

The Michigan VETERINARIAN

A magazine of the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association

Address Service Requested: Michigan Veterinary Medical Association | 2144 Commons Parkway, Okemos, MI 48864-3986



**Michigan Veterinary
Medical Association**

*Professional excellence.
Compassionate care.*



Total Practice
Solutions Group



BRET HALISHAK
C - 216.217.7822
O - 440.933.4522
BRET@TPSGSALES.COM



Q3
UPDATE

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL: DR. PAUL & GAIL YATSO - ONCONTO FALLS, WI

"Bret Halishak, what a privilege it has been for us to work with you. Your energetic personality, leadership, professionalism, and excellent sales knowledge and skills gave us the confidence we needed to ensure us that this venture was going to be a great success..."

From the very first conversation of listing the practice, to finding the perfect buyer, to the completion of the closing, you listened to our wants, needs, concerns, and you delivered!"



INDUSTRY MULTIPLES ON THE RISE

The veterinary industry has rebounded as consolidators are aggressively looking for 2+ DVM financially sound practices.

Reach out to see how your practice finances stand today!

SETUP YOUR OWN EXIT STRATEGY



Too profitable that no one can afford your practice?

Start working backwards on retirement! Employment agreements are getting longer, making it crucial to negotiate your exit timeline.

TPSG MICHIGAN PRACTICE LISTINGS

- **COMING SOON! (MI-9640)** Long-standing, small animal practice with strong staff. Call for more information.
- **Near Ohio/Michigan border.** Leased facility of 2,000 sq. ft. with four exam rooms, one surgery suite, an X-ray room, along with laboratory, treatment, and pharmacy areas. **(MI-9630)**
- **Eastern Michigan. Gross \$1M.** Established small animal practice with a great facility that can withstand future growth. Well-equipped with strong profitability, the new owner is to earn \$310,000 after mortgage and expenses. **(MI-9530)**

TPSG GREAT LAKES RECENT TRANSACTIONS

- **2 FTE, Grossing \$1.5mm** - Sold to a private buyer in **under a year!**
- **2.5 FTE, Grossing \$2.1mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under five months!**
- **4.5 FTE, Grossing \$3.6mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under eight months!**
- **3.5 FTE, Grossing \$4.1mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under six months!**
- **2.5 FTE, Grossing \$1.75mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under four months!**
- **7 FTE, Grossing \$5.15mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under seven months!**
- **3 FTE, Grossing \$2.32mm** - Sold to a corporate buyer in **under eight months!**
- **2 FTE, Grossing \$1.9mm** - Sold to a private buyer in **under six months!**



**Michigan Veterinary
Medical Association**

*Professional excellence.
Compassionate care.*

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Elaine Sheikh, President
Dr. Timothy Duncan, President-Elect
Dr. Henry Reinart, First Vice President/Treasurer
Dr. Kenny Rogers, Second Vice President
Dr. Matthew J. Hynes, Immediate Past President

DIRECTORS REPRESENTING DISTRICTS

Dr. Kelsey Deland, (1) Southern
Dr. Kerry Gilbert, (2) Michiana
& (3) Southwestern
Dr. Laura Miller (4) Jackson
Dr. Chelsea Render, (5) Washtenaw
& (9) Livingston
Dr. Emily Socks, (6) Wayne
& (8) Oakland
Dr. Michelle Meyer (7) Macomb
Dr. Jamie Morrison, (10) Mid-State
Dr. Mary Kinser, (11) Western
Dr. Daniel White, (12 & 13) Saginaw & Thumb
Dr. Chelsea Van Assche, (14) Northeastern
Dr. Megan Grant, (15) Northern

DIRECTORS REPRESENTING ASSOCIATIONS

Dr. Rebecca Dietlin, Southeastern MI VMA

AT LARGE DIRECTORS

Dr. Angel Abuelo Sebilo, MSU CVM
Dr. Melissa Dyson, Lab Animal Medicine
Dr. Jeff Bunn, Equine
Dr. Kayleigh Marinac-Prudente, Food Animal
Vacant, LVT Director
Vacant, Student Director

MVMA STAFF

Bonniifer Ballard, CEO
Rachel Boersma,
Director of Member Services
Kara Henrys, Director of Learning
& Strategic Partnerships
Anita Nystrom, Office Manager

Cover photo courtesy of Dr. Alex Strauch.

Publication management and production by:



3rd Floor - 2020 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0K4
Ph: 204-985-9780 www.kelman.ca

Managing Editor: Julia Waterer
Design/Layout: Kiersten Drysdale
Marketing Manager: Megan Stanley
Advertising Coordinator: Stefanie Hagidiakow

The Michigan Veterinarian is published quarterly
in March, June, September, and December.
Deadlines are the first of the preceding month.

Stacey Kukkonen, Magazine Content Manager



Features

8 WHY WE MUST LOVE VETERINARY MEDICINE

By Dr. Julie Cappel, DVM, CCFP

13 HELP MAKE PAWS & PLAY EVENT FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

14 MSU VETERINARY STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL MERCK BUSINESS CHALLENGE

By Stacey Kukkonen

17 A FEW REMINDERS FROM THE STATE VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE

By Nora Wineland, DVM, MS, DACVPM

20 AIR QUALITY IN MICHIGAN: A ONE HEALTH CONCERN

By Lori Thamel, One Health Committee

22 MVMA'S MICHIGAN ANIMAL HEALTH FOUNDATION ADDS VALUE TO MVMA MEMBERSHIP

23 MIVETCON 2026 CONTINUES TO INTRODUCE NEW FEATURES

24 UPDATES FROM THE MSU COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

25 UPDATES FROM THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY: ONGOING UNAVAILABILITY OF PTHRP AND LAUNCH OF ONLINE ORDERING

By Courtney Chapin, MA, PCM, Communications Manager,
MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

27 WELCOME BACK MVMA POWER OF TEN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Departments

5 CEO MESSAGE

By Bonniifer Ballard

7 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Elaine Sheikh DVM, MS CVAA, CVA

10 EVENTS CALENDAR

28 COMMITTEE UPDATES

32 MEMBER NEWS

37 MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Edward Brauer III, DVM





Searching for the perfect practice? Check out our current listings in Michigan...

MI: Southwestern - Small animal practice located in the Grand Rapids-Lansing-Kalamazoo triangle. The practice is well-equipped with a solid team and primed for growth. It is housed in a free-standing, 3,600 sq. ft. facility with excellent visibility. Both the practice and real estate are for sale. **(MI432)**

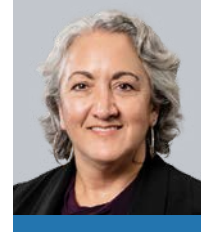
MI: Saginaw Area!! - This is a small animal, multi-doctor practice with revenues over \$2M that has been serving the area for nearly 70 years! The practice is housed in a 2,400 sq. ft., free-standing building that has 2 exam rooms, a treatment and lab area, a separate dental suite and all the usual amenities. It is well-equipped and has room for expansion. The current owner is open to staying part time. **(MI538)**

MI: Southern - Small animal practice located on the periphery of Kalamazoo-Battle Creek. Housed in a 2,800 sq. ft. facility with 2 exam rooms and all the usual amenities. It sits on a 40 acre property that is currently set up for horses, so there is plenty of room for expansion. Both the practice and real estate are for sale. **(MI522)**

MI: Eastern - Solo, small animal practice located about an hour northwest of Detroit. It is an attractive and growing practice that is housed in a well-maintained and well-equipped facility. The owner is ready to retire so both the practice and real estate are for sale. **(MI412)**

MI: Central - Established, solo, small animal hospital located in Okemos, MI. The practice is well-equipped and housed in a 1,800 sq. ft. facility with plenty of room for future expansion on the almost 4 acres of property. Both the practice and real estate are for sale. **(MI407)**

MI: Eastern - Small animal practice on the north side of Oxford just north of the Detroit metropolis. The practice has been kept small for a balanced life-work schedule but can be quickly grown. It is housed in a 1,200 sq. ft. facility with good visibility. Both the practice and real estate are for sale. **(MI235)**



We can do **hard things**

By Bonnifer Ballard, MLD, CAE

Maybe this phrase is new to you. I first heard it just over a year ago at the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference in Chicago. Keynote speaker Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe was talking about resilience. The entire session was excellent, but one phrase stayed with me. Recently, it became clear that more people – particularly women – need to hear it.

You can do hard things.

I was raised by a single mother who often worked two jobs. My mom never used that phrase, but doing hard things was woven into the fabric of our lives. She taught me resilience from a very young age. Since losing her two years ago, I have reflected often on the example she set – and on the strength it gave me.

Many of us experience imposter syndrome at some point. We carry insecurities, large or small, that can erode our confidence when we give them too much power. Yet, day after day, we push past those doubts and get things done.

You may be afraid of public speaking, but you swallow the lump in your throat and step up to the microphone anyway. You may dread a difficult conversation with a client, but you take a deep breath and have it anyway. Every day, you face challenges and overcome them – often without giving yourself any credit.

Start noticing. Start celebrating the fact that you can do hard things.

Sometimes the hard thing is feeling comfortable in your body, embracing your hair, loving whom you love, or finding the

courage to say what needs to be said. Still, you put on the outfit. You leave the house. You love. You speak up. You show up as yourself.

One of my favorite lines from one of my favorite guilty-pleasure books is: “One of the best parts of being a person is getting to make your own choices.”

Every day, you choose to do hard things – and people’s lives and animals’ lives are better because you do.

The next time you are struggling through a day when your insecurities feel especially loud, or when you wonder whether you truly belong where you are, remind yourself. Whisper it if you need to. Better yet, say it out loud:

You can do hard things.

Mad respect to all of you. I am humbled by what you choose to do every day. You are doing hard things, and the world is better because of it. 🐾



My grand-dog Patty, a bluetick coonhound, reminds us regularly that we can do hard things.



We're searching high and low for the right veterinarian to join our hospital!

