

# THE MONTHLY MULE MEMO

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AND  
STUDENT AFFAIRS



Academic & Student Affairs  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Missouri

W213 Vet Med Building

## WORDS FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

"Thoughts on NAVLE"

The ICVA recently released final institutional reports on NAVLE institutional pass rates. I am pleased to report that Mizzou CVM had a final pass rate of 93%, compared to a national average of 88%. While I am pleased to have us well above the national average, I am aspirational to ensure every graduate passes the NAVLE by the time of graduation, and I think that is a goal that can advance our program. Mizzou CVM has historically had higher pass rates, often in the 98-100% range. So what happened? Experts inform us that professional licensing examinations in all disciplines have had recent declines. The analyses of these trends are still premature and multifactorial, but it is clear that COVID-19 interruptions impacted these exam performance data to some degree. We are hopeful that if COVID-19 is a principal explanatory component, that we may see some improved institutional performance metrics as we move beyond the COVID-19 interruptions. Mizzou CVM institutional officials review the institutional data and cross-check for any obvious curricular improvements we can pursue. I am pleased to report that we are at or above the national average in every sub-category. While we intend to monitor, review, and possibly revise our curriculum as needed, I note that our NAVLE metrics do not strongly point to curricular deficiencies. For our VM4s, we are facilitating and encouraging attendance at NAVLE reviews. See Gabby for more details. Our VM3s enter clinics soon and should begin mapping a strategic plan for NAVLE prep; further our VM3s will enter their NAVLE testing window with date windows that are much different than previous years. And it's not too early for our VM2 and VM1 students to begin thinking about NAVLE preparation. As we continue to search for novel strategies for program improvement, if anyone has additional ideas to support and educate our students in preparation for the NAVLE, we are all ears. – Dr. Snider



## REGULAR FEATURES:

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## MONTHLY NAVLE PREP QUESTION

A dog presents with acute onset vomiting, hemorrhagic diarrhea and fever. On fecal examination, you find many large fluke eggs. You question the owner and discover that the dog was recently in Oregon on a boating trip. What agent is most likely causing the clinical signs in this dog?

- A. *Rickettsia rickettsii*
- B. *Nanophyetus salmincola*
- C. *Oxytrema silicula*
- D. *Neorickettsia helminthoeca*

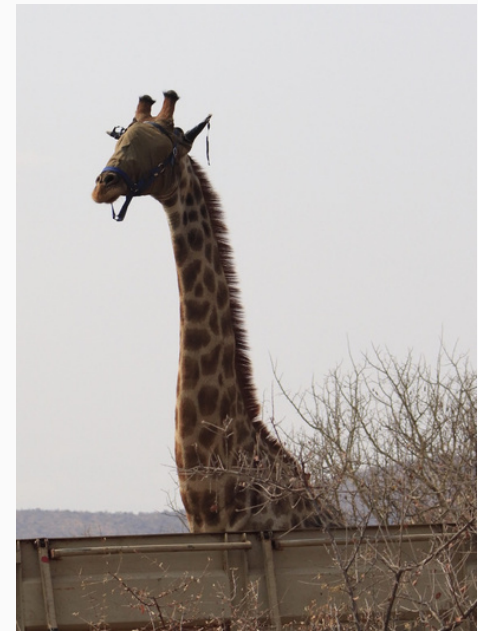
(ANSWER ON PAGE 7)

## GOING ON SAFARI! THIRD YEAR CVM STUDENTS VISIT SOUTH AFRICA

This summer, 15 third-year vet students from Mizzou travelled to Thabazimbi, South Africa to practice wildlife medicine under the care of Dr. Andy Frasier. We worked on a variety of animals, including roan, sable, oryx, impala, springbok, eland, wildebeest, cape buffalo, rhinos, giraffes, painted dogs, and more. Our tasks involved vaccinating, ear notching, deworming, and transporting these animals. We learned how to dart wildlife for sedation and vaccination, tested sperm quality, and performed pregnancy checks in different species. Some highlights of the trip included vaccinating wildlife from a helicopter, ear notching and microchipping rhino's and their horns, capturing and transporting a giraffe, vasectomizing a goat, and working on a wild dog to change its tracking collar.

