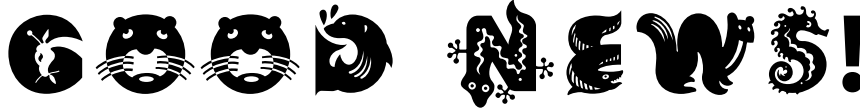




LGVMA'S



The Official Publication of the  
Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association

LGVMA  
584 Castro Street, Suite 492  
San Francisco, CA 94114-2500  
Fax: 503-213-8749  
e-mail: LGVMA@lgvma.org  
www.lgvma.org  
Volume 13, No. 1 Summer 2005

## LGVMA Celebrates 10 Years

In 1991, two San Francisco-based veterinarians, Diana Phillips and Ken Gorczyca, started organizing under the acronym I'M GLAD (International Membership of Gay and Lesbian Animal Doctors). I'M GLAD received a shot-in-the-arm in 1994, when the AVMA Annual Meeting was held in San Francisco. Naturally, this location brought a large lesbian & gay turn-out and generated what became the First Annual Meeting of what would eventually evolve into the Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association.

LGVMA celebrated its tenth anniversary during the AVMA Convention held in Philadelphia July 2004. On Saturday, July 24, LGVMA members and friends met at Bump Bar and Restaurant for a reception organized by longtime member Dr. Malcolm Kram. Guests at the reception included representatives from the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) and current AVMA Congressional Fellows. LGVMA contributes annually to AVMF at a level comparable to most state VMA's. After a lovely outdoor reception, a group of attendees went out for an enjoyable evening of dinner and drinks in Center City, in the heart of Gay Philadelphia. On Monday, July 26, Dr. Vic Spain organized a dinner outing to Philadelphia's Chinatown.

## Hollywood Hosts 2005 PAWS Summit

*The Healing Power of the Human-Animal Bond: Companion Animals in Society* was held June 2-4, 2005 at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel. It was a great success, and the first conference collaboration by Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) of San Francisco and PAWS/LA. In 2000, PAWS hosted *Healing Power of the Human Animal-Bond: Lessons Learned from the AIDS Epidemic*.

This year, Betty White was the honorary chairperson. Gretchen Wyler gave a special luncheon address and LGVMA member, Ilana Strubel, DVM gave a presentation on *Companion Animals as Emotional Support- Spotlight on Homeless Pet Guardians*. Three past PAWS veterinary and public health externs



Emilia Wong Gordon, Stephanie Wong, Belinda Wong

also presented at this conference. Emilia Wong Gordon, a veterinary student at Davis, presented with Dr. Strubel about the homeless pet guardians and Mercer Veterinary Clinic in Sacramento. Belinda Wong, MPH, University of California, San Francisco presented *Roles of pets in health promotion: A PAWS program case study*. Finally, Stephanie Wong, DVM, U.S. Navy and first PAWS veterinary extern presented *Communicating Zoonotic Risks for Immuno-Compromised Clients*. All presentations will be available at [www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org). Contact Andrea Brooks for more information on the PAWS externship program.

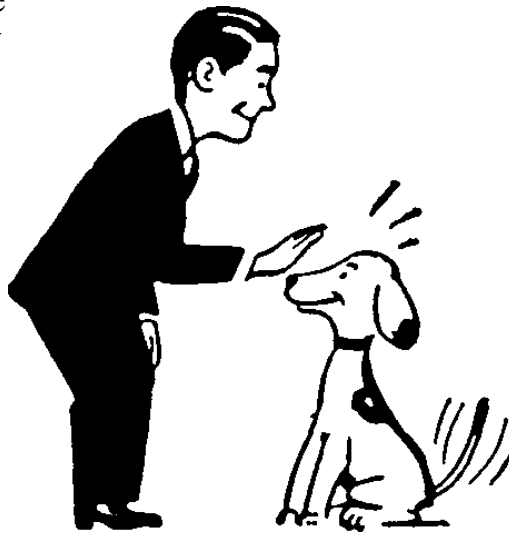
# Notes from the President: Milestones

Note to anyone who is under 25 or 30 reading this: growing old is not necessarily a bad thing. Once you get a few years under your belt, sometimes you can look back and find your life divides itself into distinct time periods, frequently connected by a common thread or two, and it can give you a sense all at once of history and peace and calm... and perhaps even a little excitement about what the future holds. This is the story of how I came to be where I am and where I might be going after this.

