



A Letter From The President

November/December 2013

Rabies Titer

What did you think of the Rabies Titer event? I thought it was a great success with over 100 attendees! Since this event had not been held in a number of years, the KCVMA had to start from scratch figuring out how to organize it. All of our board members volunteered their time to make this happen, but I must recognize a few individuals for their hard work. Dr. Donna Romanzi spent countless hours coordinating with the lab that provided the phlebotomists as well as the K-State Rabies lab. Wanda Geis, KCVMA Executive Secretary, worked closely with Dr. Romanzi in organizing the attendees' information and answering many emails and phone calls. Dr. Todd Taylor made arrangements with Boehringer Ingelheim to provide refreshments. Because of everyone's dedication, this event was possible. Thank you!

By now hopefully most of you have received your titer. For those who need a vaccine booster, you have a few options. These include private medical care providers, travel clinics, and city and county health departments. For example, as of earlier this year, the Kansas City Health Department was familiar with the vaccine. Additionally, the MVMA has a "booster shot program."

Low-cost/non-profit KC clinics

Over the past several months concerns over the low-cost, non-profit spay/neuter clinics in the Kansas City area have been brought to my attention. I am assuming most of us have had some sort of experience with them, sometimes a negative one. A few months ago three KCVMA board members met with leaders of the Great Plains SPCA. GPSPCA wanted to know why many area veterinarians seemed unsupportive of their organization. While I won't go into extensive detail about the meeting, it really came down to one issue. Most of us have had at least one or two, maybe several clients, take their pets to a low-cost facility for care that they could have afforded at one of our clinics. Because of this, many veterinarians see them as competition. At this meeting the KCVMA board members voiced this concern, emphasizing that the primary way to gain acceptance and support from the veterinary community is to verify income. Time will tell if they take our advice.

I also spoke with Gregory Dennis, M.Sc., J.D. (Independence), Legal Counsel for the Kansas and Missouri

VMAS about the legalities of operating a non-profit entity with the purpose of helping low-income individuals, but also providing services to those with higher income. He said these non-profit entities are able to provide services to anyone, but they must follow the federal and state statutes and regulations required of all non-profit entities. Also, it goes without saying, they must abide by the same rules that govern all of us, such as ensuring veterinary services that must be performed by a veterinarian are actually done by a veterinarian, and having the veterinarian(s) licensed in the state where the services are being performed. Additionally, Missouri veterinarians need to know that a Missouri Veterinary Medical Board regulation requires Missouri veterinarians who are aware of or suspect the unlawful practice of veterinary medicine, whether by lay individuals or veterinarians, to report such to the board. Not doing so can result in the board taking disciplinary action against the veterinarian for his or her failure to report.

Upcoming MVMA Elections

Soon you will receive your ballot to vote for the 2014 MVMA Executive Board. Dr. Mel Falk of Hidden Valley Animal Hospital is running for Vice President. He has been active with the KCVMA and the MVMA for many years. Currently, Dr. Falk is the KCVMA's delegate to the MVMA Executive Board and serves as the PAC Chairman for the MVMA. He is very committed to veterinary medicine's local, state, and national organizations, and would like the opportunity to serve us at the state level. Please consider casting your vote for Dr. Falk.

My time as President of the KCVMA is coming to an end. It has been a great year and I truly appreciate your support of the association. The board welcomes any input you have for the organization, but we also welcome you to be a part of the KCVMA leadership! If you are interested, please contact any of the board members. We are always looking for new faces and fresh ideas.

Enjoy the remainder of the football season and the upcoming holidays!

Kara Ballenger, DVM

President - kballenger@kcvma.com

CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS: HOW FACEBOOK CAN HELP

BY: JEN NIGRO

At the heart of every small business plan is the need to connect with clients on a personal level. It's something you and your staff do every day, face-to-face; but what about between visits? Marketing your practice to current and potential clients is an ongoing process, and a growing number of veterinarians are using social media to reach out to engage the public. According to ebizmba.com, Facebook remains the most popular social media site with an estimated 750 million unique monthly visitors. Facebook notes over one billion people like and comment on posts an average of 3.2 billion times every day. That means many Facebook users are interacting with multiple posts when they visit the site. Tapping into social media can increase your practice's visibility and create a deeper connection with clients.

