



Happy Birthday, LGVMA!

Please join us in Philadelphia July 24-28, in conjunction with the AVMA Annual Convention, to celebrate LGVMA's 10th birthday!

LGVMA Events

- Saturday morning/afternoon - Planning session with LGVMA Board and any interested members
- Saturday evening - reception and dinner 5:00 to 7:00pm
 Cash bar and hors d'oeuvres, cover charge
 Bump, located at 1234 Locust Street
 (215) 732-1800
 Dinner to follow for those interested
- Sunday morning - Annual Meeting with all members welcome.
 11:00am to 12:30pm, Concerto Room
 Doubletree Hotel, 237 South Broad Street
 (215) 893-1600
- Sunday afternoon - Board Meeting, location TBA
- Monday evening - Please join us for dinner in Chinatown on Monday, July 26. We will meet in the lounge on the first floor of the Loews (1200 Market) between 6 and 7 pm - and then go to dinner around 7. If you think you might be interested in dinner, please contact Dr. Vic Spain so that he can get a rough head count for the restaurant. (cvs2@cornell.edu or 215-574-8249).

2003 Membership Survey Results

This survey was conducted by the Lesbian and Gay Veterinary Medical Association (LGVMA) in May and June of 2003. The objectives of the survey were to assess membership views of:

- The primary functions of the organization
- What activities LGVMA should sponsor
- How LGVMA funds should be allocated
- Effectiveness of the LGVMA newsletter

All current members were mailed a survey questionnaire and pre-paid response envelope. Members who did not respond initially were sent a reminder postcard.

The overall response rate was 65% (147 of 225). This is a strong response rate for a survey of professionals, especially given that we did only one wave of follow-up for non-responders. Many published surveys of veterinarians have response rates below 50%. This high response rate suggests that members

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IN MEMORIAM: STEVEN L. SCHWARTZ, VMD 1952-2003

Survey Results

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were motivated to contribute to shaping the organization.

All of the following numbers are based on the respondents who answered the particular question. If someone skipped a question, they were excluded from the analysis for that question. No more than 5 people skipped any question, so non-response bias is not a big concern. Some percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding. The order of questions (and some answers) has been changed from the original questionnaire.

I. Demographics

What is your age? (years)

Median age 43

Percentage in each age group:

25-29 11%

30-39 30%

40-49 36%

50-59 19%

60-75 3%

This would suggest that we have more members over 50 years old than in the previous survey – either because previous membership is aging or because older veterinarians are more likely to join the organization.

What is your gender?

Female 46%

Male 54%

These numbers are similar to those from the 1995 LGVMA survey in which 58% of respondents were male and 42% were female.

How big is the city or town where you live?

>500,000 61%

50,000-499,000 22%

5,000-49,000 12%

<5,000 5%

Not surprisingly, the majority of members were in a large metropolitan area.

Primary employment (in order by percent indicating)

Private practice or relief veterinarian 61%

College/University 12%

Private company/industry 9%

Student 7%

Local, state or federal government 4%

Retired 3%

Humane organization 1%

Non-governmental or non-profit organization 1%

Not employed 1%

Other 1%

II. LGVMA Activities and Functions

How important are each of the following functions to you?

Answers are ordered by % that answered very important or somewhat important.

Functions	Very important (%)	Somewhat important (%)	Not important (%)
Advocating for LGBT issues	80	17	3
Published membership directory	59	37	4
Website	57	38	6
Social events at veterinary conferences	60	33	7
Newsletter	59	34	7
Scholarship fund for veterinary students	63	27	10
Speakers or educational events for members	35	52	13
Educational events for non-members	40	46	14
List-serv	34	48	18
Local events not linked to conferences	22	50	28

Note that combined total for very important and somewhat important is high for all answers, so it would appear that all of these are of interest to at least some members.

In general, how important are the following purposes for the LGVMA? *This question was intended to capture views of the large-scale purpose of the LGVMA, in contrast to the previous question that focused on specific events and activities. Answers are ordered by % that answered very important or somewhat important.*

Purposes	Very (%)	Somewhat (%)	Not important (%)	Not Sure (%)
Outreach to LGBT vet students	86	12	1	1
Advocating for LGBT and/or HIV/AIDS issues within the veterinary community	66	25	4	5
Providing education to the veterinary community	62	28	6	4
Providing education to the LGBT community	46	44	5	5
Providing social opportunities for members	43	47	6	3
Providing professional development for members	37	46	12	6
Advocating for LGBT and/or HIV/AIDS issues to the general public	39	37	14	10

If you were able to deduct donation to the scholarship fund, would you be...

More likely to donate	58%
Just as likely to donate	34%
Unlikely to donate regardless of deduction	8%

These next 4 questions were designed to gather information on which conferences or meetings LGVMA members attend and at which of these conferences the LGVMA should sponsor events.

