

**0:00:18.4 Katie Berlin:** Hi, welcome back to Central Line. We are continuing our special edition episodes recorded here in San Diego at the first ever AAHA Con 2023, very exciting. And our guest today is somebody I've been wishing that I could talk to for a long time, Dr. Martha Cline.

**0:00:35.7 Martha Cline:** It's so great to be here. Thanks for having me.

**0:00:37.8 Katie Berlin:** It's really great to meet you in person. We've talked virtually several times.

**0:00:40.4 Martha Cline:** Yes, little squares.

**0:00:43.4 Katie Berlin:** Yes. And if you have taken the Nutrition Certificate, the Nutrition Guideline Certificate through AAHA Learning, which if you haven't you should definitely check it out, Dr. Cline was instrumental in making that happen. You were pretty much like, you saved the day with that certificate, so, and you also appear on video in the certificate.

**0:01:02.7 Martha Cline:** Oh, yes.

**0:01:02.8 Katie Berlin:** You were a really good sport about that.

**0:01:04.9 Martha Cline:** Yes, yes. Well, I feel very invested in the guidelines and I wanted it to be just a really wonderful program because I felt like the team, all of us on the team on the guidelines put so much effort into it. And so it's really nice to see the certificate be available as well and really help another source to put all that good information into the clinic.

**0:01:25.5 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, so that's true. I didn't mention that part, which is that you were actually, were you Co-Chair of the task force?

**0:01:31.1 Martha Cline:** I was the Chair.

**0:01:31.6 Katie Berlin:** You were the Chair of the task force.

**0:01:32.4 Martha Cline:** I was the chair.

**0:01:33.0 Katie Berlin:** Yes. You didn't have to co with anyone.

[chuckle]

**0:01:35.3 Martha Cline:** I know. It was like, "Oh, are you sure you want this to be me? Okay."

**0:01:40.2 Katie Berlin:** Of the Nutrition and Weight Management Guidelines. Right?

**0:01:43.0 Martha Cline:** Yeah. 2021.

**0:01:43.5 Katie Berlin:** Yep. So, and those guidelines are fantastic, so definitely check those out too. And I really like the calculators that we have online. So just a whole bunch of good resources about nutrition, because as we know, nutrition can be something that not everyone is like super excited about, at least off the bat.

**0:02:00.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah. And I think a lot of veterinary professionals in all parts of the team can have some fatigue or some anxiety having nutrition conversations and there are some really amazing communication techniques. And actually it's really incredible to see some of the literature that's been coming out in the last few years. I think specifically Dr. Jason Coe was on our task force, and they are just like a publishing machine with really great nutrition techniques in terms of communication strategies. They're not the only ones, by any means, but when I look at the literature that's come out just in the last few years, it's all really, really great resources. And a lot of those are built into the guidelines as well.

**0:02:47.4 Katie Berlin:** You know, I really noticed that, that especially starting with the nutrition guidelines, there's been a trend in AAHA guidelines, which partly is because of the team we have in place that really wants to stress that in the content we produce, but also the taskforces that get together, people all over the spectrum of vet med are realizing the importance of the stuff that isn't just the hard science, the communication and the interpersonal relationships and the team dynamics and empowerment of members of the veterinary team that all go into really making implementation of those recommendations.

**0:03:22.1 Martha Cline:** Yeah, absolutely. And that was one of the gaps, I think, when we sat down and talked for the nutrition assessment guidelines, is we had wonderful guidelines from 2010 that a lot of that information is still relevant, we had really fabulous guidelines from 2014 on weight management but both of those guidelines did not address some of those, I guess, softer things, like not the context, right? So we'll talk about like the scientific knowledge and the context behind making a recommendation, but how do you get there? How do you proceed into that? What are the perceptions and the purchasing decisions of the client? And then how do we navigate that when having conversations about unconventional food or trying to share goals or having weight management conversations. And so there are techniques out there to address some of that, that can really, when we look at a lot of the pain points that veterinarians have, there are people that have, we have evidence-based medicine now on communication techniques to work within that space.

**0:04:26.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. Love that. I love seeing all that evidence-based research come out about things like communication. It's making them seem less soft and more essential.

**0:04:36.8 Martha Cline:** Oh, yeah, 100%. Yeah, it's really great 'cause I didn't feel like I got... I really appreciate the recognition in my time from starting veterinary school to now, to addressing the pain points of the veterinarian and the veterinary team and managing that fatigue and anxiety that comes with a lot of that but then also reminding us to be compassionate toward the client and where's the client come from. And I talked about today here at AAHA Con, don't forget about the client with the new puppy going into the pet store standing there with 200 beautiful bags staring back at it. Like, that's a very difficult decision.

