

ALABAMA VETERINARIAN

A Bi-Annual Publication for ALVMA Members, Veterinary Students and Friends of the ALVMA

Spring 2010



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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Snowing on Monday with seventy degrees on Wednesday, spring is exciting in Alabama. I hope everyone made it through a slow winter. The warm weather always increases fleas, ticks, bee stings, cat fights, and snake bites. This winter practice may have been slow, but ALVMA was very busy. As usual the Food Animal Conference was excellent. Attendance was down some, but there was still a good crowd. The White Coat Ceremony was at Tuskegee University this year. If you have never attended this ceremony I would recommend going once. This is one event that always makes me remember the excitement I felt beginning clinics and being able to apply the knowledge I had learned.



The winter meeting this year was very good and those of you who did not attend missed some very useful continuing education. As usual, Dr. Strother did an outstanding job for the Hall of Fame Banquet. Laughter and tears were present just like every year. The Legislative Day at the State Capital went very well. Quite a few of our state legislators attended. All seemed receptive to our ideas and positions on proposed legislation. Personally, I think they were happy to talk about anything but bingo.

Mark your calendars and make your reservations to attend the Annual Convention in Sandestin. Support the ALVMA, it is always working for our profession.

Thanks,
Larry L. Chasteen, DVM
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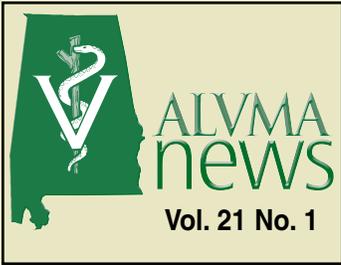
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About Larry L. Chasteen, DVM

- Born and raised in a mining community of West Jefferson County
- Became interested in animals very early in life
- Graduated from Ensley High School
- Received a BS degree in Medical Laboratory Technology - Auburn University - 1980
- Graduated from Auburn University School of Veterinary Medicine in 1984
- In 1985 opened Logan Martin Veterinary Clinic in Pell City where he remains today
- Married with two children and a grand-daughter



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Board Approves Sixteen New Applicants

The Board of Directors of the Alabama VMA voted to accept the membership applications of sixteen veterinarians since November 2009. If you have an opportunity to see or talk to the following individuals, please extend your best wishes and make them feel welcome as part of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association.

DOCTORS:

Joseph Atwell, Montgomery (AUB 08)
Billy Berry, Piedmont (AUB 81)
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MATTERS OF LAW

Attorney Jeffrey L. Roth of Fees & Burgess, P.C. in Huntsville is a guest columnist for articles contained in Matters of Law. Mr. Roth practices in the areas of employment law; commercial and contract law; general corporate law; business transactional and regulatory law; and governmental contracting. He is a frequent lecturer, and has published numerous materials and presented numerous programs on various aspects of business and employment law, and is a regular presenter at the National Contract Management Association World Congress. Mr. Roth is admitted to practice law in the states of Alabama and Ohio, and is a member of the American, Federal, Alabama, and Huntsville Madison County Bar Associations, and various industry organizations, including the Institute of Supply Chain Management and the Society for Human Resource Management. Mr. Roth holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Dayton, and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Cincinnati in business administration. Mr. Roth can be reached at 256-536-0095 or jroth@feesburgess.com.

All topics of Matters of Law are archived on the ALVMA website (www.alvma.com) under "Education/References."

Veterinary Liens in Alabama

by Jeffrey L. Roth, JD

Liens are rights in property to secure the payment of a debt. A possessory lien is a lien on the property that is in the possession of a creditor. If you take your car to the automobile repair shop, that mechanic has a possessory lien on your car to secure



payment of the repair bill.

Similarly, Alabama Code §35-11-390 sets forth a possessory lien in favor of a veterinarian treating animals. Such liens extend to every animal kept, fed, treated, or surgically treated or operated on by a veterinarian while in his or her custody, if the veterinarian is under contract with the owner of such animal to provide such services. This lien for keeping, feeding, treating or surgically treating or operating on an animal continues until the charges incurred are paid. In addition, the veterinarian has the right to retain such an animal until charges that are due are paid.

Alabama Code § 35-11-391 sets forth the procedure for the enforcement of such a lien. Generally, if a bill is unpaid 10 days after a written demand has been sent to the owner of the animal by registered or certified mail, with return receipt requested, the veterinarian is authorized to sell the animal either at public or private sale. The address to be used should be that of the address given to the veterinarian when the animal is delivered to the veterinarian. If the veterinarian is unsuccessful in selling such an animal within 15 days of the date of the demand for payment the veterinarian may dispose of such animal in any other manner that he or she deems proper.

Any amount received by the veterinarian in excess of the amount due him or her when disposing of the animal, must be returned to the owner.

No special legal proceedings need to be initiated to provide for such a lien and its enforcement. However, there are several things that a veterinarian can do to enhance his or her right to

enforce such a lien and comply with the statute.

It is imperative to have a current address for the client for the required notice. It is good practice to have clients verify whether their address has changed since their last visit. This question can be easily asked by staff anytime during the treatment procedure while the file is readily available. The statute specifically indicates that if the written notice is addressed to the owner at the address given when the animal is delivered to the veterinarian, the veterinarian will not be liable for disposal of an animal in accordance with the procedure in the statute if actual notice does not reach the owner.

The veterinarian must also be "under contract with the owner of such animal" under the statute. Although the statute does not specify a written requirement, it is always wise to have a client's written authority to provide services, particularly when those services include surgery or other expensive procedures. This is a good idea not only to demonstrate that there is a contract for the lien statute, but also to prevent any issues regarding authorization to incur costs when treating an animal, or the scope of that authority if other procedures are performed on the animal that were not initially contemplated by the proposed treatment. However, just because there is no written agreement regarding the services rendered does not mean that the owner has not contracted with veterinarian for services. There would be an implied contract in situations where the owner gives access to the veterinarian to perform certain procedures, or board an animal.

Veterinarians may also want to consider giving notice of his or her rights under this lien statute to clients in some form. Reminding clients against whom liens are enforced that they were previously notified of the possibility of such a lien mutes

any argument that they were unaware of same and were taken by surprise unfairly. Such a notice could be posted in an appropriate place at a clinic, on receipts provided to clients for services rendered, or other appropriate places.

Also, be aware of the sister statute to the veterinary lien provisions of the Alabama Code that is found in § 34-29-86. This section of the Code applies to the disposition of abandoned animals. Under this statute, "abandoned" means, "to forsake entirely, to neglect, or refuse to provide or perform the legal obligations for care and support of an animal by its owner or by his or her agent." The owner of an abandoned animal relinquishes all of his or her rights and claims to the animal. However, abandonment does not relieve the owner of any financial obligation for treatment, boarding, or other veterinary care. Similar to the lien statute, an animal will be deemed abandoned if its owner does not claim ownership 10 days after written notice by registered or certified mail to the owner's last known address. Animals being abandoned under this statute may be turned over to the nearest humane society or dog pound, or sold to collect any liens pursuant to code sections above.

In addition to the liens described above, there are also liens in Alabama with respect to the provision of services provided by livery stables or other places for feeding and caring for stock for pay; premises owners for grazing, feeding, boarding, and training of animals; and liens related to reproductive services.

Although the liens described in this article are a last resort to receive payment for services rendered, it is helpful to be familiar with them so they can be used in circumstances where such measures might be appropriate.

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Heath/Groth Scholarships Awarded

Two students from the College of Veterinary Medicine at Auburn University received scholarships, at Honors Night held on February 18th at Overton Auditorium, on behalf of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation and

the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association.

Rory Applegate, a third year student from Montgomery, AL was this year's recipient of the Dr. and Mrs. A. H. Groth, Jr. Scholarship and Kelly Foster, a third year student from Birmingham, AL was this year's recipient of the Dr. MK Heath Memorial Scholarship. Both scholarships were established by the ALVMA to honor Drs. Heath and Groth, Jr.

According to Auburn University, there were 151 veterinary students that applied to the College for financial assistance in 2009-2010. This is in addition to applications for student loans handled on main campus. The average debt of these students was approximately \$56,300. Members of the Class of 2009 which graduated last May had an average debt of \$108,000. Student debt continues to rise and is a significant concern to officials at Auburn.

According to Dr. Donna W. Angarano, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Auburn, the College of Veterinary Medicine was able to award over \$365,000 in awards and scholarships to 125 students this academic year as the result of support from individuals and organizations like the Alabama VMA and Foundation.



Dr. Larry Chasteen, president of the Alabama VMA poses with Kelly Foster (left photo), recipient of the 2010 Dr. M. K. Heath Scholarship award, and Rory Applegate (right photo), recipient of the 2010 Dr. and Mrs. Aaron Groth, Jr. Scholarship award presented at Honors Night at Auburn University, February 18th

Gucci Dies at 16

Gucci, who persevered through abuse as a puppy and is credited for stricter animal cruelty laws, was euthanized on Wednesday, March 24, 2010 due to failing health.

Gucci's story is a wonderful and encouraging example of how good can come from a tragedy. On the night of May 19, 1994 the three month old Chow-husky mix from Mobile was hung from a tree by his neck, repeatedly smacked in the face and kicked, and finally doused with lighter fluid and set on fire. The puppy somehow managed to escape from his teenaged assailants and, still ablaze, ran under a porch. He was rescued by Dr. Doug James, an adjunct communication arts professor at Spring Hill College, who was in the neighborhood only because he was trying to sell a house he owned there.

James initially tried to steer clear of the puppy's woes, but circumstances prevented him from doing this. He ended up taking the burned puppy home with him that night to administer the supportive care he was able to give, even though he didn't expect Gucci to survive through the night due to his injuries. The resilient little dog didn't die, however, and the next morning James was on the phone to friends and associates in an effort to best determine how to arrange what surely would be extensive, expensive veterinary care for a dog who belonged to someone else. A veterinary pharmaceutical sales rep recommended that Dr. Ann Branch perform the initial evaluation. She took one look at the puppy with second and third degree burns covering his face, head, and neck and agreed to treat him at no charge, on the condition that he never be returned to the cruel environment from which he had been rescued.

In the midst of the media and law enforcement attention surrounding him, Gucci remained in Dr. Branch's care, con-



Doug James and Gucci at 2006 Hall of Fame

tinuing to heal fairly steadily from his injuries. He patiently and quietly tolerated any procedure necessary in the treatment of his wounds. Eventually contractures from the burns on his face pulled his eyelids upward so that he could no longer blink or close his eyes. The decision was made to take him to Auburn University's School of Veterinary Medicine for evaluation for surgical intervention. There Gucci underwent a series of surgeries to ease the tension on the skin of his eyelids. By the end of

1994, he had healed sufficiently to appear in a segment on "Inside Edition" which aired August 30th. He and Dr. James were also invited, and drove all the way, to New York in December of that year to appear in a special program on survivor dogs for the "Maury Povich Show", which was televised January 16, 1995.