At Clio Animal Hospital we believe our clients deserve the best service, and our patients are always treated like family. Our staff members are fabulous and strive to improve themselves through continuing education. We consider ourselves to be a great group of cooks as well, and really enjoy potlucks! Experienced and new graduates are welcome to apply. There are no weekend hours, no emergency hours, and all major holidays off. Impress every client, every time. That's our motto, and if you play your cards right, it could be yours too! What you can expect should you choose us:

- Competitive Salary and Production Bonus
- 4-Day Work Week
- Mentorship
- Buy-in opportunity
- Paid Licenses, Memberships, and Liability Insurance
- CE Allowance, Scrub Reimbursement
- Health Insurance and Life Insurance
- Generous PTO and Matching 401(k)

Please email resume to animalhospital3474@yahoo.com, Attn: Aubrey



Here For Pets Like *Benson*

Thanks to MedVet's Emergency Medicine team, Benson left MedVet happier and healthier **each time**.

MedVet's 24/7 ER is supported by our in-hospital specialties: **Critical Care, Neurology & Neurosurgery, and Surgery.**



**MedVet
Commerce**

Happy Fall, Michigan Veterinarians!



By Elaine Sheikh, DVM, MScVAA, CVA

One of the greatest strengths of the veterinary profession is our ability to creatively solve challenges with the resources available to us. We see this nearly every day of clinical practice. This skill extends far beyond our day-to-day practice and shapes how we interact with challenges in the profession. This summer, I had the opportunity to see that spirit firsthand as MVMA members gathered at town hall meetings hosted by MSU CVM and MVMA leadership across the state.

One of the major challenges affecting Michigan veterinary medicine is building and sustaining a strong veterinary technician workforce. MVMA has launched a task force in addition to the standing Veterinary Team Workforce Development Committee, as part of our mission to support the veterinary technician profession.

One exciting development discussed during the town halls is Michigan State University's launch of a new hybrid veterinary nurse program. By combining online coursework with in-person laboratory experiences, this program has the potential to expand access to veterinary nursing education for students who may not have been able to pursue a traditional campus-based program. It represents an innovative step toward increasing educational opportunities while helping meet the workforce needs of veterinary practices throughout Michigan.

Over the summer, the joint MVMA and MAVT task force held listening sessions as part of the joint task force initiative. The goal of that task force is to develop a clear, meaningful, and modern scope of practice for licensed veterinary technicians. Read an update on page 31.

Finally, the MVMA task force for veterinary technician awareness has been hard at work adapting resources for member veterinarians to use within hospitals. Posters and website content demonstrating scope of practice and career progression paths for veterinary assistants and technicians, including the relatively untapped VTS (Veterinary Technician Specialist) clinical medicine role, will help support the veterinary team. Equally important, we aim to increase client understanding of the important role of veterinary technicians.

The conversations we've had this summer remind me that no single organization can solve workforce challenges alone. Progress happens when we work together toward shared goals. I am grateful to MSU CVM, MVMA CEO Bonnifer Ballard, and the participants of the town halls who thoughtfully contributed their time and ideas to these important discussions.

Looking forward to the fall, I hope to connect with many of you at MiVetCon in my home city of Grand Rapids! You won't want to miss it. 🐾



Why We Must Love VETERINARY MEDICINE

BY DR. JULIE CAPPEL, DVM, CCFP



Do you ever get tired of hearing what is wrong with our profession? I certainly do.

It seems that every time we open social media or pick up a veterinary journal, we are met with messages about how difficult veterinary medicine has become. And yes, of course there are many challenges. We continue to navigate corporate influence, private equity pressures, financial concerns, staffing shortages, client expectations, and serious mental health struggles, including stress, burnout, and even suicide.

These are real and serious issues. They deserve attention, study, and thoughtful solutions. Many in our profession are actively working toward solving them.

But there is another side of our story that we must tell.

Veterinary medicine is now, and always has been, one of the most respected, meaningful, and rewarding professions in the world.

As I coach veterinarians and interview my podcast guests, I meet incredible people who do this work every day. Veterinary professionals are problem solvers, caregivers, leaders, and advocates. And while it is important to acknowledge our many challenges, it is equally important to remember the purpose, pride, and fulfillment that drew us here in the first place.

I would love us to shift the narrative, so here, for your consideration, are my ten reasons to love ourselves and the work we do:

1

WE ARE LEADERS.

Veterinarians are leading whether we consciously recognize it or not. We guide our teams, support our clients, and advocate for our patients. We develop leadership strength because every day requires us to practice courage, moral clarity, and compassion.

2

WE LIVE WITH INTEGRITY.

At the core of veterinary medicine is a strong ethical foundation. We strive to do what is right for our patients, even when it is difficult. That integrity builds trust and defines who we are.

3

WE CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC HEALTH.

Veterinarians contribute to public health by working on zoonotic disease prevention and food safety. Our work impacts our communities and entire populations around the world.

4

WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR WORK.

Few professions allow us to make such a tangible difference in the lives of both animals and people. That impact creates a deep and lasting sense of pride.





5

EVERY DAY BRINGS VARIETY.

No two days are ever the same. From routine wellness exams to complex medical cases – and from joyful moments to challenging ones – our work keeps us engaged and constantly learning.

6

WE ARE RESPECTED.

Despite occasional difficult client interactions and negative reviews, most clients deeply value and respect what we do. We are trusted with some of the most emotional moments and decisions in their lives. And outside the clinic, if we accidentally say, “I’m a veterinarian,” we are often met with admiration and curiosity about the work that we do. People generally like us.

7

WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY FOR FINANCIAL GROWTH.

While finances and student loans are a concern, veterinary medicine offers meaningful opportunities for financial stability and growth – especially for those willing to evolve, risk, learn, and lead in new ways.

8

WE ARE MEMBERS OF A CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY.

Veterinary medicine fosters connection. Within our hospitals and across the profession, we build meaningful relationships with colleagues who truly understand this unique path. Continuing education conferences and board meetings often feel like friendly reunions.

9

WE ARE GREAT PROBLEM SOLVERS.

We are trained to think critically and act decisively. Every case is a puzzle, and there is real satisfaction in finding answers and creating solutions.

10

WE GET TO WORK WITH ANIMALS.

At the heart of it all are the animals. Caring for them, advocating for them, and improving their lives is a privilege that never loses its meaning.

AND, I THINK, THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON OF ALL (AND NUMBER 11):

Love.
Love for the work.
Love for the animals.
Love for the people we serve.
And love for the profession itself.

Veterinary medicine is not perfect – but it is powerful, meaningful, and deeply needed. A society without animals would struggle, and a society without veterinarians to care for those animals would fail.

When we choose to focus on what is working, we strengthen not only our own mindset, but the profession. Let’s solve our problems while not defining veterinary medicine by the social media narrative. Let’s define it by the positive impact we make, the lives we touch, and the purpose we live every day.

Let’s love the work that we do! 🐾

Events Calendar



VIRTUAL EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7 MVMA Closed for Holiday	8	9 Small Animal Seminar: GI and Internal Medicine	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23  Lunch and Learn Webinar MiVetCon Registration Ends	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 MiVetCon 2026 Paws and Play	10
11 MiVetCon 2026	12	13	14	15  LVT Learning Collective Webinar	16	17
18	19	20	21  Lunch and Learn Webinar	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 Small Animal Seminar	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18  Lunch and Learn Webinar	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

DECEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Small Animal Seminar	10  LVT Learning Collective Webinar MVMA Annual Member Meeting	11	12
13	14	15	16  Lunch and Learn Webinar	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2



MVMA LUNCH AND LEARN WEBINARS

Your lunch break just got smarter.

Don't miss your opportunity to stay current with trusted, high-quality online CE designed for today's veterinary professionals. Our live and on-demand 1-hour seminars deliver timely, practical information in an easy-to-access format, making it simple to fit learning into your busy schedule. Our next webinars are packed with expert insights you won't find anywhere else. Join your colleagues, stay ahead of the curve, and make sure you're not the one hearing about the takeaways second-hand.

September 23

Rabies Testing for Veterinary Professionals: Best Practices for Process and Submission

October 21

Eye Spy: Spotting Common Ocular Issues with Confidence

November 18

Better Boundaries, Better Medicine

December 16

From Culture to Cash Flow: How Inclusive Leadership Strengthens Veterinary Practices

Learn more at www.mivma.org/lunch-and-learn-webinar-2026-series.

Each session may be viewed live or on demand. 🐾



MVMA SMALL ANIMAL SEMINAR SERIES

With both in-person and virtual participation options, the 2026-2027 Small Animal Seminar series (SAS) is the perfect way to access cutting edge techniques from nationally known practitioners. Those participating in-person for at least two seminars will meet the in-person CE requirement needed for license renewal in Michigan.

November 4

Emergency Medicine

December 9

Dermatology

March 17

Ophthalmology

April 14

Communications and Team Leadership

May 12

Feline Medicine

Learn more and register at www.mivma.org/small-animal-schedule. 🐾

MVMA LVT LEARNING COLLECTIVE WEBINARS

This new webinar series was built specifically for LVTs. These webinars deliver practical, real-world skills you can apply immediately.

October 15

Ultrasound Skills: Tips and Techniques

December 10

From Stress to Stability: Behavior Medical Management in Practice

Learn more at www.mivma.org/lvt-learning-collective-webinars

Each session may be viewed live or on demand. 🐾





MVMA'S MICHIGAN ANIMAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

PAWS & PLAY

FRIDAY
OCT 9TH

5:00PM-
7:30PM

GAME NIGHT FUNDRAISER



@ AMWAY GRAND -
PANTLIND BALLROOM

DRINKS

HORS D'OEUVRES

SILENT AUCTION

Join us for MVMA's Michigan Animal Health Foundation annual Game Night fundraiser - an evening of tailgate fun with carnival inspired games, a silent auction, and great food and drinks!

Donate for a Cause

Help Make Paws & Play Event Fundraiser a Success



Don't miss this year's newly reimagined fundraising event at MiVetCon – the Michigan Animal Health Foundation's Paws & Play! This exciting evening will be filled with games, meaningful networking, and plenty of opportunities to win incredible prizes, all while raising funds to support the Foundation's mission.

To make this event a success, we're looking for donations for both our silent auction and chance auction. Whether you're able to donate an overnight getaway, gift basket, restaurant or retail gift card, concert or sporting event tickets, unique experiences or themed gift packages, every contribution makes a difference.

