



LGVMAS



The Official Publication of the  
Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association

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## LGVMA Donates to Katrina Relief Fund

The LGVMA board of directors voted to donate \$500 to the fund established by the American Veterinary Medical Foundation for disaster relief efforts in the Gulf States ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. The AVMA is matching all donations (up to a total of \$500,000), so our contribution will net \$1,000 for the fund.

According to AVMF, the fund will be used “to cover costs associated with medical treatment for animals, animal care, AVMA Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams currently operating in storm-damaged areas, and the teams’ supplies and equipment.”

## LGVMA Plans Program for 2007 AVMA Convention

The LGVMA Board of Directors appointed a planning committee to develop program sessions for the 2007 AVMA meeting in Washington, DC. Serving on this committee are Michael McElvaine, Vic Spain, Ken Gorczyca and Chip Wells. Our goal is to put on at least a half day session as part of the official convention program on subjects related to LGVMA interests and issues. In addition, we would like to sponsor a special lecture on sexual diversity in the animal kingdom by one of several eminent researchers who have published books on this subject area.

Our list of tentative subject areas include: making your practice a friendly place for both LGBT clients and employees; applying the business model for including LGBT concerns into your practice; and non-discrimination in the workplace. We are seeking an LGVMA member or members to present on the first subject. We plan on a speaker from the Human Rights Campaign for the second subject. Please volunteer or nominate someone who would be able and willing to speak about LGBT family-friendly practice issues. The USDA LGBT Special Programs Manager has agreed to present the non-discrimination program.

We are seeking input from LGVMA members about further sessions or suggestions for developing the ideas listed above. We need at least one more presentation to fill out a half-day session. The LGVMA has never sponsored a regular session program an AVMA meeting before so we want to put on a quality program that will attract a good audience.

We are also seeking corporate/professional co-sponsors for our half-day session and our special lecture on sexual diversity in animals. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or special inside contacts with any potential sponsor. We will need a modest amount of financial support to put on program, especially the special lecture.

We look forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions and also urge you to plan to come to DC in 2007.

### Issue Highlights

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# AVMA Diversity Program Omits LGBT Issues

by Michael McElvaine DVM

## *Diversity Symposium at AVMA annual meeting:*

I was surprised when I received my pre-convention issue of JAVMA that an all-day diversity symposium was on the schedule. My first reaction was, “Why didn’t LGVMA know about this?” along with pangs of frustration about the “culture” of our profession. I decided that someone from LGVMA needed to attend and make it known that LGVMA was very interested in diversity issues.

Since the LGVMA annual meeting was scheduled for 11 am, I was unable to get to the Diversity Symposium until after lunch. After reviewing the agenda and those in attendance, it appeared that the focus of the session was on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, and gender. Other areas such as sexual orientation, gender identification, handicaps, marital or family status, parental status, or age were not discussed by most of the speakers. One of the afternoon speakers, a human resources person from Pfizer, did have the words “sexual orientation” on one of her slides but she made no mention of this or of the other listed factors that I believe should be included in a discussion of diversity.

After her presentation, I asked her a question about whether Pfizer provided any partner benefits for either same sex or opposite sex couples. She eagerly listed some of the partner benefits that Pfizer provides. She restated that Pfizer was interested in all of these diversity issues and how they effect recruitment and retention of employees.

At the next break, I was approached by Dr. Tod Schadler, one of the organizers of the session (Dr. Evan Morse was co-organizer). He had guessed from my question that I had a specific interest in sexual orientation as part of diversity in the workplace. He asked me to join the speakers for the closing panel discussion. Unfortunately, I was only able to make a few comments due to the time constraints. Speaking with Dr. Morse afterwards, I expressed my interest (meaning the interest of LGVMA) in participating in future sessions. He said that there would probably be another diversity symposium at the 2006 AVMA meeting and he hoped that we would participate.

## *AVMA Task Force on Diversity:*

During meetings of the AVMA Executive Board at the Minneapolis meeting the Board appointed AVMA members for a Task Force on Diversity that had previously been created. This group consists of seven members including a member of the Executive Board as chair. The specific charge to the task force is “To study and recommend initiatives that will enhance understanding of racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, and linguistic diversity as it applies to the veterinary profession... and to foster cultural competence in the provision of [veterinary] services. The definition of cultural competence “is defined as knowledge about specific groups (e.g. history, values, and beliefs) that fosters attitudes toward an increasingly diverse client base and the development of meaningful policies and practices that assist in the provision of high

quality veterinary services.”

