

VETRAP 2010



Letter from the editor

VetRap is an annual newsletter sent out to all members of the Students of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA). I hope that you will enjoy reading the newsletter and that you are able to take something away from the articles. I would like to extend a thank you to everyone who contributed articles, to the CVMA office for their assistance and also to all the student representatives of the SCVMA. I have enjoyed my time on the council for the last two years and will always remember the great times I had.

Congratulations to the students who will be graduating this year, and welcome to those who are joining us!

Janessa Wood OVC 2012

CVMA Teacher of the Year Award

This award is presented to the faculty member who is viewed as the most influential in promoting the interest and enthusiasm of second year veterinary students. Congratulations to all of the recipients!

Faculté de Médecine Vétérinaire – Dr. Alain Villeneuve

University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine – Dr. Amy Warren

Western College of Veterinary Medicine – Dr. Elemir Simko

Atlantic Veterinary College – not awarded

Ontario Veterinary College – Dr. Stephen Lee

SCVMA Symposium 2010

This year the 23rd annual SCVMA Symposium was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. Students from the five Canadian veterinary schools were able to participate in a variety of lectures, labs, tours, and social activities. This year's keynote speaker, Temple Grandin, also treated students to an inspiring lecture. On behalf of the SCVMA, we would like to give a big thank you to Jenny Puttick, WCVM SCVMA representative and symposium chair and her team for putting everything together!



SCVMA Symposium 2011



Get ready for the SCVMA Symposium in 2011 being held at the University of Calgary! They have already started planning and here's a sneak peak of what you can expect.

From January 13th to the 15th, the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) will host the 24th annual SCVMA Symposium for the first time! There has already been a lot of planning done to ensure that this will be a spectacular event. Bring your winter gear and get ready to head out to the Rocky Mountains for some outdoor activities including skiing, snowshoeing, shopping and a visit to the hot springs.

For those who would rather stay in Calgary there will be tours of the Calgary Zoo and the Spruce Meadows equestrian show jumping facility. The wet labs will be phenomenal with many labs in the works including a bone marrow aspirate, fish surgery, small animal critical care, and an equine emergency response lab, just to name a few. On top of the traditional wet labs and lectures, more educational opportunities have been added in this symposium including a clinical presentations session as well as client communications labs. Our Western Theme night (mechanical bull pending) is going to be a highlight of our social events and is sure to provide the perfect opportunity to network with future colleagues from vet schools across Canada. Get ready, as the SCVMA Symposium 2011 will be one of the best vet school memories you will ever make.

We hope to see you all in Calgary in January 2011!

OH THE PLACES YOU CAN GO...



*"You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you
choose.
You're on your own. And you know what
you know. And YOU are the guy who'll
decide where to go."*

- Dr. Seuss



Have you ever wanted to travel or try something different in the field of veterinary medicine?

This article is a collection of experiences from fellow veterinary students that have had the opportunity to be involved in some amazing programs. We hope that these stories will inspire other students to seek out the opportunities that await them!

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A SUMMER IN NAMIBIA

AMY THOMSON

The experience of volunteering in Namibia paralleled what I imagine my first few weeks in practice will be like: everyone seems to be speaking a foreign language and feeling like you have NO idea what to do. Except in the case of this past summer, many of the people I was working with were in fact speaking a language that was foreign to me and I had no idea of how to treat the species of animal I was surrounded by.

Volunteers from all over the world come together at the Harnas Wildlife Foundation located one hundred kilometers north of the town Gobabis in Namibia close to the Botswana border. The Harnas Wildlife Foundation was started in 1975 by a couple that rescued a vervet monkey and has now grown to care for hundreds of animals, from mongoose and baboons to leopards and lions. The Foundation takes in any animals that are in need of care or protection with the ultimate goal of reintroducing them to the wild.

Every day started with a meeting of all the volunteers to decide who would be completing the various tasks for the day: food prep, lion walks, feeding tour, cheetah run, baboon walks or enclosure patrol. Whether you were taking the baby lions for a walk in the life-line, dicing up donkey meat for the mongoose, or checking the electricity in the perimeter fencing it was never dull and the day was always filled with surprises. A perfect example of this would be the day a group of us took the six-month-old lion cubs for a walk and the free-roaming adolescent giraffe “Klippie” decided to join us. I am not sure what was more entertaining – Klippie running or the four cubs’ look of bewilderment!