Before starting a Facebook page for your practice you should weigh the risks and benefits. Obviously, the biggest benefit to starting a Facebook page is the added visibility it will provide for your practice. This is great for growing your client list. But, if you ever have a conflict with a client, they could choose to go public with it on your page. While most of your online interactions with clients will likely be positive, determine in advance how you will handle any negative posts that may find their way onto your page. It is best practice not to delete negative comments, but to reach out to the client with a solution to their problem. A well-handled conflict will show other Facebook users that you will do right by them, and what started as a negative interaction will end up positive. Some Facebook page managers avoid this issue by not allowing others to post to their page. This is up to each individual administrator, but be aware that limiting your clients' posting privileges also limits their ability to interact with you and gives them fewer reasons to visit.

Now that you've decided to start a Facebook page, you need a game plan. The first thing you and your staff should do is decide what you want your page to do for you. Do you want to increase visibility? Showcase a particular strength in your practice? Sell your clients on preventative care? Setting goals to help guide the content you will post will help engage your followers more effectively. How do you know what you want your page to accomplish? Social Media Examiner recommends looking at pages created by your fellow veterinarians for inspiration. Write down the ideas you like and give them a try—some may work for your practice page, others may not. In addition, you'll want to determine who your target audience is, then find out what types of pages catch their attention.

Once you know what direction you want your page to take, it's time to start crafting content. The more you plan out what you will post, the more success you will have. It is important

to decide in advance who will create the majority of your posts. Assigning the task to a single person will help keep the tone and writing consistent so your clients know what to expect. There will be some trial and error in the beginning as you try some types of posts and see how your audience responds.

It's important to post different types of content. All text all the time will get boring fast. The Veterinary Marketing Firm (www.thevetmarketingfirm.com) says pictures are the most popular type of post, followed by videos. But, these won't stand alone—it's also important to include a short explanation. Whether you are posting a picture or text, be careful how much you post. According to Social Media Examiner, research shows 100 characters is the ideal length for a post—long enough to boost visibility and make a personal statement, short enough to hold your audience's ever-shortening attention span. This is also your opportunity to engage fans by making a call to action, sharing your expertise on a topic, or asking a question. Your administrator will take the lead in determining what to post and how frequently to post. Social media experts warn posting too little or too much will alienate your followers; you want to aim for five to 10 posts per week, with no more than two per day.

This all sounds time consuming, but there are several free online tools you can use to minimize the time you spend using social media. It's important to plan the majority of your posts ahead. Perhaps you want to choose a theme for a couple of days a week: turn Saturday into "Caturday" and post about cat issues; share a pet of the week each Monday; invite clients to share photos of their own pets. Write your planned posts out on a spreadsheet or calendar, then use scheduling websites like Hootsuite (www.hootsuite.com) or Post Rocket (www.getpostrocket.com) to schedule them out so you don't have to take time out of your busy day to log onto Facebook. Then, as time allows, you can add additional posts to those already scheduled. However, be sure your posts are spread out so Facebook users aren't inundated by a series of posts within a short period of time. The average lifespan of a Facebook post is three hours. You should also keep in mind there are optimum times for posts to appear. Buddy Media conducted a study in 2012 and found posts made between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. or on weekends get the most interaction. Social Media Examiner concurs, noting recent data from bit.ly, a URL shortening and marketing service, found Facebook usage peaks between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Many of the content management sites have tools to help you optimize timing.

When you use these content management sites, you'll discover you can manage several social media sites at a time. This can be a real time saver, but don't take too many short cuts. It's a bad idea to post identical content to all of your

social media sites at the same time. Different platforms have different purposes—don't hurt your online identity by treating them all the same way.

Once you have your page up and running, you need to make sure people know about it. There are several ways to accomplish this with minimal effort:

- Let your clients know you're on Facebook by posting signs in the clinic, including a link in your email signature.
- Write an article for your clinic newsletter.
- Embed posts on your website.
- When you post a client's story to your Facebook page tag them and/or let them know their story is online so they can share it with their friends.
- Respond to all comments and questions posted on your page.
- Always keep your page up-to-date. If you go several weeks without posting, people will stop visiting your page and it will stop showing up in Facebook news feeds.
- Be a good Facebook friend. It's important to follow other pages and like and comment on their posts through your practice page. This is another way to increase your own visibility while showing support for your online counterparts. You may even find content worth sharing on your own page.
- Finally, be sure to monitor how your page is doing. Facebook will send you a weekly email with details about your page engagement. It's important to learn how to read these analytics and use them to adjust future online interactions.

