



Students of the
CANADIAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Étudiants de
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

VetRap is an annual newsletter produced by the Students of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA) Committee and distributed to all members of the SCVMA.

Message from Outgoing SCVMA President

This past year has been filled with exciting new experiences on the CVMA Council. Travelling to Ottawa and Nova Scotia for CVMA meetings was a great way to visit famous Canadian locations while partaking in Council meetings. I am really going to miss the hard-working students on the SCVMA Committee and the members of the CVMA Council. The SCVMA Committee meets twice a year to discuss plans for student talks and provide updates on plans for the annual SCVMA Student Symposium. For all of those students that may be interested, the SCVMA and the annual Symposium are both excellent ways to network and meet students from other Canadian veterinary schools. I encourage all Canadian veterinary students to attend the annual Symposium. Good luck in all of your studies this coming year!

*Erinn Hilberry
2010-11 SCVMA President
WCVM Class of 2013*



2010-2011

Teacher of the Year Award

CVMA's Teacher of the Year Award is presented annually to the faculty member who is viewed as the most influential in promoting the interest and enthusiasm of second year veterinary students. Congratulations to the following recipients of the CVMA Teacher of the Year Award:

WCVM
Dr. Chris Clark

FMV
Dr. Bertrand Lussier

OVC
Dr. John Prescott

AVC
Dr. Peter Foley

UCVM
Dr. Soren Boysen

Volunteer Vets

*Steven John Kruzeniski,
WCVM Class of 2012*

I write this article to encourage future Canadian veterinarians to use their knowledge and skills in a volunteer capacity. I am currently a fourth year student at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. I started volunteering in the veterinary field approximately 6 years ago. My first experience was with Team North, a volunteer spay/neuter campaign directed towards communities in Northern Saskatchewan. This still expanding program was founded by Dr. Lesley Sawa of the Animal Clinic of Regina. These first experiences made me to want to incorporate volunteer work into my career. I have never had an unpleasant experience on any of these trips. The community is always very welcoming and the clients pleasant to work with. My initial motivation to attend a trip was to add volunteer work to my resume in order to gain admission into WCVM. It did not take long to realize the benefits I received beyond gaining experience. The main reason I keep returning to these communities is because of the positive interactions with the people.

The benefits of these clinics are often debated by the veterinary community. It is easy to analyze what a spay/neuter clinic accomplishes solely on a superficial level. In a weekend we intake, vaccinate, induce, and perform sterilization procedures on 150-200 animals. Impressive, but what most people do not see are the secondary benefits: public health improvement, humane education and community building.

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Join the SCVMA Facebook group to stay updated on SCVMA events and activities happening at your school!



Volunteer Vets

► *Continuing from Page 1*

I did not realize these benefits until attending a clinic in LaLoche, Saskatchewan. It was the farewell remarks of the school principal that made me realize the impact these clinics had beyond the direct animal health benefits. He told us how families who were otherwise apart were coming to the clinics together - the family dog was serving as a source of bonding. It was the positive influence we had on the children that made him most grateful. During our clinics, often held in a school gym, we do our best to tour children through the clinic and encourage those who are interested to spend the day with us. The principal felt these brief interactions could inspire a child to develop aspirations they had not previously considered possible.

My interest in northern health clinics led me to partner with the Rural Area Veterinary Services (RAVS). RAVS is a very successful California based spay-neuter campaign founded by Dr. Eric Davis. The program travels internationally and targets communities that do not have direct access to veterinary care. The group is very dedicated and have created a high quality sustainable alliance. RAVS also strives to improve education for North American and International veterinary students. A single trip is capable of accommodating 20-30 students and gives them exposure to technical medical, surgical, and communication skills that are often difficult to fit into most veterinary curriculums. Students also have the opportunity to meet less advantaged peoples and realize the potential to direct their knowledge and skills towards positive change. I encourage every student I meet to participate.

I also had the opportunity to work with Veterinarians without Borders/ Vétérinaires sans Frontières (VWB/VSF), a group that is committed towards sustainable animal, community and ecosystem health through international volunteer projects. It was not until my 2010 summer experience in Ghana with VWB/VSF that I realized the true capacity veterinarians have to make a difference. I was involved with a 3 month project investigating poultry mortality events in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The experience was incredible. While my background in poultry medicine was limited; my knowledge of disease, pathology, sample collection and bio-security proved useful. I especially encourage this program to students who have a background in agriculture as their knowledge would be of great value to these communities.