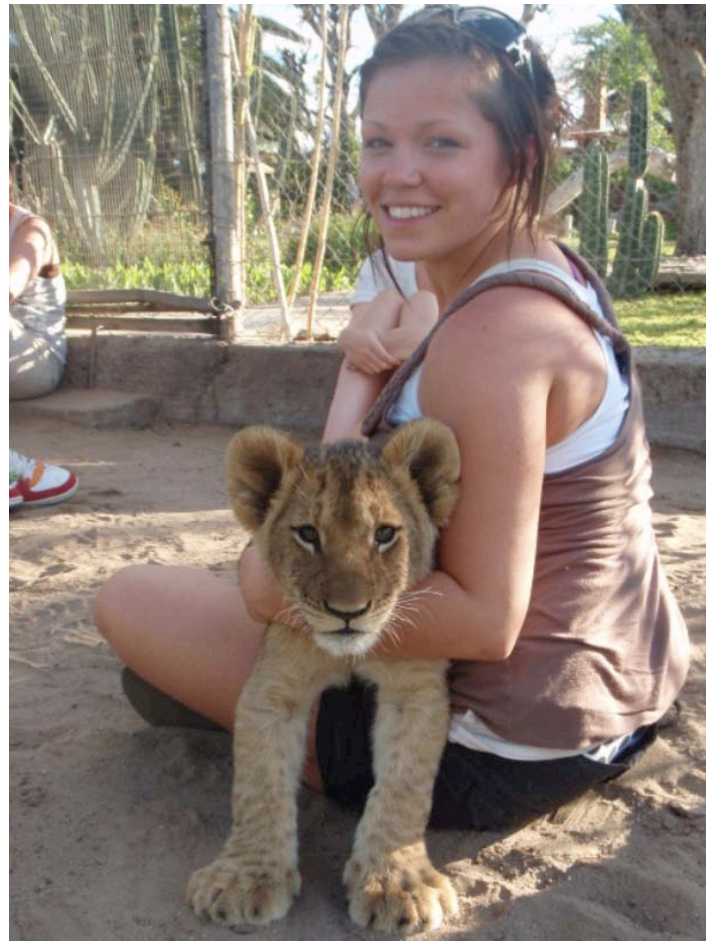
But it wasn't all fun and games; the mission of the foundation is to provide a protective environment where injured or abandoned animals can be cared for until they are ready to be released. Thus the most important tasks were preparing the meals for the animals and maintenance of the enclosures. All of the animals were checked on daily and enclosures were cleaned regularly regardless of how large. It was also very common to hear volunteers arguing over donkey meat, as everyone wanted the very best for 'their' animals.

While a great portion of my time as a volunteer at Harnas was caring for the animals on the farm that were not yet able to be released, I was also fortunate enough to be a part of the gradual release

of "Pride". Pride was born on Harnas and was hand-reared and cared for by volunteers until this past summer when the Foundation received enough funding to purchase radio collars. The release program starts gradually, Pride was taken out into the life-line in the morning with several volunteers watching over her from a 'hide-out' where she could not interact with us but we could keep an eye on her. Pride was brought back to the farm in the evening to her enclosure with Duma, Joanie and Cleo and then would be taken back out the following day. I was lucky enough to see her make her first kill on only her third day out – it is a feeling I will never forget!

In addition to learning a great deal about the native species of this gorgeous country I also learned a great deal about working with people of different ethnicities, views, education, language, exposure to animal care and how to provide the best care for the animals regardless of these differences.

For more information about the Harnas Wildlife Foundation please visit: www.harnas.org



STUDENTS OF THE CANADIAN VETERINARY RESERVE AT OVC

HOLLY SPRING



We are proud to say that we have over 100 members in our club at this current time, and student interest is increasing.

In October of 2009, we held our first lunch talk, featuring the Canadian Animal Assistance Team (CAAT). CAAT is a nonprofit organization that focuses on animal welfare and is dedicated to

providing veterinary medicine and humane education for animals in need worldwide. With over 100 students attending the talk, we raised over \$150 to donate towards CAAT.

After the lunch talk, student response was so positive that we decided to hold an informative, hands-on lab dedicated to Pet First Aid in

Emergency Situations. In addition, we felt it was important to include a large animal component in the lab. We therefore invited members from OMAFRA and OFAC to hold Humane Euthanasia of Large Animals, using a captive bolt pistol. Both components of the lab were a huge success, with over 70 students attending.



On March 18th, the SCVR held a Round Table Discussion with CAAT. With approximately 45 students in attendance, CAAT presented problems that they face when visiting remote northern communities for their wellness and educational visits. Students were asked to come up with problems and possible solutions to these various

problems. In addition, the student opportunities within CAAT were discussed. We are very excited to say that the SCVR will hopefully play a bigger role in CAAT in years to come.

