

## DIGITAL RADIOGRAPHY

April 2005

### ENHANCED DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITY ARRIVES AT PVH

There's good news for anyone who's ever been frustrated by having to wait for their veterinarian to return to the hospital to process and review their horse's radiographic films (x-rays) before calling to discuss the findings with them. Digital radiology (DR) has recently been added to our diagnostic capabilities at Pilchuck Veterinary Hospital.

DR technology uses a special plate and a standard radiographic machine to convert the energy from the x-ray into a digital image which is then viewed on a computer screen. The digital image can be enhanced, lightened, or darkened on the screen to highlight soft tissue or bone, depending upon the area of focus. DR allows for potentially greater detail than conventional radiography by permitting each digitized image to be processed by the computer.

Other advantages of DR are –

- ◆ The image is produced in approximately 16 seconds and reviewed on-site, eliminating the need for your veterinarian to return to the hospital in order to process and review the film. This is particularly helpful, especially in the case of a prepurchase exam, because it usually eliminates the need for multiple farm calls to do retakes if an area of concern becomes apparent.
- ◆ Being able to manipulate the images post exposure has two big advantages: fewer retakes due to technique errors (though positioning errors may still occur), and the ability to see bony detail and soft tissue detail in the same exposure by adjusting the settings. This potentially means fewer exposures and less time to obtain diagnostic films.
- ◆ The detail of the bone provided by DR is superior to conventional film-screen combinations (because of post exposure manipulations), allowing better assessment of the bone structure.
- ◆ The ability to lighten the image on the screen allows for evaluation of some soft tissues, such as the hoof capsule. By being able to see the coffin bone (or P3/third phalanx) and the hoof capsule on the same view, accurate measurements of the hoof wall thickness and angle can be made using the DR software. This will help your farrier determine the appropriate shoeing angles and shoes for horses requiring corrective or therapeutic work.
- ◆ Once the radiographic examination is complete, the entire exam is stored on a regular compact disk (CD). This allows a copy of the CD to be given to you or your farrier, eliminating the inconvenience of having to borrow radiographs from the hospital and then worrying about their timely return. Having the CD available for the farrier or your veterinarian will prove to be an invaluable reward of this technology.

DR is an important addition to our technology, and one that significantly enhances our ability to serve your horse and you.

**WE'RE HAVING AN  
OPEN HOUSE  
SUNDAY, JUNE 26  
1:00 TO 4:00 PM  
HOSPITAL TOURS  
DEMONSTRATIONS  
NEW TECHNOLOGIES  
REFRESHMENTS  
SAVE THE DATE!**

We'd like to show you, our client, and our community how much we appreciate your friendship and support by inviting you into our hospital for a behind the scenes look at what goes on once you've entrusted us with the care of an animal. We'll take you on a tour of our hospital, introduce you to our newest technologies, and provide some entertaining demonstrations for your entire family. If enjoying these activities causes you hunger pangs, we'll have plenty of refreshments on hand, too!

There's one thing that never changes at Pilchuck Veterinary Hospital - our commitment to provide excellent service and the highest level of care available to your animal family.

Come see what *has* changed. Join us on June 26th for some fun, and a chance to explore what's new!

**PUGET SOUND EQUINE  
REPRODUCTION CENTER**  
a Division of  
**Pilchuck Veterinary Hospital**  
**COMPLETE REPRODUCTION SERVICES**  
**FOR YOUR MARE OR STALLION**  
**360.568.7455**

## PILCHUCK VETERINARIAN SHARES HIS EXPERIENCES IN CHINA

*Dr. Michael Salewski recently traveled to China as a member of a group of veterinarians who were there to study Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, at its source. The following is a highly abridged version of three lengthy emails he sent to his coworkers at Pilchuck, sharing his experiences, impressions, & expanding knowledge as he traveled. Dr. Salewski is an equine practitioner who also offers chiropractic, acupuncture, and Chinese herbal medicine to both large & small animal patients of Pilchuck as a complementary or alternative approach to healing.*

My Asian experience began almost twenty-four hours after leaving SeaTac airport, in the Chinese city of Guangzhou (“gwahng-jo”). Guangzhou is a gritty, industrial city, akin to Detroit, with video-game traffic, smog-choked air, and the dichotomy of an ultra-modern subway system servicing a town where tap water is undrinkable.

Exhausted and elated, there was little time for exploration at first. By day our group, twenty-odd veterinarians from the US, Japan, and Israel, drank cup after cup of green tea and listened to lectures on the theory and practice of Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, which encompasses both acupuncture and herbs. The presentations of our Chinese colleagues were translated—an arduous procedure for sure, but well worth the nuggets of information we gleaned from them. A huge difference between veterinary medicine in China and the US became apparent almost immediately: their lectures focused mainly on production medicine—herd and flock health—while those given by Americans dealt with treating the individual. As one Chinese vet put it after I explained that just about everyone in the US has a dog or cat, “Not so much here. Still mostly food.”

