



# **ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS**

## **2013** IN REVIEW

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*A summary of your association's achievements and objectives*



# PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



**Dr. Marg Seward (l) & Dr. Wayne Tomlinson (r)**

Dear Colleagues,

Before Marg Seward and I review the MVMA's activities during the past year, on behalf of the MVMA we would like to publically thank a couple of our members for their service to the veterinary community, the public and of course pets and livestock. As most of you are aware, Dr. Wayne Lees is retiring from his position as the Chief Veterinary Officer of Manitoba. Dr. Lees has worked diligently for the betterment of animal health and welfare. Dr. Lees has been a champion of the "One World One Health" concept and his dedication to the province of Manitoba and its citizens will be missed. Although Dr. Lees is retiring from MAFRD, he will continue to be a member of the MVMA in 2014 and we'll likely see his continued support of the profession in some fashion in the future.

The second retiree that the MVMA would like to thank is Dr. Mark Swendrowski, for his years of service as a pathologist in our provincial laboratory. Dr. Swendrowski has been recognized nationally for

his contributions to veterinary laboratory medicine and his expertise will be missed by private practitioners and his fellow pathologists.

The year started with the AGM and our inaugural CenCan Conference. The AGM saw little controversy and CenCan was a success. At the March council meeting, a thorough post mortem exam was completed on the conference. Members of MAHTA were pleased with the format and CE available. The conference was well attended and financially successful. Comments were generally positive except for a few minor hiccoughs which will be addressed in CenCan 2.0.

At the April 10th council meeting many of the typical issues were dealt with. Things such as CVMA position statements, appointing members to the WCVM interview committee, a legal opinion sought on non-veterinary ownership of veterinary clinics, and an application for membership in the MVMA that required special council approval as it was for limited licensure.

In June, MAHTA came to the council meeting to share with council their new strategic plan. MAHTA is looking to grow as an association, and much like individual technicians who want to be a part of the clinic veterinary team, MAHTA wants to work with the MVMA in promoting animal health and welfare. June also saw council try to build bridges between our association and some of the livestock associations in the province. A Post was sent out calling for volunteers to be the liaison between the MVMA and commodity groups like Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and Manitoba Pork. We identified 5 groups (swine, beef, dairy, equine and poultry) and had a 6th group (sheep) approach us.

During the summer break it was off to the CVMA conference for Wayne, Andrea and Michelle. I had no idea what to expect and was quite surprised when I saw how busy our schedules were. While veterinarians were partaking in CE, we were spending time in a wide variety of meetings dealing with issues common to all the veterinary associations across the country. During the year, I also attended the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association's AGM and Leadership Weekend, as well as the Saskatchewan's Veterinary Medical Association's AGM. Marg represented the MVMA at the BC meetings and WAVA (Western Assembly of Veterinary Associations).

This year we had to deal with some serious "technical" breaches. In April, it was discovered that the MVMA website had been hacked. The MVMA staff quickly worked to close any access points and rebuild the website to have proper security in place. It is unknown what, if any information had been accessed. Then, in August, there was an attempt to wire MVMA funds to an individual in Singapore! This was a very elaborate scheme; the individuals had specific MVMA financial information. Fortunately, the staff was able to work with the bank to stop the transfer before any funds were lost. Some sleep was lost worrying and some money had to be spent to beef up security but in the end the association came out relatively unscathed. We do apologize for any inconvenience that this may have caused members. During times of real or perceived crises you get a feeling for the level of dedication of staff. The hacking was a stressful time and Andrea Lear, our Executive Director (or ED), spent many hours trying to make sure that this is a "one time" occurrence. Andrea has shown a real commitment to the MVMA in her role as ED.

Andrea is not alone in her efforts on behalf of the association. Michelle Martin-Strong has shown a similar enthusiasm in her role as Registrar. The Registrar position is the regulatory arm of the MVMA and, in spite of an increase in the number of complaints lodged against veterinarians, the work on PIPS and other legislation continues to move forward.

The newest member of the MVMA team is Collene Ferguson. Collene joined the MVMA in early summer in the role of Member Services Coordinator (MSC). A quick learner, she hit the ground running and is ahead of schedule on most tasks. Unfortunately, a family transfer



will take Collene to Calgary in early 2014. We are sad to lose Collene as she brought great experience to the association. Andrea will be reviewing and reporting to Council on the next steps for the MSC position. Also on the team is Judy Reynolds. A former MAHTA employee, Judy has for a number of years worked for the MVMA as a part-time bookkeeper and supports various MVMA projects as required. And last, but certainly not least, is Araina Dowd. With more than 30 years of service to the association, her dedication to the MVMA is above reproach.

Moving into the Fall saw council wrestle with issues like “remote companion animal clinics”. A survey on the issue was sent to membership and we had 79 respondents with great and varied comments. Thank you to everyone who participated, your voice helps us as we move forward on determining how to proceed on this matter. We also dealt with the CBC story titled “Barking Mad” that aired on Marketplace as well as a CBC Manitoba similarly themed story. And this fall we added two new guests to the council table. Our CVMA representative (Dr. Kevin Millar) and a MAHTA representative (Ms. Dee Black) have been asked to join council meetings as non-voting guests to add opinions to discussions and take back information to the CVMA and MAHTA respectfully.

Council is considering changes to another aspect of MVMA operation. The idea of reducing the number of standing committees and moving towards ad hoc committees is being tossed around. When an issue arises that council feels it needs help with, we would call for members to assist in an ad hoc committee. Volunteers would be handed one task (that interests them) and once the task was completed the committee would be disbanded. No meetings for the sake of having meetings, only when work needs to be done.

We also held a council election this year. Three candidates ran for the two upcoming council vacancies. Dr. Marc Philippot and Dr. Tony Singh will be leaving at the upcoming AGM and will be replaced by the newly elected Dr. Jason Kellsey and Dr. Suzanne Davidson. We had excellent member response to the election with 219 ballots returned; that’s 60% of the membership participating.

At this year’s AGM, I will be handing the gavel to Dr. Marg Seward as the incoming president and Dr. Roxanne Neufeld will be assuming the role of Vice President of your association. Between good staff and a strong council, I believe the MVMA is in an excellent position to move forward in the coming years.

Marg 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. Wayne Tomlinson**  
MVMA President 2013

**Dr. Marg Seward**  
MVMA President 2014

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# A WHO'S WHO ON YOUR GOVERNING COUNCIL

Following the February 7, 2014 Annual General Meeting, Dr. Wayne Tomlinson's term as president of the MVMA governing council will end. Taking his place as the 2014 MVMA President will be Dr. Marg Seward. Drs. Suzanne Davidson and Jason Kellsey will be filling the positions of outgoing council members Drs. Marc Philippot and Bhupinder (Tony) Singh.

## MVMA COUNCIL 2014



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

**Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Steinbach**

After the February 2014 AGM, I will be the new MVMA president. This is a

role I find both exhilarating and a bit daunting!