Gucci's media exposure in newspapers and magazines, and on radio and local and national television networks, including CNN, caused a deluge of letters, cards, and telephone calls from all over the United States, as well as from Canada and countries as far flung as Australia. He received

Continued on page 19

White Coat Ceremony

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association held its annual White Coat Ceremony on February 22, 2010 honoring the junior veterinary classes of Tuskegee and Auburn Universities. During the event, each student was presented with an embroidered white coat displaying their name and state emblem, along with the school they attended. The ceremony was held at the Kellogg Conference Center on the campus of Tuskegee University. 150 students along with about 350 guests enjoyed an evening of fellowship, presentation of the coats and reception.

Dr. Larry Chasteen, president of the ALVMA presided over the evening festivities, welcoming the students and giving them a word of encouragement regarding the profes-

sion they are about to enter. Dr. William K. Holland, vice president of the ALVMA offered the invocation. Dr. Heidi Hulon, president of the Kentucky VMA and president-elect Dr. Mike Crowley were on hand to present coats to students from Kentucky. Dr. Scott Senf, president of the South Carolina Association of Veterinarians made the presentations to students from South Carolina. Students from Alabama were presented their coats by Dr. Libby Todd, ALVMA president-elect.

A thank you is extended to Pfizer Animal Health who underwrote the cost of the reception. Their continued support of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association is greatly appreciated.

Third year veterinary students from Auburn University (top photo) and Tuskegee University (bottom photo) pose for group pictures following the White Coat Ceremony presentation.



2010 AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference

*By Dr. Tomeshia Hubbard
Tuskegee University Class of 2002*

The AVMA Annual Veterinary Leadership Conference was held in Chicago, Illinois, January 8th-10th. I received the distinct honor of representing the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association shortly after joining the organization in November 2009. I have been an ongoing member of SCAVMA and AVMA since beginning veterinary school. The AVMA now has over 80,000 members. This leadership conference provided me with some much needed information on being an emerging leader and representing the veterinary profession with intelligence. The mission of the AVMA is "to develop leaders for the benefit of the individual and the veterinary profession". This mission was definitely accomplished throughout this conference.

There were numerous attendees of this conference, which included the AVMA officers, executive board, House of Delegates, house advisory committee, committee leaders, AVMA staff and emerging leaders from various states. I was one of two emerging leaders from the state of Alabama. These leadership conferences allowed for all of the emerging leaders to network and interact with each other. Dr. Rick DeBowes, co-founder of the Veterinary Leadership Experience, helped us to learn how to connect with others, how to react to pressure and how to be the doctor you always wanted to be. Dr. DeBowes had us participate in some very unique activities, which pulled each and every emerging leader from their comfort zone and taught us how to interact better with our veterinary clients. The keynote speaker for the opening session was Dr. Paul Lisnek and his session helped us to discover the art of communication and building better client relationships.

On the second day of the conference we were designated to attend three leadership workshops. These workshop titles included 1) Social Media: Are You Ready for the Conversations, 2) The Impact of Substandard Housing on the Welfare of Companion Animals and 3) Government Isn't Broken: How to Work the System and Beat the Odds.

These workshops provided information on how to promote your veterinary practice via Facebook and YouTube and how to set up a meaningful meeting with your regional legislator to discuss pressing issues in the veterinary profession. These sessions were very informative and helped me tremendously. The closing session speaker was Mr. Mike Staver, CEO of the Staver Group and his topic was Leadership Isn't For Cowards: How to Lead Courageously in a Turbulent Age.

I was truly enlightened by this conference. It has exposed me to many of the issues that I deal with on a regular basis, as a veterinarian, and how to approach those issues from a different perspective and as an emerging leader. I would encourage all recent veterinary graduates to attend this meeting. This meeting will further prepare you for veterinary medicine outside of the veterinary medical school environment.

Rural Veterinarians to Get Help with Student Loans

By Jerry Lackey

(Reprinted with permission from Scripps Texas Newspapers)

The acute shortage of rural large-animal veterinarians across the U.S. finally has reached the panic button at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Secretary Tom Vilsack has extended a helping hand.

The USDA is taking the first step toward implementing a plan to address veterinary shortages throughout rural America by repaying the student loans of qualified veterinarians in return for their services in areas suffering from a lack of veterinarians.

Veterinarians are critical to the national food safety and food security infrastructures, and to the health and well-being of both animals and humans; however, major studies indicate significant and growing shortages of feed supply veterinarians and veterinarians serving in certain other high-priority specialty areas, Vilsack said.

A student loan, which could cost between \$130,000 and \$140,000 over four years, forces veterinary school graduates to focus on a small-animal practice simply because of economic reasons. Operating solely as a veterinarian for large animals does not offer a fast income to repay a loan.

There are several Big Country rural veterinarians who still desire to work on large animals, said Robert Pritz, Taylor County Extension agent in Abilene. They were apparently out in the country doing just that Monday when I called.

Russell Ueckert, of Anson Veterinary Hospital, and Alfred Vandeman, in Colorado City, have both operated large-animal clinics for many years, Pritz said.

Monty Ancinec, who operates Callahan County Veterinary in Clyde, has a vacancy after Robert Harle left the practice.

"There are still a few veterinarians who only service large animals, but in today's society the economy makes it extremely hard not to do a mixed-animal practice," said Gary Hodges, who operates Los Caballos with partner Dr. Chris Womack and their associate. "We have about a 50/50 practice."

Los Caballos Veterinary Clinic in San Angelo is a complete hospital for large and small animals offering 24-hour emergency service.

In the meantime, the USDA is offering to help ensure a first line of defense against animal diseases across the nation by placing qualified veterinarians in areas where there is a critical need, Vilsack said. "This program will help reduce veterinary shortages, especially in the area of food-animal medicine, which will reduce stress on producers and improve the health of the livestock industry," he said.

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture administers the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, which was established in the National Veterinary Medical Services Act of 2003. The Texas Animal Health Commission has been given the responsibility to recommend underserved areas to the USDA.

NIFA will convene a panel of federal and state animal health experts to recommend submitted nomination packages for official designation as a veterinary shortage situation. The public will be able to review designated veterinary shortage situations in list and/or map form, along with information describing the nature of the shortage.

NIFA expects to begin accepting applications from veterinarians wishing to participate in the program on April 30. For more information, visit nifa.usda.gov.

Doing More with Less - Improving Staff Utilization

Karen E. Felsted, CPA, MS, DVM, CVPM

CEO-National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues
(NCVEI)

Improved staff utilization is a more critical element of successful practices now than ever before. Practices that want to become more profitable can no longer just count on fee increases to achieve this goal. Improved profitability and patient care must come from improved business practices. In addition, employees who are allowed to learn and grow and use more skills are generally happier in their jobs and more likely to stay with the practice than those who are only allowed to do less interesting tasks. Effective leveraging of employees is also critical to the productivity of the veterinarians and the practice as a whole. Veterinarians who delegate duties to appropriate staff members are able to see more clients and generate more gross revenue and profits. This increased profitability is essential to providing good quality medicine and surgery and to continual invest-

ment in team members in the form of increased salaries and benefits and increased continuing education.

In order to achieve optimal staff utilization, the practice must, first of all, have an owner or practice manager with a strong set of financial, managerial and HR skills—the title isn't enough. Financially successful practices are, almost by definition, well-managed practices. It used to be possible to have a successful practice without a great deal of business skills, but this is no longer true. Clients have higher expectations in both the medical and clients service arenas, veterinarians face increased competition, and the complexity of business regulation has increased.

Most people aren't born with a full set of good management skills. Just as it took training and practice to learn to perform an OHE, it takes similar dedica-

tion to become a skilled manager. One difficulty in veterinary medicine is that most veterinarians do not graduate from veterinary school with a solid grounding in business skills. Veterinary school curriculums are already strained by the burgeoning amount of veterinary knowledge that needs to be passed on to students and most students didn't take business courses in their undergraduate years. Another difficulty is that many veterinarians aren't inherently interested in business management. They went to veterinary school to learn to practice medicine, not to be a business manager. Many practices have hired practice managers to take on the business side of the practice. However, not all managers have been given the training and resources they need to do their jobs well. Fortunately, these are correctable problems.

Continued on next page

NEW A first for feline arthritis patients

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¹Food Report, 10/13/2009
²Food DM, Fox SC, Morris TS. Radiographic evidence of degenerative joint disease in gray tabby cats. JAAHA 1997; 49:854-857. 2002; 68:828-832.
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continued from page 11

Management duties are handled differently in different practices depending on the size of the practice, the interests of the owner veterinarians and the money available to hire managerial help. In some practices, the owner veterinarians do all of the management work either out of necessity or because they enjoy it. In other practices, the owners have hired a full-time, experienced practice manager with the result that the veterinarians primarily practice medicine. The owners make the high-level decisions, but leave day-to-day management to those paid and trained to do it. In other practices, management duties are divided between the owners and other individuals, including support staff, practice managers or associate veterinarians. As practices get bigger and as management duties become more complex, it becomes more necessary to have highly skilled, professional managers in place. Veterinarians will contribute more to the profitability of the clinic through the practice of medicine and surgery than by being managers.

While owners certainly don't have to be involved in the day-to-day management activities of a practice, it is critical that they provide vision and leadership to the business. In addition, they need to set the framework for the decisions to be made, direct and approve the overall activities, and support the management personnel in their responsibilities.

The practice must also:

- Have a detailed, understanding of the skills staff members must have to provide outstanding patient care and client service
- Hire effectively—find and keep the employees with the right skills and attitudes necessary to achieve the practice's goals
- Provide high quality, effective and ongoing training programs to both new team members as well as those who have been in the practice for awhile
- Have high levels of employee retention—revolving door employees aren't around long enough to be efficient and effective
- Design and implement efficient policies, procedures and systems for getting things done
- Schedule staff, appointments, and surgeries effectively and in synch with each other

- Delegate effectively—tasks should be done by the lowest level person who can do the job properly
- Monitor staff activities frequently—in most practices staff are always busy doing something—what they are doing, however, is the key point—is it the most important activity that should be done?
- Regularly review staff utilization metrics

Analyzing the number of support staff in comparison to the number of veterinarians is useful in determining how efficiently your practice is being run. A greater number of support staff will generally result not only in improved client service, but also in better leveraging of doctor time and skills.

Because the number of hours worked by veterinarians and staff members varies widely amongst practices, they are compared on a full-time-equivalent (FTE) basis. A full-time-equivalent veterinarian is assumed to be one that works 45 hours/week during an entire year. This figure is calculated for each practice by taking the total annual hours worked by veterinarians in the practice divided by 45 hours per week and then dividing that result by 52 weeks. For example, a three-veterinarian practice with an annual total of 6,240 hours worked by veterinarians, the FTE number of veterinarians would be 2.66 (6240 divided by 45 with the result then divided by 52.)

A full-time-equivalent support staff member is assumed to be one that works 40 hours/week during an entire year. This figure is calculated for each practice by taking the total annual hours worked by staff members in the practice divided by 40 and then dividing that result by 52 weeks.