**0:05:20.5 Katie Berlin:** That's hard for me.

**0:05:21.8 Martha Cline:** Right? I'm so glad I don't have to make that decision. Like, I am so glad I don't have to do that. And I just, I really think about how much time and effort some of these clients have invested in making these choices and then they come into the vet clinic and now we're gonna challenge that? That's a really difficult position to be in. And so knowing how to navigate that and to talk to the client about that is so important.

**0:05:45.7 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, absolutely. Well, I realize I forgot an essential thing, which is to ask you to introduce yourself, like, so you're Martha Cline, you're a board certified veterinary nutritionist, but how... Like what do you do and what do you think is important for people to know about you?

**0:06:03.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah. So I did, I finished my residency in 2013 and right after I finished my residency, one of my main goals was to just get in the clinic and practice. Like, I love practicing, I love seeing patients. And so I moved from Tennessee to New Jersey and went to work full time at Red Bank Veterinary Hospitals. So primarily located in Tinton Falls, but I had coverage at the Hillsborough location and the Mount Laurel location. In my eight and a half years full-time, I also had a little bit of overlap with two other amazing nutritionists I learned so much from, Dr. Lisa Weeth and Dr. Maryanne Murphy. So, but I was there, I think it was 2016 on, I think I was a solo, up until December, 2021. So I was full-time just all nutrition all the time. In 2021, at the end of 2021, I had a really interesting opportunity come towards me, and I'm so happy I did that. It was really hard to think about.

**0:07:09.3 Martha Cline:** I know it's so hard to think about changing what you're doing, but I actually was so lucky I got to join the team at Nestlé Purina. So I'm a veterinary communications manager now. So I get to take a lot of the stuff that I had full-time in the clinic and I get to implement it on a much bigger scale, which is very fun. And then the really other fun part is I still actually go to the clinic too. So, I work part-time in the clinic and I still see nutrition patients depending on what my schedule of my full-time job is. So now I'm balancing that as well. But I still get to see patients but on the other side of that, I get to do a lot of other things that I love like talk, communicate, I get to write, I get to edit, I get to educate internally, I get to educate externally. And so it's just been a really fulfilling change. And it's a really nice reminder that there are a lot of things that you can do as a veterinarian, so.

**0:08:09.4 Katie Berlin:** Absolutely. That's a lot of nutrition, though. Like that's a lot of nutrition. You're talking about veterinary nutrition a lot.

**0:08:16.2 Martha Cline:** Yes. All the time.

**0:08:16.5 Katie Berlin:** So you must really love it.

**0:08:17.0 Martha Cline:** So I guess it's good that I really like it. So, yeah.

**0:08:20.4 Katie Berlin:** Did you always love nutrition or did that come to you later?

**0:08:22.7 Martha Cline:** That actually came... So I think back when I was in undergrad, I did not have an interest in nutrition beyond maybe what I was eating myself and what I, like my family members did. I had some interesting, not necessarily personally but within my family, some people who've made some very interesting diet choices for themselves in the past. And so I always had a little bit of interest in navigating that space a little bit. I have always... I came from two parents that were engineers and so, and then I was always very much in the science space. And so that background made me very much appreciate evidence and evidence-based medicine and nutrition and science in general and so it made me question a lot of things. I wanted to go to veterinary school.

**0:09:25.9 Martha Cline:** I got into veterinary school and I literally did not even know that you could, that a veterinary nutritionist existed. But in my first year of veterinary school, I applied for a student rep position, actually with Nestlé Purina, interestingly enough, and it really opened up my eyes to veterinary nutrition. And then I was very fortunate to be able to work with the nutrition service at the University of Tennessee between my first and second year on the clinic, but also doing a research project for them. And really from there, the opportunities I had in my first year of vet school really started to influence where I wanted to go in terms of my path. And so I knew by the time I finished veterinary school that I wanted to pursue veterinary nutrition and I was very much determined to do that. And here we are today. So it worked out, that's good.

**0:10:17.4 Katie Berlin:** Very cool. Yeah. I mean, that's really interesting that it's not like you came in as a nutrition nerd.

**0:10:22.5 Martha Cline:** Yeah, not at all. I just...

**0:10:24.5 Katie Berlin:** I think a lot of us just like run from nutrition.

[laughter]

**0:10:27.0 Martha Cline:** Yeah. You know, and that was something that I thought was really... I noticed that in veterinary school, that nutrition was something that even then gave people a lot of anxiety and they didn't wanna have those conversations, and they didn't wanna have to deal with it.

