

Profit over Pets



My Banfield/Pet Smart Horror Story

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My Pet Smart//Banfield Horror Story

By: Destiny Carter

We've all read stories of corporate greed. Fast food employers under paying their employees, Chain super stores running mom and pops out of business, even over paid over perked CEOs. When is enough enough? Like you I read these stories, shook my head and went on with my life. After all it didn't directly affect me right? That was until August 31,2013. I would come face to ugly face with the seemingly unbeatable monster that is corporate greed.

I never would have expected to be touched so deeply and by a corporation protecting their bottom line. Never mind they are in the medical profession. Never mind their choices to protect the bottom line can affect a family. Banfield Pet Hospital in Castlberry Hill in Atlanta and Dr. Mary Aboko-Cole not only failed to uphold the veterinary oath, but the Dr.'s lack of action contributed to my one year old puppy's death.

**Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.*

*I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics. I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence**

This is the oath all doctors of veterinary medicine take. I brought Scooby my energetic, happy, gentle shepherd mix into Pet Smart and made my way to the back of the store to Banfield Hospital. Scooby was vomiting blood and hadn't eaten in several days. I was a nervous wreck and in tears. He lie uncharacteristically still in his kennel as we waited to see the doctor.

I filled out the required paper work and we were taken back to the exam room. Scooby threw up blood in his kennel before a tech could come in. Once the very nice tech got to us I told him about the blood and he helped me get a helpless Scooby out of his kennel. I held my dog in my arms as he took shallow breaths and we waited for help. The vet tech took his temperature, noted it in his chart, gave me some wet towels to clean the blood off of his paws and left the room.

About ten minutes later the doctor came in. She immediately began to tell me my dog had fleas and Pet Smart had a wonderful flea prevention program. My dog had just thrown up blood and she was trying to sell me flea products. I was in shock. I tell her he spent the night in the yard and had picked up some outside. It's not usually a problem.

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She asked a few questions then turns the monitor to me. It's going to cost \$850.00 just to test. I tell her I believe my dog swallowed something and to explain why all of the tests were necessary. When I asked had she felt his stomach to see if she could feel an obstruction her answer was no, she hadn't felt his stomach. Although I told her my suspicions she tested for "Parvo" which I told her was not a likely, most unlikely suspect. I had been watching him for those symptoms and he didn't have any.

The doctor looked me in the eye and asked me, "How much are you willing to pay? I can take some of these test off to fit in your price range." I couldn't believe she wanted to play let's make a deal with my dog's life. He had a 104 fever, hadn't eaten in three days and couldn't even keep liquids down. This board certified doctor was only concerned about making a sell. I did not find a shred of compassion in her eyes as I searched them with my tear stained ones.

This entire time my dog hadn't been given any treatment. Not even an IV to re-hydrate him or bring down his fever. I was getting the picture that they didn't "Love my dog, as I do" Pet Smart's current tag line. I asked he be packed up and although it was a holiday weekend I was going to find another doctor. At this point I felt Dr. Mary Aboko-Cole was only trying to pad her commission. She was more of a used car salesman than a doctor sworn to relieve the suffering of animals. The tech cleaned out Scooby's carrier and we were off, but not before I got a bill for the visit.

At that point my only concern was getting my very sick pet help. It was obvious I wasn't going to get it at Banfield. We both sat in his favorite corner of my house as I flipped through the phone book trying to find emergency help my sweet puppy had a seizure and died. He shook in my arms looked up at me and took his last breath. I felt my heart break for this very important member of my family. I felt the loss before I got up off of the floor. I looked down at my baby lying motionless in his favorite spot of the house.

My neighbor also a fellow dog lover came over and helped me give Scooby a proper burial. I couldn't believe how much it hurt. I always loved my dog but I didn't expect the loss of him to cut so deeply. I felt like I had truly lost a member of my family.

After I got the first round of crying out I began to do research on the company I felt did nothing to help a sick and distressed puppy. All because I wouldn't agree to pay upfront for a battery of test the vet couldn't explain why she needed them. All while ignoring the symptoms I told her about and my suspicion of what was wrong.

I found a site called consumeraffairs.com, I did a search on Banfield and found 895 registered complaints on this site. Years of complaints about billing, malpractice claims, poor customer service, and most notably the death of several animals due to what the complainants accused to be negligence of some sort on Banfield part.

I began to dig a little further and found out a few interesting facts. Fact number one Banfield and Pet Smart are corporate partners. Not apart of the same company. How ever Banfield takes full advantage by trading on Pet Smart's customers and Lion's share of the pet care market. In trusting the Pet Smart's name we also tend to trust the other brand tied to them.

Fact number two, Banfield Pet Hospital is not Better Business Bureau accredited. They are not a member of the organization, all though they do have several complaints mostly related to the billing of their Pet Insurance Plan.

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Fact number three Banfield customer service is severely lacking. I went to the web site and called the number to file a formal complaint. The lady took my complaint was appropriately concerned before she let me know someone from the “Leadership Team” would call me back. Some one called me back alright, it was one of the girls in the office the day I brought Scooby in. The “Practice Manager,” for the store. She was loud, rude, defensive and even went so far as to say it was my fault because I wouldn’t pay, and I threatened to take him to the Humane Society. This experience just got worse. On top of my baby dying I was being told it was my fault and yelled at.

I had had enough. I decided to file a complaint with the State Veterinary board and called the corporate complaint line back. I explained what happen and the girl was horrified at my story. She apologized and said she would have someone else call me back to discuss the situation.

