



A Buck's Life

This is a true story of a difficult journey for our buck, SG Rosasharn BB Cento +*B, and myself. It all began when he was under a year of age. An accident, unseen, had left our little guy injured. My best guess at what happened was that he got his nylon collar caught on twisted fencing wire holding 2 by 4 field-fence to a cattle panel to keep the little guy from crawling through the panel. He must have thrashed about to free himself, unfortunately injuring his neck in the process. He proceeded to do very well, maintaining his appetite and growing.

However, the injury took its time healing. Just when the wound finally closed, it would open up and drain again.

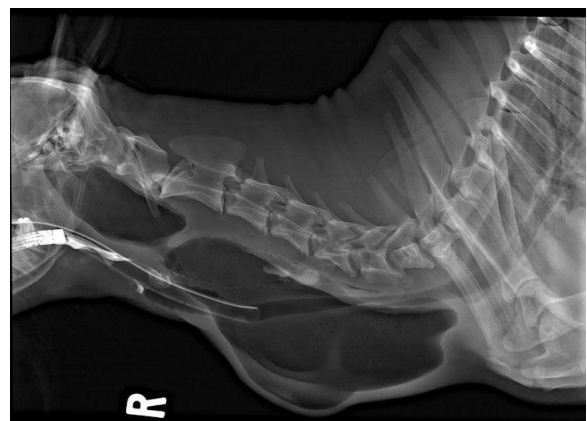
We took him to our veterinarian who probed the wound, and x-rayed it with a probe in the tract. As suggested, we kept him on antibiotics for an extended period of time to allow him to heal. Just prior to our move from California to Missouri, during our herd health inspection for health certificates, we noticed grass in the wound of our boy. The very observant Michael Clark, DVM noted that the grass was coming out

of the wound, not traveling into it. We got him into surgery just prior to our departure to try to seal the esophagus which must have been damaged months earlier. Unfortunately, due to the location of the fistula it wasn't observed from the inside. The wound was chemically cauterized from the outside, and Cento was placed on a restricted diet to allow his esophagus to heal as best as it could.

The fistula failed to heal. We flushed it with water daily, and the external wound closed. All seemed to be okay, until months later I found Cento had a massive neck, hidden in his winter coat, filled with nastiness and he was nearing death's door. This was the week prior to Christmas, 2011. Our local veterinarian referred us to the University of Missouri - Columbia Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Was this to be a Christmas miracle? Only time would tell.

December 20, 2011 I drove Cento 90 miles to Columbia, MO to see what could be done for him. John R. Middleton, DVM, PhD evaluated him and expertly assembled a team of professionals to consult on my behalf. Enter equine surgeon Shannon Reed, DVM for her unbelievable talent to assess his injury and plan for possible treatment options. "Ultrasound revealed that the mass was fluid filled with multiple communicating pockets. At the time of ultrasound, no air was present in the mass. The jugular veins and carotid arteries are intimately involved with the mass. The overall diameter of the fluid/mass is approximately 10 cm. The trachea is compressed by the mass and difficult to visualize with the ultrasound." Dr. Reed's report continues, "The diagnosis is chronic esophageal fistula with associated infection of the tissues of the neck. This is a very serious issue and is complicated by the structures

involved, the structures nearby, and the chronicity of the problem. Resolution of the fistula requires inducing healing of the defect (which is currently static), allowing the defect to rest during this healing process, and resolving the significant infection in the tissues of the neck. To that end, and after deliberation, I would offer the following plan for treatment (while recommending a serious consideration of euthanasia as an option due to the extensive nature of the issue and associated high cost of treatment):..." I had to be prepared for the worst - the loss of Cento, the loss of money to treat him, and/or the possibility of a permanently sterile buck. The cost of surgery, not including rumenotomy reversal and no complications was estimated between \$2500 and \$3500. Not to mention the home nursing care that would be required for many weeks, and return visits that would be required, the decision was a serious commitment of time and money with no guarantees of anything in return. On the other hand, if I decided to proceed with euthanasia, I would have to be prepared to live the decision to not attempt treatment.



I wondered if we could possibly have his semen collected prior to the surgery to have backup insurance in case the worst should happen. Enter Dawna Voelkl, DVM and Dr. Dietrich

Volkman for a breeding soundness exam. Remember, this is all happening on Dec 20th - right before the Christmas break - and Dr Middleton is gathering specialists at seemingly a moment's notice of my questions. Alas, while Cento did have some live sperm, the quality was too low to have a good freeze and recovery. Earlier in June, I had purchased a doeling, sired by Cento's littermate, GCH Rosasharn BB Tom Bombadil +*B, for Cento to breed in hopes of producing a nice buckling in case Cento's life was shortened due to his chronic injury. Was it possible that he could breed her (or that she could be artificially inseminated with fresh semen) prior to his surgery?