I graduated from WCVM in 1980 and practiced in a mixed animal government clinic upon graduation, eventually owning the clinic for a short while. I was also a large animal ambulatory veterinarian for many years and worked as an associate veterinarian in a swine consulting practice. I am currently working full time for CFIA.

My passion is animal welfare. At CFIA, I am one of the leads for humane transport. It was very rewarding to see many of you at the two seminars Dr. Max Popp and I presented in conjunction with MAFRD in the fall.

I was able to get my 'presidential' feet wet when representing the MVMA at the Western Assembly of Veterinary Associations (WAVA) meeting, as well as at the Society of BC Veterinarians and the College of BC Veterinarians AGMs in November. I found it amazing and comforting that all these organizations share the same concerns and seem to approach issues in the same fashion. We are indeed part of an excellent profession.

With the help of our outstanding staff, I am certain we shall have an exceptional year. I am excited to welcome and work with our two new council members – Sue Davidson and Jason Kellsey. The entire council will be sad to see both Marc Philippot and Tony Singh leave us. Their wealth of knowledge will truly be missed.

I am looking forward to representing the MVMA for the coming year. Please contact me with your comment and concerns.



**DR. ROXANE NEUFELD PRESIDENT ELECT 2015** (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2017)

**Dauphin Veterinary Clinic, Dauphin**

I graduated from WCVM in 1998 and currently part-own the Dauphin and Ste. Rose Veterinary Clinics, both mixed animal practices. My first year on Council is drawing to a close, and I have come to

truly appreciated representing the membership. It's been a steep learning curve. I am beginning to understand how our association works and what it does for us as members. There is such a broad range of experiences represented at the Council table and this is good for our association. This varied experience represents the many opportunities within our profession. Council meetings have gotten me out of my box of mixed animal practice and helped me to see the different sides of our profession. My desire is to do the best job I can on Council, serving our profession and promoting the wonderful people we have in our association. I look forward to the coming year and what we can accomplish as Council on behalf of our members.



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

**Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Development, Winnipeg**

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. During our time away from veterinary practice we raised two sons. The benefit of having sons in small town Manitoba is you get to travel extensively. We have had the pleasure of seeing the inside of just about every small town hockey rink in southern Manitoba. To fill in any possible idle time, we also operate a small beef farm. In 2007, I joined the Manitoba government as its Extension Veterinarian.

Serving as the MVMA president for the past year has been very rewarding. Meeting and discussing issues with peers across the country has been a great experience. Having seen other VMAs, I realize that we have a strong association with dedicated staff and are well positioned to meet all challenges as they arise.



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

**Winkler Veterinary Clinic, Winkler**

I graduated from OVC in 1995, and have been with the Morden Veterinary Group since then. During my first 10 years, I practiced predominantly in large animal practice. The last eight years I have practiced at the Winkler office predominantly in small animal medicine. I enjoy the diversity of working within a large clinic group. Out of the office, my three teenagers and husband keep my off-work time with plenty to do.

My second year on Council has been time well spent. It has been insightful and enjoyable to put our heads together and discuss issues pertinent to our association. I am looking forward to 2014, and encourage all members to, at some point, be part of their Council!



**DR. MICHAEL SHERIDAN, COUNCILLOR**  
(COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2016)

**Swine Health Professionals, Steinbach**

I am closing in on the end of my first year on Council. It has been a very interesting learning curve made easy by my fellow Council members, as well as the staff of the MVMA. I am learning that with a profession such as ours there are many issues arising in the various sectors in which we find our members associated. I realize more clearly that we need to ensure that all members understand the vast opportunities their veterinary degrees bring. To that end, I hope one area I can assist in is in making sure we all appreciate this diversity and are proud to discuss and promote it. I have a personal goal of trying to get our presence in the community noticed by the medical field. Time will tell.

Finally, as someone who has faced major upheaval in practice due to health issues, I will be very supportive of any programs that can help those in our profession with physical and mental health challenges. I have a much stronger belief in seeking help and will encourage, when possible, others to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the MVMA and I look forward to meeting you at the AGM.

## INCOMING COUNCILLORS



**DR. SUZANNE DAVIDSON**  
COUNCILLOR (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2017)

**Portage Veterinary Hospital, Portage la Prairie**

I am looking forward to being part of the MVMA Council and hope to learn more about the work of our association. I currently practice at Portage Veterinary Hospital as an associate. Prior to that I worked for CFIA out of the Carman District Office and in Cranbrook, BC in a mixed practice for 10 years after graduating from WCVN in 1992. We moved back to Manitoba for family, and we love summer time at the family cabin. I have two great daughters with my husband Paul and enjoy cross-country skiing and triathlon. I hope to get the chance to meet more of the association's members over the next few years of my term on Council.



**DR. JASON KELLSEY**  
COUNCILLOR (COUNCIL TERM ENDS FEBRUARY 2017)

**McLeod Veterinary Hospital, Winnipeg**

I grew up in Virden, Manitoba. After moving to Winnipeg to complete post-secondary education, and enjoying several years in the engineering world, I embraced a change in professional goals and began the journey to become a veterinarian. Graduating from WCVN in 2008, I began my veterinary career at McLeod Veterinary Hospital, where I continue to practice full-time. I enjoy the many aspects of companion animal medicine, while continuing to develop special interests through continuing education and interaction with our diverse veterinary community. My partner, Chastine, and I keep busy with our two beautiful children and collection of furry kids. I am excited to have the opportunity to represent our profession and its members on Council and look forward to the road ahead!

## FROM OUR OUTGOING COUNCILLORS . . .

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



**DR. MARC PHILIPPOT**  
**– PRESIDENT 2012**  
 (COUNCIL TERM ENDS  
 FEBRUARY 2014)  
**St. Claude Veterinary  
 Clinic, St. Claude**

The last four years have gone by quickly. I have enjoyed my time on Council, making new friends and meeting colleagues from across the country. I would like to say thank you to you the

membership in allowing me to represent you on Council and giving me the opportunity of serving as your president. Also, a special thanks to the MVMA staff for their support throughout the last four years. I must also thank my clinic staff for their support and understanding. Last (but definitely not least!), a great big thank you to my wife, Kristie, for her patience while I was busy taking on another project. For you future members, have fun while you sit on Council. It certainly was fun for me.



**DR. BHUPINDER  
 (TONY) SINGH**  
**– COUNCILLOR**  
 (COUNCIL TERM ENDS  
 FEBRUARY 2014)  
**Henderson Animal  
 Hospital, Winnipeg**

I enjoyed every moment while on Council. It is not only an opportunity to contribute to our profession and the public, it's also a great opportunity for self-enrichment. Council is a diverse and interesting group with everyone bringing great ideas to the table. What I liked most was the professional conduct of all council members when dealing with various issues; topics were analyzed properly and then concluded rationally. I am thankful to all members of the MVMA team.