The next day I get a call from the doctor on the leadership team. She starts out being nice but as I lay out what happen during my visit she becomes more defensive and agitated. At the beginning of the call when I told her the doctor didn’t even offer IV she said that was the least the attending doctor should have done. After a few minutes of me going deeper into the situation, this doctor who never saw Scooby says, well your dog was very sick and an IV wouldn’t have helped him. It felt like she was pouring salt on an open wound. This person who was supposed to be concerned was smug and rude.

We went round and round on Banfield’s part. Finally she says “Too bad we’ll never know what killed him.” There was almost taunting in her tone. Some of that arrogance was taken away when I told her I had ordered a necropsy to find my answers. I had to know I had done everything I could to save him and if he could have been saved at the time.

I went on to tell her that I was planning to picket the store and had planned to reach out to the media. Her response to me was a snarky “Good luck with that” before she hung up on me.

I was furious and more determined than ever to get justice for Scooby. I began to look through his discharge papers to attach to my board complaint and realized Banfield had also given me another customer’s discharge papers. This dog had almost the same diagnosis as my dog. I found it hard to believe that a healthy dog who was in for a routine check up would have the same diagnosis as a dog vomiting blood with a high fever. I wondered did this dog die within an hour of leaving Banfield as my dog had. This dog had been given a clean bill of health just like my dog.

A few weeks later I decided to call Pet Smart and let them know just what their corporate partner was up to. Killing people’s pets, by choosing profits over treating a dying dog. The doctor from the leadership team told me Dr. Adboke had followed company policy because they didn’t want to get stuck with an unpaid doctor bill. That confirmed for me they weren’t in the business of treating animals, but making money off of the owners that loved them. In my state that day, the doctor probably pegged me as a sucker willing to pay anything, an easy mark. Little did she know I’m anything but. I didn’t start out to be an animal rights activist but if I have to be that so my puppy’s death won’t be in vain than so be it.

My first contact at Pet Smart didn’t call me back, but when I got a hold of his boss she was very helpful. I felt her concern for me was genuine, but nothing still had been done to punish Banfield. At the time of publishing this essay, I have not heard back from the board. I was told it would take time to fully investigate and hold a hearing for the doctor if necessary.

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Bansfield even stone walled their corporate partner by telling them they couldn't talk about it because I went to the state board. From the board's perspective that is not true. They lied to their corporate partner to cover their own ass. How could they be trusted in anything at this point? The number they gave their partner to pass on to me was a non working one for the "Medical Director." I called Jessie back and she gave me the number of her corporate contact at Bansfield. I have left a few messages but the time of committing this to paper I still have not had a call returned. I hold out little hope. I am beginning to believe that Profit not Pets are the only thing that is taken seriously over there.

Scooby was more than just a pet. He was my breathing alarm clock, I still miss his seven am wake up call. He was my protector. No one could come close to the door when he was on the job. He also slept guard outside my bedroom door at night. Banfield and Dr. Cole took that away from me. They are nothing more than Glorified Groomers. Banfield's tag line is "Together for the life of your pet." Well I think they should add because we are so incompetent we'll kill them soon.

What do I want you ask? What do I hope to gain by putting this information out there? In this digital age and social media wave, I just want people to hear my story. Maybe this will save their animal or help them make better choices in taking care of their beloved pet. I would hope as I release this in e-book format it will reach several animal lovers and they will be inspired to boycott Banfield and Pet Smart until their standard practices change. Until we see a difference in how they handle pets that come into the store in distress, animals who need emergency treatment should get it. Pay should be something worked out with the loving owner after a basic round of treatment has been started. If they are going to make millions and millions of dollars off of pet products, grooming, insurance programs you may or may not use, and all things pet in-between, the least they could do is pay it forward and make sure dying pets aren't being turned away because of money during an emergency situation. If that's the business they are in than they shouldn't call themselves a hospital. They are care for hire. An expensive care for hire. Pet Smart must hold their partner accountable. They should be more aware of the complaints against Banfield, maybe conduct independent investigations. If they claim to love our pets than they should show it by making sure a partner who is trading off of their name is living up to that name. In my eyes they are just as guilty. If you turn a blind eye, stay ignorant to the problem, or choose to ignore it, than you are allowing it.

The saying, "*All that is needed for evil to triumph is for good to do nothing,*" is the perfect way to declare the situation and Pet Smart's power in this situation. They have the power to do good and keep their partner in check by demanding high standards and for them to carry out and respect the oath they took to protect animals. Sometimes that is going to mean putting pets first and worrying about treatment, before the form of payment the pet parent will give. It also means making sure care is delivered with care and compassion. After all in most households pets are people too.

Coast to Coast Complaints

**To read all 895 complaints registered on the website where this information was found visit: consumeraffairs.com. Testimonials have been printed for informational purposes only and appear as they did on originating website.*

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Carrie of Pittsburgh, PA on Nov. 3, 2013

I get ALL of my pooch's products from PetSmart, in addition to grooming him there. I have taken him there for his entire 5 year lifespan. I have ZERO complaints about PetSmart, but when I took Brooks to Banfield, we were not treated with any compassion or respect. I went to PetSmart to get his food and other products. I figured since we were there and I didn't want to subject him to another errand that day, I would take him Banfield instead of traumatize him with a separate trip to an animal hospital. The girl told me that he could not be taken right away because he didn't have a serious injury. He was basically walking with three legs. I loaded him into a cart so he didn't have to try to walk. The girl told me it was a 45 minute wait. Ok, fine.

Pooch and I sat and waited. I didn't have my phone or a watch to keep time. I saw the time when we were taken back. We watched all the regular customers get greeted with excitement and a smile. We never got that. He was taken back into a room. We should be seen soon, right? No. Waited some more. Finally all said and done, the 'vet' could not get his knee back into joint. We went home with pain meds, anti-inflammatories, some skin treatment because he had licked his bad foot raw on two of his toes. She said to come back in a week and if his knee was still out of joint we should consider surgery.

