

ALABAMA VETERINARIAN

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

Spring 2009



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*"Am I headed in
the right direction
for the ALVMA
annual conference
in Sandestin?"*



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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Michael E. Newman

Colleagues:

There is a curious phenomenon which occurs frequently within our species. It seems that when good happens due to some evolution of human effort, and many people benefit from the good, some will object and a few will object mightily. Gasoline is a great example. I don't reckon many people today remember the



DR. MICHAEL E. NEWMAN

good old days -I certainly don't-when horses, mules, etc. were the means of transportation for most and a train ride was a luxury. Travel across a small county was measured in days and care for the animals was not only necessary but a major daily undertaking. Even then, fuel for a horse for any level of work was much more expensive than the fuel used for the same amount of work by our internal combustion engines today. The simplicity of use when compared to animals, the power of and the relative lack of expense for the engines has fueled (pun intended) a huge improvement in productivity and quality of life for all of us. In some ways, we are what we are because of Henry Ford and that is not all bad although you wouldn't know it by listening to the soreheads mentioned above. To them gasoline is evil and the search for it worse. The caribou and its habitat are irreplaceable, and so they are.

The contrary phenomenon is that when the good thing gets scarce the soreheads quit complaining. Every environmentalist I know uses an automobile. It is certainly not hard to imagine that if gasoline went to say ten dollars a gallon, caribou would be featured in cook books and environmentalists would buy them.

The welfare issues of animals used for food or food production raised by concerned citizens or humane organizations is another example. Animal foods in this country are healthier and less costly today than ever before and less costly and usually healthier than similar foods from any other country. American agriculture is one of the world's greatest success stories and veterinary medicine is deeply involved and a major factor in that success. Our profession has been charged with the responsibility to provide the public with safe, affordable animal foods and we have done so. We have been asked to use science to arbitrate policy in those things we are responsible for and we have done so. We have been asked to learn our trade and to continue to learn our trade and we have done so. We have been asked to work with other agriculture groups for the betterment of animal and human life and we have done so. We have been asked to protect the welfare of animals used for food and we have done so. When did animals have it better than today and if dairy cattle and laying hens are stressed to sickness, where are all the milk and eggs coming from?

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ALVMA 2008-2009 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Human Animal Bond
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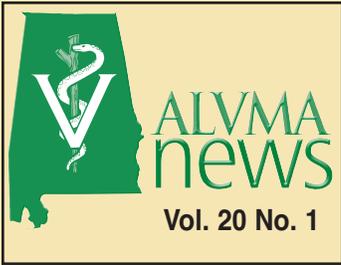
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ALABAMA VETERINARIAN



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Board Approves Thirty-Three New Applicants

The Board of Directors of the Alabama VMA voted to accept the membership applications of thirty-three veterinarians since November 2008. 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.

Jason A. Bonner, Sheffield (AUB07)
Christian N. Brown, Phenix City (GA07)
Elizabeth S. Caldwell, Auburn (AUB08)
Christopher Campbell, Birmingham (AUB06)
Samuel C. Cartner, Birmingham (AUB83)
Mary Jane Cionni, Trussville (AUB97)
Selina A. Crocker, Jackson (TUS07)
Rebecca B. Davidson, Notasalga (AUB80)
Adrienne Dunham, Athens (TUS07)
Leigh Ann Ivey Farris, New Brockton (AUB05)
Jamie Ferguson, Mobile (AUB08)
Brandie Viars Grace, Ramer (AUB08)
Lauren S. Grider, Madison (AUB08)
Allison B. Ivey, Dothan (AUB06)
Calvin M. Johnson, Auburn (AUB86)
Kelly A. Johnson, Hoover (TEX06)
Nicole M. Kuhlmann, Mobile (AUB07)

Mark S. Lawrence, Selma (AUB88)
Robert A. Martin, Dothan (AUB76)
Michael D. Moody, Athens GA (MIS07)
Randall A. Plaisance Jr., Dadeville (AUB08)
Cooper G. Puckett, Auburn (AUB08)
Kasey D. Singley, Foley (AUB06)
Joanna M. Sonmor, Dothan (AUB90)
Kathleen Sudnick-Albert, Auburn (TUS03)
Robert Syfrett, Dothan (AUB07)
Mary Allison Cloutier Trotter, Prattville (AUB08)
Herbert R. Wagenheim, Moundville (AUB08)
Travis W. Wagner, Rainbow City (AUB05)
Janet A. Welch, Auburn (COR90)
Christie Wendt, Northport (MIS03)
Robyn R. Wilborn, Auburn (AUB02)
Allison Williams, Birmingham (FL08)

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and Risk Management Resources

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MATTERS OF LAW

The Alabama VMA is pleased to announce the addition of *Matters of Law* to our bi-annual distribution of Alabama Veterinarian and our monthly online editions of E-Veterinarian.



Attorney Jeffrey L. Roth of Fees & Burgess, P.C. in Huntsville will be serving as our 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.

The topics covered in the March and April E-Veterinarian online issues included:

Complying with Your Homeland Security Obligations - (March)
Drug Free Work Place - (April)

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

National Labor Relations Act

by Jeffrey L. Roth, JD

In this edition of *Matters of Law* we will discuss obligations under the National Labor Relations Act ("NLRA") and the ability of the National Labor Relations Board ("NLRB") to penalize your practice as a result of unfair labor practice complaints by your employees.

WHAT? There are no union employees in my practice! How does that federal law apply to my practice? Well, there does not have to be a union, and the law applies to all but the very smallest of practices, since the NLRB will exercise jurisdiction over any non-retail establishment that purchases at least \$50,000 worth of the supplies directly or indirectly outside the state. One D.V.M. in Texas found out the hard way.

Two employees of the Texas practice together complained to the practice manager that the D.V.M./owner of the practice was engaged in favoritism toward another employee and complained about wages, hours, and working conditions at the practice. The practice then orally promulgated a rule that prohibited employees from discussing wages and other terms and conditions of employment. Days later, the two complaining employees were discharged.

The employees complained to the NLRB, and the NLRB

ruled that the practice had engaged in unfair labor practices and awarded the employees reinstatement, back pay (with interest), and made the practice post a notice to all employees regarding the violation and the remedies provided.

This action stems from the rights of employees under the NLRA to engage in "concerted activity" (as 2 employees were involved, not one) regarding discussions with the employer regarding wages and other terms and conditions of employment. Employers may not retaliate against employees for being engaged in such "concerted activity" under the NLRA. This is one of the exceptions to the "at will" status of an employee in Alabama. Terminating the employees violated this provision, as the NLRB believed that the reason for the discharge was directly related to the "concerted activity."

Had the practice manager spoken to the employees individually, rather than together, there would be no "concerted activity," and therefore, no unfair labor practice. Also, if evidence indicated that the employees were terminated for a reason other than engaging in the "concerted activity," there would have been no liability to the practice.

This decision was published March 31 of this year, and can be found at: <http://www.nlr.gov>

SPAY NEUTER LICENSE PLATE PROGRAM UNDERWAY



The executive office of the Alabama VMA sent out acceptance letters April 13th, 2009 to clinics/hospitals that have signed up to participate in the spay/neuter license plate program. As of the date of this publication, nearly 100

clinics/hospitals have requested approval to participate in the program. Any hospital/clinic in Alabama can request approval on the stipulation that every veterinarian employed in the clinic must be a member of the Alabama VMA.

The initial pre-sale campaign resulted in nearly \$65,000 being made available to the Foundation to begin the spay/neuter program. The ongoing sale of the plates will continue to funnel proceeds into the fund to keep the program going. It is important that Association members continue to publicize the sale of the plates to their clients. The initial \$65,000 is a great start but much more will be needed to make sure the program is truly effective.

If you need further information on the spay/neuter license plate participation program please call the Alabama VMA office at 334-395-0086.

Executive Board Recommends Proposed Constitution Amendments

The following are proposed amendments to the Alabama VMA Constitution presented at the 2009 Winter Board Meeting and **will be voted on for adoption at the 2010 Winter Board Meeting**. Your Executive Board recommends approval of these amendments. (*Article IX-Amendments: Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the president for action by the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall forward the amendment and its recommendations to be read at the next regular meeting of the Association. The proposed amendment will then be published in the Alabama Veterinarian and presented to the Association for action at a regular meeting one year later. An amendment shall be adopted by an affirmative two-thirds majority of the total votes cast by absentee ballots and members present and voting at the meeting.*)

Constitution

(Proposed February 2009)

Article IV- Officers

Section 2. **Qualifications** – The president, president-elect and vice president shall be active members in good standing and have served at least ~~two one years~~ year as members of the Executive Board. In addition, the president shall be an active member in good standing for at least five years immediately prior to assuming office.

Section 3. **Election and Term** – A president-elect, vice president, and treasurer shall be elected at before each annual summer meeting of the Association as prescribed by the Bylaws. Each such officer so elected shall serve until the annual summer meeting subsequent to assumption of office or until the installation of a successor, at which time the president-elect shall become president of the Association and shall serve as president until the next annual summer meeting or until the installation of a successor.

Article VI- Executive Board

Section 2. **Composition** – The Board shall consist of the president, president-elect, vice president, treasurer, immediate past president, ~~two members at large~~ one member-at-large, and one member from each constituent association. The executive director, delegate and alternate delegate to the American Veterinary Medical

Association, the state veterinarian of Alabama, the editor of the Alabama Veterinarian, the president of the Auxiliary to the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, a student representative from SCAVMA at Auburn University and Tuskegee University, ~~and~~ the public health veterinarian, and a member from the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation Board shall be ex-officio members without the right to vote.

Section 4. **Election and Term** – One member of the Association shall be elected each year, as a member-at-large for a term of ~~two years~~ one year and shall serve until a successor is elected. In the event a member-at-large position is vacated, a replacement shall be named by the president and approved by the Executive Board. The replacement shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term or until a successor is elected. Members from constituent associations shall be elected to the Executive Board in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws.