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## NEWLY REGISTERED WITH THE MVMA IN 2013

*Welcome to our new members!*

*Dr. Elizabeth Andree*

*Dr. David Baker*

*Dr. Joselyn Bongiorno*

*Dr. Joseph Butterweck*

*Dr. Gregory Byrne*

*Dr. Gillian Dobson*

*Dr. Philipp Gavalov*

*Dr. Erika Dawn Grover*

*Dr. Esther Hill*

*Dr. Brian Joseph*

*Dr. Margaret Kranendonk*

*Dr. Norman Lowes*

*Dr. Bryan Macbeth*

*Dr. Kaitlyn Martin*

*Dr. Amelie Mathieu*

*Dr. Fiona Mulhern*

*Dr. Melissa Purcell*

*Dr. Darwin Ramo*

*Dr. Muhammad Shuaib*

*Dr. Ingrid Sproll*

*Dr. Vanessa Stewart*

*Dr. Suzanne Thiessen*

*Dr. Shahbaz ul Haq*

*Dr. Evy Van Nobelen*

*Dr. Amy Voliva*

*Dr. Wineeta Weebadda*



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT



**SUBMITTED BY ANDREA LEAR**



Happy 2014!

Every year at this time, I struggle with writing my annual report. By the time I start my report I have already reviewed or provided input for all the other reports – and so, fingers poised over the keyboard, I am not sure what is left to say! Fortunately, I was able to come up with a few items that should be of interest to members.

**Technology Troubles** - As Wayne and Marg mentioned in the Presidents' Message, the MVMA website was hacked in the spring and there was an attempt to access MVMA funds.

A word of caution for clinics or members who maintain websites: ensure that you or your provider is updating all software related to your website program as soon as it is available. The MVMA's website program was an older one that required constant monitoring and updating. Unfortunately, our provider switched to a new website program but wasn't monitoring clients on the old program as closely as they should have, leaving our site vulnerable to attacks. And, attacked we were. We noticed in April that 'foreign' links had been embedded into the website. After contacting our provider, it was determined that the website had been hacked and these links added. It could not be determined what other information had been accessed.

Working with our provider, the 'holes' were shut down and the website was rebuilt on a more secure program. At the time, we did investigate other options (other providers and higher-level programs). It was decided to stay with our existing provider. This incident has resulted in the company changing the way they monitor and update all their clients' websites and they have increased security on all their mail servers. We are confident they are taking reasonable steps to ensure the security of our site.

So, all's clear right? Nope. In August, our bank account manager called to confirm information about a wire transfer. Confused and concerned, I immediately called back and informed the manager that no wire transfer had been requested. After much phone tag, the wire transfer was halted. The next day, I received copies of the request and related emails. Someone was impersonating me! They created an email address much like my MVMA address and used words and language similar to what I use. BUT most concerning of all was a memo with my signature on it (along with another signing officer's signature). What the heck happened? Had someone broken into my computer? Reviewed files? Stolen documents? Between this incident and the website incident in the April, I was ready to shun all technology. (Not realistic in this day and age, but I managed to stay in a bubble for a few hours!)

We'll never know for sure how the information was accessed, but we have made changes to beef up our security – including an IT audit. An IT specialist attended our office and reviewed our hardware, software, processes and facility to determine areas for potential breaches. I am awaiting the report and once Council and I have a chance to review it, I will share some of the feedback. There may also be an opportunity to have an information session on IT security for members. I do not want anyone to go through the stress and anxiety of this situation if sharing some newly gained security insights could prevent it.

**New technology?** - There are two areas where we're looking at making some technology changes. When moving ahead with new technology, there are always concerns that some members cannot access the information or are uncomfortable with the process. Please know we are aware of these concerns and will consider them as we determine our next steps.

**First change, online member renewal!** Every year there are comments about the four page renewal form and the 'paper process'. I will be reviewing CVENT's membership management platform program. (CVENT is the company we use for our event management software.) The service we receive from CVENT is top notch. They also have the highest level of security available for online payments as well as data storage. We did look at other providers, but the expense is exorbitant. This is a good first step as we expand our use of technology. There is much to do before we buy in, but our goal is online 2015 member renewals!

So, what is the other potential change? Making *News & Views* an electronic newsletter. Over the past three years we have seen a significant decrease in advertising in *News & Views*. Publishing a printed newsletter has become an expense to the MVMA – when once it was a revenue generator. An e-newsletter will significantly reduce costs. We will conduct a member survey on the idea after the CenCan conference. Please share your thoughts!

Last year I asked members for input on what new services the MVMA could provide. One member contacted me and suggested that we help coordinate x-ray and anesthesia machine inspection in rural Manitoba. A great suggestion! We are working with MAHTA on this project and hope to have some further news soon! I know there are other great ideas out there so please share them with me!

Once again, a big thank you to everyone who supports me and the MVMA. Council and other volunteers do so much. The MVMA has an excellent staff; they keep everything on track. Regrettably, we are losing the newest member of the MVMA team. Collene Ferguson is off to Calgary for a new adventure. Although only with the MVMA for a short time, we are really going miss her and I want to thank her for all her contributions and wish her and her family all the best out west!

I look forward to seeing members at the AGM and CenCan. Be sure to stop and say "Hi"!

Cheers! Andrea



# REPORT FROM YOUR REGISTRAR



**SUBMITTED BY MICHELLE MARTIN-STRONG**



This past year has been a productive one, with my main focus being on my work with the Peer Review Committee (PRC), Practice Inspection, Practice Standards (PIPS) and the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commission, as well as my participation with the other Canadian Registrars in our work toward forming a national regulatory body. I continue to learn and hone my skills in providing service in my role to protect the public interest, in addition to providing interpretation and guidance for those members working within our governing documents.

My work with PIPS inspections and Peer Review Complaint Committees (PRCC) involves establishing protocols for codifying what is already practiced and trying to streamline the processes – all the while making sure everything is transparent and consistent in order to support the excellent service both committees provide. The establishment of protocols has been extended to in-house practices as well, again to ensure that all regulatory work is consistent and efficient.

I continue to collect data for the province's Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commission (OMFC). They are mandated to ensure that all self-regulatory bodies are in compliance with their acts; the

OMFC focuses heavily on member registration, particularly in respect to Internationally Educated Applicants (IEAs). Not only do I collect data which I must submit (no personal identifiers are used) each year to them on all our new IEAs but last year the OMFC also reviewed our registration process. They have made some suggestions as to what information we make available to potential registrants; the MVMA, in turn, has established an action plan setting out changes to be made we will make on our website over the next year to create an even more transparent presentation of our registration process.

I am continuing to work towards the goal of revamping the MVMA website in relation to regulatory matters. We want to create web pages that will inform the public about the processes related to PRC complaints and appeals and the PIPS inspection process, thereby making those processes more transparent and accessible to the public. It is important that the public understand the regulations we are bound by. The MVMA's aim to garner public confidence is a worthwhile goal and one I believe all MVMA staff support in their contributions to the association. I am committed to see that the concepts of transparency and efficiency become the cornerstones of the MVMA's regulatory arm.

In July 2013, Registrars from across the country met at the CVMA Conference and set a goal to look into creating a national voice for regulatory bodies in Canada. Each province has its own governing legislation, therefore a fair amount of negotiation and message will be necessary if we are to move forward with this goal. We met as a group again in November 2013, and currently have the initial pathway before each of our respective councils. It will be interesting to see how this action evolves.

