



Academy of Rural Veterinarians Newsletter

P.O. Box 1778
Beeville, TX 78104
877-362-1150
www.ruralvets.com

Volume 2, Issue 1 July 2006

Mission:

“To be proactive and provide information to encourage interest in the rewards of veterinary practice in rural America”

ARV Speaks at Veterinary Colleges Across the Nation

The Academy of Rural Veterinarians was busy this school year, visiting 16 Universities across the nation. Students and faculty alike listened as members of ARV spoke candidly about life as a rural practitioner. Although this was not our first presentation at many of the schools, we did make headway and speak at a few for the first time including Tufts, Cornell, and Michigan State. Meetings are typically held in the evenings and are hosted by various student organizations including AABP, AAEP and SAVMA. ARV board members as well as local ARV members and mentors speak on behalf of the organization about their personal experiences as rural practitioners, hopefully dispelling some myths along the way. Topics also include information about each practitioners clinic, clientele, lifestyle, families and leisure activities. In addition to the presentation, Intervet has teamed up with ARV and generously sponsors a meal at each event.

Although we did visit the majority of veterinary colleges in the nation, we fell just short of our goal to visit each and every school this year. Schools that we were unable to present at this year for various reasons include; Louisiana State, University of California-Davis, Oregon State, Mississippi State, Tuskegee, University of Florida, University of Tennessee, University of Illinois-Urbana, University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Pennsylvania.

If you would like to serve as a liaison and assist in scheduling meetings at any of these schools or if you are interested in helping ARV spread the word about rural practice by speaking at school meetings, please contact Magen at magenkasper@yahoo.com

Inside this issue:

ARV Speaks at Veterinary Colleges Across the Nation	1
ARV at State and National Meetings	1
ARV Externship Grant is a Success	2
Selection of Area Directors Begins	3
ARV News	3
Education is a Slow Process	4-5
Thank You to Our Sponsors	5
Bud the Scholarly Cowboy	6
Become a Member	6



ARV at State and National Meetings

Over the course of the past year members of the ARV board of directors attended various state and national meetings speaking on behalf of the organization. Drs. Larry Moczygamba and Steve McDonald attended the Texas Veterinary Medical Association conference this past Febru-

ary in Austin, Texas.

Dr. Brett Andrews spoke at both the Nebraska Veterinary Medical Associations winter meeting in Omaha, NE in February and the National Student American Veterinary Medical Association convention in Minneapolis, MN this past March.



Extern Jeff Chapman takes a look at a BIG steer while at Belle Fourche Veterinary Clinic in South Dakota.

ARV Externship Grant is a Success

Last fall the Academy of Rural Veterinarians announced an externship assistance program available to U.S. veterinary students. “As the next step in our plan to promote rural lifestyle to veterinary students, we are going to award assistance in the amount of \$250/week for a maximum of \$1000/student for any student selected who wishes to spend time in a rural practice externship.”

Earlier this year, The Academy of Rural Veterinarians awarded 34 recipients a total of \$18,070.00 in grant funds. Externships ranged from one to twelve weeks with externship locations across the country. In accordance with the grant proposal, recipients are asked to complete a pre externship survey as well as a post externship survey upon conclusion of their externship, both of which will help measure the impact of their experience on perceptions of rural practice. Externs are also asked to complete an evaluation of their host veterinarian to insure quality control in hopes of identifying practices that do a good job mentoring students. In turn the host veterinarian is asked to complete an evaluation of the student.



Hattie Kugler shown here castrating her first horse. Hattie, who is a student at Washington State University, spent four weeks at Burwell Veterinary Hospital in Nebraska under the mentorship of Dr. Brett Andrews and also visited Dr. Shelley Lenz at Belle Fourche Veterinary Clinic in South Dakota.

Hear what grant recipients are saying:

“It (the externship grant) really helped me take advantage of opportunities in rural practice. Your efforts to visit schools and provide insights into rural practice were beneficial to me. As students it is important for us to see various aspects of veterinary medicine including rural practice which we get little exposure to in our curriculum. Thanks again for all your efforts to help students.”

-Melanie Jones, Mississippi State University

“I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to you (ARV) for awarding me an externship stipend. I will certainly enjoy this off-campus opportunity to gain more experience palpating cows and working with clients. I grew up in a rural environment and have an appreciation for the challenges faced by rural practitioners. Upon graduation, I look forward to entering into a rural practice and supporting the mission of the ARV.”

-Kyle Becker, Purdue University

“I wanted to express my appreciation for the externship grant I received. It greatly supports me being able to explore career options for my future in many geographical locations.”

