

Alumni Voices: Swimming With the Sharks or Profiling the Equine Science Center, Brian Voynick Brings Us Closer to Animals

When new clients walk into the veterinary offices of Brian T. Voynick, DVM, in Randolph, New Jersey, they often do a double-take. “Say, aren’t you the fellow on TV?” they ask.

He is. Brian Voynick (RU’78) is the host of the popular cable show “The Pet Stop,” a feature of News 12 New Jersey for more than a decade. But Brian would tell you emphatically that he is the host, not the star, of the show. The star changes from week to week – from a friendly dog available for adoption to an exotic bird or some fearsome sharks (yes, sharks), Brian has “interviewed” them all.

Recently, Brian came back to his alma mater to do an on-location show from the Equine Science Center’s Red Barn exercise physiology facility on the Cook Campus. He interviewed the Center’s director, Dr. Karyn Malinowski; Center affiliated faculty, Drs. Ken McKeever and Carey Williams; and several graduate and undergraduate students who work with the equine researchers and handle and care for the research horses.

“That was a very popular show,” says Brian, referring to the feature on the Equine Science Center. “I received a lot of good feedback about it – it’s amazing how many people in New Jersey relate to horses and admire the wellness work that the folks at Rutgers are doing.”

At one point in his life Brian thought he would be an equine practitioner. After his graduation in pre-veterinary medicine from the Department of Animal Sciences, he enrolled in the University of the Philippines’ College of Veterinary Medicine. “This was during a time – similar to now – when the state of New Jersey suspended funding for veterinary students in stateside universities, so many of us who wanted to pursue veterinary school had to look outside the country for programs that offered a good education and financial support.”

When he finished his academic education, the New Jersey native took a job at the Meadowlands. Born in Newark and reared in Clark, Brian knew he wanted to be a veterinarian from the time he was four years old. And even though family finances prevented him from taking riding lessons or engaging in equestrian pursuits, he was “passionate about horses, and I was thrilled by the prospect of starting at such an awesome place as the Meadowlands with all the great equine athletes of that time.”

However, his dedication kept him at work from 7:30 in the morning to nine or ten o’clock at night and by that time he was married

with two small children and living not far from the Meadowlands with his in-laws. “When my son started calling my father-in-law ‘Daddy,’ I knew it was time to re-think my schedule and my career.”

He interned with the Animal Medical Center in New York City, took his board exams and eventually became owner and director of his very successful full-service animal facility, the American Animal Hospital on Sussex Turnpike in southwestern Morris County, New Jersey.

He became involved with “The Pet Stop” about ten-and-a-half years ago when he appeared as a guest to discuss a controversial subject, the over-vaccination of small animals. He took aim at the established practice of vaccinating animals routinely every year for various kinds of common ailments without first measuring their current levels of immunity. He recommended, and still does, vaccinal titers which test immunity levels. If the level is sufficient, vaccination is not required and may even be dangerous, he maintains. He reports that current veterinary thinking is coming around to that point of view.

What is his most memorable show – besides the day of interviewing at the Equine Science Center, of course? “I think I’d have to say swimming with the sharks at Jenkinson’s Beach Aquarium in Point Pleasant,” he recalls. “I haven’t had an experience like that since the time I was at my brother’s law school graduation pool party,” he quips.

With an inquiring mind and an energy level that amazes his colleagues, Dr. Voynick will likely always stay on the cutting edge.



Cook College Dean of Students Dr. Lee D. Schneider, Dr. Brian Voynick, and graduate student Emily Lamprecht during a recent taping of News 12 New Jersey’s “The Pet Stop.”