The "right" number of staff people per veterinarian will vary in financially successful practices and must be analyzed closely in conjunction with profitability. It is very easy to increase the number of staff per doctor to a level which allows for an easier work environment but seriously erodes profitability.

Another more specific measure of staff and veterinarian productivity and efficiency is the average number of staff and doctor hours per transaction. Average staff hours per transaction are calculated by dividing the total number of hours worked by all support staff members during a certain time period by the number of transactions incurred

in that same time period. Average doctor hours per transaction are calculated by dividing the total number of hours worked by all doctors during the same period by the number of transactions incurred in that period. Average total hours per transaction are calculated by adding staff hours per transaction to doctor hours per transaction. As the name of the metric states, these results are averages for all transactions from the simplest sale of a bag of dog food to a long and complicated surgery. However, comparing these figures from period to period in your practice and to other practices can be very useful in determining areas for improvement.

Visit the NCVEI website for more information, including tools for comparing your staffing metrics to other practices, about staff utilization.

The National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues was founded in January 2000 with a mission of raising the economic base of veterinary medicine. A wide-ranging group of benchmarking, pricing and communications tools are available, free of charge, at www.NCVEI.org. The Commission is a not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors representing the three founding organizations: American Veterinary Medical Association, American Animal Hospital Association and the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. Funding is provided by members of the NCVEI's Sponsor Council that includes Merial, Hill's Pet Nutrition, Veterinary Pet Insurance, Fort Dodge Animal Health, Bayer Animal Health, CareCredit, Simmons Educational Fund and the Western Veterinary Conference.

Announcement Of Annual Business Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association will be held from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 12, 2010 in conjunction with the 103rd Annual Convention. The meeting will be held in Grand Ballrooms A & B at the Linkside Conference Center at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, 9300 Emerald Parkway West, Sandestin, Florida 32550 (850) 267-8210.

Nominating Committee Report

The nominating committee of the Alabama VMA has announced its recommendations for candidates for the 2010-2011 Executive Board. Due to the revised Bylaws the election will be done strictly through mailed ballots. Please make sure these ballots are mailed back to the Association office by May 25th. If you did not receive your ballot please contact the Association office. The recommendations include:

President-Elect - *Dr. William K. Holland - Dothan, AL*

Dr. Kirk Holland practices companion animal medicine and surgery at Care Animal Center in Dothan, AL, where he has been a partner in the practice since 2003. He graduated from Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine with honor in 2000. Dr. Holland received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with honor from Auburn University at Montgomery in 1986 and worked as a Systems Analyst and Manager of Application Development for the Information Systems Division of the Alabama Revenue Department prior to pursuing a career in veterinary medicine.

Dr. Holland is an active member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Alabama VMA, Southeast Alabama VMA, and the Greater Dothan VMA. He currently serves on the Alabama VMA Executive Board as the Vice President and is past president of the Greater Dothan and Southeast Alabama VMA's. He has served on numerous committees of the Alabama VMA and has chaired the Small Animal Affairs and Public Relations committees.

Kirk is married to Kathleen and they have a son, Will. They have a Golden Retriever named Aubie. The Holland's are active members of Logos Baptist Church. They enjoy being outdoors, especially trips to the beach.

Vice-President – *Dr. William M. Allen – Gardendale, AL*

Dr. Allen received his Doctor of

Veterinary Medicine degree from Auburn University in 1973 and in 1974 opened his private practice, *Allen Animal Clinic*, where he served for 31 years. In 1982 Dr. Allen founded Dogdoc, Inc. and still runs the business today. Since 2005 Dr. Allen has been serving as a relief veterinarian and also a practice computerization consultant.

Dr. Allen is a member of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, American Veterinary Medical Association and Jefferson County Veterinary Medical Association in which he served as president in 1978. He has served in many committees in the ALVMA and Jefferson County VMA and currently serves on the Jefferson County VMA Executive and Member Advisory Committees, as well as Senior Board Member (2009-2010) for the ALVMA.

In 2003 Dr. Allen was honored with the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association Service Award as well as being nominated by the ALVMA to serve on the State Board of Medical Examiners.

In addition to Dr. Allen's involvement with veterinary societies, he has been very active with many community and civic memberships including JayCeas, Civitans, Kiwanis International, United Methodist Conference and several committees at Gardendale Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church. He has remained active with Gideons International since 2000 and has also been a Park and Recreation Board Member for the City of Gardendale since 1998.

Treasurer – *Dr. H. Winston Pirtle, Sr. – Montgomery, AL*

Dr. Pirtle received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Auburn University in 1967, the same year he activated his membership in the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association. In 1999 he was admitted into the Alabama State Bar after obtaining a law degree from Jones School of Law in Montgomery.

Following his graduation from the

Auburn College of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Pirtle spent thirty-seven years owning various farm operations including a dairy farm, a cow/beef cattle farm; and a hay production farm as well as owning and operating *SnowdownVeterinary Hospital*, a general practice hospital south of Montgomery. In June of 2005 Dr. Pirtle sold the hospital and now serves as a relief veterinarian throughout Alabama.

Dr. Pirtle was the recipient of the 2008 Alabama VMA Distinguished Service Award. He served two terms as president of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, the first in 1985 and the second in 2004. In 1988 he was honored as the Veterinarian of the Year by the Association during its annual meeting. Dr. Pirtle has also been a member of the Alabama Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners where he served as president of the American Association of the Veterinary State Boards from 1995-1997.

Since obtaining his law degree, Dr. Pirtle has been appointed and handled three cases submitted to the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals; represented clients on criminal defense and domestic relations; has presented lectures at the Auburn University Annual Conference on effective techniques in the collection of fees for veterinary services; assisted lead attorneys representing veterinarians in various legal matters; and, has led an ethics course at Auburn for senior veterinary students focusing on negligence law, professional malpractice, standard of care, licensing board procedures and Alabama law as it relates to animals.

In his spare time, Dr. Pirtle can be found enjoying anything that involves being outdoors. He continues to operate "Pirtle's Puddle", a fishing lake open to the public since 2003. He also leases his farm for beef cattle purposes and part of the farm to a model aircraft club that flies remote-controlled model aircraft.

Dr. Pirtle is a member of the Snowdown United Methodist Church.

103rd Annual Convention - Alabama Veterinary Medical Association



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
 Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Sandestin Florida
 June 10 - 13th, 2010
 Pre-Registration Deadline - May 14, 2010

► Continuing Education Credits are certified by the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. The Alabama State Board counts 50 minutes of CE as 1 hour. Make sure to check with your individual State Licensing Board to determine their particular rules relating to CE requirements.

Your Registration Information:				
Your Full Name:				
Mailing Address:				
City:	State:	Zip:		
Daytime Phone:	Cell Phone:	Fax:		
Email: (confirmation will be sent via email)				
Spouse/Guest:				
Special Meal Requirements:		<input type="checkbox"/> VEGETARIAN	<input type="checkbox"/> VEGAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a member of the _____ State Veterinary Medical Association (must be a member of one of the 50 state VMA's for member discount)				
		Before May 14	After May 14	
Please register me for:		Member	\$350.00	\$430.00
		Life Member	\$175.00	\$225.00
Conf Fri, Sat and Sun		Vet Technician	\$175.00	\$225.00
Saturday Only - June 12		ALVMA Veterinary Tech Program	\$100.00	\$150.00
Circle Year		2007 and 2008 Graduate (ALVMA member)	\$175.00	\$225.00
Circle Year		2009 and 2010 Graduate (ALVMA member)	No Charge	\$100.00
		Non Member	\$500.00	\$550.00
Veterinary Medical and Technician Student/School/Yr:		No Charge	No Charge	\$
One day registrations are available for 1/2 of the fees listed above, please specify day				
Most special events must be guaranteed in advance and require an extra fee. Only a limited number of tickets will be available at the convention.				
THURSDAY EXTRAS June 10, 2010				
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Exhibit Hall Kick off Reception with heavy hors d' oeuvres-door prizes		Sponsored by:	
FRIDAY EXTRAS June 11, 2010				
7:00 am	Beach Fun Run/Walk - BEACH		No Charge	
8:15 am - 10:30 am	Auxiliary Board Meeting - Terrace 1		No Charge	
10:00 am	Auxiliary Coffee - Bayview Room		No Charge	
10:30 am - 2:00 pm	Auxiliary Business Meeting - Bayview Room		No Charge	
1:00 pm - until	ALVMA Golf Tournament - Sandestin Ravin Course		\$117.00	\$
SATURDAY EXTRAS June 12, 2010				
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Reception/Social Hour - Bayside Patio		No Charge	
7:30 pm - until	ALVMA Presidents Dinner and Awards		\$35.00 each	\$
SUNDAY EXTRAS June 13, 2010				
8:00 am - 9:40 am	Missionary Breakfast - Terrace 1 & 2		\$20.00 each	\$
PAYMENT INFORMATION				
Payment enclosed (Enclosed is a check made payable to ALVMA for registration plus EXTRAS)				\$
Please charge my total registration or registration plus EXTRAS in the amount of \$ _____ to my <input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard				
Account Number:		Exp Date:		
3 digit Security Code:				
Signature:		Date:		

Mail form and payment to: ALVMA, P.O. Box 3514, Montgomery, AL 36109 or register online at www.alvma.com



**ALABAMA VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
GOLF TOURNAMENT
REGISTRATION FORM**

**WHEN: FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2010
TIME: 1:00 PM SHOTGUN START
WHERE: RAVEN GOLF CLUB - SANDESTIN'S BEST COURSE!**

****YOU MUST BE REGISTERED FOR THE CONFERENCE AS AN ATTENDEE OR AN EXHIBITOR (FAMILY MEMBERS INCLUDED) TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GOLF TOURNAMENT.**

**COST: \$117.00 PER PERSON (PLEASE MAIL IN WITH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION)
* SEND YOUR GOLF REGISTRATION FORM
WITH YOUR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION BY MAY 14th 2010!**

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____
HANDICAP: _____ OR AVERAGE OF LAST 4 ROUNDS _____

I WISH TO BE PARTNERED WITH THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) :

NAME: _____ HANDICAP: _____
NAME: _____ HANDICAP: _____
NAME: _____ HANDICAP: _____

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT:
DR. JIM BENEFIELD (334) 391-1099

***MAIL THIS FORM IN WITH YOUR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM.**
***ALL PAYMENTS WILL BE MADE PAYABLE TO THE ALVMA. THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS!**

Fees are due and payable only in U.S. Funds and drawn on U.S. Banks. Please indicate your method of Payment: Check Visa Mastercard

_____/_____/_____
Card Number Exp. Date 3 Digit Code on Back

Card Holder's Name

Billing Address on Card

Annual Conference Social Activities

Friday, June 10th through
Sunday, June 13th

The ALVMA Annual Conference is not only a great opportunity for CE credits, but also a great time for fun and delicious food! Make sure to sign up for the following events when you register!!