Veterinarians have a unique opportunity to aid in development work at the ground level. Eradicating animal and zoonotic disease, improving crops and livestock, and delivering community education helps to feed communities, pay for medical fees and helps send children to school. VWB/VSF as a program has grown rapidly in the past five years. They have established several successful projects around the world and because of their student program have helped to expose students to humanitarian aid. It was an excellent experience and it was amazing to see what a group of dedicated veterinary professionals could accomplish.

The new generation of graduate veterinarians have received interdisciplinary education which spans the fields of public health, epidemiology, food safety, disease investigation and animal health. This gives veterinarians the opportunity to aid in a variety of sectors. This established skill set enables veterinarians to be valuable members of a development team. We have skills to lead and work cooperatively in teams, resolve difficult and stressful situations, effectively communicate with the public, diagnose complex disease processes and determine and carry out technical treatments. As the health sector further integrates the idea of 'one health' it will become clear the role veterinarians play in society. We are trained with the tools necessary to be leaders in global development. I feel fortunate for the experiences I have received. Volunteering has allowed me to travel and meet fascinating people from around the globe. We are in a unique profession that allows us to be involved with ground breaking and world changing projects. I encourage those with a sense of adventure to explore these opportunities.



Atlantic Veterinary College

Lisa Gillis,
AVC Class of 2013

Celebrates its 25th Anniversary

Lots of new and exciting things have been happening at the Atlantic Veterinary College over the past year. The college is celebrating its 25th anniversary. It has come a long way since it welcomed its first group of vet students in 1986 and it has been fun for the current AVC community to look back and appreciate how the college has changed and grown. Faculty and staff who have been with AVC since the beginning were presented with t-shirts printed with AVC's 25th anniversary logo on the front and "An AVC Original" on the back. AVC will continue to celebrate this milestone with events and activities throughout the year including the Open House held in September.



A generous donation of \$1 million was made by The McCain Foundation to the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) in support of the Atlantic Veterinary College's (AVC) expansion program. This includes the addition of The McCain Foundation Learning Commons at AVC that enhances the quality of learning and educational experiences of students through more classroom space, seminar rooms, teaching equipment, a veterinary resource room and much-needed study space. A floor-to-ceiling glass atrium in the space is a gathering place for students and a wonderful spot to enjoy a view of the campus.



As well, three fish aquariums were installed into the McCain Foundation Learning Commons due to the generous donation of aquarium equipment from Rolf C. Hagen Incorporated. The three 490-litre tanks include two freshwater tanks that collectively house African and convict cichlids, tinfoil barbs, blood-red parrot fish and plecostomus (algae-eaters) and a saltwater tank which holds clownfish, a hawkfish, brittle stars, a cerith snail and a turbo snail.



Some changes to the AVC curriculum have also occurred. Students in the program from the Class of 2013 onward will now have more flexibility during third year within the Health Management portion of the program. This change offers core and elective courses and gives students a choice so they can focus on more of what interests them in the large animal side of veterinary medicine.

Update from OVC

*Adam Little,
OVC Class of 2013*

This past year at the Ontario Veterinary College was once again filled with exciting events, personal achievements, and some challenging moments.

In September, the OVC community welcomed the Emerald Elephants as the OVC 2014 graduating class. Like the years before them, the Elephants were quickly thrust into a world dominated by clubs, class, frat, and hockey. The fall flew by quickly, highlighted by the introduction of the new CVSA, OTS Delta Welcoming activities, and other class events. Some of the more forgettable moments included the early Monday tests, studying over the Thanksgiving weekend, and, for many, the Elephant's first hockey game.

In November, the OVC experienced a great loss as Dr. Roberto Poma, a clinical neurologist, passed away unexpectedly. Dr. Poma had been one of the most beloved and respected clinicians within the College, known for this enthusiasm and passion for teaching, and the care of his patients and clients. While still grieving for this loss, the response from students and staff alike has been overwhelming. A number of fundraisers have taken place with proceeds going towards an educational fund for the family's young children. One of the most noteworthy events featured Dr. Andrew Peregrine, a veterinary parasitologist and faculty member, bleaching his (remaining) hair with the video rights going to the highest bidder. A memorial award has also been established by the College which is to be given annually to the faculty member who best demonstrates the qualities and commitment that made Dr. Poma such an incredible teacher, veterinarian and friend.

