

SUMMER 2011

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FOR *Pets* SAKE

4224 WAIALAE AVE
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816
PHONE: 808/734-2242
www.alohaanimal.com

A NEWSLETTER OF ALOHA ANIMAL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATES

WE WERE SKEPTICS TOO BUT NOW WE'RE BELIEVERS IN CHIROPRACTIC CARE FOR PETS



At the end of 2010, AAHA test-piloted a complementary medical treatment: chiropractic adjustments for pets. Although largely accepted for humans, chiropractic care for pets remains uncharted territory. AAHA owner, Dr. Douglas Chang, reached out to one of Hawaii's most respected Chiropractors, Dr. Bryan Luke of Luke Chiropractic and Sports Injury, and challenged him to work on three dogs. Dr. Chang stood back and closely monitored the results. One of the dogs in the trial belonged to Dr. Chang. His 16-year old Papillon, Tia, had degenerative vertebral disk disease, slipped disks and a pinched nerve. She walked with a hunch and had difficulty climbing stairs.

"I had been treating her with Metacam (an anti-inflammatory medication) and feeding her a special diet of Hill's J/D," said Dr. Chang, noting that Hill's J/D contains a nutritional supplement that

helps with arthritis. "I was skeptical of chiropractic treatment at first," he continued, "but after four or five sessions, Tia was able to climb the stairs much better. Her hunch diminished and – most importantly – she appeared to be in less discomfort. While she was not perfect, there was significant, noticeable improvement," he said.

Since Dr. Luke has been visiting AAHA, the staff is learning more about this new area. "Virtually any nervous system function can be treated with chiropractic care," says Dr. Luke. "The most common problems we see are arthritis, back pain, neck pain (or stiffness), leg pain, gait problems, immune system problems, and thyroid or adrenal conditions."

"Chiropractic care improves the nervous system function," says Dr. Luke. "That, in itself, can improve the body's entire functionality." Dr. Luke explains that each vertebra has a direct influence on nerves, which in effect, control specific parts of the body. Chiropractic adjustments improve neurology, which in turn improve the body.

"When I tell people I'm a chiropractor, many people think I'm a 'back doctor.' In reality, I'm

a nervous system doctor. The body is a self-healing mechanism, and chiropractic care simply helps that mechanism to function more efficiently. Chiropractic care, whether on humans or dogs or any other living creature, all works the same," he says.

"That made me a believer, and that's when I made Dr. Bryan Luke a regular addition to AAHA."

"When the nervous system is compromised by subluxation (bone impingement), the muscles, organs, and systems of the body do not function at their best. The body becomes sick or diseased. Hence, function of the body slows and all types of health conditions present themselves. Pain happens to be one of the most common conditions that responds most quickly to chiropractic care."

A BIT ABOUT DR. LUKE

When you meet Dr. Bryan Luke, you'd hardly know that he was once severely injured. Today he is the picture of health. When Dr. Bryan Luke was only 17 years old, he injured his back. His parents took him to the doctor in what would be the beginning of months of treatments. He was prescribed painkillers and physical therapy. "I was on so much pain medicine, I started feeling like a walking drug addict," he says. "For over a year, I was going to physical therapy, but the exercises and stretches only seemed to make things worse." Eventually, the doctors said he needed surgery.

"I did not want to be cut open," he says. "That's when I tried chiropractic care, sort of a last resort." After a few adjustments, Dr. Luke's back began to heal. Within a very short time, his pain was gone, his body healed naturally, and he avoided surgery.

That's when Dr. Luke realized he had just stumbled upon his life's work – chiropractic medicine. A chiropractor for the past 24 years, Dr. Luke owns and operates Luke Chiropractic and Sports Injury. What got him interested in working with animals? "Some of my clients asked if I could help their pets. I tried working on my dad's dog as a start. The treatments worked just as well as they do for humans, so I was open to the idea of working with pets when

Dr. Chang suggested it. I love pets and was ready to work with Dr. Chang and his team, knowing firsthand how effective chiropractic care can be."

Dr. Luke's approach? It's not "just" doing adjustments; instead, Dr. Luke takes a "whole body" approach. He emphasizes daily exercise and a good diet. He also encourages chiropractic treatments when a person (or pet) is sick, to help the body heal itself naturally.



Watch Dr. Luke as he works on dogs at AAHA.
Go to www.alohaanimal.com/services/Chiropractor

DR. BRYAN LUKE AT A GLANCE



- Launched his Chiropractic Business (for humans): 1987
- Joined AAHA: 2011
- **Schooling:**
 - University of Hawaii: 1983-84, Pre-Medical Courses,
 - Palmer College of Chiropractic West: 1987
 - Doctors Degree of Chiropractic, Los Angeles

- College of Chiropractic: 1988 Post-Graduate Sports Injuries & Treatment of Shoulders, Elbows, Wrist & Hand
- Los Angeles College of Chiropractic: 1989 Post-Graduate Bio-Mechanic of Spinal Trauma
- Los Angeles College of Chiropractic: 1990 Post-Graduate Sports Injuries & Treatment of Hips, Knee, Ankles & Feet
- Parker College of Chiropractic: 1991-2004 Post-Graduate Sports Injuries & Treatment of Shoulders, Elbows, Wrist, Hand, Hips, Knee, Ankles & Feet

- Parker College of Chiropractic: 1996-2004 Post-Graduate Spinal Bio-Physic & Mechanic
- Los Angeles College of Chiropractic: 1991-1995 Post-Graduate Whiplash & Spinal Trauma
- **Hobbies:**
 - Photography
 - Going to church
 - Staying physically fit
 - He also started painting recently



EYE ON HEALTH: DOES YOUR PET SEE 20/20?

