



EMERGENCY B·Y·T·E·S

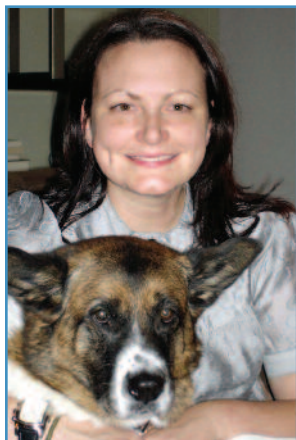


Chicago Veterinary
Emergency Services
ER
Open Nights, Weekends & Holidays
773.281.7110

News and information from the Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services

Winter 2008

Taking On Emergency



Dr. June LaFave

Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services is proud to welcome Dr. June LaFave as our new medical director.

Originally from the east coast, Dr. LaFave grew up in Absecon, NJ, before moving to Philadelphia for college. She spent nearly 13 years in Philadelphia, achieving both her under-graduate and graduate degrees from the University of Pennsylvania (which she points out is not Penn State). Because she attended this particular university, her degree states she is a VMD rather than a DVM. Dr. LaFave explains that the university focuses on the MD in the title due to the close link between their veterinary and medical schools.

While she briefly considered becoming a forensic anthropologist, Dr. LaFave always knew she wanted to be a veterinarian. "I truly feel this is why I was placed on this earth. I am here to help the animals. It's my calling." It is this calling that led her to CVES. She and her husband fell in love with Chicago on a trip here in September of 2005. Unbeknownst to him, she sent a resume to CVES and was hired. Five months after their first visit, the LaFaves found themselves back in Chicago—this time to stay. For the past three and half years, Dr. LaFave has been an associate veterinarian at CVES.

"I love the pace of the emergency room, the interesting caseload, and being there for people and their pets when in need," says Dr. LaFave. "When I am faced with a critical patient everything around me fades away. It is just me and the patient and that is where my total focus goes."

Dr. LaFave's work ethic is based on what she learned from her parents. She sees her father as an extraordinary leader who is 100 percent business when he needs to be. His ability to bring levity to the workplace while maintaining a level of professionalism and respect is not an easy task to achieve, but it is one that she strives to emulate.

Dr. LaFave is also extremely team oriented, an attribute she developed while participating in her high school and college rowing teams. She feels the best way to motivate those around her is to lead by example; if she is working hard then she believes the team will naturally do the same. It is this ethic of hard work that spurred Dr. LaFave to accept the role of medical director. She explains, "I care very much about CVES and I am willing to do pretty much anything in order for this clinic to succeed." She is very excited to see the hospital planning for 24-hour operations and offering further specialty services. Dr. LaFave sees CVES at the forefront of emergency medicine, and under her leadership, she hopes to see this hospital become one of the premier ER and specialty centers in Illinois, if not the entire Midwest. Dr. LaFave looks forward to the time when she will be able to manage critical cases for our referral practices and offer more advanced procedures.

Continued on next page

Fall and Holiday Safety Tips

Antifreeze. Even small amounts can kill your pet. Symptoms may not show for several days, and by then it may be too late. Store antifreeze in tightly-closed containers and in a place pets can't reach. Clean spills immediately and thoroughly.

Prescription and all other medications, including cold and flu medicines, should be kept out of your pet's reach at all times, as they can be lethal even in small doses.

Fan belt injuries. Cats and kittens like to nap in warm places, and this can include warm car engines! Before starting the engine, knock on the hood of your vehicle or honk the horn, then wait a few minutes. If in doubt, open the hood and look.

Cold weather. Outdoor pets should have dry shelter out of the wind. Bring cats and dogs into the house if the weather conditions are rainy, snowy, or extremely cold. Always remove ice, salt, mud, and snow from your pet's coat and feet as soon as it comes indoors.

Frozen water. Do not let your dog off leash near bodies of water. Animals can easily fall through the ice.

Fireplaces and space heaters. Keep your pets at a safe distance from all heating sources. Pets can burn themselves or knock a heat source over and put the entire household in danger.

Carbon monoxide is odorless and invisible, but it can cause problems ranging from headaches and fatigue to trouble breathing. Pets generally spend more time in the home than owners, making them more vulnerable to poisoning than the rest of the family.

Hypothermia occurs when animals are exposed to severe cold. In mild cases, animals will shiver and show signs of depression, lethargy, and weakness. In severe cases, an animal's muscles will stiffen, heart and breathing rates will slow down, and the pet will stop responding to stimuli. If you notice these symptoms, you need to get your pet warm and to your veterinarian immediately.

Holiday treats and decorations can pose hazards to your pet. Alcoholic beverages, candy, turkey bones, and fatty foods can be dangerous to your pet's health. Tinsel, glass ornaments, spray-on snow, ribbons, wrapping, or anything a pet can swallow is also dangerous. Try to hide electrical cords, and never let your pet chew on them. Do not tie ribbons around your pet's neck or limbs.

Toxic plants. Place harmful plants such as poinsettia, holly, mistletoe, philodendron, and dieffenbachia out of the reach of pets.