Article IX- Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the president for action by the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall forward the amendment and its recommendations to be read at the next regular meeting of the Association. The proposed amendment will then be ~~published in the Alabama Veterinarian and presented to~~ mailed to all

~~members of the Association for action at voting before a regular meeting one year later. An amendment shall be adopted by an affirmative two-thirds majority of the total votes cast. by absentee ballots and members present and voting at the meeting. Balloting and voting shall be held as prescribed by the Bylaws.~~

Executive Board Recommends Proposed Bylaws Amendments

The following are proposed amendments to the Alabama VMA Bylaws presented at the 2009 Winter Board Meeting and **will be voted on for adoption at the 2009 Annual conference on Saturday, June 27th, 2009 at 12 noon.** Your Executive Board recommends approval of these amendments. (*Article XIII-Amendments: Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the president for action by the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall forward its recommendations and a copy of the proposed amendment to each member in good standing not less than thirty (30) days before the next regular meeting of the Association. An amendment shall be adopted by an affirmative two-thirds majority of the votes cast by absentee ballots and members present and voting at the meeting.*)

Bylaws

(Proposed February 2009)

Article 1 –Membership

Section 2- Life Members

(b) A member who has maintained continuous membership for 35 years and has retired from all activities related to veterinary medicine. Up to 10 years credit may be granted for membership in Associations of other States, provided that the most recent 25 years was in the Alabama Association.

(c) A member who has reached 65 years of age, has retired from all activities related to veterinary medicine, and has been a member of the Association continuously since graduation from veterinary college. Credit may be granted for membership in Associations of other States, provided that the most recent ? (one-half) of the period of membership was in the Alabama Association.

(d.) A member who has retired due to infirmity. For this purpose, a retired member is one who has ceased all regular employment, ~~and whose annual earnings from occasional professional activity or other employment do not exceed the maximum earnings limit established by the U.S. Government to remain qualified for social security retirement benefits, and has been a member of the association continuously since graduation from Veterinary College.~~ Credit may be granted for membership in Associations of other states, provided that the most recent (one-half) of the period of membership was in the Alabama Association.

Section 9- **Exemption from Dues** - Life and honorary members shall be exempt from payment of dues. ~~Active members may be exempted from dues for a period of time by the Executive Board for just and reasonable cause. An active member may petition the Executive Board of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association for waiver of dues on the basis of financial hardship or physical disabilities or illness. The member may be asked to provide appropriate documentation to support the petition. If waiver is granted, the member will maintain the privileges of an active member.~~

Article II – Officers

Section 1. **Nominations** - The president shall appoint a

nominating committee at least six months prior to the regular summer meeting of the Association. The committee shall consist of five members who are past presidents and no two of which shall be from the same constituent association. The committee shall present nominations for the offices of president-elect, vice president, treasurer, a member-at-large of the Executive Board, and if necessary, a president. The slate of nominees shall be published ~~in the Alabama Veterinarian at least one month~~ prior to the election. Voting will be by mailed ballots.

Section 2. **Election-** ~~a) If a member is unable to attend the regular summer meeting and desires to vote by absentee ballot, the ballot must be requested in writing from the executive director. The completed ballot must reach the executive director one week before the beginning of the meeting for the ballot to be counted. A space for write in candidates will be provided. Election will be conducted by mailed ballots. The executive director will mail a ballot listing the positions and candidates name(s) for that position to each member of the association. A space for write-in candidates will be provided. The ballots shall be mailed six weeks before the annual summer meeting and must be completed and returned to the executive director two weeks before the beginning of the meeting.~~

b) The president-elect, vice president, treasurer, member-at-large of the Executive Board and, if necessary, a president shall be elected by receiving the largest number a majority of the total absentee votes cast and of members present and voting at the regular summer meeting prior to the summer meeting of the association. Ties will be resolved during the summer meeting of the association. Names of candidates that were tied with the largest number of votes will be placed on the ballot, and members in attendance at the annual business meeting will vote to determine the winner.

c) All other offices of the Association shall be recommended by the Executive Board and elected by an affirmative vote of the majority of members ~~present and~~ voting at the regular summer meeting or in the election prior to the summer meeting.

Section 3. **Installation-** All elected officers shall be announced and installed during the regular summer meeting ~~at which they are elected~~ following the election and shall take office at the close of the meeting.

Section 4. **Vacancies** - (a) If the president dies, resigns, or is otherwise removed from office, then the president-elect shall immediately become president as provided in Article IV, Section 4, of the Constitution. In the event that there is a vacancy in the office of president-elect at the time that the vacancy in the office of the president occurs, then the vice president shall act as president until the next regular summer meeting, at which time ~~a new~~ the newly elected president shall ~~be elected to~~ serve until the following regular summer meeting or until the installation of a successor.

(b) If the president-elect dies, resigns, or is otherwise removed from office, then the vice president shall act as president-elect until the next regular summer meeting at which time ~~both a the newly elected~~ president and a president-elect shall ~~be elected to~~ serve until the following regular summer meeting or until the installation of their successors.

~~Section 8- Senior Board Member - The senior board member shall:
Secure corporate sponsorship for the Convention.~~

~~Section 9- Junior Board Member - The junior board member shall:
Coordinate Convention activities not related to the scientific programs.~~

Section 8. Board Member-at-Large- The at-large board member shall:

1. Secure corporate sponsorship for the Convention.
2. Coordinate Convention activities not related to the scientific programs.

Article IV- Executive Board

Section 3. **Executive Committee** - There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the president, president-elect, vice president, treasurer, immediate past president and the executive board ~~members at large~~ member-at-large, with the executive director serving as an ex-officio member. At those times the president determines that urgent action is required to be taken in the name of the Association, a meeting of the Executive Committee may be called. Action shall be taken only upon unanimous approval of the Executive Committee. Only those Executive Committee members who are incapacitated or unavailable within a reasonable length of time shall be excluded from this deliberation. A minimum of ~~five~~ four members shall be required to conduct a vote. Such action taken by the president under the authority of the Executive Committee shall be reported in its entirety to all Executive Board members within two weeks of the vote. If the vote is not unanimous the entire Executive Board will be consulted.

Article V – Delegate and Alternate Delegate

Section 3. **Election and Tenure** - The president shall appoint a nominating committee at least ~~three~~ six months prior to the regular summer meeting of the Association. The committee shall consist of five members who are past presidents and no two of which shall be from the same constituent association. The committee shall present nominations for the offices of delegate and alternate delegate. Election will be conducted by mailed ballots. The executive director will mail a ballot listing the positions and the candidates name(s) for that position to each member of the association. A space for write-in candidates will be provided. The ballots shall be mailed six weeks before the annual summer meeting and must be completed and returned to the executive director two weeks before the beginning of the meeting, and their names shall be published in the Alabama Veterinarian at least one month prior to the regular summer meeting. The floor shall be opened for additional nominations at that time of election. Election shall be declared by receiving the largest number affirmative vote of a majority of total votes cast of absentee votes and of the members present and voting at the regular summer meeting. Ties will be resolved during the summer meeting of the association. Names of nominees that were tied with the largest number of votes will be placed on the ballot, and members in attendance at the annual business meeting will vote to determine the winner. The term of office shall be four years and shall begin on September 1, following their election.

Article VI- Constituent Associations

Section 2. **Application** – Application for recognition of a local or district veterinary medical association as a constituent association shall be filed with the executive director not less than ~~30~~ 60 days prior to a regular meeting of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association. The application shall include:

- The constitution and bylaws of the local or district association.
- A list of officers and members.
- Letters of recommendation from two adjacent constituent associations.

The Executive Board shall forward its recommendations and the application to the Association for consideration. Recognition shall be granted by an affirmative vote of a majority of ~~absentee ballots and members present and voting at a regular meeting~~ votes cast. Voting

will be conducted by mailed ballots. The executive director will mail a ballot to each member of the association. The ballots shall be mailed out six weeks before the annual summer meeting and must be completed and returned to the executive director two weeks before the beginning of the meeting.

Article IX- Committees

Section 3. **Standing Committees** – Standing committees of the Association shall be:

~~g) Long Range Planning~~ – ~~The long Range Planning Committee shall consist of the past five presidents and chaired by the immediate past president.~~

~~h) g) Professionals Wellness~~ – The Alabama Veterinary Professionals Wellness Committee shall consist of not less than 9 nor more than 15 veterinary professionals licensed to practice in Alabama. The members of the committee shall be appointed by the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, from a list of candidates submitted by the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association. The members of the committee will be eligible for reappointment. Subsequent to the initial appointment procedure appointments will be made for three (3) years. Appointments made for vacant positions will be appointed for the remainder of that term. Members cannot serve more than nine (9) consecutive years. Duties of the committee shall be to develop procedures in consultation with the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners as provided for in Rule 930-X-1-34 of the State Statute and of the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners Operation Rules.

~~i) Program~~ – ~~The Program Committee shall consist of the vice president as chairman and five members appointed by the president. Duties of the committee shall be to plan and arrange for suitable programs for the regular meetings of the Association in coordination with the president and convention committee.~~

~~j) Radiology~~ – ~~The Radiology Committee shall consist of a minimum of three members appointed by the president. At least one member shall be a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Radiology. Duties of the committee shall be to advise association members and the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners on matters concerning radiology, radiology safety, protection and regulations and act as a liaison to the Division of Radiation Control, Alabama Department of Public Health.~~

~~k) Resolutions~~ – ~~The Resolutions Committee shall consist of five members appointed by the president. Duties of the committee shall be to receive, consider, and write in resolution form, items from members, other committees, and constituent associations that reflect the policies, actions, and expressions of the Association as a body. Resolutions shall be approved by the Executive Board.~~

Article XIII- Amendments

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the president for action by the Executive Board. The Executive ~~Board~~ Director shall forward ~~its~~ the ~~Board's~~ Board's recommendations, ~~and~~ and a copy of the proposed amendment, ~~and a ballot~~ and a ballot to each member in good standing ~~not less than thirty (30) days~~ six weeks before the next regular meeting of the Association. Voting will be by mailed ballots and must be returned to the executive director two weeks before the meeting. An amendment shall be adopted by an affirmative two-thirds majority of the votes cast ~~by absentee ballots and members present and voting at the meeting.~~

From the Editor: The End of Economic Euthanasia?

Dr. Barbara F. Monaghan



**DR. BARBARA
MONAGHAN**

One of the worst situations veterinarians can find themselves in is a situation when euthanasia of a family pet is considered in lieu of treatment because of the financial limitations of the owner. We have all been there many times. In fact a poll conducted in 2004 indicated that 90 per-

cent of the veterinarians taking part in the poll had performed economic euthanasia of clients' pets. Advocates of pet insurance state that the overarching benefit of pet insurance will be the reduction of economic euthanasia in daily practice.