As you can see, there is no specific mention of sexual orientation in any of this language although there is room for inclusion of our issues in the general statement about “specific groups.”

This task force will meet three times in the future although no time frame was listed in the charge. The first meeting will be in mid November. All meetings will be at AVMA headquarters in Schaumburg, IL. The committee will be dissolved after they submit a report to the Executive Board.

It is my opinion that this task force provides an opportunity for LGVMA to take specific actions to ensure that LGBT issues are placed before the task force. The LGVMA board should write to the committee chair, Dr. Larry Kornegay, and to AVMA President Henry Childers to notify them of our interest in providing input to the task force. This input could be in the form of a white paper or it could be done in person by a Board member at one of the meetings, preferably at the first meeting.

I will be making a motion at the next meeting of the LGVMA Board that we take these actions and possibly to fund travel expenses for a Board member to attend the first meeting of the task force.

While there is certainly no guarantee that we can make any significant impact on the activities of this committee, I feel that it would be a missed opportunity if we don’t speak up and present our concerns at this time.

# LGVMA Meets at AVMA Annual Convention in Minneapolis

This statue of Minneapolis's most famous fictional resident, Mary Richards, greeted LGVMA members as they arrived for the Annual meeting.

The LGVMA Board met for a planning meeting on Saturday, July 16, 2005. The minutes from Sunday's business meeting are on page 4 and the proposed 2006 Budget is below. Saturday evening's social festivities began with appetizers, beverages and socializing at Solera, a tapas bar on the Nicolette Mall. Over 20 people attended even though the host kept trying to divert everyone up to the second floor for a wedding dinner. (The fashion police were not kind to the wedding party...) About a dozen of us moved down the Mall to The Rock Bottom brew pub for a civilized but noisy casual dinner. Some members also went to Orchestra Hall where they enjoyed Ben & Jerry's ice cream while listening to the outdoor concert that was part of the Minneapolis Orchestra's Summerfest. There are rumors that some of our members explored several of the bars down the street and did not return to their hotels until rather late.



You're gonna make it after all



LGVMA members attending meeting in Minneapolis.  
From left: Lois Wetmore, Chip Wells, Tim Withers,  
Michael McElvaine, Kate French and Mike Miller

## LGVMA Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2006

### *Inflows:*

Dues	6,620
Merchandise Profit	240
Scholarship Donations	<u>825</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7,685</b>

### *Outflows:*

<b>Expenses</b>	
General	1,075
Meeting	1,170
Membership	1,595
Newsletter	1,800
Projects	690
Reserves	530
Scholarships	<u>825</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7,685</b>

# Minutes from the 2005 LGVMA Annual Meeting

July 17, 2005

Hyatt Regency Minneapolis @ AVMA Annual Meeting

Attending: Tim Withers, Michael Miller, Michael McElvaine, Chip Wells, Shawn Caron, Cricket Brooks, Lois Wetmore, Ronna Dornsife, Vara Burns, Kate French.

Call to order by President Tim Withers.

Minutes of last meeting read and approved with the following additions.

1. A financial review from the start of our organization (1994) was completed by Michael McElvaine, Mel Vassey and Sara White.

2. A Standing Financial Committee was created. Members are Michael McElvaine, Mel Vassey and Mark Walter.

Treasurer's Report - Michael Miller  
A summary with handouts presented of financial report for the year 2004, a balance sheet as of 7-16-05, and a detailed proposed budget for 2006. Expected upcoming new expenditure will be for LGVMA T-shirts.

Discussion:

- re. AVMA Foundation contribution  
- see Old Business below.

Motion to approve 2006 Proposed Budget approved.

Membership Report-from Mel Vassey, read by Tim Withers

Received 118 membership renewals so far out of 204 members. Second notice had not yet been sent but expected out Aug. 2, 2005.