Please contact the MVMA office at mahf@mivma.org or call 517-347-4710 to express your interest in donating an auction item by September 24. 🐾



Online Mandatory MI Continuing Education for Veterinarians

Online & On-Demand | RACE Approved | Multiple Course Options for Mandatory CE and Beyond

Medical Records & Veterinary Law

1 Hour in Medical Records & 1 Hour in Veterinary Law
Required to obtain or renew a license

Example Offerings:

- Michigan Medical Records & Veterinary Law (2 hrs)
- Top 10 Medical Record-Keeping Deficiencies (1 hr)
- Beyond the SOAP: Medical Record-Keeping (1 hr)
- Client Consent and Communications (1 hr)



Expert-Led

Learn from a veterinarian and attorney with real-world clinical and legal expertise.



Practical

Satisfy mandatory requirements while developing strategies and enhanced tools to meet the demands of practice today.



Convenient

Complete courses online, on your own schedule, from anywhere.

What Veterinarians Are Saying...

"It served a purpose, it was no nonsense, and I learned a few things I have only been doing wrong for 40 years."

"You have created an amazing set of courses. It's the best overall offering available online."

"This is the most thorough CE I have encountered on legal, medical and ethical aspects of opioid use and how it relates to the veterinary field."

"Incredibly helpful in clarifying how controlled substance laws apply directly to veterinarians."

animalandveterinarylaw.com

MSU Veterinary Students Win National Merck Business Challenge

BY STACEY KUKKONEN

For John Liddle, the idea of owning a veterinary practice once looked a lot less like professional independence and a lot more like working until 10 pm most nights.

One of his earliest mentors in veterinary medicine owned a private practice in West Bloomfield. Liddle admired her intelligence and work ethic, but when he came in on weekends to care for overnight patients, he would often find her still working.

"I love veterinary medicine," the Michigan State University student said. "But I'm not sure ownership is for me."

A national veterinary business competition would eventually make him reconsider.

Liddle, along with fellow MSU veterinary students Selena Gomez and Emily Newborne, took first place in the 2026 Merck Animal Health Veterinary Simulation Business Challenge, a national competition designed to give veterinary students experience managing the business side of medicine.

The competition is sponsored by Merck Animal Health and promoted through the Veterinary Business Management Association, a student organization focused on helping future veterinarians develop business and practice-management skills alongside their clinical education.

"It works to build a group of veterinary students that are competent not only in our clinical understanding of medicine, but also in the application of those business principles," Liddle said. "So, we can graduate as fully functioning veterinarians who know how to run a practice, fight for higher pay, better benefits, and all of that."



John Liddle and Emily Newborne receive their award at the AVMA Convention.

The competition ran from early March through mid-April and challenged teams from veterinary schools across the country to operate a virtual small-animal hospital through a multi-year simulation.

During the early rounds, the students faced the kinds of day-to-day decisions practice owners encounter regularly, he said. An employee is late. How should management respond? Equipment breaks. What is the best financial decision?

"We basically made case-to-case decisions," Liddle said. "The X-ray machine broke, how do you handle it? You have this marketing decision; how do you handle it?"

As the competition progressed, the focus shifted heavily toward budgeting

and finance. Teams determined how much to invest in marketing, employees, equipment and facilities while tracking several measures of the hospital's performance.

"We had to manage our free cash," he said. "We had to manage profits, revenue, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. It was hours of just testing numbers, seeing how the simulation would run them differently."

The students also competed against simulated veterinary hospitals offering different combinations of pricing, quality and service. That meant there was rarely one obvious correct answer. Every decision could improve one part of the business while creating challenges elsewhere.



L to R: Dr. Steve Carey, Newborne, and Liddle.



Merck representatives with Newborne and Liddle.

For Liddle, the financial component was the most difficult. Fortunately, the three-person MSU team brought complementary strengths.

"Emily did a bunch of business work in high school and her mom's an accountant, so she absolutely dominated our financial side," he said. "I think Selena was a perfect all-around player because she was able to take everything at face value and make good decisions alongside Emily."

Liddle found himself gravitating toward another area.

"I was more of the marketing design guy," he said. "I got paired with two of the most intelligent women in our program, and I'm so grateful for it."

After six rounds of competition, Michigan State advanced to the final round alongside teams from the University of Wisconsin, Iowa State, Florida and Washington State.

The finalists were tasked with presenting the hospital they had built and managed throughout the simulation. They had to explain their decisions, demonstrate how they made the practice successful and recommend what its new owners should do next. Michigan State finished first.

The victory earned Liddle, Gomez and Newborne \$10,000 scholarships each, along with \$1,000 stipends to attend the American Veterinary Medical Association convention. The team also received first-place awards, while a

“There are so many amazing support staff and so much counsel that you can get from your peers that really make it seem not impossible, but very much doable to start your own practice.”

rotating plaque recognizing the winning school will remain at MSU until next year's competition. For Liddle, however, the experience offered more than a financial prize.

Originally from Northville, Michigan, Liddle is approaching his fifth year at MSU after completing three years of undergraduate study in biology and human biology before entering veterinary school.

He is still exploring what direction his career might take.

"I've changed my mind a million times over," he said. "The goal is to go into some kind of ownership or specialty, but I think it would be a disservice to myself to say I know what I'm going to do when I've changed my mind five times after exploring all the opportunities of vet school."

This summer, Liddle is completing a veterinary student fellowship in laboratory animal medicine at the University of Michigan, working alongside residents and conducting a research project. He also serves as a student

representative for Banfield Pet Hospital and Ru Veterinary Relief Management.

But the Merck competition added practice ownership back onto his list of possibilities.

"I'd say this competition mostly changed my viewpoint on practice ownership," he said. "Yes, the competition was difficult and tough, but it kind of made me realize ownership isn't out of the question."

He still does not envision building a practice entirely by himself, he said. Instead, the competition showed him the value of surrounding himself with people whose skills complement his own.

"There are so many amazing support staff and so much counsel that you can get from your peers that really make it seem not impossible, but very much doable to start your own practice," he said.

For Liddle, that may ultimately be the most valuable prize of all.

"It gave me that sense of confidence and drive to reconsider my options and figure out what's right for me," he said. 🐾

YOUR 24/7 ER PARTNER

Leave emergency to us, so you can do what you do best.

With VEG, you have an ER partner you can rely on day and night.

- VEG complements your practice with a seamless client experience
- Customers can call and speak immediately with an ER vet
- We send updates and consult with you anytime

ER services include:

- 24/7 hospitalization
- Endoscopy
- Radiology & Ultrasound
- Surgery

Locations in Ann Arbor, Northville, and East Grand Rapids.



SDMA is now built into Catalyst Chemistry CLIPs

A simpler way to order, store, and run the Catalyst™ SDMA Test.

SDMA belongs in every chemistry profile. Which is why we built it into our core chemistry CLIPs (Chem 18, Chem 16, Chem 11, and NSAID 7), bringing earlier kidney insight to every chemistry run.

By including SDMA in every run, kidney function decline is detected sooner. These preloaded CLIPs simplify your workflow by removing manual steps and streamlining purchasing and inventory, and one price means no additional line item.

To learn more, scan the QR code or visit idexx.com/SDMAbuiltin

© 2026 IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. All rights reserved. - 09-2692922-00
All ®/TM marks are owned by IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. or its affiliates in the United States and/or other countries.
The IDEXX Privacy Policy is available at [IDEXX.com](https://idexx.com).



IDEXX

A Few Reminders from the State Veterinarian's Office



By Nora Wineland, DVM, MS, DACVPM

As the fall season begins, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's State Veterinarian's Office would like to offer a few reminders.



Willing to share your opinion? Help define the 2027 designated veterinarian shortage situations.

Michigan needs more veterinarians – especially in rural areas and in large animal medicine. Your feedback is vital to help define the 2027 designated veterinarian shortage situations, which are the foundation of two federal programs supporting veterinarians.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture created the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) and the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) to financially support veterinarians working in food animal medicine within designated shortage situations, which are updated annually and informed by feedback.

The VMLRP is a loan repayment program designed to help any veterinarian who has qualifying educational loan debt and provides service in a designated high-priority shortage situation. The program compensates veterinarians by providing DVM-related loan repayment of up to \$40,000 per year for three years. While VMLRP primarily provides compensation for

student loans, it also accommodates loans used for educational materials or housing during a veterinarian's time of study.

The VSGP goes a step further. This competitive grant program provides grants to those within designated shortage situations who want to establish or expand their veterinary practices by equipping veterinary offices, sharing overhead costs, and/or establishing mobile veterinary facilities.

Overall, the benefit and impact of these two programs hinges on how effectively the designated shortage situations are defined. Being able to set these areas in locations that will attract applicants as well as where there is a clear need is necessary to take full advantage of these funding opportunities. Sharing your insights and feedback is pivotal to strengthening the veterinary profession in Michigan's rural communities.

Please take a moment to follow the QR code and fill out a brief survey on designated shortage areas or send an email directly to me (winelandn@michigan.gov), by October 23, 2026.



Want all the latest buzz on New World screwworm?
Information and resources can be found on USDA's site
screwworm.gov or MDARD's michigan.gov/screwworm.

On June 3, 2026, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) confirmed the first detection of New World screwworm (NWS) in the United States in a calf from Texas. Since then, there have been additional detections of the pest in domestic animals from Texas and New Mexico. While cattle are the primary species being affected, screwworm has also been detected on sheep, goats, and dogs.

Currently, **there have been no detections of NWS in Michigan.** By maintaining our vigilance through checking animals for enlarging wounds, maggots, and other signs of infestation or discomfort as well as helping ensure clients adhere to animal movement requirements, we can all work to protect animal health and keep this pest out of Michigan.

Response Efforts

In Michigan

To help further protect Michigan's domestic animals, new NWS import movement requirements went into effect on June 17, 2026, and can be found at michigan.gov/animalimport. These requirements are to be followed in addition to the regular animal movement requirements outlined for each species and primarily affect animals moving from states where there has been a confirmed detection of NWS or from a state that borders one of these affected states. If there are any questions



Source: Texas Farm Bureau

regarding these requirements, please contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) at 800-292-3939.

In addition to these requirements, MDARD has now created its own NWS page: michigan.gov/screwworm. The page provides some basic information about the pest and links to key resources.

In the United States

Federal, state, local, and industry partners continue to work on addressing detections of NWS. Due to the strength of their work, the USDA will conduct a phased reopening of southern cattle ports, which was suspended since May 2025.