Aside from the veterinary work, we learned about the culture in the area and had many opportunities to eat authentic local food. We took a day off to go on safari in Pilanesberg National Park, where we had a chance to see many elephants up close, including some adorable baby elephants! This trip gave us valuable hands-on experience in wildlife medicine, allowed us to appreciate the culture and natural environment in South Africa, and bond as classmates and future colleagues. It was truly invaluable!

-Marika Austad





## VETERINARY ENRICHMENT AND TEAMBUILDING (VET)

A big thank you to everyone who volunteered with VET! Special recognition goes to Jennifer Hamilton and Lisa Thompson for stepping up while I was out sick the entire week before the event—I couldn't have managed without their support. VET was a great success this year, and we received plenty of positive feedback. The VET Working Group will meet on September 4th to discuss possible changes and improvements for VET 2025. This year, we introduced corporate sponsorships for meals, which helped us stay within budget. We plan to continue this sponsorship model in the future. - Lisa McCubbins

## PET PICTURES

CVM Pet Pictures for VM2 and VM4 students will take place on Saturday, September 28, and Sunday, September 29. A Google sheet with sign-up instructions will be sent out soon. If there are any open spots after September 16, the sign-up will be opened to faculty, staff, residents, and interns. VM1 and VM3 students, along with Visiting Scholars, will have their pet photos taken in Spring 2025, with the date to be determined. Open spots for faculty, staff, residents, and interns who did not have their photo taken in the Fall will also be available during this session. I will soon send out an email soon to recruit volunteers for Fall registration—if you're interested, please let me know. - Lisa McCubbins

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

9/5-6 VEA TESTING IN ADAMS (VM3)

9/8 - END OF CLINICAL BLOCK 7 (VM4)

9/9 - START OF CLINICAL BLOCK 8 (VM4)

9/13-14: ALUMNI WEEKEND

9/26 - ASSOCIATE DEAN OFFICE HOURS - LARGE ANIMAL LOUNGE

9/28-29 - PET PICTURES



## CLUB CORNER: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FELINE PRACTITIONERS (AAFP)

We are so excited to announce the American Association of Feline Practitioners Club Student Chapter here at Mizzou! Without the effort of the executive team, staff at MU, and my fellow peers, this would not have been able to happen. Our mission is to support and help educate other students interested in pursuing or learning more about feline specific veterinary medicine from experienced and trained staff/professionals. In addition to our general meetings, we are also offering group outings, craft nights, access to the AAFP website perks, (Cat friendly certification, CE credits, national journal articles, scholarships, conferences, etc!) and so much more!

### Fall 2024 Events:

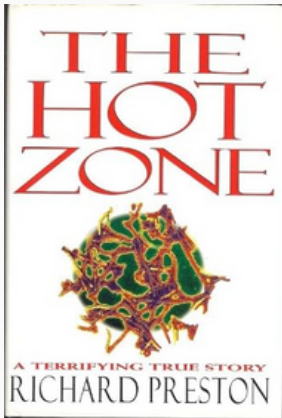
- 🐾 September 19th- Cat coat and color patterns discussion with Dr. Lyons
- 🐾 October 23rd- Physical Examination of the feline patient (BYOF)(wet lab) with Dr. Cohn
- 🐾 November 11th- Joint meeting with Behavior Club on restraining a fractious cat without chemical administration
- 🐾 Planned outing to Bertha's Bean's Cat Cafe in Columbia! Date-TBD



Contact us for more information at [allbg8@missouri.edu](mailto:allbg8@missouri.edu)