KICK OFF RECEPTION...

Get the conference started right by coming to the Kick Off Reception with delicious hors d'oeuvres and drinks. The reception will be held in the Exhibit Hall Thursday from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Linkside Conference Center. No ticket required.

BEACH FUN RUN/WALK...

A great event for the whole family to enjoy! This event will begin on the beach, Friday, at 7:00 a.m. There is no charge.

AUXILIARY COFFEE...

This event is open to anyone who wishes to participate. The members of the auxiliary would love to see you. You may join them on Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. in the Bayview Room.

GOLF TOURNAMENT...

Tee off with some of your colleagues on Friday, June 11th. It will be a shotgun start at 1:00 pm at Sandestin's Raven Course, the best course at Sandestin!

<http://www.sandestin.com/Golfers/BrowseCourses/RavenGolfClub.aspx>

The deadline to sign up is May 14th so make sure you register today!!

RECEPTION/SOCIAL HOUR...

Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Bayside Patio.

PRESIDENT'S DINNER & AWARDS CEREMONY...

Help to welcome the new officers of the association, during a fabulous dinner beginning at 7:30 p.m. on June 12th. Tickets are required at a cost of \$35.00 each.

MISSIONARY BREAKFAST...

Please come and join the fellowship for our Sunday morning worship and breakfast. Hear from one of our very own as they relate their personal experience of helping those in need. Tickets are required and the cost is \$20.00 per person.

Thank You to Our 2010 Annual Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors

(as of 4/7/2010)

Abaxis
Alabama Veterinary Technician Association
Bayer Health Care
Bay X-Ray
Boehringer-Ingelheim
Butler Schein Animal Health
DermaPet
Diagnostic Imaging Systems, Inc.
DVM Resources
Elanco
Elsevier
Fees & Burgess, P.C.
Hill's Pet Nutrition
Greenbrier
Idexx
Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health
Jorgensen Laboratories
Lilly Animal Health
Merial
Merritt Veterinary Supplies, Inc.
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
MWI Veterinary Supply
Nestle Purina
Novartis Animal Health
Nutramax Laboratories, Inc.
P & G Pet Care/ Iams
Pfizer
PKB Animal Health
Purchasing Services, Inc.
Universal Ultrasound
Webster Veterinary
Wedgewood Pharmacy
Wellness Pharmacy
Wickliffe Veterinary Pharmacy

EXHIBIT HALL HOURS

Thursday, June 10
5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Friday, June 11
7:00 am – 1:30 pm
Saturday, June 12
7:00 am – 1:30 pm

103rd ALVMA Annual Convention Schedule

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

June 10th – 13th, 2010

Social Activities			
Date	Time	Activity	Location
Thursday, June 10, 2010	6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall - Kick Off Social with Heavy Hors D'oeuvres	Linkside Center Exhibition Hall
Friday, June 11, 2010	7:00 a.m.	Beach Fun Run / Walk	Beach
Friday, June 11, 2010	8:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Auxiliary Board Meeting	Terrace 1
Friday, June 11, 2010	10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Auxiliary Business Meeting	Bayview Room
Friday, June 11, 2010	1:00 p.m. – Until	Alabama Veterinary Medical Association Golf Tournament	Raven Golf Club
Saturday, June 12, 2010	6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Reception / Social Hour	Bayside Patio
Saturday, June 12, 2010	7:30 p.m. – Until	President's Dinner and Awards	Bayside Ballroom
Sunday, June 13, 2010	8:00 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.	Missionary Breakfast	Terrace 1 & 2

Thursday ~ June 10, 2010	
1:00p.m. – 5:30p.m.	REGISTRATION (<i>Exhibit Hall – Linkside Center</i>)
4:30p.m. – 7:00p.m.	EXHIBIT HALL – Open (<i>Linkside Center</i>)

Friday ~ June 11, 2010			
Time	Small Animal I Grand B	Time	Small Animal II Grand C
7:00a.m. – 4:00p.m.	REGISTRATION (<i>EXHIBIT HALL</i>)		
7:00a.m. – 8:00a.m.	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (<i>EXHIBIT HALL</i>)		
8:00a.m. – 9:00a.m.	Workplace Harassment and Violence – Jeff Roth Sponsored by: Fees & Burgess, P.C.	8:00a.m. – 9:00a.m.	Feline Heartworm Disease – Dr. Lynn Buzhardt, Sponsored by: IDEXX Laboratories
9:00a.m. – 10:00a.m.	Workplace Harassment and Violence – Jeff Roth Sponsored by: Fees & Burgess, P.C.	9:00a.m. – 10:00a.m.	Feline Heartworm Disease – Dr. Lynn Buzhardt, Sponsored by: IDEXX Laboratories
10:00a.m. – 10:45a.m.	BREAK ~ (Visit the Exhibit Hall)		BREAK ~ (Visit the Exhibit Hall)
10:45a.m. – 11:45a.m.	Wage and Hour Law – Jeff Roth Sponsored by: Fees & Burgess, P.C.	10:45a.m. - 11:45a.m.	The Zen of Cats - Dr. Mark Cousins Sponsored by: Pfizer
11:45a.m. – 1:00p.m.	LUNCH (<i>In the Exhibit Hall</i>)		LUNCH (<i>In the Exhibit Hall</i>)
1:00p.m. – Until	Alabama Veterinary Medical Association Golf Tournament (Raven Golf Club – Pay when you register for Conference)		
1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.	Hiring, Promotion and Firing – Jeff Roth Sponsored by: Fees & Burgess, P.C.	1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.	The Zen of Cats - Dr. Mark Cousins Sponsored by: Pfizer
2:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.	Hiring, Promotion and Firing – Jeff Roth Sponsored by: Fees & Burgess, P.C.	2:00p.m. - 3:00p.m.	TBA - Dr. Rowan Milner Sponsored by: Boehringer Ingelheim
3:00p.m. – 3:10p.m.	BREAK - (Visit the Exhibit Hall)		
3:10p.m. – 4:10p.m.	Otititis – Dr. Chris Reeder, Sponsored by: Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health	3:10p.m. – 4:10p.m.	TBA - Dr. Rowan Milner Sponsored by: Boehringer Ingelheim
4:10p.m. – 5:10p.m.	A Fresh Perspective on Retirement. Gauranteed – Richard Thome, Sponsored by: Morgan Stanley Smith Barney	4:10p.m. – 5:10p.m.	Sutures – Greg Brown, sponsored by Novartis Animal Health

Saturday ~ June 12, 2010

Time	Small Animal I Grand B	Time	Small Animal II Grand C
7:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	REGISTRATION (EXHIBIT HALL)		
7:00 a.m. – 7:30 a.m.	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (EXHIBIT HALL)		
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Current Dermatology Systems – Dr. Keith Hnilica, Sponsored by: Webster Veterinary & Novartis Animal Health	8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Canine Influenza Virus – Dr. Pam Ford, Sponsored by: Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health
9:00 a.m. – 9:40 am	BREAK (Visit Exhibit Hall)		
9:40 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.	Current Dermatology Systems – Dr. Keith Hnilica, Sponsored by: Webster Veterinary & Novartis Animal Health	9:40 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.	Canine Influenza Virus – Dr. Pam Ford, Sponsored by: Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health
10:40 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.	Current Dermatology Systems – Dr. Keith Hnilica, Sponsored by: Webster Veterinary & Novartis Animal Health	10:40 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.	Feline Degenerative Joint Disease – Dr. Catherine McClelland, Sponsored by: Hill's Pet Nutrition
11:40 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	ALVMA General Membership Business Meeting – Grand B LUNCH – In the Exhibit Hall		
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Current Dermatology Systems – Dr. Keith Hnilica, Sponsored by: Webster Veterinary & Novartis Animal Health	1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Cats and Carbs – Dr. Catherine McClelland Sponsored by: Hill's Pet Nutrition
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Dermatology – Dr. John MacDonald, Sponsored by: Elanco	2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	TBA – Dr. Catherine McClelland Sponsored by: Hill's Pet Nutrition
3:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.	BREAK (Visit Exhibit Hall)		
3:10 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.	Dermatology – Dr. John MacDonald, Sponsored by: Elanco	3:10 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.	TBA - Dr. Dan Green Sponsored by: Boehringer Ingelheim
4:10 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.	Dermatology – Dr. John MacDonald, Sponsored by: Elanco	4:10 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.	TBA - Dr. Dan Green Sponsored by: Boehringer Ingelheim

Sunday ~ June 13, 2010

Time	General Session – Grand A
7:30a.m. - 8:00a.m.	Coffee & Pastries
8:00a.m. - 9:40a.m.	Missionary Breakfast with Dr. George Wood (<i>Terrace 1 & 2</i>)
9:40a.m. - 10:40a.m.	Information Desk - Open
8:00a.m. - 9:00a.m.	Parasitology – Dr. Stephanie Thompson Sponsored by: Merial
9:00a.m. - 9:10a.m.	BREAK ~ (Grand Foyer)
9:10a.m. - 10:10a.m.	Parasitology – Dr. Stephanie Thompson Sponsored by: Merial
10:10a.m. - 11:10a.m.	Parasitology – Dr. Stephanie Thompson Sponsored by: Merial

**VETERINARY TECHNICIAN PROGRAM ~ SATURDAY ~ JUNE 12, 2010
Bayview Room**

Time	Lecture Title / Speaker Name
8:00a.m. - 8:50a.m.	Snake Bites – Sandra Foster
8:50a.m. - 9:40a.m.	Orthopedics – Kelly Knowles
9:40a.m. - 10:20a.m.	BREAK ~ (Visit the Exhibit Hall)
10:20a.m. - 11:10p.m.	Dental Health – Jennifer Crawford
11:10p.m. - 12:00p.m.	Dental Health – Jennifer Crawford
12:00p.m. - 1:00p.m.	LUNCH ~ (In the Exhibit Hall)
1:00p.m. - 1:50p.m.	Vertebral Disc Herniation – Shawn Smith
1:50p.m. - 2:40p.m.	The Nursing Process – LeChon Camp
2:40p.m. - 2:50p.m.	BREAK ~ (Grand Foyer)
2:50p.m. - 3:40p.m.	Know Your Breeds – LeChon Camp
3:40p.m. - 4:30p.m.	Know Your Breeds – LeChon Camp

A Legislative Update

By Dr. Charles F. Franz, Executive Director

From the Executive Director

New Practice Act Passes - Our new Veterinary Practice Act passed on April 14 and is on the way to the Governor for signature. Our bill to allow an income tax check-off on Alabama tax returns is very close to passing as of this writing. The income tax check-off will benefit the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation's spay/neuter program. In addition, several other bills of interest to veterinarians are being worked and debated as the 2010 session winds down. Be sure to check the most up-to-date information in the ALVMA E-News. If you are not receiving this communication, please call or email the office to subscribe.

