

FALL 2019



SFVMA

**SAN FRANCISCO
VETERINARY MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION**

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN ANIMAL CAREERS

A study presented at the 2019 convention for American Psychologist Association finds that veterinarians and others who work with animals on a daily basis deal with stressful and emotional events that put them at a higher risk of developing mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and, in some cases, suicidal thoughts.

Are veterinarians and other animal carers more prone to depression and anxiety? Apparently yes. In a study using data from 1979 to 2015 it was found that veterinarians are at particularly high risk of suicide with veterinarians taking their own lives at two to 3.5 times more often than the general population. Several studies have identified a link between suicide and occupation including the healthcare professions and our own profession. The rate of suicide in the veterinary profession has been pegged as close to twice that of the dental profession, more than twice that of the medical profession, and 4 times the rate in the general population. But apparently, it is not just veterinarians. Animal welfare agents including animal shelter volunteers were also found to have

a greater need for mental health care than the general population. They suffered from compassion fatigue and psychological distress. "Shelter workers are caught in a dilemma because they are charged with caring for an animal and they may ultimately end that animal's life," stated Angela K. Fournier, PhD, of Bemidji State University, who presented at the meeting. "Research suggests that this causes significant guilt, which can lead to depression, anxiety and insomnia, as well as greater family-work conflict and low job satisfaction."

Does veterinary medicine and other animal caring professions attract people that are more prone to depression and anxiety? To answer that question, researchers looked into the childhood experiences of many veterinary students to determine if negative childhoods play a role in the high rate of mental health problems among vets. The study found that veterinarians were no more likely to experience depression PRIOR to starting on the job.

However what about the stress of the veterinary training? One study suggests that

the very high academic entry requirements into veterinary schools may be linked with increased vulnerability to suicide. However, others report a negative association between intelligence and suicide, making the association unclear, but worthy of consideration. It's also been suggested that the highly demanding curriculum and pressures to succeed in veterinary school may preclude the expected growth of emotional intelligence and social skills in that critical juncture of life, limiting the development of coping skills and resilience.

One thing is clear. Something is happening either over the course of our training or once we are working that affects our mental well-being. What are some of the factors that may make us more prone to mental health problems? More research is under way to help better understand why veterinarians might be at an increased risk, but a combination of personality traits, professional demands and the veterinary learning environment all likely contribute.

People who work or volunteer with animals often do so because of personal calling. However, the nature of the work is often dealing with animal suffering and even death on a routine basis which can lead to burnout, compassion fatigue and the development of mental health issues.

Veterinarians tend to be high achievers, and high achievers have tendencies to perfectionism, conscientiousness, and neuroticism, all of which can be risk factors for mental illness. Similarly, veterinarians with a preference for working with animals rather than people, may have a higher risk of depression as a result of relative social isolation. Veterinarians and particularly those in single man practices work long hours and may have little desire or time to have worthwhile social interaction.

Katherine Goldberg, DVM, LMSW,
community consultation and intervention

specialist at Cornell Health and Founder of Whole Animal Veterinary Geriatrics and Palliative Care Services, who also presented at the meeting noted that vets also face economic challenges, as the average veterinary school graduate reported having more than \$143,000 of school loan debt while earning a starting salary of just over an average of \$73,000 annually in 2016. Personal finance concerns are stressful for many veterinarians, especially recent graduates, and at the same time, many clients regularly question the cost of care for their animal and all of us familiar with client's catchphrase of "You don't care about my animal. You are only in it for the money." On one hand our training in small animal medicine is the best it has ever been and our ability to diagnose and treat has improved greatly. However, there are still the financial concerns of many of our clients that often prevent from offering our best.

Talking about suicide in our profession certainly gets some attention but there are a gamut of other mental health issues that need to be discussed. We are a profession prone to poor mental well being. There is research being done in this area. We all need at times to focus on the bigger picture i.e. we are animal carers and we are making a difference. As difficult as it is we should try not to dwell on the crisis and loss. We all need to be trained and reminded about self care not only to help those we are trained to help but that we can continue to do so whilst having a happy and fulfilling life. We belong to a profession where many of us are have difficulty in creating boundaries between work and our personal lives.

Finally, we need to address these issues in the veterinary student curriculum so that we can identify problems not only in ourselves but in our colleagues. We are carers but to continue doing so we must care for ourselves.