**A MONTHLY BOOK SUGGESTION  
FROM DR. SNIDER'S BOOKSHELVES**

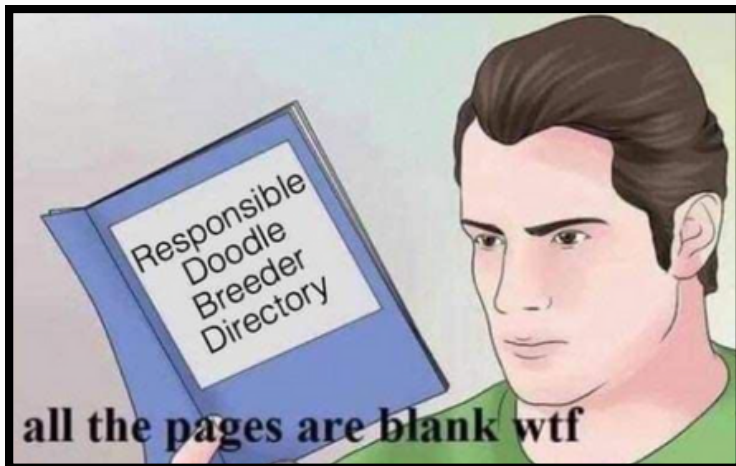


My book recommendation this month is now old enough to be deemed a classic: “The Hot Zone” by Richard Preston. This true story occurs in the D.C. beltway and involves a high threat viral pathogen previously never seen in the United States. By the story’s end, some key US Army military veterinarians are the heroes, the first US-based outbreak of Ebola is contained, and no loss of human life occurred. This book opens windows into unique veterinary career opportunities and some behind the scenes glimpses into biodefense and high-consequence pathogen research. The book also inspired a blockbuster Hollywood movie of the 90s called “Outbreak”, with stars including Morgan Freeman, Rene Russo, and Dustin Hoffman. As one of my biggest pet peeves, the screenplay was adapted to make all the scientist-heroes into MDs, leaving the true story of the DVMs relegated to relative obscurity.

**PAWSOME AWARD**

Congratulations to Liana Haas as the August 2024 PAWsome Award Winner. Thank you for all your Pawsome work Liana!

**MONTHLY MEME**



**OUR OFFICE**

Timothy A. Snider, DVM, PhD, DACVP  
Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs

Lisa McCubbins  
Executive Assistant for Student Affairs

Lisa Thompson  
Senior Student Support Specialist for Academic Affairs

Jennifer Hamilton  
Educational Program Coordinator II

Stephanie McClaren  
Educational Program Manager

Manda Riley  
Financial Aid Coordinator

Kathy Seay  
Admissions Manager

Kerry Karaffa  
Psychologist

Tiffany Sanford-Martens  
Psychologist

**CVM COMMUNITY CHEST & UPCOMING FOOD DRIVE**

As the halls fill up with the return of students, we will be conducting a food drive later this month to help ensure we can meet the needs of our CVM community. Keep an eye on your mailbox for an email!

Amazon Wish list: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3vz5k4>)

Monetary contribution:

<https://tinyurl.com/TheCommunityChest>

Drop food items off in W213

Good veterinarians talk to animals. Great veterinarians hear them talk back.  
-Unknown

**WHITE COAT CEREMONY**

The White Coat ceremony for VM3 students will be held on October 20th at 1 p.m. in Jesse Auditorium. VM3 students, please keep an eye on your email for information regarding tickets, try-on dates, and a Qualtrics survey. - Lisa McCubbins

## WHAT I DID LAST SUMMER: STUDENT EXPERIENCES OVER THE SUMMER OF 2024

### MARVET Experience, by Grace McIntosh

This past summer, I took part in a marine veterinary externship through a program called MARVET located in Roatan, Honduras. At the Roatan Institute of Marine Sciences, I was able to learn about marine conservation medicine with a focus on bottlenose dolphins. Topics included anatomy, physiology, pathology, husbandry, nutrition, and clinical diagnostics. Through the help of many dolphin trainers and certified aquatic veterinarians, I had the opportunity to practice hands-on skills including physical exams, hematology, clinical pathology, and ultrasonography. Due to aquatic veterinary medicine being a niche field, I am beyond grateful to have been accepted into this program. This opportunity gave me the chance to network, meet other future aquatic veterinarians, and expand my knowledge of one of the smartest, most playful, creative animals in the world.

### MARVET-Marine Animal Medicine and Conservation Externships



### Holland Military Working Dog Hospital, by Tina Rossi

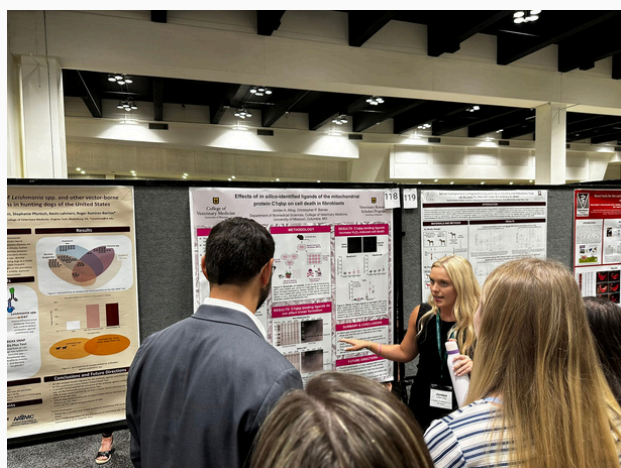
I spent my summer at the Holland military working dog hospital. It is the only location where the government breeds dogs. It is also the home to initial training from working dogs in every military branch as well as homeland security including TSA, border patrol, and the secret service. All military dogs that need advanced medical care from around the world are sent here for rehabilitation. I spent my time rotating through the specialties the military offers including surgery, emergency, internal medicine, sport rehabilitation, radiology, outpatient, and public health. I also got to work with LTC Winston who recently finished his surgery residency at Mizzou!