The ALVMA Legislative Day on March 23 was a great success. We were able to visit with many of our elected representatives and discuss issues ranging from the Practice Act to spay/neuter efforts and items related to animal welfare. A big THANKS to those veterinarians (**Drs. Jim Benefield, Bill Bledsoe, Larry Chasteen, Jack Goodman, Kirk Holland, Dee Jones, Dan Kuykendall, Glen Malone, Stevan Parsons, Bill Sternberg, and Winston Pirtle**) who took time off from their work to support veterinary medicine and let their voices be heard. We are a well respected profession in the eyes of the public and our elected officials. However, that respect can only equate into positive actions for us if we are a part of the process. We fell short of my goal of having 3% of our membership (23 veterinarians) at the State House for the day. Numbers are important, personal contacts are important, visibility is important. Does your representative hear from you on issues? When was the last time you talked with him/her about an issue? They are making decisions affecting your business and ability to practice. Do you want to have a part in those decisions? I see groups at the State House weekly. Some of those groups cover the lawn of the Capitol and will not even fit into the State House. Believe me, the elected representatives notice that.

Many of you are aware of the Alabama Coalition for Farm Animal Care and Well Being, founded last year by about a dozen organizations, including the ALVMA. The Coalition has made tremendous progress this year in educating and lobbying the Legislature on issues of concern relating to animals. This group has provided a reasonable and science-based voice to counteract some of the misinformation spread by animal rights groups. These groups are politically active in practically every state and have tremendous financial assets to assist in getting their messages out.

The elections held later this year will provide many new faces in the Alabama Legislature. There are more retirements announced this year than any year I can remember. Get involved in the election process this year; support your ALVMA Political Action Committee; support your local candidates; talk to them about the issues; and come to Montgomery next year for our Legislative Day.

If we can provide any information on bills or the process, please contact me. I look forward to seeing you during the upcoming June Conference at Sandestin!

Thank you to all of the ALVMA Political Action Committee (PAC) Contributors!!

Your contribution assists the committee in helping those members of the Alabama Legislature who have proven to be friends of Veterinary Medicine and have a keen interest in our profession.

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Gucci Dies at 16 *continued from page 8*

gifts of money and treats from both private and corporate donors. He also benefited from frequent appearances at fund raisers held by humane societies across Alabama and in Florida.

Through the efforts of George Hardesty and Judge James Strickland, in July, 1994, Gucci's two juvenile attackers were each given 200 hours of community service, preferably in settings where they would have to participate in animal care, and ordered to pay fines of \$250 plus court costs. After multiple delays, the 19 year old assailant's case finally came to jury trial on February 3, 1995. He pleaded guilty as a felon, and two days later was sentenced to three months in jail (of which he served six weeks), two years probation, and was ordered to pay restitution for Gucci's surgical bills.

Gucci was named "Alabama's Official State Spokesdog Against Animal Cruelty" by Governor Fob James in February, 1998. In May, 2000, exactly six years following his abuse, the Alabama State Legislature passed a bill making intentional cruelty to domesticated animals a Class C felony, punishable with a prison term of up to 10 years. The bill was signed into law by Governor Don Siegleman, with Gucci looking on, on May 20, 2000. In 2006 he was inducted into the Alabama Annual Hall of Fame for his help in creating awareness and stricter laws against animal cruelty.



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AVMA DELEGATE REPORT

by Dr. Jan Strother-Alternate Delegate to the AVMA

Dear Colleagues:

As always there are many topics of interest being addressed by the AVMA. I would urge members to check out the AVMA web site and update their member profiles. Download some of the new pod casts to learn what AVMA Officers and Representatives are sharing about important topics to the news media and public. We hope you will join us in Atlanta July 31st through August 3rd, 2010 for the 147th AVMA Annual Convention. You can register anytime on-line.

Please take a few minutes to read through these two articles as they affect all of us in the veterinary profession.

As always if you have any questions or comments please contact myself or Dr. Bill DeWitt.

Wishing each of you a happy, productive and safe summer.

Respectfully,
Dr. Jan K. Strother
drjanvet@aol.com
256-773-0844

AVMA Provides Guide for Pharmaceutical Waste Disposal

The AVMA created the policy "Best Management Practices for Pharmaceutical Disposal" and the related poster in this issue in response to an August 2008 proposal by the Environmental Protection Agency to survey health care facilities on disposal of pharmaceutical waste.

The agency had proposed the survey to determine the extent of water pollution coming from health care industries and the risks this pollution posed. A Federal Register notice published at that time indicated agency officials were concerned health care providers were dumping unused pharmaceuticals in drains and toilets, and that these chemicals could pass through public water treatment plants to surface waters.

The AVMA contended that the veterinary profession is a minimal contributor to pharmaceutical pollution in water and the profession should be exempt from such a survey.

A December 2009 Federal Register notice from the EPA stated that the agency does not plan to proceed with the sur-

vey of health care industries.

Outreach from the agency from 2007-2009 indicated stakeholders were nearly universally interested in better management of unused pharmaceuticals at health care facilities and were generally interested in advancing the use of best practices for managing those pharmaceuticals, the notice stated.

"The survey would be an effective but potentially time-consuming tool for gathering facility-specific data on the management of unused pharmaceuticals," the notice stated. "EPA estimates that it has gathered sufficient data from its site visits and outreach to begin the development of best practices for unused pharmaceutical management at health care facilities.

"During the next year EPA will continue to work with a variety of stakeholders in the development of these best practices and the means for their dissemination and adoption."

AVMA Releases FAQ on Antimicrobial Use and Resistance

The AVMA has developed a new document, "Frequently Asked Questions about Antimicrobial Use and Antimicrobial Resistance," to provide members of the public with scientific information and the AVMA stance on the subjects. According to the FAQ, "antimicrobials are an important part of the veterinarian's toolkit, and veterinarians agree that they should be used judiciously and in the best interest of animal health and public health."

The document offers basic definitions of microorganisms, antimicrobials, antibiotics, susceptibility, and resistance. The FAQ also explains antimicrobial use in animals and possible causes of antimicrobial resistance, presents the case against

severely restricting antimicrobial use in animals because of potential negative effects on animal welfare and food safety, and discusses efforts to address antimicrobial resistance. In addition, the document covers European restrictions on antimicrobial use in animals and outlines the reasons why the AVMA opposes the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (H.R. 1549/S. 619) under consideration by Congress.

The FAQ is available at
www.avma.org/public_health/antimicrobial_use.asp.



2010 Annual Animal Hall of Fame

The Annual Alabama Animal Hall of Fame now has four more inductees following the 2010 induction ceremony held at the Birmingham Sheraton Hotel in Birmingham on Saturday, March 6th. The evening began at 6:00 p.m. with silent and live auctions followed by the Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony. The auctioned items garnered over \$5,400 for the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation.

The 2010 inductees included *Taka*, *Miss Sophie Grey*, *Xanto* and *Mike*, four exceptional dogs with amazing stories.

Taka, a member of Love on a Leash Therapy K-9's of Athens, AL was our first inductee, honored for his selfless service and the smiles he brings as a therapy dog. *Taka* regularly visits the veteran's home in Huntsville, AL and is also a Reading Education Assistance Dog (READ) at the Redstone Arsenal Library. His monthly "Tales with Taka" program has become a huge success by helping children improve their reading skills and confidence by reading to him. Through this program and *Taka's* gentleness, he has also helped one 8-year old boy overcome his terror of dogs. In the past year a frequent reader program was also implemented where children who read to Taka five times during the year receive a "pawtographed" copy of one of *Taka's* favorite books.

Along with several other therapy teams *Taka* and his owner and handler, Jamie Ward, helped honor veterans of each branch of the military last November by dressing in



Taka



Miss Sophie Grey

military costumes and performing skits with patriotic music. *Taka* has truly been a joy to people of all ages and walks of life.

Miss Sophie Grey of Athens, AL, is also a Love on a Leash Therapy K-9 and has worked very hard in the last three years, earning her Canine Good Citizenship, Rally Novice title, Companion Dog title, Therapy Dog, Inc. registration, and her Intermountain Therapy Animals registration as a Reading Education Assistance Dog (READ). She truly is a wonderful, loving and sweet Yorkie that brings joy to every one she meets. It seems that *Miss Sophie Grey's* therapy

work is endless with the wide array of people she visits regularly including two local nursing homes, an Alzheimer facility, assisted living facility, veterans at Tut Fan in Huntsville, AL, and the many preschoolers she visits each year. On her visits to the pre-schools she promotes responsible dog ownership, proper care, housing and nutrition. She is such a joy that parents ask each year if she will be coming back. As a READ dog

Miss Sophie helps pre-k through third grade students at a local elementary school increase literacy and communication skills. It is easy to understand why her owner, Sheila Wilbanks, says "Miss Sophie loves everybody and everybody loves Miss Sophie!"

Xanto gives 110% as a working member of the Morgan County Sheriff's Department K-9 unit. He was adopted by the Sheriff's department from Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX in July of 2007. *Xanto* and his handler, Deputy Kristen Barnett have completed intense basic training and have also received the honor of "Best New Dog/New Handler Award" in 2008. *Xanto* is well trained in a number of different categories including narcotic detection and criminal apprehension. He is able to detect marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin and any derivatives thereof. His obedience skills include heeling, agility, handler protection, search and tracking, just to name a few.

At work, *Xanto* is very protective of his patrol car and of Officer Barnett. Once outside the car he keeps his attention on her, waiting patiently for his next command. He is not aggressive, and his demeanor towards dogs is amazing. Officer Barnett testifies that he is like a light-switch when commanded. He can be aggressive in apprehending a criminal one second, and running to you with his ball the next!

Mike, a blue-eyed Australian Shepherd, was born deaf. His story is best summed up by Kitty Terry, Executive Director of Hand-In-Paw, "His so-called disability has yielded one of his greatest gifts – his unique ability to reach the unreachable and spread joy wherever he goes." When *Mike* was born and the breeder discovered that he was deaf she saw no value in him, but thankfully there was some one there that saw beyond his disability and was determined to find him a home. Thankfully *Mike* found his way into the Layne



Deputy Kristen Barnett & Xanto

family in Birmingham where Melannie Layne taught him American Sign Language (ASL). He now knows more than 30 different signs. When the Layne family discovered Hand-In-Paw, whose mission "is helping children and youth heal and maximize their potential through interaction with specially trained handler and animal teams," they knew this was a perfect fit for *Mike*. After Melannie Layne and *Mike* became certified as a Pet Partner team with the Delta Society they began visiting several different facilities including nursing homes, Children's Hospitals, Family Violence Centers and Bell Center for Early Intervention.

In addition to the Hall of Fame Inductees, several human awards were presented. This year's Animal Hall of Fame Hero Award was presented to Mrs. Kathleen Standifer of Birmingham, AL. Mrs. Standifer has been an animal advocate and has been a nurturing influence to the veterinary profession, the Alabama VMA, local, state and national VMA auxiliaries, as well as having served on the Board of the Foundation since its inception. Ruth Fledermaus, the director of Huntsville Friends of Rabbits; Cindy Buckman, therapy dog trainer and president of Love on a Leash; Debbie Whitten, LVT, teacher, pet rescue and animal advocate; and Dave Spurlin, the director of Parrots R 4-Ever Avian Rescue and Sanctuary were all presented with the Bowie-Heath Humanitarian Award for their dedication and hard work in saving and helping hundreds of animals through their organizations.