Which of the following conferences or meetings do you expect to attend at least once in the next few years?

AVMA	59%
NAVC	40%
Western Veterinary Conference	32%
ACVIM	31%
AAHA	23%
Wild West Veterinary Conference	12%
Midwest Veterinary Conference	10%
Tufts Animal Expo	10%
Atlantic Veterinary Conference	8%
Central Veterinary Conference	8%
Canadian VMA	3%
CRWAD	1%

Meetings from “other” category – any meeting listed by more than one person. These are probably undercounts, since this was an open ended question.

IVECCS	9%
State/provincial veterinary society (any)	6%
AAFP	3%
AALAS (lab animal)	2%
University meeting (any)	2%
U.S. Animal Health Association	2%
AAEP	1%
Veterinary Cancer Society	1%
SAVMA	1%
American Humane Association	1%
International Veterinary Acupuncture Soc.	1%
International Conference on Exotics	1%
International Veterinary Seminars	1%



Would you like to see LGVMA events held at any of the meetings you attend? (among those planning to attend at least once conference)

Yes, at any or all	89%
Yes, but only certain meetings	8%
No	3%

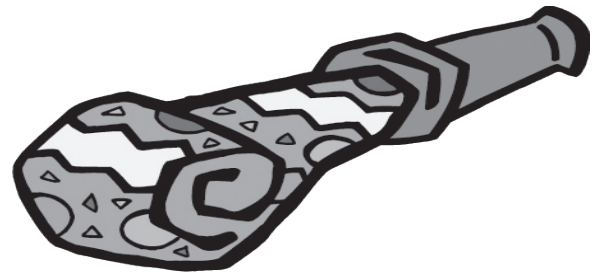
What kinds of events would you be likely to attend in conjunction with a conference or meeting you were attending? (In decreasing order and among those who would like to see LGVMA events at meetings they attend)

Social event at café, restaurant, or bar	85%
Social event on the meeting site	78%
Speaker sponsored by LGVMA	59%
Social event at a member's home	56%
Tours or activities	48%
Workshop or educational session	39%

Only 2 people said they would attend an event at a member's home, but NOT at a café, restaurant, or bar. This may suggest that only a few members have concerns about relatively public events.

Would you be interested in organizing an LGVMA social event in your area or at a conference you were attending? (among those who would like to see LGVMA events at meetings they attend)

Yes, definitely	23%
Maybe	45%
Probably not or definitely not	31%



III. Newsletter

How important is the following content in the LGVMA newsletter? Decreasing order base on combined % that answered every issue or sometimes.

	Every issue (%)	Sometimes (%)	Not important (%)
Stories about LGVMA events	81	18	1
News from vet schools that is gay/lesbian related	71	29	1
Stories about individual LGVMA members	33	66	1
News about member vet students	29	66	5
News on LGBT social justice issues	55	34	12
Educational articles on veterinary topic	40	48	12
News from vet schools that is not gay/lesbian related	7	48	44

Do you have an email account?

Yes	98%
No	2%

Would you want to receive the newsletter as an email attachment? (Among those with an email account)

Prefer just email	71%
Prefer both email and printed copy	10%
Prefer just printed	19%

Just for fun...

What companion animals do you have in your household?

Cat(s)	71%
Dog(s)	69%
Bird(s)	14%
Fish	10%
Horse(s)	8%
Reptile or Amphibian(s)	5%
Rabbit or rodent(s)	5%
Ferret(s)	2%
Other	5%
None	7%

IV. Summary of ideas for LGVMA projects and other comments on organization

Please note that these are summaries of ideas presented. More detailed responses are available for some of these. Ideas have been subjectively categorized. Some of these were expressed by only one respondent, while others were expressed by multiple respondents.

Ideas for on-going programs

- Advocacy training for a board member – sponsor training with AVMA or other group
- Education – improved vet client service/awareness, HIV/immune suppression issues, zoonoses
- Hire someone to keep website current and active
- More frequent conference social events (also - better advertised, listed in meeting programs, etc.)
- More or higher value scholarships
- Provide ways for members to meet outside of conference – Let members know it's OK to contact others in directory
- Research grants to students (e.g. on zoonoses or access to vet care)
- Support for vet care for pet-owners with HIV/AIDS (e.g. support vets who do pro bono work)
- Would like window clinger or pin for work to show LGVMA membership
- Upgrade newsletter

Ideas for outreach

- Charitable contributions to (or sponsoring events for) animal welfare groups
- Charitable contributions to other LGBT groups
- Connect with other LGBT groups (choral, sports, medical, etc.)
- Educate vet school faculty about LGBT student issues
- Mentoring for vet students
- More advertising about LGVMA in vet journals or SCAVMA journal
- Outreach to disabled LGBT vets
- Outreach to LGBT technicians or vet technology programs
- Visibility – at LGBT business expo, pride events, SCAVMA events, state VMA events

Ideas for special events

- AVMA Convention session (with published proceedings/papers)
- LGVMA conference separate from other meetings
- More awards/recognition to members
- Offer seed money for members who want to organize local talk
- PAWS summit session

Ideas for lobbying efforts

- Address gender discrimination or sexual harassment issues
- Lobby AVMA to include domestic partners in health care
- Lobby private practices to have non-discrimination policies
- Lobby to allow non-vet spouses/partners to inherit practices in areas where practices must be owned by vets
- Partner with national gay rights group for advertising campaign on LGBT issues

Related comments on specific project ideas

- Oppose using reserve-fund for a one-time party/celebration
- Lectures/program at AVMA should not be related to AIDS or being gay

Other comments on organization

- Board is more responsive to students than to vet members
- Board is slow to get things done, too concerned with procedures
- Easy to miss renewal deadline for directory
- Make sure Ross students are eligible for scholarships (*n.b.* - Ross students have always been encouraged to apply for the scholarship and are given equal consideration with all other candidates)
- Members are too reluctant to get involved with organizing events
- No need to send newsletter to vet-school deans
- Students have trouble reaching LGVMA by email
- Would like current membership directory
- Lots of “thank you,” “good job on survey,” “keep up the good work,” etc.

Many thanks to all who responded to the survey! Many of these suggestions are already in the planning or implementation stage. If you have a particular issue you'd like to see LGVMA working on, please volunteer some of your own time to help us with that. We are an all-volunteer organization and member participation is crucial to meeting all our goals.

2004 LGVMA Scholarships

There were four applicants for this year's LGVMA scholarship, all of whom were very well qualified - making for a very difficult decision. Ultimately, though, the Scholarship Committee made their selections and is proud to announce that the recipients of the 2004 LGVMA Scholarship - each of whom will receive a \$500 scholarship - are Rebecca E. Wolf, a member of the Class of 2006 at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and Anthea Smith, a member of the Class of 2007 at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. Below are their personal essays, which form part of the application packet that each applicant submits:

Rebecca E. Wolf

In the past year, I have re-founded and revived the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine's student chapter of the LGVMA. In the beginning, I had intended for this group to act as a networking and support system for students while they are going through the rigors of school. After six months of serving as the group's president, however, I have come to understand the role of our student organization in a different light. The environment at Penn is extremely open and accepting of all types of people, and I quickly found that although there certainly is a desire to have official camaraderie with other lesbian, gay, bisexual, or allied students and faculty, most of us are happy to simply get together socially and meet with campus groups and alumni when the opportunity presents itself. There is no need to fight for our right to be recognized, and there is no need to seek out a gay or friendly faculty mentor when all faculty are friendly, helpful, and accepting in a mentor role. I now see our most important role at the Veterinary School as simply existing in the public light. My hope is that the more student colleagues who enter and spend four years of veterinary school in our presence will enter our profession and society believing in - and advocating - removal of prejudicial attitudes and increased acceptance. Because our group exists as a normal, functioning part of veterinary school society, I believe that our colleagues will carry these ideals into their professional and personal lives. In the end, the more future veterinarians we can affect change with now, the more our acceptance in our profession and in society will grow. This is the goal I hope to achieve with our student chapter of the LGVMA.

Anthea Smith

Only in the past week did I hear about the LGVMA, but I do hope to become more involved with the organization. I will be in contact with Jeffrey Berkshire at AVC and talk to other students at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN) about the possibility of starting up a "V4D" group for next school year.

I have always wanted to be a veterinarian, and after lots of determination and several tries, I was finally accepted last year. I find that WCVN is a very conservative college with not much awareness regarding the LGBTTQQA community. The first month of veterinary school was difficult, as I had the feeling that I did not fit in. Coming from a "queer" family made explaining my family to inquiring class mates difficult as well (as to why my mom and dad do not live together or in the same city, and no, my dad does not have a girlfriend, he has a boyfriend!). After a period of time, everyone in my class got to know each other quite well, and we all accept each other for who we are. I no longer feel like I stand out so much, but the college could definitely benefit from having "appreciation of diversity" emphasized a bit more.

I have special interest in companion animal medicine, and have several pets of my own. I have been fortunate to have worked at a veterinary practice that shares my philosophy of treating all animals, including people, in a kind and considerate manner. A significant proportion of the clients are part of the LGTB community. No one is ever unfairly discriminated against for any reason. During the school year, I do not have time to work there, but when time permits, I continue to volunteer to gain additional clinical experience.