In 2007 Consumer Reports magazine stated that US consumers spent \$9 billion dollars on veterinary medicine. They spent \$230 million on pet insurance. That is enough incentive for many a new player to enter the pet insurance market. Even Kroger grocery store chain has a pet insurance policy for sale. Last year our own AVMA GHLIT changed its charter to be able to offer pet health insurance to the general public. The GHLIT endorsed a pet insurance program that would promote quality veterinary medicine and reduce euthanasia while at the same time accommodating the practitioner's needs. The last half of that sentence is the most important "accommodating the practitioner's needs".

The AVMA endorses the concept of pet insurance. The type of product that becomes most utilized in the market place is the key and the primary concern. In addition to reducing economic

euthanasia, pet insurance is designed to increase the overall expenditures on pet's health maintenance. As a society we are not great planners or savers so insurance can be there for a pet's unanticipated illness or injury. However we all know that our M.D. counterparts do not have a hand in glove relationship with insurance companies and will often state how fortunate we are as an industry not to have to deal with the insurance companies in a third party pay relationship. Veterinary medicine could find itself in a similar situation if we do not take an active role in molding the types of products that insurance companies bring to the market place, now AND in the future. I am of course speaking of managed care plans and third party pay plans. Managed care networks will not "accommodate the practitioner's needs".

Managed care networks will be attractive to your clients! They will market themselves as having the power to rein in skyrocketing veterinary bills. Clients will pay for an annual membership card. They will go to a network veterinarian and pay a network fee for services that are a discounted rate negotiated by the network on behalf of the pet owning member. The network "encourages" veterinarians to become network providers by providing the incentive that the network will drive many a new client in to your hospital. If you choose not to join the network you may find your current long term clients bombarded by a direct mail marketing campaign to pull them from you to the network veterinarian down the road who will provide the excellent veterinary care that they demand at a much lower price. In one situation recently a company was providing pet

id cards to a practice and was uploading client information from the practice software to mail the cards to the clients. This company evolved into a multifaceted company that started to offer negotiated reduced fee veterinary services to the pet owning public. This company attempted to blackmail the veterinary hospitals that had been using the pet id service by threatening to utilize the large database of client addresses to market discounted veterinary services to their clients through other veterinarians. This was stopped cold by the attorney general in the state where this happened, but it did get started.

So where do you fit in all of this? You are right in the middle. The pet insurance industry is expected to experience tremendous growth. Your clients will come to you and they will ask you for advice. What will you do? The AVMA's endorsement of the pet insurance product indicates that the product is a relationship between the company and the pet owner. The company cannot and will not have any influence on treatment plans or treatment costs provided by the veterinarian and the client can use the veterinarian of their choice. The client discusses the treatment with their vet. They pay the vet in full for services rendered and then submit the bill to the insurance company for eligible reimbursement under their plan; no discounts and no third party pay.

Veterinarians must be educated on the types of insurance products in the market and use your relationship with your client to guide them in their choice, they are already asking. Do not allow managed care to slip into our industry through complacency and inaction like it did with the MDs.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The annual business meeting of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association will be held from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00p.m. on Saturday, June 27, 2009 in conjunction with the 102nd Annual Convention. The meeting will be held in Grand Ballrooms A & B at the Linkside Conference Center at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, 9300 Emerald Parkway West, Sandestin, Florida 32550 (850) 267-8210.

Heath/Groth Scholarships Awarded

Two students from the College of Veterinary Medicine at Auburn University received scholarships on behalf of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation and the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association.

Rebecca George, a third year student from Alexander City, Alabama was the recipient of the Dr. and Mrs. A.H. Groth, Jr. Scholarship, and Jessica Sherrill, a second year student from Madison, Alabama was this year's recipient of the Dr. M.K. Heath Memorial Scholarship. Both scholarships were established by the ALVMA to honor Drs. Heath and Groth, Jr.

According to Auburn University, there were 160 veterinary students that applied to the college for financial assistance in 2008-2009. The average debt of these students was approximately \$55,300. This is in addition to loans that are handled on main campus. Members of the class of 2008 which graduated last May had an average debt of \$86,800. Student debt continues to rise and is of 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 \$325,000 (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 elect of the Alabama VMA poses with Jessica Sherrill (left photo), recipient of the 2009 Dr. M.K. Heath Scholarship award, and Rebecca George (right photo), recipient of the 2009 Dr. and Mrs. Aaron Groth, Jr. Scholarship award presented at Honors Night at Auburn University, February 12.

Alabama VMA Partners with Veterinary Career Network

Looking for qualified veterinary industry professionals? Join the newly established Alabama VMA CAREER CENTER.

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association announces a partnership with the Veterinary Career Network (VCN) – the most comprehensive career and recruiting site for the veterinary industry. The CAREER CENTER OFFERS extensive resume and position databases, powerful and user-friendly searching capabilities, which allow you to find the candidate you're looking for! We are a Veterinary Career Network partner and when you post your job with us, you post it nationwide to our other VCN partners: As part of the

national Veterinary Career Network, in conjunction with the American Veterinary Medical Association, you will have access to the most jobs and candidates in the veterinary industry in your neighborhood and nationwide.

The CAREER CENTER helps streamline your hiring process with:

- **Incredible exposure for job listings**
- **Higher quality candidates**
- **Economical pricing** - post your available jobs and pay only \$59-\$119 for a 30-day job posting – highly targeted advertising exposure for a very reasonable price.

The CAREER CENTER is here just in time to put a little spring in your step with a 20% discount to connect with top talent. Buy a 30-day Job Posting (Veterinarian and Non-veterinarian) and receive a 20% discount!

Greater competition for qualified staff has made the search for the right colleague a real challenge. We have your candidate... it's a fact that the best professionals are engaged with their industry association. We attract top talent! Discount offer expires May 15th, 2009.

Check out the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association's CAREER CENTER today at WWW.ALVMA.COM.

2009 AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference

*By Dr. Lindsay Bryant
Purdue University Class of 2005*

This year the annual AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference was held January 9th – 11th at the Intercontinental Hotel in Chicago, IL. The mission of the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference is to develop leaders for the benefit of the individual and the veterinary profession. Attendees of the conference included but were not limited to the members of the AVMA Executive Board and House Advisory Committee, Delegates and Alternate Delegates, Future Leaders (recent graduates who have graduated within the last seven years) and State, Allied and International Veterinary Association officers. The conference featured entertaining speakers, expert discussions, a variety of workshops, a mini-Veterinary Leadership Experience for Future Leaders and the House of Delegates winter session.

As a recent graduate I had the great opportunity to attend the Veterinary Leadership Conference as a Future Leader representing Alabama. I was one of sixty Future Leaders from around the United States and Canada to attend the conference this year. A main focus for the Future Leaders was the mini-Veterinary Leadership Experience. The mini-VLE is an abbreviated version of

the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Experience developed by Washington State University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2004. The AVMA VLE features an interactive curriculum with small group activities and exercises designed to enhance communication and leadership skills. The AVMA VLE currently invites faculty and students from veterinary schools around the world to participate in this multi-day experience held each year. The mini-VLE was a unique opportunity for the Future Leaders to interact, network and have a fun and memorable experience.

An orientation session outlined the structure and goals of the AVMA and served to “demystify” the AVMA. Keynote speaker Michael Dunn discussed the importance of political involvement by veterinarians and encouraged all veterinarians to get to know their local members of Congress and support the AVMA Political Action Committee. Five different workshops were offered with topics including how AVMA animal welfare policies are developed, federal, state and local advocacy, membership issues, association management and personal development. Other topics discussed during the conference included the importance of the

National Animal Identification System, the AVMA budget and financial status, generational differences and the potential impact it may have on the future of organized veterinary medicine, increasing ethnic diversity in the veterinary profession, new online continuing education programs provided by the AVMA (AVMA Ed) and outreach programs to school teachers. Throughout the conference there was an underlying focus on the need to engage and involve new and recent graduates into professional associations. The conference concluded with Peter Sheahan who gave an entertaining speech entitled “Engaging Generation Y in Your Business”.

I am truly grateful I had the opportunity to attend the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference. I not only obtained a better sense of the AVMA but also of myself. I encourage all recent graduates to attend this conference and become more involved. The AVMA is a membership driven organization and depends on its 78,000 members for its survival. Each and every veterinarian can make a difference by becoming more involved, volunteering and with financial contributions.

A Legislative Update

by Dr. Charles F. Franz - Executive Director . . .

The 2009 Alabama Legislative session is rapidly coming to a close. Bills affecting animals or veterinary medicine are listed and updated below. Links are provided to text of the bills.

Senate Bill 146 (House Bill 245) strengthens existing laws against cock-fighting by providing for felony convictions and stiffer penalties. We have worked closely with agriculture interests in the state to insure that individuals raising chickens legally will not be impacted negatively by this legislation sponsored by the Humane Society of

the United States (HSUS). *While this bill was reported favorably out of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the bill is not seeing much movement at this point.*

Senate Bill 469 removes the annual revaccination requirement for rabies and adds ferrets to the list of animals which must be vaccinated. The bill provides for the veterinarian to decide vaccine intervals based on vaccine manufacturer guidelines and his/her preference depending on the individual client/patient situation. This

bill is the result of efforts over several years by the ALVMA Public Health Committee working in conjunction with the Department of Public Health and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. The bill was last introduced in 2007 and failed to pass. There has been renewed interest by lawmakers as Alabama (since Arkansas passed a law earlier this year) has become the only state in the country requiring annual rabies vaccination. *This bill has passed the Senate and awaits final action in the House.*

A Legislative Update continued

Senate Bill 554 requires all privately owned dogs and cats to be spayed or neutered, with certain specified exceptions. This is a bill that will not move due to tremendous opposition on many fronts. Similar bills have been introduced in other states and cities and have passed in some specific cities in other states. *The bill is assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.* A position statement from the American College of Theriogenologists against government mandated spay/neuter can be found by following the link: <http://theriogenology.org/displaycommom.n.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=53>

House Bill 206 (Dangerous Dog Legislation) is similar to the bill introduced last year. The bill establishes procedures by which a dog can be

declared dangerous, requires registration of dangerous dogs and provides for penalties. The bill is not breed specific; it places responsibility on the dog owner. *It is assigned to the House Committee on County and Municipal Government and has yet to see any action.*

Senate Bill 228 requires the State Emergency Management Agency, in consultation with local emergency management agencies, to create a comprehensive plan for the evacuation and sheltering of household pets and service animals. This bill also requires veterinary hospitals (and many other entities) to create evacuation plans for their animals. I know many of you already have plans in place (this is an AAHA requirement) and those who do not may want to consider developing a plan. *It is*

assigned to the Senate Committee on Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability and has yet to see any action.