Proceeds from the Animal Hall of Fame will be used for various programs supported by the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation including scholarships, assistance to indigent pet owners and funds for animal disaster relief efforts.



Mike



Special Thanks to Those Who Made The 2010 Animal Hall of Fame a Great Success

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Bowie-Heath Award winner Dave Spurlin poses with Dr. Jan Strother



(l-r) Dr. Libby Todd; Bowie-Heath Award winner Ruth Flermaus and husband Bruce; Dr. Jan Strother



(l-r) Dr. Libby Todd, Bowie-Heath Award winner Cindy Buckman, and Dr. Jan Strother



Bowie-Heath Award winner Debbie Whitten and Dr. Jan Strother



Dr. Jan Strother poses with Hero Award winner Kathleen Standifer

A Message from the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation President

I have a few updates and thoughts to share with you since last fall. Although the economy is slower than we would like, we have been busy at the Foundation.

We have two new board members. Laura Hydinger and Ashely Powell. Both from the Birmingham area. It has been a pleasure to work with them the past 9 months, as they bring in new ideas to the Foundation

We continue to give a few Indigent Care and Good Samaritan grants but are in need of funds to continue these grants. Sales from the Foundation's Pet Memorial Cards, donations from individual clinics and friends, and income from the donations from Journeys End Pet Cremation Service are the main sources of income to fund these grants. Please use our cards and services to fund our grants. Also, let those clients that have an interest in making a gift to help the animals know about the Foundation and our programs. You never know who might become a life long friend and donor to our Foundation!

This year the Dr. and Mrs. Aaron Groth Scholarship awards for 2010 were given to Ms. Rory Applegate (Auburn University) and Ms. Lauren Rowe (Tuskegee University).

In the fall 09 issue of the Alabama Veterinarian, I highlighted the approval of the spay/ neuter license plate and that the spay/neuter program had started in April. Each month since last April we have had more sales of the tags, which has increased the number of procedures we could do in the state for our indigent clients. As of the end of the

year we have received over \$112,800.00 and done over 1000 surgeries!

Several times though we had to suspend granting requests due to lack of funds. Due to the many requests for assistance and the limited funds in this first year, we decided to lower the compensation for each procedure so that more clients and their pets could benefit. Although we have received some negative feed back for this move, we also found favor with a gracious donor who gave the Foundation a \$19,500 gift to apply to the spay/neuter program.

We need to continue to push for Alabama Residents to purchase a spay/neuter license plate and we need to lead by example. I encourage you to purchase a tag. There are flyers at the Association office (334-395-0086) that are free to use in your office to help explain the program and encourage your clients to get tags.

Remember that these programs that benefit the needy in our state may not be perfect, but they are OUR programs. We are in control of them, we are proud of them, and we should support them.

Thank you for your support of and help with the Foundation.

Lewis McCurdy, DVM

President

Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation



The Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation How Can You Help?

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation was formed on December 16, 2003 to assist veterinary students and technicians by providing scholarships and endowments, to develop animal welfare programs and support programs that contribute to the wellbeing of animals and enhance the human-animal bond, and to provide peer assistance for colleagues in crisis. The Foundation has been actively seeking contributors to meet the needs of the requests under which it was established.

There are several ways you can take advantage of tax incentives while assisting with the Foundation's efforts.

GIFTS OF CASH AND MARKETABLE SECURITIES: Obviously the Foundation is glad to accept cash and checks. But, did you know you can make gifts to the Foundation of appreciated stocks, bonds and mutual fund shares without incurring any capital gains taxes on such a gift, and the amount of the income tax charitable deduction is equal to the appreciated value of those assets.

GIFT OF REMAINDER INTEREST IN HOME OR FARM: In appropriate circumstances, single or married couples may see the advantages of not burdening their children with the worries of selling a home after their deaths or possibly creating family conflict or disharmony. The gift of the family home to the Foundation while retaining the right to live there for life is a perfect solution to this family dilemma. The couple (or individual) obtains an immediate income tax charitable deduction; continues to live in their residence as they always have; and removes this valuable asset from their estate upon death. Of course, if the Foundation is so inclined (which it probably would be), any of the children can purchase the family home from the Foundation possibly utilizing other inherited monies.

CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST: In appropriate circumstances, the use of a charitable remainder trust and gifts of appreciated publicly-traded stock or land has numerous benefits with few disadvan-

tages. The deferral of a capital gains tax upon the sale of the stock or land by the charitable remainder trust, a current income tax charitable deduction by the donor upon his or her gift of appreciated publicly-traded stock or land to the charitable remainder trust, and the retention of an income stream for life by the donor (and by his/her spouse if so desired) are all excellent benefits obtained upon the use of charitable remainder trust. Upon the death of the donor, the assets in the charitable remainder trust would pass to the Foundation estate tax free!

GIFT OF LIFE INSURANCE: One of the more simple ways to benefit the Foundation is to designate it as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Upon the insured's death, the death proceeds are paid to the Foundation and qualify for an estate tax charitable deduction.

BEQUEST UNDER A WILL: The Foundation is glad to accept bequests under a will (or revocable living trust). They are very common and take effect after an individual passes away. These bequests may be changed at any time prior to death as long as the donor is mentally competent to make the change. Bequests or devises to the Foundation may designate a specific asset, a fixed sum, or a portion of the donor's estate, and are fully deductible for estate tax purposes.

Many of the above charitable planning techniques are simple and basic and will assist the Foundation in accomplishing its mission—all while saving the donor taxes.

Please consider the Foundation not only in your year end charitable giving, but also during this upcoming year. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

(The preceding information was provided courtesy of Louis B. Feld, esq. and James J. Coomes, Esq., of Feld, Hyde, Wertheimer, Bryant and Stone, P.C., 2000 SouthBridge Parkway, Suite 500-Birmingham, Alabama 35209. (205)-802-7575)

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“News from the Auxiliary”

HALL OF FAME HERO AWARD

On occasion an individual may be recognized for a life-time of conspicuous and dedicated humanitarian achievements for people and animals. Such is the case tonight with our Hero Award recipient, Mrs. Kathleen Standifer. This amazing lady began her life-long love affair with the veterinary profession right after World War II when she moved to Auburn with her husband, Allen Standifer, who planned to pursue his degree in veterinary medicine. She worked at a manufacturing plant doing clerical work and payroll while Allen made his way along his career path. Kathleen notes that they went five years without having a car while living in Opelika, and every-day she walked about a mile to work and back.

When Allen graduated Kathleen pitched right into helping with the practice, answering phones, being the receptionist, paying bills and making payroll at their first practice in Leeds, Alabama. When they moved their practice to Homewood in 1958, Kathleen not only managed their clinic, she also took care of their growing family and became actively involved in the Jefferson County Veterinary Auxiliary. At that time there were few women veterinarians so wives took the reins of charitable causes and projects near to the hearts of veterinarians. She has served in nearly every position of the Jefferson County Veterinary Auxiliary, including President. A tireless friend of people and animals, Kathleen also has served in numerous capacities, within the Alabama Veterinary Auxiliary including President. The Auxiliary brought many ani-



Caption: (l-r) Nancy McCurdy; Hero Award recipient and past-president Kathleen Standifer; president, Judy Dewitt

mal related education programs to elementary schools throughout the state in addition to raising money for veterinary scholarships and other important programs to support the veterinary profession. Kathleen continues to be an active member of the ALVMA Auxiliary and the American Veterinary Medical Auxiliary.

Kathleen Standifer has become an Icon in both the Jefferson County VMA as well as the ALVMA. She has generously volunteered her time and energy to a multitude of meetings and programs. She is often the first face you'll see volunteering to man a booth for the VMA or Foundation. She has never met a stranger. Even recent graduates or first-time meeting attendees are put at ease and made to feel welcome—they know they've met a friend.

When the ALVMA began to make the ALVMF a reality, one of the first names brought up to recruit for the Board of Directors was Kathleen Standifer. Getting a fledgling foundation going is a tall order. It takes a tremendous amount of time, thought, effort and money. But Kathleen never shied away from one of those responsibilities. She has served on the Foundation Board for 4 years and will continue her term until 2012. Kathleen's son, Wayne Standifer, is a 1982 graduate of Auburn's College of Veterinary Medicine and continues the practice that she and husband Allen started back in 1958

It is with great pleasure that we bestow the Alabama Animal Hall of Fame Hero Award to Kathleen Standifer, a true Ambassador for veterinary medicine and the Human-Animal Bond.

Auxiliary To The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION IN SANDESTIN
TIME: FRIDAY, JUNE 11TH AT 10:00 A.M.
PLACE: BAYVIEW ROOM**

What is the Auxiliary to the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association? The Auxiliary is a group of people who wish to support veterinarians in their chosen profession. ***What does the Auxiliary to the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association do?*** Our organization participates in National Pet Week every year. Volunteers go into the schools to distribute materials to teachers and students with the intent to encourage responsible pet ownership, celebrate the human-animal bond, and promote public awareness of veterinary medicine.

The Auxiliary donates to veterinary student loan funds, gives awards to student spouses who are active in Auxiliary

activities, and often helps to defray travel costs for student members to attend the AVMA annual meeting.

Donations are made to both of our Alabama veterinary school libraries.

The Auxiliary to the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association serves as a source of communication for those associated with the veterinary profession.

WHO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE AUXILIARY?

Membership is open to anyone who has a strong interest in the promotion of veterinary medicine. This can include any "support member" in a veterinarian's life. Members could include spouses, technicians, office managers, friends or family. Currently, there are no separate dues collected for membership in the Auxiliary on the state level. *ALVMA members, please encourage a "support member" who is important in your life to join us at this meeting.*

In Memorium

Dr. Donald F. Walker (1923 – 2010)

Chalk it up to an exercise in wise judgment, expeditious recruiting, and a stroke of good luck that coincided under stars benign to bring to Auburn in 1958 Dr. Donald F. Walker, his champion, Pat Walker, and their beautiful daughter, Kandy Walker.

The timing was particularly propitious; I suppose a classic example of synchronicity. The American Southwest, Texas in particular, had been in the grip of a disastrous seven year drought of Biblical proportions. Ranchers had been reduced to burning off the spines of prickly pear cactus to use them for cattle feed. In the meantime, Alabama and its neighboring states were undergoing a sea of change in agriculture from that of a historical cotton-is-king mentality to that of a cattle culture. Many of the beleaguered western herds were moved or sold to southeastern operations, and all of a sudden Alabama found itself a major cattle producer, with the largest Cattlemen's Association membership in the U.S. Into this seething broth of opportunity stepped Dr. Don Walker, a cattleman's dream of a boots-on, ready to go to work cattle veterinarian. The rest, as they say, is history.