I have had many great opportunities to interact with members from both the rural and urban communities around the province, and thank you all for your great questions and suggestions. Although there may be some differences that exist in running a rural clinic as opposed to an urban one, a lot of the same issues do arise, mainly through interactions with clients. These issues challenge me to review governing documents and current practices, and to find innovative ways to solve some of these issues. Please keep sharing your stories as well as any comments you have related to governing legislation.

Our membership numbers have stayed relatively the same over the last year, with 383 General Members in 2013. In addition, we also have eight Associate Members, four Public Members, 45 Life Members and 13 Honorary Members. In 2013, a total of 26 new licenses were issued.

I sincerely thank all the volunteers involved with the PRC, the PIPS Inspectors, and the MVMA Council for everything they contribute in helping me to get the job done. The MVMA can only be as strong as all of our varied and many parts. May 2014 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 was able to acquire three used refrigerated centrifuges from Canadian Blood Services in 2013, thus ensuring uninterrupted processing of whole blood now and into the future.

In an ongoing effort to upgrade blood products and in keeping pace with industry trends, CABB is now collecting much of its blood into leucodepletion bags. While increasing production costs, removing white cells reduces transfusion reactions.

Product sales grew marginally in 2013, with annual income for CABB now exceeding \$250,000.

Lab director Mrs. Beth Knight attended the annual meeting of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association where CABB had a display booth. She also visited Vanier College in Montreal where the blood bank continues to explore the opportunity to establish another satellite collection site and thereby increase awareness of CABB in a major market area.

Dr. Jonas Watson joined the board of CABB this year and thanks go to him, as well as to Drs. Heather McDonnell and Cathy Moir who continued their service on behalf of MVMA members as directors of CABB.

## CITY OF WINNIPEG ANIMAL SERVICES LIAISON

SUBMITTED BY **DR. LYNN WEBSTER**, MVMA LIAISON

The Advisory Committee to Animal Services did not meet in 2013. However, the City of Winnipeg implemented revisions to the Animal Control By-Laws, with the most significant change being the licensing of cats. The revenue from cat licensing, in excess of administrative costs, is earmarked for spay and neutering.

The by-law amended the number of pets to six, four of which can be dogs. The minimum term they will hold an unlicensed pet is 3 days, but their adoption policy on dogs suitable for adoption means that very few dogs are euthanized.

The Animal Services performance under the new CEO is admirable with in excess of 60,000 dogs licensed, and an adoption rate of impounded dogs not returned to owner in excess of 90%.

It is suggested, the MVMA and its members should make every effort to implement a spay and neuter program in conjunction with the Winnipeg Humane Society and Animal Services to address the excess cat population.

## COMPANION ANIMAL REPRESENTATIVE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. COREY BARTLEY**

In 2013, we continued to delve into the issue of alternative therapies and the role of the MVMA. Andrea Lear, Michelle Martin-Strong and I met with members of The Pawsh Dog Wellness Centre to discuss the future of pet owners seeking alternative therapies. As many members in the Winnipeg area are aware, Pawsh is offering hydrotherapy as part of its canine services. A key question: Is this veterinary medicine that should only be provided by a veterinarian? Currently, Pawsh requires a health certificate to be signed by a pet's veterinarian stating that said pet is physically healthy enough to use the Pawsh pool for fun/exercise. In addition, those pet owners seeking specific therapeutic treatments must have a veterinarian present during these therapies. Pawsh is interested in seeing legislative changes that would allow unsupervised treatments.

This summer, MVMA members were invited to tour the new facilities and attend a presentation by Angela Griffiths (CCRP, PTLA, RCH) on the benefits of hydrotherapy for multiple conditions. Unfortunately, membership turnout to this event was slim. We understand that Pawsh is willing to provide a tour for any veterinarian interested in the services they provide; they want to work with the veterinary community in providing this service.

The establishment of Pawsh's hydrotherapy pool is an example of an issue that the MVMA must deal with on a provincial level. We cannot make a decision solely for Pawsh; any decision on changes to (or enforcement of) existing legislation and policies must be applied to all non-veterinarians providing health treatments to animals. The MVMA membership is going to need to reach a consensus on whether to maintain current legislation and policies prohibiting practice of alternative therapies by non-veterinarians or whether to allow unsupervised treatments to occur. In order to reach a broader segment of membership we may need to conduct a survey assessing members' opinions.

The focus on Pawsh and alternative therapies was our main concern this year, but another companion animal issue that was raised was that of temporary clinics – and what restrictions there should be on services as well as location. This was mainly discussed at a council level, but I understand that it will be passed down to a committee for further discussion in 2014.

If you have any questions on these topics, please contact me at [drcorey@mymts.net](mailto:drcorey@mymts.net).

# CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

SUBMITTED BY DR. KEVIN MILLAR, MVMA REPRESENTATIVE



CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)  
*One Profession. One Strong Voice.*

CVMA represents Canadian veterinarians across the country and around the world. We're pleased to provide an overview of many of the projects CVMA undertook during 2013.

## ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP

In March 2013, the Ontario Medical Association publicly recommended that the federal government and the Government of Ontario should close the legal loopholes that currently allow animal owners to access veterinary pharmaceutical products for their own personal use without surveillance or regulation. CVMA issued a statement to make the public aware that CVMA has been urging the federal government for many years to implement a legislative change that closes the loophole in Health Canada's Own Use Importation policy, particularly for antimicrobials.

## KEY DISCUSSIONS ON VETERINARY DRUG IMPORTATION

Veterinarians were represented by CVMA in April at a Health Canada consultation meeting on veterinary drug regulatory modernization. CVMA is concerned with:

- The lack of government regulation that allows the importation of active pharmaceutical ingredients and their direct administration to food animals.
- The importation of over-the-counter veterinary drugs not approved in Canada (antimicrobials in particular), using a Health Canada policy for "own-use importation".

CVMA is reviewing two proposals brought forward to address these long-standing veterinary drug importation regulatory gaps. National veterinary species associations will be consulted so that the feedback to Health Canada from the veterinary profession in Canada is cohesive and complete.

## CVMA ANTIMICROBIAL TASK FORCE

With the increasing concern about the spread of antibiotic-resistant organisms and fewer new antimicrobials in development, the American Veterinary Medical Association established a Task Force on Antimicrobial Stewardship in Companion Animal Practice and invited CVMA to be part of this Task Force. CVMA Council selected Dr. Nigel Gumley to represent Canadian veterinarians.

## POSITION STATEMENTS

CVMA revised or approved two general position statements and eight animal welfare position statements during 2013. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources/statements.aspx](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources/statements.aspx))

## CANADA'S TWO SCIENTIFIC VETERINARY JOURNALS

Twelve issues of The Canadian Veterinary Journal and four editions of the Canadian Journal of Veterinary Research were produced during 2013.