**ACT I – August 1970:** About a year after the Stonewall Riots rocked a steamy New York City and marked a milestone in GLBT history books, this story opens in a small Kentucky town 717 miles (and a thousand light years) from Greenwich Village. In a rambling farmhouse in Versailles, Kentucky, a pudgy little 5-year-old boy can't sleep – tomorrow is his first day of school. The next morning when his mom, a single mother, dresses him for school, he's in a brand new, red, short-sleeve shirt (made of a hideous nylon which can probably still be found valiantly surviving in a landfill somewhere in the South) and a pair of white shorts (also made of a similarly non-biodegradable material)... and off to first grade.

A few months later, the red shirt has faded a little but the newness of school has not – especially considering the

mysterious new feelings that little boy is developing for another little boy in his home-room. While he didn't know what those feelings meant or what he might possibly ever do about them – and he certainly had never heard the words “gay” or “homosexual” in his short life in a tiny rural town – these feelings were undeniable evidence of one fact: he knew he was different.



About a year later he decided he wanted to be a veterinarian – but the gay part was there first.

**ACT II – June 1990:** Another sleepless night, this one the night before graduation from veterinary college. Another small southern town – this time Auburn, Alabama, instead of Versailles, Kentucky. And instead of spending the evening with his mother, the young man is staying with his good friend Teresa, a veterinary technician in the ophthalmology ward at school. He and Teresa had bonded almost immediately for two reasons: first, Teresa had a gay brother

whom she loved very much and didn't get to see very much – the young man was kind of a substitute brother. And second (and perhaps more importantly at the beginning) they found they both shared a mini-crush on the same guy in the young man's class in vet school.

Sitting at the kitchen table in Teresa's small trailer a few miles from vet school, the young man told his friend about his plans after graduation. Most of these plans involved moving to a big city and finding a way to combine his life as a gay man with his career as a veterinarian – perhaps by doing some volunteer work with an AIDS service organization which helped people and their pets. Even though at that point, he had never heard of Pets Are Wonderful Support in San Francisco (which was only three years old at the time) nor of PETS—Washington DC (which would officially come into existence just a few months later in October 1990). But he knew somehow, he wanted to be able to say he was proud of being both a gay man and a veterinarian at the same time. And who knows? He might even be able to find one or two other gay veterinarians out there in the world.

**ACT III – May 2005:** That little 5-year-old is about to turn forty and has spent fully half his life in veterinary medicine, first as a veterinary assistant, then in vet school, and for the last 15 years, practicing small

animal medicine. He has worked with both PAWS-SF and PETS—DC and considers himself lucky he can call the founders of both of these organizations “friend.” And not only did he find one or two other gay and lesbian veterinarians over the years, he was a founding member and two-time President of a group called the Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association, now entering its second decade with over 200 members in North America and Europe.

But the job he loves doesn't provide the same satisfaction it once did – there are only so many times you can list the causes of otitis externa or explain the in and outs of anal glands. So before he starts to hate the profession which he loves and which has brought him much personal and professional satisfaction, he decides its time to move on. He decides just as much as he has loved private practice, he would equally loathe either research or becoming a product salesman – just not up his alley. He asks himself two simple questions: what do you love and what are you good at? The answer to the first question is films and film history, the answer to the second is computers and graphic design. Decision made – simply go back to school to become a film editor or cinematographer or computer animator, whichever comes most naturally.

So in the Fall of 2005, this 40-year-old is going back to school. Part-time at first, taking some photography and

film history classes to make sure he is heading in the right direction. Next year he'll end his second term as LGVMA President in Honolulu, Hawaii, (make your reservations now) and will be preparing to retire completely from veterinary medicine within the next 4-5 years. He figures 25 years is long enough to do anything, even something someone loves as much as he has loved being a vet.

