

Business Spotlight

Veterinary Specialty Center a one stop shop for complicated pet problems

By Michelle Gisi • Reporter

These days, pet owners are taking greater care of their animals, insisting upon specialized diets, exercise plans and top-notch health care.

In fact, health treatments and surgeries formerly reserved for humans are now available to pets. This means your dog can get ACL surgery, just like professional athletes, or receive cancer treatment.

Though a family veterinarian handles most of a pet's needs, sometimes a specialist is needed. That's where Veterinary Specialty comes in.

The referral hospital, located at 5746 N. Academy Blvd., currently focuses on internal medicine and surgery. Come mid-March, Veterinary Specialty Center will move to a larger location at 5520 N. Nevada Ave.

The new, 17,000-square-foot specialty hospital and emergency clinic (that's huge compared to its current location) will



Dr. Bauer analyzing a patient

feature separate areas for emergencies, surgery, internal medicine, pain management and dentistry. The location was chosen for its neutral location and proximity to I-25, since many clients come from other cities or out of state.

The new practice will be owned by the current center's proprietors, board certified veterinary doctors Michael Bauer- surgery and Chris McReynolds

- internal medicine, along with James Gaynor, who is board certified in anesthesiology and pain management. Dr. Gaynor owns two

Animal Emergency Care Centers, in the south end of town on Airport Road and in the north on Academy Boulevard. The Academy location will close and move into the new hospital, where Dr. Gaynor will also have an office for pain management and physical rehabilitation.

The goal of the new center is to have one place where a group of veterinary specialists can pool their expertise to provide comprehensive health care. "We're not trying to be in competition with veterinarians. We just want to make sure the patient gets what's right," said Dr. McReynolds. "Think of it like this, if you've got a cough, you go to a general practitioner. If your cough doesn't go away, you'll go to a specialist. It's the same for animals."

Dr. McReynolds explained that if he can help a dog with cancer live longer because of his field of expertise, the pet and its' family will benefit.

Dr. McReynolds received his DVM degree from Oklahoma State University. After he finished an internship and residency in internal medicine at Colorado State University, he came back in 1999 to Colorado Springs to open an internal medicine practice. His practice focuses on internal medicine, including treatment for diabetes, cancer, immune diseases and more.

"We treat the sickest of the sick," he said.

Besides having the latest technology and equipment to diagnose and treat pets, Dr. McReynolds' office offers 24-hour critical care support. That means your pet will have a skilled nursing staff and doctors to keep an eye on them around the clock after a surgery or treatment. His team includes board-certified doctors Karin Cannizzo, whose interests are endocrinology and urology, and Brad L. Hines, who focuses on cardiology and gastro intestinal diseases.

The point Dr. McReynolds wants to get across is that pet owners must have and maintain a solid relationship with their family veterinarian, even if that vet refers the animal to Veterinary Specialty Center.

8 "It's a win-win situation if we use that approach," he said. "So we usually go off of referrals because we want the pet's main veterinarian involved."



5520 N. Nevada Ave, their new location

What makes a specialist different from a family veterinarian is that they focus on an area of expertise and get additional schooling. Specialists complete three to four years of advanced training after graduating from veterinary school. In many of the cases specialists see, a general practitioner might only see one of those a year while the specialist deals with several each week or month.

"I am on a mission to let the public know what their options are and what a specialist is," said Dr. Bauer.

Dr. Bauer attended 13 years of veterinary school and taught small animal surgery at Colorado State and Purdue universities for 10 years before establishing his own practice in Colorado Springs. He's performed as many or more ACL repairs and total hip replacements as anyone in the Rocky Mountain region has.

Dr. Bauer has wanted to be a veterinarian since he was five years old, when he tried to "fix" injured turtles and

other animals.

"I sincerely love animals. I am the epitome of the animal-loving guy," he said.

In many cases, the dog can go home a few hours after surgery – a practice Dr. Bauer supports.

"We are very dog-lover oriented," said Dr. Bauer, who owns Sweet Pea, a black Labrador, and Bella, a Maltese. "I know people want their pet back at home with them and I think dogs do better back at home."

At the end of the day, that's just what the goal is at Veterinary Specialty Center – to relieve a pet's pain and get them back with their loving family.



Dr. McReynolds and a friend



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