

A Taste of Shelter Medicine

Lollypop Farm's Veterinary Clinic Opens Doors for Pets and People

The ability of Lollypop Farm to maintain the health of thousands of animals each year and find homes for as many of them as possible depends on many factors. A modern and clean facility, high-quality Science Diet food, excellent care from staff, and lots of help from volunteers are all important, but also essential to the organization's operation is the excellent veterinary clinic on site.

Many animal shelters aren't able to hire staff veterinarians and must contract with community vets for services, but Lollypop Farm is lucky to employ three full-time vets, as well as five full-time veterinary

technicians and four full- and part-time veterinary assistants. The Clinic staff provides medical and surgical care for the animals who enter the shelter, assists in the prosecution of animal abusers, and offers hands-on experience to veterinary students and interns.

"We're fortunate enough to be able to treat and fix all kinds of problems, from broken bones to tumors to eye problems, bladder stones—we do anything that makes animals pain-free and more adoptable," says Chief Veterinarian Andrew Newmark, DVM, who works alongside Cristina Cadavieco, DVM, and Cathlin Craver, DVM.

The staff also performs health exams on incoming animals, checkups on animals before they go home with adopters, and spay and neuter surgeries. Some of the most common ailments treated in the Clinic are skin problems, digestive issues, and lameness. The veterinarians spend 80 percent of their time sterilizing animals, which allows Lollypop Farm to take the vital step of spaying and neutering each dog, cat, and rabbit before sending them to new homes.

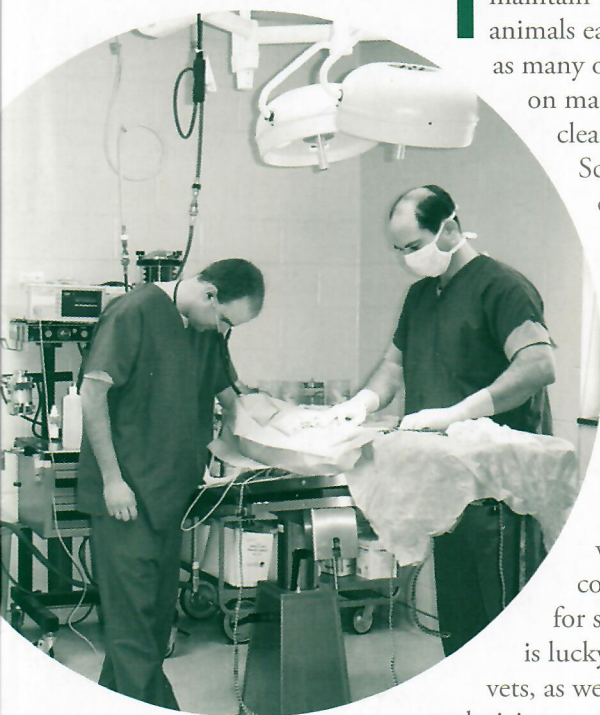
Caring for many different species with a wide assortment of problems keeps the Clinic staff on their toes. Life in the Clinic is "organized chaos," says Newmark. "My staff is working nonstop to accomplish everything we need to do on a daily basis," he says, "but we enjoy it, and I don't think we'd have it any other way. It's certainly a group effort. I wouldn't trade my staff for anyone—they do a great job."

Sharing Expertise

Shelter vets also work to fight the mistreatment of animals; Newmark performs forensic necropsies ("necropsy" means animal autopsy), testifies in court as an expert witness in cruelty cases, and gives seminars to other vets around the country on their role in fighting cruelty to animals.

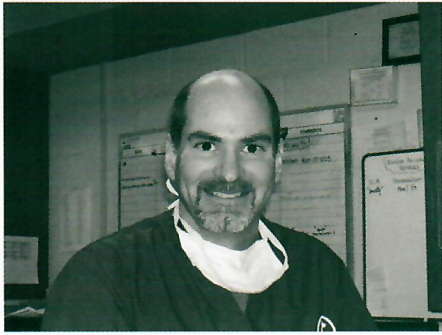
Animals—and their future human families—aren't the only ones who benefit from the efforts of the Clinic staff. Since 2001, Lollypop Farm has offered externships to fourth-year veterinary students enrolled at universities such

“This is why I became a veterinarian—to help the animals no one else would help.”



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Dr. Andrew Newmark, DVM, Lollypop Farm Chief Veterinarian.

as Cornell, Tufts, and Ohio State. So far, more than 70 students have taken advantage of this opportunity. Lollypop Farm also accepts veterinary interns who are completing internships through Monroe Veterinary Associates, a network of 13 area animal hospitals.

The two-week externship placements, which help students fine-tune their surgical and examination skills, allow Clinic staff to provide one-on-one attention and to “preach the gospel” about shelters, says Newmark. Externship students, he says, are “pleasantly surprised at the

level of medicine we practice and the level of care the animals get in the shelter. They leave with a better understanding of problems and obstacles we face.”

If these individuals eventually become vets in private practice, Newmark hopes their Clinic experiences will also be able to help them to be knowledgeable about and support their local shelter. They will be able to make more informed decisions about shelter animals they may treat, he says.

Even better, these talented people may decide to continue working in shelters. The option has become more popular among vet students, says Newmark. The University of California-Davis, Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Florida now offer shelter-medicine programs to their

future vets. The first teaching course in shelter medicine at a college of veterinary medicine began in 1999 at Cornell.

After 13 years in private practice, Newmark himself chose a career as a shelter vet ten years ago when he joined Lollypop Farm. “This,” he says, “is why I became a veterinarian—to help the animals no one else would help.”

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Dr. Cristina Cadavieco, DVM, performs surgery

A Clinic Close-up

Lollypop Farm’s operating room is a busy place: the veterinarians perform an average of 460 spay/neuter surgeries every month! Their vital work helps control pet overpopulation by preventing the births of thousands of animals each year. Although the Clinic is closed to the public, if you visit the shelter during our open hours and take a left turn halfway down our dog-adoption corridor, you can look through a viewing window to get a front-row seat for the surgeries being performed there.

Aye Chihuahua!



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A Shelter-Vet-in-Training

Future vet Christine Garvey spent time in the Lollypop Farm clinic even before becoming a student at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, where she is a member of the Class of 2012.



Christine Garvey

Starting in her freshman year of college, she volunteered at the Clinic, where she helped clean cages and surgical instruments, assisted staff with health exams, and helped prep animals for surgery. The time she spent at Lollypop Farm led her to realize that shelter medicine is a great fit for her, she says. Since then, she has gained experience at other shelters and has joined the Veterinary Society for the Prevention to Animals as a student member.

Garvey is grateful for her time spent at the Clinic. "The knowledge and the skills I have obtained have really helped me both in school and while working in other environments," she says. "I highly recommend this experience to vet students and those considering a career in veterinary medicine." ●

Lending a Hand

The biggest challenge faced by those working in shelter medicine, says Andrew Newmark, DVM, Chief Veterinarian, is dealing with limited resources. The Lollypop Farm wish list, which you can find at www.lollypop.org, contains several items our Clinic must have to operate and continue to care for thousands of animals each year, such as rubber gloves (exam and dishwashing types), Feline Pine and pellet litters, and rubbing alcohol. We also seek monetary donations to fund the following:

- Lab work (for testing tumors)—\$64 per test
- Veterinary heating pad—\$200
- Surgical pack—\$150 each
- Breathing circuit—\$100
- Breathing bag and mask—\$50
- Instrument trays—\$50 each
- Animal ear thermometers
- Shaving clippers

You can help by making a donation at www.lollypop.org.



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