The decision was made to take Cento home, induce estrus in my doe, and hope that he could either breed her or bring them both back for artificial insemination on Friday, 12/23/11. Cento would then be left at the hospital to undergo his surgery on Tuesday, 12/27/2011. Fluid in the mass on his neck was removed so that he could breathe easier, and he was placed on antibiotics. The following day, Wednesday, 12/21/2011, I found two of my does in season. I wasn't sure Cento would feel up to servicing them, but I thought I would see if he was interested. Indeed, he serviced one after the other... good boy! As it turned out, he settled Goldie who delivered 2 doelings on 5/15/2012, however Bea didn't settle. By Thursday 12/22/2011, Cento didn't feel quite as well as he was crying with what appeared to be pain in his head. I gave him some banamine, and worried incessantly about the welfare of my dear little buck. Friday came, and Lizzie stood for Cento, so artificial insemination wasn't necessary. We had an appointment with Dr Reed at 2 pm, and I was very concerned about Cento having to wait all the way until Tuesday for surgery. Upon evaluation, and removal of

more fluid/bacteria from the mass on his neck, we agreed to proceed as planned and that immediate surgery wasn't necessary.

Not Just Any Buck.....

While I'd like to think I have unlimited time and resources to save any animal of mine in need, practical decisions must always be made. If I'm not paying the vet bills, I am in no position to make the call for anyone else, nor do I expect someone to make the same decision I made, as euthanasia would have been a practical and wise decision. Never-the-less, given some of the background on the potential of this buck, one may understand why I invested so much into saving my boy.

SG Rosasharn BB Cento +*B is out of the first ADGA National GCH Nigerian Dwarf and multi-year Top Ten Production doe, SG Rosasharn P Haiku 4*M 06-05 91 VEEE (deceased 5/3/2015), bred and owned by Anne Petersen of Rosasharn Farm. In 2011, Haiku was the ADGA National Total Performer and was awarded Reserve Best Udder. His sire is ++*B Rosasharn WT B-Bo 05-01 89 VEE (deceased). Cento was born 7/9/2009, prior to his dam's exciting placing at the 2010 ADGA Nationals. Not long before Cento's ordeal, his maternal brother/paternal nephew, *B Rosasharn SH Epic, sold for a record \$8700 at the ADGA National Convention Spotlight Sale held Oct 22, 2011. Clearly, I wasn't the only one who valued these genetics!

Prior to Cento's surgery, he had 13 kids on the ground, all too young to be proven. He had a couple kids "in the oven", and valiantly serviced and impregnated one last doe before the risky surgery. Since his surgery, he has naturally sired only 4 kids.

Cento's progeny are now proving themselves with milk, linear appraisal, and show. Notable daughters include:

- SG Alethia CTO Dew It Again: 03-02 91 EEEE
- SG RHV CTO Sweet Melody: 02-11 89 VVEE
- CH Alethia CTO Eye of the Sky: 04-04 90 VEEE; 2015 ADGA National 4th place 4 yo
- SG RHV CTO Peppermint Patty 7*M: 03-00 ++EV 86; Best Udder of Breed, 2013 Missouri State Fair; 1st lactation 275 DIM, 890#, 60 bf (6.7%), 44 protein (4.9%)
- SG Alethia CTO Moon Shadow 5*M: 03-04 VEVV 88 (stale); 2nd lactation 441 DIM, 1320#, 79 bf (6.0%), 56 protein (4.2%)
- SG RHV CTO Rachel 4*M 03-02 88 VVVV; 1st lactation 450 DIM, 1160#, 67 bf (5.8%), 56 protein (4.8%)
- SG RHV CTO Leah 4*M 03-02 89 VEVV
- SG RHV CTO Sunkissed 4*M 02-11 84 +VE+

On Tuesday, 12/27/2011, Lizzie came back into estrus. Unfortunately it seemed that she didn't ovulate with the estrus on the previous Friday.

Time would confirm that Lizzie hadn't settled. Cento's surgery was pushed back to Wednesday 12/28/2011 in order to have a fresh team start work on him at about 10 AM. A rumenotomy was performed so that his esophagus could rest after laser treatment to initiate healing of the fistula. His esophagus had adhered to his neck muscles. All feeding would be done directly into his rumen for several weeks. 500 cc of fluid/bacteria was drained from his neck. He had a large incision on his neck which needed to be flushed several times a day and rebandaged. He had to be kept without bedding so that he wouldn't eat it. Cento was to remain at VMTH until 1/5/2012. By that time, I was barely prepared to see how thin my boy had become, but at least he had survived! It was indeed a Christmas miracle for me, delivered by the blessed hands of Shannon Reed, DVM and her spectacular team!