For the most up-to-date information and resources on NWS, please continue to visit screwworm.gov, a website dedicated to serving as an informational hub about the pest for producers, veterinarians, and more.

Continued Vigilance

As a reminder, NWS can affect any warm-blooded animal, including pets and (in rare cases) people. Occasionally, the larvae also affect wild and domestic bird species. NWS most often enters an animal through a break in the skin or an exposed mucous membrane and feeds on the animal's living flesh, causing serious damage to tissue that could be fatal.

Screwworm infestations are difficult to detect at first. Be sure to check animals for draining or enlarging wounds, signs of discomfort/irritation, and the smell of decay. Also, look for screwworm larvae or eggs, which are creamy white in color and deposited near the edges of wounds.

If you suspect an animal is infested with screwworm, please contact MDARD **immediately** at 800-292-3939 (daytime) or 517-373-0440 (after-hours) as this is an emergency reportable animal disease. As with any reportable disease, your vigilance is key to keeping Michigan's domestic animals healthy and safe. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have a suspect case.



CATS
RADIOIODINE
TREATMENT CENTERS

Your feline patients with hyperthyroidism
can have an effective cure with competitive cost
when compared to either surgery or
long-term medication.

Call any of our offices for more information.

Steven J. Bailey DVM, DABVP (Feline), Director

OAKLAND COUNTY AREA	
EXCLUSIVELY CATS VETERINARY HOSPITAL	248-666-5287
MACOMB COUNTY AREA	
CATS VETERINARY	586-463-9550
DOWNRIVER / TOLEDO AREA	
LINCOLN PARK VETERINARY HOSPITAL	313-389-2222
KENT COUNTY AREA	
KENTWOOD CAT CLINIC	616-241-6369



**Able to help with bovine tuberculosis testing?
Contact MDARD to provide testing services in your area.**

While bovine tuberculosis (TB) is a familiar disease issue for Michigan's cattle industry, what might not be known is how you can help manage this disease as a private veterinarian.

Bovine TB is present in the free-ranging white-tailed deer population in specific areas of northeastern lower Michigan, and the disease can be transmitted between deer and cattle. As a result, there are currently two TB zones within the state: a four-county area (Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Oscoda counties) known as the Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) and the remainder of the state is referred to as the Accredited Free Zone (AFZ).

Routine surveillance testing of cattle and bison herds is regularly needed in the MAZ and in portions of the counties that border this zone to ensure the health of Michigan's cattle herds. Also, with the detection of bovine TB in herds from Charlevoix and Iosco counties earlier this year, surveillance testing will be required in additional areas around these detections.

If you are interested in helping with these testing efforts, have clients within these testing areas that you would like to assist,

“Assisting with these testing efforts not only provides a unique opportunity to help with disease management strategies within the state but also helps maintain the strength and vitality of Michigan’s cattle industry.”

or have questions, please contact MDARD's Atlanta Field Office at 989-785-5616.

Assisting with these testing efforts not only provides a unique opportunity to help with disease management strategies within the state but also helps maintain the strength and vitality of Michigan's cattle industry.

Questions? Contact us.

If there are ever any animal health-related questions, please feel free to contact MDARD at 800-292-3939 for assistance.

Thank you for all of your efforts to protect the health of Michigan's domestic animals. 🐾

Air Quality in Michigan:

A ONE HEALTH CONCERN

BY LORI THEMEL, ONE HEALTH COMMITTEE

Most of us in Michigan experienced the downwind effects of Canadian wildfires this summer. It was a stark reminder of how important clean air is – and that no one can solve air pollution alone. Protecting air quality requires a community effort and poor air affects everyone.

The same environmental pollutants that affect people also affect companion animals, livestock, wildlife, and the ecosystems we all share. While wildfire smoke captured our attention this year, it is only one of many air quality concerns in Michigan.

URBAN AIR POLLUTION

In Michigan's urban areas, air pollution comes from traffic, industrial activity, construction dust, and other combustion sources. Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, and other pollutants can irritate the eyes and respiratory tract, worsen asthma and chronic bronchitis, and increase cardiovascular stress.

Pets are exposed during walks, outdoor exercise, and time spent in yards near busy roads or other pollution sources. Dogs with chronic bronchitis, collapsing trachea, brachycephalic airway syndrome, or heart disease may be especially sensitive to poor air quality. Horses and livestock can also experience



reduced respiratory function when exposed to elevated levels of particulate matter or smoke.

RURAL AIR QUALITY CONCERNS

Rural communities face their own air quality challenges. Agricultural dust, equipment exhaust, seasonal field work, and outdoor burning all contribute to local air pollution.

Michigan's open burning regulations recognize that burning unwanted

materials releases smoke and pollutants directly into the air, creating respiratory irritation, unpleasant odors, and other health concerns (michigan.gov).

Although some rural residents burn leaves, brush, or yard waste, burning household garbage is much more hazardous. Plastics, treated wood, synthetic materials, and other waste can release fine particles and toxic combustion products that are harmful to nearby people, pets, livestock, and wildlife.



Campfires are another familiar part of Michigan's outdoor culture, especially during the fall camping and hunting seasons. While much smaller than wildfires, campfire smoke can still affect the respiratory health of people and animals nearby.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY MATTERS

Air quality is just as important indoors, particularly during Michigan winters when people and animals spend more time inside. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency notes that indoor air can sometimes contain higher concentrations of pollutants than outdoor air.

Common indoor air pollutants include:

- Tobacco smoke and vaping
- Wood-burning fireplaces
- Candles
- Cooking emissions
- Mold
- Dust
- Cleaning chemicals
- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)

Other contributors include pet dander and allergens, contaminants tracked indoors, and rodent infestations (U.S. EPA).

WHAT VETERINARIANS CAN DO

Veterinarians can help clients improve air quality for both people and animals by recommending practical steps, including:

“Air quality is just as important indoors, particularly during Michigan winters when people and animals spend more time inside.”



- Checking the daily Air Quality Index (AQI) before prolonged outdoor exercise
- Keeping windows closed during smoke events
- Using high-efficiency HVAC filters (MERV-13 or higher, when compatible with the system)
- Maintaining portable HEPA air cleaners
- Avoiding indoor smoking or vaping
- Reducing the use of candles and other combustion sources

During periods of poor air quality, walks should be shortened, strenuous exercise postponed, and pets with respiratory disease kept in clean, filtered indoor environments (michigan.gov).

Veterinarians are uniquely positioned to recognize the connection between environmental and animal health. Asking about a pet's environment – including exposure to wildfire smoke, open burning, household air quality, or outdoor activities – can provide valuable clues when evaluating respiratory disease.

Air quality reminds us that human, animal, and environmental health are inseparable. Whether the source is urban pollution, agricultural activities, open burning, campfire smoke, or indoor pollutants, improving the air we share benefits Michigan's communities, farms, wildlife, and the animals that live alongside us.

REFERENCES

1. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). *Open Burning*.
2. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). *FAQ: Burning and Open Burning*.
3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Indoor Air Quality*.
4. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Indoor Particulate Matter*.
5. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Sources of Indoor Particulate Matter (PM)*.
6. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Biological Pollutants and Indoor Air Quality*. 🐾



MVMA's Michigan Animal Health Foundation Adds Value to MVMA Membership

This question was recently asked, “how does MAHF bring value to MVMA members?” A fair question and one with easy answers.

- The MAHF can help attract new MVMA members, particularly younger professionals who value philanthropy and want to belong to an organization committed to giving back.
- MVMA members can strengthen community relations by sharing with clients that their professional association supports animal health and welfare through its charitable foundation. This connection is especially valuable when clients ask veterinarians to recommend organizations worthy of their support.
- MVMA's affiliation with the MAHF can also support employee recruitment, retention, and engagement. Practices may further demonstrate their commitment by offering employee matching gifts to the MAHF.
- Through the Companion Animal Fund, the MAHF provides grants through MVMA member veterinarians to help qualifying clients afford necessary veterinary care. When effectively communicated, the program benefits members, clients, companion animals, MVMA, and the MAHF.
- MVMA members also benefit from the knowledge generated through MAHF-funded applied research and educational grants. Grant outcomes are shared in *The Michigan Veterinarian* and through other organized veterinary medicine channels.
- By supporting the MAHF, MVMA members can make a lasting difference in the lives of animals and people while gaining a deeper sense of purpose and connection to the profession.
- Donations to the MAHF may qualify for charitable tax deductions. The MAHF can also serve as a charitable vehicle for legacy giving, family foundation planning, endowment gifts, and estate planning in coordination with donors' financial and legal advisors. 🐾

For more information about the MAHF and the various ways you can enjoy the benefits of the Foundation and become involved and support the MAHF charitable programs, please visit www.michanimalhealthfoundation.org.



MI VET CON
MICHIGAN VETERINARY CONFERENCE

2026

MiVetCon 2026 Continues to Introduce New Features

OCTOBER 9-11, 2026, DEVOS PLACE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI

The premiere veterinary conference in Michigan offering quality in-person CE, access to resources and a sense of community. Don't miss it.

New this year! The MiVetCon Buyers Guide makes it easier than ever to connect with exhibitors offering the products, services, and solutions that help your practice thrive. Explore innovative resources, discover new partners, and plan your time in the exhibit hall so you don't miss the companies that can make your day-to-day practice more efficient and successful. See this new research online on the MVMA website and in the Winter issue of *The Michigan Veterinarian*. Be sure to use this resource to support the companies that support the CE that's important to you.

More hands-on opportunities to learn than ever before! Don't miss your chance to take your skills beyond the lecture hall.

New and expanded hands-on practical and wet labs offer immersive learning experiences where you can practice techniques, build confidence, and learn directly from expert instructors. Space is limited, and these popular sessions fill quickly – register now to secure your spot.

MiVetCon isn't just another conference. It's the conference for veterinary professionals who want to stay ahead of the curve. Created by vets, for vets, this event brings together an elite lineup of expert speakers ready to take you deep into real-world, interactive sessions that you can apply in your practice right away. With over 90 dynamic sessions, there's something for everyone. If you're not there, you're missing out. 🐾

Discounted registration ends September 23:
www.mivma.org/mivma-mivetcon.

Onsite registration is welcome.