We would like to thank the Canadian Veterinary Reserve (CVR) for their generous donation that helped the SCVR get started on events around OVC.



For more information about the CVR please visit: www.canadianveterinarians.net

For more information about the CAAT please visit: www.caat-canada.org



In January of 2010, veterinary students had the opportunity to visit the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. The purpose of our visit was to attend the third bi-annual Day at the CDC for Veterinary Medical Students.

Over 300 veterinary students from across North

America attended. We participated in a simulated interactive outbreak investigation and we attended a wide array of lectures and information sessions. The diverse backgrounds from the many different speakers enlightened us to the seemingly endless opportunities for veterinarians in public health and gave a glimpse into the CDC's mission.

Upon arriving in Atlanta, students were invited to a social evening where they were welcomed by coordinators and public health officers of the CDC. They had the opportunity to socialize with students from the other veterinary colleges across the United States and Canada. The following day we attended a series of seminars that explored the opportunities and career choices available in the Public Health field. A strong focus on how human health and animal health is interrelated was highlighted through a variety of case based discussions and presentations.



One of the highlights of this event was a simulation exercise that we had enrolled in upon admission earlier that morning. Upon arrival, we were asked to create a "potion" in a test tube based upon what we had eaten at the social event the evening before, where we were staying and whether or not we had gone out after the social event. Each person was then deemed "infected" or "not-infected" and asked to wear a facemask for the simulation. This formed the basis to study interagency cooperation to determine the cause of this "outbreak". Throughout the seminar series we received live "breaking news updates" with CDC Director, Julie Gerberding, which was used to demonstrate the CDC's communication response during a disease outbreak. In the afternoon, we were divided into two groups, one of which attended a session on Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) situations, while the second group participated in a telephone conference with two scientists based in European and Asian countries. These sessions provided attendees

with the opportunity to see how public health careers could be both dynamic and worldly.

All in all, we had a great trip to Atlanta, Georgia, and I encourage anyone considering Public Health careers to attend future CDC student veterinarian days!

ONE HEALTH CLUB

In September of 2009, with support from The Center for Public Health and Zoonoses and The Office of the Dean, the One Health Club was created at the Ontario Veterinary College. The main objective of the club is to provide a cross-disciplinary forum to discuss issues pertaining to animal, environmental, and human health. We currently have over 30 DVM student members and are working to expand to integrate students from the many disciplines across campus for the fall of 2010.

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY IN KENTUCKY

EMILY TRUSCOTT

At some point during our training, every veterinary student must decide what type of practitioner he or she wants to become. For some of us, this is quite clear, but if you are like me, the decision can be almost as difficult as getting in to veterinary school! The indecision arises in part because we have a love for all animals and would enjoy the opportunity to help them regardless of species. However, as the profession swings towards specializations in one or a few species, there comes a point where a decision on which path you take has to be made. How you come to your decision is personal and may take into account your family, location, additional training, strong mentorship, or, all it may take is one weekend in Kentucky.

Every year in September there is an annual seminar open to all North American veterinary students entering their third year of study called the Opportunities in Equine Practice Seminar (OEPS). Its goal is simple: to promote equine practice as a viable and rewarding career option. In 2009, I was one of fifteen students from OVC who traveled to Lexington, Kentucky for this all expenses paid event. Our group consisted of approximately nine “horsey people”, who knew they wanted to work with horses, and six “fence sitters” who simply liked the idea of working with them, but were unsure if horses fit into their idea of a successful career. Fortunately, there are no prerequisites to attend this seminar - you don't have to have horses, show horses or even have grown up with them. In fact, coming to this event with an open mind and a slight equine interest is all you need to get the most from your OEPS experience.

Upon our arrival in Kentucky, we checked in to our hotel and were waiting to join the welcome reception and practice exhibits when a kind gentleman offered to buy us lunch after saying; “I do this for one group every year”. We were somewhat suspicious, but also quite hungry, so we accepted the lunch offer. Well, it turned out our generous lunch companion was none other than Dr. Bill Rood from Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital and the host organizer for OEPS. Dr. Rood and his amazing team organize everything from the food we eat to the tours of places like Keeneland racecourse. In other words, we had just had been welcomed by the OEPS star himself.