My work with Cento was just beginning. He needed to be fed through his rumenotomy four(!) times a day. It sounds easy enough, however when you realize that the rumen contracts normally 1-4 times per minute, and that I am pouring food into a hole in this contracting bag.... well, you can possibly envision the challenge (and mess) this actually is! Cento's entire diet, food and water, had to be delivered directly into his rumen, and somehow he needed to keep it inside that rumen and not push it all out the hole in his side (and all over his left side, his crate, or the floor). He wasn't allowed anything by mouth, however he felt he was starving (he had lost a large percentage of his body weight) so he wanted to eat anything he could get hold of.

Healing was a slow process, fraught with infection, nutritional crisis, parasite burden, additional surgical procedures and just plain

hard work for me monitoring his weight, temperature, feeding, medications, and cleaning of both Cento as well as his indoor accommodations including doing his daily laundry. A positive outcome was still far from certain. Through all of this, Cento was a fabulous patient, tolerating my fussing with him even when it hurt, and learning how to live life without his herd. I am so very thankful that he made my job enjoyable and not dreadful with all I had decided to put him through.

Our boy Cento was not the only one who received fabulous care during our ordeal from the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital at the University of Missouri - Columbia. The humans are also very well cared for as well! I will never forget the image of Cento standing in a deep straw bedded manger right before Christmas with delicious hay presented to him with a flourish by Ignacio Idoate, DVM prior to his life-saving surgery. It was obvious he was in good hands, and that he was going to be cared for lovingly by the veterinary team and students. I briefly thought about snapping a picture as it was a beautiful sight, however with a positive outcome being far from certain, I couldn't bear to risk having that memory documented and lasting.

In addition, I received daily updates from Becky Bravo, VMTH student, before and after his surgery. Becky remained available to me via email, and encouraged me to email and/or call for updates or questions. She even continued to keep in touch with me after her rotation with Cento was over, answering questions and giving me encouragement through the lengthy recovery phase. Her genuine concern for his welfare was quite evident, and it was very comforting for me to know that I wasn't alone

and that she along with others was available to help support me however they could.

Cento's recovery process was lengthy indeed. His weight dropped to just over 30 pounds at the lowest point, and had sub-normal temperatures. He was kept crated indoors wearing a "goat coat", in addition to having a space heater near his crate. Getting sufficient food into his rumen so he could maintain weight was challenging. We switched his diet to a combination of Purina X-Clamation Show Goat mixed with alfalfa pellets, soaked into a mash and delivered directly to his rumen several times a day. After a couple weeks, I increased the amount fed to nearly 700 g a day, or as close to that amount as I could get with the losses coming back out his side. It seemed like ages passed before he finally started to gain back some of his lost weight, but on 1/25/2012 he weighed in at 36 pounds, still emaciated but at least the trend was finally proceeding in the right direction.

What turned out to be the most difficult part of his recovery was the closure of his rumenotomy. His first surgery to close it was 1/25/2012. Unfortunately, he ended up with infection and the wound failed to close. Dr Reed tried again on 2/7, but it was basically like trying to suture hamburger. It was recommended that we try to let it heal on its own, and it started closing up, however before finally closing, his rumen started working really hard and he ended up stretching the hole bigger and bigger! Considering he also had a major inflammatory response (losing nearly every hair on his body at one point), it was decided to wait a couple months for his health to stabilize and then try the surgery again. In the interim, Dr Reed fashioned a "plug" for his rumenotomy, which failed to stay in place much longer than a

couple days. I fashioned a "green plug" for him, made out of silicone trivets, one piece stuffed through the wound into the rumen, but attached to another piece which remained on the outside. I had to replace them with larger and larger plugs as time went on as he stretched that rumen port each and every day. Finally, once he had enough time to restore a normal immune system, Dr Reed and her team did the reversal surgery on 5/10 (more than 4 months since the rumenotomy), which thankfully was a success.





7/8/2012



RHV CTO Show-Me Flourish (SG Rosasharn BB Cento +*B x Chenango-Hills Lizabet 6*

We were fortunate enough to have Cam Faircloth of Mega Bucks Semen Service visit our farm in October of 2012 just prior to his scheduled collection at the Southwest Missouri Dairy Goat Association's Fall Frenzy Quad Buck show in Neosho, MO. I had semen collected from all of my bucks. I was hopeful that Cento's semen would be found healthy enough to freeze, and survive the freeze/thaw process, but I wasn't sure I would be so lucky. Thankfully, Cam showed me motile sperm collected from Cento. I was literally in tears, I was so happy that he seemed fertile. In addition, Cam showed me samples from all of my bucks after they were frozen and thawed. Indeed, Cento's semen looked healthy!

Further proof of Cento's fertility was yet to come. Cento was bred to several does for spring 2013 freshenings. On 3/19/2013, Cento's niece, Chenango-Hills Lizabet 6*M, delivered 2 awesome bucklings. One, RHV CTO Show-Me Flourish, is the spitting image of Cento. We're as thrilled as can be that this story has the happiest ending that could have been hoped for. God bless everyone at VMTH - Mizzou for their support and talents!