For 30 years Dr. Walker made landmark contributions to the cattle industry of Alabama and to the profession through which his influence was extended worldwide. His younger colleagues and students continue to benefit the cattle industry to this day.

A native Coloradan, Dr. Walker entered Colorado State University on a scholarship in 1941 and was inducted into the ASTP military program. He graduated in veterinary medicine in 1944, and thereafter studied breeding soundness in the bovine at the University of Missouri, Columbia. Soon after World War II he established a private practice in large animal medicine at the Grassland Hospital in Broken Bow, Nebraska, which became a referral practice for all of Nebraska and six surrounding states. His outreach was facilitated by flying his own plane to remote areas as well as a haul-in practice for sophisticated surgical procedures and extended hospitalizations. This included much work on breeding soundness, particularly in beef bulls. For his contributions in this field, he was made a lifetime member and President of the National Society for the Study of Breeding Soundness and a Charter Diplomate of the College of Theriogenology, as well as other professional societies.

In 1958 Dr. Walker was recruited to come to Auburn University as Associate Professor of Large Animal Surgery and Medicine. Thereafter, he rapidly expanded the clinic's services throughout the entire southern region and established Auburn University as a nationally-recognized center of excellence in this field. This coincided with and significantly reinforced Alabama's growth as a major player in the national beef cattle industry. It would be difficult to overstate Dr. Walker's contributions to this development.

His work extended directly through the USAID to India (1968-1970), Costa Rica, Pakistan, Sudan, Nigeria, Venezuela, and Great Britain. He was widely sought as a speaker to professional societies and cattlemen's associations, and published many papers. In 1980 he co-authored the Lea & Febiger textbook on Large Animal Urogenital Surgery. In 1970 he was appointed full professor, and in 1978 Department Head of Large Animal Surgery and

Medicine. In 1988 Dr. Walker became Professor Emeritus of Large Animal Surgery and Medicine. In 1990 the annual Hudson-Walker Theriogenology short course was named jointly in honor of Dr. Walker and his colleague, Dr. Robert Hudson. He graciously donated the statue of Nandi, sacred symbol of fertility in India to the Society for Theriogenology and for many years Nandi served as the logo for the society. Nandi currently resides, on an annual basis, with the President of the Society for Theriogenology. In 1994 he received the Bartlett Award from the Society for Theriogenology.

It is no exaggeration to say that no one individual has had a greater impact on the health of beef cattle in twentieth century Alabama than Dr. Donald F. Walker. In recognition by the Alabama Cattlemen's Association and the Southeastern Livestock Exposition, Dr. Walker was inducted into the Livestock Hall of Fame in 2008.

That's for the record, but if you'll allow me, I'd like to add a few personal recollections that reveal a very human side to the guy. I confess to being a bit sobered by the realization that as of today I'm the sole survivor of the Large Animal Clinic's staff that recruited Dr. Walker to join us in 1958. Dean Jimmy Green had just succeeded Dr. Redding Sugg, the third dean. Dr. Fred Schell had followed Dr. Walter Gibbon as department head, Dr. George Kiesel had transferred to research, and Dr. Agee Wiggins had recently returned from Kansas State. Dr. Wiggins, Dr. John Watts, and I were the working staff on the clinic floor, plus holding down the ambulatory service that covered a nine or ten county area in East Alabama and West Georgia.

Enter upon this scene a piece of genuine western rawhide who could speak fluent cattlese; in fact, I think he communed with cattle. His ability to diagnose their problems sometimes defied scientific explanation, as did his ability to handle them with a minimum of effort. A two-thousand pound Brangus bull was no match for Dr. Walker. He quickly magnetized a following of students who recognized he was something special. And yet, with it all, he was totally unassuming and devoid of any pretensions whatsoever. On one occasion a group of students was quizzing him on how he arranged his own ambulatory wagon back in Nebraska, what did he use for containers and compartments, what sort of cabinets? His reply? Cardboard boxes.

His internship and residency program in theriogenology, that OB-GYN plus urology, with surgery and endocrinology thrown in for good measure, attracted the best graduate students and was continually oversubscribed.

Knowing him was a pleasure, working with him a privilege. Borrowing from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Psalm of Life: "Lives of great men all remind us, We can make our lives sublime, And, departing, leave behind us, Footprints on the sands of time; Footprints, that perhaps another, Sailing o'er life's solemn main,

A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, Seeing, shall take heart again."

Don Walker's footprints are enshrined for posterity. Can any man aspire to more?

J. Vaughan

1.11.10

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, NURSING, AND ALLIED HEALTH

TUSVM: Building the Bridge to Veterinary Medicine with Apprenticeship Program, V-CAP



Once a dream, now a reality, The Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM) is helping to bridge the gap between desiring to be a veterinarian one day and actually seeing what this profession is about before hand for potential students. The Volunteer Clinical Apprenticeship Program (V-CAP) was developed as a part of the bridge program between TUSVM and the Tuskegee University College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAENS).

The purpose of V-CAP is to mentor undergraduate students aspiring to become veterinarians. The program provides these students with an opportunity to get clinical experience in the Small and Large Animal Hospitals as a part of their application to the veterinary medical professional program. The V-CAP students are exposed to veterinary medicine through various interactions in the clinical and academic programs.

The vision of this volunteer program began when Dr. Pamela Guy, Senior Out-Patient Clinician at TUSVM, was approached by undergraduate students who wanted to become veterinarians. These students also wanted to gain clinical experience by volunteering in the Small Animal Hospital. Dr. Guy eagerly seized the opportunity to mentor these prospective veterinarians by sharing her clinical knowledge and experience with the veterinary admissions process.

This volunteer program later developed into the present formalized V-CAP program with assistance from Dr. Ruby L. Perry, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs-TUSVM; Dr. Olga Bolden-Tiller, Assistant Professor-CAENS; Dr. Noriko Aoi, Small Animal Instructor-TUSVM; and Dr. Deidre Quinn-Gorham, Program Liaison-TUSVM. Students participating in the V-CAP are identified by their embroidered scrub tops and are required to maintain the same professionalism as

the veterinary medical students. The official V-CAP scrub tops were donated by Dr. Irving McConnell, a TUSVM alumnus and Executive Director of the McConnell Group.

V-CAP is currently a segment of the Pre-Vet Scholars program which includes undergraduate students who are serious about applying to TUSVM and becoming a veterinarian. These scholars must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher to be eligible for and remain in the program. The Pre-Vet Scholars Program, which currently has 42 scholars enrolled, is directed by Dr. Perry and Dr. Bolden-Tiller.

TUSVM Small Animal Mobile Wellness Clinic

Preventive health care is not only a focus for people but for pets as well. To promote comprehensive health care for pets and help prevent diseases and illnesses of pet populations in Macon County and surrounding counties, the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine, Small Animal Hospital kicked off its 2010 Small Animal Mobile Wellness Clinic on March 13. The mobile wellness clinic runs from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays in the following locations:

- March 13: Carmack Grocery (Notasulga, Ala.)
- April 3: Franklin Volunteer Fire Department
- April 10: Shorter Town Hall/Post Office
- May 8: Warrior Stand Volunteer Fire Department
- June 5: Brownville Volunteer Fire Department
- June 12: Fort Davis Volunteer Fire Department
- June 19: Little Texas Volunteer Fire Department
- June 26: Torch Truck Stop (Tuskegee)

All participants receive free physical exams during the mobile wellness clinic. Other services are also available at a cost: vaccinations, canine heartworm-lyme disease test, nail trimming, deworming medication, and flea medication. The deworming and flea medication fees are based on pet's weight and medication type. All fees are due at the time of service. Appointments are not necessary for the mobile wellness clinic. In the case of severe weather or other necessary cancellations, the mobile clinic provides rain checks/scheduled home visits. For more information on the Small Animal Mobile Wellness Clinic, please call the Tuskegee University Small Animal Hospital at 334-727-8436. Dr. LaTina Gambles is the Small Animal Ambulatory clinician who oversees this outreach service for the community.



Veterinary Medical Symposium Highlights Efforts in Haiti and Other Global Veterinary Education Issues

With the massive earthquake that struck Haiti and shattered lives in January, this year's veterinary medical symposium focus on "Advancing Global Veterinary Medical Education into the Next Century" is both timely and of paramount importance. The Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM) hosted its 45th Annual Veterinary Medical Symposium on March 24-27 at the Tuskegee University Kellogg Conference Center and School of Veterinary Medicine Complex.

"Noted public health and animal health speakers, veterinarians, and veterinary medical students came together to discuss and learn about the global implications of veterinary medical education in a number of areas," said Dr. Tsegaye Habtemariam, Dean of the Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health. "This year's symposium had several objectives for participants. The foci covered a broad spectrum of veterinary medical education issues from a local, national, and international perspective. This is so relevant, especially now, in these very serious and troubling economic times for our nation as well as globally."

Among the many global perspectives highlighted at this year's symposium was "Veterinary Missions in Haiti." A

"Haiti" panel discussion convened on Friday, March 26 at 11:30 a.m., headed by TUSVM alumni Dr. Lloyd Jarmon, Dr. Kelly Crowdis, Dr. Brianna Skinner-Harris and Dr. Irving McConnell. The focus was on the efforts of these and other individuals having either worked directly in Haiti or with some veterinary medical relief efforts for Haiti. This forum also provided the opportunity for discussions on future efforts to assist with veterinary medicine in Haiti.

Other symposium presentations highlighting some global issues as they relate to disaster preparedness included "Environment Hazards and Public Health Issues Associated with Emergency/Disaster Response;" "Veterinary Regulatory Support in Safeguarding Americans through International Outreach and Programs;" "Federal Resources and Capabilities for Veterinary Emergency and Disaster Response;" "Alabama Emergency Response Assistance;" "Community Preparedness and Shelter in Place for Veterinary Disaster Response;" "Training and Operations for Post-Disaster Animal Shelters;" and "Recovery from a Food Emergency after a Disaster."

The culminating event on Friday, March 26 was the annual banquet. The reunion classes of 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005 were honored.

Information submitted by: Anissa L. Riley, Assistant Director, Office of External Affairs, riley@tuskegee.edu

Dog Day Afternoon: Transporting Furry Friends to Safety

By Kathryn Opalewski

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What some people are willing to do for an animal is really amazing. Take Jeff Bennett from the Florida Keys, for example. As of October 2008, he has saved almost 100 dogs from being euthanized by donating his time, airplane, and fuel to transport the dogs from overcrowded shelters to rescue groups and safe havens several states away that are committed to finding them adoptive homes.

"I love dogs and I love flying," said Bennett, a pilot since 1995 and owner of a Cirrus SR22. "I've put the two together and do what little I can to save what little lives I can."

This has been made possible through Pilots N Paws, an online forum established in February 2008 for animal rescue groups and pilots to coordinate animal transports around the country. The 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization helps make pilots and aircraft owners across the country aware of the dire need for animal transports.

