



ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS

2012 IN REVIEW

A summary of your association's achievement and objectives

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



**Dr. Wayne Tomlinson (l)
& Dr. Marc Philippot (r)**

Dear Colleagues,

Wayne and I would like to take this time to review the MVMA's activities during the past year with you. It all started with the new Ear Cropping by-law that was approved by membership at the February 2012 AGM. This created a media blitz for the MVMA – with local, national and international interest. Now there are grumblings from a group who feels that these types of by-laws infringe on their rights. Some MVMA members have received a letter threatening a class action suit from this group; however the MVMA itself has not been contacted. This letter suggests that it will name many parties from across Canada. The validity of this claim is tenuous at best. Council will continue to keep membership informed on this matter, but is taking no action at this time.

This past spring, the MVMA won an injunction against a chiropractor who was practicing veterinary medicine in Manitoba. This brought forward an increase in communication to the MVMA from other groups or individuals providing alternative therapies. The MVMA has created the Complementary and Alternative Therapies Committee, an ad hoc committee, whose objective is to look at the future of and regulation of complementary and alternative therapies in veterinary practice.

In April, the MVMA hosted a luncheon with producer associations. This meeting has led to further meetings with the individual associations as well as invitations by these groups to get our perspective on veterinary pharmaceuticals. It is very exciting to see these relationships grow!

In July, the MVMA moved to its new location at 1590 Inkster Boulevard. (Stop in and visit the staff if you are in the neighbourhood!) It was an interesting process; from site visits and lease negotiation to member communication as well as renovation and fixtures decisions – it was a new experience for some council and staff.

The MVMA has also entered an agreement with MAHTA to host a joint conference - now named the Central Canadian Veterinary Conference – in February. Preparations for the conference began this past summer. Hosting such a large event will keep the office busy with the larger venue size, more speakers and larger trade show, but the outcome will be worth it! This is a very exciting event and a great way to bring together the two associations.

Michelle and Simone joined the office just in the last few years and have adjusted to their roles, both keeping busy. Michelle has been involved with other VMA registrars, discussing various topics and taking some related CE opportunities. Simone was able to travel to CanWest Conference to shadow the AbVMA's staff and see how their conference is run. Judy, MAHTA's employee at the office, has for a number of years worked for the MVMA as a part-time bookkeeper. She is retiring from MAHTA, but will stay on to assist the MVMA. Andrea has also been quite involved with many different projects at the office. This year we changed Andrea's job title from General Manager and Director of Communications & Advocacy to Executive Director. This title is a better reflection of her responsibilities. And last, but surely not least, Araina continues to dedicate herself to the MVMA's membership and vision. Araina is now celebrating 30 years of employment with the MVMA. Join me at the AGM for a special recognition of Araina's commitment to the association.

During the year, Wayne travelled to B.C. to represent the MVMA at the Society of B.C.'s Veterinarians' AGM. I travelled to Alberta, Saskatchewan and the CVMA for various meetings. Both of us have found these meetings quite informative. It is a great opportunity to see how other associations manage and deal with issues similar to those that the MVMA faces. The Western Assembly of Veterinary Associations will be meeting in Winnipeg on Thursday, January 31, 2013, with the MVMA hosting. This group is made up of B.C. (Society and College), Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba VMAs. Again, it is a time for the western provinces to share ideas and problems faced by all four provinces.

In November, MVMA representatives met on several occasions with the Manitoba Office of the Fairness Commission. This department of the Manitoba government is requiring self-regulated professions to be more transparent and create a friendly, usable system that will help internationally educated applicants in completing the necessary processes and exams to become licensed in Canada. The government requires a collection, confidentially, of all internationally educated applicants' information each year for their database.

Also in November, the MVMA met with the new Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Ron Kostyshyn. The focus of the meeting was to discuss veterinary incorporation and pharmaceuticals. The minister was very happy to meet with us and was also quite honest during the

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meeting. He let us know that veterinary incorporation should occur this spring and the government will not take a position on veterinary pharmaceuticals. This has prompted the pharmaceutical committee to take a different direction on how to address the matter. They will use media, position statements, continuing education and producer communication to keep moving this issue along.

This past year, Drs. Marg Seward and Jackie Enns joined council. Although some time was spent "learning the ropes", they have jumped in and brought forward some new ideas. Council would like to announce that Dr. Marg Seward will become President-elect. Leaving us after the AGM are Drs. Chris Kranendonk and Leeanne Bargen. Chris served as your 2011 President and Leeanne has also been involved with the Public Image Committee and the Council Advisory Committee. Chris and Leeanne have served council well; they have been a great asset and surely will be missed. But have no fear, Dr. Michael Sheridan of Swine Health Professionals and Dr. Roxane Neufeld of Dauphin Veterinary Clinic will be joining us on council. Both come with years of clinical experience and are looking forward to helping the association.

This year Council decided to continue improving membership services and relationships, as well as public relations and media. This has been through improving communications with members through electronic forums, Facebook (please "Like" us!), Twitter and our website. We have been looking at mental health aid for members that feel overwhelmed or stressed. We have aided in the creation of the SafePet Program, prepared various press releases (such as pet obesity, heartworm, livestock transport, cow hoof health, etc.), and continued support of the "Season is FUR Everyone" with the Christmas Cheer Board.

Council has also decided to recognize the hard work and dedication of members to the MVMA, by making sure that every year a deserving member is awarded the Certificate of Merit. This year, Council selected Dr. Fred Lindenschmidt of Selkirk Animal Hospital as its recipient, recognizing all his years of service and dedication that he has provided to the MVMA. Congratulations Fred!

Wayne and I continue to ask you to share in writing your ideas and opinions with council. We value your thoughts; without them, council cannot help direct or shape the MVMA. Please contact us with your comments.

Dr. Marc Philippot
MVMA President 2012

Dr. Wayne Tomlinson
MVMA President 2013

A WHO'S WHO ON YOUR GOVERNING COUNCIL

Following the February 1, 2013 Annual General Meeting, Dr. Marc Philippot's term as president of the MVMA governing council will end. Taking his place as the 2013 MVMA President will be Dr. Wayne Tomlinson. Drs. Roxane Neufeld and Michael Sheridan will be filling the positions of outgoing council members Drs. Leeanne Bargaen and Chris Kranendonk.

MVMA COUNCIL 2013



DR. WAYNE TOMLINSON, PRESIDENT 2013 (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2015)

Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives, Winnipeg

As incoming president, I have been asked to submit a short bio and send a personal message to the members. The bio is easy; I graduated from WCVM in 1985. My wife (Cheryl a 1983 grad) and I, upon my graduation, purchased the mixed practice in Glenboro. We ran the practice for 22 years. In 2007, I joined the Manitoba government as their Extension Veterinarian.

When I joined council, Dr. Brad Chappell was past president, Dr. Chris Kranendonk was president and Dr. Marc Philippot the incoming president. These three gentlemen have done yeoman's service for our organization. But they were not alone, each included all members of council and staff during the decision making process. This team approach has suited the MVMA well and an approach I hope to

continue as your president. I believe we have a strong organization because of the talents of our staff and council.