The Holland hospital is located at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio Texas and their number is 210-671-3631.



## VETERINARY RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM (VRSP)

The 20th iteration of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Research Scholars Program set out for St Paul, MN bright and early the morning of August 8. After a 9-hour bus ride they arrived in time to show off some beautiful, periodic table evolution-themed, bleach-tie dyed VRSP shirts at the symposium's reception. After networking with the other 800 attendees, they had a nice dinner and hit the bed early in preparation for Friday's meeting. Day 1 of the symposium included three poster sessions during which 16 MU scholars enthusiastically presented the research they had pursued during their program. When not presenting, scholars circulated to visit posters of interest but found it particularly challenging to hear presentations of their MU peers who consistently attracted crowds of visitors. While the poster sessions were the highlight, the day also included a keynote presentation entitled "Harmonizing Research Passion with Compassion: Enhancing Animal Welfare to Achieve Scientific Excellence," and a choice of three breakout sessions with topics ranging from Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning to Specialty Careers to Working with Animals in Science and Agriculture Research. Friday evening was devoted to socializing and camaraderie looking forward to Day 2. The latter brought two more poster sessions during which the remaining six MU scholars presented their work, breakout sessions on careers in academia, government, and industry, and a mix and mingle "speed networking" sessions where scholars met one-on-one with faculty in a variety of careers. The symposium concluded with a closing reception and banquet followed by an evening of further community building among the MU scholars. Throughout the symposium, the program directors in attendance, Drs. Baines and Franklin were overcome with pride at the performance of all of our scholars. Their passion, enthusiasm and support of each other made MU proud. - Drs. Baines and Franklin







**Program Objective**

The MUVRSP provides veterinary medical students the opportunity to explore research careers by performing mentored research in several exciting scientific disciplines

**Research**

- Foundations in Veterinary Research and Discovery, a research topics course
- A wide variety of hypothesis-based projects



In addition to working hard on their projects, scholars participate in activities such as networking, abstract writing, poster workshops and social outings

**Interested in exploring state-of-the-art research that fosters improvement of human and animal health?**



**Curious about career opportunities for veterinarians in research? Check out the VRSP!**

**The National Veterinary Research Scholars Symposium**



Scholars travel to a National Symposium where they attend seminars, present posters, and enjoy a little comradery.

**Field trips to research facilities**



Scholars visit local and regional research facilities such as the Boehringer Ingelheim research farm in Fulton, MO and MU's NextGen Precision Health facility



Scholars and VRSP alum enjoy the annual VRSP float trip and T shirt tie dye.

**Our gracious sponsors**



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



The Kent Tomazi Memorial Research Fund, a gift from Dr. Natalie Rabiner, alumnus of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine and all of our research mentors

**STUDENT INPUT FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**

We seek to improve! One way our student body can assist us with improving is to utilize our anonymous suggestion boxes, located in the VMB Tile Room and in the VHC near the student mailboxes. The Associate Dean checks these approximately monthly, shares the suggestions to the Dean and student leaders, and we act on some of the suggestions where budgets permit or where processes can change. Of course, suggestions need not be anonymous. I also regularly receive students or student groups in my office making direct appeals and suggestions, and we are able to make some of those happen, also. Some anonymous suggestions can be difficult to act upon, investigate, etc. Thus, we cannot solve every issue that is raised. While we are appropriately proud of our academic program and student services, we aspire to expand and improve, and you students are an integral part of that process. – Dr. Snider

Answer to this month's NAVLE prep question: A) Neorickettsia helminthoeca

**A LITTLE DAD JOKE HUMOR**

**Question:**  
What kind of dog doesn't bark?

**Answer:**  
A hush puppy