases (i.e. - joint manipulations, long bone palpation, and muscle palpation) of the orthopedic examination, suggesting that there is nerve root involvement.



Once physical examination suggests a nerve root signature sign as the cause of the lameness, advanced imaging of the cervical spinal cord is necessary to determine the cause of the clinical lameness. This can either be accomplished with a cervical myelogram and CT, or MRI. A cervical myelogram is a good diagnostic tool for identifying a compressive lesion, especially in those patients in which a disc herniation is likely (i.e. Beagles, Pekinese, Basset Hounds, Pomeranians, Dachshunds). A CT can be used with the myelogram to further characterize the lesion. VSA has helical CT scanners in each of its facilities. Alternatively, an MRI has the sensitivity of identifying compressive lesions as well as cord edema, syringomyelia, and tumors of the spinal cord or nerve roots. This is an excellent diagnostic tool to use when there is concern for an etiology other than a disc herniation. We utilize the services of the IAMS Imaging Center in Redwood City to obtain MRIs of our patients. The digital MRI images are directly transferred to each VSA hospital and a board certified radiologist is available for immediate report if need-

ed. This allows for a rapid diagnosis and immediate institution of therapy whether it is medical or surgical.

A thoracic limb nerve root signature sign can be a diagnostic challenge. A complete history along with a complete physical exam, orthopedic exam, and neurological exam will help to diagnose that the lameness is due to nerve root involvement. Once that is confirmed, advanced imaging is necessary to definitively identify the problem.

Jeff Todoroff Puts Down the Scalpel and Retires from VSA

One of the co-founding partners of VSA, Jeff Todoroff, retired as of July 1, 2008 after an incredible career serving both animals and their companions. His contributions to veterinary surgery reached not only the clients of VSA but many others, as he was generous in sharing his knowledge and love of surgery with colleagues via formal and informal consultation, informative and timely lectures, and his involvement in professional organizations. Jeff received his veterinary medicine degree from UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 1974. He completed his internship at the University of Pennsylvania and a residency in surgery at the University of Pennsylvania and at the Angell Memorial Animal Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. Jeff has been a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons since 1980, and he practiced in the Concord area since 1982.

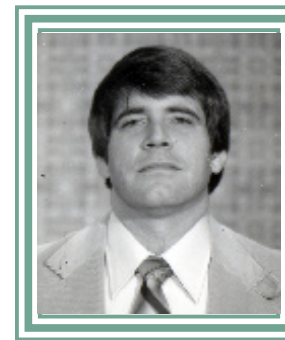
Jeff was one of the pioneers of specialty veterinary medicine in private practice. In 1991, he was asked to lecture at the ACVS symposium on the then "cutting edge" subject of surgeons that had chosen private practice rather than the traditional hallowed halls of academics. Synchronistically, Dr. Dwight Gaudet was sitting in that audience and had already begun developing some innovative concepts regarding how private specialty practice could be offered and have everyone involved benefit through this new approach. Dwight and Jeff began weekly breakfast meetings, and they continued those meetings for the next 6 months. They like to say that, during those meetings they "dreamt" Veterinary Surgical Associates into existence. VSA was formed on July 1, 1992 and Jeff practiced within our Concord hospital ever since. In 1999, VSA moved out of its location within the Contra

Costa Veterinary Emergency Clinic (CCVEC) and into its own facility just across the parking lot. Since that time VSA, together with VMS and now TVAEC, has expanded to 4 locations, totaling over 50,000 square feet of veterinary hospital space. Throughout it all, Jeff remained dedicated to serving not just the clinicians of CCVEC, but all referring doctors that reached out to him for help with surgical cases. His many contributions to the VSA organization made a real difference that will long outlast his active role, and those contributions will be missed.

Jeff authored numerous peer reviewed papers and book chapters over the years. He is known for work in areas as diverse as shoulder and elbow injuries to GDV and congenital urogenital disease. Jeff performed approximately 15,000 surgeries over the years, saving many lives and consistently contributing to patients' well-being while fostering the special relationship we have with companion animals. His surgical expertise is widely recognized, both regionally and throughout the veterinary surgical community. Beyond such deserved recognition, Jeff will be most remembered for the compassion with which he practiced his surgical art. Jeff was an embodiment of the *Mission Statement* of VSA & VMS:

To significantly and continually improve the quality of veterinary medicine offered in the San Francisco Bay Area, through the integration of Science, Compassion, and Integrity.

Jeff, the doctors and entire staff of VSA and VMS will miss you; the referring veterinary community will miss you; and most importantly, the pets and their human companions of Contra Costa County will miss you. Safe journeys.



Jeff Then - 1980



Jeff Now - 2008