As pet owners, we sometimes have to be detectives. Pets can't tell us when something is wrong – like when they have a toothache or an upset stomach. Instead, they just have to live with the situation, until we notice. Spotting eye problems is especially tough, even for vigilant pet owners. Why? Most pets will simply adjust to minor impairments without showing symptoms. It's only when blindness begins to emerge that vision problems become obvious.

Dr. Douglas K.Y. Chang advises pet owners to take notice of the early warning signs of eye problems such as squinting, pawing at the eyes, excessive tears and/or excessive eye discharge. "We take eye conditions seriously," he says. "As part of our normal physical exams, we use special instruments to look into the eyes and measure pressure. If we discover a problem, we intervene quickly because we never want your cat or dog to go blind, especially when it's preventable."

Dr. Chang groups the most common eye conditions below:

Common Eye Conditions

- Eye infections
- Eye trauma
- Congenital conditions (such as closed tear ducts)
- Deformities (such as eyelids turned inside out)
- Tearing problems (too many or too few)

Eye infections are caused by bacteria and can be picked up when your pet goes outside or has contact with other animals. They can even be caused by certain respiratory diseases that affect the eyes such as distemper (for dogs) or herpes, calici and distemper for cats. One of the most common ways dogs get eye infections (and eye trauma) is by riding in the car with their heads out of the window. We all know how much dogs love doing this, but please be aware of the danger. (small objects hitting their eyes at high speeds?)

Eye trauma occurs when the eye has been hit or scratched, resulting in an abrasion. These are urgent matters and should be checked as soon as possible. Congenital conditions occur most often in breeds with "big eyes," such as Pugs, Lhasa Apsos, and Chihuahuas. These breeds tend to have difficulty with proper tearing and drainage.

Uncommon Conditions

- Glaucoma (decrease in eye pressure)
- Uveitis (increase in eye pressure)
- Cataracts
- Retinal diseases (which can be inherited or caused by conditions such as diabetes)

It's important that eye disease is properly diagnosed, because some vision loss is a normal part of aging – just as it is for humans. "There is a condition called nuclear sclerosis which is often confused with cataracts," Dr. Chang says. "This is not a disease, but part of the aging process."

If you think your pet may have eye disease or trauma, get them checked right away to preserve their vision, said Dr. Chang. "We want your pet to see the people they love."



Did you know that Aloha Animal Hospital Associates cares for all types of animals? This includes rabbits, exotics, lizards, chickens, even our State Bird the Nene Goose. Here, AAHA Vet Techs administer medicine to a Nene Goose who got hurt defending his mate.

MEET THE AAHA TEAM



JOY

You notice a missed call on your phone and listen to your voicemail. A wonderfully pleasant voice says, "This is Joy. I'm calling from Aloha Animal Hospital to remind you about your appointment tomorrow." Joy may do a lot of talking on the phone, but she prefers to be the one listening. When we asked her to share her most interesting trait, she was sincerely stumped. She sat quietly and eventually sighed. "I'm pretty boring," she said.

Not so if you ask her 10-year-old son who spends more time with her than anyone. Why? Joy is not a mother who watches things happen from the sidelines – she joins in. She may be quiet, but she loves to play basketball and baseball with her son. This "cool" mom even plays video games with him, but when he's doing homework or asleep for the night, Joy will have her nose in a book – mostly fiction or mysteries. "We go to the library once a week," she said, noting that she reads an average of two – three books per week. "My record is five books in seven days." A true animal lover, Joy has two adopted cats; Bandit (6) and Tigger (8). "I would love to have a dog, but we don't have enough space," she said. "Instead, I share stories about the pets I see with my son. He's always asking, 'did you get any new animals today?'" Joy says her son especially likes to hear about AAHA's exotic pets such as penguins, turtles, birds, rabbits or geese. "Of course, he loves stories about the kittens and puppies too."

Joy came to AAHA in 2009 with a background in healthcare. "There is a lot of crossover between human healthcare and veterinary medicine, and that has helped me better understand the needs of our animal patients," she said, motioning to the hundreds of medical charts that line the shelves. Excellence in patient care and customer service is a

job she takes very seriously. "People are putting their pets' lives into our hands," she said. "We owe it to them to pay attention to every detail." Joy loves working in the team atmosphere at AAHA and is motivated by the company's enthusiasm. "This job inspires me because I see how dedicated the doctors and vet techs are. On a day-to-day basis, I watch them going above and beyond for our patients. They really personalize their work and are committed to what they do. I know this approach works because I personally see the pets going home feeling much better than when they came in. That makes me very proud to be a part of our team."