If you need more information on any of these bills or have other legislative issues you would like to discuss, please contact me. I would encourage you to track any bills of interest to you. A wonderful system exists for being able to do this. The Alabama Legislative Information System Online (ALISON) can be found at this link: <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/aca/ACASLogin.asp> and is easy to set up for tracking all specific bills of interest to you.

I encourage you to get involved with the legislative process. Your representatives want and need to hear from you on issues.

Lyme Disease; A Growing Concern

Lyme disease (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) is the most common vector-borne illness in the United States with 20,000 new cases annually. One-hundred and thirty human cases of Lyme disease were reported to the CDC from Alabama between 1993 and 2005. Lyme disease in Alabama as well as in other states may be underreported. The CDC approved test often gives false positives leaving patients untreated unless the physician is very familiar with tick-borne diseases. The Lyme bacterium is known to have numerous strains, and a different species of *Borrelia* (*B. lonestari*) has been identified in the South called Southern Tick Associated Rash Illness (STARI). The symptoms of this new disease are not fully understood and there are no tests available. Lyme and other tick-borne diseases are likely much more common in Alabama than has previously been documented. The objective of this study is to collect ticks from veterinary clinics statewide for analysis for tick-borne diseases.

TICK SUBMISSION FORM

*Jacksonville State University
Department of Biology*

The Jacksonville State University Department of Biology is conducting research on ticks and tick-borne diseases in Alabama. If you find ticks on animals (wild or domestic), please remove them and place them in small bottles with 70% isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol or ethanol and mail them in a crush-proof container that won't leak with this completed form to **Dr. Benjie Blair Jacksonville State University Department of Biology 700 Pelham Rd. N Jacksonville AL. 36265.**

A. Name of the individual, clinic, or organization submitting tick: _____

B. Name of the owner of the infected pet or collector of ticks from wild animals.

Name: _____

Number of tick(s): _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Tel: _____ Date tick found: ____/____/____

Where acquired: Town: _____ County: _____

C. On what species or breed of animal, what species? Dog (Chihuahua, etc.), Deer, other: _____

On which part of the body was it found? _____

Were there any associated symptoms? _____

Describe the symptoms: _____

NCVEI Update: Ongoing Impact of the Recession, Accounts Receivable and More

Recession update

Results from our March QuickPoll indicate some optimism about the economy and its impact on veterinary medicine in 2009. Almost 2/3's of the respondents don't expect 2009 to be worse than 2008.

Actual results from our Economy Tracker show a slight decline in revenue for January, 2009 compared to January, 2008 (about 1.5%.) The decline is driven by a decrease in the number of transactions seen (about 3.5%) offset by an increase in ATC of about 3%. We're still collecting February results and they appear to be similar; however, February of 2008 had one extra business day due to leap year so this decline may not be real.

One of the upsides of the recession and one of the reasons for the increase in the ATC is that practices tell us they now have more time to spend with clients, are more thorough in their recommendations and communication and consequently, the clients who do come in are accepting a higher level of care.

Please enter your data into the Economy Tracker each month so we can continue tracking the effect of the recession on our profession. The data results are only as good as you make

them! Go to NCVEI.org and click on the Economy Tracker Link.



Accounts receivable

The NCVEI has a wide range of benchmarking tools and other resources to help your practice improve its economic success. One of these tools let's you compare your accounts receivable, both in total and by aging categories to other practices. Once you've reviewed the comparison you can click on the Recommended Treatment button for information on improving this aspect of your practice.

While NCVEI data indicates practices are carrying fewer receivables now than they did 2 years ago, the age of the receivables is getting older. In other words clients are slower paying now than before. And, of course, the older an account gets, the less likely you'll

ever collect it. A 2008 survey from the Commercial Collection Agency Section of the Commercial Law League of America shows that 90% of 30 day old accounts get collected but this drops dramatically as time goes on with only 23% of the year-old accounts getting collected.

Check out the accounts receivable tool at the NCVEI website for more information. The tool is called "How many IOUs is too many?" and is located in the finance section of the Exam Room.

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 as well as other resources 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.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT *Continued from page 2*

Our profession is part of a huge success story and we should be and have a right to be proud. Yet we seem to be losing to an emotionalism that is anything but science based and frankly carried by a relatively few-albeit well financed- soreheads.

It is not only appropriate but it is our charge to evaluate and reevaluate our tasks constantly. Science is anything but static and today's methods for food production will not survive tomorrow's technology and knowledge. It is not appropriate to revert to past methods of food production at higher costs to justify an opinion for animal welfare. Yet that is precisely what happened in California.

Frankly, I'm looking forward to seeing the contrary phenomenon when the full impact of proposition 2 hits the fan in California. We don't need to wait however. American agriculture has resources far surpassing those of the feared humane groups. Your community, your political leadership, and your clients should be made aware of the contributions made by our profession to the health and wellbeing of animals and people. Our health is intertwined but it is especially true that if our animals are healthy people will also be healthy. There are no successful countries that ignore their animals' health and well

being especially those animals used for food or food production. This principle is also why missionary work by veterinarians is so important. The United States had the foresight to emphasize animal care and health and to use our profession for the purpose. Take pride in this very successful profession and for Pete's sake, help protect it!

With kindest regards,

Michael Newman DVM MS
avs@bellsouth.net
256-350-7001
256-350-7079 fx

102ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE SLATED FOR JUNE 25-28, 2009



Only two months left until the 102nd Annual Convention of the Alabama VMA. If you register on or before May 29th, you can take advantage of a discounted registration fee!

You can register online at www.alvma.com or use the registration form included in this edition of *Alabama Veterinarian*. 20 CE hours will be available along with a chance to network with colleagues from all over the south-east.

The exhibit hall will be a focal point this year for opportunities to win great door prizes during every break and lunch period, including a free registration to the annual conference in 2010! All door prizes are valued at \$100 or more and a Grand Prize Drawing will be held worth \$750! (Here's a hint – the grand prize is something the entire family can enjoy for hours on end).

Thursday evening, June 25th will be a fun-filled opening night festivity in the exhibit hall with heavy hors d'oeuvres, entertainment and door prizes. It all gets underway at 7:00 p.m. In previous years, attendees were required to purchase tickets for the opening night festivities, but through the tremendous support of *Hill's Pet Nutrition*, this year's event is free to all conference attendees and their families.

The annual President's Dinner and Awards Ceremony will be held Saturday, June 27th at 7:30 p.m. The annual Fun Run/Walk, an auxiliary coffee, golf tournament and a missionary breakfast will also take place during the conference.

Don't miss this year's conference! Better than ever!

Nominating Committee Report

The nominating committee of the Alabama VMA has announced its recommendations for candidates for the 2009-2010 Executive Board. They include:

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 *Snowdown Veterinary 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 hon-

ored 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 from 1990–1991. He served as president of the American Association of 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; has presented lectures at the Auburn University Annual Conference on effective techniques in the collection of fees for veterinary services; 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 riding his Gold Wing Honda motorcycle and doing 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.

Continued on page 18

102ND ALVMA ANNUAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

June 25th – 28th, 2009

Social Activities			
Date	Time	Activity	Location
Thursday, June 25, 2009	6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall – Kick Off Social with Heavy Hors D'oeuvres – Door Prizes Sponsored by Hill's Pet Nutrition	Linkside Center Exhibition Hall
Friday, June 26, 2009	7:00 a.m.	Beach Fun Run / Walk	Beach
Friday, June 26, 2009	8:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Auxiliary Board Meeting	Terrace 1
Friday, June 26, 2009	10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Auxiliary Business Meeting	Bayview Room
Friday, June 26, 2009	1:00 p.m. – Until	Alabama Veterinary Medical Association Golf Tournament	Sandestin Links Course
Saturday, June 27, 2009	6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Reception / Social Hour	Bayside Patio
Saturday, June 27, 2009	7:30 p.m. – Until	President's Dinner	
Sunday, June 28, 2009	8:00 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.	Missionary Breakfast	Terrace 1 & 2

Thursday ~ June 25, 2009	
4:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.	REGISTRATION (<i>Exhibit Hall – Linkside Center</i>)
4:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.	EXHIBIT HALL – Open (<i>Linkside Center</i>)

Friday ~ June 26, 2009			
Time	Small Animal I Grand D	Time	Small Animal II Grand B
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.	“Malpractice Risks... Where Are They?”- Dr. Charlotte Lacroix	8:00a.m. – 9:00a.m.	Practical blood transfusion in the dog – Dr. Andrew Mackin
9:00a.m. – 10:00a.m.	“Malpractice Risks... Where Are They?”- Dr. Charlotte Lacroix	9:00a.m. – 10:00a.m.	Practical blood transfusion in the cat – Dr. Andrew Mackin
10:00a.m. – 10:45a.m.	BREAK ~ (In Exhibit Hall)	10:00a.m. – 10:45a.m.	BREAK ~ (In Exhibit Hall)
10:45a.m. – 11:45a.m.	“Malpractice Risks... Where Are They?”- Dr. Charlotte Lacroix	10:45a.m. - 11:45a.m.	Collection of bone marrow in the dog and cat – Dr. Andrew Mackin
11:45a.m. – 1:00p.m.	LUNCH Exhibit Hall <i>Courtesy of Fort Dodge</i>	11:45a.m. – 1:00p.m.	LUNCH –Exhibit Hall <i>Courtesy of Fort Dodge</i>
1:00p.m. – Until	Alabama Veterinary Medical Association Golf Tournament (Sandestin Links Course – Pay when you register for Conference)		
1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.	“Internet Pharmacies and the Boogie Man—What They Have in Common” - Dr. Charlotte Lacroix	1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.	Problem small animal anemia cases – Drs. Andrew Mackin, Melanie Johnson & Todd Archer
2:00p.m. – 3:00p.m. Grand C	(Workshop) Breaking the silence: Discussions about medical errors - Dr. Kathleen Bonvicini Sponsored by : AVMA PLIT	2:00p.m.- 3:00p.m.	(cont.) Problem small animal anemia cases – Drs. Andrew Mackin, Melanie Johnson & Todd Archer
3:00p.m. – 3:10p.m.	BREAK (In Exhibit Hall)		
3:10p.m. – 4:10p.m. Grand C	(Workshop) Breaking the silence: Discussions about medical errors - Dr. Kathleen Bonvicini Sponsored by : AVMA PLIT	3:10p.m. – 4:10p.m.	Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia: Pathophysiology and diagnosis – Dr. Andrew Mackin
4:10p.m. – 5:10p.m. Grand C	(Workshop) Breaking the silence: Discussions about medical errors - Dr. Kathleen Bonvicini Sponsored by : AVMA PLIT	4:10p.m. – 5:10p.m.	Immune-mediated thrombocytopenia: Pathophysiology and diagnosis – Dr. Andrew Mackin

