



# VCA Salem Voice

*"Connecting VCA Salem Clients with VCA Staff"*

## Alison McKay, DVM, Joins Emergency Medicine Team

Alison McKay, DVM, joined the VCA Salem team in mid-September. She hit the ground running the moment she worked her first overnight Emergency shift.

McKay grew up in Roseburg, "raising show rabbits which is probably what first got me interested in animal care and veterinary medicine." However, when she graduated high school her ambition was to be a high school science teacher. She attended Eastern Oregon University and graduated with a degree in Bio-

chemistry in 2007. After earning her bachelor's degree McKay moved to San Antonio, Texas to pursue a graduate degree in chemistry. Shortly after starting graduate school, "it became apparent that life in the laboratory was not for me." So she got a job as a kennel assistant and later as an assistant at San Antonio's only holistic/acupuncture veterinary clinic.

In 2013 McKay got her DVM from Oregon State University School of Veterinary Medicine. Since then McKay has pursued a variety of surgical

*Alison McKay—Continued on Page Four*

## Amber Schofield, DVM, Joins ER Team

Dr. Amber Schofield moved from Oklahoma to join the VCA Salem ER team in late November 2018. Veterinary medicine was a passion of hers long before she actually went to Veterinary School. Schofield was a veterinary technician for over ten years, she knew she eventually wanted to be a vet but "had some traveling to get out of my system before I was ready to buckle down and go to veterinary school."

A graduate from University of Central Oklahoma (UCO), Schofield eventually went to veterinary school at Oklahoma State University (another OSU) after living in San Francisco,



*Amber Schofield, DVM, Emergency Medicine, VCA Salem Animal Hospital with her trusty companion, Molly*

California for a while.

Schofield is an avid hiker and trail runner who loves to be outside as much as humanly possible, she says "I feel like I have landed in paradise here in Oregon! Forests, mountains, the coast, the Gorge, countless waterfalls, miles and miles of trails....paradise!" There are, however,

*Amber Schofield—Continued on Page Two*



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## Photo Gallery — Photo Gallery — Photo Gallery



**Photo Gallery** — Clockwise from Upper Left: Santa Nilla; Milo getting comfy; Riley & Noelani on their best behavior; Fitzgerald in the snow; Chef Carl's Christmas profile; Mason and Mimi holding paws; and, Evie enjoying the sunshine.

## Schofield Joins VCA Salem ER (continued from page one)

things she misses about Oklahoma, "Our pastures are all filled with cattle in Oklahoma. Here you have grass crops and vineyards, which are beautiful, but I miss endless pastures filled with cattle."

Dr. Schofield loves emergency medicine because it is challenging in a very specific way, "the pace is thrilling and the medicine can be difficult. Absolutely nothing feels better than getting through a busy night or a stressful emergency surgery...or both! But mostly I think I have a special ability to be there for a family at a very stressful time. No one plans for an emergency to happen. Emergencies happen at inconvenient times when you have not financially planned for them. Finding a treatment plan that fits both the patient's needs and family's budget can be challenging. Lastly, people, myself included, are not always at our best during stressful situations. I really work to help people get through the stressful situation. It feels so great when a client comes in stressed and upset and by the end of my short time with them I have eased their worries and earned their trust."

After interviewing with several clinics before deciding on VCA Salem, Schofield notes "Quite honestly I chose VCA Salem because of Dr. Thomas and Erin. I believe in them and their vision for VCA Salem's urgent care services. I interviewed in fancier clinics with nicer facilities and brilliant specialists, but there was just something about Dr. Thomas that I instinctively trusted. I think it is rare to have a boss that you feel genuinely cares about you. In Dr. Thomas and Erin I see a team who cares and listens to their employees whether it is another doctor or the receptionist. Liking your bosses is rare and invaluable."

Dr. Schofield lives in South Salem with her husband, 4-year old boxer, Molly, and cat, Oscar. Molly the boxer is an avid backpacker and runner; Oscar is a homebody. Molly loves the Oregon Coast, you may find them running at the beach on Sundays after the doctor finishes her overnight shift; Molly was ecstatic to see a sea lion on the beach recently! Oscar has a pig graft on one eye, he enjoys perfect vision.

In April 2019 Dr. Schofield will be running her first ultra-marathon, the Tillamook Burn 50K! 🐾



### Did you know...

... Yawning is contagious – even for dogs. Research shows that the sound of a human yawn can trigger one from your dog. And it's four times as likely to happen when it's the yawn of a person he knows.