Breakdown of renewals:

112 regular members

4 retired

1 vet tech

1 student

Old Business

1. Officer changes

-Treasurer from Chip Wells to Michael Miller

-Membership from Chip Wells to Mel Vassey

2. AVMF Congressional Science Fellows support contribution  
Discussion-Would like to continue our funding. We have been a substantial contributor in past. Approx. a third of previous fellows have been LGVMA members. Not a line item on budget because in past has been drawn from that year's donations to the General Fund. A motion to authorize board to contribute up to \$500 at its discretion carried. Also request made to provide information about Fellows program to General Membership in upcoming newsletter.

3. AVMA Annual Meeting in 2007 in Washington, DC.

LGVMA plans to be included on program.

-Michael McElvaine, Chip Wells, Vic Spain and Ken Gorczyca agreed to be on a coordination committee. Any others welcome!

-Ideas so far have been Practice tips to make practices more welcoming to GLBT clients and homosexuality in the animal kingdom.

-Ronna Dornsife offered to be a liaison with business community on diversity/benefits issues.

-Chip Wells recommended discussions should take place online via the list serve.

4. Ad in JAVMA

-money has been budgeted  
-suggestions for Graphic Designer?

5. Summary of Financial Review

-tabled until board meeting

New Business

1. Diversity Session at 2005 AVMA

- We were not invited nor aware of it. Michael McElvaine was able to attend end of the session. After talking to organizers he was included in a panel discussion on diversity issues during the session. AVMA plans on annual diversity sessions next few years. Michael McElvaine plans to be in contact about this and hopefully included in 2006 Honolulu meeting.

2. Letter from LGVMA to be written

in support of the Veterinary Medicine Education and Work Force Development Act. This legislation is sponsored by Sen. Wayne Allard and is meant to try to increase the number of public health veterinarians.

3. Many volunteer opportunities  
-Kate French offered to coordinate a presence at 2006 SCAVMA Symposium in St.Paul.

4. Do we need an Executive Secretary?

-Lois Wetmore offered to check into secretarial support possibilities at Tufts as an alternative to a paid position and to relieve some current volunteer jobs.

5. T-shirts

-discussed plans to produce more LGVMA t-shirts, possibly designed by a lesbian-owned company

6. Achievement Award candidates discussed and finalized: Dr. Michael McElvaine and Dr. Colin Johnstone

7. Scholarship to Angela Taylor, Univ. of Georgia, \$500

8. New Members outreach  
-any ideas?

Minutes submitted by Kate French  
8/18/05.

# Thanks to These Volunteers

**Ronna Dornsife**, Raleigh, NC -- volunteered to work as Student Outreach Coordinator. Ronna works on providing grants from the AKC Canine Health Foundation (<http://www.akcchf.org/>) as well as with various GLBT organizations.

**Ron Erkert**, Stillwater, OK -- despite being in the final year of his PhD program, Ron has offered to serve as Membership Director, welcoming new members to the organization.

**Kate French**, St. Paul, MN -- volunteered to help organize LGVMA activities at next year's SAVMA Symposium in St. Paul and served as acting Secretary at our Annual Meeting in Minneapolis

**Karen Hull**, Bloomington, IN -- after many years doing a fine job on the LGVMA website, Karen has also agreed to take over duties as KODB -- Keeper of the Database.

## Volunteer Opportunities for the Next 12 Months

### 2005

December 1 - finalize list of candidates for 2006 elections  
December 15 - mail pre-NAVC newsletter (volunteers needed for mailing)

### 2006

January 1 - mail membership renewals (volunteers needed for mailing)  
January 7-11 - NAVC conference in Orlando (volunteer needed to organize reception)  
February 1 - mail membership renewals - 2nd notice (volunteers needed for mailing)  
March 9-11 - SCAVMA Symposium in St. Paul (volunteer needed to organize reception)  
March 15 - mail newsletter & election ballots (volunteers needed for mailing) - deadline for student scholarship applications  
June 15 - Pre-AVMA Convention newsletter (volunteers needed for mailing) - deadline for receiving returned election ballots  
July 11-13 (tentative) - possible LGVMA retreat at Russian River

Many thanks to the following folks for their donations during 2004 & 2005.