About 500 pilots have volunteered so far and the organization is committed to increasing the number of pilots and airplane owners involved in Pilots N Paws so that no request for transport goes unanswered, according to Jon Wehrenberg, co-founder of Pilots N Paws.

"It doesn't take much of an excuse for a pilot to go fly," said Bennett. "So why not just take a four-legged friend with you?"

About 4 million animals or more are euthanized annually, but this would not be the case if there were more and better spay and neuter programs. This includes laws regarding owners' responsibility for their animals. Because the problem is primarily regional, a lot of these animals could find permanent "forever" homes if they could be transported from high-

kill regions to areas with homes available.

"And general aviation could use the support, too. So, is there a need for this? Yes, and we wanted to give volunteers a place to connect and coordinate missions," said Deborah Boies, co-founder of Pilots N Paws. "I've dealt with the most kind-hearted people. It's the best of humanity coming together, working together to safely transport the dogs. Flying is the best way to cover a lot of ground in a short period of time."

One of Bennett's recent trips involved a Doberman pinscher that belonged to a family from New England who wanted to live on a boat. The dog didn't like being around water, so the family decided to just turn it into the shelter. Through Pilots N Paws, Bennett was able to transport the dog to a new home within two weeks.

"We have the ability to move the dogs to areas where they have a much better chance of being adopted, sometimes based on what people are looking for such as breed and temperament," he said. "There are so many programs at the federal and state levels for people who need assistance. Dogs have nothing except shelters, which are always on the verge of bankruptcy, and are overloaded and underfunded."

Nick O'Connell of Williamsburg, Virginia, also is an animal lover and figures he has to fly a certain number of hours to stay current anyway.

"I can only imagine what some of these animals have gone through," said O'Connell, a pilot since 1991 and owner of a Piper Cherokee 180. "I'm delighted to have saved around 23 dogs so far. It's very rewarding."

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE NEWS

Auburn's Vapor Wake Canine is a Tool against Explosive Threats

As a result of the Christmas Day bombing attempt aboard an airliner, Auburn University's canine detection program and its Vapor Wake Detection method are garnering national attention.

Last fall Rob Gillette, D.V.M., was named director of the Animal Health and Performance Program (AHPP) at Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine. AHPP includes the Canine Detection Research Institute (CDRI) and veterinary sports medicine. Dr. Gillette had previously served as director of the Richard G. and Dorothy A. Metcalf Veterinary Sports Medicine Program which studies injuries, diseases, nutritional factors, and physiologic functions of dogs and horses involved in field sports and working endeavors.

Established in 1989, CDRI conducts research activities encompassing canine detection and the process of canine olfaction. Auburn's CDRI is the largest dedicated canine detection research program in the United States and its Canine Detection Training Center in Anniston, Ala., is one of the largest outside the federal government.

There are numerous canine programs in existence, but Auburn's program is the only one that combines veterinary sports medicine and detection. "CDRI focuses on improving security by producing superior detector dogs," said Dr. Gillette.

Auburn University has created a novel detection asset in the Vapor Wake Detection canine. Canines are bred for specific traits and trained to sample plumes of air – a vapor wake – coming from persons and what they are carrying, such as explosives or munitions, as they pass through check points or crowds. The Vapor Wake Detection canine team is a standard explosives detection team with the additional ability and training to detect carried or body-worn explosives.

At birth, an Auburn puppy enters the detector dog rear-

ing program. Over the next 12 months, the dog is exposed to various engineered environmental conditions. Due to the close proximity to people these canines must work, sporting breeds are generally used. Sporting dogs can also operate within a crowd causing fewer disruptions and anxiety.

After completing the rearing program, each canine undergoes ten weeks of vigorous training before a handler is assigned. After the handler arrives, they complete a ten-week basic explosives handler course as a team. Upon graduating from the basic course, the team receives two weeks of Vapor Wake training and two additional weeks of Vapor Wake training in their operational environment. Continued training in the operational environment is critical to the team's continued success.

"One of the key benefits of the Vapor Wake Detection dog is they are non-invasive," said John Pearce, CDRI associate director. "In a heavily crowded venue, the dog can detect an explosive vapor wake and trace it to the person carrying the explosive."

Auburn researchers believe the Vapor Wake Detection technology is the most effective and economical approach available for combating threats to safety and homeland security posed by individuals carrying explosives or munitions. According to Mr. Pearce, the canines have been exceptionally successful in this form of detection in areas with a large congestion of pedestrian traffic without impeding traffic flow.

While explosives detection and check point screening equipment is stationary, detection dogs can work all types of venues, shopping malls, mass transit stations, and major events. Canine teams also provide a strong visible and psychological deterrence against criminal acts.

Additionally, the canine detection team offers unpredictability. "Detection and screening equipment can be studied and compromised," Mr. Pearce said. "Each canine detection dog is different; terrorists cannot pre-determine their ability or responses."

Numerous federal agencies have purchased and are using Auburn University Vapor Wake Detection dogs.



Suicide Risk Among Veterinarians

Gregory E Skipper, MD

Medical Director, Alabama Veterinary Professionals Wellness Program

Assistant Professor, University of Alabama School of Medicine

Jerome Williams, DVM

Chairman, Alabama Veterinary Professionals Wellness Committee

A recent paper from England reported a high rate of suicide among veterinarians. Depression, substance abuse, work-related stress, reluctance to admit psychiatric or substance problems, access to lethal drugs and familiarity with euthanasia were cited as possible causes. Method: In 2008 we surveyed veterinary students, executive directors of state veterinary associations, and licensed veterinarians regarding their experiences and attitudes concerning mental health issues, including suicide. Results: Of 58 vet students attending a Student Chapter meeting 19% indicated they'd personally been diagnosed with mental illness and 13% had "seriously considered or attempted suicide." Of 22 state association executive directors 40% knew of one or more veterinarians who'd committed suicide over the previous 3 years, only 37% believed suicide was a significant concern for vets,

and only 44% indicated their state had an active wellness program. Of 14,551 licensed veterinarians 701 responded. Of the 66% who indicated they'd been clinically depressed 32% had not sought treatment. More females (27%) than males (20%) admitted they'd seriously considered suicide ($P < .01$) and only 11% believed that suicide among veterinarians was more prevalent than average. Women (15%) were more likely than men (7%) to respond that they were not sure they'd "made the right career choice" ($P < .001$), 4% stated they were not happy being veterinarians, and 1% were currently planning to leave veterinary medicine. It is of concern that veterinarians, like other health professionals, have a higher risk of suicide but they have less support and seem to have inadequate awareness of their own mental health vulnerability.

NEWS FROM YOUR STATE VETERINARIAN

by Dr. Tony Frazier

BSE Testing Program Takes a Break

The BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) Testing program in Alabama in mid-February took a break while the USDA re-evaluates where the program actually needs to be in order to satisfy export partners as well as to insure consumer confidence at home. Because of the tremendous response by cattle producers in Alabama and around the country, the program has far exceeded expectations, which leaves us at a point of deciding exactly how much testing needs to be done in the future. A great deal of appreciation goes to you the private practitioner who made the testing program a success in Alabama. For the near future, we ask that you, along with the rest of us take a time out while the future direction and goals of the program are established.

In the spring of 1996, the Minister of Health for England announced that there was a possible link between a new variant of the human disease CJD and consumption of meat and other products from BSE positive cattle. At that time the United States banned imports of all live cattle and other products from countries known to have BSE in their cattle populations. We here in the United States also initiated other practices to guard against the introduction of the disease within our borders. One of the first firewalls was to ban the feeding of rendered ruminant by-products such as meat and bone meal in cattle feed.

The United States also began testing for BSE. In 2001



Dr. Tony Frazier

there were about 5,000 cattle tested for the disease here in the U. S. In 2002 the number moved to 12,500. The number for 2003 was 20,000. In the last quarter of 2003 the USDA decided to enter into cooperative agreements with the states to increase the testing level to 40,000 "target" animals (downers, dying, debilitated, and those showing central nervous system signs). The 40,000 samples would, according to a Harvard University risk assessment, give a ninety-five percent level of confidence that if a positive BSE cow were here, it would be found.

In the February 2004 issue of the Alabama Cattleman Magazine, there was a letter from the state veterinarian and the USDA announcing the BSE Testing Program in Alabama. Because of the cow in Washington State in late December of 2003, the goal for sampling was expanded to 268,000 samples which would give a 99 percent confidence level that if the disease were out there, we would find it. In 2005 a positive cow from Texas was found and in 2006 we had our own case of BSE in Alabama. Since that time hundreds of thousands of samples have been collected in the U. S. There have been no positives found here in the United States since the cow here in Alabama four years ago.

So pat yourselves on the back. You as the private practitioner in Alabama have made the BSE program a success. On a national basis, Alabama has provided what are truly considered "target animals". And while for now there will

not be funds for the BSE testing program, we must still strongly encourage you to respond to any cattle showing central nervous signs, such as in coordination, staggering, or strange behavior from your cattle clients. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact my office 334-240-7253 or the USDA Veterinary Services (334-223-7141). Presently, there are no funds to aid in the proper disposal of the carcasses.

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Region of Relief: Central/East Alabama, West Georgia

Dr. Mary Battistella, AUB '83

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Alexander City, AL 35010-3050
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Cell: 256/496-3013
Fax: 256/825-6202
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Email: drnikkibrown@gmail.com
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Kind of Practice: Mixed
Region of Relief: East Alabama, would prefer within 50 miles of Auburn or Phenix City

Dr. Jason Johnson, AUB '03

1860 Hillbrook Circle
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Email: jwj001@auburn.edu
State(s) where Licensed: AL, GA
Kind of Practice: Mixed, SA, LA
Region of Relief: Birmingham Area, will travel
Appropriate Information: Diplomate, theriogenology- large and small animal: will travel/consult/educate as appropriate

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Birmingham, AL 35212
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State(s) where Licensed: AL, GA
Kind of Practice: SA, LA, Mixed
Region of Relief: 150 mile radius of Birmingham, AL

Dr. Katherine L. McGahee, MIS '06

645 NE Fields Road
Lacey's Spring, AL 35754
Phone: 256/883-4947
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Email: Mcsquize@aol.com
State(s) where Licensed: AL
Kind of Practice: SA, Mixed
Region of Relief: North Alabama Area - Birmingham North. Additional charge for long distance travel

Dr. H. Winston Pirtle, Sr., AUB '67

8560 U.S. Hwy 331
Montgomery, AL 36105
Cell Phone: 334/399-2059 on call 24/7
Email: pirtledvmjd@aol.com
State(s) where Licensed: AL
Kind of Practice: Mixed
Region of Relief: State of Alabama - prefer within 100 miles of Montgomery
Appropriate Information: Will bring vehicle stocked and equipped for equine and cattle calls.

Dr. Donald C. Wood, AUB '68

2106 Kirkland Drive
Auburn, AL 36832
Phone: 334/826-3692 (AL)
239/389-4877 (FL)
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