**0:10:43.3 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. We don't wanna do math. [chuckle]

**0:10:45.0 Martha Cline:** Yeah. And I'm like, no, do the math. And then now I'm like, there's really great online calculators, there's so many online calculators, you don't have to do it, just bookmark it and put it in and it'll do it for you. But I think I appreciated that. And again, I just had this really unique background where I wanted to, of having some weird nutrition stuff happen in my life in the past, and I wanted to just, and so part of that came from that but then I wanted to be a veterinarian, and then I was able to find out how I could incorporate all of those things together.

**0:11:21.4 Katie Berlin:** That's very cool. Yeah, we'll have to... That's another conversation for another time, but we'll have to talk more about the connection between veterinary nutrition and human nutrition. Like, we could really dive deep in that.

**0:11:30.4 Martha Cline:** Oh, man.

**0:11:31.4 Katie Berlin:** Because that's a space I'm very interested into, especially when it comes to how we think about obesity and how we have those conversations with pet owners. Because I do think we're like, we are a little behind the times on that.

**0:11:43.3 Martha Cline:** Yeah, we definitely are. And when I was a resident, I was very fortunate to take some graduate level courses on main campus at University of Tennessee with the nutrition department, with people who are registered dietitians, those in public health, those in PhDs. So I was in class and I've made some connections with people there. I also have some connections, just like friendly connections with registered dietitians and the space they navigate is so difficult.

**0:12:14.7 Katie Berlin:** It is. So emotional.

**0:12:14.8 Martha Cline:** Because there's so much social stigma and emotion related to it. And one of the most interesting things that I've seen come from looking at some of the way we communicate in veterinary medicine that really is something that people hadn't really thought of but when we think about weight bias in human medicine, right? So this is where people are basically discriminated against because of their weight and they're being stereotyped. And this happens in exam rooms for people that are going to the doctor and it really compromises care. And so there have been some people that have looked at, or some researchers have looked at, does this exist in veterinary medicine? And there was an interesting study done out of University of Pennsylvania where they did find that there is some degree of weight bias that happens. So when there are veterinarians and veterinary students and they are confronted with an animal that is overweight, that they have more negative attitude towards the owner.

**0:13:20.2 Martha Cline:** And then when owners themselves are also overweight or obese and have an overweight or obese animal, there tends to be more blame put on that owner for that compared to if the owner was lean. And then some of the language that is used in veterinary medicine, like when we're talking about animals that have excess body weight, some of that language can be stigmatizing to the owner. And so it's, that paper and the conversation around that is really important because of what exists around people and how stigmatizing it is. And obviously we know that in dogs and in people, there are certain health consequences from having excess body weight, and that is science but the navigating the space in terms of communication and doing the best that we can to help people. And I actually feel like I've learned a lot from that human field in terms of even communicating with clients. And again, there is some literature about this is when we're talking about pet weight and making recommendations, is we're focusing it in the context of the pet health.

**0:14:32.4 Martha Cline:** So that like a, for example, if you have an obese dog and it has lameness associated with it and it has an issue with mobility that's affecting its quality of life. So the conversation maybe not to have is be like, "This dog weighs 90 pounds, your dog really needs to weigh 60 pounds. We're gonna come in, we're gonna do this." Let's refocus that not on just what the weight is and the number on the scale is, but let's say, we have some really good evidence to show that even five to 10% weight loss can help improve mobility. So why don't we work towards, if you have a good nutrition history and do a nutritional assessment, we can make those recommendations but not focusing it on, "Your pet is obese and needs to lose 30 pounds." Like, "Your pet could probably benefit from a mobility standpoint, and I'm gonna help you do that." And so there's just ways to reframe that conversation that makes it less stigmatizing to the owner and makes it less about just what that number on the scale is. And so looking at it in terms of how we can help with the quality of life of the pet I think is important, so.

**0:15:34.8 Katie Berlin:** That's...

**0:15:35.8 Martha Cline:** It's so complicated though. I feel like there's still so much, I mean, I sometimes can even be intimidated by those conversations because, and the last thing I ever wanna do is come across as like judgmental or even stereotyping somebody. And, you know, everybody has to work on that. Like, nobody is immune to having biases and things but it's an important conversation for us to start having and, yeah.

**0:16:01.5 Katie Berlin:** For sure. Yeah. And there's so much science now that they're starting to figure out, and I say science, I'm making the little air quotes again. I do this a lot. Most people listen to the podcast, they don't watch it and I'm like, "They're not seeing this," but I'm making little air quotes because there's so much science about weight and obesity in humans that is actually based in very shaky data and like...

