

New Faculty, Equipment Keep Hospital Surgery Staff on the Cutting Edge

By Dean Herb Whiteley

University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine

A tremendous resource for Illinois veterinarians and companion animal patients is getting even better.

Recently joining our small animal surgery section are Dr. R. Avery Bennett, who has published and presented definitively on avian, reptile, and small mammal surgery, and Dr. Wanda Gordon-Evans, who is among a small number of surgeons trained in elbow replacement surgery. They enhance an already world-class faculty line-up in this section.

Drs. Bennett and Gordon-Evans are two of 13 faculty members hired into the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine since Dr. David Williams came on board as department head two years ago.

On the technology side, the Veterinary Teaching Hospital recently acquired a C-arm for real-time imaging to verify, for example, bone alignment or placement of fixative materials during surgery. Other imaging resources available to hospital clinicians include DEXA (dual energy X-ray absorptiometry) for bone density scans, digital radiology, nuclear scintigraphy, MRI, and 3D computed tomography.

According to section head Dr. Dominique Griffon, our orthopedic and soft tissue surgeons increasingly use minimally invasive surgical techniques.

Ongoing research informs and improves the care for patients at our hospital and elsewhere, as discoveries are disseminated by our faculty. Dr. Griffon is currently enrolling patients in a study of elbow dysplasia in young large-breed dogs.

The rehab service, now under the direction of Dr. Ann Johnson, is conducting research trials on aggressive rehabilitation for dachshunds treated for intervertebral disc disease and on young dogs with hip dysplasia. Rehab has also introduced the Shape Up, Pup! weight-loss program for overweight pets.

Timely communication between our staff and referring vets and their clients—before the consult, at diagnosis, and before and after treatment—is a key commitment of the surgery section. Four certified veterinary technicians help to facilitate consultations with our faculty.

An overview of the surgery faculty and their clinical interests is listed below. Feel free to contact them.

Dr. R. Avery Bennett, DVM, MS, DACVS

Professor, Small Animal Surgery

Clinical interests: General soft tissue surgery, surgery of exotic animals, minimally invasive surgery (laparoscopic and thorascopic), oncologic surgery, and microsurgery

Dr. Wanda Gordon-Evans, DVM, PhD, DACVS

Assistant Professor, Small Animal Surgery

Clinical interests: Elbow replacement, osteoarthritis, post-operative pain management, cartilage repair

Dr. Cathy Greenfield, DVM, MS, DACVS

Associate Professor, Small Animal Surgery

Clinical interests: Thoracic surgery, gastrointestinal surgery, minimally invasive surgery, oncologic surgery, reproductive surgery

Dr. Dominique Griffon, DVM, MS, PhD, DACVS, DECVS

Associate Professor and Head, Small Animal Surgery, and Director, Laboratory for Orthopedic Research of Biomaterials

Clinical interests: Arthroscopy, abnormal limb conformation and elbow/stifle diseases, total hip replacement, bone graft substitutes

Dr. Ann Johnson, DVM, MS, DACVS

Professor, Small Animal Surgery, and Director, Rehabilitation Service
(Currently serving as president-elect of the Western Veterinary Conference)

Clinical interests: Fracture repair, bone healing, corrective osteotomies and growth deformities

Dr. Sandra Manfra Marretta, DVM, DACVS, DAVDC

Professor, Small Animal Surgery, and Dentistry Director of the Janet Mertz Dental and Oral Surgery Clinic

Clinical interests: Diagnosis and treatment of complicated acute and chronic dental and oral surgical diseases in dogs and cats

For surgery consultations or referrals, please contact the appropriate clinical coordinator at their direct line:

- Dentistry and Oral Surgery: Misty Finn, CVT, 217/333-5859
- Orthopedics and Neurosurgery: Carrie Bubbs, CVT, 217/265-5533
- Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy: Kim Knap, CVT, CCRP, 217/265-5314
- Soft Tissue/Oncology Surgery: Michelle Jaeger, CVT, 217/333-6808

Note: Dr. Sandra Manfra Marretta was recently honored by the Champaign County Humane Society as Humanitarian of the Year for her years of bringing veterinary students to provide dental care to shelter animals.

Many Chicago-area practitioners have studied dentistry with Sandy, who is a founding member of the American Veterinary Dental College. She has also helped countless veterinary students nationwide gain knowledge of dentistry principles and techniques by offering her Veterinary Education Online program at veterinary colleges that do not have a dentist on staff.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Manfra!