Serving the association the past two years has been an enjoyable learning experience and I encourage everyone to volunteer. In closing, I would like to thank Chris and departing councillor Dr. Leeanne Bargaen for their hard work and dedication.



DR. MARC PHILIPPOT
PRESIDENT 2012
(COUNCIL TERM ENDS
FEBRUARY 2014)

St. Claude Veterinary
Clinic, St. Claude

For those of you who do not know who I am or what I do: I graduated from WCVM in 2001 and have been an active member

of the MVMA since then. For my first three years as a veterinarian, I worked at Central Veterinary Services. I took over the St. Claude Veterinary Clinic from Dr. Villy Vaerum in 2004 and have continued practicing mixed animal medicine and surgery. My wife Kristie and I were married in 2006 and currently have a two year old son. I began volunteering with the MVMA when the CVMA conference came to Winnipeg, and it did not stop there. I joined the ad hoc pharmaceutical committee in 2008 and was mysteriously nominated to council in 2010. I was sent to the Emerging Leaders Seminar at the CVMA Conference in Calgary that summer. From there, I became your President in 2012. I look forward to finishing my term on the MVMA council and encourage those of you who like to help to consider volunteering in our proud little association.



DR. MARG SEWARD
PRESIDENT ELECT 2014
(COUNCIL TERM ENDS
FEBRUARY 2016)

Canadian Food
Inspection Agency,
Steinbach

This past year on council has been an extremely rewarding experience for me. I had been pushing off putting my name

in for council for a long time, always thinking that I would do it later when I had more time. However, I discovered that even after more than 30 years in practice, you never have more time. Sometimes, you just have to set your mind to it and make more time.

I have been very fortunate to work with an excellent crew of both fellow veterinarian council members and our MVMA support staff. Despite our various backgrounds, I feel that the membership has been well served since we are all able to bring different views when addressing issues and yet we all have the same basic values at heart when it comes to decisions regarding our profession.

I am really looking forward to 2013, now having gotten my feet wet, and hopefully I will be able to continue on my learning curve as I prepare to assume the role as President-Elect.

GOVERNING COUNCIL (CONTINUED)



DR. JACQUELINE ENNS, COUNCILLOR
(COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2015)

Winkler Veterinary Clinic, Winkler

I graduated from OVC in 1995, and have since worked from the Morden Veterinary clinic until 2005, and then established the Winkler Veterinary Clinic

as part of the Morden Group. Professionally, I have felt extremely lucky to be part of a large practice group, working together with several veterinarians with such varied expertise.

My husband and I keep busy on our beef and grain farm south of Winkler with our 3 children who keep our evenings busy with sports and 4H.

My first year on MVMA Council has been a learning year. I have been humbled by my exposure to the volunteer work that is happening amongst our members within our profession. I am excited to work within this group in 2013!



DR. BHUPINDER (TONY) SINGH, COUNCILLOR
(COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2014)

Henderson Animal Hospital, Winnipeg

Dr. Singh joined the MVMA Council in February 2011. His business knowledge has enhanced council discussions about governance and associa-

tion management.

After graduating from veterinary college in India, Dr. Singh worked in India and the U.S. before coming to Canada in 1994. His varied education and work experience has enabled him to be a mentor for internationally trained veterinarians; often helping them transition to working and living in Manitoba. These experiences are shared with the MVMA Council and help the MVMA ensure it is supporting all members of our diverse community.

This will be Dr. Singh's last year on the MVMA Council. The council looks forward working with him in 2013!

INCOMING COUNCILLORS



DR. ROXANE NEUFELD, COUNCILLOR
COUNCILLOR (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2016)

Dauphin Veterinary Clinic, Dauphin

I am a 1998 graduate of WCVM and worked at two different clinics before I ended up at the Dauphin Veterinary Clinic in 2001. Along with my business partner, we have been operating the Dauphin Vet Clinic since 2002 and took over the Ste. Rose Vet Clinic in 2009. Both clinics are mixed animal practices but I primarily work as a small animal veterinarian (except during calving season!). I have enjoyed growing our small animal dentistry, and reaching out and educating our clients through the use of social media and radio. Along with my husband and two beautiful daughters, we enjoy camping and fishing in the Parkland region and have recently started to enjoy snow-shoeing and kayaking. I am looking forward to the opportunity to represent you on the MVMA council and doing my part for our association.

DR. MICHAEL SHERIDAN, COUNCILLOR

COUNCILLOR (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2016)

Swine Health Professionals, Steinbach

I graduated from Ontario Veterinary College in 1977. Moving to Manitoba after graduation, I worked in general practice in both the Selkirk and Steinbach areas. In 1988, I became a founding partner of Swine Health Professionals (originally named Sheridan & Heuser Swine Health Services). My work includes herd health management, regulatory, second opinions with practitioners, as well as consulting on especially difficult cases.

I have volunteered with the Western Canadian Association Swine Veterinarians as well as serving on the Animal Welfare Committee of Manitoba Pork Council. I served as the MVMA's CVMA representative for two terms (2004-2010) as well as on various MVMA ad hoc committees and projects. I am also a member of the Canadian Veterinary Reserve.

I hope that my diverse experiences will serve the MVMA membership well!

FROM OUR OUTGOING COUNCILLORS . . .

Your MVMA colleagues thank you for the time you have invested in advancing your profession during your respective terms.



**DR. CHRISTIAAN (CHRIS)
KRANENDONK
– PAST PRESIDENT**

(COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2013)

Canadian Food Inspection
Agency, Winnipeg

I have had the honour and privilege to serve on the MVMA Council since 2009. During these past four years, I have had the opportunity to learn and appreciate the complexity and diversity that exists within the profession throughout

this province and beyond.

Both as a council member, and especially as president, one develops a deep appreciation of the issues and challenges facing the veterinary profession. The experience of meeting and interacting with fellow council members, colleagues across the province, association members across the country, as well as many individuals associated with the various aspects of our profession was undeniably a most memorable experience.

In addition, I would like to express a sincere and heartfelt thanks to the tireless efforts of the MVMA staff and the many volunteers that contribute so much to the well-being of this organization. It is the concerted efforts of all these individuals that keeps our association moving forward. I would once again encourage members to volunteer for council, other MVMA initiatives, committees, or other activities involving the MVMA. Volunteering for any of the association's activities represents a unique opportunity, not only to influence the direction of our profession and our association, but in many ways to shape its future.

As I leave Council, I have the utmost confidence that the association and the profession will be well served now and in the future. To the new Council, I would like to wish them all the best of luck and we all look forward to what the future might bring.



**DR. LEEANNE BARGEN
– COUNCILLOR**

(COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2013)

Pet Vet, Steinbach

This will be my last council 'bio', as my last meeting was in January. My time on council has gone quickly. It has provided me with a wealth of MVMA knowledge and respect for the inner workings of our association. In the three years I have served, great strides have been made on many fronts, including incorporation, PIPS review, governance, pharma regulation, and office relocation. I am proud to have been part of such an effective and strong peer group. And for anyone contemplating council, I have to say that it's not all seriousness and making motions; the meetings provide a great feeling of camaraderie and enjoyment.