The year 2010 came to a close with the opening of the new Pathobiology Building at the College. This modern facility houses a number of labs and offices as well as another large lecture hall which was much appreciated by the student body. Unfortunately, the improved seating, lighting and ventilation have all drastically cut down the number of excuses for poor test performance that have been historically used by students.

One of the last major fundraisers at the OVC was the annual Inside Ride. This indoor cycling event helps raise money towards the fight against children's cancers and support for various kid's cancer camps across Canada. Dr. Tom Gibson, a small animal surgeon, and a team of students help to spearhead the fundraising efforts resulting in a total of \$47,000 donated to the charity, Coast to Coast Against Cancer Foundation.

As exam time approached, the 4th year class play and subsequent 4th year kick-off provided some comic relief for all. These annual events provide the graduating class with an opportunity to "reflect" on their experiences at the College that is then countered by a "send-off" staged by the professors. The Black Mambas delivered quite an unforgettable performance highlighted by some great singing, good acting, and poor suturing skills. It is clear that all the time spent being video-taped during veterinary appointments has certainly made this group of future veterinarians (a little too?) comfortable in the spot light.

So there you have it! The OVC is an unpredictable place with the only constant being the each year above you will take every opportunity to remind you of how much more difficult their year is. I can't wait for September.



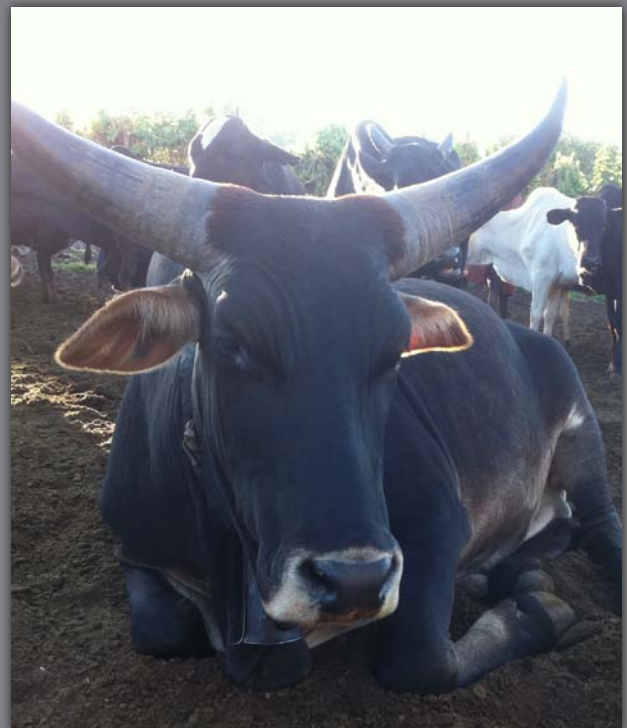
“ONE HEALTH” Coming To Life

*Erin Heck,
UCVM Class of 2012*

While every other classmate was heading to their first fourth year rotations in and around Alberta, three students were getting packed and ready to start theirs in the Ngorongoro district in Tanzania, Africa. The rotation was a part of the Ecosystem and Public health area of emphasis at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. The goal of our involvement was to conduct a research project that would explore of the role of western medications in treating livestock illness in the Maasai herds. The Maasai are a pastoralist people who rely on their cattle, sheep and goats for their nutrition, economics and community status. It was truly the concept of “One-health” coming to life as the Maasai ate, lived, built, celebrated and traded with their livestock.

After community meetings, that felt like they were straight out of the National Geographic channel, the research began. Every morning we would drive to the houses of the Maasai families called boma's. Time was spent weighing unwilling livestock in order to figure out peak weights at the end of the rainy season. For the smaller animals, they were restrained in a harness and hoisted off the ground by two Maasai warriors while someone read the scale attached to the system. The larger stock was weighed using weigh-tapes carefully strung around their girth usually while they were trying to walk away in the pen or during milking. Another project was focused on ticks and their distribution around the grazing ground and their resistance to acaricide treatment. Tick-borne diseases were considered one of the biggest causes of mortality to their livestock and cited by the Massai as one of their biggest challenges. The acaricide research included cattle restraint, acaricide application and counting and removing ticks. The cattle restraint was not as straight forward as it sounds as there were no fancy chutes to handle them in. You had to grab one by the hind leg and have another person grab for the horns. This process, especially when the students got involved, was not always smooth. A leg or tail would be grabbed and a student would “ski” across the herd, still hanging on, until someone else could grab the head and control the animal. The other project included categorizing ticks found on the pasture of the cattle. It included many hours of pulling a piece of cloth behind you and checking to see if you had caught any ticks. The children were so curious about what we were doing and at one point started pulling ticks off the cattle and planting them on the cloth flags when we were not looking to seemingly help with our effort.

