



A Letter From The President

July/August 2012

It is summer once again. As a child I couldn't wait for summer. Back then it took forever to come, and was over much too quickly. Today summer seems to arrive more quickly and is much longer than I remember it being when I was a child. It goes to show perspective is based on each individual's experience at a given time. I was made aware of this recently after meeting with Courtney Thomas, CEO and Executive Director of Great Plains SPCA. Courtney feels she is helping animals whose owners cannot afford care. From her perspective, she is not doing area veterinarians a disservice. Courtney has offered to address our members and answer any questions that anyone might have. I am willing to coordinate this meeting. But I really want our members' input, so attendance at the meeting will be critical. Great Plains SPCA and their ilk are not going away. Consequently, we must find a way to coexist to the best of our abilities. If anyone has any questions, ideas, or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Great Plains SPCA is not the only problem veterinarians are currently facing. The pharmacy issue is continuing to spread. I just read that Winn-Dixie, a southern grocery store chain, is going to start selling animal pharmaceuticals. The monetary loss to clinics is worrisome, but I am more concerned about possible misinformation that my clients may receive. The father of one of our technicians, who lives in Nebraska, went to a COSTCO to get his Rimadyl prescription filled and was told by pharmacy staff that he could use ibuprofen since it was the same class of drug. A pharmacist questioned my dosage once, because, as he told me, it was a higher dose than what a human would take. My dosage was correct, and he was surprised. I really hope that pharmacists and their staff will be required to learn about our pharmaceuticals so misinformation will not occur.

Summer is definitely upon us now. The heat has arrived and it announced its presence with authority. People are heading to the pool and lakes and, of course, taking their pets with them. In Indiana they have already had to close pools due to water-borne illnesses. The warnings about

blue-green algae have already started to be issued. The cyanobacterial toxins that the blue-green algae produce are both hepatotoxic and neurotoxic. Supportive care is the only known treatment, as there is no known antidote. Stomach contents can be tested through Kansas State's diagnostic laboratory to confirm or rule-out your suspicions.

When I first joined the KCVMA 12 years ago I wasn't really sure what the KCVMA did. Back then, I thought the KCVMA was a political body that addressed veterinarians' concerns. CE didn't even play into my idea of what the KCVMA was about. Then I joined the board approximately four years ago and learned that the KCVMA's primary focus was continuing education. During those four years the board focused on CE, but also addressed member concerns as they arose. Today we continue to offer great CE events, but we are being brought into the political arena more than in the past. I don't know how I feel about that or how other members may feel, but I think it is the direction of the future. That said, it is imperative that all members let their board members know their concerns. It is equally important that members get involved by joining the board, contacting board members, or simply coming to meetings.

Our next social is fast approaching, and I am looking forward to seeing my first professional soccer game as well as seeing many of you. Our last CE meetings of the year should be excellent as well. I hope everyone has a wonderful summer.

President - mhughes@kcvma.com

LIVING THE DREAM: NEW CLASS OF VETERINARIANS ENTERS JOB MARKET

BY: JEN NIGRO

When Lauren Smith recited the Veterinarian's Oath during graduation ceremonies at the University of Missouri on May 11, she fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a doctor of veterinary medicine. One of 70 graduates from the MU program, Dr. Smith is also a newlywed and the newest employee at Belton Animal Clinic and Exotic Care Center in Belton, MO. Dr. Smith says she has always loved animals, but her childhood pet, a rabbit named 'Buttons', sealed her desire to become a veterinarian. She remembers the comfort she got from the family veterinarian when 'Buttons' became ill. "I knew that someday I wanted to help an ailing animal and their owner as much as 'Buttons' and I had been helped."

Reaching this goal was no easy task for Dr. Smith, or the other 69 MU graduates and their 106 counterparts from Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. Students from both schools begin their professional careers with heavy debt. MU grads will carry an estimated \$117,804, not including their undergraduate expenses. Dr. Ron Cott, Associate Dean for Student/Alumni Affairs and Director of Development for MU, says most CVM students earn enough Missouri income and register to vote, making them eligible to receive in-state tuition after their first year. Kansas State grads average \$179,921 in debt, including their undergraduate expenses. Dr. Ron Elmore, K-State's Associate Dean for Academic Programs, Admissions and Diversity, notes 60% of their students are non-residents, and cannot change their eligibility for in-state tuition. Dr. Elmore estimates KSU graduates will earn starting salaries between \$62,217 and \$73,500 per year, but says those salaries have not kept pace with the rising cost of education. Still, he reports all but 17 students have listed places of employment. About 20 are staying in the Midwest to practice, while others have found employment elsewhere. "My opinion is that while there are an adequate number of positions to absorb our new graduates, the selection is not as broad as in previous years," he says. "In other words, our new graduates might not be able to find their ideal positions in their desired geographical locations."