NEWLY REGISTERED WITH THE MVMA IN 2012

Welcome to our new members!

*Dr. Beever, Rhian
Dr. Burch, Stacey
Dr. Banman, Jenesa Lee
Dr. Chartrand, Genevieve
Dr. Choptain, Karen
Dr. Embury-Hyatt,
Carissa Kelly
Dr. Gagawchuk, Nicci
Dr. Gowan, Troy
Dr. Gunj, Dragan
Dr. Gunson, Mangita
Dr. Hoffmann, Patrick*

*Dr. Hojjati, Peiman
Dr. Jones, Corey
Dr. Kahlon, Supreet Singh
Dr. Macbeth, Bryan
Dr. MacDonald-Sofo,
Kristin
Dr. MacFarlane, Marcel
Dr. Macsyclic, Tara
Dr. McGuirk, Ashlee Grace
Dr. Ostendorf, Elizabeth
Dr. Penner, Kevin
Dr. Perera, Chamath*

*Dr. Rosing, Justin Pete
Dr. Sanford, Benjamin
Dr. Sharma, Surinder Kumar
Dr. Snell, David
Dr. Stuart-Altman,
Samyra
Dr. Swelka, Kurtis John
Dr. Van Dynese, Stephanie
Dr. Watson, Jared
Dr. Whelen, Julie
Dr. Wilkinson, Deanne*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

SUBMITTED BY ANDREA LEAR



Once again, it is time to reflect on the past year's activities and share them with membership. My challenge in doing this is that much of what I would report on has been reviewed in other reports. Also, I tend to be forward focused – moving on from “what we have done” to “what we need to do” rather quickly. I have an advantage over many of the other “report writers” in that I get to

review the reports before I write my own. So, rather than rehashing information that can be found in other reports, I think I'll review what we have done with the approach of “What next?”.

Ear Cropping By-law – The passing of this by-law certainly created quite the buzz. The MVMA received more media attention than other associations when they passed similar by-laws. I believe cosmetic surgery by-laws reflect much of what membership and the general public feel about these surgeries; questioning their necessity. Unfortunately, there is a group threatening to challenge these by-laws. For now, it's prudent to take a wait and see approach, responding when, and if, this group gets organized and takes proper legal action.

Complementary & Alternative Therapies – After successfully winning an injunction against a chiropractor who was practicing veterinary medicine, the MVMA received many more calls about non-veterinarians providing veterinary services. It has become clear that many non-veterinarians are providing services. In fact, the MVMA was contacted by one group who feels that the “power” of the MVMA to restrict their ability to provide therapy is unfair and has suggested they would be willing to contact the Government of Manitoba to challenge the definition of veterinary medicine as outlined in the *Veterinary Medical Act*. The difficulty for the MVMA is protecting the definition of veterinary medicine as well as prosecuting non-veterinarians practicing veterinary medicine comes down to resources; the MVMA does not have the staff or financial resources to fight all the battles. An ad hoc committee has started to look at this issue. They will be asking members for feedback, so please share your opinion when requested.

Government Relations – The MVMA has often been quiet when it comes to working with the government. We respond when asked for our opinions and politely make requests when necessary. We have been discussing veterinary pharmaceuticals with the government for over six years and veterinary incorporation for over three. It seems the government has taken little action. The government work required to make the changes to the *Veterinary Medical Act* to allow for incorporation has been done for almost two years, but it has not been presented to the floor of the legislature. There has been minimal government work on veterinary pharmaceutical regulations. At our meeting with the Minister of Agriculture in November, it was suggested that incorporation may go before the legislature in the spring session, but his response regarding veteri-

nary pharmaceuticals was honest whilst disappointing. In a nutshell, the Minister told us that the Manitoba government is not interested in regulating veterinary pharmaceuticals- not even in education of lay outlets who sell veterinary pharmaceuticals. I wonder if it is time to take a different approach when working with the government. Maybe we shouldn't be so polite?

Building Relationships – So, if government is not supportive of the MVMA, perhaps it's time to start building relationships with others of influence. One group that comes to mind is producer associations. A luncheon last year with various associations was followed by subsequent meetings throughout the year.....a great start! The MVMA is hoping to find members to volunteer as “liaisons” to each producer association. This close connection will help build our relationship. As our relationships grow, we can introduce and build support for MVMA initiatives. Another group where we need to develop support is amongst animal welfare groups; particularly in Winnipeg. The cat overpopulation issue is generating a lot of concern in Winnipeg and it is important that the MVMA be seen as a leader in the discussions.

Relocation – As much as relocation of the MVMA office does not have a “what do we need to do” attached to it, I felt it was important to review. I must admit, the negotiation and planning for the relocation took more resources (council and staff time as well as financial) than anticipated. In the end, it can be looked upon as a success. The MVMA has newly renovated space that meets its needs and is financially beneficial. The MVMA Council and staff are very proud of the office and we encourage you to stop by!

Looking ahead to 2013 activities, I find there is one question that is often on my mind is “Is the MVMA doing enough for member service and advocacy”? Overall, the MVMA manages the regulatory responsibilities appropriately. There are always ways to improve the MVMA regulatory function, but for the most part, I think membership and the public are satisfied. But, what else do we need to do? What do members want us to do? I would really like to hear your feedback. I am reminded of a quote from a course I once took, “it is easier to regulate than advocate”. What are your thoughts?

In closing, a huge thank you to everyone involved with the MVMA. The MVMA Council works diligently to ensure decisions are always in the best interest of the association. A particular thank you to Marc and Wayne, their insight, feedback and coaching are much appreciated. Thank you to the volunteers in the various volunteer positions. They do tons of work on behalf of the MVMA and help MVMA staff better understand the veterinarian's perspective. Thank you to members who let me pick their brain on various topics. Often, a “quick chat” with me turns into a discussion of current events affecting the veterinary industry. And, of course, a thank you to MVMA staff. These great people are very committed to their roles and want to ensure they are doing right by the members. Congratulations to Araina on the celebration of her 30th year with the MVMA.

I hope to see you at CenCan!

Cheers! Andrea

REPORT FROM YOUR REGISTRAR

SUBMITTED BY **MICHELLE MARTIN-STRONG**



This past year has been an amazingly busy year from a work perspective with many challenges leading to many rewarding situations. Some of the big highlights: the office moving to Inkster, the combined MVMA and MAHTA winter conference for February 2013, constant reviewing and creation of in house guidelines to help us maintain transparency and consistency. It is not surprising that the MVMA staff were hard at work on these items. Each year I learn more about the ins and outs of veterinary medicine from the varied interactions members have with clients, and the challenges running a clinic, to the different and similar issues faced by rural and urban clinics. I have had many great opportunities to interact with many members primarily through calls seeking clarification.