Updates from the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine

Over the past two years, the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine and MVMA have partnered to host Town Hall events across the state. We are grateful for the tremendous reception these gatherings have received, and for the thoughtful conversations about issues that matter to veterinarians, veterinary nurses, practice managers, and communities.

Thank you to everyone who has joined us.

Here are ways your feedback have informed College initiatives: We launched an alumni and friends externship showcase to connect DVM and Veterinary Nursing students with externship and employment opportunities. We brought alumni reunions back to Homecoming. Changes within the DVM curriculum are providing students with increased surgical and dentistry experience. And we continue exploring ways to recruit more veterinary graduates in rural and underserved communities.

There is more underway, and we look forward to continuing these discussions.

DISTANCE LEARNING VETERINARY NURSING PROGRAM

MSU is advancing plans to establish a distance learning pathway within its Veterinary Nursing Program, expanding access to high-quality veterinary nursing education while maintaining rigorous standards and strong student outcomes.

The proposed Associate of Applied Science degree will combine asynchronous online coursework with hands-on clinical training, offering students greater flexibility while ensuring they receive comprehensive practical

experience. Clinical training will be completed either through experiential learning at approved veterinary practice sites or during intensive on-campus laboratory sessions held each summer.

Students will build clinical competencies through standardized assessments, skills tracking, and close faculty mentorship, benefiting from the same commitment to excellence that has distinguished MSU's Veterinary Nursing Program for nearly six decades.

The proposed program is currently moving through the University's governance process. Pending final approval, the College anticipates welcoming its first cohort of distance-learning students in fall 2027.

VETERINARY COLLEGE OF THE FUTURE

Veterinary medicine has evolved dramatically since MSU opened its veterinary teaching hospital in the 1960s. Pet owners increasingly expect the same advanced diagnostics, specialty care, and technology available in human medicine, while today's students learn in ways that would have been unimaginable a generation ago.

To remain a national leader in veterinary education, research, and patient care, our College – and the facilities that support it – must evolve alongside the profession.

This summer, College leaders and planning teams have been traveling across the country to explore the latest advances in clinical care, research, teaching, technology, and facility design. Those visits, together



with input from our faculty, students, staff, alumni, university leaders, and veterinary professionals, are helping us think expansively about what the next generation of veterinary education, discovery, and care should look like at MSU.

Planning encompasses new educational and research facilities – and a new teaching hospital. In keeping with MSU's land-grant mission, we are also exploring spectrum-of-care teaching facilities and ways to expand services for underserved communities. The planning process is expected to produce an initial blueprint in late 2026.

As these initiatives progress, we remain grateful for the partnership of MVMA members and veterinary professionals across the state. The conversations at our Town Halls – and throughout the year – help us better understand the profession's needs and identify where MSU can make a meaningful difference. 🐾



Updates from the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory:

Ongoing Unavailability of PTHrP and Launch of Online Ordering

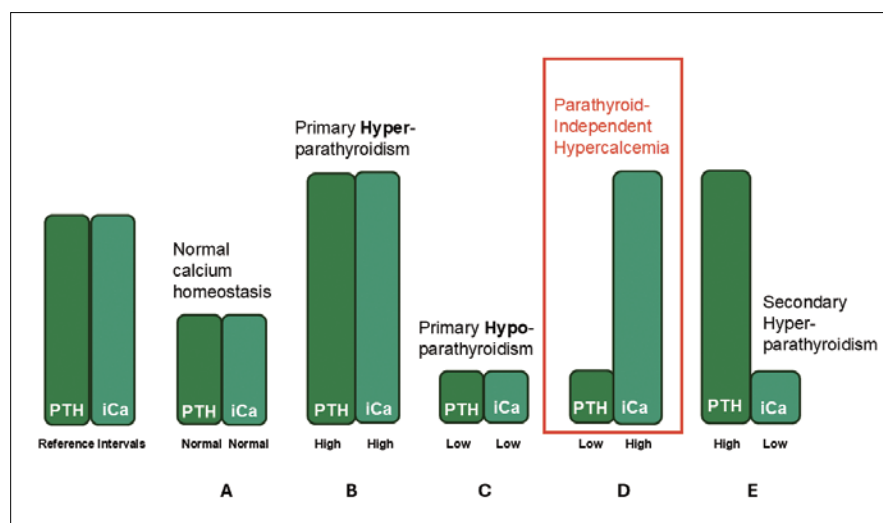
By Courtney Chapin, MA, PCM, Communications Manager, MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

MAXIMIZING THE DIAGNOSTIC UTILITY OF AVAILABLE CALCIUM TESTING DURING ONGOING UNAVAILABILITY OF PTHrP ASSAYS

Early this spring, the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MSU VDL) announced that we cannot measure parathyroid hormone-related protein (PTHrP) using our previous assay due to unexpected and significant supply chain disruption. As a result, our parathyroid hormone-related protein test (20004) and our malignancy profile (20030) remain unavailable while we work to validate a new assay.

During this period, our parathyroid hormone and ionized calcium profile (20033) should be ordered instead of the malignancy profile. The difference between these two profiles is the additional measurement of PTHrP in the malignancy profile. While measurement of PTHrP *adds support for* humoral hypercalcemia of malignancy, it is important to remember that a normal (or negative) concentration of PTHrP does not exclude the possibility of malignancy. Malignancy may still be present even if the PTHrP concentration is not increased.

To support our clients navigating diagnostic cases during this time, we recently published an article written by



Dr. Cheryl Rice, assistant professor in our Endocrinology Section. *Maximizing the Diagnostic Utility of Available Calcium Testing* is an in-depth follow up to information presented by Dr. Rice at MVMA's May Lunch and Learn webinar. If you or your teams have questions about patterns of results and interpreting cases in the absence of PTHrP, please see the article on our website at animalhealth.msu.edu for more information.

We know this is an important diagnostic test for our clients and the patients

entrusted to your care. To our knowledge, we are the only veterinary diagnostic laboratory that measures parathyroid hormone-related protein (PTHrP). PTHrP measurement is widely used in human medicine and is performed almost exclusively by human laboratories. We are actively working on a new test method, but do not have a timeline for when it will be available. We are committed to bringing the PTHrP test back as quickly as possible, but we will not sacrifice test quality and reliability for the sake of expediency.

"We are committed to bringing the PTHrP test back as quickly as possible, but we will not sacrifice test quality and reliability for the sake of expediency."

LAUNCH OF ONLINE ORDERING

The MSU VDL is excited to announce the launch of our new online ordering portal! We hope clients find this new system easy to use and choose online ordering for many of their test requests.

The MSU VDL Online Ordering Portal can be used like many other familiar online ordering systems. Almost everything we offer can be ordered online with a few general exceptions: multiple

animal (herd-based) submissions, most necropsies, and shipping solutions. *If the test or service you need doesn't have an 'Add to Cart' button, please use a regular submittal form instead of the online ordering system.*

We do not require clients to use the online ordering portal. If you prefer to use a regular submittal form instead, please use the most current forms on our website. Whichever ordering method

you choose, a printed submittal form or order confirmation form should accompany each submission.

Please see the information available on our website at animalhealth.msu.edu for instructions on setting up your account, using the system, and frequently asked questions.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, DON'T MISS THE MSU VDL AT MIVETCON!

MiVetCon is just around the corner, and you won't want to miss connecting with us in the exhibit hall on Friday, October 9. Beyond the exhibit hall, Dr. John Buchweitz, Toxicology and Nutrition section chief, will present three sessions Friday morning:

- Handling Possible Toxic Exposures in Companion Animals
- Updates on Toxic Reaction to Illicit Stimulants in Animals
- Therapeutic Drug Monitoring

We love the opportunity to connect and share our expertise with Michigan veterinary teams and hope to see you in Grand Rapids in October! 🐾



MVMA maintains an active Legislative Advisory Committee prepared to protect the interest of veterinarians and veterinary staff with regard to state and federal legislation

-RUN WITH THE PACK-

VET-PAC

DONATE TODAY

Michigan Veterinary Medical Association Political Action Committee

Welcome Back

MVMA Power of Ten Leadership (POTL) Academy

Building a community of progressive and leadership-driven practitioners is the main purpose of MVMA's Power of 10 Leadership Academy (POTL). The 2026 Class has already shown great potential!

The first session of the 2026 POTL academy took place in April, and was facilitated by Heidi Hulon, DVM, CCFP, CPPP, MHFA. This session focused on building meaningful connections among participants while laying the foundation for a supportive peer network. Attendees spent time getting to know one another, exploring their individual communication styles and preferences, and sharing common communication challenges they face in their clinics. Through open discussion and collaborative activities, participants strengthened relationships with their fellow academy members and began developing the trust and camaraderie that will support them throughout the program.

The POTL class was also present for the 2026 Mandatory CE Day in May, as well



as participating in the program reunion hosted by the MVMA Leadership Development Committee in June. This was a wonderful opportunity for POTL alumni to reconnect, share updates, and celebrate the lasting relationships built through the program.

During the August session, the Class covered leadership topics including managing liability risk, negotiating contracts, financial management, and a practitioner's role in animal welfare.

The remaining 2026 POTL sessions will take place in October and December of this year.

Interested in being a part of the POTL community? We are currently accepting candidates for the 2027 class.

Designed to cultivate leadership skills and provide important team and skill-building experiences, the POTL is a completely free, real-world, relationship-building program consisting of five leadership development sessions that occur over a one-year period. During each session, MVMA provides continuing education credit for one-on-one access to experts who cover topics like team building, effective communication, regulatory information, financial, personal finance and tax information, human resources, impacts of legislation on veterinary medicine, work/life balance, personal wellness and much much more!

In addition to building a community with your POTL colleagues, you will also get the chance to network with progressive practitioners, MVMA leadership, and past POTL participants.

Candidates for the Power of 10 Leadership Academy must be graduates from a college of veterinary medicine within the last five to seven years and be MVMA members in good standing. To enroll please contact Kara Reed Henrys at kara@mivma.org. 🐾

MEET THE 2026 POTL CLASS



*L to R: Drs. Katherine Tilly, Megan Norton, Sarah Hammar, and Rebecca Bean.
Not pictured: Dr. Alexis Kraniak.*

MVMA Hosts Successful **Food Animal Wet Lab**

By Kayla Clark, DVM, Food Animal Practice Committee Chair

In July, I joined seven other veterinarians from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio at Sterner Veterinary Livestock Professionals for the first MVMA Food Animal Wet Lab. Held by MVMA and sponsored by Axiota Animal Health, the lab had one main goal: to teach veterinarians how to perform liver biopsies and interpret the results so we could bring this practical skill back to our own practices. As someone who performs liver biopsies regularly, I know firsthand what a valuable tool this can be for clients, and I was excited to see the rest of the group discover that for themselves.