I read over his paperwork after we got settled that evening. Their comments included overweight, bad teeth, bad skin. He is supposed to be seen in 7 days. We will

definitely be going to our regular vet. Their only goal in this 'hospital' is to make money, not heal. IF YOU HAVE ANY LOVE FOR YOUR PET PLEASE GO SOMEWHERE ELSE.....

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Command Sergeant Major Isaac of Colorado Springs, CO on Oct. 30, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

My husband and I are writing to you because of the continued harassment that Banfield is giving to our family. We purchased the "Wellness Plan" because we love our Schnauzer just as if he were human. As most married couples who can't have children usually do we spoil our "pet". When my father had a heart attack and my husband was on his Eighth Combat Tour, I had no choice but to travel by car to see him as I could not kennel my child. I never have and I never will put him in a "cage"! I had already paid five months of payments to Banfield through my bank automatic allotment. We moved from Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

There were not any Bank of America Branches here at Fort Carson so we were forced to change our Financial Institution. We would have gladly continued to pay if not for TWO HUGE reasons and both fall on the part of Banfield. The first is the fact that I called and gave my banking information to a young lady and she failed to do what was required to comply with Banfield regulations. The second and most devastating was the employee at the Banfield location at PetSmart located on Academy Boulevard here in Colorado Springs, and her words and attitude to us about my father.

When I contacted Banfield to notify that location that I would not be available for Padre's booster shot, I was NEVER told that if I missed that appointment I would have to PAY to start over on that vaccination. Why would I when I am in their Wellness Plan and pay EVERY month? When I returned and attempted to receive his second shot the young lady (and I am being polite calling her a lady) told me in this exact quote: "We do not care if your father was in ICU and almost died, that is not our problem! You HAVE to pay for the entire shot process over again because YOU failed to comply with our Optimum plan." I was stunned and told her that I would not pay again as I have been nothing but a loyal and respectful customer and then I said this: "If you ever say anything so stupid to me or another client again, not only will I attempt to have you removed from your job but I will go on the news and tell them how Banfield treats their Military families" End quote!

I have since attempted to contact the Veterinarian(s) at this location. I have been told that there are two part time Vets who are on "loan" from another Animal Hospital and only one Vet who actually works for Banfield. I have left seventeen messages to have her call me and she has not returned ONE call. I have been to the location on six occasions as I have Padre groomed at that Pet Smart location and the Grooming department can tell you that I love my Padre and I tip very well for their service. This is NOT about their \$34.00 a month fee, this is not about their Optimum Plan, it is about that location not following their own rules! This is about INTEGRITY.

My husband is now deployed on his NINTH combat tour and I have just had a Bilateral Mastectomy for LDIC Breast Cancer. I am currently not working as I am recuperating here without any family other than my Padre. I am sure that if I take this situation to the local news, someone else will pay this "debt" for my husband. Who let me mention has earned FIVE Bronze Stars for Valor in his NINE Combat Tours defending ALL Countries both Foreign and Domestic!! I believe that we have paid for the services that Padre received. We paid over three hundred dollars and he did not receive that amount of care. I have asked kindly that they remove us from their system and that the "debt" be zeroed out. If they feel that is not the appropriate avenue, then I will have no choice but to contact the local newspaper and local news stations. I KNOW one of them will carry this story and I also know that it will hurt their business way more than it will hurt our reputation.

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I am sending a copy of this letter to Banfield here in Colorado Springs where all of this horrible issue started. I am also sending a copy to our local JAG (Judge Advocate General) for The United States Army, and I am sending it to the Veterans Administration because this falls under the Soldiers and Sailors Act of 1978 where you cannot pursue a "debt" while the service member is deployed during wartime. Please reply how you would like to handle this situation.

Kris of Pleasanton, CA on Oct. 24, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 2/5

I have had Banfield Wellness the last four years for my cat who I adopted from the shelter. She was about 12 years of age. My Cat has had her teeth cleaned for the last three years at Banfield.

In Sept. 2013 I took her into Banfield about a week before the scheduled cleaning just to make sure she was in good enough shape for the procedure and because she was not eating her normal amount of food. The lady vet at the Dublin, CA Banfield said it looked like she had an ulceration under her tongue and put her on antibiotics. I then took her back two days before the scheduled teeth cleaning and another vet told me it looked like a severed frenulum under her tongue and he would do the teeth cleaning and take a biopsy of the mouth wound that day.

I came back to get her and was told both procedures were done and I could take her home. By this time the vet doctor who did the procedure had left for the day, I was told my cat had a suture in her mouth but she didn't need any pain meds. I was not happy about this and asked the new girl at the desk to please ask the other vet who was in the back if he would please give me pain meds for my girl. His reply was "I wasn't involved in the case so I can't authorize any pain meds".

Apparently when the changing of the "guards" shift changes, the vets don't collaborate! The next day the vet who did the surgery called me only because I was not happy when I left there. He apologized for sending my cat home with no pain meds and I had to go back there to get some. The biopsy came back as a stomatitis or traumatic injury. I took my girl back a few days later because she wasn't eating and the vet gave her a steroid shot, antibiotics and more pain meds.

Another few days went by and I took her back because her mouth was not healing, she was not eating well, she was drooling constantly and just a mess. The vet then told me he wanted me to take her to a specialist because he couldn't help my cat any more. I decided to get a second opinion from a local veterinarian.