This year I had the opportunity to participate in a conference held by the Ontario College of Teachers focusing on “Inspiring Public Confidence” – geared toward self regulatory bodies. It was an excellent conference giving me many ideas. The regulatory side of the conference focused on two very important concepts, “transparency” and “efficiency”. Self-regulation is a privilege given by the provincial government, and as the College of Teachers in British Columbia found out, a privilege that can be taken away. I believe

the MVMA’s pursuit to inspire public confidence is a noble and wise goal, and I will work hard to see that the concepts of transparency and efficiency become the cornerstones of the MVMA’s regulatory arm.

It appears that we experienced growth in membership last year, with a jump from 345 members in 2011 to 387 General Members in 2012. In addition we also have 6 Associate Members, 4 Public Members, 42 Life Members and 13 Honorary Members. In 2012 a total of 30 new licenses were issued with 2 of these being renewals.

My work continues with establishing protocols for PIPS inspections and PRCC, codifying already what is practiced and always working under the rubric of transparency and consistency which in turn supports the excellent service both committees provide. The establishment of protocols has been extended to in-house practices as well, again to make sure that all work in the office is consistent and efficient. I continue to work in re-drafting of PIPS By-laws and I give thanks to the members on the PIPS task force who have done an excellent job reviewing drafted sections of PIPS before they go through council and then to membership for approval. We have three sections ready for approval at the AGM as well as a new By-Law on Mobile Clinics. Throughout the process, we are all cognizant to the changes in the standards for the profession as well as the societal needs, ensuring that the PIPS by-laws reflect these important considerations. This results in PIPS being a living document and always evolving.

In the past year, I worked rather extensively with the Office of the Fairness Commission (OMFC), a department of the Provincial Government. They are mandated to ensure that all self-regulatory bodies are in compliance with their act, which focuses heavily on registration and particularly with respect to Internationally Educated Applicants (IEA). Not only do I collect data which I must now submit (no personal identifiers are used) annually to them on all our new IEA, but this year the OMFC also reviewed our registration process. They have made some suggestions to what information we make available to potential registrants and the MVMA in turn has established an action plan setting out changes we will make in the next year or so in creating an even more transparent presentation of our registration process, again with an emphasis on IEA. I thank Dr. Marc Philpott, current MVMA President and Dr. Wayne Tomlinson, MVMA Vice-President, both who helped with this review during the November and December workshops and meetings.

In November, a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture took place with Drs. Philpott, Tomlinson, Atkins, Chappell, Ms. Lear and I attending. It would appear that good news may be on its way, although I am hesitant to say too much least I jinx this, but it appears that the government may pass the additional sections to our Act allowing for Veterinary Incorporation. Of course we will have to wait and see.

I sincerely thank all the volunteers on PRC, the PIPS Inspectors, the MVMA Council, and the MVMA staff, for all they contribute in helping me to get the job done. We, the MVMA, can only be as strong as all our varied and many parts. May 2013 be a wonderful and prosperous year in business and goodwill.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE SUMMARIES

CANADIAN ANIMAL BLOOD BANK

SUBMITTED BY **DR. KEN MOULD**, CABB PRESIDENT

The Canadian Animal Blood Bank enjoyed another year of supplying veterinarians across Canada with blood products and related supplies to assist them in their patient care. The year-end financial statement (May 31st 2012) showed a profitable year enabling the blood bank to continue providing blood products with only cost of living price increases.

The board of the CABB continues to consider opportunities for expansion, keeping in mind the volunteer commitment and organization required to expand successfully into other provincial jurisdictions. The interest is definitely there and the efforts of our lab director in dialoging with and assisting other veterinarians and animal health technologists reflects favorably on the MVMA and our blood banking partner Red River College.

Lab director, Beth Knight and assistant Gina Marsh, are very flexible in setting up donor clinics at private practices across Winnipeg and in rural clinics as far away as Brandon. This has brought the CABB closer to the members of the MVMA and enabled the CABB to maintain a donor base that in large part meets the current demand for blood products.

To ensure product quality, the CABB has donor blood screened against a broad panel of vector borne diseases. Upgrades in data base and product tracking have also taken place over the past few years.

I would like to thank Dr. Cathy Moir and Dr. Heather McDonell who continue to serve on the board of the Canadian Animal Blood Bank and to the many MVMA member clinic owners who have cooperated in providing donors and hosting blood donor clinics.

COMPANION ANIMAL REPRESENTATIVE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. COREY BARTLEY**

This was a busy year for the Companion Animal Committee. This year we have been discussing the emergence of non-veterinary businesses wanting to provide complementary and alternative therapies and treatments on animals. This is in conflict with the *Manitoba Veterinary Medical Act* and existing MVMA bylaws. As more and more alternative modalities become popular with the public, it will become impossible for veterinarians to keep up to date and comfortable with all of the options.

There was a meeting with MVMA council to discuss whether the existing bylaw structure will meet the public's needs and what impact a change in bylaw could have on veterinary practice in Manitoba. Council determined that an ad hoc committee should be stuck to discuss this matter. This committee was made up of several veterinarians who practice or offer alternative therapies as well as veterinarian primarily providing "western veterinary medicine". The goal was to gather information and opinions on the idea of changing bylaws to allow practice of alternative therapies by non-veterinarians. We also discussed if and how such therapies could be regulated. The College of Veterinarians of Ontario's position statement on complementary and alternative therapies was reviewed and it was determined this could be a model for the MVMA.

There will be more discussion on this topic in 2013. MVMA members at large will be polled as to their opinions on the potential for non-veterinarians to practice certain alternative treatments in Manitoba.

There was lots of great CE during 2012 – from the Winter Conference in February to sessions throughout the year, the MVMA is happy to be able to provide outstanding CE for our members right here in Manitoba!

There will be many great CE lectures at CenCan in February 2013. Dr. Craig Mosely will be discussing higher-risk anaesthetic patient protocols; Dr. Monique Mayer on cancer therapies; Dr. Barak Pressler on renal disease and the lower urinary tract; and Dr. Smeak on gastropexy, paramedian approach to cryptorchid castrations, and splenectomy. We are very fortunate to have Mark Opperman joining for practice management CE (bring your office manager along!). And I have heard Dr. Whiting's is session exceptional! Excellent quality CE credits for all!

I hope to see you at CenCan!

ANNUAL COMMITTEE SUMMARIES (CONTINUED)

COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

SUBMITTED BY **DR. BRAD CHAPPELL**, COMMITTEE CHAIR

2012 has been a year of change for the MVMA. The MVMA has moved their office location, as well as a change in the chair of the Council Advisory Committee (CAC). We all would like to thank Randy Aitken for his years of chairing this committee – Randy has spent many hours volunteering for our association.

I was pleased to accept the “offer” to fill the chair position of the CAC (committee of the past presidents and committee chairs). The goal of this committee is to advise the MVMA council on past and current events and issues that have occurred in the association. It also acts as the nomination committee for MVMA council, committee and volunteer positions. It meets 2-3 times a year, depending on the agenda items brought forward by the MVMA council.