Our five-hour CE day started with Dr. Jerry Rusch, who works part-time with Axiota, walking us through the basics of mineral nutrition in cattle – utilization, the functions trace minerals serve, storage, and why these minerals, especially the trace ones, matter so much. Dr. Rusch talked through common trends he's seen in dairy and beef cattle, where they differ and his theories behind those differences. The conversation stayed informal, and before long we were swapping cases of our own, tying them back to possible mineral issues – like the dwarf-like calves several of us have noticed more of in the past few years. From there, Dr. Rusch walked us through the biopsy procedure itself: approach, tips for success and the risks to watch for. He wrapped up the lecture portion by explaining why liver biopsy remains the gold standard for assessing mineral status in a herd, how to interpret results, and how to work toward a solution once an issue turns up.

Then it was time to get our hands dirty. We started on cadaver livers, getting a feel for how the biopsy needle enters the tissue before any of us touched a live animal. It's a small thing, but that biopsy needle can be tricky when learning how to load it to be able to take a bite of the liver. There is also a "feel" to the needle entering the liver tissue that is easier to recognize once it is practiced in a cadaver vs starting with a live moving cow. Once we were comfortable loading and setting the needle, we started by loading a dry cow into the chute.

A local dairy that had previously had liver biopsies done hauled in 10 cattle for us – calves, yearlings, springers and dry cows – so we'd get a well-rounded age range to practice on. Dr. Rusch kept circling back to the same fundamentals – ultrasounding first, prepping properly, keeping the needle



loaded until you were ready to sample, applying the correct pressure and then hearing the satisfying click to the biopsy needle closing and hopefully taking a bite of the liver. We worked through the two dry cows together as a group making sure everyone had a turn to practice and troubleshoot the location of the liver on a cow that is heavily pregnant. Then we split into two groups and worked through the remaining heifers and calves. The group worked well with each other with everyone making sure to practice all stages of the procedure and guiding each other through. I could watch the group's confidence build with every animal and troubleshooting together. The yearlings, springers and dry cows were all collected standing in the chute, while the calves were done in lateral recumbency on the ground, using the same landmarks and technique throughout.

“The group worked well with each other with everyone making sure to practice all stages of the procedure and guiding each other through. I could watch the group's confidence build with every animal and troubleshooting together.**”**



One of the attendees, Dr. Emmy Schuurmans, said, “This wet lab really simplified a procedure that initially seemed complex and intimidating. The hands-on experience gave me the confidence to realize it’s actually a straightforward technique that I can easily perform on-farm. I left feeling excited to offer this service to my clients.”

The samples were sent out Monday and results were received Friday. The group is planning to reconvene over Zoom to compare this year’s results with last year’s results. That’s really the part I’m looking forward to – getting to come full circle, interpret the data together, and work out recommendations and next steps for the producer. Knowing how to read those results, and what to recommend from them, is what actually shows a client the value liver biopsies bring to their operation.

Dr. Jerry Rusch says “I love teaching the liver biopsies and especially talking about the interpretations of the results. It is so interesting to correlate what we are seeing clinically on the farm with what the trace mineral liver biopsies show.”

In the end I hope the attendees found value in the wet lab. That’s the whole point, and I hope to help bring more of these



opportunities to veterinarians in the near future. Hands-on labs like this let us get real exposure to new procedures, refine skills we already have, and work through questions and concerns with guidance – all without a client standing next to us. 🐾

Do you have topics you’d like to see covered in future wet labs? We want to hear from you!

Food Animal is looking to expand CE access for food animal veterinarians through future webinars, wet labs and MiVetCon.

Up next for food animal CE: MiVetCon in October, featuring 12 hours of food animal lectures on dairy cattle, beef cattle, small ruminants and swine on Friday and Saturday, and wrapping up the weekend with a three-hour lameness wet lab on Sunday.

Legislative Advisory Committee

Advocacy in Michigan

As many of you know, MVMA has been actively working with bill sponsors and other stakeholders on House Bills 4220 and 4221 and Senate Bills 193 and 194, the telehealth bill package. The House bills passed out of the House earlier this year and are now sitting in the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture.

In their original form, these bills would allow DVM's to establish a VCPR via a telehealth visit for companion animals. Members have made it clear that the best medicine is being able to examine an animal in person. Members have also made it clear that telehealth has a role to play in expanding access to care.

MVMA's Legislative Advisory Committee and Board of Directors determined that with safeguard amendments to the bill in place, MVMA could take a position of neutral on these bills. Without those amendments, MVMA will remain opposed. We continue to advocate for policy that is most protective of human and animal health while advancing the veterinary profession.

There are several other bills MVMA continues to monitor related to the use of xylazine, cat declaw, courtroom advocate, and other animal welfare related bills. The bill that creates a fund through automobile license plates was passed this summer and became law at the end of July. That law allows the Secretary of State to create a license plate whose proceeds will go to help the Michigan Pet Alliance fund spays and neuters across the state.

Stay tuned! Many state legislators are approaching re-election or are term limited out. That will make 'lame duck,' the period after election and before the new session starts, very lively.

Michigan Updates Animal Cruelty Laws

Michigan has enacted two companion bills – Senate Bills 293 and 294 – that significantly strengthen the state's animal cruelty laws. Together, the bills increase penalties for animal abuse and neglect, establish a clearer process for handling animals seized during cruelty investigations, and reinforce the important role veterinarians play in protecting animal welfare.

“Together, the bills increase penalties for animal abuse and neglect, establish a clearer process for handling animals seized during cruelty investigations, and reinforce the important role veterinarians play in protecting animal welfare.”

Although enacted together, the bills address different types of offenses. Senate Bill 293 updates Michigan's general animal cruelty statute, focusing on neglect and inadequate care. It covers issues such as failure to provide food, water, shelter, sanitation, exercise, veterinary attention, and proper transportation, while also strengthening standards for dog tethering and abandonment. Senate Bill 294 revises the animal torture statute, addressing intentional acts such as torture, mutilation, poisoning, and malicious killing of animals. It also creates enhanced penalties when a companion animal is intentionally harmed to intimidate, threaten, or control another person, recognizing the connection between animal abuse and domestic violence.

Both bills establish graduated penalties that increase with the severity of the offense, the number of animals involved, or an offender's prior convictions. Serious neglect cases and intentional acts of cruelty may now result in felony convictions carrying prison sentences of up to ten years. Courts also retain the authority to order restitution, require psychological counseling, and prohibit convicted offenders from owning animals, including permanently in some cases.

One of the most significant changes is the creation of a standardized process for animals seized during cruelty investigations. Animal owners must now receive prompt notice following a seizure and have an opportunity to request a court hearing. To retain ownership while a criminal case proceeds, owners may be required to post a security deposit or bond to cover the costs of housing and caring for the animals. If the bond is not posted, ownership may be forfeited before the criminal case concludes. This eliminates the need for long-term housing for seized animals, which increases their welfare. By eliminating the need for long term housing, this bill also will make it more likely for organizations to pursue cruelty cases as the cost of housing can be a deterrent. The bills also establish procedures for humane euthanasia when a licensed veterinarian determines an animal is suffering beyond recovery or poses a threat to public safety.

Veterinarians are central to implementing these laws. Licensed veterinarians may be called upon to assess seized animals, document evidence of neglect or abuse, estimate ongoing care costs, recommend treatment or humane euthanasia, and provide expert testimony in court. The legislation also continues to exempt veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are lawfully practicing veterinary medicine, while preserving longstanding exceptions for accepted animal husbandry, hunting, fishing, wildlife management, and scientific research.

These companion bills modernize Michigan's animal cruelty statutes by providing stronger protections for animals, greater accountability for offenders, and a more consistent legal framework for veterinarians, law enforcement, animal control agencies, and prosecutors working together to address cruelty and neglect. 🐾

LVT Scope of **Practice Task Force**

The MVMA LVT Scope Of Practice Task Force continues to make meaningful progress toward developing a clear, modern scope of practice for Licensed Veterinary Technicians (LVTs) while also addressing title protection. Since our last update, we hosted four virtual listening sessions – two with veterinarians and two with LVTs – to discuss the results of our statewide survey and hear firsthand about the opportunities and challenges facing our profession.

The conversations reinforced that while practice settings may differ – from private practice and corporate medicine to shelters and academia – several common themes emerged. Participants emphasized the importance of practicing at the top of one's education and training, strengthening the veterinarian-LVT partnership through trust and communication, and creating greater consistency in onboarding, protocols, and utilization of LVTs across Michigan practices.

Additional topics discussed included workforce shortages, financial challenges affecting recruitment and retention, appropriate supervision levels, career development pathways, title protection, potential legacy pathways, and the importance of educating clients about the roles and expertise of the entire veterinary team. We also explored how recommendations can be flexible enough to support the diverse realities of private practice, corporate practice, shelters, academia, emergency medicine, and specialty practice while maintaining high standards of patient care.



One area identified for additional outreach is large animal medicine. While the survey and sessions provided valuable input from many areas of veterinary practice, participation from the large animal community was limited. As a result, the Task Force recognizes the need for additional engagement with large animal veterinarians and technicians to ensure their unique perspectives and practice needs are represented as we develop recommendations. Our goal is to create recommendations that are inclusive, practical, and applicable across all areas of veterinary medicine in Michigan.

As the Task Force continues its work, our focus remains on developing recommendations that support high-quality patient care while remaining practical for the diverse settings in which veterinary medicine is practiced. We are grateful to everyone who completed the survey or participated in the listening sessions. Your perspectives are helping shape recommendations that will strengthen our profession for years to come.

We look forward to sharing additional updates as our work progresses and encourage continued engagement from veterinarians, LVTs, and all members of Michigan's veterinary community. 🐾

“As the Task Force continues its work, our focus remains on developing recommendations that support high-quality patient care while remaining practical for the diverse settings in which veterinary medicine is practiced. We are grateful to everyone who completed the survey or participated in the listening sessions.”