Dr. Cott says Missouri's CVM graduates face similar circumstances, though they rely on the American Veterinary Medical Association for their employment statistics. Those won't be released until later this year.

While Dr. Smith is relieved to have a job right out of school, she admits it took a lot of legwork. "There simply are not vast numbers of clinics that feel comfortable adding another associate in this economic climate," she says. "I heard many times that 'Your application looks great and we would love to meet you, but we aren't hiring right now.'" Still, she persisted, sending out resumes even when clinics weren't hiring. Belton Animal Clinic had her application on file when a position

opened up unexpectedly, and Dr. Smith was hired. But she says landing a job takes more than sending out resumes. "If you have built a relationship and established credibility far in advance of the application process, either through employment in other capacities or during preceptorships, doors open to you that would not open for a mere resume delivered in the mail," she says.

But graduates don't have to do it alone. Both veterinary colleges have programs to help new veterinarians find employment. K-State has an online "job book" and a network connecting their faculty and employers throughout the United States. "Many positions are not advertised," says Dr. Elmore. "Practitioners often simply call us to ask for names of potential new employees." There is also a page on the KSU website where students can post resumes for potential employers. The University of Missouri offers an online job board and listings of preceptorships and externships. There is also an on-site financial aid advisor who provides 12 hours per week of direct student contact, making it easier for students to access services. Dr. Smith says MU did a great job preparing her for both the clinical and business sides of being a veterinarian. "Dr. Cott took it upon himself to prepare us for the business aspect of potential employment through his sacrifice of time, provision of opportunities, development of curriculum and investment of energy into each student," she says. Dr. Smith also served as president of the Veterinary Business Management Association mentored by Dr. Cott. On the clinical side, Dr. Smith says staff prepared students for interviews and gave them opportunities to grow. "They gave me room to take ownership of my cases, to make medical decisions and to communicate with the clients, all while being there to back me up when I needed help."

Now that Dr. Smith has achieved her goal of becoming a veterinarian, she says it's time to set a new goal: being the very best veterinarian she can be. That means juggling "pet side" manner, diagnoses and efficient use of time. She's looking forward to advocating for pet health, building strong relationships with pet owners and strengthening the human-animal bond.

Dr. Smith, already a member of the KCVMA, MVMA and AAHA, sums up her decision to become a veterinarian in this way: "The one that eloquently conveys the wonder of God's creation, readily brings joy to a bad day, sweetly snuggles with the lonely, patiently watches over the elderly, fearlessly locates explosive devices, confidently leads the blind, searches with determination for the lost amidst the rubble, the ones that feed the world and advance medical research, the only one for whom an autistic child will open up – these are my patients. I could not ask for anything more than to help them and those who depend on them. I am a veterinarian...and love it!"

CASE REPORT: THE IMPORTANCE OF DENTAL RADIOGRAPHY

BY: DR. MATT PEUSER

Every animal that comes to our hospitals needs dental care. Providing high quality dental care can often be very rewarding for the pet, the client, the veterinarian, and their practice. Many clients tell us their pets feel much better after having dental problems corrected. Recently a newsletter from BluePearl Specialty and Emergency Medicine for Pets highlighted the importance and financial benefits of dental radiography. A separate newsletter from Companion Animal Dentistry of Kansas City discussed missing teeth and the problems associated with them. This case is a perfect example of why dental radiography is important when teeth are missing.

Gus is a neutered male 13-year-old pug who came in for bad breath. His mouth was a train wreck, as is expected from an older, brachycephalic dog. Upon oral exam under anesthesia, Gus was noted to have several problems. He had a grade 3 malocclusion (underbite) and several rotated premolars, all of which were affected by periodontal pockets up to 9mm deep. He had many mobile teeth and appeared to be missing both of his lower first premolars. He also had a swelling on his left mandible. Full mouth dental radiographs were taken and revealed not only severe periodontal disease, but also a very large dentigerous cyst formed around the unerupted left first mandibular premolar.

The cyst extended from the base of the canine tooth at the mesial aspect distally to the third premolar. Upon opening the cyst a large amount of thick brown fluid was observed. Treatment included extraction of the canine tooth and first three premolars. The fourth premolar was also extracted due to advanced periodontal disease. The lining of the cyst was completely curetted away and the defect was flushed liberally with saline. Alveoplasty (the removal of dead tissue and smoothing out of the rough edges of bone) was performed and a large gingival flap was made before filling the defect with Consil. The flap was closed with 4-0 monofilament dissolvable suture in a simple interrupted pattern. A recheck three weeks later revealed a healed mouth and a happy dog and owner. Plans were made to take intraoral radiographs again in six months.