Evenings were spent gathered ten to a table at family-style meals, lazy-susans piled high with soups, vegetable dishes loaded with lotus root, bamboo shoots, and pumpkin, and all manner of meat dishes (much of it tasted like chicken; I thought it best not to ask). I made it a point to try everything, from spicy Sichuan snails to duck soup where an entire carcass, bill to webbed feet, floated like a corpse in the East River. The strangest things to cross my palette were thinly sliced smoked pig’s ear (crunchy), chicken feet (rubbery), and fermented bean curd biscuits (unspeakably foul).

The last afternoon in Guangzhou was free, and I spent it with a small group of friends exploring an open-air herbal market where we saw bushels of all the ingredients in our formulas, from the mundane, like angelica root and ginseng, to the exotic, like dried gecko on a stick and centipedes half a foot long bound into bushels and stacked like cordwood.

After the conference, which dealt with advanced techniques for cardiopulmonary disease, we traveled to Huang Shan, the yellow mountains. We spent the day hiking the peaks on stairs carved into the granite centuries ago, taking in breathtaking spires covered with gnarled and stunted pine trees. In the morning we rose early to take in the sunrise before hiking down the back side of the mountain, passing porters carrying supplies, as much as two hundred pounds worth, to the summit.

From the mountains we boarded a bus and traveled roads parallel to ripe rice fields to Hangzhou (hahng-jo), a city famous for tea, silk, beautiful women, and a lake that is the centerpiece of the city. If Guangzhou was gritty, Hangzhou was serene. The city is home to the national art institute and the lake is surrounded by gardens and sculptures. In a short day and a half, we biked around and canoed in the lake, toured a tea plantation and silk factory, and observed acupuncturists at a human clinic apply their craft. The night we spent in this city was magical. Our trip coincided with an international fireworks festival, and in the evening we sat lakeside with two million others and watched the sky explode in a dazzling display for a full hour.

Our trip ended in Shanghai, a city of almost twenty million people. You would think a city this gargantuan would be cold and off-putting, but it captured my heart in an instant. This is a city alive and vibrant, much more so than New York. It’s hip, chic, and gorgeous: modern skyscrapers jut artfully into the sky, bursting into neon life at night. Lower to the ground, where the streets are spotless, ancient temples and gardens offer respite from the constant hum of a city vying for international acclaim. One of our group had a friend working in the city and she took us to the Chinese Acrobatic Theater (sort of a Cirque du Soleil), and afterwards to an ex-pat bar where we indulged in hamburgers, watched the baseball playoffs on television, and listened to a Filipino band belt out Fleetwood Mac and Alanis Morissette.

Finally, it was time to put down my chopsticks and come home to silverware, recognizable meat, and a reliable cell phone connection. It was an experience I’ll never forget, and one I hope to repeat when the next China conference comes around in 2006.

### NEW DOCTOR WELCOMED

In September 2004, Pilchuck welcomed Jennifer Miller, DVM, to our staff of equine ambulatory doctors who see patients and clients at their homes or barns. Dr. Miller is a 2003 graduate of Kansas State University, College of Veterinary Medicine. Following veterinary school, she completed a post-doctoral internship here at Pilchuck’s equine referral hospital, from July 2003 to July 2004.

Dr. Miller feels the large and varied caseload she experienced during her internship at Pilchuck was great preparation for her current duties as an ambulatory practitioner. She is enjoying seeing and treating a wide variety of horses from different disciplines. In her spare time, Dr. Miller enjoys hiking with her dogs, horseback riding, and camping.

### EQUINE BENEVOLENCE FUND

We are often asked by horse owners or their friends if our equine department has a memorial fund to which a donation may be made in memory of a equine friend. For many people experiencing loss, honoring a special horse in this way helps bring closure; it is way to help transform a very difficult time into something positive and beneficial. For friends, it can be a meaningful expression of sympathy.

On other occasions, clients ask if a donation may be made as a gesture of appreciation for services we’ve provided to their horse. It is always a humbling experience for our doctors and staff when this occurs, and one for which we are very appreciative.

In response to this giving spirit and desire to have a positive impact when it’s most needed, we established our Equine Benevolence Fund. Though the amounts available vary, its funds may be offered to a client who’s brought a horse into our hospital and clearly cannot afford to provide a life-saving treatment or surgery. Funds are offered solely at the discretion of our equine surgeons, on a case by case basis.

All contributions are gratefully acknowledged by a personalized card sent to the owner of the horse who is being honored, or directly to the client whose gift is made in appreciation for services provided.