VETERINARY PHARMACEUTICAL REGULATIONS

Regulating veterinary pharmaceuticals are still a priority for the MVMA council. At this time, the province is not interested in veterinary pharmaceutical regulations – not even to the point of education. The action plan of the MVMA is to:

- Develop a training course on how to correctly dispense pharmaceuticals.
- Develop detailed position statements of what the MVMA is doing and be ready send to these statements to the media whenever a concern about veterinary pharmaceuticals arises.
- Re-launch the pharmaceutical regulation discussion within our membership as some members are not fully aware of the concerns.

COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

The CAC had a discussion on the background of complementary and alternative therapies. This topic was forwarded to the Complementary and Alternative Therapies committee. CAC members felt that it is important to consider the potential harm to the animals when reviewing this issue.

MVMA COUNCIL POLICIES & PROCEDURES, REFERENCE AND ORIENTATION MANUAL

The CAC will be supporting the GM/DCA in the updating and development of new material in relation to the MVMA council. Supplemental policies, procedures and other material will be reviewed and revised (or developed) as required. A council orientation manual will also be developed.

NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCIL

This year, two nominees were required to sit on council. Eight potential nominees were identified. The GM/DCA contacted the potential nominees to confirm their interest. Had there been more than 2 nominees to accept the nomination (including nominees nominated by membership), a vote would have been called. Only one of the eight nominees nominated by CAC accepted the nom-

ination. There was one nomination from membership, so both positions are filled. We are pleased to announce Roxanne Neufeld and Michael Sheridan accepted their nominations, and will be joining council at the February 2013 AGM.

PRC TRAINEE POSITIONS

The MVMA Council approved the recommendation that the Peer Review Committee (PRC) have two trainee positions. These individuals would then be available to fill vacant PRC positions. Drs. Pat Dorval and Heather McDonell were recommended to CAC to fill these positions and CAC further recommended these individuals to Council. Drs. Dorval and McDonell have since accepted these positions and will start as trainees in 2013.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

The CAC agreed with the recommendation that large animal species-specific volunteers be identified. These volunteers will work directly with producer groups to strengthen relationships between the MVMA and producer groups. The volunteers will report to the Food Animal Representative (Dr. Wayne Tomlinson). Dr. Tomlinson and the GM/DCA will further develop the requirements for the volunteers. It is hoped these positions will be filled in 2013.

ANIMAL WELFARE REPRESENTATIVE

The need for an animal welfare representative was discussed, but it was tabled to a further meeting. The need for this (or potentially an ad hoc representative), may become more relevant in 2013. As the cat population issue in Winnipeg grows, it becomes a greater concern for the MVMA as veterinarians are being drawn into the debate. This issue has already resulted in some negative press for the association and its members.

Other items discussed included the development of a mobile clinic bylaw, clinic ownership by non-veterinarians, and veterinary incorporation.

PRACTICE INSPECTION PRACTICE STANDARDS (PIPS)

SUBMITTED BY **DR. FRED LINDENSCHMIDT**, PIPS CHAIR

The reorganization of the PIPS Bylaws is reaching a conclusion as evidenced by the motions being put forward at this AGM this year. The review aspect is, however, an ongoing process requiring constant adjustment as new concerns are identified. To this end, I encourage members to contact either myself or the registrar (Michelle Martin-Strong) with any concerns or suggestions.

I would like to thank Michelle Martin-Strong for her unrelenting work in getting this document finished. I would also like to thank the inspectors and the task force for the ongoing input and suggestions that have been crucial in producing a document that we feel we can present to members.

RED RIVER COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. BOB NEWFIELD**,
RED RIVER COLLEGE LIAISON

As you may recall, last year in my report I reviewed that RRC had engaged in a curriculum review for the Animal Health Technology program. This review was conducted with the help of a group of veterinarians representing all facets of veterinary medicine that employ AHTs as well as curriculum consultant professionals and AHT educators from the college. The group identified AHT “must have” skills required upon graduation as well as skills that could be learned in their places of employment. A gap analysis was generated and the consultants then set out to design a more current and relevant program for AHTs. Needless to say, this is a mammoth task and I am pleased to report that the program development is coming along nicely. The committee met in November to review the progress to date and the results are very exciting.

The new curriculum, although not complete at time of this writing, will use the body system approach to learning. There are still many details to work out but the committee is very enthusiastic about the newer approach. As of our last meeting, it appears that the new curriculum will commence as early as September 2013, although a later start date is foreseeable as the consultants want to be sure that everything is done absolutely right.

The advisory committee met also in November. There has been a staff change as Dr. Wendy Slezak has replaced the now retired Dr. Mary Ann Millar. Attrition of students remains a concern for the committee. There are 19 students now in second year and for the 29 admissions this year, 2 have been lost so far with potentially others at risk. The college has implemented many innovative programs to mitigate the attrition rate which I have alluded to in past reports. Despite these efforts, student loss seems to be inevitable in the community college setting. We are hopeful that the curriculum review and subsequent changes to the program will help retain more students to the extent that the more difficult but never utilized courses presently taught but never used in practice will be eliminated. The thrust of the new curriculum will be on providing technically sound, practice ready graduates.

WCVM ADVISORY REPORT

SUBMITTED BY **DR. HUGH MILLAR**, WCVM ADVISORY
COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

The annual WCVM Advisory Council Meeting was held last September in Saskatoon. The highlights of the meeting include:

1) Construction update:

- o The veterinary diagnostic complex is complete.
- o The equine performance center will be complete this fall with the final installation of the standing MRI and a new treadmill.
- o The buffeteria and Smith rooms have been remodeled. The red tile in the buffeteria that we know so well is gone.
- o The anatomy lab now has exhaust tables to decrease formaldehyde fumes.

FOOD ANIMAL REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

SUBMITTED BY **DR. WAYNE TOMLINSON**

The Food Animal Committee (FAC) was established in January of 2006. The purpose of the committee is to provide MVMA’s large animal practitioners with a unified voice when representing the profession on issues regarding food animal health and practice of large animal medicine. The committee consists of any and all members of the MVMA that wish to participate. A formal meeting was not held at 2012 winter convention in order to allow members to attend CE sessions.

This spring, the MVMA reached out to various commodity groups. We hosted a luncheon and representatives from beef, small ruminants, dairy, swine and various poultry groups were invited. The meeting was an informal introduction of the MVMA to these commodity groups. We expressed our desire to assist them in their dealings with policy makers and the public.

Since the group meeting, we were invited to a discussion that Manitoba Chicken Producers were having on antimicrobials. They are currently seeking to have increased regulations on antimicrobials used in poultry. We have also had conversations with both Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and Manitoba Beef Producers associations. When swine producers were struggling financially this summer, we contacted Manitoba Pork to see if we could be of assistance and sent a letter to the Minister of Agriculture in support of Manitoba Pork’s Hog stabilization plan.

Going forward, the MVMA hopes to have one of our members closely aligned with each producer association. This will give the association someone they can turn to for advice on animal health and welfare matters. And it will in turn give our association knowledge on issues our clients are facing as a group not just on an individual basis. Managed properly, these relationships will develop support for MVMA positions and policies.

I am always interested in hearing about what is happening in your corner of the province, please contact me!