The new vet checked her out and said by the feel of her jaw and because she had not improved even with all the medications, she thinks a needle biopsy will come back with a cancer. Because of the wellness plan I had I took her back to Banfield. He said he was disappointed I didn't take her to the specialist he recommended! I told him what the other vet said and he didn't want to do only the needle biopsy but also wanted to take a bigger section of the wound.

Now I was putting my sweet girl under yet another anesthesia and she was already in bad shape. This was already three weeks after the first biopsy and on so many medications with no improvement at all! The second biopsy came back as squamous cell cancer of the mouth. The doctor vet at Banfield said he was sorry but he should have taken that deeper biopsy the first time!

I had to put my beautiful Persian to sleep on October 11, 2013. REALLY, my precious cat had to suffer for three weeks! The front desk people should not be working there with the exception of Cynthia. All the people

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working the desk seem to be so cold indifferent, and just plain bothered by customers. To make matters worse I called Banfield Wellness to cancel my pet insurance.. They sent me an email saying the policy can't be cancelled unless I want to pay for the whole year.. And by the way, they would give me a 50% reduction of the cost but I still need to pay the balance!

For heaven's sake, my precious cat is dead! What is the matter with Banfield.. Other than I have now realized they are not a full service vet office and the money is far more important. I want everyone reading these complaints to reconsider before taking your beloved pet to Banfield. That woman vet at the Dublin CA Petsmart should not be working there.

Dan of San Antonio, TX on Oct. 19, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I took my dog in to get his teeth cleaned on Tuesday morning. He was very lethargic and would not eat later that day. We expected this because of the anesthesia. However, the next day he wouldn't eat or drink and lay in his kennel all day. Our dog is a Min Pin and literally does circles around us and the kitchen at feeding time. He didn't even look at his food. This continued.

Long story short, we took him in on Thursday and REQUESTED for his blood to be drawn and checked for infections or something because he wasn't right. He was vomiting, diarrhea, lethargic, and his breathe smelled like dead animals. We went back to pick him up and the Dr. told us that he was fine. He ate and he's okay. We asked if any blood was taken and he said no. We questioned this and he responded that he made a medical decision based on our dog's behavior. Disregarding what we requested.

Jump forward to today, Saturday. The symptoms continued and I know my dog. He was not acting normal AT ALL. I took him this morning and explained everything to the CHILD at reception. They took Bruiser back and the vet came out and proclaimed, "He's healed," as she fed him some food. I just looked at her like she was an idiot. Very calmly I explained to her that the exact same thing happened two days ago and that my dog is very possessive about his food with other dogs. That's why he ate everything in sight. And he's acting "normal" because of his adrenaline.

I refused to take him and insisted on her taking blood. She responded with, "You brought him in because he wouldn't eat and he's eating." I then became upset and made a scene. Asking her if she had been told about drinking 0 fluids in two days, eating yesterday and vomiting it back up and all the other symptoms I explained to the child at reception. She said no, just not eating. So after telling her to either take blood or I would go somewhere else she agreed.

As I was leaving, I explained to the CHILD that his breathe smelled like death and to please inform the Vet about this (FYI, my version of being upset is pretty mild. I'm a laid back guy). The Vet just called me and said, "I overheard the girls talking about the bad breath." I asked, "Did they tell you directly?" She said that no, they didn't. She just overheard them talking about it and that is a bad sign. She ran blood.

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My dog's kidneys have failed. He's in treatment right now and we don't know if he'll make it. He's only 4 years old and a Champion Blood Min Pin. He's not a kennel dog or a rescue. So I know he has good genes. I am positive that if the first Vet, Dr. ** at the Culebra location would have just done as my wife requested. TWICE, our baby boy would have a lot better chance. Now we have a 3 week old baby at home and a sick pup in the hospital.

SHAME ON YOU BANFIELD. I researched and saw the bad reviews but always thought only mad people complain and that's only a small percent. That is 100% true. But pray that you aren't that small percent. I am confident that another Vet that didn't have 50 other dogs would have filled our request. I will be writing to the State Board also to explain the situation. I understand Vets can't prevent everything. But he ignored the request of the owners on two occasions and it's has led to this. We were not requesting blood work to be done free. We were 100% willing to pay for it. He just refused.

Yevonne of Henderson, NV on Oct. 18, 2013
Satisfaction Rating 1/5

My King Charles (Ramsey) died Oct. 11th. I spent over \$2,000 at Banfield 4 months ago. Oct. 11th, he had a stroke and I rushed him to hospital. I did not have my purse, any money or debit card. My son was in ICU in critical condition in Tucson. I had just returned the night before to get more clothes. I was completely devastated Ramsey died. When I got home, I made a check out of Investment account dropped in mail box on way to airport. I received 5 calls before I could call back to tell them I dropped check in mail. When I got home from Tucson in 3 days, I had all kinds of threatening call. They did not receive check and didn't believe I mailed check. It was in my mailbox. I had wrong zip code and it was returned. Three more calls saying they were turning it over to collection.

I immediately took check in returned envelope to office. I had paid you lots of money and had always paid. You do not care about pets or people only money. They knew my son was critical. I told them the vet talk to my daughter and she told her. I will never walk through the door of a PetSmart store and will tell all my friends. Your actions were uncalled for. I think a new CEO should be considered for you company. I could not believe all the complaints on websites. People reading this, do not use Banfield. They do not care about you or your pet.

Robert of Crescent Springs, KY on Oct. 18, 2013
Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I would strongly suggest that no one trust their pet to Banfield Pet Hospital, no matter where you live. The clinics in Miamisburg, Ohio and Florence, Kentucky failed to properly monitor my beloved Maggie, who was prescribed Phenobarbital against my wishes for supposed seizures, which in less than one month destroyed her liver killing Maggie. I had requested Dr. Amy ** (Ohio) and Dr. Andrea ** (Kentucky) to run laboratory tests to determine if the medication was toxic on her liver, and they decided to ignore my wishes. May Maggie rest in piece, and Drs. ** and ** go to Hell for their flagrant neglect. God help them!