Saturday ~ June 27, 2009

Time	Small Animal I Grand D	Time	Small Animal II Grand B
7:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.	REGISTRATION (EXHIBIT HALL)		
7:00a.m. - 7:30a.m.	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (EXHIBIT HALL)		
8:00a.m. - 9:00a.m.	Light years ahead – Class IV laser therapy Dr. John Godbold Sponsored by LiteCure	8:00a.m. - 9:00a.m.	Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia & thrombocytopenia: Emergency management – Dr. Andrew Mackin
9:00a.m. - 9:40a.m.	BREAK ~ (Visit the Exhibit Hall)		
9:40a.m. - 10:40a.m.	Light years ahead – Class IV laser therapy Dr. John Godbold Sponsored by LiteCure	9:40a.m. - 10:40a.m.	Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia & thrombocytopenia: Chronic management – Dr. Andrew Mackin
10:40a.m. - 11:40a.m.	Thrive: Rejuvenating client services to keep clients coming back – Dr. Wendy Myers Sponsored by Merial	10:40a.m. - 11:40a.m.	Fever of unknown origin - Dr. Todd Archer
11:40a.m. - 1:00p.m.	LUNCH Provided In Exhibit Hall ALVMA General Membership Business Meeting (Grand B)		
1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m.	Thrive: Selling clients the value of prevention - Dr. Wendy Myers Sponsored by Merial	1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m.	Cytologic diagnosis of cancer (sample collection techniques, cytologic interpretation), a case-based approach – Drs. Andrew Mackin & Melanie Johnson
2:00p.m. - 3:00p.m.	Thrive: Reversing the decline of feline visits – Dr. Wendy Myers Sponsored by Merial	2:00p.m. - 3:00p.m.	(cont.) Cytologic diagnosis of cancer (sample collection techniques, cytologic interpretation), a case-based approach – Drs. Andrew Mackin & Melanie Johnson
3:00p.m. - 3:10p.m.	BREAK		
3:10p.m. - 4:10p.m.	Thrive: Avoiding accounts receivable pitfalls – Dr. Wendy Myers Sponsored by Merial	3:10p.m. - 4:10p.m.	(cont.) Cytologic diagnosis of cancer (sample collection techniques, cytologic interpretation), a case-based approach – Drs. Andrew Mackin & Melanie Johnson
4:10p.m. - 5:10p.m.	Dr. Catherine McClelland Sponsored by Hill's	4:10p.m. - 5:10p.m.	Approach to the hypoalbuminemic patient – Dr. Andrew Mackin

Sunday ~ June 28, 2009

Time	General Session – Grand A
7:30a.m. - 8:00a.m.	Coffee & Pastries
8:00a.m. - 9:40a.m.	Missionary Breakfast with (TBA) (Terrace 1 & 2)
9:40a.m. - 10:40a.m.	Information Desk - Open
8:00a.m. - 9:00a.m.	Dr. Catherine McClelland Sponsored by Hill's
9:00a.m. - 9:10a.m.	BREAK
9:10a.m. - 10:10a.m.	Dr. Catherine McClelland Sponsored by Hill's
10:10a.m. - 11:10a.m.	Technicians and why to hire them in your practice - Dr. Arthur Moore

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN PROGRAM ~ SATURDAY ~ JUNE 27, 2009

Bayview Room

Time	Lecture Title / Speaker Name
8:00a.m. - 8:50a.m.	Canine Leptospirosis: An Emerging Threat – Dr. Stephen Jaffe Sponsored by: Fort Dodge Animal Health
8:50a.m. - 9:40a.m.	Virulent Systemic Feline Calicivirus: An Emerging Pathogen – Dr. Stephen Jaffe Sponsored by: Fort Dodge Animal Health
9:40a.m. - 10:20a.m.	BREAK
10:20a.m. - 11:10p.m.	Image Analysis – Betty Files, LVT
11:10p.m. - 12:00p.m.	Image Analysis – Betty Files, LVT
12:00p.m. - 1:00p.m.	LUNCH Provided in Exhibit Hall-Grand Prize Drawing-(Must be present to win)
1:00p.m. - 1:50p.m.	Case Scenarios Involving Chest Tube Drainage and Respiratory Care – Lechon Camp, RN
1:50p.m. - 2:40p.m.	Blood Transfusions - Lisa Chrestman, LVT
2:40p.m. - 2:50p.m.	BREAK
2:50p.m. - 3:40p.m.	Chemotherapy - Lisa Chrestman, LVT
3:40p.m. - 4:30p.m.	Veterinary Technician Safety in the Workplace – Sandra Morales Foster, LVT, MS

EXHIBITORS SUPPORTING THE 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(as of 4-23-09)

Abaxis
*American Express
Banfield The Pet Hospital
*Bayer Health Care
Bay X-Ray, Inc.
Boehringer Ingelheim
*Butler Animal Health Supply
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***Indicates Door Prize Donor**

****Indicates Grand Prize Donor (Flat Screen TV)**

EXHIBIT HALL HOURS

Thursday, June 25

4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Friday, June 26

7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 27

7:00 a.m. – 1:00 Noon

Nominating Committee Report

Continued from page 14

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

Junior Board Member at Large - Dr. William G. Bledsoe—Camden, AL

Dr. Bledsoe received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1981. Immediately following graduation he opened Camden Veterinary Clinic in June of 1981. Dr. Bledsoe attributes a lot of the work and long hours of opening a new practice to his late wife Sally, who passed away in 2007. "She was as much a part of the clinic as I am and deserves much of the credit for its success," Dr. Bledsoe told the *Alabama Veterinarian*.

Dr. Bledsoe was born and raised in Autaugaville, Alabama and has three children, two of which are currently attending Auburn University. His oldest Daughter Blair (Bennett) is married and lives in Montgomery. His middle child Jill, is a senior pursuing a degree in Public Relations and his son Bo, is a junior seeking a degree in wireless engineering.

Dr. Bledsoe has been the board representative for

the West Alabama VMA for nearly 20 years. In his spare time he enjoys gardening, outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing and as often as possible he likes tailgating at Auburn football games. He believes in giving back to the community and volunteers in civic projects as often as possible.

He is a member of the Camden Baptist Church where he is a Deacon and teaches Sunday school for 5th & 6th grade boys.

Dr. Bledsoe says he is honored to be nominated and is looking forward to the opportunity of serving on the board of the Alabama VMA

The Nominating committee also recommends the advancement of Dr. Libby C. Todd to President Elect and Dr. William K. Holland to Vice President. Dr. Larry Chasteen automatically advances to President and Dr. Bill Allen advances to his second year of a two year term as board member at large.

Voting on the committees recommendations will take place on Saturday, June 27th, 2009 at 12 noon during the annual business meeting held at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Sandestin, Florida in conjunction with the association's annual convention.

ALABAMA VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION GOLF TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION FORM

Tournament Sponsored by Journey's End Pet Cremation Service

WHEN: FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2009
TIME: 1:00PM
WHERE: SANDESTIN LINKS COURSE

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

COST: \$105.00 PER PERSON (PLEASE MAIL IN WITH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION)

***THERE WILL BE A LIMITED NUMBER (40) FOR GOLF THIS YEAR, SO SEND YOUR GOLF REGISTRATION FORM WITH YOUR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION BY MAY 29, 2009!
(SINCE WE ARE IN A NEW LOCATION WITH NEW RULES WE HAVE TO PREREGISTER FOR GOLF.)**

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!**

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THE ALABAMA VETERINARY MEDICAL FOUNDATION

2009 Annual Animal Hall of Fame Held in Birmingham

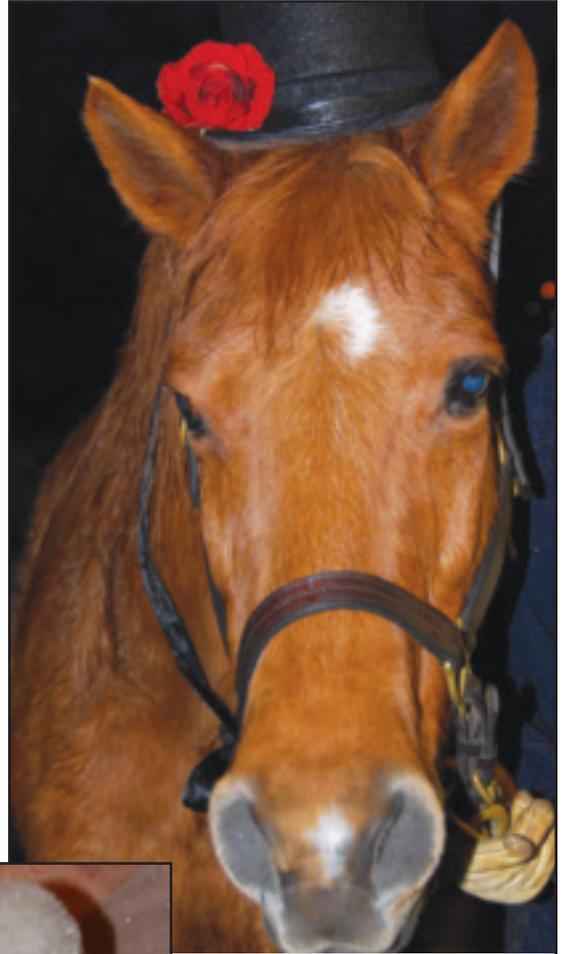
The Annual Alabama Animal Hall of Fame now has four more inductees following the 2009 induction ceremony held at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham on Saturday evening, February 28th. Despite the inclement winter weather which struck Alabama, nearly one hundred fifty people attended the gala event.