After spending four weeks living in tents in a small field in the Ngorongoro conservation area it was exciting to know that another group of eager students will be able to get involved next year in continuing the project that was started. They will find also that research in Tanzania is a new learning experience filled with spectacular, unforgettable moments, and at the heart of these moments were new friends and a new perspective on life.



Journey to the Land of One Million Elephants

Audrey Coeuret, Olivier Campbell and Corinne Lafrance-Girard

Défi Vet-Monde is a project that has been led by Students of the Faculté de Médecine Vétérinaire for about 15 years and which seeks to explore the relationship between humans and animals in societies different from our own. It is in the context of this adventure that three students from Quebec boarded a plane last May for the faraway land of Laos, called the Land of One Million Elephants.

After a 24 hour plane ride, Audrey, Corinne and Olivier escaped a comfortable Canadian Summer to find themselves in Southeast Asia, where the monsoon season was beginning. Their lofty goal was to uncover the various aspects of veterinary medicine in Laos, but they quickly stumbled upon a major obstacle: the scientific and rigorous version of Western veterinary medicine is almost non-existent in this faraway country. In this communist country, there are only a few older veterinarians that remain and they almost all exclusively work for the public service. Since the fall of communism in the USSR, Laos does not send any young people abroad for training. The absence of a new generation of credible veterinarians is therefore very plainly evident..

Perhaps not surprisingly, in some villages, when an animal is sick, a plant and herb-based mixture, said to be medicinal, is administered to a sick animal by the shaman or a supposed expert. Anyone can claim to be a veterinarian over there.

During their trip, the three students sometimes managed to find a real veterinarian. They were able to visit two small animal clinics hidden in Vientiane, the quaint and welcoming capital of the country. Although in some of these practices, the sanitary conditions and some techniques left much to be desired compared to Canadian standards, they were first class in contrast with the rest of the country.

Their itinerary took them to a zoo in the small town of Ban Keun, where they met a friendly veterinarian that had been trained in Cuba. Thanks to their exchanges with this veterinarian, they were able to learn more about the management of this unique Laotian zoo and also to approach and handle the animals in ways not permitted for regular visitors. They also could participate in the cleaning of stalls and learn about the projects for the reproduction in captivity of Siamese crocodiles and sambars.

Then, the students participated in an internship with ElefantAsia, a French NGO whose goal is to help Asian elephants. Despite the moniker of "land of one million elephants", very few of these pachyderms are left in Laos, only about 700 wild elephants and 500 domesticated ones. Domesticated elephants perform mostly loading work or are used in the tourism industry. The survival of this species is in danger because logging is destroying its natural habitat and limiting its access to food. These animals sometimes flee to farmed areas which creates conflict with the local inhabitants. Also, since the reproductive rate of elephants is extremely low, local extinction for this species is likely if the number of births does not increase in the next few years.

Armed with this information, the three youths met with Dr. Bertrand Bouchard, the NGO'S senior veterinarian. He entrusted them with a research project to evaluate the sedimentation rate of the red cells of elephants. Knowing this could make it possible to diagnose the pregnancy of females earlier. It should be noted that since ElefantAsia is a not-for-profit organization, it cannot afford to use ultrasounds, which would be a lot more effective. Related to this project, they also participated in a mission in the Thongmixai District, one of the only places in Laos where elephants still reproduce in the wild. Mystery still surrounds the paternity of domestic elephants. Mating occurs mainly during the night, when females are alone and tied in the forest. Since few owners have witnessed mating, no one knows if one or several wild males are involved. If one animal is mating with all the females, this would mean that the majority of young elephants in Laos are consanguineous. The survival of the species would therefore be threatened in the long term. The mission also included an education program to inform elephant drivers and survey them about the situation. Various samples were collected for tests in order to determine the paternity of elephants through DNA.

Aside from all the veterinary aspects of this trip to Laos, there was also a human dimension to the training that the students received. Laos is a country inhabited by an incredible number of ethnic groups but all Laotians seem united by some shared traits: generosity, hospitality and, above all, an incredible smile.

And what happens when you say yes to a Laotian offer may sometimes be surprising . . . To learn more, you are invited to attend the Défi Vet-Monde lecture on Laos which will be held in November 2011 at the Université de Montréal's Faculté de médecine vétérinaire.