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Cira of Miami, FL on Oct. 17, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I visited a Banfield Animal Hospital last week. While I waited in the examination room for 2 hours, I only saw and spoke with the Vet for about 10 minutes. All alone, I was dealing with what seemed to be a 20-year-old so-called nurse? I asked many questions and each time she had to leave the room to get answers. At one point, I was exhausted and frustrated. When the Vet was in the room for all 10 minutes, I had to remind her to check my dog's ears... She said, "Oops, yes, I should." I am still confused as to what exactly is wrong with my dog and what they did or didn't do for the 10 minutes they took him away.

As I exited the room to the front counter, I asked the Manager to please administer one of her medications (since I expected them to know how to do it) so in case she gave me a hard time when I got home. He tried to give her the meds orally through a syringe... My dog was not happy about it and the "manager" wrestled my dog to the ground and the medication went flying everywhere as well as my dog to the ground. A lady in the waiting room commented very negatively on the incident she had just witnessed. When I left there, I sat in my car and thought about everything I had endured... and just cried.

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I called Banfield's corporate offices only to find out that no one will speak with you. I left a message with Corporate and they had the Manager which wrestled my dog to the ground call me... It only made me angrier as he was so aloof, cold, and uncompassionate. He said Sonny, the market manager, may call me at "her discretion"!?! Can you believe that? I am wishing to take my dog to another Vet but can't afford it. I have seen many, many complaints about Banfield not that I am also an unhappy customer. I am just astonished as to why they are allowed to continue to run a business in this fashion. Aren't there any protection laws for consumers? They are obviously getting away with murder...and I really mean murder with some of the posts I have read about negligence on their part. Still angry and upset!

Susan of Gibsonia, PA on Oct. 13, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I received a very sick kitty from a breeder in San Antonio, TX. He had been seen at the Banfield Hospital there and been approved for interstate travel with NO immunizations. When I received him, he had ear mites, respiratory infection, conjunctivitis and active ringworm. The exam report from the Banfield vet 3 days prior to my receiving him mentioned NONE of these health issues. It has cost \$900 in vet bills over the past 10 days to treat these illnesses. I have NO respect for this fraudulent veterinary practice. As with everyone else, their main concern was selling their wellness program.

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Joyce of Providence, RI on Sept. 28, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I believe Banfield is mainly a money making operation. I had a coupon for a free exam and took my new dog there last year. They convinced me the wellness plan was the way to go as it would be cost effective and my Pekingese could get all her shots. On that first visit they proceeded to give her three vaccines that day and a harsh ear wash for her ear mites. She had a severe allergic reaction that night. I informed Banfield of this reaction and they decided that every time she had her shots she needed an IV catheter w/ an anti allergy drip that required me to drop her off and pick up hours later. Needless to say they charged a lot for these services, but I took their word for it that it was necessary.

Last month I attempted to make a grooming appointment for my dog and was told her rabies certificate had expired. I was not made aware of this by Banfield. I contacted Banfield and made an appointment for a rabies shot only in the evening. I visited the Banfield in Warwick, RI. I waited an hour after my scheduled appointment, was called into the exam room and waited some more. The vet tech came in the room and said we had a problem. They needed to put my dog on an IV to give her a rabies shot because of her past reaction. I insisted she should be fine without it, was only one shot and we needed it done asap. This vet tech went out and spoke to the female vet in charge that night. I could hear her exclaiming "No! NO, absolutely not!!" Then another male vet came in saying "I'm here to break the bad news to you. She wont allow the rabies shot tonight. You need to come back so they can put her on an IV." We were turned away and REFUSED A RABIES SHOT!!

Needless to say I won't be going back. I feel the vets are lacking in common sense and my experience at Banfield Thursday night proved it to me. I attempted to complain through Banfield corporate who had the store manager call me, who just supported the action of their vet. You don't even know who your vet is in that place, you never know who you are going to get, none of them are personable, you don't know where they went to school, what their credentials are, and the one on Thursday night never even came in the room to introduce herself or listen to me. I believe they are inexperienced and incompetent poor excuses for vets.

Margaret of Lavallette, NJ on Sept. 28, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I took my dog in and said "he has an ear infection and a sore on foot." They looked and confirmed that by saying "Eew, I can smell his ear." NEVER CLEANED THE EAR. Tried to sell me a program and charged me \$186.00 for nothing but a tube of medicine. I went to them because it was close to my house and I didn't want to drive the 15 minutes to my regular vet. My vet would have been half that, and I would have left with clipped nails and the ears cleaned. NEVER, NEVER will I use them again and I will go back tomorrow and let them know, I was too upset at the time. They didn't even have a table to put my big boy on..... It is a big scam.

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Joe&ash of Tampa, FL on Sept. 26, 2013

Satisfaction Rating1/5

We brought our dachshund mix into Banfield on September 24 after we noticed he seemed to be in serious pain after stepping off our deck. The vet at Banfield looked him over and took x-rays, costing almost \$400, only to tell us that he didn't know what was wrong and it was not a back issue. I asked specifically if it had anything to do with his back and was told "no, probably not." They gave us pain killers and told us to go home and come back on Sunday if he wasn't better.

