



6136 BRANDON AVENUE  
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22150  
703 / 569-0300  
FAX: 703 / 866-4962  
Web site: [www.southpaws.com](http://www.southpaws.com)

## Background

At SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center, your pet's comfort and well-being are out top priority. Our hospital's specialists and critical care clinicians work synergistically to provide our patients with compassionate healthcare of the highest quality and scope available.

Experts in specific areas of veterinary medicine including cardiology, critical care, emergency care, holistic medicine, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, orthopedics, and surgery collaborate to provide state-of-the-art care in an around-the-clock hospital setting. This cohesive network maximizes continuity of care in an ideal environment and provides rapid access to convenient, flexible and timely referrals. Through advanced training and multi-disciplinary interaction, the veterinarians at SouthPaws maximize their potential to care for our very special patients.

SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center was founded by partners James C. McConnell, D.V.M. and George H. Siemering, D.V.M. Practicing Associates at the Center include: Daniel Brehm, V. M. D., Betsy Dayrell-Hart, V.M.D., Michael Knoeckel, D.V.M., Sarah Sheafor, D.V.M., Tina Conway, D.V.M., Jordan Kocen, D.V.M., Thomas G. Saunders, V.M.D., Steven Rosenthal, D.V.M., Bonnie Lefbom, D.V.M., William D. Tyrrell, Jr. D.V.M., Jennifer Sidley, D.V.M., Matthew Antkowiak D.V.M., Kristian Gutowski, D.V.M., Dondi Dahlgaard, D.V.M., Kim Danoff, D.V.M., Beth Herman, D.V.M., Robert Toal, D.V.M. and Marsha Reich, D.V.M.

SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center is located at 6136 Brandon Avenue in Springfield, Virginia.

**INTERNAL MEDICINE**  
James McConnell, D.V.M.  
*Chief of Internal Medicine*

Tina Conway, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Internal Medicine*

**ONCOLOGY**  
Sarah Sheafor, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Oncology*

**CARDIOLOGY**  
Thomas Saunders, V.M.D.  
*DACVIM-Cardiology*

Bonnie Lefbom, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Cardiology*

Steven Rosenthal, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Cardiology*

William Tyrrell, Jr., D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Cardiology*

Jennifer Sidley, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Cardiology*

Greg Ferguson, D.V.M.

**EMERGENCY AND  
CRITICAL CARE SERVICES**  
Dondi Dahlgaard, D.V.M.  
*Director of Critical Care*

Matthew Antkowiak, D.V.M.

Kim Danoff, D.V.M.

Jason Evans, D.V.M.

Beth Herman, D.V.M.

Kristian Gutowski, D.V.M.

**SURGERY AND  
ORTHOPEDECS**  
George Siemering, D.V.M.  
*Chief of Surgery*

Daniel Brehm, V.M.D.  
*DACVPS-Surgery*

**NEUROLOGY**  
Betsy Dayrell-Hart, V.M.D.  
*DACVIM-Neurology*

Michael Knoeckel, D.V.M.  
*DACVIM-Neurology*

**HOLISTIC MEDICINE AND  
ACUPUNCTURE**  
Jordan Kocen, D.V.M., CVA

**INTERNS**  
Larissa Kats, D.V.M.

Valerie Pallatto, D.V.M.

Elissa Thomdike, D.V.M.

## Partners

### **James C. McConnell, D.V.M.**

#### *Internal Medicine*

With over 15 years of veterinary experience, James C. McConnell, D.V.M. heads the internal medicine practice at SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center. One of the region's leading referral veterinarians accepting internal medicine cases exclusively, Dr. McConnell diagnoses and treats of chronic, complex, and catastrophic illnesses of dogs and cats.

Using the same equipment and advanced techniques that medical doctors use to diagnose and treat their human patients, Dr. McConnell offers an array of services including diagnostic ultrasound and fiber optic endoscopy examinations. Dr. McConnell's experience and training also allow him to provide precise, thoughtful well planned treatments for pets with cancer, liver, kidney or other internal organ failure, and chronic bowel disorders.

In 1981, Dr. McConnell graduated from Texas A&M University with his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine degree. In 1987, after four years of general small animal practice and successfully completing a small animal medicine residency at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, he established a private veterinary referral practice in Springfield, Virginia. Dr. McConnell is currently an adjunct professor at the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and trains externs from other schools as well. He has co-authored publications in veterinary medical journals, and presents continuing education programs to veterinarians on the latest developments in the field of canine and feline internal medicine.

### **George H. Siemering, D.V.M.**

#### *Surgery and Orthopedics*

George H. Siemering, D.V.M. brings over 25 years of experience in advanced veterinary surgical and diagnostic procedures to his practice at SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center. Highly qualified for the surgical treatment of a wide range of conditions including lung cancer, gall bladder blockages, and herniated (slipped) discs, Dr. Siemering is also an acknowledged expert in orthopedic procedures. He maintains a 95% success rate in the surgical treatment of hip dysplasia - a malformation of the hip joint's ball and socket mechanism - performing more total hip replacements than any other privately practicing veterinary surgeon in the United States.