Dentigerous cysts form when a tooth fails to erupt. Fluid accumulates around the impacted tooth leading to pressure atrophy of the surrounding bone¹. This bone loss can cause damage to adjacent teeth, and over time can lead to pathologic fracture of the mandible. Dentigerous cysts can be prevented by taking radiographs of any missing teeth and removing impacted teeth before they lead to pathology.

In Gus' case, a swelling was apparent upon oral exam, necessitating dental radiographs. However with a smaller cyst, swelling may not be apparent. Without radiographs proper evaluation and treatment would be delayed, leading to more bone destruction and a bigger problem in the future. Radiographs also indicate the extent of periodontal disease. Additional anesthesia time, oral surgery, extractions, Consil, and pain medications were performed or used on this pet. Not only was the use of dental radiography a boon to the patient, but to the practice as well.

All of our patients will benefit from proper oral care. This includes daily at-home care, dental products approved by the Veterinary Oral Health Council (www.vohc.org), and regular professional cleanings. Any time a pet is under anesthesia for professional cleaning missing teeth should be noted and radiographed. Preventing major problems such as a dentigerous cyst is good medicine and will lead to a healthier mouth for the pet in the future.

¹ <http://www.toothvet.ca/PDFfiles/dentigerouscysts.pdf>



Figure 1 Radiograph showing large bony cyst



Figure 2 Intraoral radiograph showing distal extent of cyst

BUILT ON THE SHOULDERS OF VETERINARY GIANTS

VETERINARY ART – PART ONE OF TWO

BY: DR. STEVE JOSEPH, KCVMA HISTORIAN

Two pieces of veterinary art depict the compassion of our profession and the services performed by veterinarians to conserve the life and health of animals and safeguard the health of humans. Both are the work of Danish American artist Christian Peterson (1885 – 1961) and are located at Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

The Gentle Doctor is recognized as the international symbol of veterinary medicine. The sculpture depicts a veterinarian holding a sick or wounded puppy while its dam looks upward with concern. It conveys the essence of the bond between humans and animals.

The other sculpture, *The Veterinary Medicine Mural*, was placed prominently by Charles Stange, Dean of ISU's CVM from 1909 to 1936, so veterinary students would be reminded daily of the college's curriculum goals.

Their partnership started when Petersen arrived at ISU in 1934 following service with artist Grant Wood in eastern Iowa. He met with Dean Stange, and together they formed a plan for the bold works that show the influence of Wood. Petersen's one-semester residency spread to 21 years during which he completed a dozen other art pieces.



Petersen was aided by his wife Charlotte, whose research abilities and enthusiasm helped him develop ideas for the artistic symbolism of research and development milestones in veterinary medicine.

In a 1983 interview, Charlotte Petersen explained her husband's approach to veterinary art. "It's all about life with animals and how important that relationship is. Christian felt a kinship with veterinarians...so he was close with students and faculty. They were intelligent, practical people who worked with their hands and hearts."

In a 2009 *News and Notes* historical article about Dr. F.J. "Mac" McCann's (1914 – 2010) *Memoirs of a County Vet*, he wrote about Petersen's works, as well as former ISU CVM professor and Kansas State University CVM Dean Ralph Dykstra's *Veterinarian's Creed*. "I've kept a framed combination of *The Gentle Doctor* and

Veterinarian's Creed in my office for years," McCann writes. "I believe it served not only as an inspiration, but a reminder of responsibility for this country vet during those three decades in practice." Dr. McCann

graduated from ISU CVM in 1947.

Dr. McCann's *Memoirs* can be read at www.kcvma.com - click on the "About" tab.

THANK YOU NOTES

Dear Kansas City Veterinary Medical Association,

Thank you very much for this Proficiency in Radiology award. I have had a strong interest in radiology since second year of veterinary school. I plan to use my radiology knowledge as a veterinarian in New Jersey as a small animal general practitioner. After receiving my undergraduate degree at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, I was lucky enough to get into KSU CVM. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here. Thank you again for this award.

– Kira Dea, KSU CVM 2012



Dear Kansas City Veterinary Medical Association,

Thank you so much for sponsoring the Compassionate Animal Care award that I received at the awards banquet. Your award will help me move from Manhattan to Chicago for my internship at Kendall Road Equine Hospital.

Part of what I love about veterinary medicine is caring for the animals and even more the joy we can bring to owners. Thank you for recognizing that part of practice.

– Caroline Gillespie, KSU CVM 2012



CLASSIFIED ADS

Send your classified ads to: Wanda Geis, PO Box 12468, Shawnee Mission, KS 66282-2468, fax them to her attention at 913-341-4225 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 8/13/12.

Associate Veterinarian: Progressive full-service small animal practice in eastern Independence is seeking a full or part-time associate veterinarian. All levels of experience are considered. Interest in exotics is welcomed. Please email resume to aschweizer@sbcglobal.net.

