



AKSEL THE OFFICE DOG
AFTER A RECENT SURGERY

VET BILLS!

There are reasons it costs money to get vet care

BY RUBY DUNCAN

Our four-legged friends deserve all the love and support we can give them. But that can get tough when it requires a four-figure veterinary bill. When the only option to save your pet is to spend thousands, the costs can seem excessive and daunting, but the hospitals have their reasons for charging as they do. They love animals as much as you do — but they also have to stay in business!

Most pet parents take Kitty and Fido to a regular vet for the basics like vaccinations, minor surgeries and such. Then there are unplanned emergencies that send us to the veterinary ER and finally, the more extensive cases that might need a specialist.

The Eugene Animal Hospital was founded in 1940, and as a small locally owned business says it can provide a compassionate, personal experience. Still, it has received some confusion and frustration from clients over the prices of different services such as surgeries or vaccinations.

Anna Donahue, the veterinary practice manager, explains there are several factors that cause price increases, including fairly paying their workers.

Donahue says there is currently a major shortage in veterinarians and veterinary technicians. “The competition in this industry to pay better wages for our employees is also a big factor in needing to address pricing.”

Inflation is also a large reason for an increase in veterinary service prices. “The cost of goods that we need to use in our hospitals have greatly increased, if not tripled in prices,” Donahue says. In order to afford the necessary products, Eugene Animal Hospital has had no choice but to raise prices.

“The supplies are way more expensive than they’ve ever been in the 16 years I’ve done this job,” Donahue says. “Now, another thing that’s coming into play is tariffs.”

Eugene Animal Hospital gets some supplies from out of the country, which now greatly increases its costs. “What used to be five bucks is now 22,” she says. “And so we have to make up for that, which, unfortunately, you have to pass it along to the consumer.”

Donahue says the main trifecta that affects their prices is staffing and wages, cost of goods, and finally, the involvement of big corporations in veterinary practice. There are few small businesses left in the veterinary world. As big hospitals dominate the veterinary care scene, they affect the local economic markets.

Donahue says big corporations have an advantage over small businesses in access to products. “They can do huge bulk orders where they get these big price decreases and breaks, where we don’t get that,” she says.

As big hospitals grow and continue to take over the market, small organizations are forced to raise their prices to stay afloat and afford their goods. Donahue says she understands why the price increases are happening, “but at the same time, it’s uncomfortably fast.”

The Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Springfield is open 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day — a factor that plays into its costs. The EVH team is highly trained in emergency animal services that all vets may not be able to treat.

In 2019, EVH became a branch of the Lakefield Veterinary Group, a veterinary hospital and veterinary practice

acquisition company, which is in charge of setting the prices for services at the Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Springfield.

The set price for a walk-in exam is \$169. This includes getting your pet’s vitals taken and being seen by a doctor.

EVH employee Nathalie Worth says there are multiple factors at play when it comes to the overall cost of veterinary medicine. “I would say the first one being that the research and science behind vet med, much like human med, can be costly.” She points to making medications that are catered to animals, along with creating machines and instruments that might need special materials or must be manufactured differently from the human ones.

Worth also says that pet insurance is a relatively new thing — although there has been an increase in clients having insurance, which she says is “amazing.” But, “we are not at the point of being able to bill an insurance company yet, because of this bills have to be paid upfront, so it makes them feel like the cost is a lot higher and you are paying it all out of pocket.”

Some more complicated cases go to Oregon State University’s Lois Bates Acheson Veterinary Teaching Hospital, which focuses on specialized care for those complex cases. OSU gives a quote with a price range before proceeding with treatment. OSU spokesperson Rob Odom echoes Worth saying, “Our pricing reflects the expertise, advanced techniques and equipment necessary for providing highly specialized care.”

Options for pet owners worried about pricing include loans like CareCredit, pet insurance and low-cost options like Willamette Animal Guild providing low-cost spay and neuter services and more. Setting up a small savings account for your pet is also a good choice.

Worth says, “The last thing I would say is medicine is still medicine, animal or human. It still requires supplies, machines, staff and a facility to do it in. Ultimately, we still all have a common goal to help pets get the care they need to live long happy lives!”