**0:16:25.0 Martha Cline:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**0:16:26.4 Katie Berlin:** I think that's really important too, is that as you say, some of it is science where we know that excess weight, especially after a certain point, is detrimental to the health of both animals and humans. And also humans aren't dogs, dogs aren't humans. And like for humans, the genetic component, the social component of weight is so important to take into consideration.

**0:16:47.8 Martha Cline:** It is. And there are healthy people at different sizes, right?

**0:16:51.1 Katie Berlin:** Exactly. Yes.

**0:16:52.1 Martha Cline:** Like, and so... And I don't wanna ever speak out of turn because I am not a registered dietician or human doctor but the things from applying some of those communication techniques into veterinary medicine, and you know, I can feed my pets a complete and balanced diet every day. Like I, when we're talking about weight management, that is gonna be very different than when we talk about diet culture for people, which is very complicated, but...

**0:17:23.2 Katie Berlin:** So complicated. There's nothing more complicated.

**0:17:25.4 Martha Cline:** I'm really fortunate that I have the ability to utilize different diets and therapeutic nutrition to make sure that if I'm dropping calories, I'm not restricting nutrients, I'm not restricting protein. I have ways that I can promote satiety, I have different behavioral techniques and things that we can do, and we just have so much more control. So sometimes I feel like my job is easier than it is gonna be on the human front because they have to deal with emotion and society and perception and, yeah, that's really hard.

**0:17:57.9 Katie Berlin:** It's so complicated. Like, and even just hearing you, listening to you talk, I'm just thinking like when it comes to the human animal bond, the food is such an important part of that. And when they hear restricting calories or like changing diet, they hear you're changing my relationship with my pet. And that doesn't have to be the case. But that's the gut reaction. Like even for me, it's like, my cat should probably be on a food trial, to be honest, 'cause he's got chronic ear stuff but like, I don't wanna take away his churu, you know what I mean?

**0:18:30.1 Martha Cline:** Oh, yeah.

**0:18:30.5 Katie Berlin:** And like it's just so emotional.

**0:18:30.7 Martha Cline:** And it's not even with weight management, it's like anytime you're making a change that not only involves a diet change, but like a behavioral change, it's something that you have to navigate. And so asking the right questions in terms of making sure we're assessing what the owner's goals are, the reasons why maybe they purchase a certain pet food, are there different parts of the daily routine when it comes to feeding that are really important for that human

animal bond? Like the churu that you're talking about or the bone that they give, they have to give this treat when they... So I wanna preserve some of that.

**0:19:11.3 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, like, that's what we do.

**0:19:11.5 Martha Cline:** I wanna preserve some of that, but maybe I wanna fit it into, so I don't ever wanna be the person that comes in and just be like, "I'm taking all of this away from you," and you can only feed...

**0:19:22.0 Katie Berlin:** "You could just forget about all of that."

**0:19:23.3 Martha Cline:** One cup of food twice a day and that's it. And no treats. And you have to take your dog on a walk for three miles everyday. You know, so we have the ability to think about that in a much different way than... And we can have a lot more control over it, so.

**0:19:42.4 Katie Berlin:** This AAHA podcast is brought to you by CareCredit. CareCredit understands that all veterinary teams are busier than ever. To help patients get the care they need, the CareCredit Health and Pet Care credit card allows clients to access a budget friendly financing experience anytime from anywhere on their own smart device. They can learn, see if they pre-qualify, apply, and even pay if approved, all on that smart device. With just a tap, they have a friendly contactless way to pay over time for the services and treatments their pet needs, whether it be a general referring or specialty hospital, as long as they accept the CareCredit credit card.

**0:20:21.5 Katie Berlin:** Absolutely. Well, that's fascinating and I definitely wanna talk to you more about that at some point, because it's...

**0:20:27.2 Martha Cline:** Yes. It would be really fun to do it with a registered dietician, right?

**0:20:30.3 Katie Berlin:** Yes. Exactly. Like we should have a panel and talk about that. Okay, so note to self.

**0:20:35.4 Martha Cline:** More like One Health kind of thing too.

**0:20:37.0 Katie Berlin:** Exactly. Yeah.

**0:20:39.3 Martha Cline:** And also the opportunity for just learning from each other. So, yeah.

**0:20:43.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. Because it is public health, like all...

**0:20:44.7 Martha Cline:** It's public health.

**0:20:45.8 Katie Berlin:** All of this is public health. And it's hard to think of something that's more closely entwined with the human animal bond than food, so.