- o The college is in the process of installing a linear accelerator for cancer therapy.
- o A new dairy barn is being built on the university campus.
- 2) The Veterinary Teaching Hospital has been renamed the Veterinary Medical Center
- 3) A new rehabilitation center has been added to the small animal clinic.
- 4) A new wellness program is being introduced into the curriculum to provide students with training in preventative care and communication.
- 5) Computer simulations have replaced most of the terminal physiology labs and virtual microscopy has been introduced in histology and anatomy.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE SUMMARIES (CONTINUED)

CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

SUBMITTED BY DR. KEVIN MILLAR,
MVMA REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CVMA



CANADIAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) proudly represents the profession nationally and internationally. The following are just a few examples of how the CVMA worked on behalf of the veterinary profession in 2012:

CVMA POSITION STATEMENTS – THEIR ROLE AND UTILITY EXPLAINED

The CVMA National Issues and Animal Welfare Committees develop position statements where there is adequate scientific basis and ethical concern to support the statements, and present them to the CVMA Council for approval and adoption. These positions are meant to guide the profession, educate the public on the veterinary viewpoint on select issues, and provide a “forward-thinking” viewpoint on issues based on what is happening not just in Canadian society and the veterinary profession but internationally. They are not intended to regulate the profession of veterinary medicine; however, it is recognized that provincial regulatory bodies may consider them when they update or amend veterinary bylaws. To read the full description of the roles and utility of CVMA position statements, visit the CVMA website.

ANIMAL WELFARE POSITION STATEMENTS

The CVMA revised or approved the following Animal Welfare Position Statement this year:

- Trapping of Fur-Bearing Animals,
- Castration of Cattle, Sheep and Goats
- Neutering of Dogs and Cats (Spay and Castration)
- Breeding of Dogs

The Committee has begun the development of a **position statement on Humane Slaughter**, and it is currently gathering background information and scientific references, as well as consulting with experts in the field of humane slaughter practices. Once the draft position is developed, CVMA members will be consulted to help finalize.

SHIPPING EMBARGO OF NON-HUMAN PRIMATES

In November 2012, CVMA urged the Canadian Transportation Agency not to accept a recent petition filed by Air Canada, which would permit the company to refuse shipments of non-human primates intended for laboratory research and/or experimental purposes. Rather than transporting non-human primates by the most direct and appropriate route, this proposed shipping embargo would cause

unnecessary rerouting, which will result in an increased risk of harm to these animals (e.g., cold exposure, frostbite, limb and appendage loss).

ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE (AWC) ANNUAL FALL MEETING

The CVMA Animal Welfare Committee held its annual fall meeting at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM). The Committee took some time to visit the Pound Maker beef feedlot in Lanigan, Saskatchewan. The beef operation has a 28,500 head capacity and is Canada’s first integrated feedlot/fuel ethanol facility. The AWC meeting featured a noon-hour presentation to the WCVM students by Dr. Terry Whiting. A packed lecture theatre heard Dr. Whiting give a presentation titled “A Hobbit’s Tale – there and back again. How an animal welfare crisis can impact mental health wellness”.

CVMA CODE OF PRACTICE FOR CANADIAN KENNEL OPERATIONS

A review of the 2007 CVMA Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operations is currently underway. Among the issues that will be considered in this review are tethering of dogs, time spent out of confinement and kennel requirements for home breeding operations versus commercial kennel operations.

NATIONAL ISSUES POSITION STATEMENTS

The CVMA revised or approved the following general position statements this year:

- Vaccination Protocols for Dogs and Cats
- Raw Food Diets for Pets

The National Issues Committee will submit a **revised Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine position statement** to CVMA Council for approval. The draft position was sent to CVMA members for consultation, as well as to practitioners with expertise in this field.

DRUG SHORTAGE AT SANDOZ CANADA

Earlier in 2012, Sandoz Canada had very limited availability of some human drugs used in veterinary practice, in particular some anesthetic and analgesic products. A number of key veterinary drugs were in short supply. At the request of Health Canada’s Veterinary Drugs Directorate (VDD), the CVMA helped identify the top three to four most critical drugs for veterinary use as VDD considered looking internationally for alternatives. The CVMA monitored the situation and communicated updated information to veterinarians as it became available.

PROPOSED AQUATIC SUBSTANCES REGULATIONS

The CVMA met with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in August to discuss the proposed release of aquaculture substances regulations. The purpose of this meeting was to ensure that the proposed regulations concerning the use of drugs, pesticides and other substances in aquaculture do not impinge on the practice of veterinary medicine. The CVMA reviewed and commented on the proposed regulations that were published in the Canada Gazette I in October 2012.

2012 AGM MEETING

Dr. Jim Fairles (Guelph, Ontario) was sworn in as the CVMA's 64th President and the following members were appointed to the Executive Committee:

- Dr. Jim Fairles, President
- Dr. Jim Berry, President-Elect
- Dr. Jean Gauvin, Vice-President
- Dr. Nicole Gallant, CVMA Executive Member (new on Executive)
- Dr. Lloyd Keddie, Immediate Past-President
- Dr. Barry Stemshorn, Treasurer
- Mr. Jost am Rhyn, Ex-officio member/Executive Director

CVMA COUNCIL MEETS WITH REGULATORY BODY PRESIDENTS AND REGISTRARS

After speaking to the councils of all provincial regulatory bodies individually earlier this year, the CVMA drafted a proposal for national collaboration with the regulatory bodies. A task force was formed with representatives from the regulatory bodies and the CVMA to analyze feedback and the outcome of the July 12, 2012 meeting and to suggest a next generation proposal.

CVMA LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

The CVMA's new website, Canadianveterinarians.net, was launched in December 2012. The website is more user friendly and allows veterinarians to easily locate the large amount of resources provided for members. Be sure to check out the "benefits and services" area for discounts on hotels and car rentals.

2013 CVMA CONVENTION

July 10 -13, 2013 • Victoria, B.C.

This is a condensed version of my CVMA report. A copy of the complete report can be obtained by emailing me at the email address below.

Contact your CVMA National Office by telephone at 1-800-567-2862, by e-mail at admin@cvma-acmv.org or contact your MCR: Dr. Kevin Millar; (204) 984-5068, by e-mail at millark_ma@yahoo.ca.

CITY OF WINNIPEG ANIMAL SERVICES LIAISON REPORT

SUBMITTED BY DR. LYNN WEBSTER

The Animal Services Advisory Committee met on one occasion this year. The discussion centered on a comprehensive review and related recommendations regarding City of Winnipeg Animal Services by-laws which were developed into a report for the City of Winnipeg Council. This report was to be presented to the City of Winnipeg Council in November 2012. Unfortunately, it was high jacked by a presentation at city council regarding the right to keep backyard chickens. This presentation is now planned for early in the 2013, allowing Animal Services time to consider the chicken issue.

The primary item under consideration is to add the licensing of cats to City of Winnipeg by-laws. This is an issue that I believe the MVMA should have a position on and be an advocate for as it is the largest issue with respect to over-population and stress on the Winnipeg Humane Society and other pet rescue groups. Several thousand cats are euthanized or meet untimely deaths on the streets of Winnipeg every year and the time has come for everyone with a vested interest to become involved.