## NFACC NATIONAL CODES OF PRACTICE

CVMA's review of the National Farm Animal Care Council's (NFACC) updates of the Equine Code of Practice, Beef Cattle Code of Practice, Pig Code of Practice and Sheep Code of Practice are now complete. Thank you to those who responded to our request for input. You helped formulate comments that represent our national veterinary voice on issues that may have important implications for veterinary practice.

## CVMA CODE OF PRACTICE FOR CANADIAN KENNEL OPERATIONS

As a first step in the review of the 2007 edition of CVMA's Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operations, members were consulted for feedback on various issues including tethering of dogs, time spent out of confinement, and kennel requirements for home breeding operations versus commercial kennel operations.

## 2013 INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT FOR URBAN ANIMAL STRATEGIES

In October, CVMA represented the profession at the 2013 International Summit for Urban Animal Strategies. The theme of the Summit, "Facts and Evidence", provided an opportunity to discuss consumer service, the declining pet population, the cost of pet ownership, and licensing compliance.

## COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

Many veterinarians and student veterinarians participated in CVMA's communications audit survey and shared their views in a telephone interview with our research partner. The answers and insights that were provided have been analyzed and provided to CVMA Council. These findings will help shape CVMA's future communication efforts and the programs and services offered to the profession.

## CANADA'S ANTI-SPAM LEGISLATION

Canada's new Anti-Spam Legislation comes into force on July 1, 2014, and is intended to prohibit the sending of unsolicited commercial electronic messages to recipients who have not consented to being sent such messages. Since July 2013, CVMA has been producing monthly articles to guide veterinarians through this legislation. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/news-events](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/news-events))

## MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

CVMA continues to represent Canadian veterinarians and position the profession positively in the public eye by providing credible information to the media and public. During 2013, CVMA managed several national media issues, including CBC Marketplace's "Barking Mad" television program, overnight hospitalization of pets, cross-border shopping for veterinary services, and reports of pet illnesses and deaths that may be connected to consumption of jerky treats.

## 2013 CVMA AWARDS

Each year, through its awards program, CVMA honours selected individuals and groups in recognition of their contributions to veterinary medicine and the health and welfare of animals.

**CVMA Humane Award:** Dr. Judith French-Sampson



**CVMA Small Animal Practitioner Award:** Dr. Cheryl Cullen

**Merck Veterinary Award:** Dr. John Kastelic

**Practice of the Year:** Calgary Trail Pet Hospital

**R.V.L. Walker Award:** Ms. Emily Vellekoop

**President's Award:** Dr. Terry Whiting

([www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/awards-honours.aspx](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/awards-honours.aspx))

### PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE TOOLKIT

As an Associate Member of Partners for Healthy Pets, the CVMA is pleased to offer CVMA members access to the Partners for Healthy Pets preventive healthcare toolkit, a collection of tools and resources to enhance the overall vitality of pets and veterinary practices, the delivery of preventive healthcare services, and communication with pet owners about the value of routine care. During 2013, CVMA's Communications Advisory Group reviewed the tools and provided a series of recommendations in The CVJ and in CVMA's monthly eNewsletter on the tools they found most useful. ([www.partnersforhealthypets.org](http://www.partnersforhealthypets.org))

### PET NUTRITION ALLIANCE

The Pet Nutrition Alliance (PNA) consists of a number of organizations working together to promote the importance of nutrition in the health of pets. The CVMA is the Canadian partner of PNA, with Dr. Jim Berry as our representative. Ottawa veterinarian Dr. Susan Little also serves on the PNA tools development committee. CVMA's Communications Advisory Group recently reviewed the tools and their recommendations will be available in upcoming editions of The CVJ and CVMA's monthly eNewsletter. ([www.petnutritionalliance.com](http://www.petnutritionalliance.com))

### ANIMAL HEALTH WEEK

Thank you to those who celebrated Animal Health Week by putting the spotlight on preventive health exams! ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/animal-health-week](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/animal-health-week))

### EVERYBODY NEEDS HELP FROM TIME TO TIME

When life's challenges become more than you can handle, it may negatively affect your personal and professional well-being. A nation-wide listing of crisis centres, resources and support services is available on the CVMA website. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources))

### SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VETERINARY PRACTICES

Merchant payment processing service, business banking program, member rates on classified advertising, and a telephone hold service are available. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/membership](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/membership))

### CVMA ECONOMIC SERVICES

CVMA business management services continue to be delivered, including provincial suggested fee guides, associate and non-DVM compensation and benefits reports, economic consulting services, practice management resources, financial management services, employment guidelines and a full day of free one-on-one business consultation during CVMA's Convention. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/business-management.aspx](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/business-management.aspx))

### CVMA EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

Veterinary leaders of tomorrow gathered in July for a full day interactive workshop with Dr. Rick DeBowes, co-founder of the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Experience. ([www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/emerging-leaders-program.aspx](http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/programs/emerging-leaders-program.aspx))

## RED RIVER COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

As you may recall from last year's report, the Animal Health Technology (AHT) Program is undergoing a major curriculum review and overhaul. A lot of time and effort has been put in by faculty, Sandra Sukhan (RRC program curriculum development consultant), and the curriculum review committee. The renewal and updating of the program is in the curriculum development stage whereby courses are being reassessed and content being added or deleted to make the course more relevant for graduates, and in turn, more relevant for clinics/companies hiring AHT graduates. The revamped first year program will be rolled out in the fall of 2014.

The college is making great progress with programs to better prepare prospective students for the realities of becoming an AHT. RRC is working with a web designer to have case study modules on-line so that prospective students can get a first hand look at what AHTs do in their day to day activities in the field. The website will also answer questions they may have about the profession. The hope is that this strategy will help prospective students to determine if becoming an AHT is a good choice for them.

New this year is the assigning of academic coaches to all incoming first year students. The good news is that so far, of the 30 students admitted to the fall 2013 class, no students have failed or dropped out. In fact, there is a good chance that the 2015 class will be the largest graduating class in the program's history! There appears to be approximately 20 students graduating in 2014.

## WCVM ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. CHRIS BELL**, MVMA REPRESENTATIVE

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

### 1. THE NUMBERS ARE UP!

- a. The WCVM saw a record number of applicants to veterinary school last year
- b. The entry grade point average is up over previous years as well
- c. The college sees continued enthusiasm for the coming years and anticipates continued growth of the applicant pool from all Provinces

### 2. ONE HEALTH PROMOTED

- a. The concept of One Health (combining the expertise of all health professions to a single goal of providing comprehensive health care initiatives for both people and animals) was discussed and promoted
- b. An impressive student-led presentation regarding the One Health concept was given
- c. Provinces are encouraged to incorporate the One Health concept into the VMA's mandates

### 3. CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETE

- a. The college is through the construction phase and new facilities are in use
- b. Students are benefiting from new learning environments and addition of state of the art equipment (new equine MRI, treadmill, small animal rehabilitation equipment etc.)

## PROFESSIONAL IMAGE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY DR. JAY THRUSH, COMMITTEE CHAIR

Social media has become a focus in marketing generally and the MVMA continues to grow its presence in this area. The MVMA focuses on the Facebook platform, recognizing that we do not have the resources required to have a foot in all types of social media; we do have a Twitter account, but are not actively tweeting.