**0:20:51.8 Martha Cline:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**0:20:54.0 Katie Berlin:** Okay. Well, that's a wonderful tangent that we went on that I didn't know we were gonna talk about.

**0:20:58.7 Martha Cline:** Yeah.

**0:21:00.4 Katie Berlin:** And I love it so much, so.

**0:21:00.5 Martha Cline:** No, I just...

**0:21:01.1 Katie Berlin:** Many seeds have been planted.

**0:21:03.3 Martha Cline:** It's something I'm just... I think about it all the time. I know I have like so much to learn about it, so yeah.

**0:21:07.9 Katie Berlin:** Same, same. Okay. So without getting too deeply into specifics, I'm curious to know, the theme of our conference this year is Level Up and I'm curious to know what leveling up, whether it's in vet med in general or in veterinary nutrition looks like to you.

**0:21:28.4 Martha Cline:** I feel like this is such an obvious answer when I'm gonna say it, but something that I found, especially in the last couple of years, is I've switched jobs and changed my position and what I do on a daily basis is looking for where my knowledge gaps are and trying to fill those knowledge gaps. And this is totally one of those things. Like sometimes I realize, "Oh, I didn't know what I didn't know." I love that phrase. Like, people don't know what they don't know. So you can speak really confidently about something and then you find out it's more nuanced than that. And I kind of like almost love when that happens to me a little bit, and I get challenged and get to learn something new.

**0:22:11.0 Martha Cline:** And especially as moving... One of the interesting things in navigating a different sector of veterinary medicine, so going from private practice to nutrition is just like having... Being able to learn so much more about a space that I wouldn't have been able to learn about if I had not decided to take that opportunity up on myself. So I think leveling up for me personally is always that pursuit of just learning. And I think... So that's like from a professional standpoint and having the opportunity to do things that I wouldn't have had to do if in the clinic full time, even though that was a fulfilling thing as well for me. Personally, like outside of that, man, I'm really trying to become a better runner.

**0:23:00.7 Katie Berlin:** So this is the third space question, right?

**0:23:00.8 Martha Cline:** Yeah. Okay, okay. Yeah. Okay.

**0:23:03.0 Katie Berlin:** Like, I wanna know more about that. So I was gonna ask you what your third space is where you don't have to be Dr. Cline, you don't have to be a wife, you don't have to have responsibilities where you're like obligated to someone else, you can just focus on something that's important to you.

**0:23:17.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah. So I never... I was not a runner until, and I mean, I... [laughter]

**0:23:25.4 Katie Berlin:** If you run, you're a runner.

**0:23:26.4 Martha Cline:** Okay. If I like go outside and I run for a little bit, I guess I could qualify



as a runner. So let's put a real low bar on here but when I was an intern I met one of my like very close friends when I was an intern, and she was a runner. And I ran my first 5K when I was an intern and I was like, "Okay, this is kind of fun." And then I went into my residency and that's when I really found the running in terms of being in a space where I could put my head somewhere else and that, I know it does not work for everybody. Like, I have friends and they're like, "Yeah, that sounds like a miserable time," but...

**0:24:00.2 Katie Berlin:** Right. Like, why would you make yourself miserable? You should not be miserable.

**0:24:01.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah. Like, why would you do that? But it's something that really worked for me and... But it was hard. Like I've never been the kind of runner where I could just really get up every single morning. And I know those people and they're amazing who could run like three miles everyday before they go to work. And so that was something I really struggled with. And so I was like very recreational with it. And I also probably did what you're not supposed to do, which is weekend warrior it and then go and do a half marathon. Yeah, don't recommend, not recommending to do that.

**0:24:30.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, no.

**0:24:31.3 Martha Cline:** Bad idea. Really bad idea. So one of the things in the last of couple years, it kind of started in the pandemic, when the pandemic started, but I really wasn't able to focus on it so much. But I've been able in the last two years to significantly drop my times. Like, I'm a much faster runner, I feel a lot better. And part of that too is in my other third spaces, I actually found a gym that works for me. Believe me, I have tried, I have paid a lot of money for different gyms that did not pan out right.

**0:25:07.2 Katie Berlin:** You're not alone there. [laughter]

**0:25:09.3 Martha Cline:** Like there's a lot of people being like, "Yeah, I know about that." But one of my friends who's a veterinarian invited me to come to this gym with her and I found it to be a really positive place with like really positive classes and coaches. And I'm also gonna say I found a gym that did not give out really horrible nutrition information.