CVMA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

SUBMITTED BY DR. BOB NEWFIELD,
CVMA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE

The response to the economic survey for 2011 was identical to 2010 at an 18% response rate which is right on the average response rate for all of Canada. Ideally, a higher response rate would be beneficial to providing greater accuracy and insight into the economic trends of our profession.

From the data provided there were some interesting trends worth noting. If we look at all practices in Canada we see a tremendous variability in revenues and net incomes. To give you an example of the magnitude of the variability, for practices grossing \$1.6 million the net was anywhere from \$100,000 to \$800,000. It would appear there is a wide variation in management practices in our profession. Over the last year there has been on average an 8% drop in mixed and large animal practice net incomes and a 4% drop in companion animal net incomes. With a more difficult economic climate and consumer confidence waning, rising revenues are more difficult to achieve. The take away message from the 2011 economic report is that expense control will become even more important if we expect to increase our bottom lines.

Active clients dropped nationally by an average of 6%. This figure may not be entirely accurate as many practice software programs default to 18 months for active clients whereas the CVMA Practice Owners Economic Survey defines an active client who has been to the practice in the last 12 months. As more software programs set the default to one year the accuracy of this parameter will get better.

Of the three western provinces, Manitoba had the weakest increase in food animal production. Semen and pregnancy testing was fairly flat compared to the large gains in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Not to be the bearer of all bad news, Manitoba had the lowest expenses in Canada; mixed and large animal practices earned 6% more than the national average. Manitoba came in with the lowest expenses in all but 4 categories nationally.

In the face of tightening economies, reducing fees may be tempting to some. This is absolutely the wrong thing to do. Manitoba nationally already has some of the lowest fees for companion, mixed and large animal practices. By discounting fees even by 10%, with no change in expenses, a practice would have to see approximately 30% more clients just to make up for the discount let alone an increase in revenue.

If you have been following the economic survey and fee guide suggestions over the last 5 years you will probably have seen a steady rise in revenues, fees and clients. In 2011 the economy for our profession changed. Much of what we gained in the past 5 years is being threatened by rising expenses, slower growth and stagnation of wages. We will have to do more than just increase fees with a blind eye to our expense side of the ledger. Fees will still have to go up to keep up with inflation but to increase our bottom lines we will have to manage the expenses more effectively to realize any gain in net incomes.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE SUMMARIES (CONTINUED)

WINNIPEG HUMANE SOCIETY LIAISON

SUBMITTED BY DR. JONAS WATSON

In May 2012, I took over the position of MVMA representative on the Winnipeg Humane Society Board of Directors from Dr. Nancy McQuade, who had done an exemplary job in this role for many years.

The Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS) faced several challenges this past year. Unfortunately, shortfalls in revenue were much worse than anticipated for 2012, mostly due to decreases in general and annual donations, as well as fewer donations generated by direct response pleas to WHS members. This is a trend affecting most Canadian humane societies, which have seen similar decreases in donor contributions. "Paws in Motion", the Society's annual dog walk fundraiser in June, saw many participants, but far fewer donations this year than in the past. The lower than expected turnout for "Paws in Motion", combined with less money raised by participants, was disheartening. I would encourage all Manitoba veterinarians to form clinic teams for 2013, raise money, and participate in this event. Besides being a fun day for pets and owners alike, it is also one of the major fundraisers upon which the WHS depends for revenue.

The extremely hot summer of 2012 led to unexpected costs incurred by the Society, associated with an unusually high number of interventions by our Animal Protection Officers attending to pets trapped in vehicles with interior temperatures exceeding 43 degrees Celsius. The WHS is inadequately compensated for investigations of this kind even during temperate summers, and if 2013 proves to be as hot as 2012, this will be a financial burden we face again this year. Resources were further stretched in 2012 by several large scale animal seizures undertaken throughout the province, some of which were not reported in the media.

On the expense side of things, increases in staffing costs (salaries and benefits) as well as building maintenance, presented further financial challenges. In an effort to control costs, WHS management implemented a reduction in hours that the shelter will be open to the public. Minimal staff will be in the building from 7 p.m. until midnight to take in animals abandoned there outside business hours (a regular occurrence). The Society's new, shortened hours of operation will be more in line with other shelters across Canada.

The WHS was active this year in establishing and maintaining positions on several issues facing domestic and wild animals in the province. We opposed the release of Makoon, the orphaned

black bear cub that was returned prematurely to the wild after a brief stay at the zoo. The Society's stance was that this animal should have been sent to a bear rehabilitation facility in Ontario to mature until 1.5 years of age, which would have maximized his likelihood of survival once released. This fall, the public became aware of some of the inhumane practices taking place at a Puratone hog barn in Arborg. The WHS applauded the organization "Mercy for Animals" for bringing the issue of farm animal welfare to the public consciousness. The WHS encourages consumers to think about the meat they purchase, where it comes from, and how the animals from which it originates are treated. Through our long-standing "Quit Stalling" campaign, we continue to urge pork producers to phase out the inhumane practice of housing sows in stalls throughout gestation, and implement costlier, but more pig-friendly, group housing systems.

The WHS's top priority continues to be the issue of cat overpopulation. We strongly support cat licensing for the city of Winnipeg, with the contingency that revenues generated from this program go entirely toward the spaying and neutering of other cats. This money could be used to hire additional veterinary surgeons, fund trap/neuter/release programs, and subsidize elective surgeries for cats whose owners cannot afford to pay themselves. Cat licensing has been implemented in most major Canadian cities; revenues generated have gone to help spay and neuter programs to great success in places like Calgary, often cited as the model that cities like Winnipeg (where licensing is not yet in effect) should aim to follow. As of the date of this report, WHS CEO Bill McDonald is preparing to address this issue before the City's protection and community services committee on January 14, 2013, when the licensing bylaw is set to be proposed. The cat overpopulation problem is the single greatest burden the Society faces; a progressive measure like cat licensing is the kind of strategy we need to implement in order to reduce the number of cats that the WHS is forced to euthanize every year (which is thousands of cats annually).

MVMA members can help the WHS in many ways, whether in the form of financial contributions (consider "In Memoriam" donations for your deceased patients), participation in WHS fundraisers (November's "Bow Wow Ball" could be a fun night for your staff, and corporate tables are available for purchase) or volunteering surgical and medical services. Maintaining a healthy relationship between our association and the WHS is important, given our common objective to ensure the health and welfare of animals in our city and province. If MVMA members have any questions or concerns about our involvement with the Winnipeg Humane Society, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. PHILIPP SCHOTT**, COMMITTEE CHAIR

Once again, 2012 was a very typical year for the Peer Review Committee. There were 45 complaints in total (compared to 40 in 2011, 46 in 2010 and 46 in 2009), of which 9 went on to the formal written stage (compared to 14 in 2011, 10 in 2010 and 20 in 2009). Once again I want to emphasize that the 36 “verbal” complaints comprise a wide array of different phone calls from the public ably fielded by the registrar, Michelle Martin-Strong. Some of these calls are actual, albeit informal, complaints that are resolved verbally by the registrar, but many more are from people who simply want to vent or from people who are confused about something and are satisfied with a simple explanation. The Manitoba Veterinary Medical Act does not recognize any sort of complaint other than the formal written complaint, but we keep statistics on these calls as a type of barometer.