-Travis Kuhlka, The University of Wisconsin-Madison

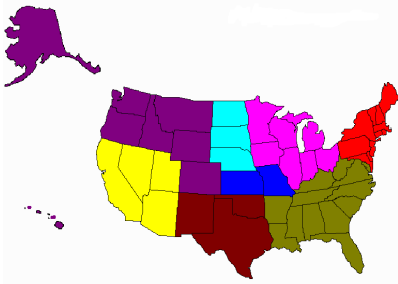
With the success of this years externship awards looming over our heads, The Academy of Rural Veterinarians is optimistic that next year we will double both the number of grants awarded and the total funds awarded. Applications for next year will begin to be accepted November 1, 2006 and are due by April 1, 2007 for externship dates between April 1, 2007 and April 1, 2008.

The qualifications for consideration are fairly straight forward. The student must be a student member of the Academy of Rural Veterinarians, but may sign up at the time of submitting the application. The program is open to anyone enrolled in the professional curriculum of any U.S. veterinary school, and again, we are most interested in those students that have not yet committed to a particular practice style, and would potentially be interested in rural practice. Practitioners visited must also be members or mentors with the Academy of Rural Veterinarians.



Mehgan Davis-Seabolt, a 2006 graduate from University of Georgia externs with Steve McDonald in Henrietta, Texas.

Selection of Area Directors Begins



The Academy of Rural Veterinarians has organized the nation into areas or districts, each with an Area Director to serve as an advocate to rural practice in their home region. The individuals who assume this responsibility are responsible for recruiting like-minded veterinarians, to serve as mentors and contact mentors in their respective areas on an annual basis. Directors are also charged with the task of identifying pro-active faculty members at the regional or near-by veterinary colleges for the purpose of arranging school meetings. Individuals are asked to network with other veterinarians who might be involved with similar activities, and possibly set up weekend and summer teaching opportunities. Those selected as Area Directors will also act as liaison to state and local VMAs, attend state and local VMA meetings and speak on behalf of ARV. Since this is an unpaid position we rely heavily on those individuals that have committed both the time and energy necessary to fulfill these duties. To date we have identified three individuals to take on this momentous task. Dr. Dave Horn from Greenwich, New York will serve as the Northeast Area Director. The Midwest area director is Dr. Rexanne Struve from Manning, Iowa and the Northern Plains Area Director is Dr. Shelley Lenz from Belle Fourche, South Dakota. Each of these individuals has already played an integral role in spreading the message of ARV. We look forward to working with these individuals during their two year term and hope to appoint directors to those areas not yet assigned.

ARV Districts:

Southeast: West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Florida

Northwest: Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Hawaii, Alaska

Southwest: California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona

South Central: New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma

Central: Kansas, Missouri

Northern Plains: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska

Midwest: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio

Northeast: Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, D.C., Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire



ARV News

- During the Spring meeting in Irving, Texas this past April, the board voted to expand membership categories. Individual membership dues will remain \$100 while a practice membership will be \$150 regardless of the number of associates joining. Associate memberships will also be offered to those who wish to join ARV but don't meet general membership requirements.
 - Due statements will be sent out at the end of August. You will have the option of renewing your individual membership or opting for a practice membership.
 - The Academy of Rural Veterinarians has successfully recruited 30 faculty liaisons from 24 universities to help facilitate ARV objectives at each university. Liaisons are asked to assist in setting up school meetings, mentor-student relationships, and as aid in selecting students from each university to whom we will award grants for rural veterinary externships. We are still in need of faculty liaisons at University of Pennsylvania, University of Wisconsin, Oregon State and Western University.
 - Externship applications, surveys and evaluations can be found online at: www.ruralvets.com/externships/default.asp
 - There is a "Jobs" link on the website that is free for ARV members to announce positions that are available. Members must first sign up online in order to input information.
- If you have news related to ARV you wish to include in an upcoming newsletter please contact Magen at magenkasper@yahoo.com

Education is a Slow Process

Paul E. Click, D.V.M.

After studying a recent survey of veterinary student knowledge and attitudes concerning rural/mixed/food animal practice, I first went and consumed a big dose of Maalox, then discussed the material with my wife, then mentioned to the ARV group that an old school superintendent here told me long ago that education was a SLOW process. I indicated that I felt we were just getting started in the changing attitudes business, were going about it in an effective way and that we just needed to keep the faith. One of the group evidently correctly surmised that I had a lot on my mind concerning the issue and asked me to elaborate, so here it is.