–*Tim Withers DVM*  
*President, LGVMA*

---



I am pleased that Tim has shared this essay based on his own life. I think there is much more that many LGVMA members can learn from the story beyond the specifics of Tim's plans. It may surprise many of you that anyone could think about leaving a career that has been central to his/her life for so long. I know that when I graduated veterinary school, I thought that my whole life was set out before me. Little did I know that I would reach a similar point in my career when I knew that I couldn't spend the rest of my life in practice. That's when I started to explore what I really wanted to do. I reinvented myself and found new meaning in life and career.

Tim and I are not the exceptions to the rule. I have since learned that a majority of people make career changes at some point in their lives. In fact, most people have at least three “careers.” These careers may be derivative or complete changes. Don't be scared if you find that you are not satisfied with your current career. Seek out help and support; explore the possibilities. Change is normal. No matter what you do, you will still be a veterinarian at heart.

I hope that these comments are useful to my fellow LGVMA members, whether now or in the future. As for myself, I am preparing to make my next career change. I plan on retiring from USDA in the next few years and probably spend my time in volunteer work. I wish Tim the best of luck and much success in his new career, whatever that may turn out to be!

–*Michael McElvaine DVM, MPH*  
*Past President of LGVMA*

# The 2005 LGVMA Annual Meeting Schedule

Schedule for Minneapolis, site of the 2005 AVMA Annual Convention. Check the LGVMA website for updated details, [www.lgvma.org](http://www.lgvma.org)

Saturday, July 16, 10am to 2pm, Planning session for Board of Directors

-open to all interested members, location TBA

Saturday, July 16, 5pm to 7pm, Reception, location TBA

Sunday, July 17, 11am to Noon, LGVMA Annual Meeting, location TBA

Sunday, July 17, 1pm to 4pm, Board of Directors meeting

## Minutes from the 2004 LGVMA Annual Meeting

The 2004 Annual Meeting of LGVMA was called to order on July 25, 2004, at the Doubletree Hotel in Philadelphia, PA, in conjunction with the 141st AVMA Annual Convention. Outgoing President, Dr. Sara White, welcomed all those in attendance. Dr. Mel Vasseay, acting in the capacity of Secretary, read the minutes of the 2003 meeting in Denver, Colorado, which were accepted unanimously.

Outgoing and longtime Treasurer, Dr. Joe "Chip" Wells reported total funds of \$27,754.25. Of that amount, \$6,591.19 was in the Operating Fund, \$20,873.06 in the Reserve Fund, and \$290 in the Scholarship Fund Reserve. Dr. Wells also delivered the Membership Report, with 164 regular members, 4 retired members, 9 student members, 6 AHT members, and 2 friend members.

Old business items discussed included advertising plans, pursuing tax-exempt status for the Scholarship Fund, establishing a new Membership Director, and a review of the 2002 Membership Survey. Among the ad strategies discussed were small block ads in JAVMA and Vet Tech magazines, and on-line ads in Intervet magazine

A review of the 2002 Membership Survey found that there has been essentially no change in the gender makeup of LGVMA, despite the ongoing gender shift in the profession at large. There is also continuing high support for LGVMA to serve as an advocate for LGBT issues.

In new business, a motion was submitted to award LGVMA's first ever Dubious Achievement Award. The proposed award read, "The Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association hereby presents its first ever Dubious Achievement Award to Senator Wayne Allard, DVM (R-Colorado). Senator Allard is the primary sponsor of the Federal Marriage Amendment, which was proposed to ban same-sex marriages. As fellow veterinarians concerned with human rights, we are very disappointed in Senator Allard and his ongoing attempts to enshrine discrimination in the US Constitution." The motion carried.

In the 2004 Board elections, 37 ballots were returned, with unanimous approval of the slate of candidates. As there was no candidate for the position of Secretary, Dr. Joe "Chip" Wells moved to recommend that Dr. Vic Spain be

appointed in that capacity, and the motion passed. One At-Large position also remained open, but longtime LGVMA member, Dr. Gene Bodily, volunteered to serve in this capacity. A motion to recommend his appointment to this position also passed.