### *Student Scholarships:*

John Brancel  
Kate Brown  
Sue Buxton  
Michael Dugan  
Melinda Freckleton  
Kate French  
Tia Greenberg  
John Hynes  
Karen Stell  
Several anonymous donors

### *General Fund:*

Troy Cobb  
Diane Dodin  
Michael Dugan  
Tia Greenberg  
Thomas Hodge  
Michael McGill  
Geoffrey McKenzie  
Joc Rawls  
Estate of Steven L. Schwartz  
Ilana Strubel  
Jennifer Thomas  
Bonnie Yoffe-Sharp  
Several anonymous donors

## Volunteer Positions Available:

Executive Secretary  
Membership Outreach Coordinator  
Student Representative to Board

## ALL Board Positions Up For Election in 2006

President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
3 At-large positions  
Student Representative  
Technician Representative

Now taking nominations for all of these Board positions.

# Veterinary Medical Education and Workforce Development Act

The American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges asked the LGVMA to write a letter supporting this legislation pending in Congress. The mere fact the AAVMC would contact the LGVMA to ask for our support is a sign of how we have been able to raise our profile within the veterinary community over the years. There is some sweet irony that Senator Wayne Allard -- certainly no friend of the GLBT community -- is a cosponsor of this legislation and will most certainly be receiving a CC copy of our letter supporting this legislation. A summary of the legislation can be found here: [www.aavmc.org/documents/VWEA15MAR05e.pdf](http://www.aavmc.org/documents/VWEA15MAR05e.pdf) The full text of the LGVMA letter is below:

Dear Dr. Heider:

The Lesbian and Gay Veterinary Medical Association (LGVMA) strongly supports the Veterinary Medical Education and Workforce Development Act that has been introduced in the 109th Congress. We understand that this authorizing legislation will establish a competitive federal grants program to build research and training capacity in the nation's veterinary medical colleges. The United States is facing a critical shortage of veterinarians in such public practice areas as food safety and food security, infectious and zoonotic diseases, population medicine, public health, and biomedical research. Only through significant national effort can these deficits be met.

Several agencies in the federal government have, or will soon have, a severe shortage of veterinarians. In addition, many recent studies have shown dramatic shortfalls of veterinarians in key areas related to biomedical research and public health. The AAVMC proposal is an excellent and realistic solution to these significant resource requirements. Federal support is most appropriate because veterinary public practice is a national resource with an impact that crosses state boundaries. The proposed competitive grants program would provide the infrastructure and faculty support to advance the science of public health and meet the needs of society.

The mission of LGVMA includes support for individuals, education to the community as well as providing a forum for information exchange among our almost 200-plus active members. Our focus has been on support of lesbian and gay veterinary students as well as graduate veterinarians. Many of our members are in public practice and consistently promote the importance of public practice to other members, the veterinary profession in general, and to the public. We join the AAVMC in its effort to expand veterinary public practice programs by increasing capacity in veterinary medical education.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

**January 7-11, 2006**, North American Veterinary Conference, Orlando, FL

**February 19-23, 2006**, Western States Veterinary Conference, Las Vegas, NV

**March 9-11, 2006**, Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA),  
Minneapolis, MN

**July 15-19, 2006**, LGVMA Annual Meeting & AVMA Annual Convention,  
Honolulu, HI

If you'd like to volunteer to help plan social events at any of these meetings, please let us know.

## LGVMA ONLINE

Be sure to check out our colorful and informative website at [www.LGVMA.org](http://www.LGVMA.org). This entertaining website is voluntarily maintained by LGVMA member, Karen Hull, DVM. Thanks, Karen! Even if you happen to misplace this newsletter, you should be able to view the information in cyberspace on our website. Other online services include an application for membership, how to contact us, a calendar of events, and links to other sites. If people have ideas for things that they would like to see on the website, please let Karen know by email at [webmaster@LGVMA.org](mailto:webmaster@LGVMA.org)

## Sign Up Now For LGVMA List-Serve

LGVMA maintains a Yahoo Groups list-serve so you can exchange messages rapidly with other participating members.

Subscribe by sending an email to:  
[LGVMA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:LGVMA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)  
Or visit the website to subscribe.

## Submit!

The next LGVMA newsletter will be published in early 2006. Please send any news or other submissions to [lgvma@lgvma.org](mailto:lgvma@lgvma.org). We are particularly interested in any news about LGVMA gatherings, meetings or news about members that would be of interest to others. Microsoft Word files attached to e-mail are the easiest for us to work with. If you have any digital photos (related to LGVMA events, that is!), please pass them along to us. Thanks!