Board Adopts Revised Member District Map

At its Fall Board Meeting, the MVMA Board of Directors adopted a new district map for member districts. This effort is the culmination of a governance goal within the current strategic plan, to better align governance with the needs of MVMA. One of the factors was examining the distribution of members compared to district directors on the Board.

A task force was convened, chaired by MVMA past-president Dr. Dana Tatman-Lilly. The group used membership data from the MVMA member database to determine distribution of members by county and redrew districts to provide a more equitable representation for members per district director across the state.

A member's district is determined by their address of record in MVMA's member database. Members will be getting notification of their new districts and their new director (if applicable) in the coming weeks.

The Board appreciated that task force worked hard to develop a fair and equitable map and transition plan and approved both unanimously. 🐾



Nominations for MVMA Board of Directors

Nominations will open October 1, 2026 for open seats on MVMA's Board of Directors. The MVMA Board consists of district directors, at-large directors, an LVT director, a student director, appointed officers, and elected officers. Each role is defined in the association's bylaws.

While district directors are elected by DVMs within their district and LVT and student directors are elected by those constituencies, all directors serve for the benefit of all members of MVMA. All Board members are responsible for becoming knowledgeable about the

topics put before the board and to make decisions that are in the best interest of MVMA members and the association overall. A Board orientation is provided and board development micro lessons are incorporated into each meeting.

The Board typically meets 4-5 times each year with some work expected in between meetings. Meetings are held hybrid with the in-person held in Lansing.

The Leadership Development Committee will review all nominations for eligibility and suitability to serve and recommend a slate of candidates to the

Board President. If there are more than one candidate put forth for a given seat, an election will be held per Board policy and bylaws.

Open Seats

District 8 – including Kent County
LVT Director
Second Vice President

Self-nominations and nominations of colleagues are both welcomed. Look for the email on October 1 that officially opens the nominations and visit the MVMA website to nominate yourself or a colleague. 🐾

AVMA Update Fall 2026

The AVMA House of Delegates (HOD) met July 9–10 in conjunction with AVMA Convention in Anaheim CA.

During the meeting, the HOD considered two Veterinary Information Forum (VIF) educational topics, two proposed Bylaws amendments, three resolutions, elected candidates to Council positions, the House Advisory Committee (HAC), the offices of AVMA Vice President and President-Elect, and received updates from across the AVMA.

House of Delegates Manual

The House of Delegates Manual was amended as proposed to remove the two-minute introductory video requirement for Council nominees.

Veterinary Information Forum (VIF) Topics

Informational Session: Emerging Technologies

Delegates received an overview of emerging technologies, including the growing need for guidance, education, and practical support as veterinary teams encounter AI tools in clinical and business settings. The discussion highlighted the AVMA Task Force on Emerging Technologies and Innovation's work to develop a framework for responsible AI adoption, including resources on AI literacy, appropriate use in practice, governance, risk management, and preserving veterinarian accountability.

Informational Session:

New World Screwworm

Delegates received a practical overview of New World Screwworm, including the fly's lifecycle, risk factors for myiasis, clinical signs, differential diagnoses, treatment, and case management. The discussion also



Drs. Jennifer Quammen and Michael Bailey.

summarized USDA preparedness and response efforts with federal, state, and industry partners, including surveillance, reporting, diagnostics, eradication efforts, and stakeholder communication.

Bylaws

The House considered two proposed Bylaws amendments:

- Amendment 8, **Revisions for Clarity**, was approved as proposed, aligning language in the Bylaws.
- Amendment 9, **Extension of Grace Period for Constituent Allied Veterinary Organizations** was approved as proposed, extending the grace period to two years.

Resolutions

The House considered three proposed policy resolutions:

- The proposed revised policy on **Animal Abuse and Neglect** was amended and approved as amended.

- The proposed policy on **Free-roaming cats** was approved as proposed.
- The proposed policy on **Calf Management** was amended to include replacement dairy calves and was approved as amended.
- The proposed policy on **Encouraging State Proclamations Recognizing November 3 as One Health Day** was amended to adjust the order of the resolution text and was approved as amended.

Elections

The House elected:

- Dr. Michael Kleinhenz to represent Pharmacology on the Council for Biologic and Therapeutic Agents.
- Dr. Sylvia Ouellette to represent Private Clinical Practice – Predominantly Equine on the Council for Biologic and Therapeutic Agents.
- Dr. James Kober to represent Private Clinical Practice – Predominantly Food Animal on the Council for Biologic and Therapeutic Agents.
- Dr. Beth Thompson to represent Animal Health of the Council on Public Health for a full term, and Dr. Sharon Harris to represent Animal Health on the Council on Public Health for an unexpired term.
- Dr. Sara Margrey to represent Human Health on the Council on Public

“Delegates received an overview of emerging technologies, including the growing need for guidance, education, and practical support as veterinary teams encounter AI tools in clinical and business settings.”



Dr. Robert Knapp



Dr. Isaac Bott



Dr. Sandy Willis



Dr. Elizabeth Boggier

Health for a full term, and Dr. Joni Scheftel to represent Human Health on the Council on Public Health for an unexpired term.

- Dr. Nick Van Engen to represent Private Clinical Practice on the Council for Research
- Drs. Becky Fankhauser Morris, Brian Iritani, Sharon Ostergaard, and Laurel Redding to represent Veterinary Medical Research on the Council for Research
- Dr. Rachel Cezar-Martinez to represent Private Practice – Predominantly Equine on the Council on Veterinary Service
- Dr. Mark Hardesty to represent Private Practice – Predominantly Food Animal on the Council on Veterinary Service
- Drs. Kristen Clark, Kathleen Ebers, and Debra Nickelson to the House Advisory Committee for an initial term, and reelected Dr. Theresa Kelliher to the House Advisory Committee for a second term.
- Dr. Robert Knapp, to the office of AVMA President-Elect
- Dr. Elizabeth Boggier, to the office of AVMA Vice President
- Drs. Sandy Willis and N. Isaac Bott officially launched their campaigns for 2027-2028 AVMA President-Elect.

AVMA Updates

As part of the Informational Session, delegates received updates from leaders across the AVMA. Related resources:

- AVMA 2025 Annual Report
- Student loan changes at-a-glance
- Understanding accreditation changes
- Technical Tutorial Videos Journals

- Journey for Teams
- AVMA Federal Advocacy Update Summer 2026
- 2025 AVMF Impact Report
- AVMA Insurance Services

Next Meeting

The House of Delegates winter session will be held **January 8–9, 2027**, in conjunction with the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference in Chicago, IL.

AVMA PAC BOARD 2026 Update

The AVMA PAC is the profession's voice in Washington. During the 2025-2026 period, \$470,000 was raised from more than 2,300 AVMA and SAVMA members. This was a 6% percent increase from 2023-2024 but still only represents 2% of the members contributing to the AVMA PAC. As a comparison most professional organizations have a contribution level between 8 to 10%.

The AVMA distributions to members of Congress included almost half a million dollars in donations. This was divided on a non-partisan basis with an almost equal 50/50 split between the parties. Donations are made based on key committee assignments and to members of Congress who back our important veterinary issues.

The profession benefits from these contributions by allowing us to help elect candidates who understand and support veterinary medicine. It allows us to develop relations with Congressional members and gives political credibility to the profession.

2026 saw a drastic increase in interactions between the AVMA Governmental Department staff, AVMA Ambassadors and the members of Congress. We are still working towards passage of the 2026 Farm Bill, the Healthy Dog Importation Act, The Rural Veterinary Workforce Act and the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act. With continued support to the AVMA PAC, the profession can continue to influence the outcome of important veterinary-related legislation in Washington D.C.

Please consider contributing to the AVMA PAC and the MVMA's MIVETPAC.

Contact us:

The AVMA serves more than 112,000 members. Please reach out to your delegates with questions or to provide input on issues regarding our profession.

Drs. Jill Lynn (Delegate) 517-331-2009, jill.lynn@dvm@yahoo.com; and Larry Letsche (Alternate Delegate), 734-355-2754, remrock02@aol.com. 🐾



The Practice Hub Is Here for You

Veterinary medicine is rewarding – but managing a practice, supporting a team, and navigating everyday challenges can sometimes feel overwhelming. That's why the MVMA created the Practice Hub: to connect you with practical resources and trusted support when you need it most.

As an MVMA member, you currently have access to:

- A free 30-minute consultation with an HR professional, along with helpful HR templates
- A free 15-minute legal consultation with an attorney
- A low-cost, easy to manage 401K retirement plan for veterinary practices
- Assistance from the MVMA Ethics and Grievance Committee with client complaints

“Upcoming plans include a dedicated well-being webpage with easy-to-find mental health resources and support through various partnerships and life coaching resources.”

- Fetch the Facts, our free and informal webinar series where members can ask questions, exchange ideas, and learn from one another

We're also working to make the Practice Hub even more valuable. Upcoming plans include a dedicated well-being webpage with easy-to-find mental health resources and support through various partnerships and life coaching resources.

We're exploring additional resources focused on financial and retirement

planning, student loan repayment benefits, and telemedicine updates as Michigan legislation evolves.

Whether you're facing a difficult workplace situation, planning for your practice's future, or simply looking for helpful information, you don't have to navigate it alone. Visit the Practice Hub on the MVMA website to explore the resources available to you through your membership. For more information, email Rachel Boersma at rachel@mivma.org. 🐾



Our concern for the environment
is more than just talk

This publication is printed on Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certified paper with vegetable oil-based inks. Please do your part for the environment by reusing and recycling.

2026 Annual Member Meeting to be Hybrid

The MVMA Board of Directors set the 2026 Annual Member Meeting for immediately following their Winter Board Meeting on Thursday, December 10. All members are encouraged to attend.

Updates from the MVMA Board, staff, committees, and MVMA's Foundation, the Michigan Animal Health Foundation, will be provided. Installation of new Board members, passing of the gavel, and other member recognition will take place as well.

Members may RSVP for either in person or online participation via the MVMA website. 🐾

2026 Annual Member Meeting

Thursday, December 10, 2026

3:30–4:30 pm • Lansing, MI

Or via Zoom

RSVP required

Those needing assistance to RSVP may call the MVMA office at 517-347-4710.