Throughout the weekend, students were encouraged to mingle while looking at the wide range of practice exhibits displayed in the hotel lobby. The exhibitors came from all over North America and spanned many disciplines. There was certainly something for everyone. For example, one of our attendees met with various equine facilities about the internship programs they offered and spent some time talking with their representatives. I am certain that this interaction will help her find an internship since making a lasting connection with these representatives is a huge step in securing a place in a highly competitive program. For me, I was able to meet and talk with a few representatives about external elective possibilities during my final year. It was truly remarkable to come to an event and interact with practitioners who were genuinely interested in what you were planning to do with your training. They each offered incredible advice and even shared their own stories on how they got to where they were today. It was comforting to know that

their story and their road to success started off a lot like ours.



On Saturday, all the students are randomly assigned to group tours of places like Keeneland racecourse, Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute and enormous thoroughbred breeding and racing barns. Being in the thick of horse country, it is very hard not to get caught up in all the excitement. I could tell that even the fence sitters in the group were awed and fascinated in what we were seeing. For the horsey people, they were getting even more excited for an industry they were soon going to be a part of. These feelings grew as that afternoon practitioners from all over North America gave presentations on various topics concerning the decision to enter equine medicine. The speakers were from all disciplines, from a New York ambulatory practitioner to a Calgary, Alberta board-certified surgeon. Their backgrounds also ranged from having no prior horse experience to riding in top-level competitions. For all of us, the practitioner presentations marked the best part of the trip. The message and inspiration that these speakers conveyed to the audience was obvious - it energized the horsey people and made the fence sitters consider equine practice as a viable career choice. As we left the auditorium on our way to the fun-filled night at the Rood & Riddle barbecue, the fence sitters were now transformed into believers - at this point anything seemed possible.

On the final day, the practitioner presentations ended and it was time to head back home. After talking with the rest of the group, it was clear everyone gained something from OEPS. For some of us, it was a way of solidifying our career path and a chance to meet future colleagues or to help find the perfect internship. For others, it was a career-altering experience, which truly taught us that despite our past experience with horses, this career choice is a viable option that we should seriously consider. For me, it solidified what I had believed all along; although equine medicine might seem daunting, it is something that my career would certainly feel empty without. In just one weekend, I learned from experienced practitioners what I would be missing and what I have to gain by entering this profession. I encourage anyone with any level of interest in horses to attend OEPS. You may arrive a skeptic, but with an open mind, you might leave with an entirely different point of view.

For more information about OEPS visit: www.oeps.com or talk to your **AAEP Student Chapter representative**



VET MEDICINE UNDER THE SEA

KRISTINA MCLAREN

When I was a child dreaming of vet school, if someone told me that on my path to becoming a vet I would someday wrestle a crocodile or put my hand in a dolphin's mouth, I would have said they were crazy. But those were just a couple of the many unique experiences that I was fortunate enough to have through a two-week Marine Animal Veterinary (or Marvet) workshop.

A friend of mine at vet school sent out an email last summer to see who would be interested in going to Mexico for two weeks on this workshop, and after reading about what our potential experiences would be with exotic species, I immediately wanted to go.



A group of about 20 people from at least five different countries (including Ecuador, Italy and Spain) gathered together in Playa del Carmen, Mexico for the experience of a lifetime. This course was designed to introduce us to the world of marine mammal veterinary work, as well as to implement the concept of integrating veterinary medicine with other scientific and political disciplines in order to achieve conservation

medicine. We learned about the importance of preventative medicine in marine mammal species such as the bottlenose dolphin, difficulties faced by marine mammal rehabilitation institutes, and the significance of preserving our oceans. Some of the experiences that were provided by the workshop included performing a physical exam on a bottlenose dolphin; sea turtle and sting ray necropsies; snorkeling with nurse sharks; and catching sea turtles in order to draw blood and scrub their shells.

Outside of the marine animal world, we also spent two days helping the Peanut Pet Shelter with physical exams, diagnostics and surgeries (spays and neuters) of the cats and dogs they save off the streets. As a student going into my third year, it was exciting to be able to perform my very first spay and really get some hands-on experience. There were many other exciting activities as well as enough lecture time to provide some background information on marine animal pathology and more.

There are many challenges that face marine animal vets, one of which being a lack of existing information. There is little knowledge on the maintenance of certain species, and the pathology of various diseases affecting many marine species. I now have a newfound respect for both marine animals, and those who dedicate their lives to the health and preservation of our marine wildlife. If anyone is interested in any way in the marine animal world, I highly recommend that they look into the Marvet workshops. And since I now know just how wonderful it can be, I just might see you there!

For more information on Marvet please visit:
www.marvet.org