Delving into the world of social media can be overwhelming, but if you make a plan and stick to it, Facebook is manageable in just a few minutes a day. For additional tips on navigating the world of social media, visit www.socialmediaexaminer.com.

AVMA OFFERS INSURANCE OPTION FOR VETERINARIANS

BY: JEN NIGRO

If you've paid any attention to the news lately, you know the online health insurance marketplace created through the Affordable Care Act opened October 1. It's off to a bumpy start, but it's not the only option for those wanting to buy insurance to avoid potential tax penalties under the ACA. There are several private options available, including one offered by The American Veterinary Medical Association through its Group Health and Life Insurance Trust Programs. The private exchange, open to veterinarians and veterinary students seeking insurance coverage, replaces the organization's current medical coverage plan. The AVMA was forced to stop taking new applications for that program in January after its underwriter determined it would be unable to offer competitive plans under the Affordable Care Act. AVMA GHLIT rolled out Phase One of its marketplace, GHLIT CARE, in March, targeting "senior" veterinarians. Phase Two was introduced in July. Libby Wallace, Executive Director of GHLIT, says that phase had a few challenges, but says the program has already helped assist many veterinarians seeking health coverage.

Unlike those operated by the federal government, GHLIT CARE is a private exchange. Still, glitches with the October 1 opening of the public system have trickled down to GHLIT CARE. "The insurance carriers have focused all of their resources on the public marketplaces," says Wallace. "Therefore, they were not ready to submit benefit plan and premium information to private exchanges like GHLIT CARE Insurance Exchange." However, Wallace says most insurance carriers have now finalized their offerings, and are providing data to GHLIT's quoting partner, HealthPlan Services. Wallace says they are seeing new carriers and plans added daily all over the country.

According to Wallace, GHLIT CARE is getting an overall positive reception from veterinarians. "So far they have been very patient as we work through technical issues," she says. "They understand the delays we've experienced were exacerbated by the federal shutdown and the federal exchange problems." She says most of the frustration comes from the uncertainty surrounding the impact of the changes.

Current AVMA GHLIT members can continue their Disability, Life, Dental, Vision, Hospital Indemnity, Long Term Care, Hospital Indemnity, and Professional Overhead Expense insurance plans; they and new enrollees can also choose from options included on the exchange. Those wanting coverage to begin on January 1, 2014 will need to complete their open enrollment by December 15. "There really is plenty of time to review the options and make informed decisions," says Wallace.

Those who choose a private exchange, like GHLIT CARE, will not receive premium assistance subsidies available to low-income individuals who use the public exchanges.

Wallace encourages anyone with questions to visit www.avmaghlitcare.org, or call 877-473-6017.

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All suggestions and comments are welcomed.
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BUILT ON THE SHOULDERS OF VETERINARY GIANTS COMBAT CANINE

BY: DR. STEVE JOSEPH, KCVMA HISTORIAN

No one knows when Sergeant Stubby was born. It was in the months leading up to American involvement in World War I. We know he was the most decorated war dog of his time and the only dog promoted to sergeant through combat.

Stubby served 18 months and participated in 17 battles on the Western Front. He saved his regiment from surprise gas attacks, and found and comforted the wounded. Once he caught an enemy spy by the seat of the pants and held him until his colleagues arrived. This action led to his promotion to sergeant. Stubby's adventures were front page news across the world.

His story began when the stray Pit Bull/Terrier mix appeared at Yale Field in New Haven, CT. Soldiers were training and Corporal Robert Conroy developed a fondness for the dog. When it came time for the soldiers to ship out Conroy hid Stubby on board the troop ship.

Somewhere along the way Stubby was discovered by the commanding officer. Conroy quickly gave the order to "present arms" and Stubby saluted the officer. From that moment on Stubby was allowed to follow his troops wherever they went.

