



Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Summer Newsletter

June, 2011

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Letter From The President

Greetings to my colleagues in veterinary medicine. As president of the ASBVME, it is my pleasure to represent the great profession of veterinary medicine. I feel that the current members of the board are a great group and although our primary purpose as a board is consumer protection, I assure you that our efforts are always directed toward cooperation with members of the profession in an effort to improve the quality of veterinary medicine in the State of Alabama. We thank you for your support and confidence.

As you are aware there have been several changes in regards to the board and there will be more in the near future. Changes are not always pleasant and certainly may not be totally agreed upon. However, if given the opportunity changes will often serve to improve all aspects of the board's function including obligations to both the consumer and the veterinary profession.

Moving the board office from Decatur to Montgomery was long overdue. We invite you to visit the board office at your convenience. The current address is: 8 Commerce Street, Suite 910, Montgomery, Alabama. The phone number is 334.262.8068. Most of you know our new executive director, Mrs. Tammy Wallace, who was with the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association for several years. We would like to welcome our new secretary, Ms. Demetrice. We were all sad to lose the services of Mrs. Patti Christman who served as the board's executive secretary; needless to say, Patti will be hard, if not impossible to replace. We wish Patti well and look forward to a future relationship with Patti in a less demanding role.

The board is solid and consists of a group of competent, caring board members who both hold the veterinary profession and our obligation to the consumer to the highest level of concern. They work hard and are extremely concerned with accuracy of all board responsibilities. We lost a great member in Dr. Lewis McCurdy. Dr. McCurdy will be greatly missed, both by the board and the profession.

The board has decided to go in a different direction in regards to premise inspections, both in regards to the inspectors and the process of inspections. It was the unanimous decision of the board to go to an inspection process similar to the one used by the AAHA.

This will consist of changing the forms currently being used so that they are easier to fill out, which eliminates redundancy and are more accurate in regards to meeting the practice act guidelines. **All premises will be required to meet all requirements.**



Dr. Robert D. Horne
ASBVME President

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The inspection process will involve both a self inspection by the owner of the practice, which will be online and an inspection by an inspector who works directly for the board. The self evaluation will allow you to constantly evaluate your premise if you wish and to perform an evaluation prior to the schedule visit by the board inspector who in fact will just review your evaluation with you and note any deficiencies, which should be none.

We all, as professional veterinarians desire to practice the highest quality of veterinary medicine possible. Self evaluation will give us the opportunity to continue to improve any noted deficiencies at any time to assure almost a perfect inspection process every three years.

We are currently searching for the best possible person to fill this position. It has to be someone with excellent communication and interpersonal skills that is willing to study and learn the requirements stated in the practice act and administrative code. Until this position is filled and the person properly trained any necessary inspections will be performed by the board members. We ask for your input and cooperation in making this the most accurate and unbiased inspection process ever.

Please stay in touch with the board and let us know how we can be of help to you at any time.

Sincerely,

Dr. R.D. Horne

FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

by Dr. Robert E. Pitman

In March of 2010, the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners welcomed Dr. Lewis H. McCurdy. He brought with him a persuasive passion for veterinary medicine and a burning desire to do the very best job he could do.

These traits characterized his service to veterinarians and organized veterinary medicine throughout his career, starting with FTC rulings in the 1980's that disbanded the local veterinary association in Madison County, to his years on the Executive Board of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, to his visionary involvement with the Alabama Veterinary Medical Foundation. Lewis brought a sense of thoroughness and resolve to issues of great importance.

Early in his brief service on the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, we knew he was destined to be a very valuable member of your Veterinary Board. His commitment to studying the Practice Act and Administrative Code indicated that he prepared to be an effective member for you. His service was cut short and we miss him as a friend, colleague and fellow board member.

Rest in Peace Lewis.

Having Veterinarians Document Services Offered and Refused by Clients-doing this may lessen the chance of client complaints on veterinarians to the Board by Dr. John R. Grider

A good, complete and timely patient record can go a long way in aiding veterinarians in defending themselves against unfounded complaints by clients to the Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. The record should have at least daily entries with presenting complaint, diagnostics performed, the diagnosis, medications and dosages used, surgery performed and prescriptions sent. Also, notes on discussions with and recommendations made to the client should be kept in the patient record.

In many cases that the ASBVME investigate, the client states that the veterinarian did not do all that he or she should have done in treating the animal. The client will claim that additional diagnostics should have been performed or different medication should have been utilized. Quite often the client will be disgruntled because they say they were not made aware that referral to a specialist was available. The veterinarian often counters that the client was offered these things but declined them for any number of reasons.

When a client declines a procedure or referral, a notation should be put in the client record at that time. Some veterinarians even have the client initial the notation or sign a statement acknowledging their refusals. Many veterinary practice software programs give the veterinarian the ability to note declined items in the patient history and even print them on the client invoice. Seeing their refusals on the record may make the client more aware of the importance the veterinarian places on his recommendations or at least help the client to remember these items were actually discussed.

The small amount of extra time taken to keep proper records is insignificant when measured against the time and aggravation which can be involved in answering a complaint filed with the board. And besides that, it is just good medicine.

ATTENTION COUNTY RABIES OFFICERS

Please be aware that the Rabies Clinics you conduct each year should be restricted to providing **RABIES VACCINE ONLY**. To offer other veterinary services (example other vaccines) or products will be in violation of the Veterinary Practice Act.



**ALABAMA STATE BOARD
OF VETERINARY
MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

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[Www.ASBVME.Alabama.gov](http://www.ASBVME.Alabama.gov)

2012 License Renewals

This is just a friendly reminder that starting in October, you will be able to go to our website, www.ASBVME.alabama.gov, and renew your DVM license or your LVT license, just like you did last year.

We would like to remind all of our new graduates that after December 31st of each year your license will be considered late, and you will incur a late penalty. This Board by law can not waive any late fees, no matter the circumstances.

Also you need to make sure that you have your 20 hours of continuing education if you are a veterinarian, and 8 hours of continuing education if your or a licensed veterinary technician, before December 31st.

If you do not have access to a computer or you are unable to pay online, you may contact the ASBVME Office and we will mail to you a hard copy of your license renewal and continuing education form. You need to contact this office by December 1st, 2011 in order to insure that we may receive your renewal by December 31st, 2011.

