



Dr. Sharon Kopinak, shown with her Boston bull dog, Meaghan, uses homeopathy with traditional veterinary medicine.

Vet mixes traditional and holistic healings

BY KAREN WETMORE
The Acton Tanner

Curing the whole body instead of focusing only on the sick part is the basis of holistic medicine.

Acton veterinarian Sharon Kopinak incorporates these practices with the traditional training she received 30 years ago at the Ontario Veterinary College. Animals referred to her care might get a variety of treatments including acupuncture, homeopathy and herbal medicines.

Kopinak stresses holistic medicine does not and can not replace traditional options such as surgery. The two approaches, when combined, make for healthier animals. But it can be as simple as changing an animal's diet to fix a problem, says Kopinak.

Twenty years ago, she bred both Dobermans and race horses and fed them traditional diets. With the dogs, she found many of them had to give birth by Cesarean section. Her mares also had trouble foaling and the foals were slow to stand up and often had umbilical hernias.

"I had 20 mares with no common denominator except their feed and the stallion, but I knew

the stallion couldn't have been responsible for all of the problems," she said.

She started to look for what was missing and found the answer in an acupuncture course she was taking. The people in the class were involved in holistic medicine, which started Kopinak's own involvement.

Hair analysis on the animals, to see what minerals were present and what ones were lacking, caused Kopinak to change the animals' food. The next year's foals had none of the problems the past ones did. The same was true for the dogs.

Kopinak was thrilled with the discovery, but met with opposition from her colleagues and the Ontario Veterinary Association.

"People resist change. It was a horrible struggle," she says. "If I had to go back and do it all over again, I don't know if I would."

Although Kopinak uses centuries-old methods for healing animals in her practice, she also uses modern lasers and an electromagnetic machine.

"Technology changes, but our bodies haven't," she says. "The same rules apply."

Fleet closes in on B.A. degree

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Matthew Fleet is at a time in his life when he would rather look at paycheques than books.

Come May, Fleet, 23, will only be two courses shy of a Bachelor of Arts degree in honours geography from York University.

"I'm looking forward to getting through those courses," says Fleet, who is considering completing his degree through the summer, so he doesn't have to go back to the North York school in the fall. "I'd like to focus on something less academic. I would like to work for a while."

Fleet, a quadriplegic after suffering a spinal cord injury while in the ocean off the Dominican Republic in December 1988, is holding a B-plus average in his third-year of geography after enrolling in an arts program as a freshman.

Along with an interest in international development, Fleet says teaching is still something he may

pursue as he has taken a few fine arts courses to fall back on.

But aside from the odd hassle while doing field work as part of his program, he enjoys geographical studies and is happy with his decision to switch majors.

The Acton resident also doesn't regret his choice to attend York, despite criticism from some who say, "It's not a friendly place to visit."

"Physically," Fleet begins, "York was the best place to go. The campus is generally flat, unlike the University of Waterloo, which is hilly and could become a hassle. There's more independence at York."

"I thought of the University of Guelph, but it's not exactly notorious for its wheelchair accessibility. My primary concern when choosing a university was the physical aspects of the residence building."

Fleet lives in an apartment-style suite. "I haven't had a problem at

all travelling the campus. Some ramps are steep, but it's not like I have to go up stairs."

Aside from residence activities, Fleet hasn't involved himself in wheelchair sporting programs, saying "he's trying to have a more academic focus."

To this day, Fleet says a custom-equipped van he was given by Actonites, who raised money during The Wheels For Matthew Campaign about four years ago, means so much to him.

"It really makes you appreciate small town atmosphere. When you live at the Jane-Finch corridor you really notice a difference," says Fleet, who drove the van home this past weekend for a visit. It also helped him drive to a volunteer job in Burlington last summer.

"I'm very appreciative of what has been done for me. It's rewarding to turn things around again."

Tax clinic at ASSIC

ASSIC ALERT

ASSIC will be offering an income tax clinic during the months of March and April.

Eligibility is based on income, i.e. seniors on supplements and singles with incomes less than \$15,000.

The costs for the service is \$10 for singles and \$15 for couples. To make an appointment please call Sue at 853-3310 or drop by the office at 19 Willow St. N.

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The Centre offers a drop-in program, toy lending library, book library and caregiver theme kits. The centre is a relaxed and informal setting where you and your child can enjoy crafts, songs, stories and lots of play experiences.

The Centre is open Monday and Friday from 9:30 to 11:30 am and 1 to 3 pm; and Wednesday from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. Feel free to drop by at 85 Wallace St. (the Band Hall) or call 853-2574 or 853-3310 for more information.

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