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Emergency Bytes is published by Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services (CVES). The only after-hours animal emergency facility in Chicago, we provide the highest quality emergency medical and surgical care when your regular veterinarian is closed. Fully staffed with veterinarians and technicians who are specially trained and experienced in handling animal emergencies, we are just a phone call away!

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While Dr. LaFave knows all of this will not be easy to achieve, she believes in our doctors and their abilities. She foresees many updates to the way medicine is practiced here. Most important, she hopes to continually improve communication between the day practices that refer to CVES and the emergency clinic. She realizes many challenges lie ahead with the practice growing so quickly. However, with her 12 years of experience, a strong work ethic, compassion, and a commitment to continuing education, Dr. LaFave feels confident she will be able to achieve all she needs to in her new role.

Dr. LaFave brings with her several important lessons learned during her years of practicing

medicine. Among these is that the body is very forgiving and listening to her technicians is crucial. She says the most important thing to remember is that, "The client is always right. Owners know their pets best and if they insist there is something wrong you better believe them."

Dr. LaFave is truly honored to be recognized by her peers and asked to become medical director of CVES, considering it her greatest professional achievement to date.

Knowing that emergency medicine can be very stressful, and that it is about to get even more stressful with the added responsibility of her new role, Dr. LaFave has taken up yoga to help her stay calm and relaxed. She also spends time walking around the city listening to her

iPod. Fortunately for her, her husband acts as a great sounding board and often absorbs stress for her. She calls him a "borderline saint."

Beyond the veterinary world, Dr. LaFave has become interested in Urban and Outsider art. She also reads, goes for long drives, plays chess, and enjoys spending time at the gym or hitting golf balls. She admits that if given the time she would pursue something in the design field as it is an area of fascination for her. Anything from fashion design to architectural design would be fine with her. "Basically any activity BRAVO has a reality show about, I would like to do," she says.

In reality, though, we are the truly fortunate ones to be able to have Dr. LaFave on our team.



Blood Donors Making a Difference

By Chanda Hallen

Thanks to the help of generous canine blood donors, CVES is able to save lives through blood transfusions. We would like to recognize two senior blood donors who have recently retired.

Lady Punk, a cattle dog mix, was taken in as an emergency foster animal because she was not dealing well with shelter life. Her foster home became her forever home as Punk's physical and mental wounds healed; soon she was healthy enough to become enrolled in the CVES blood donation program. After saving many lives, Punk moved with her family to Portland, OR, where she now lives as a happily retired lifesaver.

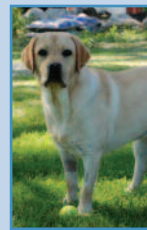
Stella, a pit bull mix, recently retired from being a blood donor because she turned eight years old, the age limit for donation. Stella enjoys playing with her toys, taking long walks, and chasing squirrels. Her blood has helped many CVES patients recover from critical illnesses.

We applaud Lady Punk, Stella, and all of the canines who have graciously given their blood over the years. Following are some success stories that illustrate why canine blood donors are so integral to the healing of sick animals.

Maria, an Olde English bulldog, was found as a pregnant stray. Due to her severe emaciation and ill health, the rescue group who saved her decided to spay her rather than let her have puppies. When she had



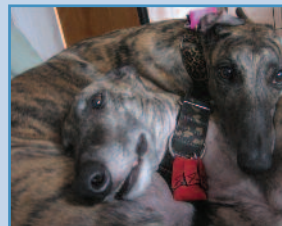
Maria and Luke



Sam



Stilton



Princess Buttercup and Bloomberg

difficulty recovering from her spay surgery, she was brought in to CVES. The doctor on duty determined that Maria was suffering from internal bleeding and needed a blood transfusion. The transfusion stabilized Maria, allowing her to undergo a second surgery to stop the bleeding. Once the bleeding was repaired she recovered rapidly.

A blood transfusion was also needed to save the life of Stilton, a French bulldog puppy. Stilton's illness started with mild, bloody diarrhea. Blood work revealed

that his Packed Cell Volume (PCV) was 38%, and he was sent home after symptomatic treatment. Three days later, a depressed Stilton returned to CVES with more severe gastroenteritis symptoms. His PCV upon admission was 24%, and when rechecked several hours later, had dropped to 18%. An X-ray of Stilton's stomach and intestines revealed that he had swallowed a metal object. The veterinarian on duty was able to remove the piece of metal using an endoscope. Stilton recovered from the metal toxicity with the help of chelation therapy (which involves giving specific types of drugs that tie up metal in the body and prevents its toxic effects) and a blood transfusion, which raised his PCV.

The night after he had a routine surgery, a Labrador retriever named Sam was brought into CVES by his caretakers because he was trembling and lethargic. By the time Sam got to CVES, he was unable to stand and an aspirate revealed blood in his abdomen. He was immediately taken into surgery, where veterinarians were able to locate and stop the bleeding. It took several transfusions to help Sam recover. A pair of rescued greyhounds named Bloomberg and Princess Buttercup generously donated the blood that Sam needed. Sam's health improved after the transfusions, and today he is an active, healthy dog.

To find out how your dog can become a lifesaver, call 773-281-7110, ext. 67.