**0:25:28.4 Katie Berlin:** Ooh.

**0:25:29.1 Martha Cline:** I know.

**0:25:29.4 Katie Berlin:** Oh, I didn't even think about that, how frustrating that must be for you.

**0:25:32.5 Martha Cline:** Yes, because I have like a... I mean, I'm not... Again, I am not a registered dietician, I am not a human nutritionist.

**0:25:38.5 Katie Berlin:** But the science of nutrition does apply.

**0:25:39.5 Martha Cline:** I wanna stay in my lane, but I definitely know when people are saying stuff that is not right. So that was actually like being able to find...

**0:25:49.4 Katie Berlin:** Oh, I so feel that.

**0:25:49.8 Martha Cline:** Being able to find a space where I felt there was a lot of positivity and there wasn't a lot of misinformation there. And so I found this place where I go. So I also am a better runner now because I cross-train in the gym.

**0:26:04.4 Katie Berlin:** Ah, yeah.

**0:26:05.6 Martha Cline:** Who knew all of these very basic things.

**0:26:06.6 Katie Berlin:** Right? If only someone had told us.

**0:26:09.4 Martha Cline:** Wow, if somebody told me I needed to cross-train to be a better runner. But that's just been a really positive thing and it's something that I never thought that I would get there or be the type of person that would enjoy doing that but it took a really long time and it was definitely something I could have easily have given up on. But I think it's just, again, having the opportunity and then also finding just a supportive group of people, and so...

**0:26:36.5 Katie Berlin:** For sure.

**0:26:37.4 Martha Cline:** What I do for that is definitely not for everybody. And you know, even my husband finds different ways. Like he does not wanna go to the gym with me or run with me but he loves his bike. [laughter]

**0:26:50.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. I mean, it's so personal and like I love that you kept it up until you found something that worked for you and like, there's a season for everything, right?

**0:27:00.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah, absolutely.

**0:27:01.5 Katie Berlin:** I used to be... Like sign up for all the races and I was never fast but like, I was getting faster and I cared about that and I wanted to go do speed work and stuff. And my body just like, I was cross-trained, but my body just... I had some medical problems and I just kind of, I lost it for a little while and now I'm just happy to be out there. And it helps to live in Colorado now where like, being outside is just great.

**0:27:27.5 Martha Cline:** Right. Like, well, can you live in Colorado and not like that, right?

[laughter]

**0:27:30.4 Katie Berlin:** Right. I feel like they take your Colorado card away if you don't get to... [laughter] I guess the Colorado card is something else. [laughter] But like, you know, I have a bike rack now and stuff, I do everything.

**0:27:39.5 Martha Cline:** Oh, yeah.

**0:27:41.2 Katie Berlin:** But like, I wanna be able to just be outside and be moving. But there's something about running that for me, you just can't replicate. Something about just like, it's you and the road and your shoes and your breath and I solve a lot of problems running, you know?

**0:27:58.3 Martha Cline:** Yeah. I think the other thing with the running is I've found the people that I like to be with when I run. And shout out to my friend Carrie who is the one that I met my internship. And if all goes well, we will both be running the New York City marathon next year 'cause we're doing...

**0:28:16.0 Katie Berlin:** Oh, that's so exciting.

**0:28:17.7 Martha Cline:** They have a program where you can run nine races and volunteer for one. And so my friend Carrie and my friend Catherine, who are also veterinarians, and I love them very much, we're all volunteering at the marathon this year. So I just...

**0:28:29.3 Katie Berlin:** Oh, that's gonna be fun too.

**0:28:31.3 Martha Cline:** Oh, yeah. And I just love the energy of these big races and I just really feed off of the positivity of all of it. And so it's not only the running, it's also the encouragement that you get when you're doing it. It's really nice.

**0:28:45.4 Katie Berlin:** Totally.

**0:28:46.3 Martha Cline:** So yeah. And having people that you can celebrate with and also build up and do it with. Yeah.

**0:28:54.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. For anybody listening who has not stood at the finish line or like down that home stretch of a marathon, I would highly recommend it. Like even if you never have run a step and don't plan to run a step in your life, like you learn something about the human condition watching people finish a marathon, especially like the mid to back of the pack people.

**0:29:12.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah, it's incredible.

**0:29:13.8 Katie Berlin:** Like, it's no big deal to me to watch super fit people race across the finish line really fast, like great for them, kudos to them, but there's something about the people who have been out there for like six hours, six and a half hours. And New York City has people finishing like at night.