Last year, all of the veterinary colleges in Canada had an animal welfare club or humane ethics club except WCVN. When I started vet school in the fall, I formed such a club. We have brought in guest speakers, including the Saskatchewan SPCA to talk about the link between animal abuse, violence, and child abuse. This

February, I organized student involvement with running vaccination clinics for cats of low income families. The program was initiated and funded by Street Cat Rescue Program which is a group that I have been volunteering with for the past 5 years. After the cats received their vaccinations, the owners were given a voucher to have their cat spayed or neutered at a participating vet clinic. For the majority of the cats, it was their first visit to a veterinarian, and if it was not for this program, they would be having kittens this spring. During the health exams that students performed, we discussed important aspects of cat care with the owners including zoonotic diseases cats may carry, who should be most concerned, and what precautions they can take.

I have an interest in epidemiology and public health. From working on the West Nile Virus Surveillance Program, I have experience working in a related field.

“Gayby” Boom!

- LGVMA Secretary Dr. Elaine Pérez and her partner, Alicia Fernández, are the proud parents of Carlos Enrique. Elaine gave birth to this 6lbs. 13oz. bundle of joy on January 7.

- LGVMA members Drs. Ashley Owens and Tonya Amiri also became parents of a baby boy, Jaeden Alexander Amiri-Owens. He was delivered by C-section on January 13 and weighed 9lbs. 2 oz. Tonya’s second parent adoption became official on February 10.

- LGVMA member Dr. Linda Detwiler and her partner, Michele Rabinowitz, finalized the adoption of two children from Guatemala in early June. Jake turned two in June and Leah will turn two in August.

Congratulations to all these proud parents!

Classified ads

Brooklyn, NY—small animal practice

Rapidly growing 1 year old practice seeking associate to join 3 doctor clinic. Clinic emphasizes client education and support, practices conventional and naturopathic medicine and features hydrotherapy, hospice, dedicated dental suite, and social work counseling. Excellent communication skills a must. Area is gentrified and has a large LGBT population with pets. 4 day work week. New grads welcome to apply.

Submit resume to:

Juliet Sternberg, CSW
Hope Veterinary Clinic
390 Atlantic Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11218

Fax: 718-852-4249

Email: jsternberg@hopevet.com

Website: www.hopevet.com

A letter from your outgoing president:

As you will see in this newsletter, the results of our membership survey are in, and we hope to use these results to serve our membership better. Thanks to everyone who took the time to respond.

Our members in Philadelphia have a lot of great events planned for our annual meeting this month during the AVMA convention, and I hope to see many of you there.

I want to encourage everyone reading this to get involved in the LGVMA, in whatever way suits you. If you spend time online, join our listserv and talk to other members. If you live in a city, look up other members and have a potluck. If you are near a vet school, become a mentor to a LGBT student. If you’re at the AVMA convention, consider joining in our planning sessions. If you enjoy writing or editing, volunteer for the newsletter. This organization is what you make it.

I’d like to offer sincere thanks for all the help and support of the board members during my two years as LGVMA President—I couldn’t have done it without you. I’m pleased to be passing the torch to our next President, Dr. Tim Withers, a previous LGVMA President and an excellent leader.

See you in Philly!

Sara C. White, DVM
Hartland, Vermont



After a decade of service to the Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association, Dr. Joe “Chip” Wells is stepping down from his position as Treasurer. Having filled that position faithfully since the very beginning of LGVMA in 1994, Chip deserves the thanks of each and every member for his integrity, dedication and foresight in managing our accounts and our member database.

On a related note, there are many volunteer opportunities available in LGVMA:

Manager of the Database -- Chip has also handled this duty since day one and would appreciate handing this task off to some “new blood”.

Secretary -- Our outgoing Secretary, Dr. Elaine Perez, is retiring after two terms to spend more time with her partner, Alicia, and their new son, Carlos Enrique. Since no one has stepped forward to fulfill this position, it remains vacant. We really need someone to step forward and be appointed to fill out the current two-year term (July 2004 to July 2006).

Membership Director -- This role has been vacant for about a year and is crucial to the future of the organization. The Membership Director welcomes new members to the organization and helps formulate ongoing plans for outreach to potential members.

LGVMA would also like to thank the following donors:

Scholarship Fund Donors:

- Anonymous
- Kate Brown
- Larry Carbone
- Kate French
- Tia Greenberg
- Mari Morimoto
- Randy Vaughn

General Fund Donors:

- Anonymous
- Troy Cobb
- Diane Dodin

- Ted Eudy
- Tia Greenberg
- Thomas Hodge
- Malcolm Kram
- Michael McGuill
- B. Joy Morris
- Roger Nichols
- Joc Rawls
- Estate of Steven L. Schwartz
- Randy Vaughn
- Beth Weisberger
- Bonnie Yoffe-Sharp

- If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically in .pdf format, please notify Dr. Mel Vassey at mel.vassey@comcast.net.

- If you would like to subscribe to the LGVMA e-mail listserv, please send a blank e-mail to LGVMA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or contact group administrator Dr. Tim Withers at wwith@aol.com.