Other topics of discussion included instituting a membership drive, establishing a Paypal account to facilitate membership renewals, sponsorship of the PAWS Human-Animal Bond Conference, lobbying AVMA-GHLIT to offer domestic partner benefits, sponsorship of a session at AVMA Annual Convention in 2007 in Washington, DC. The Proposed Budget for 2005 was approved, and recipients of the 2005 LGVMA Scholarships were announced.

The 2005 LGVMA Scholarships were awarded to Anthea Smith, a member of the Class of 2007 at the University of Saskatoon, and Rebecca Wolf, a member of the Class of 2006 at the University of Pennsylvania. LGVMA was pleased that Ms. Wolf was able to be in attendance at the meeting.

# PAWS Veterinary Externship Program Seeks Applicants

The PAWS Veterinary Intern/Extern Program was established in 1998 to address the lack of training in the field of the human-animal bond in traditional veterinary medical education. Currently, there are very few opportunities for veterinary students to gain practical experience in issues involving the human-animal bond. For this reason, a month-long veterinary externship program was established to provide firsthand experience in the context of a private, nonprofit organization such as PAWS. The objective of the program, for which only two externs are selected through a competitive process each year, is to train and educate potential leaders and professionals who will have an impact in the field of the human-animal bond. The closely supervised externship involves public speaking experiences, direct interaction with clients and PAWS staff members, short term projects, interactions with the local veterinary community and participation at the PAWS Food Bank.

To date nine veterinary students, along with another student who helped initiate a pilot study on the diversification of PAWS' client base, have completed the program. Their collective efforts have resulted in such landmark activities as the PAWS sponsored Healthy Pets/Healthy People Project, which published and presented valuable information on the risks of zoonotic diseases to both the general public and health professionals, the development and distribution of PAWS' Large Animal Safe Pet Guidelines, the organization of the Healing Power of the Human-Animal Bond Summit 2000, and the compilation and distribution of the Summit 2000 proceedings.

The PAWS Veterinary Intern/Extern Program is supported by external competitive grants. PAWS is proud of this program and hopes that it will continue to grow and develop in the future as more and more people recognize the significance of healing and the human-animal bond.

For more information about the Pets Are Wonderful Support veterinary externship in 2005, contact Andrea Brooks, PAWS education coordinator, at [abrooks@pawssf.org](mailto:abrooks@pawssf.org) or check out the webpage at [www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org).

## Submit!

The next LGVMA newsletter will be published in the Fall. 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!

## 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 [kahull@indiana.edu](mailto:kahull@indiana.edu).

## 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.

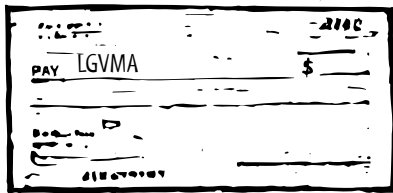
## Pets Are Wonderful

**Support** has been chosen to be the Organization Grand Marshal for the San Francisco Pride Parade on Sunday, June 26, 2005!

All LGVMA member are invited to march with PAWS as the first contingent of the parade! (No waiting this year!) Contact PAWS for more information at [www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org).

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 sponsor for LGVMA functions.

## Tasty News from San Francisco

After surviving a recall of our governor by the Governor, enjoying the celebration of gay marriages at City Hall until the California Supreme Court stopped the weddings, still recovering from an intense election, San Francisco's Ilana Strubel and Michelle McAnanama and their animal companions hosted their annual Kugel-off at their home in Bernal Heights. The eighth kugel bake-off came after David Muir, partner of Will Carr, took the Kugel Queen title for the past two years. The energy surrounding this year's kugel-off was building and finally happened on December 19 at 4PM. The votes were tallied this year making Ilana Strubel the 2004 Kugel Queen of San Francisco! Congratulations!



### LGVMA 2005-2006 Officers:

President	Tim Withers, DVM, Washington, DC
Secretary	Vic Spain, DVM, Philadelphia, PA
Treasurer	Michael Miller, DVM, Alameda, CA
Student Rep	

### 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.