The next day, Boomer wasn't any better. He was clearly uncomfortable and crying constantly. A few hours later, he completely lost control of his legs and was not able to walk or focus on anything. I called Banfield and was told that they gave me too strong a dose and to just cut his pills in half. I called again about hour and half later and was given to another vet, who told me that since he hadn't been the one to look at Boomer, he didn't know what I wanted him to say. And he said he probably had to go to the bathroom or something like that.

We rushed Boomer to the emergency vet after that and they quickly told us that it was in fact his back, and that he had slipped discs in his spine that were pushing into his spinal cord. The ER vet told us that once the dog is paralyzed, it's really too late to do anything for him and that he was in severe pain. She told us never to go to Banfield. We were left with no choice but to put our baby to sleep. We called Banfield's corporate office and lodged a complaint saying that we felt that if Banfield's vets had told us earlier about him or would have tried harder to figure out what was wrong instead of dismissing us because it was closing time, we could have gotten him the surgery that would have saved his life.

The first vet called us back and basically told us that he didn't agree with the ER vet and that it wasn't his fault because Boomer wasn't showing those symptoms when he saw him. When I asked him why the other vets hadn't told us to bring him instead of blowing us off, he just kept apologizing and he would talk to his staff, and get us our money back. This is a quick fix and not good enough. The vet just kept saying that there was nothing he could do and the outcome would've been the same. This is not true. If they would have told us that we needed more help, we could have taken him to the ER sooner, and he would not have had to go through an entire day of excruciating pain.

William of Bourbonnais, IL on Sept. 18, 2013

Satisfaction Rating2/5

My ten-year old Papillion/Yorkshire, Hoosier, began wrenching and we had just begun the most expensive Banfield wellness plan for him. I called and they said to bring him in and was told to change his food and was given some pepsin for his stomach and sent home with the new food/diet change. Two weeks later, he began bringing up a lot of bile so Banfield said bring him in (second time) and this time, they found pancreatitis (why not this finding the first time?). So they filled Hoosier with fluids (he looked like a water balloon) and sent him home with three days of a tablet antibiotic. Hoosier stopped drinking water and his urine was dark orange so I called Banfield and was told not to worry.

Three weeks of that, back to square one with wrenching bile so why would I go back to Banfield a third time? Off to an AAHA veterinarian facility (Stateline Hillcrest), we went where they saved his life and sent him home with fourteen days of a liquid antibiotic. Hoosier is now in great health and if I had stayed with Banfield,

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Hoosier would more than likely be dead. After multiple communication with Banfield's corporate office, it is obvious to me they are aggressive financially and care little for the well being of the pets they claim to serve. Banfield absolutely needs to be shut down.

K. of Lewisville, TX on Sept. 17, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

Dr. Joy was a great vet and was great with my kitten. But that's where my satisfaction stops with Banfield. Since my cat was enrolled in a 1-year wellness plan, I made it clear to the employees there that I did not want the plan to renew because I was moving (or so I thought). Months later, I see that I'm still being charged by Banfield and call to see if she's still enrolled, which she was. After making a 1-hour call to the corporate headquarters, they finally cancelled her plan and refunded me 1 month's payment, even though I never took her in and specifically requested that the plan not auto-renew. They claimed I requested that the plan not auto-renew EARLY, a technicality and mistake on their part. I never wanted to renew, and tried my hardest to communicate that to them.

I'm fairly sure that they want to keep auto charging you as long as possible, even if you haven't received services, and then state that it was 'in the contract' when it was an employee's mistake. It really is just a business trying to make as much money as they can off of the customers. So if you do enroll in a wellness plan and don't want to continue, be sure to (as specifically as possible), tell them not to let it auto-renew.

Larry of Murrells Inlet, SC on Sept. 16, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

On Tuesday my wife noticed our Maxx was having a problem with his right eye. She was visiting our daughter so she took him to Banfield in Wesley Chapel, NC (Daughter's vet). The vet examined Maxx and advised my wife that he had an eye infection and was given meds to treat. My wife felt his left eye also seemed slightly affected and was told by the vet to not be concerned, it was limited to the right eye. She returned home on Wednesday and the eye was closed and by late Wednesday, it was obvious that the left eye too was affected. She had followed the instructions from the Banfield NC vet to the letter as Maxx is a big part of our family and we see him as a little boy in a white furry suit!

Thursday morning, she took him to our vet and was sent immediately to Banfield in Myrtle Beach SC for an ocular pressure test. Banfield Myrtle Beach looked at the report from Banfield Wesley Chapel and was surprised to see That no ocular test had been performed. The Banfield Myrtle Beach vet set up an immediate appointment with an animal eye specialist in Charleston and was told to get him there immediately. I left work and we drove him the hour and half drive to Charleston to see the specialist. We were taken in immediately and Maxx was examined. His ocular pressure was 70 which the specialist advised us was extreme and that she had never had a patient near that pressure. They relieved the pressure and began to treat Maxx. We were told that due to the amount of pressure Maxx would likely be blind in both eyes after being treated.

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We left him there overnight for treatment and picked him up on Friday afternoon. We are taking him back this Tuesday for a follow up and long term planning. Maxx has Glaucoma. If you Google this you will find this is common in several breeds and seems to happen between 2-3 year old dogs. Maxx is 2 1/2 years old and always affects one eye first. If you continue to read, the symptoms Maxx had were textbook to what he had when he was seen in NC. The vet should have done a simple test and referred us to a specialist less than 15 minutes away. Instead we were treating him for an infection as he continued to go blind.

We have been told that if we had taken him to a specialist on Tuesday, his sight would have been saved. My wife called Banfield in Wesley Chapel and pleaded with them to be careful of providing the wrong info in a case like ours and my wife is much more forgiving than I but totally heartbroken. We were charged \$160.00 for this misdiagnosis, and since have spent nearly \$1000.00 and it isn't over yet. We have a healthy 2 1/2 year old fella that still has an average life span of 10-12 years that is totally blind due to the Wesley Chapel Banfield's misdiagnosis.