We have seen great growth in the number of Facebook 'likes' we've received this year. And our posts are often 'shared' with the greater Facebook community. Some posts have reached nearly 1,000 people and we'd love to see this grow even more. One of the ways to do this is for clinics and members to 'like' our page and then 'share' our posts. We do our best to share relevant posts from clinics – helping to increase their reach, too! (Let us know if you have a Facebook page so we can 'like' you.)

Our Facebook posts are a balance between being fun and informative. The fun posts usually have the most reach and generate more 'likes' and 'shares' than informative ones. We use the fun posts to grow our audience so our informative posts can reach that greater audience. It is a slow process, requiring dedicated attention. This year we ran 'Festive Tips' in December - a new tip for twelve days. We saw a good response (through sharing and reach statistics) and were able to convert the 12 festive tips into a press release. We are going to try this approach for other topics in 2014.

We responded to focused media attention this past year. In April, CBC French TV did an excellent piece on veterinary pharmaceutical use and regulation. This is a topic that is very important to the MVMA and we were happy to provide a press kit. Dr. Marc Philpott made himself available for an extended interview on the topic. It was a well-balanced report that clearly outlined the MVMA position on this issue.

Also this fall, there were various media stories that cast a negative light on the veterinary profession. CBC Marketplace ran a nationally televised report (October 4, 2013) titled 'Barking Mad' and ABC's 20/20 aired a report (November 22, 2013) titled 'Some veterinarians sell unnecessary shots, tests to make extra money...'; both programs questioned fees, as well as the requirement for vaccinations and testing. In Manitoba, CBC Manitoba's I-Team aired a report (October 4, 2013) titled 'Veterinarians' price differences shock Manitoba pet owners'. This report was aired on local radio, television and online. It had a similar focus to 'Barking Mad', and drew content from this report. However, there were added questions about fee regulation, the complaint process and the publishing of complaint resolutions. Dr. Philipp Schott, Peer Review Committee Chair, admirably responded to these questions. CVMA had significant notice about the national report and kept its members (as well as the various provincial associations) up to date and armed with resources to respond to client, public and media questions. The MVMA posted these resources on its website for members to access as required.

MVMA members also spoke to the media on a variety of veterinary topics throughout the year. I would like to thank Drs. Leeanne Barga, Corey Bartley, Sheri Gould, Colleen Marion, Colleen O'Morrow, Nancy McQuade, Marc Philpott, Wayne Tomlinson, and Ron Worb for representing 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 when a story is run. Also, the MVMA can help you prepare for an interview. Alternatively, if you are contacted by media and do not feel comfortable commenting on a particular topic or item, please contact Andrea Lear at the MVMA office (alear@mvma.ca or 204-832-1276, ext.1).

"The Season is FUR Everyone" program ran in Brandon and Virden this year. Local clinics volunteered their support and partnered with several local animal rescues to ensure that the food collected was distributed to pets in need. The program did not run in Winnipeg in 2013, but we'll review interest to determine if it will be a go in 2014. Partnering with animal rescues may be a good alternative to donating to the Winnipeg Cheer Board. It might also allow clinics in rural Manitoba to more easily participate.

We are looking forward to planning for 2014. If you have any thoughts on how the MVMA can grow its image, or areas you would like to see us promote, I'd love to hear your ideas!

## FOOD ANIMAL REPRESENTATIVE

SUBMITTED BY DR. WAYNE TOMLINSON

The Food Animal Committee (FAC) was established in January 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 who wish to participate.

In the 2012 FAC report I wrote that the MVMA hoped to have one of our members closely aligned with various producer associations. This will give the association someone they can turn to for advice on animal health and welfare matters. In turn, it will give our association knowledge on issues our clients are facing as a group, not just on an individual basis. I am pleased to announce that we have filled the Dairy (Claus Leppelmann), Equine (Chris Bell), Poultry (Lorne Cruise), and Swine (Blaine Tully). The beef position is still in need of a volunteer, so please contact me if you are interested. Also, the sheep and goat associations would like to have a MVMA liaison and we are working to fulfil this request. To date these people have not been called upon and it will be a goal in 2014 to initiate the relationship between the liaison and the association.

Two CE sessions were held in November and December. Dr. Marg Seward and Dr. Max Popp represented CFIA and spoke on humane transportation and federal regulations. This was followed up by Dr. Terry Whiting of MAFRD speaking on provincial regulations and concerns with respect to large animal welfare. November's meeting was held in EOC (emergency operations center) at the Veterinary Services Laboratory on the U of M campus and the December meeting was at the Brandon CFIA Research Station. I would like to thank the CVO and CFIA respectively for use of the facilities. The venues are great and the MAFRD (Dr. Copeland) and CFIA (Dr Clayton) staff were a huge help in organizing the facilities.

On the horizon we are looking into future CE sessions in conjunction with the Dairy Farmers of Manitoba on their new Animal Care Program. If anyone has any further suggestions for future sessions please contact me or the MVMA office.



## MVMA – MAHTA REPRESENTATIVE

SUBMITTED BY **DR. MARC PHILIPPOT**

Over the last year, Manitoba Animal Health Technologists Association (MAHTA) has been working on their strategic plan to help improve their profession and image. They have a five year plan set and are working hard towards their identified goals. During this time, MAHTA and the MVMA have been improving communications between the two governing bodies. We have invited the MAHTA representative to sit at our council table as a guest, and we have been invited to sit on their council as a guest. This gesture has allowed us to understand, a little more, about our respective council/board and share more information between the two groups. MAHTA continues to see steady member growth, but is still looking into the reasons techs leave the profession. As well, MAHTA is now offering free membership to RRC AHT students; something they have never done before. MAHTA has also been bringing to the MVMA's attention the use of none techs, in veterinary clinics throughout Manitoba, who are doing AHT work. This is certainly an issue for MAHTA and we will continue looking into this with them.

## CVMA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

SUBMITTED BY **DR. BOB NEWFIELD,**  
CVMA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE

It was nice to see an increase in the number of survey responses for the year ending 2012. Manitoba had a 22% response rate, up from 18% the previous 2 surveys.

There is little good news from the year previous as we witnessed dipping consumer confidence in the economy hitting a low point towards the end of 2011. 2012 has seen a leveling off of consumer confidence but it has not approached levels seen before the big financial crisis of a few years ago. The last two surveys support the notion that as consumer confidence in the economy wanes, client visits also decrease. In 2011 we saw client visits across Canada decrease as confidence in the economy took a dive. In 2012, we see stagnating revenues across Canada.

Manitoba has performed reasonably well in these challenging times as we have exhibited the lowest expenses in the country resulting in Manitoba vets earning 6% more than the national average. However, for 2 consecutive years, veterinarians have seen stagnating revenues with rising expenses that erode net incomes. Trimming expenses in the face of flat revenues is one way to offset diminishing net revenues. Increasing client communications and some marketing savvy will help to increase client visits and increase revenues.