The evening began at 6:00 p.m. with a silent auction complete with delicious hors d'oeuvres followed by the Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony which began at 7:20 p.m. The auctioned items garnered nearly \$6,000 for the Foundation.

The 2009 inductees included a horse named **Zeke**; a dog named **Champ**; a cat named **Calico** and a dog named **Ellie**.

The Story of *Zeke* is a heartwarming account of a horse that was neglected and subsequently adopted by the Spirit of Hope Youth Ranch in Wilsonville, Alabama. *Zeke* had numerous health problems including Cushing's disease that had developed over time and predisposed him to hoof problems. Some folks had given up on *Zeke* because of all the health issues, but the members of the ranch did not, and through a regiment of treatments and special care *Zeke* survived and today is a big part of the emotional healing of youngsters who stay at the ranch.

Zeke's most miraculous quality is his ability to touch people. When a child walks into the barn, *Zeke* rests his head on the stall door, winks and gives a little nicker as if to say "Choose me!" You can almost



Zeke

see the ice melt away from the frozen heart of a child who has not known unconditional love. *Zeke* represents hope, because even a broken little red horse can find comfort and love and give it back threefold.

Champ is credited with saving his owners life by detecting cancer in her breast. As Betty Owens of north Alabama lay in bed one night, *Champ* began sniffing at her breast. He was so persistent that it was difficult for her to even get any rest. But the persistence got Betty's attention. She went to her fami-



Champ

ly doctor who was very astute and knew that some dogs were able to detect small discreet tumors. The physician referred Betty to an oncologist and a diagnosis of breast cancer came shortly thereafter.

The doctor told Betty that if *Champ* were to ever start sniffing her again, not to ignore him, he had a special gift for cancer detection. A few years later, *Champ* began his sniffing regiment again only this time on Betty's cheek area. And yes, *Champ* made the correct diagnosis once again. Betty subsequently had two cancerous growths removed from her cheek and is today cancer free. But the story doesn't end there.

Champ is himself a survivor. In 2003 and 2006 he was attacked by what authorities believe were coyotes. He suffered fractures and abrasions, but following surgery performed by Dr. Michael Newman of Decatur, *Champ* was soon out of the hospital and back home with Betty.

Champ is a very fitting name for this canine that survived two attacks himself and saved his owner's life, not once, but twice. He is indeed a *Champ!*

For Nena Moon, a volunteer at



Ellie

Hand-in-Paw of Birmingham, her little miniature Schnauzer named *Ellie* is her pride and joy. *Ellie* and Nena are a therapy team who are well known at the Wallace Tumor Institute at the

University of Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Center. There they visit patients and bring abundant joy to many patients throughout the year.

Earlier this year, Nena and *Ellie* won the national Pet Partners Beyond Limits Award. They were the only team from the southeast to advance to the finalist stage for this award.

It is because of her extreme dedication to helping patients through very difficult times that *Ellie* was selected to be an inductee into the Alabama Animal Hall of Fame. She is a true ambassador in helping medical and educational facilities understand and embrace the benefits of animal-assisted therapy.

For members of the Alabama School for the Blind (ASB) it is easy to understand why a cat named *Calico* was chosen to be inducted into the Alabama Animal Hall of Fame. This special stray calico feline appeared at the school in 1999 looking



Attendees of the 2009 Hall of Fame listen as awards are presented during induction ceremony.



THE ALABAMA VETERINARY MEDICAL FOUNDATION



Attendees of the 2009 Hall of Fame participate in an auction to raise money for the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation.

for a home. She found it there and the members of the school found a life long friend and companion.

Calico's kind temperament and love for people has enabled many students to become comfortable holding a cat for the first time in their life. *Calico's* regular visits to the dormitories, the nurse's station and even to the classrooms have brought laughter and comic relief to many ordinary school days. She has also taught students about responsibility and caring for others.

According to school officials, "*Calico* has an important mission; to teach students about caring, loving and enjoying the wonderful creatures God has given us to have as pets. Through pets, we all become better, more considerate and caring people toward each other."

And so it is with *Calico*; A caring, loving and patient feline who brings a brighter day to the students and faculty at the Alabama School for the Blind.

In addition to the Hall of Fame Inductees, several human awards were presented. Hero Award recipi-

ents included Drs. Robert E. Pitman of Athens, AL who was the mastermind behind the spay/neuter license plate effort. Also honored were Dr. T.C. Branch of Birmingham and Ms. Becki Vance of Birmingham. Both were recognized for their efforts in helping to reach the 1,000 goal of pre-sold spay/neuter license plates.

Jodie Hobson, the director of the Friends of Cats and Dogs Foundation and Debbie Dodd, president of the A New Leash on Life, Inc. were both presented

with the Bowie-Heath Humanitarian Award for their work in saving hundreds of animal lives through their organizations.

Proceeds from the Animal Hall of Fame will be used for various programs supported by the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation.



Calico

Special thanks to Those Who Made The 2009 Animal Hall of Fame A Great Success

Table Sponsors

A New Leash On Life, Inc.
Family Pet Health Care - Dr. Dawn T. Monroe
Friends of Cats and Dogs Foundation
Jefferson County Veterinary Medical Association
McCurdy Animal Hospital - Dr. Lewis H. McCurdy
Merial
North Alabama Cat & Bird Veterinary Clinic - Dr. Jan K. Strother
Red Mountain Animal Clinic - Dr. Jerome B. Williams
Mrs. Kathleen Standifer
Veterinary Referral Hospital of Decatur - Dr. Michael E. Newman

Silent/Live Auction Donations:

Carol & Lee Bates; Claudia Bucher; Mr. and Mrs. Joe Carl; Chappy's Deli; Nancy Dallas; Judy DeWitt; Nita Franz; Jimmy Smith Jewelers; Drs. Michael E. & Jan Newman; Sharon Owens; Perdido Beach Resort; Nancy Pett; Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort; Annette Strother; Becki Vance

Auction Logistics Team

Dr. Bill & Judy DeWitt; Claudia Bucher; Sharon Owens, LVT; Melody Rankin; Annette Strother

Audio/Visual Logistics & Production

Kevin Strother

Script Editing & Production

Annette Strother

Event Entertainment Coordinator

Claudia Bucher

Photography:

Claudia & Joe Bucher

The Animal Hall of Fame would not have been possible without the countless hours of dedication by many volunteers. Their commitment to the human/animal bond is greatly appreciated. A special thank you to Dr. Jan Strother, Chairman of the Human/Animal Bond committee.



**Foundation Hero Award winners (l-r)
Dr. T.C. Branch; Ms. Becki Vance; Dr. Robert Pitman**



**Dr. Michael Newman poses
with Bowie-Heath Award winner
Debbie Dodd.**



**Dr. Jan Strother (l) poses
with Bowie-Heath Award winner
Jodie Hobson**



THE 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 disadvantages. 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)

Foundation Receives Second Check from Journey's End

In 2008, the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation (ALVMF) became partners with *Journeys End Pet Cremation Service* which currently services clinics from Birmingham to the north in Alabama. *Journeys End* is a division of Pet Services, Inc., founded in 1999.

Journeys End has worked hard to give back to the Veterinary Community of Alabama through their Pet Services/ALVMA Foundation Support Program which to date has resulted in nearly \$6,000 in funding for the Foundation. Here is how support program works.

All clinic clients of *Journeys End* receive a 15% discount off their suggested published private cremation costs. (Brochures without prices are available). For each clinic that currently uses their services and any new clinic that would like to participate by designating 5% of their discount, *Journeys End* will match the 5% making a total of 10% of the cost of each private cremation going to the ALVMA Foundation Programs. The remaining 10% of the discount will still be given to the participating clinic. Some of their cur-

rent clinic clients have agreed to contribute their entire 15% discount in the name of their clinic, thus creating a 20% contribution of each private cremation to the Foundation. The accumulated funds are deposited in the Foundation Support Program Account

The ALVMF and *Journeys End* would like to continue to challenge all ALVMA Members who currently use their services and those that may start using their service to participate in this program. If you would like to have information of services offered by *Journeys End Pet Cremation Service* please contact Bill Barber at 256-453-9521. Their web site is journeysendpetcremationservice.com.

We are very excited to have this relationship with *Journeys End*. We appreciate their generosity and concern for the many pets that need help in Alabama.

Please contact Mr. Barber or any member of the Foundations Board of Directors if you would like to participate in the program.

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(Term Expires 2010)

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Pell City, AL
205/884-3412
(Term Expires 2011)

Corte, James Dr.
Fairhope, AL
251/928-8555
(Term Expires 2009)

Goodman, Jack D. Dr.
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256/232-1344
(Term Expires 2010)

Hydinger, Laura
Birmingham, AL
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(Term Expires 2011)

McCurdy, Lewis H. Dr.
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256/881-2482
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Moore, Arthur Dr.
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334/954-2596
(Term Expires 2010)

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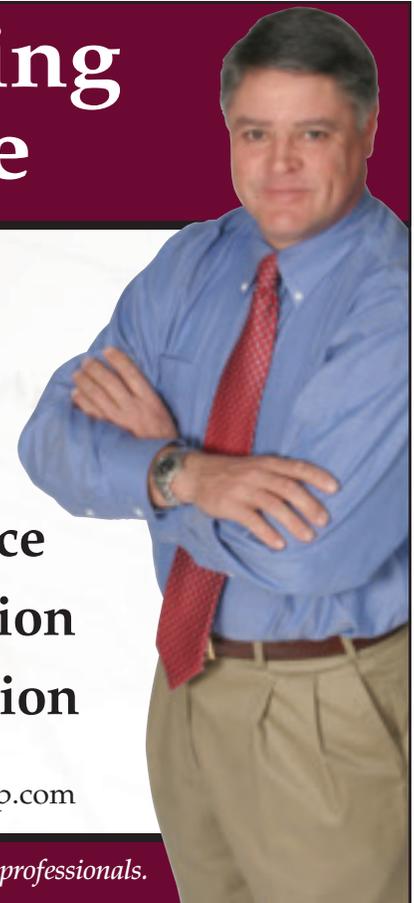
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In Memorium

DR. GEORGE MILLIS (Auburn 73) of Montgomery passed away Tuesday, December 30, 2008. Dr. Millis was a highly respected member of the Montgomery veterinary community and a long time member of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association. He gave of his time and talents in many ways. Dr. Millis mentored high school students through a veterinary explorer post. His clients all loved him dearly for the interest he took not only in their pets, but in each one of them.