As I said before my wife is much more forgiving than I. My next expense is an attorney and I promise you that these people will pay for their incompetence! This is not about the money, I don't care what the cost to take these people to court or if we recover one cent. It's not fair to us or our Maxx that we suffer this due to someone's ignorance or negligence. This is one of the most heartbreaking events to affect our family in many years! Just remember that not all Banfield clinics are this negligent... The one in Myrtle Beach was very helpful.

Glenn of Independence, MO on Sept. 15, 2013 **Satisfaction Rating 1/5**

I took my kitten in yesterday in an emergency. He suddenly became sick and my regular vet was closed for the day. The first thing I found out about these Banfield people is they are disgustingly predatory and actually prey upon people with pets in distress. First they charged me \$40.00 for just visiting the office (visiting the office!!). Then they wanted to do a blood test on him that cost 175 dollars for information they could find out much cheaper. Never have I seen such outrageous fees anywhere in my life.

The second thing I learned is they are incompetent when it comes to reading and dealing with people. It turned out my kitten, who has always been indoors, tested positive for the virus FIV. This killed me especially as this little kitten chose me and has been more like a buddy and a funny roommate than a kitten. I know I said I wanted to die, but they could have checked and made sure what I meant. I felt I had failed my little friend, and it crushed me. But they didn't check, they didn't ask if I was okay, nothing like that. Instead, they snatched the kitten away from me and lied to me, saying they were going to clean him up.

Unknown to me, they were calling the police while I waited! Yes, called the police who proceeded to haul me away in front of an entire store full of people. These disgusting vermin (Banfield) had the audacity earlier to not take the kitten's temperature because they said they didn't want to "stress him out". Gee, ya think maybe forcing him to stay in a strange place scared and alone might "stress him out???" But, how silly of me, then they could charge more money to keep him overnight!

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So, as it stands now, I cannot even go to get him. What are they going to do, call the police again? Or just keep him as long as they can so they can get more money? Banfield in Independence, MO, you people are the most disgusting people I have ever had the displeasure of meeting.

Sheri of Lilburn, GA on Sept. 12, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

My son was convinced to accept the "insurance" offered by this establishment for \$65.00 a month. On the few visits, there is always an additional cost offered. This last visit, I dropped the pet off at 8am and advised the clerk at the counter to call me with their assessment. I did not receive a call. I arrived at 5:30 pm to pick her up and they "were not finished with her". After waiting for an hour, we were finally asked to talk to the vet about a skin condition. I specifically dropped her off so as not to wait to be seen. I inquired as to the skin condition as was told, "You should have that looked at." Doing so was apparently not part of the \$65.00 monthly fee - that is for healthy visits only. Why would someone pay \$780.00 for yearly shots? The price for items recommended was absurdly overstated so as to show a "discount" as part of the plan.

I've been to vets all over the country and have never seen anything like it. When the vet sensed my unease, she left the room and sent in the clerk to try and sell the additional items. I agreed to one item, with reluctance, only to find out it was not available. Keep in mind, I dropped the pet off at 8am with contact information. Why at 7pm are they discovering they do not have what the pet needed? The complete disregard for the pet and the owner was astounding. This so called "insurance" is a scheme to take advantage of unsuspecting victims. I would never recommend this company for anything, especially entrusting them to the well being of my pet, as well being is not their primary focus - money is.

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Diane of Baltimore, MD on Sept. 8, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I got a new puppy and I went to Pet Smart to get her food, bowls, toys, treats etc. The Pet Smart associate sold me a new Puppy 2013 Starter Kit at the cash register. In this puppy kit there was a free consultation coupon with a Banfield veterinarian. So I made an appointment. The lady who registered me at the front desk asked me if I would like to enroll in the wellness plan. I told her I wanted to see how this visit went first. A vet nurse came and took us in the exam room. She asked what we were there for. I told her I would like to get my puppy's shots up-to-date. She asked me what shot do I need. I gave her the paperwork on my puppy's last shots. She still didn't know what shots I needed. Then she started talking about enrolling in the wellness plan. I told her that I wanted to see how this visit went before I made a decision. I will go home and discuss with my husband.

The doctor came in next and he started talking about himself, where he was from, how long he's been a vet. etc. He asked what we were there for and then he proceeded to talk about enrolling in the wellness plan. I told him I wanted to see how this visit went and I will talk it over with my husband at home. The doctor walked out of the room. At this time, I walked out of the room, went to the front desk to pay my bill and no one could understand why I was upset. I was upset because everyone at this place only cared about selling me something instead of taking care of my puppy. I do not recommend this vet. Go to your neighborhood vet. I did. Totally different experience.

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Amy of Vancouver, WA on Sept. 2, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I have had several bad experiences with Banfield Pet Hospital, Vancouver Mall Drive, Vancouver, Washington. However, I am only going to describe my most recent experience with them. My 6 year old dog had diarrhea for two days, and on the 3rd day she began vomiting, so I called Banfield and took her in immediately. After waiting 20 minutes to be helped, they put us in a room, and shortly one of the techs came in. I gave her a history of what was going on, and as she is typing on the computer she says to me, "Well, they will probably want to do x-rays." How much is that, I asked - her response was \$206. I told her that I was not clear what an x-ray would even show, and that \$200 was too much money.

When the vet came in, she said, "So, I understand that x-rays are too expensive for you, so we will do a gram stain (test of fecal matter) and take it from there." She left, and when she returned she said she had seen bacteria that she sees with salmonella and ordered 3 prescriptions to be given: amoxicillin as an antibiotic, cerenia for vomiting and an antidiarrheal medication.

