

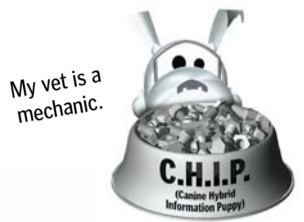
KidsPost

SURVEY SAYS

Last week's survey asked: How active are you each day?
 More than 150 readers responded:

0-30 minutes	26.6%
31-60 minutes	23.7%
61-90 minutes	12.2%
More than 90 minutes	37.5%

Teachers: Print a copy of today's page at www.washingtonpost.com/kidspost/kidspost.pdf.



WHEN I GROW UP

I Want to Be a...

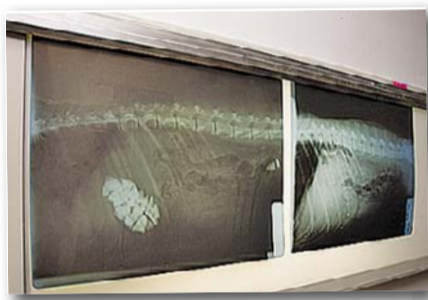
Veterinarian

A Challenging Job for Someone Who Loves Animals

Sierra was feeling terrible. But, unlike a person, she couldn't describe what hurt. Fortunately, a veterinarian was able to figure out what was ailing the golden retriever.

"She just wanted to eat rocks one day," veterinarian Karena Joung said with a chuckle.

Although Sierra wasn't Joung's patient, the 35-year-old vet has had to extract her share of odd things from dogs' bellies at the Hope Center for Advanced Veterinary Medicine.



One of the hospital's patients, a dog, had a belly full of rocks — shown in this image — that were successfully removed.

The Vienna center, an emergency hospital for pets, is open 24/7. Joung works the night shift. Her workday usually starts at 5 p.m. and lasts until 6 a.m.

Joung says she "actually loves" working overnight because that's when the more severe cases show up, and she enjoys the challenge.

The number of pet-patients she sees in a night varies. On a really busy shift there might be more than 30 — and there is almost always an animal that was hit by a car, and one that ate something bad, such as chocolate.

Figuring out what's wrong with sick animals can be very difficult. The animal's problem is not always obvious. The owner might not know what happened, either.

Since Joung is a stranger to them, some dogs and cats don't want her getting close to them.

"I love the animals, but I realize that they can be afraid of me, and they don't know why they are here," she says. Sometimes she offers a treat or sits near the ani-

mal until it becomes comfortable with her. Before going to veterinary school, Joung planned on being a surgeon (for people). She took pre-med courses in college, and after graduation worked toward a master's degree. After four years as a researcher, she decided to become a vet.

"I just loved working with animals," she says. "And I realized [that] I could learn surgery and medicine to treat animals as a veterinarian."

She spent four years at vet school, specializing in small animals (dogs and cats). A year-long internship in emergency medicine followed, and then she joined the Hope Center.

Joung studied a lot, but she says she loves to learn: "I don't think you can ever say you are prepared for everything. You never know what is going to come through that door. That's why it's always good to continue your education."

The Hope Center offers classes to keep its employees up-to-date on new procedures. There also are classes to help vets learn how to handle the emotional stress from an animal's death. Joung says that's one of the most difficult parts of her job, especially because she tries to treat each pet as if it were one of her own (she has two dogs and two cats).

The sadness she feels over an animal that doesn't make it is balanced by how great it feels when she is able to help someone's sick or injured pet.

"You see the bond between human and animal" when a pet is handed back to its owner, she says. "It's so nice to make people and animals happy."

— Amy Orndorff



Karena Joung with some of her patients. "You never know what is going to come through that door," she says. "That's why it's always good to continue your education."

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor

By the Numbers

62,000

The number of working veterinarians in the United States in 2006. The federal government employs 1,400 civilian veterinarians.

\$71,990

The median salary for veterinarians in 2006 (half made more than that; half made less).

70%

Veterinarians in private practices who mostly treat small animals.

28

The number of U.S. colleges that offer veterinary medicine.

1 in 3

The number of applicants accepted into veterinary school.



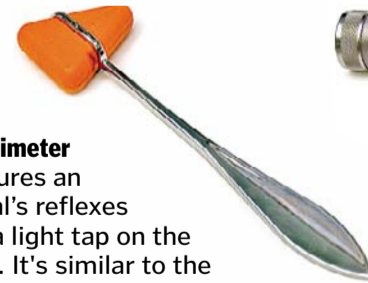
Using an echocardiogram machine, staff at the Hope Center take ultrasound pictures of the heart of Bubba, a sick Great Dane.

Some Tools Of a Veterinarian

The **Bionet BM3** is a small and portable patient monitor that can take an animal's blood pressure, detect irregular heartbeats and measure the amount of oxygen in its blood.



A **pleximeter** measures an animal's reflexes with a light tap on the joints. It's similar to the one doctors use to measure reflexes in humans.



An **otoscope** allows a doctor to examine an animal's ear canal.



CAREER TIPS

Want to be a veterinarian? Here are some ways you can prepare before you start saving animals.

Love Animals

Karena Joung says she "felt a bond with dogs and cats ever since I was little."

Volunteer at a Shelter

There are many things kids can do there — from playing with the animals to cleaning cages. (Doing messy work is part of the job.)

Do Well in School

Science and math are especially important: "You do so many calculations [and] every one of our dosages is exact," Joung says. Veterinary schools are tough to get into, so you need good grades in high school.

Communicate Well

Joung has to be able to carefully explain what she can or cannot do for a sick or injured animal. That task can be really difficult if the owners are as scared as their pets.

Know Your Options

Vets are needed in many settings, including farms, zoos, labs that make medicine for people and even the government. Different jobs might require very different skills.