## Do you have friends who should be LGVMA members but aren't?

Please encourage them to visit [www.lgvma.org](http://www.lgvma.org) and become a member today!

LGVMA President Tim Withers says, "I don't know about you... but I have at least four or five friends who should be LGVMA members but for various reasons, are not. For example, I have three lesbian classmates who are practice owners in the south (Alabama in two cases, Florida in the other) who have consistently declined my invitations to join the LGVMA. In each case, they are concerned about the potential negative repercussions if their clients or local colleagues were to find out they belonged to LGVMA. Unfortunately this oppressive environment in which LGBT veterinary professional have to remain closeted for fear of losing their livelihoods is still all too common—especially outside of major urban areas. Sometimes we forget that not all potential LGVMA members live in Washington, DC or Philadelphia or New York City or San Francisco."

# Classifieds

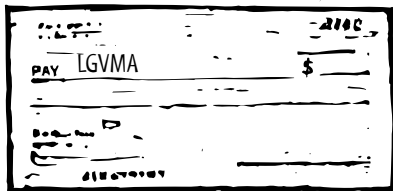
## Veterinarian Wanted in Brooklyn, NY

We are a lesbian owned delightfully blossoming practice in Brooklyn NY, now seeking a warm, compassionate 4th doctor. We need someone who is equally comfortable performing routine surgeries as they are caring for animals and humans in the exam room. We emphasize client education, believe in both conventional and naturopathic medicine, feature hydrotherapy, hospice care and social work counseling. We have a fabulous support team, a beautiful facility and many gay and lesbian clients! We work a 4 day work week and offer good benefits. New grads are very welcome to apply.

Please e.mail your resume to [jsternberg@hopevet.com](mailto:jsternberg@hopevet.com) or fax to: 718-852-4249.

Check our website for current job listings: [www.lgvma.org](http://www.lgvma.org)

LGVMA members can place a free ad for the newsletter and website. Others may contact the editor for advertising prices. Simply e-mail to [LGVMA@lgvma.org](mailto:LGVMA@lgvma.org)



Please consider donating money to LGVMA's scholarship or general funds. Also consider recruiting corporate sponsors for LGVMA functions.

## Practice for Sale—Georgia

500K+ Small Animal Practice, Low Fee, High Volume. 40-70 clients/day, 5-day week, no after-hours. Largely working class clientele, outside Augusta. On 3-year vaccination schedule since 1985. 100% out-patient, no boarding or grooming. Needs one very hyperactive or 2 normal-pace veterinarians. Must be honorable. Lease building, buy or lease equipment. No blue sky. Call 1-706-554-2495 from 8:30-9:30pm

## Veterinarian Wanted—Florida

Small animal associate desired for AAHA accredited 3-doctor practice in beautiful coastal South Sarasota County Florida. Excellent diagnostic, surgical, communication skills needed for well-equipped hospital, excellent clientele. Leadership and training skills a plus. Base salary + production, benefits, average 40 hours/week, rotating weekends. Great opportunity for long-term association with possible buy-in. Brandt Veterinary Clinic, 720 N. Tamiami Trail, Nokomis, FL 34275. Fax: 941-484-5662; Email: [WeCare@BrandtVetClinic.com](mailto:WeCare@BrandtVetClinic.com).

### LGVMA 2005-2006 Officers:

President	Tim Withers, DVM, Washington, DC
Secretary	Vic Spain, DVM, Philadelphia, PA
Treasurer	Michael Miller, DVM, Alameda, CA
Student Rep	<i>position vacant</i>

### At-Large Board Members:

Michael D. McElvaine, DVM, MPH, Washington, DC  
Keri Jones, DVM, Lakewood, CO  
Gene Bodily, DVM, Bellvue, WA

### GOOD NEWS! Staff:

Vic Spain, DVM, Noël Rosales, MD, Philadelphia, PA

*LGVMA'S GOOD NEWS!* is published by the Lesbian and Gay Veterinary Medical Association, originally founded as the International Membership of Gay and Lesbian Animal Doctors (I'M GLAD). The opinions expressed in *GOOD NEWS!* belong to the contributing authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the LGVMA.