I kind of feel like the man who was walking with his son along a beach littered with starfish. He would stoop down, pick up a stranded starfish and pitch it into the sea. The son commented that he didn't see how his dad thought he could make any difference when there were so many beached starfish--after which the dad reached down, picked up another, threw it into the sea and said, "I made a difference to THAT ONE!"

I saw about 50 clients yesterday. Some of them came in not caring to learn anything, and likely didn't--but, I try to notice those that are hungry to learn something that will help them and their animals and spend the time to meet their needs. I believe that as a profession, we have forgotten that doctors were first teachers that tried to PREVENT wrecks in lives through education and then TREATED when those efforts FAILED. We have four children, five grandchildren, and numerous animals in various stages of training or neglect. Teaching/training is a patient, persistent, consistent, authoritative repetition of ideas/facts/concepts to a RECEPTIVE student. It is a slow process in most cases, even with the precocious!

My best clients have always been the most informed, my favorite colleagues the most progressive (more on that later), and my most beloved patients have been those that are SOCIALIZED! I believe that practices advertised in JAVMA as "progressive" probably just have all the bells and whistles to play with and mesmerize clients. My notion of "progressive" is a practice where the doctor/doctors spend considerable thought each day about how best to use their training, experience, and life-long, open-minded learning to improve the lives of their clients and thus their critters, regardless of species.

Now, after that philosophical harangue which only serves to help you know me a little better, I'll try to address change in several areas.

I have met the enemy---I see him every morning in the mirror when I shave! I was literally raised in a dairy barn so have been blessed/vexed by a farmer mentality. I grew up in an era when the accepted notion was that if you worked hard enough/long enough, you would succeed---never mind working smart! The price of anything should somehow be related to what it cost to produce it (and don't count the TIME it takes to produce it!). I delivered my first calf when I was 10 years old--I don't ever remember not being around all kinds of animals--wild and domestic. I graduated from veterinary school with many good technical skills/able to do many things instinctively, except THINK like a veterinarian should and value my services like my clients did. Changing those things has been a 30 year PROCESS that continues. The state association here has really pushed NCVEI and after attending the first meeting, I came home and raised all my fees 20%---- NO ONE complained, just like my wife said they wouldn't! Who says you can't teach an old dog? I've always tried to give good service (key word here is GIVE), but never understood the VALUE of it. Nobody's fault but my own! I am sure that the way I have practiced in the past has turned off some prospective veterinarians. I know it has made colleagues wonder what my problem was and want to cuss me and it never caused a single client to cherish/bond with me, because what does that is how I transfer knowledge and how I care for them and their animals.

I had a colleague in Tennessee that said he could walk down a row of cows and look them in the eye and diagnose as many 40-day pregnancies correctly as I could by rectal palpation---ignorance will raise its ugly head! Patient demonstration over time convinced him of his faulty notions, and helped him see that it was a skill that could be acquired. Wonderful colleagues have taught me how to: diagnose pregnancies consistently at 27-28 days, determine problems with a ration by smelling my arm while palpating, balance a ration on the hood of the truck without a computer, ferret out stray

Education is a Slow Process Continued...

voltage problems, and textbooks full of other things which we didn't cover in school except in PRINCIPLE. These things I have gladly shared with other colleagues. All of us veterinarians are people. Some of us change the way we think and how we do things over a lifetime at the urging of many different motivations: some for money, some for personal satisfaction, some at the patient urging of a colleague, friend or spouse. Most of the way I practice I've borrowed from gracious colleagues who serve their clients well, still enjoy practice after 30 years or so, and have figured out many ways to make it financially rewarding.

Clients are the easiest to change, especially farmers, ranchers, and horse people. I had one dairy client in Tennessee that sold my dairy program to more clients than I did. You just have to identify the right PROGRESSIVE THINKER in an area and patiently show them the things that would be fun, profitable, and POSSIBLE on their operation---they will do the rest!

Kids--I think we have to start early--I speak (show and tell) to preschools and kindergartens. Every time I have a client's kid present, I try to encourage them by answering their questions candidly, helping them to see I'm having fun, and showing them I care about them and their animals. I try to encourage them in school, especially to learn to read--FAST. I believe we've got to get their hands into stuff--the girls from Vo-Tech this past spring did pretty well with things I could get their hands into, but they often got queasy when just watching--I believe that is a normal reaction! I try to help them cherish/revel in being from a small town. I try to help them understand that the only thing wrong with living in Vernon, Alabama is never having the vision or guts to consider anything else and being trapped here by their sorriness. If they look, then make a conscious/rational decision to live here, they will be a blessing to the area (veterinarian or whatever) and the people of the community will cherish and bless them. I believe we are doing the right thing getting these kids out here in our practices and homes for externships, etc.--the sooner the better. Then we (students and practitioners) need to show/tell our colleagues about the richness of the experience. I believe if we're patient and persistent, the program will explode!

