



A shaggy dog story - with a twist!

Ben Burd

Every dog story is different and this one more so. Dr. Katy Spiewak is a hybrid Chiropractor - working with both humans and animals and she has yet to state a preference - they both get equal treatment. "I like to dress up and go to the office, and treat people, but also like to put my barn clothes on and look after animals." And judging by the results she is successful in both worlds.

The dog in the picture is Sydnee, a one hundred and twenty pound Great Dane, who had a problem getting up and down stairs. Being treated for five minutes every two weeks, and whenever she has a relapse has done wonders for her mobility. Owner Tracy Stewart said, "It's been great and we are very pleased and Katy even did a housecall to fix a problem while we on vacation." That's Dr. Katy, as some of her patients refer to her, for you. If animals could talk they would be singing her praises just as the owners do.

Dr. Katy Spiewak is a Port Hope Chiropractor, who devotes fifty percent of her business to working with animals. She doesn't limit herself to just cats and dogs but is up for horses, a cow and last month she adjusted a rabbit. Based in her office in Port Hope - The Ganaraska Chiropractic and Healing Arts Centre - she works with six associates and the Clinic provides services in traditional and non-traditional types of healing methods. When she does her animal practise it takes place in Cobourg at the "All Creatures Great and Small" Animal Wellness Centre on King St. Clinics take place here twice a week - Wednesday morning and Friday afternoon. Primarily located there she does do outreach work throughout Northumberland County and works in Peterborough from time to time.

Although she is only five years out of school, the road here took another five years: three years at the University of Guelph gaining an Honours Degree in Biological Sciences, one year to get the Chiropractic degree at the Ontario Chiropractic College in Toronto which gave her the Chiropractic license to work with people, and then one more year to be licensed to treat animals - she emerged as a fully licensed Doctor of Chiropractic and certified by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AVCA).

Being born and raised in the Lakeshore area, she attended school at Trinity College, in Port Hope, and High School in Cobourg, Katy was always around horses. She rode them all the time and one day when her mother's horse became lame she, her mother, was advised to put the horse down. That drastic measure was not

acceptable and another option was sought. "When the animal chiropractor came and adjusted the horse that's when I knew that's what I wanted to do!"



At a recent session at the "All Great and Small" clinic Dr. Katy was treating a golden retriever. Heidi, the dog's owner, takes up the story. "Willow is twelve years old and suffers from hip problems, she couldn't get up and we were thinking about putting her down. We had been told about Katy's animal service by a friend who had been treated in the Ganaraska clinic for a human problem. So we contacted the Doctor. Willow has a really bad problem of dealing with Vet's and Clinics since the time her and another dog (a dog that had been a companion for over five years), went to a

groomer and the other dog had a heart attack and died at the groomer's. Willow has reacted very badly to clinical settings ever since. So we treat Willow in a non-clinic setting. In a series of treatments over six weeks we could see progress in the second week and she gets monthly treatments."

Another testimonial about Dr Katy's work was received during the writing of this article - ""We met Dr. Katy Spiewak after one of our yearlings had tried to jump out of her paddock and had injured her shoulder. X-rays showed no fracture or bone implications but the ligaments and muscles were damaged. After a month of stall rest and eight weeks of "minimal exercise" she was improving but still seemed stiff and uncomfortable. Dr. Spiewak evaluated her and recommended a chiropractic adjustment. The following day, Elegant cantered across the paddock and bucked! It was the first time I had seen her do that since her injury. Katy treated her twice more and then the filly went back to training and is now a successful racehorse. Had it not been for the chiropractic care, I am not sure she would have fully recovered. Since then Katy has treated two other horses of ours, she is careful, kind, patient and gentle with the animals. We consider her an important resource for our barn. She also takes care of our dog (a Vizsla) and now the humans too! "

Dr Katy fees and charges are reasonable by any standards: a treatment for a large animal would be \$100 per session and \$115 for the initial examination, dogs and cats are \$60 for the initial exam and \$45 thereafter.

Dr. Katy says that in her experience most animals respond to treatment more quickly than humans, "I like to work with animals because they bounce back so quickly. I put it down to the lack of mental stress that accompanies human ailments." Asked about her experiences with animals she recalls an Irish Wolfhound that was constantly biting its back leg. "The owners' tried everything, creams, pain pills and even the 'dreaded cone', none of which worked. I came in and adjusted the back and hips and discovered a pinched nerved creating a sciatic pain problem, a series of treatments no more biting." She tells, when asked about her favourite animal to treat, "Horses are neat. The owners' know when the horse is suffering, and usually where, and it is very rewarding to see the

usual quick response to the horse and the delight of the owner.” Dr Katy also advises owners that if regular adjustments take place then the animals life will be extended. “My experience suggests anywhere from six months to a couple of years can be added to the lifespan. Even dogs with genetic hip issues (hip dysplasia) such as Labradors and other large dogs can be helped as they age by manipulating and adjusting the other joints in the body. I adjust my own dog every couple of weeks.”



Having spent the last four and a half years getting to this point in her career Dr, Spiewak hasn't given the future much of a thought but when pressed for an answer she does say that she might like to develop her own practise but is perfectly happy where she is right now. She is producing videos that show owners how to properly exercise their dogs, CDs are on sale in the All Creatures Great and Small store, and she wants to expand the line. The videos have adapted human exercising skills to a series of dog movements that develop core strengths for dogs. She also is not decided about who she prefers to focus in the future, “I like both aspects of the job and it may only be animals but who knows?”

And just to show that the good Doctor is not all work and no play she has found time to be involved with the Northumberland Sunrise Rotary Club - this year she is the President.

All in all a very rounded person.