Entering battle in February 1918, Stubby soon came under constant fire day and night for over a month. In April he was wounded by retreating Germans throwing grenades. Stubby was sent to the rear for convalescence and, as he

had done on the front, he was able to improve morale. Once recovered, he returned to the trenches.

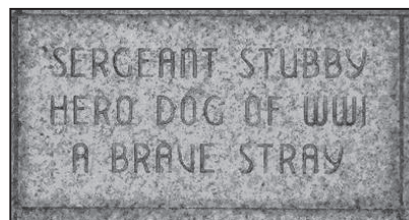
Being a canine, Stubby could hear the whine of incoming artillery fire before his human companions. He was adept at letting his unit know when to duck for cover. Following a victory that reestablished allied positions, women of one town made Stubby a chamois coat to display his numerous metals and awards. You can find images of Sergeant Stubby via Google.

After the war Stubby became a celebrity, and frequently led parades across the country. He met Presidents Wilson, Coolidge and Harding. In 1921, he attended Georgetown University Law Center with Conroy and became the Hoyas' football team mascot. At halftime, he would nudge the ball around the field to the applause of the crowd.

Stubby was made a life member of the American Legion, the Red Cross and the YMCA. The Humane Education Society awarded him a special gold medal for service to his country. The medal was presented by General John Pershing.

Sergeant Stubby died in Conroy's arms in 1926. His remains are featured in *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War* exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution.

Stubby was honored with a brick in the Walk of Honor at the World War I monument at Liberty Memorial here in Kansas City on Armistice Day on November 11, 2006.



RABIES TITER EVENT



NOTE FOR RABIES TITER TESTING PARTICIPANTS: RESULTS HAVE BEEN EMAILED TO THE ADDRESS YOU PROVIDED AT REGISTRATION.

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Gregory Dennis has served and represented the KCVMA and Kansas City area veterinarians for 25 years.
To reach Mr. Dennis, contact: Leongatha Law, LLC | 14801 E 42nd Street, Suite 600 | Independence, MO 64055-4776

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Send your classified ads to: Wanda Geis, PO Box 12468, Shawnee Mission, KS 66282-2468, or email them to classifieds@kcvma.com. Ads must not be over 100 words in length. Classified ads will be run at the sole discretion of the editor and may be edited for content. Deadline for the next newsletter is 12/13/13.

Mixed Animal Veterinarian Needed: Drexel Veterinary Clinic is looking to hire a mixed animal veterinarian. Come join a busy, progressive practice that consists of 35% beef cattle, 15% equine and 50% small animal. We are located 20 miles south of Overland Park, KS. For more information email Aaron at stohsdvm@yahoo.com.

Hiring Home Euthanasia Veterinarians. Part-time & full-time veterinarians needed to provide private pet euthanasia in comfort of home throughout entire greater Kansas City area (and nationwide). Earn \$2000/month for 10 home visits, \$4000/month for 20, \$8000/month for 40. Study our website www.PetLossAtHome.com and email DrKaren@PetLossAtHome.com.

Practice for sale: Small animal practice with an enviable 24-year track record in a community one hour outside of the KC Metro. State-of-the-art facilities were first built three years ago, and the space has been expanded by 35% in recent months to accommodate new grooming services and additional boarding capacity. This practice has a robust earnings track record, a positive revenue trend, ample physical capacity to allow for expansion, and business development opportunities that can be exploited for further growth. Gross Revenue: \$659,161; Cash Flow: \$264,568; Asking: \$655,000 Contact Paul Temme: 913-433-2310; pault@kcapex.com.

Small animal practice in an upscale area of Kansas City 'north of the river' is looking for an associate to work 3.25 days a week (M, T, F and alternate Saturday mornings). 30-minute appointment times. Excellent support staff and nice work environment. Our clients are accustomed to thorough workups and cradle-to-grave, compassionate care for their pets. Emphasis on preventive medicine and diagnosis. Surgical skills and experience in dentistry are pluses. Nearby Blue Pearl location takes referrals and after-hours emergencies for us. Please respond to picturehills@sbcglobal.net.