A professional multi-tasker, Joy may greet you and process your payment while she has the telephone to her ear. She spends about half of her time on the telephone, taking and making calls. The remainder of her day is spent greeting clients, triaging care and managing all of the patient files. In every task, though, Joy is doing more listening than talking – and giving her very best to pets of Aloha Animal Hospital.



AMANDA

Each day when Amanda comes home from her job at AAHA, she is greeted at the door by four very happy – and curious – pets. Her two dogs and two cats immediately begin sniffing her clothes and shoes. "It's like they're gathering evidence," she

laughs. "They smell all the other pets on me and think I've been out betraying them." To make amends, Amanda typically loads her dogs into her car and takes them on a long hike. "When we come home, we're all exhausted and happy," she said. It's then that Amanda tends to three other pets – she also has aquatic turtles, bringing her total pet count to seven.

Amanda has a full house, but the arrangement is working well. Her two dogs – a pit bull and retriever

– live peacefully with her two tabby cats, one of which Amanda adopted from Hilo when she volunteered for the Keauau Humane Society. She was a foster kitten when Amanda first saw her – only two days old. "After taking care of her, there was no way I could let her go." Today, they play as much with the dogs as they do with each other.

A Kamehameha Schools graduate, Amanda attended the University of Hawaii at Hilo and majored in Agriculture. She graduated in May of 2010, but spent her last semester on Oahu with her family, completing her courses through the school's Distance Learning program. She spends as much time as possible with her family, which includes her pets. "They're my babies," she said. "That's what helps me relate so well with our clients. I know how much they love their pets."

Starting with AAHA as a lab technician, Amanda spent her days preparing samples to be sent to labs or analyzing them in the clinic and administering medications. "I love the independence of this job," she said. "The doctors are always teaching us about the different situations we see. They give us a lot of responsibility – and sometimes test us to see if we can accurately predict what kind of outcome to expect."

Amanda is cross-trained for a number of duties around AAHA and is now assisting in what AAHA calls their Out-Patient Treatment area. "Things can get very busy here with three different vets," she said. "We all have to be quick on our toes, especially when we get an emergency patient. We have to be ready to pitch in and help in a number of areas. If a pet needs our full attention, we all pull together to help that pet."

This teamwork has been one of the most rewarding parts of the job for Amanda. "Sometimes things can get pretty crazy with a lot going on," she said. "We will work very hard, but it's not the kind of work that drains me. Instead, it energizes me because we're all working for the same cause – and it's a very good cause."



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KING OF THE HOSPITAL PART 1

This is the first of two stories about King, a very special therapy dog.

It's a site you'd hardly expect as you walk through the halls of Kapiolani Children's Hospital – a black-and-white Siberian Husky with steel blue eyes. What's more, this dog is wearing a hospital badge and riding along on an office chair. His paws never touch the floor. Instead, he is pushed through the halls by his owner Matthew Chun, a hospital volunteer. By the look of it, you'd think he's a king – and you wouldn't be wrong.

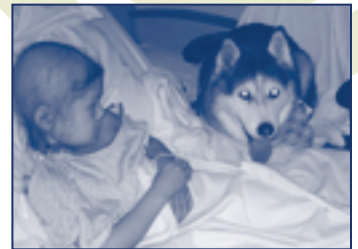
King, one of Aloha Animal Hospital Associates patients, is a 12-year-old therapy dog. He visits Kapiolani Children's Hospital every weekend to give the young patients a happy diversion. His piercing blue eyes and mild, soothing demeanor brings smiles and laughter to the children's bedsides.

"All I do is wheel him up to the bed. King knows what to do from there," says Matt. "Sometimes, he gently rests his head on their laps or gives them a kiss. Sometimes he even crawls into bed and cuddles with them if they want him to." It's obvious from the patients' faces – as well as the hospital staff – that they all look forward to King's rounds. "It's really a tear-jerker sometimes," says Matt.

When King and Matt arrive, they're given a list of patients who have been cleared to have a visit. Then, someone from the hospital staff will escort Matt

and King to the door and check to see if the patient and the patients' family want a visit. Once approval is given, Matt wheels King into the room, and the children's faces light up. Their families immediately brighten. It's the kind of thing you have to see to truly appreciate – and you can if you go to the Aloha Animal Hospital website and watch King in action.

In our next issue, learn why Matt says that he never expected King to be a therapy dog.



Did you know?

Aloha Animal Hospital now uses plastic bags that are made of biodegradable plastic. Just one way to do our part in helping our environment.

Going Green?

If you would like to start receiving our newsletter by e-mail, please write to us at info@alohaanimal.com.

Your pets are part of our family too, and it is an honor to care for them. All of us on staff give our genuine mahalo to you for placing your trust and confidence in our ability to care for your pets. It's a responsibility we take very seriously.

"For Pets Sake" is a quarterly publication of the Aloha Animal Hospital Associates.

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Please submit them to:

Aloha Animal Hospital Associates,
4224 Waiialae Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96816

or call us at 808/734-2242.

www.alohaanimal.com