A graduate of the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Siemering first began working for the Delaware Equine Center, a practice which specializes in the treatment of horses. He then spent seven years as a small animal general practitioner before accepting a surgical residency at the renowned University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. Within two years, he had been promoted to the positions of Surgical Instructor and Director of Emergency Service. During this time, he also served as a Veterinary Consultant at the Medical College of Pennsylvania and as a Surgical Consultant for the Philadelphia Zoological Society. Currently Dr. Siemering is a veterinary consultant to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Siemering has served as president of the Northern Virginia Veterinary Medical Association, and is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Veterinary Orthopedic Society. In addition, Dr. Siemering is an adjunct Associate Instructor for the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Siemering lectures around the country and has published many articles in veterinary journals and textbooks on topics such as canine arthroscopy and the surgical treatment of hip dysplasia. He has been featured in The Washington Post and D.V.M. Magazine.

### **Practicing Associates**

#### **Daniel Brehm, V.M.D., Dip ACVS**

##### *Surgery*

Daniel Brehm, V.M.D., is a board certified veterinary surgeon. Dr. Brehm graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in 1989. He then remained at Penn to complete a one year internship and a three year residency in small animal surgery. Dr. Brehm subsequently worked at referral services in Michigan and Illinois, and was an emergency clinician and surgeon in Maryland before coming to SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center.

Dr. Brehm performs a wide variety of orthopedic, soft tissue, and neurosurgical procedures. He has particular interest and expertise in plastic and reconstructive surgery, fracture management, and surgical oncology. Dr. Brehm has lectured on a number of surgical topics including feline hyperthyroidism and gastric dilation-volvulus syndrome. His research on peripheral nerve sheath tumors in dogs was published in the Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association.

#### **Betsy Dayrell-Hart, V.M.D., Dip ACVIM, Neurology**

##### *Neurology*

Betsy Dayrell-Hart, V.M.D., is a graduate of the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, and is board-certified in Neurology by the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. Dr. Dayrell-Hart graduated from Veterinary School in 1983, then went on to her internship at The Animal Medical Center in New York, and returned to the University of Pennsylvania for her residency. She remained at the U of P as a member of the faculty, and became an Assistant Professor of Neurology in 1991. She has a special interest in epilepsy and anticonvulsant drugs, and continues to lecture on these subjects at the University of Pennsylvania. She came to SouthPaws in August 1997, and takes great pleasure from working with referring veterinarians and clients in the region by expanding the range of available neurodiagnostic testing and treatment of neurologic disease.

#### **Michael Knoeckel, D.V.M., Dip ACVIM, Neurology**

##### *Neurology*

Dr. Knoeckel has recently joined the SouthPaws team. He is a 1986 Colorado State University graduate. After several years of general practice, he completed a residency in neurology and neurosurgery at the University of California, Davis, in 1994.

Dr. Knoeckel brings to the practice a strong interest and considerable experience in spinal and intracranial surgery. He is also highly skilled in advanced imaging techniques such as MR imaging and Myelography, as well as electrodiagnostic methods for evaluating neuromuscular diseases. This, coupled with his knowledge and ability in dealing with seizure disorders, provides a strong addition to the well-rounded SouthPaws team.

**Sarah Sheafor, D.V.M., Dip ACVIM**

*Oncology/Internal Medicine*

Sarah Sheafor, D.V.M., is a graduate of Michigan State University of Veterinary Medicine and is board-certified in Oncology by the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. Dr. Sheafor brings impressive clinical expertise and cutting edge knowledge acquired during her residency and subsequent clinical instructorship at the Ohio State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital. A well-respected educator and clinician from OSU's renowned medical oncology unit, Dr. Sheafor now provides increased accessibility to high quality, compassionate veterinary care to the D.C. area.

**Tina Conway, D.V.M., MA, Dip ACVIM**

*Internal Medicine*

Tina Kalkstein, D.V.M., a certified veterinary internist, is pleased to be a member of the internal medicine service at SouthPaws. She is a 1995 graduate of Michigan State University. She completed her internship at the Animal Medical Center in New York City and then returned to Michigan State University for her residency in internal medicine. Her research has focused on feline idiopathic lower urinary tract disease and feline heartworm disease. Dr. Kalkstein is especially interested in urinary tract disorders, hematology, and feline medicine.

**Jordan Kocen, D.V.M., M.S.**

*Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist*

Jordan Kocen, D.V.M., a leader in the field of veterinary holistic medicine, received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Missouri in 1986. Dr. Kocen practices the use of alternative therapies to treat animals for their current ailments and as a way to strengthen the animal to prevent future problems. He is certified in Veterinary Acupuncture by the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society and has completed courses in Veterinary Homeopathy and Chinese Herbal Medicine.

The holistic approach to veterinary health care involves looking at the pet as a whole being and the therapy used is tailored to treat that individual in the way best suited to improve their overall health. Many of Dr. Kocen's patients are in a state of health that would not allow them to undergo a conventional medical, surgical, or diagnostic procedure.