Dr. Millis will be remembered for his sense of humor, ability to relate to people, his intelligence, and a genuine caring attitude for all those around him. We will miss seeing him at veterinary meetings and hearing his humorous stories. Friends and acquaintances who have been ribbed by him have accused him of having a photographic memory, because he never forgot some of the foolish things everyone may have done over the years.



DR. PRICE MOSS STONE (API 44) 89, Hurtsboro, Alabama died August 27, 2008.

He served as an Assistant State Veterinarian, Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries for 33 years. As an Assistant State Veterinarian, Dr. Stone worked with Alabama practicing veterinarians, livestock and poultry producers to prevent, diagnose and eradicate costly diseases and parasites. He was a pioneer in the implementation of Alabama State-Federal programs to eradicate screw worms.

Through his efforts this costly parasite was eradicated from Alabama in the late 1950's. Today's large population of deer, turkey and other wildlife is primarily because of the successful eradication of the screw worm. Dr. Stone also had an active part in Alabama's successful eradication program for hog cholera, brucellosis, tuberculosis, and pseudorabies.

He was a Life Member of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association.



DR. EDWARD D SELLERS (AUB 73) a native of Tuscaloosa, Alabama and a resident of Mobile died Thursday, January 8th, 2009.

Dr. Sellers was an established veterinarian in Tillmans Corner. He graduated from the Auburn College of Veterinary Medicine in 1973 and established a clinic in Tillmans Corner the following year.

Dr. Seller's father traveled extensively in his job so the family moved quite often but spent a great majority of their time in the Monroeville area. Dr. Sellers considered Monroeville his hometown during his youth. He loved to fish and was active in the New Hope United Methodist Church. Dr. Seller's son and only child Matthew, still resides in Mobile.

According to the employees who worked for Dr. Sellers, 'He was a great boss and we miss him terribly. He was kind, caring and always concerned about his patients and their owners.' One employee who began working for Dr. Sellers in 1975 is still employed at the clinic today, which she says "Is a testament to how good of a boss he really was."

White Coat Ceremony Held



Third year veterinary students pose for a group picture following the White Coat Ceremony presentation.

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association held its annual White Coat Ceremony on February 16, 2009 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 Dixon Conference Center on the campus of Auburn University. 147 students along with 325 guests enjoyed an evening of fellowship, presentation of the coats and reception

Dr. Michael E. Newman, president of the ALVMA presided over the evenings festivities, welcoming the students and giving them a word of encouragement regarding the profession

they were about to enter. Dr. Libby C. Todd, vice president of the ALVMA offered the invocation. Dr. Steven J. Wills, president of the Kentucky VMA and president-elect Dr. Heidi Hulon were on hand to present coats to students from Kentucky. Dr. Sherri Reid Duncan president of the South Carolina Association of Veterinarians and secretary Dr. Mark Moore made the presentations to students from South Carolina. Students from Alabama were presented a coat by Dr. Larry Chasteen, ALVMA president elect.

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

Prostaglandins Alert

As the result of a contact made to the American Veterinary Medical Association by a state association in the upper midwest in early 2009, it has been reported that teenagers were using a “medication meant to induce abortions in cows” to abort unwanted pregnancies and avoid parental knowledge or the cost of an abortion. The drugs mentioned included prostaglandins, Cystorelin, Factrel, Gonadorelin, and Lutalyse. [note: of the drugs mentioned, only prostaglandins and Lutalyse would be likely to induce abortion based on the drug’s actions. The other products mentioned are GnRH products.] The information received apparently originated

from the Care Net Pregnancy Center of Green County Wisconsin. The text of the original email from Care Net was also published in the Monroe Times newspaper on February 6, 2009. There is concern that this issue will rapidly snowball could quickly develop a national impact.

This situation underscores the need for veterinarians to remain vigilant about storing, distributing, prescribing and using veterinary products that can pose human health risks. The situation also underscores the need for food animal producers to be vigilant about all veterinary drugs they may be storing or using at their facilities.

AVMA DELEGATE REPORT

by Dr. Jan Strother-Alternate Delegate to the AVMA

Dear Colleagues:

You've seen mentions in previous issues of AVMA@Work about their new emphasis on animal welfare issues and the roles veterinarians play on what can often be a crowded stage, sometimes filled with conflict and contentious dialogue. It's safe to say that you're going to be seeing more of these items in the future.

Ear Cropping and Tail Docking:

The AVMA Executive Board recently approved a revised policy on ear cropping and tail docking that has generated quite a bit of interest from the media and other groups. The revised policy is a result of a regularly scheduled, five-year review of our animal welfare policies.

As Dr. Gail Golab, director of the AVMA's Animal Welfare Division, put it, our new approach to any animal welfare policy is going to be driven by one central question: Why do we do what we do? The answer to that question has a lot to do with where our policies end up.

When it comes to the changes in our ear cropping and tail docking policy, the Animal Welfare Committee asked why ears are cropped and why tails are docked. The answer, the committee decided, has a lot more to do with how a dog looks than its overall health and well-being.

That's why we changed the policy language to read that the AVMA "opposes ear cropping and tail docking of dogs when done solely for cosmetic purposes." We also included language in the policy that states that the AVMA "encourages the elimination of ear cropping and tail docking from breed standards."

The language is a reflection of our new level of advocacy on animal welfare issues. It's also indicative of AVMA's critical approach to animal welfare topics, where our primary concern is the animal and its welfare, not the players in the game. We are putting more emphasis on veterinarians' scientific expertise to make critical evaluations irrespective of who the stakeholders are, while staying consistent with our guiding principles on animal welfare. And we are doing this because you – our members – expect us to take responsibility and create policies that are science-based and in the best interest of the animal.

This advocacy and new philosophy means more activity in the animal welfare arena is on the way.

Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation

For the first time since the early 1990s, the AVMA's American Board of Veterinary Specialties has approved for public comment a petition for recognition of a brand new, stand-alone specialty organization – the American College of Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Now it's your turn to get involved. Public comment must be sought as part of the rigorous approval process for any new specialty, and we welcome and value your thoughts about the proposed new specialty in sports medicine and rehabilitation.

What we're looking for is input on whether a new specialty in the sports medicine and rehabilitation field will improve veterinary medical services to the public; whether there are enough potential diplomates to serve a clearly defined need within the profession; and whether this specialty represents a distinct and identifiable specialty of veterinary medicine, one that is supported by a base of scientific knowledge and practice and that is acceptable to the profession and the public.

That may seem like an awful lot to digest, but we can't emphasize too strongly how important your comments are in this process. Your input will help us determine whether the process should go forward or needs to be slowed down a bit for further evaluation.

You can send your comments via e-mail, Fax or letter. Make sure that your name appears on the document; we can't accept anonymous submissions. E-mail your comments to David Banasiak at dbanasiak@avma.org. Fax them to 847-285-5732. Or mail them to the AVMA, Attn. David Banasiak, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg IL, 60173.

Call to Action

From biologic and therapeutic agents, to public health and the human-animal bond, the AVMA has councils and committees that represent every aspect of the veterinary profession. These volunteer entities, however, are only as effective as the people who commit to serving on them.

That's why we are looking for volunteer leaders to help us conduct important work on behalf of our members and to set policy in all areas of veterinary medicine. If you want to see what opportunities are available, please visit our Web site and consider throwing your hat into the ring.

MEMBERS ATTEND CE CONFERENCES

Members of the Alabama VMA took advantage of two educational opportunities at the beginning of 2009. The 18th Annual Food Animal Conference was held in February at the Alabama 4-H Center in Columbiana with twelve speakers presenting a variety of topics ranging from Advances in Anthelmintics; the versatility of Moxidectin, to Beef Cattle Economics. The coveted "Downie Award" was presented to Dr. Dwight Wolfe of Auburn.

The Weekend of February 27, members converged on Birmingham for the 2009 Winter CE Meeting at the Wynfrey Hotel. Despite the very inclement weather, members were able to enjoy a variety of topics on Oncology and Orthopedics and participate



Drs. Bert Gaddis (L) and Jim Chancellor (R), participate in the Dental Wet Lab at the 2009 Winter CE held in Birmingham March 1st.



Dr. Terry Slaten (R) presents Dr. Dwight Wolfe with the 2009 Downie Award during the 2009 Food Animal Conference in Columbiana on February 7th.

in a dental wet lab sponsored by Webster Veterinary.

Thanks to all of the sponsors who supported these two events through their exhibiting and monetary contributions.

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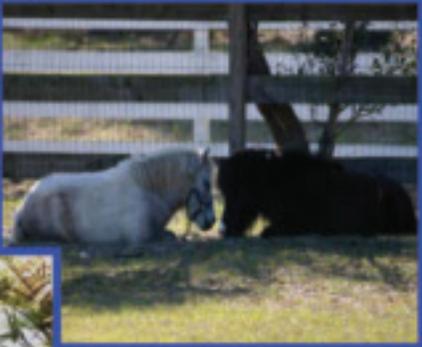
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NEWS FROM YOUR STATE VETERINARIAN

By Dr. Tony Frazier

CEM – CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS



DR. TONY FRAZIER

Sometime back in 1996, I did an internet search (that was before google became a verb) for BSE. I thought that as much as we had heard about the disease in the United Kingdom, surely it would be the number one entry. It was not. The first entry was the Belgium Stock Exchange, then Breast Self Examination, followed by two or three other entries before Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. The same was true when I “googled” CEM. The first entry was College of Estate Management, followed by Certified Energy Manager. I guess that makes it apparent that the world of veterinary medicine we travel in is somewhat small. Then when you break that down to bovine and equine medicine, the circle gets even smaller. Therefore, some of you may be aware of the recent and current CEM outbreak in the United States; many of you may not be.