I urge you all to read the survey results as they are quite informative as to the state of veterinary medicine in Manitoba and Canada from an economic perspective. I would also recommend that hospital owners take the time to fill out the surveys, as a greater number of respondents will yield the most accurate information and feedback. The results you receive will be quite beneficial in making business decisions to improve your economic performance.

## MAHTA REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MVMA

SUBMITTED BY **MS. DEIRDRE BLACK,** MANITOBA ANIMAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGIST ASSOCIATION VICE PRESIDENT & MVMA LIAISON

The Manitoba Animal Health Technologist Association (MAHTA) has had one of our busiest years in recent history! We are busy trying to re-organize our association to bring higher standards of professionalism and to improve and build upon our existing services to our members. This initiative started with the formation of a five year strategic plan that MAHTA undertook last December. From this, we have been tasked with a number of goals to accomplish over the next five years. These goals cover three major focus areas: governance, member services and building our profession. With Year 1 coming to a close, we are beginning to see the fruits of our labours, but also feeling the pressure of the tasks ahead of us.

As part of this strategic plan, we've been working on strengthening our ties with the MVMA. Because our professions are so integrally linked, we felt that so too must our communication. We put forward a proposal to the MVMA at the start of the summer to entertain the idea of having a member of each association on the other's board/council. Gratefully, the MVMA agreed this would enhance communication and we have started a trial initiative by including a member from the other association as non-voting guests at each other's meetings.

We have also had a number of ad hoc committees formed from our strategic plan who are working on a number of initiatives for us including:

- Evaluating our continuing education policy making sure it meets the national standards
- Forming new board positions including Student Liaison and Members Relations Liaison positions.
- Working on our public relations.

From these ad hoc committees we have been tasked to re-evaluate the structure of our board. We are now in the process of reviewing board positions, responsibilities and reporting flow. This will allow us to enhance our board and ensure it meets the growing needs of our members. We are also working on updating our policies and bylaws to ensure they meet our requirements.

It has also been part of our mandate to show our membership exactly what their association does for them and how it benefits them. We have undertaken to give a new face to our association including new brochures, a new newsletter, as well as joining the social media world of Facebook.

This summer we also welcomed our new Office Assistant, Donna Taraschuck. She comes from an administrative assistant background and has been hugely beneficial to us helping us drive the association in a positive direction.

# COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

The Council Advisory Committee (CAC) is made up of past presidents and committee chairs. The goal of this committee is to advise the MVMA Council on past and current events as well as on 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. In 2013, the committee met twice; one in-person meeting and a second teleconference meeting. A third meeting, scheduled in November, was postponed until 2014.

Below is a summary of the activities of the committee in 2013.

## REVIEW OF VACANT VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

As the nominating committee, for positions other than council, the CAC will review volunteers and then provide a recommendation to Council to fill the various positions. MVMA Council will then review and approve (or decline) the CAC nominee.

Annually, the CAC also nominates sufficient candidates to ensure a full slate of candidates for the vacant council seats. Once a slate of candidates is identified, the CAC provides a list to the MVMA Executive Director to contact the various candidates to confirm their interest and acceptance of a nomination for MVMA Council. This year, eleven candidates were identified. Two candidates (Suzanne Davidson and Jason Kellsey) accepted their nomination.

This was an exciting year, as with two of the CAC candidates accepting their nomination plus a membership (Manjit (Manny) Sra) nomination, the MVMA had their first election in many years. I understand that the return for the election was an exceptional 60%+.

## NORTHERN MANITOBA RABIES VACCINATION PROGRAM

The CAC also reviewed a request from the CFIA to allow a non-veterinarian to give rabies vaccinations to dogs in the Churchill. There was a great discussion around the protection of veterinary medicine versus public health. There were specific limitations attached to this program (renewal annually, the non-veterinarian could not provide a rabies certificate). In the end, it was determined that the MVMA could not stand in the way of public health and prevent a non-veterinarian from providing rabies vaccines in a community where there are no veterinarians to provide the service.

## PHARMACEUTICAL ACCOUNTABILITY BY-LAW

The CAC was provided with background regarding a concern that had come to the MVMA office. The MVMA Registrar became aware of a situation where a member was purchasing veterinary pharmaceuticals without being attached to a clinic. Without being attached to a clinic, there are no requirements for record keeping, and it is difficult for MVMA inspectors to access any records and drug logs.

A bylaw from the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association Practice Inspection Practice Standard Quality Assurance Framework was reviewed. This bylaw requires all veterinarians practicing in Alberta to be registered with a "Veterinary Practice Entity". There is a provision that allows retired veterinarians to purchase pharmaceuticals for their own use. The CAC recommended to Council that the MVMA consider such a by-law to allow for greater monitoring on pharmaceutical compliance.

Since this recommendation, it is our understanding that a draft by-law was developed and reviewed by Council. This by-law was shared with various members for feedback. Consulted members expressed various concerns and the draft bylaw is being reworked

to consider these concerns while allowing for greater supervision of veterinary pharmaceuticals.

One of the most interesting discussions centred on the lengths the MVMA is required to go to establish regulations to ensure proper monitoring of pharmaceutical compliance. Considering how much regulation is required is always a good discussion when drafting new legislation.

Other items discussed included the need for an animal welfare representative, prescription diets, clinic types, and the definition of "temporary remote companion animal clinics" as well as its related distance requirement.

# PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

In 2013, the Peer Review Committee received 53 complaints in total (compared to 45 in 2012, 40 in 2011, 46 in 2010 and 46 in 2009), of which 21 went on to the formal written stage (compared to 9 in 2012, 14 in 2011, 10 in 2010 and 20 in 2009). As you can see, the numbers fluctuate and there are no particular reliable trends to discern.

As in past years, it is important to emphasize that informal '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 true complaints that are resolved informally by the Registrar, but many more are from people who simply want to vent or from people who are confused about something and are then satisfied after 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 informal verbal complaints as a kind of barometer.

With respect to the written complaints, it is important to point out that the Act permits anyone to formally complain about any member, regarding any concern they might have. We have no authority to filter out some of the more vexatious and trivial complaints. If the complainant insists on proceeding with a formal written complaint, they have the absolute right to do so. I mention this so that those of you who have been on the receiving end of a formal complaint understand that the formality of it does not necessarily correspond with the seriousness of it. The PRC does not make any determination whatsoever prior to proceeding with the formal process.

As in every year, the majority of the complaints in 2013, formal and informal, arose from some variation on the theme of 'communication'. That being said, I will mention that this year the PRC addressed a larger number of 'serious' complaints than usual. I believe this to be a coincidence or a 'blip' rather than an indication of a shift in the public or the profession. It is in fact 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 range across quite a broad spectrum, but I will 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 billing estimate.
- Failure to use appropriate, comprehensible language when speaking with clients. (Some of us have lost 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, I would like to emphasize that the PRC does not get to see the tens of thousands of interactions that go well! We do not 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 astonishing that the numbers of complaints are as consistently low as they are. Keep up the good work and all the best in 2014 to each and every one of you!