Registered Veterinary Technician wanted for busy two-doctor practice in Kansas City, Kansas. We are AAHA certified and practice progressive medicine. The practice maintains an environment of individualized patient care. We perform most surgeries including many advanced orthopedic procedures. We have high speed dental unit with digital dental radiography. We have in-house lab and ultrasound. The position available is full-time and surgical and dental procedures are completed daily. Competitive wages and CE allowance. Wages are commensurate with experience. New graduates will be considered. Please send resume to Dr. Corbin Hodges at Piper Heritage Veterinary Clinic 3140 N. 99th St., Kansas City, KS 66109, Phone 913-299-0010, Fax 913-788-8346.

Wanted: Pets to sit. I am a semi-retired, Missouri-licensed veterinarian who has recently returned to North Kansas City and am currently building an in-home pet sitting and dog walking service in the metro area. Services are provided in the client's home and may include administering veterinary-prescribed medications. While I do intend to maintain an active Missouri license, I do not intend to initiate veterinary care for clients or to build my own veterinary practice. Contact me, Marty Smith, D.V.M., at 970-216-1993 cell or jadandboos@gmail.com for information on fees and services.

Associate Veterinarian; Looking for Ownership opportunity. AAHA accredited small animal hospital in Lee's Summit. Practice in a beautiful 7,000 square foot facility; Excellent clientele, knowledgeable and caring support staff. Two owner- doctors are looking for the right person to join them as third partner. Candidate must be dedicated to highest quality veterinary care with superior client/patient/team communication skills. Candidate must have at least 3 years of practice experience with a strong interest in business, human resources and marketing. Positive work/life balance is our goal! Mail resume to: Julie Dyer, DVM, Lakewood Animal Health Center, 5001 NE Lakewood Way, Lee's Summit MO 64064.

Gladstone Animal Clinic L.L.C. is looking for a full or part-time licensed registered veterinary technician. We are a 6 doctor small animal and exotic practice that places client service and quality medicine first. We need an outgoing technician that enjoys clients and has good technical skills. Please call 816-436-1100 or email jeffreyschlagervm@msn.com. Gladstone Animal Clinic 7027 N. Oak Gladstone Mo 64118.

Veterinary Technician with excellent patient care and client interaction skills needed for AAHA small animal veterinary hospital. Johnson County Animal Clinic is a team-oriented 3-doctor practice dedicated to our clients, patients and staff. Duties include client education, venipuncture, IV catheter placement, anesthesia, surgery prep and monitoring, complete dental care including dental radiology, laboratory and preventive health care knowledge. A strong compassion for canine and felines is a must as well as multi-tasking abilities, excellent customer service skills, strong communication and computer skills and a strong work ethic. Experience with Avimark is helpful, but not necessary. Medical, dental and vision benefits are available, as well as a 401k plan and paid vacation. This is a full-time position, which includes Saturday mornings. Please apply in person to Jill Hueser at Johnson County Animal Clinic, 9425 West 75th Street, Overland Park, Kansas 66204, 913-642-2714.

Busy Veterinary Clinic in Raytown, Missouri looking for a part-time veterinarian to start work ASAP. Surgery skills a plus. Part-time could possibly turn to full-time at some point. Please fax your resume to 816-767-1016 or email kklnorris@yahoo.com.

Small animal clinic in Overland Park/Leawood seeking experienced groomer. Hours and pay negotiable. Benefits considered. Prefer experience with both cats and dogs. Please call 913-345-8147 for additional information or fax resume to 913-345-0801.

Progressive clinic in south Kansas City area seeking part-time/full-time Registered Veterinary Technicians for our small animal/exotics AAHA accredited practice. Great facility, equipment and staff! Looking for a team player with excellent communication skills and compassionate treatment of animals a must. Interest/experience in exotics and alternative modalities such as acupuncture, cold laser and rehabilitation a plus but not required. Email resume to rhonda@beltonanimal.com.

Technical Services Manager, Royal Canin USA: Royal Canin USA, located in St. Charles, MO, seeks a DVM to manage a team of 6 veterinary technicians. The Technical Services manager will manage the Technical Services team to meet service experience goals as measured by key call center metrics. Is responsible for maintaining an advanced level of nutritional proficiency. Will handle escalated nutritional recommendations, respond to veterinary consult requests, and act as the primary point of contact for customers with sensitive cases. Will review all medical complaints that have pet health ramifications and consult with treating doctor. For more information, or to apply: <http://careers.royalcanin.us>.

Westwood Animal Hospital is seeking a KENNEL ATTENDANT to join our team! Some veterinary hospital or animal shelter experience is preferred. Please call or email the clinic for more information, westwoodanimalhospital@gmail.com.



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Gregory Dennis has served and represented the KCVMA and Kansas City area veterinarians for 25 years.
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