**0:29:28.1 Martha Cline:** Yes. I love...

**0:29:28.6 Katie Berlin:** Like they've been running literally all day.

**0:29:30.7 Martha Cline:** I love cheering at races and hanging out, like after I finish, going back and hanging out and cheering people on and...

**0:29:36.8 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, it's so inspiring.

**0:29:38.9 Martha Cline:** It's really, really fun. So I love it.

**0:29:42.6 Katie Berlin:** Well, that's awesome. Have so much fun volunteering.

**0:29:45.2 Martha Cline:** I'm so excited.

**0:29:45.5 Katie Berlin:** Yeah. And I'll be cheering for you next year when you're out there.

**0:29:49.2 Martha Cline:** Oh, I hope so. I really hope so.

**0:29:52.4 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, that's great. Okay, so last question. So this is gonna come out after Tech Month or Tech Week, National Veterinary Technician Week. It's gonna come out after that, but technicians should be celebrated all year. But since we're coming up on Vet Tech Week and the release of the first AAHA Technician Utilization Guidelines are coming out in October.

**0:30:14.4 Martha Cline:** Oh my gosh. That makes me so excited.

**0:30:16.2 Katie Berlin:** Yep. So they'll be out in Trends magazine in October.

**0:30:19.3 Martha Cline:** Oh, that's huge.

**0:30:20.5 Katie Berlin:** Yeah.

**0:30:20.7 Martha Cline:** That's amazing.

**0:30:21.4 Katie Berlin:** So by the time this airs, they'll be out already. So I hope everyone's checked them out, but if not, we'll have a link. And I'm collecting stories for our technician friends. Because credentialed technicians just, they are... And everybody calls them the unsung heroes or like the backbone, all true. Like all the cliches, they're so true. I don't know what I would do without our technicians. And I was wondering if you wanted to give a shout-out to either veterinary technicians in general or to one specific credential technician who may have saved your butt or something because I can think of many that have saved mine.

**0:31:01.5 Martha Cline:** Yeah. So I was an intern once, a long time ago, and I think...

**0:31:09.3 Katie Berlin:** God love you.

**0:31:09.4 Martha Cline:** Pretty much anybody who's done a small animal or a large animal internship, the overnight technicians absolutely save us. Like they save us. So I was so lucky during my internship to work with two really amazing technicians, Darina and Joanna, and both of them multiple times saved me, not only saved the animal but there are some really difficult client interactions that sometime happen at night. And I had a really, one that was making me very uncomfortable and scared and having one of my technicians be like, "I got you. Like, I'm gonna come and I'm gonna stand outside this door and I'm gonna listen and I'm gonna come and rescue you if you need help." Because that was a rough one. And it was something that I... You know, you learn a lot when you're an intern and you learn a lot when you're first out, you're out of vet school in general. But I felt so much better knowing that she was literally standing on the other side of the door with me and to help me protect me if I needed protection from this very irate client, so.

**0:32:29.5 Katie Berlin:** Oh, no.

**0:32:31.4 Martha Cline:** And then the other technician that is the nutrition technician at the

University of Tennessee, Ashley Cox, I... Or, well, not... That's... Well, she's married now, so she has a different last name. Ashley Self. Sorry. I always remember her by her name from before. But Ashley...

**0:32:49.4 Katie Berlin:** She'll know who she is.

**0:32:50.5 Martha Cline:** She knows who she is, so, but I met her during my residency before she ever became a VTS in nutrition. She actually came in my residency to just spend a little bit of time with us and we quickly realized how skilled she was and how much of an asset she was. And it's been really amazing to watch her become actually a really important technician in the veterinary nutrition space in terms of the leadership opportunities she's taken. And I'm actually really not surprised by any of it to be honest. But she's really good. She's so good. I wish I could have stolen her or taken her to New Jersey with me, but I know she would've never have moved there, but she is just a real talent and I know the people at Tennessee are so lucky to have her and she's amazing 'cause she's also teaching people now too, and teaching other people to be in the nutrition space. And so that knowledge that she has has been available to lots of people now. So I've just... Yeah. Anyways.

**0:34:01.2 Katie Berlin:** I love that. I love all of that. And I also love it when technicians who are really amazing at what they do go out and show other technicians that they can be that way.