Dr. Kocen is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society, and the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association. He is the Assistant Editor for two veterinary professional journals, and has been featured in the ASPCA magazine, Animal Watch.

**Thomas G. Saunders, V.M.D., Dip ACVIM, Cardiology**  
*Cardiology*

Thomas G. Saunders, V.M.D., one of the region's most recognized veterinary cardiologists, comes to SouthPaws Veterinary Referral Center with over 16 years of clinical experience and nearly 19 years of echocardiographic experience. An acknowledged expert in echocardiology, Dr. Saunders is also highly qualified for all forms of cardiovascular surgery including pacemaker implantation, pericardial surgery, and correction of congenital heart defects.

Dr. Saunders received both his V.M.D. and advanced cardiology training from the University of Pennsylvania and is board certified in cardiology from the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. He lectures on a diverse group of cardiology topics and is presently involved with research in various drug therapies and advanced echocardiographic techniques. Dr. Saunders practices primarily at Chesapeake Veterinary Cardiology Associates offices in Annapolis and Timonium, Maryland.

**Steven Rosenthal, D.V.M., Dip ACVIM, Cardiology**  
*Cardiology*

Steven Rosenthal, D.V.M., a board certified veterinary cardiologist, has been a member of Dr. Saunders' cardiovascular team since 1994. A graduate of the University of Maryland, Dr. Rosenthal received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. He completed both his small animal internship and cardiology residency at the Animal Medical Center in New York City.

Dr. Rosenthal has lectured or presented scientific papers on numerous occasions to students and colleagues alike. In 1994, he became a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine in Cardiology, and has been recognized for various research projects. Dr. Rosenthal's current research includes, among others, medical therapies for early valvular diseases and heart muscle dysfunction.

**Bonnie K. Lefbom, D.V.M., Dip ACVIM, Cardiology**  
*Cardiology*

Bonnie K. Lefbom, D.V.M., is another of SouthPaw's board-certified staff - a diplomate of the American College of Internal Medicine, College of Cardiology. Dr. Lefbom attended the University of Maryland in College Park as an undergraduate and in 1991 graduated from the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech. She was a general practitioner for 3 years and then completed a small animal medical and surgical internship at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Dr. Lefbom completed her residency in cardiology in 1997 under the direction of Drs. Tom Saunders and Steven Rosenthal. Her prior private practice experience keep Dr. Lefbom centered in the practical clinical approach to referral medicine. Dr. Lefbom has spoken at several veterinary continuing education forums on topics including feline heart disease, causes of canine respiratory distress, and anesthesia in the cardiac patient. She has also published articles in referred veterinary medical journals. Dr. Lefbom has a special interest in breed specific cardiac disease in both cats and dogs.

**William D. Tyrrell, Jr. D.V.M., Dip ACVIM Cardiology**  
*Cardiology*

Dr. Tyrrell is a 1992 graduate of the VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. After graduation he spent four years in a small animal general practice in Northern Virginia. In 1996, Dr. Tyrrell began his cardiology training at the Angell Memorial Animal Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. He completed his residency in 1998 under the mentorship of Drs. Thomas Saunders and Steven Rosenthal, board certified veterinary cardiologists currently associated with our center. Dr. Tyrrell has presented lectures to veterinarians on topics in veterinary cardiology including canine and feline cardiomyopathy, anti-arrhythmic drug therapy, boxer cardiomyopathy, and electrocardiography. In 1999, Dr. Tyrrell received his board certification in cardiology from the American Veterinary College of Internal Medicine.

**Matthew Antkowiak, D.V.M.**  
*Critical Care*

Matthew Antkowiak, D.V.M., originally from Buffalo, NY and a staunch Buffalo Bills fan, received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Minneapolis in 1993 and his veterinary degree from the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University in 1997. While at Cornell, Dr. Antkowiak spent much of his time completing clinical research with the cardiology service and has since kept up a special interest in cardiovascular medicine.

Dr. Antkowiak completed his internship here at SouthPaws in 1998 and presently is a full time emergency and critical care clinician.

A District resident, Dr. Antkowiak uses his meager spare time to pursue surfing, community theatre and the trumpet. "Dr. Matt", as he is known to his staff, can often be seen around Capital Hill strolling with his dog, Brehmer, a 3 year old Short-haired Collie mix who is the unofficial SouthPaws mascot.

**Dondi Dahlgaard, D.V.M.**  
*Critical Care*

Dondi Dahlgaard, D.V.M., hails from the Sunshine State of Florida where she was born and raised. She is a graduate of the University of Florida where she received her Bachelors of Science in Zoology and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. She then successfully completed an internship in small animal medicine and surgery in 1995 and has been practicing emergency medicine ever since. She spent 3 years in Atlanta at a referral hospital prior to coming to SouthPaws as the director of our emergency and critical care service.

In her spare time she enjoys cooking, shopping and has special interests in music and singing.