The nature of the complaints was also absolutely typical. I discussed this in my last two reports and I will discuss it again this year: the great majority of complaints, formal or informal, arise from some variation on the theme of “communication”. It is gratifyingly rare for the PRC to review a complaint that truly brings a veterinarian’s technical skill or knowledge into question. On the other hand, it is all too common for the PRC to review a complaint that could have been avoided had the communication between the veterinarian and the client been more complete and effective. These communication issues run across quite a broad spectrum, but I will again outline the most common types:

- Failure to provide accurate estimates or failure to try to contact the client when medical circumstances necessitate a change to the estimate.
- Failure to use appropriate, comprehensible language when talking to clients. Some of us have lost all perspective on what some clients can and cannot understand. Do not assume that they know what you’re talking about!
- Failure to explain all reasonable options.
- Failure to ensure that the client understands the difference between a tentative diagnosis and a confirmed diagnosis.
- Failure to be frank about prognosis.
- Failure to clearly communicate empathy when things go badly.

The key point is that we should never forget that the ability to communicate effectively is as essential to good patient outcomes as the ability to tie secure knots or interpret a potassium level. Effective communication is not an optional skill. It may be time consuming, but then all good medicine is.

To end on a positive note though, I would like to emphasize that the PRC does not get to see the tens of thousands of interactions that go well! We don’t get calls or letters when the veterinarian has done an outstanding job of communicating! Day in and day out the great majority of our profession excels at communication. When one considers the incredibly complex and emotionally fraught nature of our work, it is truly astonishing that the numbers of complaints are as consistently low as they are so keep up the good work and all the best in 2013 to each and every one of you!

PROFESSIONAL IMAGE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. JAY THRUSH**, COMMITTEE CHAIR

This past year started off with a bang – the Ear Cropping by-law created local, national and international media interest. Quite a few veterinarians spoke with media on the MVMA’s behalf – thank you to everyone!

Various press releases were sent during the year on many topics. We are fortunate that media is very interested in our information and often runs the stories we release. The MVMA was also contacted by the media on several other topics during the year including:

- Veterinary pharmaceuticals
- Regulation of non-veterinarians providing veterinary services
- Relationship between animal abuse and domestic abuse
- Winnipeg’s cat (over)population concerns
- This Season is FUR Everyone (special thanks from me to all of the clinics in “my back yard” - Brandon and Virden who participated in the program this year)
- Distemper in raccoons
- Hoof health
- Debarking of dogs
- Elastration of cattle
- Dangers of shock collars

Thank you to Drs. Leeanne Bargaen, Corey Bartley, Ken Johnson, Marc Philippot, Lynn Webster, and Ron Worb for speaking to media on behalf of the MVMA. My sincere apologies if I have left anyone off this list.

The media sometimes contacts MVMA members directly. There is no restriction on members speaking with the media, but the MVMA does like to know when the veterinary profession is being highlighted. We’d appreciate notification if a story is run. Just let Andrea at the office know. Also, the office can help you prepare for an interview if you need a hand. Alternatively, if you are contacted by media and do not feel comfortable commenting on a particular topic or item you can refer to the office any time. Again, just contact Andrea (alear@mvma.ca or 204 832 1276 ext.1).

Unfortunately, it appears that the MVMA and veterinarians are “being thrown under the bus” by some organizations. When animal health issues as well as overpopulation (spay/neuter) concerns are discussed in the media, some organizations will “blame” the MVMA and/or veterinarians. They cite MVMA by-laws and policies and/or the cost of veterinary care as barriers for pet owners. This will be an item for discussion in 2013; how best to be proactive to divert this messaging and how to respond when these comments arise.

The MVMA continues to develop its social media presence. Our Facebook “likes” continue to grow, doubling this year. If your clinic has a Facebook page – we’d like to know. “Like” us on Facebook and we’ll “like” you back! Find us at “Manitoba Veterinarians”. Like many businesses, the MVMA juggles with balancing staff time put into the development of news and articles for Facebook and Twitter and into other commitments. We want to ensure we have a consistent presence, but not at the expense of other activities. I hope we have struck the right balance, but would love your feedback!

We are looking forward to planning for 2013. If you have any thoughts about how the MVMA can grow its image, or areas you would like to see us promote I’d love to hear your ideas!

IN RECOGNITION OF...

The following individuals will be recognized at the start of the MVMA Annual General Meeting. Please join us to acknowledge their outstanding contributions to the veterinary profession in Manitoba!

"DEDICATION IS NOT WHAT OTHERS EXPECT OF YOU, IT IS WHAT YOU CAN GIVE TO OTHERS."

DR. FRED LINDENSCHMIDT AWARD OF MERIT

Awarded by the MVMA Council, the Award of Merit recognizes veterinarians and other individuals who have made significant contributions towards the achievement of the MVMA's vision.

Dr. Lindenschmidt has been the PIPS (Practice Inspection, Practice Standards) Coordinator since 2002. The position was created to support the Registrar with the PIPS process including by-law interpretation, by-law development, PIPS Inspector training and supervision, as well as the completion of clinic inspection reports. The Registrar commends Dr. Lindenschmidt as being able to take the by-laws and apply them in a realistic manner; making rigid rules work in the real world. The MVMA Council identified that Dr. Lindenschmidt has tirelessly volunteered his time for so many years and notes his willingness to continue this tremendous support of the association.

LIFE MEMBER AWARDS

A Life Member has been a member in good standing in one of the MVMA's membership categories for 25 years or more, who has retired from active practice and does not hold a license to practice.

Dr. Murray Esler

Ontario Veterinary College, 1965

Dr. Paul Friesen

Western College of Veterinary Medicine, 1977

Dr. Claude Mason

Western College of Veterinary Medicine, 1973

DR. REUBEN NEUMIER VETERINARIAN OF THE YEAR

Nominated by MVMA members, the Veterinarian of the Year is presented to a veterinarian who has provided exemplary service to the MVMA and the profession.

Dr. Neumier was nominated by former colleagues, but it was a young veterinarian, whom he mentored, who initiated what she felt was overdue recognition. His nomination highlighted many reasons why Dr. Neumier deserves the award and referenced his wealth of knowledge, years of dedication to the profession, his interest in mentoring (colleagues and clients) and community support. Dr. Neumier was also described as "the MacGyver" of veterinary profession because he makes the most of every situation and uses the resources available to achieve his goal.



MS. ARAINA DOWD SERVICE AWARD

Ms. Araina Dowd joined the MVMA in the fall of 1982 as their first employee. With over 30 years of dedicated work, Araina is a tremendous resource for council, members and staff. It has been said that "Araina is an ambassador of the association and the veterinary profession in Manitoba".



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