## WINNIPEG HUMANE SOCIETY LIAISON

SUBMITTED BY **DR. JONAS WATSON**, MVMA REPRESENTATIVE

In 2013, the Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS) focused its attention on two main priorities: the city's significant cat overpopulation problem, and the continued use of gestation crates by Manitoba pork producers.

Progress was made on the cat issue as The Responsible Pet Ownership By-Law, which proposed the implementation of cat licencing, was passed by city council. Cat licencing will go into effect in January, 2015, with fifty percent of licencing revenues used to fund spay and neuter efforts at the WHS. The passage of this by-law is a great victory for our city's homeless cats and the people who care for them.

The WHS held two "free cat adoption" days this year, during each of which, more than 200 cats were adopted into new homes. Other participating shelters brought cats to the WHS and were able to adopt them out as well. These "giveaway days" have proven an effective strategy for adopting out large numbers of cats when shelters are at capacity. Given the alternative of large scale euthanasia, these promotions seem a more palatable option, and have been associated with high retention rates of cats in newly adoptive homes.

In May 2013, the WHS veterinary clinic held a "Spay Day," during which staff spayed 100 cats. In the fall, the clinic began operating on Saturdays for the first time, with the sole purpose of spaying and neutering cats. An initiative planned for February 2014, is a campaign called "Beat the Heat," funded by a grant from PetSmart charities, that aims to spay and neuter 500 cats in one month. The campaign will focus on inner city neighbourhoods where the problem of cat overpopulation is particularly critical.

Most of the action undertaken by the WHS in the interest of farm animal welfare is done by the Farm Animal Compassion Committee (FACC). The FACC is a factory-farming watchdog group which campaigns against inhumane practices associated with intensive confinement of farm animals in Manitoba's industrial agriculture facilities. The committee's primary focus in 2013 was on Manitoba Pork's use of gestation crates for pregnant sows. The WHS, through the FACC, is currently pressuring Manitoba Pork to phase out the use of gestation crates by 2017 (as Maple Leaf Foods has committed to do) and to hold them accountable to their position that they are researching alternative systems.

Though the FACC has been focused primarily on pig welfare, it is the Committee's firm position that farm animals of all species be permitted to express natural and species-specific behaviours, including the ability to stretch limbs and wings.

Efforts by the WHS and the FACC in 2013 included publicizing pig welfare issues through social media, the design and sale of T-shirts messaging farm animal compassion (contact me if you're interested in purchasing one), and regularly hosting "Quit Stalling" campaign booths throughout the city, featuring "Penelope" the life-sized, crated, papier mache sow. Upcoming plans for 2014 include hosting an event with speakers (farmers, welfare advocates, etc.) in advance of Manitoba Pork's AGM in the spring of 2014.

Other noteworthy matters at the WHS over the past year have included:

- A reduction in the WHS's hours of operation in an effort to reduce expenses.
- The establishment of a program whereby the WHS can now accept donations of derelict vehicles.
- The balance of the WHS's mortgage being paid with a grant from the Kresge Foundation, earned for receipt of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.
- Several successful fundraising events, including "Paws in Motion," the "Bow Wow Ball," and the newest, the very well-attended "In the Ruff" golf tournament.
- The passing of the city's Responsible Pet Ownership By-Law, which banned the use of exotic animals in circuses, for which the WHS had lobbied for more than a decade.
- An influx of pet owners facing economic hardships to the WHS veterinary clinic, which at times strained staff's ability to contend with animals living at the shelter.
- The December 2013 sentencing hearing for the Gull Lake couple who plead guilty to seven offences under the Animal Control Act in one of the province's worst ever cases of animal hoarding (in 2010, the WHS helped remove 64 dogs from the Cherneckis' property, 34 of which had to be euthanized). Sentencing was deferred to late January 2014. The Crown is seeking a jail sentence, fines, and the recovery of expenses and court costs.

As I've indicated, a lot of good work was done in 2013 and 2014 will be just as busy. The Winnipeg Humane Society is grateful for any support Manitoba veterinarians may be willing to offer. Clinic fundraisers, "In Memoriam" donations for pets, and participation in WHS events, are all ways in which you can help the thousands of homeless and needy animals that pass through the shelter's doors. For more information about the MVMA's relationship with the Winnipeg Humane Society, please feel free to contact me anytime.

## PRACTICE INSPECTION, PRACTICE STANDARDS (PIPS)

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

The past year has been a relatively quiet one with few major issues. Updating of the PIPS bylaws is an ongoing work in progress. No sooner do we think we have one section completed, when new issues are identified that need to be addressed. A big 'thank you' to our Registrar, Michelle Martin-Strong, for keeping this process moving forward in good order.

I would like to thank all of our inspectors for their efforts in making the PIPS process work and Michelle for keeping everything on track.

I encourage all MVMA members to contact me and/or Michelle, with any concerns, comments, or suggestions regarding any part of the PIPS process.



# IN RECOGNITION OF...



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

*"IT IS EASY TO SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE. WHAT IS DIFFICULT IS GETTING UP AND TAKING ACTION."*

– Al Batt

## DR. COLLEEN MARION 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. Marion has made significant contributions to the MVMA. She has been a part of many ad hoc committees as well as standing committees including the "Great Manitoba Dog Party Committee" (as a member and chair) and the Council Advisory Committee. She is also our 'go to' for animal welfare items. Dr. Marion has also served on the MVMA Council and as the MVMA President. She even volunteered to be the MVMA President for a two year term – extending her council term to five years. And, finally, when the MVMA office was short-staffed, she filled in as our Registrar for a three month period. The MVMA Council is confident they have found a very deserving member to honour with this award.

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## DR. FRANK JUCK LIFE MEMBER AWARD

*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. Frank Juck worked as a diagnostic veterinary pathologist for Manitoba Agriculture from June 1, 1974 to Dec. 31, 2012 (38 years 7 months). After emigrating from Czechoslovakia, he graduated from the Ontario Veterinary College in 1972. He did a one year pathology internship in Guelph and a one year residency at WCVS Saskatoon. After joining Manitoba Agriculture in 1974, Dr. Juck obtained pathology board certification by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists in 1979. Dr. Juck was head of Clinical Pathology and Toxicology from 1982-2001. Dr. Juck's dedication to veterinary pathology has been significant in the successful operation of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

## DR. TERRY WHITING 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.*

Many veterinarians in Manitoba know Dr. Whiting – heck, he is recognizable by veterinarians across Canada and around the world! The MVMA member who nominated Dr. Whiting wondered why it took so long to acknowledge him as the MVMA's "Veterinarian of the Year". Dr. Whiting is well known as an animal welfare advocate and speaker. He has been recognized by the CVMA in 2011 as their Humane Award winner and in 2013 he was honoured with the CVMA's President's Award. Most recently, Dr. Whiting has been tackling the difficult issue of mental health in the veterinary profession. His presentation on this topic is personal and compelling, making many people recognize what an important issue this is and that we need to seek support (as required) and support those around us to ensure a healthy veterinary community.

**DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR THIS YEAR'S**

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**FEBRUARY 7-9, 2014**