The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City is looking for an experienced veterinary technician (license not required) to join us part-time, Tuesday – Friday (approximately 16-20 hours per week) to assist our veterinarians with preventive vet care and spay/neuter surgeries at the Kansas City, KS animal control. You will also be responsible for record keeping and monitoring the health and placement of cats housed at animal control's shelter. We are looking for a self-starter who can be a flexible team player. This challenging position will play a vital role in helping us improve the lives of cats and dogs in the public animal shelter. If interested please contact Lorna at lorna@hsgkc.org.

Small animal veterinary clinic for sale. 2000 sf lease space, opportunity to add additional 2000 sf. Owner retiring. Gross \$500,000. Fully equipped including: Avimark software, Idexx QBC, Snap Reader, VefTest and Electrolytes. MedRx Video VetScope, Synostics Ultrasound. Grooming and boarding. Experienced staff. Johnson County, KS, is an upscale/affluent Kansas City suburb with nationally acclaimed schools and two emergency and specialty clinics within 10 miles. Small town atmosphere with big city nearby. Contact dogdoc50@gmail.com.

Associate Veterinarian wanted for established, three doctor, small animal practice with an excellent reputation. Competitive salary and benefits (medical insurance, professional dues, continuing education, vacation). No after-hours emergencies. Send resume to: Farview Veterinary Hospital, 17710 Susquehanna Rd., Independence, MO 64056. Contact Dr. Jack Mauck 816-257-5454 or FVHINC@aol.com.

Veterinary technician position available at a small animal-exclusive, two veterinary practice in Parkville. We focus on high-quality medicine and great customer service. Candidate must be a Missouri licensed registered technician. Benefits include medical and dental insurance, paid vacation, and retirement plan. If interested email us at pahapets@live.com or fax your resume to 816-741-2379.

Westwood Animal Hospital is seeking a full-time veterinary receptionist to join our team. Job responsibilities include answering telephone calls, scheduling appointments, checking patients in/out, opening/closing the clinic, handling payments, and other general clerical/hospitality duties. Some veterinary experience and availability to work Saturdays is required. Knowledge of AVIMARK software is much preferred. JOB REFERENCES ARE REQUIRED UPON APPLYING. To apply, visit our website, www.westwoodanimalhospital.com. Click on the "FORMS" link and select JOB APPLICATION. Please fill out the application and email it, along with a resume, ATTN: Emily. Our email address, and more information about our practice, is available on our website.

Turner Animal Hospital is looking for a part time (15-20 hours a week) veterinary receptionist. Duties would include: checking clients in and out, answering multi-line phone system, using practice management software, handling payments, and general office work. Experience is preferred. If interested, please email Tara at turneranimalhospital@gmail.com with your resume and three references.

RECORD OF KCVMA CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINARS FOR 2013

DATE	SPEAKER / TOPIC	C.E. CREDIT
February 24	Various Speakers Specialists in Kansas City 7th Annual Frostbite Seminar	7 Hours
March 21	Gary I. Glassman, CPA, Burzenski & Company, P.C. The Great Market Shift – effects that the flea and tick market have had on your bottom line	2 Hours
April 18	Geryll G. Hall, DVM Updated Vaccine Guidelines and How to Interpret Them	2 Hours
May 15	Shelley C. Rankin, Ph.D., Associate Professor Clinician Educator of Microbiology, University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine Navigating Your Laboratory Reports: Selecting the Best Antimicrobial Therapy for your Patients	2 Hours
June 20	Brian Scott, DVM, DACVD South Texas Veterinary Specialists, LLP Pruritis - Scratch the Itch	2 Hours
July 18	Steve Graff, DVM, Field Technical Service Veterinarian, Virbac Animal Health Advances in the Management of Otitis Externa	2 Hours
September 19	Dr. David Husted, Director, Veterinary Medical Affairs, Pet Division, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Utilizing Risk Assessments for your Patients	2 Hours
October 17	Dr. David Martin, Senior Veterinary Specialist (Anesthesiology, Sedation & Pain Management), Zoetis Anesthesia and Analgesia: Common Clinical Questions	2 Hours
November 17	Dr. Ken Kwochka, Senior Manager of Veterinary Services, Health and Wellness, Bayer Dermatology	6 Hours