

Pine Crest  
**The Magazine**

Summer 2009

**Pine Crest: The Next 75 Years**



**A Greener Look**

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*A new green*



*Stephanie Shank Correa '87*



*Brandon Knight '10*

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*The Magazine is going green. This fall, you will have a choice to receive *The Magazine* via U.S. mail or online. Instructions will be coming soon.*



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## ALUMS OPEN VETERINARY ONCOLOGY HOSPITAL

By Toni Marshall

Recently, he came in for his checkup and received a clean bill of health. Still cancer free after five years, the golden retriever was diagnosed with lymphoma when he was only 3.

“Younger patients who are diagnosed with cancer can be cured so that they can live a long life, with older pets we can provide palliative care -- systematically treating the patient so that the patient is sick from cancer but improving the quality of the end of that patient’s life,” says veterinarian oncologist Stephanie Shank Correa ’87.

This month Correa and her husband, Tony ’87, are scheduled to open the Animal Cancer Care Clinic and Wellness Center, a veterinary oncology clinic located in Fort Lauderdale.

Stephanie Correa is a board-certified veterinarian oncologist; Tony Correa serves as the director of finance and operations for the clinic. The animal-care facility is located in the 1100 block of NE 4th Avenue in the old Kitchens to Go site. The hospital is the first of its kind in the region and one of just a few in the country. The Correas, who were Pine Crest sweethearts, have been supporting each other’s dreams for years.

When Correa started practicing oncology in South Florida in 2001, she was the only veterinarian oncologist in the tri-county area. So, for nearly a decade, she has spent her days rotating between three clinics in the tri-county area.

“Pets receive radiation treatments often maybe two or three times a week,” says Correa, noting the extra time most pet owners spend helping their pets through treatments. “We wanted to build a hospital where pets can stay with an exercise yard, get bathed, walked, and receive the proper nutrition, and all of those needs are met at a certain time,” she says. Veterinary oncology is a fairly new specialty in medicine. As short as 10 years ago, if a pet was diagnosed with cancer, often times it was recommended the pet be euthanized or put to sleep.

The idea of such a specialized hospital came to Correa when she was doing her internship in New York,





*Tony '87 and Stephanie Correa '87 review building plans.*

following veterinary school at the University of Florida. The veterinary hospital had an entire floor dedicated to cancer patients. "I said, 'People who have pets with cancer want somewhere for them to go...I could have a hospital with just animals with cancer.'"

She's the free thinker and her husband, Tony, is the nuts and bolts – taking ideas and making them happen, notes Correa.

Correa's free thinking has led to one of the most innovative animal medical care facilities. With her husband's background in business and project management, they developed a full-scale oncology hospital.

The hospital offers specialized therapies, bereavement counseling, nutritional services, holistic services, and acupuncture as well as other therapies and treatments. The idea is to provide the whole gamut of cancer care.

The 7,500-square-foot facility houses

a linear accelerator (external beam radiation-treatment device) and a CT scan machine as well as other high-tech equipment. "We will be able to do much more advanced treatment at this location. The mission is not only to take care of pets, but families who take care of pets." There are bereavement facilities for families and social workers on staff, one who specializes in the human-animal bond. Plus, the Correas have incorporated eco-friendly standards. They maintain patient records electronically, use non-toxic materials in both the interior and exterior of the building, and support a strong recycling program. Landscapers have strategically planted native vegetation outside the building for shade and water conservation.

"Cancer is on the front line now. You hear about it on the nightly news. It's phenomenal -- the advances. Often we do clinical research on dogs

and cats and other animals," Correa notes. There is a lot of collaborative work between veterinarian oncologists and oncologists who treat humans. Dogs and cats get the same cancers as humans, so many of the experimental treatments are given to animals first. "I sometimes get approval for my patients before the treatment for people. If it is approved for dogs, maybe it will speed through the approval process for humans," she adds.

"Cancer touches everyone's lives. When I talk to people in the exam room, they tell me stories about either a grandmother, an aunt - relatives getting treatment. Many people see pets as part of their family." For further information on the Correas' Animal Cancer Care and Wellness Center, visit the Web site at [www.animalcancercareclinic.com](http://www.animalcancercareclinic.com).