“We have had two young ladies from this small county graduate from veterinary college since we began practice here 18 years ago..”

I believe it's important to help kids see that THEY CAN be veterinarians--tell them how I got to be one. Help them to understand that it takes a while to become one---but only one day at a time. Help them to understand that the greatest expense in becoming a veterinarian is lifestyle rather than books and tuition! Help them to see life as it really is, not some fairy tale off ANIMAL PLANET!

We have had two young ladies from this small county graduate from veterinary college since we began practice here 18 years ago, both of them fairly recently. I won't take credit for either one of them, but MAYBE they were listening way back there sometime when I told them to learn to read FAST!!!

Thank You to Our Sponsors

The Academy of Rural Veterinarians has had generous industry supporters our first few years of existence. We would like to thank our sponsors for assisting us in our mission. It is through their continued support that it is possible for us to travel to veterinary colleges as well as state and national meetings across the country speaking about rural practice and the opportunities that lie therein.

Our thanks go out to the Academy of Veterinary Consultants, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Intervet, Merial, Nebraska Cattlemen, Newport Laboratories, Pfizer and Schering-Plough Animal Health. Again thank you for your support.



Bud, the Scholarly Cowboy

Steve McDonald, D.V.M.

I never asked anyone how far Bud got in school, but it was a known fact he read a lot. I first learned this when I was temporarily stranded at his house after pregnancy checking some of his boss's cattle. My truck had chosen that particular day as a good one to die, and I was waiting for a tow-truck to come drag its treacherous carcass to town.

"You might as well come in and look at my arrer-head collection", he invited. The afternoon was shot, and it was about a 30 minute haul to town, assuming Gene was free at his garage to fire up the wrecker and come rescue me. I agreed and was soon treated to a room full of wooden boxes filled with much more than "arrer-heads".

Just about everyone who spends time out-doors finds arrowheads, or the flakes of flint left from their manufacture, myself included. I associated the ones I had found with running battles between the Comanche and the U. S. Cavalry or Texas Rangers. Bud had a huge assortment of many different points in many different styles from long lance points or maybe knives to very small what must have been toy arrows for children. I hefted a particularly well-made arrowhead and made some comment about skewering pony-solders with it. "Naw, that ones about 500 years old, by the time white men got here the Indians were trading for sheet arrer-heads from the Mexicans.", he said. (He opened a box of points made of iron). He went on to show me different points and told something of their use and how old they were. His oldest point, he said, was almost 2000 years old. He also had Spanish trade beads, musket balls, minie balls, old rusty knives, revolvers, spurs, muzzle loading rifle barrels, buffalo skulls, coins, and who knows what. He had found them all locally while prowling the creek bottoms and remote pastures either hunting cows or trapping coyotes. I commented on his knowledge of ancient local history, which prompted his display of his library which included books on archaeology, Native American History, geology, you name it. He had read them all. It was a very entertaining and enlightening couple of hours. A few days later I commented to someone about Bud's collection, and got a snort and a cussword. "You can't count on that sun-of-a-pup to help gather cattle, cuz he's as likely to be on his hands and knees, scratching up something with his pocket-knife that he spotted from atop his horse."

Eddie, one of the local lawyers, told me of the time Bud came to him for help in a legal matter. He didn't say why, but Bud wanted to know all the Texas statutes concerning home burial. Eddie was curious, but agreed to help, either by lending him books or telling him where and how to get his answers (Obviously, Eddie is not a big-city lawyer). As it turns out, you may be legally buried by anyone in Texas, without embalming, as long as it is in a hole of specified depth, in a specified container, which may be wood, within 24 hours of your departure from this mortal coil. Bud's grandmother was near death in the local nursing home, and he didn't see why the family had to pay for the funeral. They had all said their good-byes. He didn't want to break the law. Besides, one of the cousins owned a back-hoe.

Eddie told the local mortician, who was aghast at the mental image of the cowboy backing his pickup to the nursing home front door, walking down the hall, spurs jingling, wrapping the late lamented Grandma in a sheet, slinging her over his shoulder and plopping her into the bed of his pickup, and driving off. When the time came, he buried her for free.

Interested in becoming a member?

Please fill out the information below and submit it along with a check for \$100 for an individual membership or \$150 for a practice membership to the address below. It is through the continual support of our members and industry sponsors that makes it possible for us to carry our message to the nations veterinary colleges.

Name (s) _____

Practice Name _____

Street _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone (Work) _____

Phone (Home) _____

Email _____