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"We're joined at the hip," says Fagin. "She moves from room to room with me at home. We're never apart."

In a short period of time, Lulu began losing her ability to get up and to walk. Her local veterinarian referred Fagin to OSU's Center for Veterinary Health Sciences. On Oct. 31, 2006, Lulu was checked into the Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, part of the Veterinary Center located on the Stillwater campus, for treatment. A CT scan showed bony changes in her vertebral bones associated with her rib cage and spinal cord.

"This was a strange case," reports Dr. Kristyn Broaddus, Small Animal Surgeon. "We thought it might be cancer or an infection but it didn't really look like either."

The team treating Lulu, led by Dr. Broaddus, decided to perform back surgery to access the dog's spinal cord to relieve the pressure. According to Broaddus, it's a tough surgery especially for a dog of her size. Drs. Broaddus and Zack Ricker, Small Animal Surgery Resident, performed the 4-hour surgery.

"This is the first time that I performed surgery in this particular area of the spine," explains Dr. Ricker. "We went in from the top, which was a very deep approach into the musculature to the spinal cord. It took 3 hours just to reach her spine."

"With any back surgery, you expect that it will be awhile before the dog gets back up," continues Dr. Broaddus. "Within one week, Lulu was up. By the end of the second week, she was getting up with minimal assistance."

It turns out, Lulu had a very bad bone infection, which isn't all that common according to Broaddus. Antibiotics were prescribed and rehabilitation started to get Lulu back on her feet.

During Lulu's three-week stay, Fagin, who lives in Edmond, visited her every day—usually

twice!

“We have been incredibly impressed with this facility,” states Fagin. “The surgeon, Dr. Broaddus; the Internal Medicine specialist, Dr. Mary Bowles; Dr. Ricker, who did the surgery; and Ingrid Manhart, 4th year veterinary student, have all been phenomenal. Everyone has gone above and beyond what is normally expected.”

According to Fagin, the flexibility that was given her to visit Lulu and bring the dog special meals (including Chicken Soup) has helped the dog recover. She also credits good genes and good care including Lulu’s diet which consists of all natural dog food with glucosamine chondroitin sulfates.

“The wonderful care she received and the fact that she knew I hadn’t abandoned her, made all the difference in her quick response to surgery. Lulu has so much heart; she wants to do what you ask of her; she wants to get better,” says Fagin.

Dr. Broaddus is also pleased with Lulu’s progress.

“We didn’t know if she would walk again or not and she was walking within two weeks of her surgery. She’s doing much better than we thought she would, especially for a dog of her age and size,” smiles Dr. Broaddus.



When Lulu left the Veterinary Hospital, she didn’t go home. Instead, she went to Neel Veterinary Clinic in Oklahoma City for rehabilitation. A full-time physical therapist on staff at the Neel Clinic worked with Lulu for approximately two weeks. The dog underwent physical therapy using an underwater treadmill as she was supported by harnesses to hold up her hind quarters during her recovery before she would support her weight again.

This is the second time the Fagins have brought a pet to the Veterinary Hospital. They are such grateful clients that they wanted to help other animals receive the care they need.

“My husband and I are at the stage in our lives when we can afford the healthcare Lulu needed.

Some people are not so fortunate. We would like to make a donation to help those who have animals that need care but cannot afford it," she says.

The Fagins made a contribution to the Brittany Fund, which was established in 1994 as a result of a donation from a Veterinary Hospital client in honor of her beloved dog, Brittany. The intent of the fund is to help defray the veterinary expenses of clients who are truly indigent and do not have the financial means to provide for their pet. Funds to maintain the account come solely from private donations, such as the one the Fagins generously gave. There are guidelines for the use of these funds to make sure they are used for deserving clients in exceptional cases.

Donations to the Brittany Fund are always welcome. Checks may be made payable to the OSU Foundation, with a notation in the memo for the Brittany Fund. Please mail donations to: Oklahoma State University, Center for Veterinary Health Sciences, 308 McElroy Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078. To donate online, visit [www.osugiving.com](http://www.osugiving.com). Select "Priorities & Progress," then "College Needs." Select "Center for Veterinary Health Sciences" and scroll down to "Make a Gift to the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences." In the "Gift Section" in the "Other Comments Box" add "Brittany Fund." For more information, call (405) 744-5630.