Eugene Animal Hospital, 1432 Orchard St., EugeneAnimal.com, 541-342-1178. Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Springfield, 1821 Pioneer Parkway East, EmergencyVethosp.com, 541-746-0112. Oregon State University’s Lois Bates Acheson Veterinary Teaching Hospital, 172 Magruder Hall in Corvallis, VetMed.oregonstate.edu/hospital, 541-737-4812.

Bricks \$ Mortar BY CHRISTIAN WIHTOL

ANOTHER SPENDY HOUSE FOR THE COACH

Dan Lanning doubles down on Gilham Road real estate

Oregon Ducks football coach Dan Lanning likes his new Gilham Road residential neighborhood in Eugene so much that he’s bought a second home there.

Lanning bought a massive house and adjoining vacant lot in the Gilham area in September 2022. And a couple of weeks ago, he bought another home two blocks south, property records show. The recent seller? A University of Oregon sports department staffer who quit to take a job in California.

Lanning has been busy buying and selling homes in Eugene ever since he landed the head coaching job at the UO in December 2021. Upon Lanning’s move from the University of Georgia to the UO, sports and Duck fan websites and other media wrote about Lanning’s initial home purchase here. But they shied away from the gritty details and eventually moved on.

So, here are said gritty details:

Once he arrived, Lanning and his wife quickly bought a home in southeast Eugene, off Spring Boulevard, for \$1.2 million according to the deed. The March 2022 purchase gave them a just-completed home, 3,068 square feet, plus a 628-square-foot garage, all on a quarter acre.

But these proved temporary digs. Six months later, in September, Lanning bought a much bigger spread, off Gilham Road in north-central Eugene, where he and his family have been ever since.

MONSTER HOMES

People who want really large homes in the Eugene city limits often gravitate to the Gilham area. That’s where Chip Kelly, one-time Duck football coach, built his much-publicized 6,300-square-foot home back in 2010-12. It’s now owned by a local neurosurgeon.

The biggest Gilham-area home clocks in at 7,289 square feet, plus garages totaling 1,668 square feet, Lane County records show. It’s owned by Jordan Papé, CEO of the Papé machinery companies. The runner-up is a 6,847-square-foot-home

owned by Baljeet Singh, proprietor of 7-Eleven stores in western Oregon.

Lanning’s Gilham home falls short of these.

It’s a 5,810-square-foot residence, built in 2017, on 1.6 acres. It sports four bedrooms, three full bathrooms, two half-bathrooms and an outdoor in-ground kidney-shaped pool, Lane County records show. Like many super-costly Gilham-area homes, it’s shoehorned in among smaller, older, less-expensive houses on smaller lots.

The purchase price wasn’t disclosed, but Lanning took out a \$3 million mortgage on it, records show. The property now has a market value of \$3 million, Lane County estimates.

Lanning bought the home from the original owner, Jeremy Reynolds, owner of Eugene-based Reynolds Electric, records show.

BUY-BACK OPTION

The deal has an unusual caveat: a “memorandum of option agreement” states that Lanning gave Reynolds the “sole and exclusive option” to buy back the property by Sept. 5, 2025. The memo

doesn’t elaborate on the buy-back terms.

Meanwhile, Lanning sold his Spring Boulevard area home to a Eugene orthopedic surgeon in February 2023 for \$1.145 million, a bit less than he paid for it.

Fast-forward to the summer of 2025: Jordan Troester, director of performance and sports science at the UO Athletics Department, gets hired as director of performance at Red Bull Athlete Performance Center in California, a facility owned by the Red Bull caffeine-beverage corporation. Troester’s 2,200-square-foot home was two blocks from Lanning’s Gilham-area house. On July 30, Troester sold his house to Lanning for \$735,000, the deed shows.

Asked by *Eugene Weekly* for any comment, UO Ducks spokesman Jimmy Stanton emailed: “Our coaches don’t comment on private financial transactions.”

Troester appears to have made out nicely in the sale. The sale price was a 34 percent markup from the \$549,000 Troester paid in 2020, the deeds show. Touchdown for Troester!

Bricks \$ Mortar is a column anchored by Christian Wihtol, who worked as an editor and writer at The Register-Guard in Eugene 1990-2018, much of the time focused on real estate, economic development and business. Reach him at Christian@EugeneWeekly.com.