CEM is a bacterial sexually transmitted disease of equidae that is caused by *Taylorella equigenitalis*. It is typically a mild, self-limiting disease that results in a short period of infertility, but rarely abortions. The carrier state is common in both mares and stallions. Fillies and colts can become congenitally infected and may become carriers. The main problem with CEM is the severe economic losses that can occur.

CEM is a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD). It causes no systemic signs, but cannot clinically be distinguished from other bacterial STD's such as *S. zoepidemicus*, *K. pneumoniae*, or *Ps. aeruginosa*. Diagnosis can be made by culture or PCR. Mares may become serologically positive 20 to 40 days after breeding.

Carrier mares are not likely to be serologically positive. Stallions must have genitalia cultured. Stallions do not become serologically positive. Prevention includes strict hygiene and management on breeding farms, use of sterile or disposable equipment, and bacteriological screening of stallions and mares.

Last December we became aware of a stallion that tested positive for CEM that had been on a breeding farm in Kentucky the year before. It would not have been much of a big deal to us except for the fact that USDA Veterinary Services notified us that a stallion from Alabama had been on an exposed property in Kentucky at the same time. As the epidemiology unfolded, there were more mares in Alabama that were considered possibly exposed and needed testing to rule out infection. Thus far the stallion and mares are in the process of being tested and one mare has tested negative. Even as we write this article there may be more horses that are required to be tested.

So far there have been 15 stallions from four states and four mares from four states that have tested positive. The epidemiological investigation has involved possibly exposed mares from 46 of the 48 continental states. Those are the statistics that were current on March 31.

CEM was first reported during an outbreak in the United Kingdom in 1977. There was a major outbreak in the United States in Kentucky in 1978. Because CEM is a FAD it is therefore a reportable disease. And since the clinical signs are subtle, just remember to consider this kind of infection if mares are repeat breeders during the season. Questions about out of state or international travel for breeding should be included in the history. So when hear hoof beats, think horses.....but don't forget the zebras.

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, NURSING, AND ALLIED HEALTH

By Anissa Riley (riley@tuskegee.edu)

TUSVM RECEIVES FULL ACCREDITATION

Giving its stamp of approval, the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education (AVMA COE) voted during its spring 2009 meeting to grant Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM) full accreditation up to the remaining time in the accreditation cycle (five years).

"I am proud of our faculty, staff, and especially our students. The attainment of full accreditation status for the School of Veterinary Medicine would not have been possible without their dedication. All spent a tremendous amount of time preparing for the AVMA COE focused site visit and I truly thank everyone for their contributions and efforts," said Dr. Tsegaye Habtemariam, Dean of Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health.

TUSVM Holds 44th Annual Symposium

The Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM) hosted its 44th annual symposium March 25-28,

2009. The meeting, themed, "Rebuilding Our Communities Through Integrative Health, Research and Educational Initiatives," brought together noted public health and animal health speakers, veterinarians, and veterinary medical students to discuss health-related issues from global, national and local perspectives.

Wellness Clinics Held

Preventive care is not only important for people, but for animals as well. To promote comprehensive health care for pets and help prevent diseases and illnesses of Macon County and surrounding counties pet populations, Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine Small Animal Hospital presented the 2009 Small Animal Mobile Wellness Clinic from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM on seven different dates and at seven different locations from January 31st, through April 25.

Services offered during the wellness clinic included: Physical Exams, Heartworm testing, Nail Trimming, Rabies vaccinations, Deworming medication and Flea medication. Services were either offered free or at reduced costs.

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, NURSING, AND ALLIED HEALTH

TU VETERINARY MEDICAL SCHOOL'S ANNUAL HORSE HEALTH HELD MARCH 21



Shown here is Dr. David McKenzie, Large Animal Clinician, and veterinary medical students.

In an effort to help prevent springtime illnesses for horses, the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM) hosted its 17th Annual Horse Health Fair on Saturday, March 21, 2009, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the School's Large Animal Hospital.

At the Horse Health Fair, all horses received free physical examinations, fecal parasite examinations, and nutrition information. For a minimal fee, clients also received other services for their horses which included deworming treatment, Coggins test for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), and preventative vaccines like Influenza, Rabies, and Encephalomyelitis. Tetanus, Phinopheumonitis, West Nile, and Strangles. A farrier was also on site.

Dr. Jeannine Bellamy, Assistant Professor and Department Head in Clinical Sciences, served as the chairperson and faculty advisor for this year's Horse Health Fair.

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS VISIT AUBURN UNIVERSITY TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

Dr. Cesar Fermin, Associate Dean for the Office of Research and Advanced Studies at the Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health (CVMNAH), took a group of researchers from the CVMNAH to Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine (AUCVM) during the fall semester. The purpose of the trip was to have a round table discussion on research interest, ongoing projects, as well as identify common ground for potential collaboration. A tour was arranged by Dr. Carl Pinkert, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies at AUCVM.

Contemporary biomedical research requires multidisciplinary approaches that are best realized with collaborative

efforts between institutions that share human and physical resources of common interest, and that is the case with this interaction," said Dr. Fermin.

Dr. Jim Sartin, Professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology, provided a guided tour through the entire veterinary college at Auburn to include teaching, research and clinical facilities. Following the tour of the facilities the group met with research faculty Associate Dean Pinkert, and Dr. Timothy R. Boosinger, Dean of the AUCVM.

Researchers from Tuskegee University's CVMNAH present at the meeting were Dr. C. Fermin (Associate Dean), Dr. Teshome Yehualaeshet (Pathobiology), Dr. Temesgen Samuel (Pathobiology), Dr. Woubit Abdela (Pathobiology), and Dr. Naga Yamani (Biomedical Sciences). Auburn University's researchers present at the meeting included Dr. Michael Irwin (Pathology), Dr. Carl Pinker (Associate Dean), Dr. Bruce Smith (Pathology and Scott Ritchey Research Center), Dr. Robert Judd (Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology), Dr. Curt Bird (Pathology), Dr. Stuart Price (Pathology) and Dean Boosinger. Dr. Pinkert introduced the group and started the meeting by expressing his appreciation for inclusion of faculty and himself in the Tuskegee University's CVMNAH Biomedical Research Symposium.

As a consequence of this meeting faculty at Tuskegee and Auburn are planning an exchange of activities, resources, and future applications to granting agencies. Moreover, faculty members from Auburn are planning to participate in Tuskegee's CVMNAH conference series. The conference series includes scientific topics supporting or enhancing biomedical research, especially those that may lead to cross-fertilization to design interdisciplinary projects needing collaborations from different fields. Also included in the conference series are the following: Grand Rounds – interesting cases and clinical presentations, Research Conferences – progress reports of ongoing research projects, Research Faculty Meetings, and Workshops.



Auburn's Pathology Department research faculty member Dr. Curt Bird explains to Tuskegee Researchers the advantages of the modified sorter used in his laboratory.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE NEWS

Contact: Tara Lanier, 334-844-3698, tal0002@auburn.edu

ALLEN NAMED DIRECTOR OF VETERINARY TEACHING HOSPITAL

The Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine has named Douglas Allen, D.V.M., as director of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

Allen, who began April 1, manages the clinical and administrative functions of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital in the Department of Clinical Sciences.

Clinical Science Department Head Jamie Bellah applauded the appointment citing Allen's impressive credentials. "Dr. Allen is an internationally known academician recognized for his expertise in equine surgery and for his contributions and leadership as director of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital at the University of Georgia. He previously served as president of the American Association of Veterinary Clinicians which is a national organization that supports the management and instructional goals of veterinary colleges," said Dr. Bellah.

Allen has received awards from veterinary students for his clinical teaching. "We are very fortunate to have someone with Dr. Allen's leadership experience serving as our hospital director," said Timothy R. Boosinger, dean.

A graduate of Auburn's College of Veterinary Medicine, Allen is a diplomate in the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. He succeeds Dr. John Saidla who became director of Auburn's Veterinary Teaching Hospital in 2000.

Auburn is one of 31 colleges of veterinary medicine in the United States and Canada, enrolling nearly 380 students in its doctor of veterinary medicine degree program, as well as more than 90 graduate students in its graduate biomedical science program.

RICK TUBBS RECEIVES THE EL TORO AWARD

Rick Tubbs, D.V.M., recently received the El Toro Award for Excellence in Food Animal Medicine at Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine. The award recognizes veterinarians who, through their contributions to food animal practice, organized veterinary medicine, high ideals, and dedication to the production of food animals, serve as role models for veterinary students.

Dr. Tubbs earned his doctorate of veterinary medicine from Auburn University in 1983. Following graduation, he worked as an associate in a mixed animal practice in Eaton, Georgia, where he focused on dairy herd health and reproductive evaluation.

He completed a residency in theriogenology at Mississippi State University where he earned his Master of Science degree in 1987. He served as assistant professor in swine medicine at Mississippi State before accepting a position in 1991 as swine veterinarian and clinical assistant professor at the University of Missouri. In 1993 he was promoted to clinical associate professor and administered continuing education courses to swine producers and veterinarians.

In 1996 Dr. Tubbs became a partner in Green River Animal Hospital in Bowling Green, Kentucky, as a swine specialist.

Dr. Tubbs is a past president of the American Association of Swine Veterinarians, and he is a member of the National Board of Veterinary Examiners, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association, the American College of Theriogenologists, the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners, and the Society for Theriogenology.

He has worked for numerous large swine production companies, and consulted and lectured extensively in the United States, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Taiwan, and Spain.

Dr. James G. Floyd Jr. established the El Toro Award at Auburn University in 1994 in memory of his father J.G. Floyd. The award is presented during the College of Veterinary Medicine's Annual Conference. Dr. Floyd's intention was to recognize outstanding food animal veterinarians before veterinary students of all classes.

A major focus of the award is to provide opportunity for interaction between veterinary students and the recipient in hope of attracting students to food animal veterinary medicine.



Dr. Rick Tubbs (left) receives the El Toro Award from Dr. Dwight Wolfe of Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

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