

Hundreds attend King Animal Hospital's grand opening

By **Jim Stewart**

The King Animal Hospital opened officially with much fanfare on August 13 in ideal midsummer conditions, and it might have been the most secure event in King Township history.

Hundreds attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of the 60,000 square-foot, cutting edge veterinary hospital (KAH) tucked away on 19th Sideroad between Bathurst and Dufferin.

Attendees toured the impressive multidisciplinary referral and emergency facility that includes seven operating rooms, 12 exam rooms, a pharmacy, a separate cat ward, indoor arena for equine assessments, outdoor paddocks for horses and green spaces for dogs, heated outdoor ramp for horses and trailers, an auditorium for knowledge exchange and continuing education, water therapy facilities for both horses and dogs, the only hyperbaric oxygen chamber for veterinary care in Ontario, and advanced diagnostic imaging equipment, including two MRI machines, one recumbent CT scan for small animals, one standing CT scan with robotic arms for large animals, nuclear scintigraphy, C-Arm fluoroscopy, and digital x-rays.

Over 125 KAH staff clad in their distinctive black scrubs mingled freely with equine industry VIPs, King business leaders, including founders Danielle and Rob Scheinberg, and CEO Tracy Jones, as well as political dignitaries including Premier Doug Ford, Minister of Energy and Electrification Stephen Lecce, Solicitor General Michael Kerzner, Mayor Steve Pellegrini, and King Councillors David Boyd, Debbie Schaefer, Jennifer Anstey, and Mary Asselstine.

The administrative and political dignitaries were protected by a phalanx of security guards, supported by the York Regional Police, who regulated the arrival of guests at the facility's 19th Sideroad gated entrance. The arrival of Premier Doug Ford at the 50-acre campus created the biggest show of security at a King event in recent memory. Premier Ford delivered a folksy, upbeat speech to attendees. He referenced his own amusing anecdotes about dog and cat ownership and the avowed animal lover praised the leadership of Danielle and Rob Scheinberg, whom he thanked personally.

"We want to thank Rob and Danielle for all they do for the community. Their philanthropy is well-known; they're constantly giving as a family. They've created a state-of-the-art hospital. There's no place in the country that has a place like this. It's an amazing facility. The transition from the last time we were here to today is staggering. It's a Five-Star Hotel for our animals that we love."

CEO Tracy Jones welcomed attendees and noted the historical significance of the grand opening: "Today marks a new era in veterinary medicine. This state-of-the-art facility is a testament to our level of care. I feel honored to work with those that cherish the human-animal bond."

Jones cited "Rob and Danielle Scheinberg's passion and dedication" and noted "their generosity in providing animal care. I welcome you to the King Animal Hospital where we are leading with care."

Co-founder Rob Scheinberg acknowledged to attendees that the hospital "has been a project for seven years."

He noted that "we've provided a calm environment for both patients and their owners, accommodating all creatures great and small."

Mayor Pellegrini delivered a warm, personal address that was as sunny as the morning on which it was delivered. Mayor Pellegrini, whose chain of office glittered in the eastern light, noted both the prevalence of brilliant sunshine in King Township and expressed his gratitude toward the hospital's founders and their civic leadership.

"It's a spectacular day in King. This facility is another example of the excellence of Rob and Danielle Scheinberg who have been community builders with Dog Tales and their work with Seneca College. This is the finest veterinary facility in Canada."

After the four speeches by dignitaries and the conclusion of the Grand Opening ceremonies, Minister Lecce held court in a sizeable media scrum and expressed his excitement about opening the King Animal Hospital as it blazes a trail forward for animal care across Canada, right in the heart of our community.?

The King-Vaughan MPP was thrilled about the services that will be provided for his constituents and their pets.

?This state-of-the-art hospital will serve so many residents who love their pets by providing veterinary medicine that combines expertise, technology, and compassion in a beautiful natural setting.?

Minister Lecce was generous with his time after the ribbon-cutting and offered personal insights into the Township's enviable level of services.

?This is an example of King punching above its weight. I'm so pleased to see this level of excellent level care for our animals. It is a state-of-the-art centre for our horses and dogs. It's also a reminder that when we work together to bring a top level of care for the agricultural sector. We're celebrating a significant advancement in animal care.?