**0:34:10.9 Martha Cline:** Yeah. She's definitely become a leader in her field now.

**0:34:15.3 Katie Berlin:** I love that.

**0:34:15.6 Martha Cline:** So it's really great.

**0:34:16.4 Katie Berlin:** That's amazing. Yeah.

**0:34:18.1 Martha Cline:** And I met her on day one, coming to Tennessee.

[laughter]

**0:34:23.0 Katie Berlin:** Well, I think that's fantastic. And some of that was a while ago, right?

**0:34:28.5 Martha Cline:** Yeah.

**0:34:28.6 Katie Berlin:** So, and you remember very clearly those situations and what you just said when you were like, "She stood outside the door and she said, 'I got you.'" You know? Like, "I'll rescue you if you need it." I think that encompasses so much of what technicians do for us is just like, they don't get the credit, they don't get the kudos, but they are there and they're like the hands that are just like waiting to catch us when something happens and like, ugh, thank goodness for them, so.

**0:34:54.5 Martha Cline:** Yeah. Absolutely. I mean...

**0:34:56.0 Katie Berlin:** It was a good story.

**0:34:57.6 Martha Cline:** Yes. I bet... I don't know if she... I mean, I wonder how many times she stood out the door for an intern but I'll never forget it. Like I needed that so bad...

**0:35:07.1 Katie Berlin:** She probably went home and was like, "I had to stand outside the door for the intern."

**0:35:07.3 Martha Cline:** So I gotta stand outside this door for this intern who has been here for two months and I still, that was in 2010 and I still think about it now. I needed that. So yeah.

**0:35:21.4 Katie Berlin:** That's nice. Well, Dr. Martha Cline, thank you so much for coming by the podcast studio.

**0:35:26.4 Martha Cline:** This was really fun. Yeah.

**0:35:28.3 Katie Berlin:** Our studio here in San Diego. I kind of wish we could just stay here because it's so nice to have a studio.

**0:35:32.6 Martha Cline:** It's beautiful. Yeah. And San Diego is beautiful.

**0:35:34.8 Katie Berlin:** And San Diego is beautiful.

**0:35:37.3 Martha Cline:** I don't know if this space is beautiful, but yes. [laughter]

**0:35:39.8 Katie Berlin:** I mean, this room exactly is not that beautiful but like this setting outside is incredible.

**0:35:46.4 Martha Cline:** Incredible.

**0:35:47.4 Katie Berlin:** And so I appreciate you taking time to come here and chat.

**0:35:48.4 Martha Cline:** Yeah. This was very fun.

**0:35:52.3 Katie Berlin:** Yeah, absolutely.

**0:35:52.4 Martha Cline:** I love it.

**0:35:53.4 Katie Berlin:** And lots of ideas for follow ups now.

**0:35:54.4 Martha Cline:** Yes. I love it.

**0:35:56.4 Katie Berlin:** So we'll put some links in the show notes for some of the things that we talked about today. And is there anything else that you would like people to know before we sign off, places they can reach you, resources they should know about, or like a mic drop about veterinary nutrition that you want people to know?

**0:36:14.4 Martha Cline:** Veterinary nutrition is an amazing job and it is so diverse too what you can do as a nutritionist. And I think about how much knowledge and time the Nutrition College and my colleagues in the Nutrition College, just... It's incredible. Like, and nutrition is such an evolving

field and there are things that I said five years ago that I don't say anymore, I changed because we just are learning all this really cool new stuff. And so I just want people to know how cool nutrition is, like how I think it is. So that's it.

**0:36:53.5 Katie Berlin:** Love it. And Purina has a ton of resources about that.

**0:36:56.3 Martha Cline:** Yes.

**0:36:57.5 Katie Berlin:** So like, just that you can just use.

**0:36:58.5 Martha Cline:** Purina Institute Center Square is... And Purina Institute website in general is a really fabulous resource. It's product agnostic, so it just really focuses on the science and the research and development. And then they have a really great resource, Center Square, and Center Square has tools for the veterinary team, it also has tools for clients, it also is translated in eight different languages so it really helps with that language barrier that sometimes people experience. So there's just really, really great information and you know, I love that resource. It's so great. It's a fantastic resource.

**0:37:42.2 Katie Berlin:** Very cool. We'll drop that link in the show notes also.

**0:37:44.4 Martha Cline:** Perfect. Thank you.

**0:37:45.4 Katie Berlin:** And if you want specific links to Purina Institute resources, they are integrated, many of them are integrated into the Nutrition Certificate.

**0:37:52.5 Martha Cline:** They are.

**0:37:52.7 Katie Berlin:** So you'll find that on AAHA Learning. [laughter]

**0:37:55.8 Martha Cline:** Great.

**0:37:56.4 Katie Berlin:** All right. Well, thank you so much Martha and this was super fun.

**0:38:00.4 Martha Cline:** This was super fun.

**0:38:01.7 Katie Berlin:** Thanks to all of you for listening and watching, we'll catch you next time on Central Line.