Défi Vet-Monde Laos 2011 wishes to thank its generous sponsors/donors: the Montreal SPCA, Groupe Dimension Multi Vétérinaire, Nurun, the Mayor of Saint-Hyacinthe, the Sœurs de Saint-Joseph, the Michel Rheault Veterinary Hospital, the Lesage Robin and Tousignant Veterinary Hospital, the Daubigny Veterinary Hospital, Dr. Karen Rodier, Iams, Dr. François Lubrina, the City of Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier and the architect Monique Brunet.

Special mention must also be made of the Université de Montréal's Groupe International Vétérinaire, which donated medical equipment to ElefantAsia, the Lao Zoo and the National Centre for Animal Health.



UCVM Hosts 2011 SCVMA Symposium

2010-2011 SCVMA Committee

Each January, student members of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA) have the opportunity to attend the annual SCVMA Symposium and experience three fabulous days of social and educational activities. The SCVMA Symposium is a valuable experience, as it promotes a sense of unity and mutual respect amongst students who are all working toward the same goal of practicing veterinary medicine. It is a fun and exciting time in which students build relationships and learn about the many facets of veterinary medicine including business, clinical, communication and self-management that are crucial to a well-balanced career as a veterinarian.

Students from all five Canadian veterinary schools came together at the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) from Wednesday, January 12 to Saturday, January 15, to experience the 2011 SCVMA Symposium.



On **Wednesday** evening, students gathered for registration at the UCVM Spy Hill Campus. Students met their UCVM billets, enjoyed a light dinner and had a chance to relax after their travels. Registration packages included stainless steel water bottles and ceramic mugs as well as USB sticks that reflected the Symposium's effort to be environmentally conscious. Students were then organized into teams and games were set up around the building to allow students to get to know each other and view the campus. The evening was full of laughs and fun and it was a great way to kick off the Symposium.

Thursday started bright and early with a choice of social excursions including a snowshoeing and wildlife adventure, skiing at Sunshine in Banff National Park, tour of Spruce Meadows and the Calgary Zoo, or a chance to enjoy the Banff Hot Springs, take in some shopping downtown, and experience a private tour of the Banff Springs Hotel.

After the day's adventures, students were ready to put their feet up and returned to the campus to spend a relaxing evening of pizza and movies with new friends.

Friday was a full day of education which included clinical presentations in the morning and wet labs in the afternoon. Students had the choice of attending two clinical presentations, which included topics on equine lameness, equine endoscopy and the use of Dynamic Remote Endoscopy in diagnosing respiratory problems in horses, pathology rounds, and cases on endocrine and neurology in both small and large animals.

The afternoon brought exciting hands-on wet labs that encompassed all aspects of veterinary medicine. Included were bird of prey handling, fish surgery, and wildlife camera tracking as well as ophthalmology, cardiology, bovine AI and semen evaluation, and equine emergency to name a few.



After a busy but stimulating day, students embraced their inner cowboy and donned their best and outrageous western garb to attend the "How the West was Won" theme night. It was an entertaining time full of great music, great food, great people and lots of line dancing.

Saturday morning offered students a choice to stretch their legs and competitive spirit in a hockey or dodgeball tournament or improve valuable communication skills from one of the leading experts on veterinary communication, Dr. Cindy Adams. The communication lab format, which is part of the UCVM curriculum, provided students a chance to practice their communication skills with a simulated client and provide constructive critique to peers.

Lunch brought more fabulous food and a special treat, as the students were served by the CVMA Executive Committee. Students were able to meet and chat with the executive members and other students about the morning. Saturday afternoon brought lectures that covered a large variety of subjects. Topics included a discussion on raw food diets for small animals, ultrasound in everyday practice, swine production and welfare, and global health and veterinary medicine, plus many others.

Saturday concluded with a dinner and dance at the Calgary Zoo and an address by keynote speaker, naturalist and educator Kevin Strange. Mr. Strange's role as Senior Advisor of Conservation Outreach at the Zoo and his experiences during his career allowed for an entertaining and humorous talk. The coordinators of the Symposium were introduced and congratulated on the fantastic job they did and all the hard work it took to organize such an impressive Symposium. The students danced the night away until the evening came to a close. It was a perfect end to a fabulous and fun-filled three days.



The next SCVMA Symposium takes place from January 12-14, 2012 at the Ontario Veterinary College.