Honoring MVMA Members Who Have Passed

Angela Lusty, Pierson Vet
Member since 2012

Heidi Stucki, retired
Member since 1978



Welcome New Members

May 2026 – August 2026



Dr. Katie Atkinson
Dr. Andy Baker
Stacey Baker
Dr. Susan Bonino
Dr. Brent Calhoun
Jessica Campbell-Berry
Dr. Jaycee Carpenter
Dr. Thomas Catlin
Dr. Samantha Christensen
Dr. Eileen Cook
Dr. Keith Cook
Dr. Bridget Craft
Leah Craig
Dr. Vanessa Crenshaw
Dr. Lindsay Cronin
Dr. John Danks
Dr. Muray Darling
Dr. Jodi Davis

Danielle DeCormier
Dr. Emily Ducote
London Eldridge
Dr. Peter Esterline
Dr. Joshua Gehrke
Dr. Kelly Giles
Dr. Betty Harper
Dr. Bethany Hess
Dr. Darwyn Howard
Dr. Yuting Huang
Dr. Alex Hubbard
Michelle Jones
Theresa Laski
Rebecca Lemke
Dr. Alissa Lin
Dr. Cassidy Luukkonen
Dr. Lily Luzi
Dr. Lauren Maghak

Dr. Cheryl Makowski
Dr. Darien McLemore
Dr. Noah McNaughton
Dr. Layne Nadig
Dr. Deborah Peet
Dr. Adrienne Pesavento
Dr. Alyssa Pobocik
Marissa Poleski
Dr. Leandra Quinn
Dr. Annalise Reed
Dr. Gabrielle Remakel
Rhonda Ritter
Lynn Roland
Dr. Blaine Sanford
Dr. Emily Schuurmans
Dr. David Schwartz
Dr. Katherine Smith
Marina Songer

Dr. Heidi Stucki
Dr. Keri Suk
Dr. Kaitlyn Sullivan
Dr. Jennifer Swisher
Dr. Mackenzie Tarockoff
Susan Teegardin
Temperance Animal Hospital
Terri Thomasma
Jordin Tillison
Jessica VanHusen
VEG ER for Pets East Grand Rapids
Dr. Claire Vincent
Johanna Weitzel
Rebecca Winget
Dr. Michael Wolf
Jenna Young

Member Spotlight

Edward Brauer III, DVM

Co-owner, Marquette Veterinary Clinic

Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Class of 2020

Tell us a little about yourself and your role at Marquette Veterinary Clinic.

My name is Dr. Edward Brauer III, and I graduated from Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 2020. When COVID-19 brought a nationwide shutdown, I was able to receive my DVM a little early because I had completed all my core requirements. I headed home to the Upper Peninsula and dove right into my career at Marquette Veterinary Clinic, which my father has independently owned since 2010.

Over the past six years, I have transitioned from an associate veterinarian to a co-owner. I plan to buy him out of the practice over the next five years, so you could say I am his future retirement plan!

What first inspired you to pursue a career in veterinary medicine?

One of the most defining moments happened when I was about seven years old. My father had coordinated with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help rehabilitate a wild barred owl that had been hit by a car. I went to the clinic to help and see the owl, and I fed it chicken livers while my father checked its vital signs. That experience set me on the path toward veterinary medicine.

Did growing up with a veterinarian for a father influence your decision to enter the profession?

Absolutely. Having a veterinarian for a father gave me opportunities to see the profession up close and to understand what the work truly involves. I was able to experience both the rewards and the demands of veterinary medicine long before I applied to veterinary school, which had a major influence on my decision.



What is it like working alongside your dad, and how has your professional relationship evolved over time?

Some people will tell you never to go into business with a family member, but so far we have made it work. Even when I first joined the practice as an associate, we were able to separate our family relationship from our working relationship, and I think that has helped immensely.

Since buying into the business, I feel we are more like equals as colleagues and business partners than father and son.

What have you learned from your dad that you could not have learned in veterinary school?

There was an immense transition from what you might call 'ivory tower medicine' at a tertiary referral center to the realities of general practice. My father has worked in general practice for about

38 years, so he was able to help me make that transition. He taught me more about orthopedics and introduced me to many soft-tissue surgeries I did not have the opportunity to experience at the university. He also has several old-school techniques that remain very useful in diagnostic workups and surgery.

He has also taught me the ropes of business and practice management. Learning how to run a clinic while practicing medicine was something I never would have learned in college, and it has been an eye-opening experience.

Are there ways you and your dad approach veterinary medicine differently? How do those differences strengthen the practice?

My father and I approach diagnostic workups similarly, but I am more willing to try newer medications and anesthetic

protocols. He tends to stick with the 'ol' reliable' medications and treatment plans he has trusted throughout his career. That blend of experience and newer knowledge strengthens our practice and helps us provide appropriate care to owners from many different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Is there a particular patient, client, or experience that has had a lasting impact on you?

I am sure many of my colleagues would agree that euthanasia is one of the harder parts of this profession. Our practice offers house-call euthanasia in addition to the procedures we perform at the clinic. When I was about two years into practice, I had five euthanasias scheduled in one day, which was a record for me at the time. Three were at the clinic, followed by two house calls after a full day of work. It was mentally taxing, and I felt like the Grim Reaper claiming all those souls.

When I arrived at the final house call, the owner came out to greet me. She said, "Oh, honey, thank you for doing this. You are an angel of mercy." I was already teary-eyed, but a wave of reassurance washed over me. Since that day, I have been able to approach euthanasia, even the most difficult cases, with more grace and dignity. I now see it as an act of mercy that frees an animal from a life of suffering.

What do you find most rewarding about serving animals and their owners in Michigan's Upper Peninsula?

The most rewarding part is seeing the impact I leave in the community. In a



smaller community, I often run into owners and their pets in public. Seeing those animals thriving after a serious illness or major surgery is incredibly rewarding. Word travels quickly here, and the feedback I have received from clients and others in the community makes me feel that I have made a positive impression.

What challenges do you believe veterinarians are facing right now, and what gives you hope for the profession's future?

In a rural area like the Upper Peninsula, one of our greatest challenges is the shortage of services and staff. We do not have a 24-hour emergency and critical care center in the U.P. The closest one is at least a four-hour drive away, which is not feasible when an animal is in critical condition and time is of the essence. To help fill that gap, many area veterinarians

take after-hours calls for their clients. When some practices cannot provide on-call services, their clients may have limited options, which puts additional strain on clinics already caring for their own clients and the seasonal tourists who visit the area.

Hiring more veterinarians and support staff would help, but recruiting talent to a rural area is its own challenge. We compete with the higher starting salaries available at corporate practices in urban areas, and many newer graduates are not expected to take call in those positions. Still, I am optimistic. A recent town hall coordinated by MVMA and MSU's College of Veterinary Medicine shared information about proposed programs designed to bring veterinary students and technicians into rural practices, with the hope of recruiting future talent. I am eager to see those programs come to fruition. 🐾





Protect What Matters Most.

Your Practice, Your Team, & Your Patients

Brown & Brown understands the unique challenges veterinarians face—from caring for patients to protecting your team and your business.

We provide customized employee benefits, business insurance, life and Medicare solutions for MVMA members.

Let our experienced insurance professionals design a program that fits your unique needs, so you can focus on what matters most — **caring for animals and growing your practice.**



Brown & Brown Insurance Services, Inc.

Schedule Your Free Consultation

BBrown.com

Michigan Veterinary Medical Association

2144 Commons Parkway

Okemos, MI 48864-3986

p. 517-347-4710 | f. 517-347-4666

mvma@mivma.org | www.mivma.org



ILOVEMYVET



MICHIGANVMA

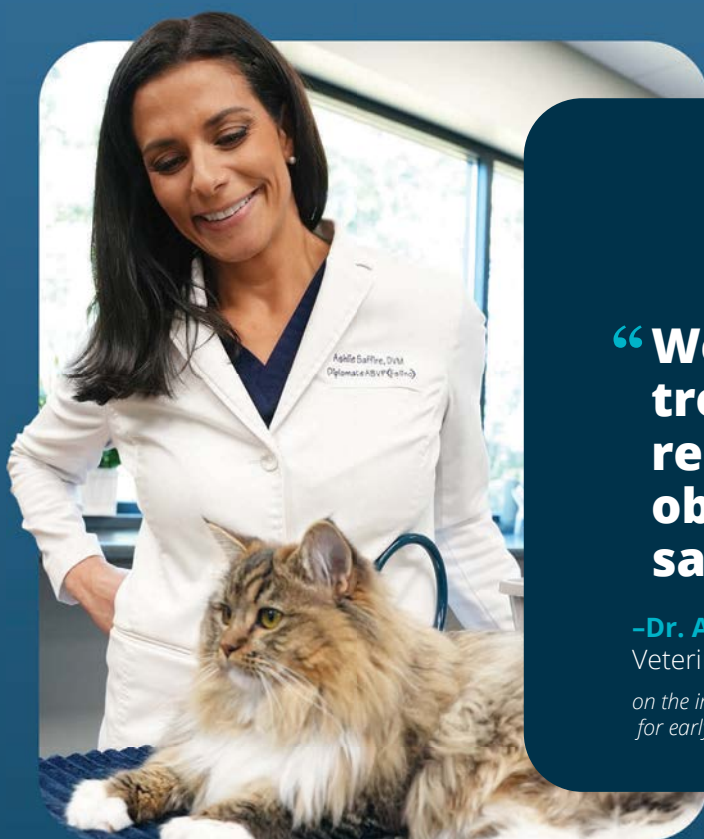


MICHIGANVMA



MICHIGAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Professional Excellence. Compassionate Care.



“We were able to institute treatment right away, relieve the urinary tract obstruction and literally save his life.”

–Dr. Ashlie Saffire, Board Certified Feline Veterinarian & Purina Partner

on the importance of using the Smart Litter Box Monitor for early detection

Petivity is your partner in pet care, helping you extend your support beyond the clinic by providing pet owners with valuable health insights and information about their pets between vet visits. Together, we can ensure your patients receive the continuous care they deserve.



Learn more about Petivity's portfolio of proactive pet care products.

Purina trademarks are owned by Société des Produits Nestlé S.A. Printed in USA.



Your Pet, Our Passion.®