## McKay Joins VCA Salem (continued from page one)



*Alison McKay, DVM, VCA Salem Animal Hospital with her sweet & spunky Gizmo*

internships and emergency medicine work. Since graduating five years ago she has lived in Washington, Nevada, Connecticut, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Although she enjoyed living in Las Vegas immensely, she still has wonderful friends in Connecticut, Wisconsin

and Michigan nothing quite beats Oregon for McKay. She is the self-proclaimed human servant of several cats and one terrier mix canine, Gizmo. They have all joined her on her many adventures traversing across the country, but she's pretty sure they all prefer Oregon too.

According to McKay, "I chose VCA Salem for it's great team of doctors and staff. I get to work strictly overnight shifts which is great for someone like me who doesn't like mornings!" She likes living in Salem because it is in the Willamette Valley, a great location for someone, like McKay, who loves beer and wine tasting and visiting friends in Portland. 🐾



# ASPCA

**ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Phone Number:**

**(888) 426-4435**

Keep this number in your phone.

It may save your pets' life. 🐾

## VCA Salem AAHA Accreditation

In December 2018 VCA Salem received renewal of the prestigious American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) accreditation. Fewer than 12% of small animal practices in the United States and Canada are AAHA accredited. We are proud of this designation and the excellence it represents. 🐾



*Did you know...*

*... animal behaviorists have concluded that cats don't meow as a way to communicate with each other. It's a method they use for getting attention from humans.*

## Salem in Top 10

## Heartworm Uptick

The Companion Animal Parasite Council developed a "Top 10 Cities" list which highlights those cities experiencing an increase in the occurrence of heartworm (HW) disease. **Salem, Oregon is in the TOP 10.** Multiple factors play a role in the increased occurrence: warmer days and nights (HDU\*; calculated from weather with a 57°F threshold), movement of animals in HW-positive states, presence of vectors, and coyote populations.

**DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2018, TEN CITIES HAD THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE HEARTWORM TESTS:**

1. Philadelphia, PA
2. Springfield, MO
3. Yonkers, NY
4. Fremont, CA
5. Omaha, NE
6. Bakersfield, CA
7. Dayton, OH
8. Pittsburgh, PA
9. **Salem, OR**
10. Norfolk, VA



# VCA Salem Team Attend WHS Boo Bash

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On October 27th part of the VCA Salem leadership team attended the Boo Bash at the Salem Convention Center. We saw many familiar faces and enjoyed seeing the animal greeters, including a llama, as well as the amazing costumes.

Supporting WHS at the Boo Bash was loads of fun for an excellent cause. There were silent and live auctions; abundant food and drink; and, the best people watching Salem has to offer.

VCA Salem and the Willamette Humane Society are in partnership to promote and further animal welfare in the Salem area. 🐾



*Clockwise from Left Front: Hospital Manager Erin Heimerdinger, Erin's husband Jason, Assistant Hospital Manager Laurie Blair, Client Service Manager Rebecca Nance, Medical Director Dr. Seth Thomas, Dr. Kris Hallden, and Veterinary Assistant Lead Heather Whiteis pose at the Boo Bash Photo Booth.*

## VCA Salem Animal Hospital

Caring staff helping pets and their people.

## We're on the web!

[www.vcahospitals.com/salem](http://www.vcahospitals.com/salem)

4053 Commercial Street SE  
Salem, OR 97306

Phone: 503-581-1438  
Fax: 503-581-5477  
E-mail: [au672@vca.com](mailto:au672@vca.com)

## Salem Leadership Team

**Erin Heimerdinger**, Hospital Manager

**Seth Thomas**, Medical Director

**Laurie Blair**, Assistant Hospital Manager

**Heather Whiteis**, Veterinary Assistant Lead

**Jess Lawrence**, ER Daytime Lead

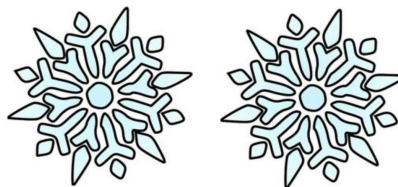
**Julie Hanberg**, Animal Care Taker Lead

**Rebecca Nance**, Client Service Manager

**Stephanie Grabotin**, Surgery Lead

## Did you know...

...Humans greet each other by shaking hands; cats greet one another by touching their noses together.



## Vision Statement

*Salem's progressive resource to strengthen the human animal bond through compassionate and collaborative care.*

## Core Values

- Respect for the human animal bond
- Integrity
- Progressive
- Compassionate
- Collaborative
- Educational resource

## The latest Care Club news:

- ♦ Care Club members whose pets have Home Again microchips now get complimentary annual renewal as part of their Care Club benefit.
- ♦ One App is better than two! The Care Club App Chat function has been incorporated into the MyVCA App (available for Apple or Android). Check it out!
- ♦ Not a Care Club member? Ask any VCA Salem Team Member for information and we'll be happy to answer your questions about Care Club!



**When the landlord says no to dogs.**