

Conversations with Technicians

featuring Zhong Huang, LVT

written by Lauren Gamiel

She's your typical girl. Your typical, rabbit-rehabilitating-girl. Your page straight out of the book, chip off the old block, Licensed Veterinary Technician girl. Nothing exciting to see here, just a knack at putting catheters in squirmy <5 pound puppies and tying bows with exceptional flair (more on that later). Her name is Zhong Huang, she likes Pokemon, and we are about to engage in an epic interview.



Disclaimer: Zhong is one of our most highly esteemed technicians. If you try to face her in a sarcasm battle, you will inevitably lose, unless you are the author, who has been known to be "pretty sarcastic as well, but not really as cool, wait, why are you writing this down". Zhong knows everything that happens here and at our sister hospital on the Lower East Side. Some claim that Zhong has created Horcruxes (see: Harry Potter) and placed them at both locations such that she can never be destroyed, even in the grips of a particularly fractious cat (see: Almost All Cats At The Vet).

So I decided to check in with Zhong for the day during the exceedingly rare Quiet Moment*. I have seen and worked with her many times before, but to force her to answer all my questions for The Sake Of The Blog was, until now, an unfulfilled dream.

**Quiet Moment: noun: a moment in veterinary medicine, which is, under no circumstances, to be acknowledged.*



The day begins as it usually does, quiet and unintimidating, a mere wink of what is to come. Zhong has been here since 7:15am doing treatments and preparing for the surgeries of the day, but I first catch up with her around two in the afternoon. She is in the midst of organizing endotracheal tubes according to size and confirming that they all inflate and deflate properly. This is an important step in ensuring the safety of our patients during anesthesia.

(Warning: this next paragraph is very nerdy. Very, almost Scary Nerdy, and contains Pokemon references. If this makes you uncomfortable, please skip it entirely.)

I approach her from the side, so as not to startle. She eyes me warily but I already have my pokeball out and my Bulbasaur engaged. We lock eyes and begin to battle.

LG: *Bulbasaur, hit her with the Intro Question!*

Bulbasaur: *Bulba! Why did you decide to become an LVT? Bulba!*

ZH: *Pikachu, fire back with First Response!*

Pikachu: *Pika! I used to work at a wildlife rehabilitation program, and after a while I decided I wanted to further my education and develop my skills! I even considered veterinary school! Pika!*

LG: *Bulbasaur, use Follow Up!*

B: *Bulba! Do you still do any work with wildlife? Bulba!*

ZH: *Pikachu, use Quick Response!*

P: *Pika! Yes, I rehabilitate rabbits in my free time! Just last week I helped raise money for a Non-Profit of which I am a board member, "Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation"! Pika!*

LG: *Okay Bulbasaur! Lets switch to normal conversation mode, we're losing half our demographic!*

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As our conversation moves forward, I ask Zhong what she most enjoys about her work. "I actually really enjoy writing protocols for the hospital. I love organizing and compartmentalizing the amazing things we do here." Zhong is responsible for having created one of our most involved hospital protocols for local pet store surgeries. Since she spends much of her time in surgery, this task is perfectly suited to her knowledge and abilities. She can whip up a clear protocol faster than you can say Cryptorchid*.

**Cryptorchidism refers to a condition in male animals where one testicle does not descend and remains instead in either the abdomen or inguinal canal.*

When asked about her hobbies outside of work, she tells me that she "enjoy[s] spending time with my two cats, Petri and Pipette, and tending to my salt water tank. I also love taking photographs, mostly of animals. And I'm watching The OA!" We chat briefly about this exciting new show, but no spoilers here.

Finally, I ask her if anything scares her. "Large farm animals. Not sure why, but they freak me out." At last, I have beaten her at one thing. My confidence soars.

Well, that's all for now. Check out our Facebook to see what I meant when I said Zhong ties bows with "exceptional flair"... and very unique technique! Remember to follow us on instagram @heartofchelseanyc for pictures of our awesome patients and employees. And finally, check out the blog every other week for a new take on the veterinary life!