The cerenia was to be given 1 hour before the other two meds to ensure that they would not be vomited back up. The "4 pack" of cerenia I received was one round tablet, broken (not cut) into 4 pieces and the cost was \$33. Amoxicillin was \$20 for 20 capsules (100 capsules go for \$19) and the visit cost me \$106 (I was not charged for the office visit, since I had already purchased a wellness plan). The vet never took her temperature, nor did she do any blood or urine tests.

This will be my last visit to Banfield, they over-charge (at least 3x the markup) on their prescriptions, they "hard sell" you with the premise of "you want to do what's best for your dog" and they try to get you to agree to tests or treatments that are not even necessary, but always expensive. I have even talked to the owner of this Banfield, Dr. Goff, and he ended up charging me \$850 to pull 7 of her teeth, yet never scheduled any type of follow-up visit. I have paid almost \$2,000 since going to Banfield the first of this year, but I have finally learned my lesson: they don't care about your animal, they only care about the almighty buck.

Gorecki of Fort Collins, CO on Aug. 27, 2013

Satisfaction Rating 1/5

I adopted a dog from Craigslist and, unfortunately, the previous owner was shoddy. He never got any papers to me and didn't contact me at all to see how she was doing or to answer my questions regarding her papers and vaccine record. Even worse, she ended up getting sick after just a few days. I took her to Banfield in Fort Collins and was unimpressed with the staff. None of them seemed to give a damn about my pup, except for the fact that she wasn't spayed. When I asked about the cost of a spay procedure, they quoted more than \$200. I told them that was not affordable for me and that we weren't even sure if we wanted to spay. Instead of being understanding, the staff member rudely commented that my dog wasn't a purebred and no one would want a puppy from her anyway.

Sadly, with the checkup and medicine, the cost for the visit was well over what I had, as I was waiting for my paycheck which would be in the next day. The BRILLIANT employee decides to tell me that if I sign up for a wellness plan, the cost would be significantly less, nothing would be charged that day, and that I could pay for

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and pick up the medicine the next day after my pay was in. I was told I could cancel at any time and that it would be \$25 a month (rounded). It just seemed to make sense. Yes, I was stupid and in hindsight, I should have just waited until I got paid and went to another vet, but my pup was sick and I wanted her to get better as soon as possible. So much for the \$25 charge, I was getting \$50 charges on my card, until my account was closed when I lost my job. Now they can't get their money and they keep calling me.

After reading all the reviews, I honestly don't want to give them more money. Between charging outrageous prices for services and continually charging for pets that are deceased or are not even being trusted to them anymore, I'd say they've screwed enough people. Seems to me like it's time for the people to screw them! I personally feel like they prey on owners who care deeply for their pets by quoting high retail costs and then using that as a means to get people to sign up for wellness plans. They treat you like you're the scum of the earth, until you fall for their charade and, in my case, even after, if you decline their 'caring' advice (i.e. pay \$100+ extra for a spay procedure that was well done by a local vet for \$97, including pain meds).

If you ask me, the wellness plan was based on the idea that they could charge annually for services that don't even cost them that price to offer. How many people REALLY make full use of the plan, except annual check up, shots, emergencies? So you either pay ridiculous fees for the services you DO use, or you pay a seemingly less ridiculous fee for services you don't fully use. The fact that they can discount everything with the wellness plan should show how much they overcharge in the first place. Also, Mike from FoCo, how do I get in touch with you?

A. of Bristow, VA on Aug. 26, 2013 **Satisfaction Rating 1/5**

I have been a vet tech with Banfield for six years. It began as my dream job. Decent hours, a wonderful Chief of Staff and happy co-workers. I had always dreamed of helping and working with animals, and was finally given the chance because of a doctor who cared enough to take the time to teach me while I was going to back to school to study veterinary technology. Then we were taken over, by all things, a giant candy corporation. This made perfect sense of course - making chocolate and caring for pets is obviously a natural transition. That is when it began a rapid downhill slide toward the changing of priorities to the all-mighty dollar in place of pet care.

Reduced to skeleton staffing while more than doubling clientele and procedures, eliminating benefits, extending hours and hiring veterinarians who are so incompetent, they pose a constant danger to the pets. When specific, potentially harmful, practices were brought to several managers' attention, they were never addressed. Mainly because our profits were now so very wonderful, they didn't want to interfere. Hooray for them! How impressive. Unfortunately, I am not in a position where I can just walk out, but as soon as I'm able, I am gone. I don't even take my own pets there, regardless of the discount. Please find another animal hospital for your beloved pets.

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Destiny Carter



Destiny Carter grew up in the small town of St. Petersburg Florida. Her love for all things literature grew from the time she finished her first book *Freckle Juice*. Trying her hand at acting and performing in productions of *The Wizard of Oz*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and a few other original plays she eventually found her true voice in writing. Destiny attended Fort Valley State College where she studied Mass Communications. Ms. Carter holds three certifications in public speaking from the internationally recognized organization Toastmasters International.

Although her love for writing was put on the back burner to try other career interest Destiny eventually found her way back to her true passion, writing. Destiny's first novel *Pleasure Island* was published in August of 2007.

In 2008 Destiny produced her sophomore book *Snow Cap Mountain*. *Dirty Karma* was released to take the literary world by storm in 2009, followed by her erotic romance *Her only wish*, *The Freak Files* an erotic anthology, *To Tell a Secret*, and her instructional publishing planner "Book Basics Writer's Workbook."

Visit the author at WWW.DESTINYCARTERNOVELS.COM