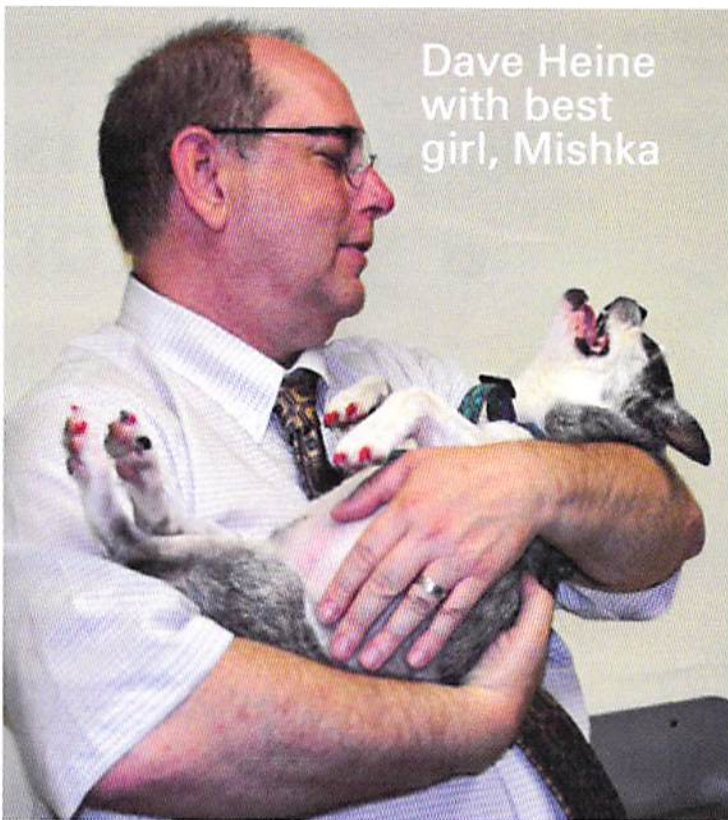


# HEARTWORM HERO: DAVE HEINE

## IT STARTED WITH MISHKA

For the past 12 and a half years, Dave Heine and his wife have shared life with Mishka, their much-loved Boston Terrier.



Dave Heine with best girl, Mishka

*Photo by Sarah Carey, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine*

She is an absolute joy but has repeatedly been physically challenged – to the point that she and Dave are “regulars” at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine (UFCVM) where Mishka has undergone multiple surgeries and other specialty care. In 2014, after dislocating and damaging her right knee for the fourth time, surgical repairs at UFCVM

resulted in a 7-week hospital stay during which she had to learn how to walk again.

Dave’s visitation arrangements at the time put him in close touch with Ross University 4th year student and then-intern Kelly Fishman, who has since earned her DVM degree and practices at Hancock Park Veterinary Clinic near Los Angeles. Dave remarks, “Kelly had Mishka as her first patient and taught me so much about caring for dogs.” Over the course of Mishka’s treatments, Dave also found out about unexpected needs at the veterinary school: “I always

assumed that vet schools had all of the funding they required, but to my surprise I learned that some programs never get off the ground for lack of adequate financial backing.” Having discovered that, Dave continues to donate to several programs at UFCVM as a way of giving back for the great care and exceptional attention Mishka has received there.

## AN INCREDIBLE TRANSFORMATION

Mishka spends most weekdays at Dog Day Afternoon daycare in Orlando, Florida, which has led to an easy friendship between Dave and manager Lauren Herrington. Just over a year ago, Lauren went through a difficult personal loss when her mother passed away suddenly and left Wesley, a rescued young Chihuahua mix, in need of a home. Wesley had been a Craigslist find and was in extremely poor condition after living in a deplorable environment before Lauren’s mother adopted him. Besides being undernourished and fearful, Wesley was heartworm positive. Even becoming slightly active often caused him to faint. About 2 weeks after he arrived at Lauren’s, he suffered a pulmonary embolism. Ultrasound examination showed what appeared to be either a mass or numerous heartworms, although Wesley was remarkably healthy otherwise given his previous circumstances. After learning

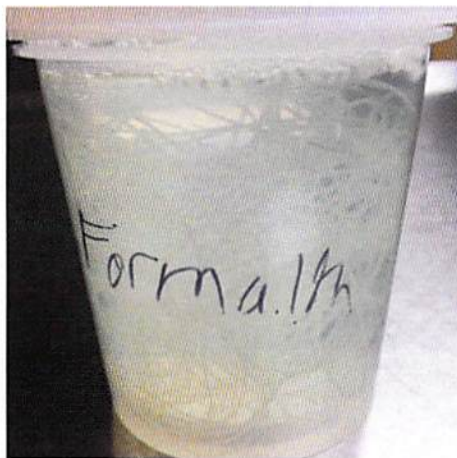


Wesley



about the emergency situation, Dave discussed Wesley's treatment with Lauren, encouraging her to take him to UFCVM and assuring her that he would help with the fees.

Because of the potentially large worm burden, Wesley was not a candidate for conventional treatment, and Lauren faced the choice of a surgical option to extract the heartworms yet was limited in her ability to afford the procedure. Dave generously offered to fund the majority of the cost but asked Lauren to raise the additional \$1,000 needed to meet the estimated total expense. Today Lauren says, "I honestly don't think Wesley would have survived without Dave. My situation with Wesley is a perfect example that no matter how circumstances get you down, you have so much to be thankful for." Surgeons removed a staggering 53 heartworms from the little 8-pound dog, and he now runs around "like a maniac"! Lauren has witnessed six dogs undergo heartworm treatment and has seen how hard it was on them. She notes, "The impact of heartworm disease is clear. It's absolutely crazy not to prevent it when prevention is so easy."



Heartworms extracted from Wesley ... 53 total!

## THE SLOGAN WITH HEART

After deciding with Lauren's employer to help Lauren raise the extra money for Wesley's procedure by holding a raffle (with any overage to be donated to the Veterinary Community Outreach Program at UFCVM), Dave felt that a good fundraiser needed a slogan. The phrase that kept coming to mind was "A pet's heart is a place for love not worms." Thinking that the slogan might have mileage beyond connection with a local benefit, Dave approached the American Heartworm Society and offered to pay the fees involved to trademark the saying and turn it over to AHS, which is introducing it to its sponsors, veterinarians, and the public this spring. Two versions – "A pet's heart is a place for

love not worms" and "A dog's heart is a place for love not worms" – are being trademarked in keeping with the fact that heartworm disease largely affects dogs but is also a concern in cats and several other species.

AHS expresses its gratitude for Dave Heine's inspiration and generosity and looks forward to using the catchy new slogan in support of its fundamental purpose – to educate pet owners about prevention of heartworm disease.

A dog's  is  
a place for  
**LOVE**  
not worms.™

Trademark of American Heartworm Society



**OUR HERO: Dave Heine is a businessman, originator, entrepreneur, philanthropist, thinker, and animal lover located in Orlando, Florida. ■**

*Photo by Sarah Carey, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine*