

Evergreen vet to be featured on 'Animal Planet'

Program to air Monday on cable television network

by Ken Eysaman

Associate Editor

EVERGREEN — David Manobla never imagined that a procedure aimed at ending a genetic defect in Lhasa Apsos would land him a spot on the Animal Planet television network.

Manobla, a veterinarian who has practiced in Evergreen for almost 20 years, began working on the problem in 1996 after a local breeder brought her sick dogs to his office.

It appeared that some of the dogs were developing kidney failure by the time they reached 8-years-old.

Manobla eventually connected the symptoms with a condition known as renal dysplasia, an ailment that was first discovered in the Lhasa Apso breed around the late 1960s.

In order to minimize the spread of the condition, Manobla began testing the dogs to determine which ones would be suitable for breeding.

By performing a biopsy on the dogs' kidneys, Manobla is able to identify the infected animals. Such a determination enables breeders to select only uninfected dogs and thwart

the spread of the condition.

Exactly what causes the defect is unclear.

"It's a congenital problem in the breed where their kidneys don't form correctly," Manobla said.

The procedure, which Menobla can perform outpatient with a general anesthetic, has proven effective with no long-term adverse side affects for the dogs.

Since 1996, he has performed the procedure nearly two dozen times which has effectively reduced the spread of the condition locally.

"By doing biopsies of the kidneys we can determine how many are affected so we won't breed these dogs," Menobla said.

But the real success comes through educating breeders that they can identify uninfected dogs.

Late last year, Manobla's work with the Lhasa Apso breed caught the attention of producers at the Animal Planet network. In January, a crew visited his Soda Creek office and filmed a biopsy procedure. The segment is scheduled to air at 2 p.m. on Monday.

Dr. David Manobla, a veterinarian who has practiced in Evergreen for almost 20 years, was filmed for a television special that will air next week.

Courier photo by Eric Drummond