— Philip Watt, BVSc, MANZCVS, FANZCVS

UPCOMING MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

"Have You Gone Loco? Locoregional Analgesic Techniques to Minimize Opiate Usage"

Dr. Alexander Hawley, DVM, MS, DACVAA



Dr. Hawley joined The Sams Clinic in 2009. As the on-staff anesthesiologist, he vigilantly monitors patients before, during, and after surgery to ensure their well-being and comfort. He wants pets to be free of anxiety and pain yet alert after surgery. This goal is accomplished by using a progressive, multi-modal approach, combining local and regional techniques with lower doses of systemic medications. In addition, as the director of the Pain Management Clinic, Dr. Hawley supplements more conventional protocols with both state-of-the-art allopathic therapies and acupuncture.

After obtaining his doctorate in veterinary medicine from Colorado State University in 2005, Dr. Hawley went on to do a year long internship in small animal medicine and surgery at Kansas State University, followed by a three-year residency in anesthesiology at Tufts University. He also holds a master's degree in anatomy and is a certified acupuncturist.

APPETIZERS

Potato Samosas +
Jumbo Prawns with Bacon

SALAD

Endive and Blue Cheese Salad

MAIN COURSE

Porcini Dusted Salmon

-OR-

Vegetarian Option

-OR-

Vegan Option

DESSERT

Triple Chocolate Mousse Cake

AGENDA

6:30 pm **Hors d'oeuvre and No Host Bar**
7:15 pm **Dinner and Meeting**
8:00 pm **Program**

ALL MEETINGS AT THE CLIFF HOUSE

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THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL DVMS

Non-members pay \$75
Annual membership \$230

**RSVPs required individually via the SFVMA website
by Friday, September 13, 2019: www.sfvma.net/rsvp**

Remember: The Association pays for uneaten meals. If you have RSVP'd and will not be able to make it, we need you to send in your cancellation no later than Monday, September 16, 2019.

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RABIES CLINICS



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2019

10am – 1pm

\$6 per Vaccine!

(Dogs Only / Cash Only)

The SFVMA sponsors Rabies Clinics on four Sundays each year. Rabies clinics are held at **Animal Care and Control (ACC), 1200 15th Street** (at Harrison), in the “Get Acquainted” Room.

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you to all the volunteers that continually make these clinics a success! Volunteers are still needed for the upcoming 2019 Rabies Clinics. Sign up today!

Please email sfvmavp@gmail.com with your information to sign up for a clinic. Rabies clinics will be held at Animal Care and Control (ACC), 1200 15th Street (at Harrison) from 10am–1pm.

Please contact **Anna DeVincenzi** if you have any questions or would like to volunteer: sfvmavp@gmail.com



SPONSOR A FUTURE MEETING

In order to continue to contract with the Cliff House as our meeting venue, support our charitable and scholarship funds, and generally maintain the organization (with keeping dues payments reasonable), the Board will continue to seek sponsorships that help to cover the costs of our programs.

If you are interested in sponsoring a future meeting, please contact **Philip Watt**: sfvmapresident@gmail.com



LATEST NEWS FROM SFAfA

Things are going well at SFAFA. A very successful fund raiser, **Bark & Brew**, was held on August 31. Thank you all that attended.

Our board of Directors has grown significantly over the past six months allowing us to do more fund raising, more outreach and provide more grants than ever before. **So far this fiscal year we had saved 475 pets.**

Our new grant year started on **July 1, 2019** and everyone should have received all the necessary information about their available Grants-in-Aid funds for use between now and

June 15, 2020. If anyone has questions about the program or their grants please contact Dr. Annemarie Benfatto (annemarie@sfaidforanimals.org).



SFAfA

SAN FRANCISCO AID *for* ANIMALS

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

The SFVMA Board will consider charitable grants to organizations that support the care and welfare of animals in our community and promote the veterinary profession.

Please contact **Keely Commins** for details on requests for donations:
sfvmatreasurer@gmail.com



SFVMA SCHOLARSHIPS

Veterinary Students

If you know a good candidate for 2020, please encourage them to apply! Applications are accepted from **October to December annually** as determined by the college.

We will offer a scholarship at **Western University** next year.

REQUIREMENTS

- Current enrollment in the vet med program
- Current or former employment by an SFVMA member
- Letter of recommendation from the same

CONTACT

Tim McPherson

Director of Development
College of Veterinary Medicine
tmcpherson@westernu.edu

RVT Students

To support and encourage RVTs in San Francisco, the SFVMA has established a scholarship program for students enrolled in an accredited RVT program. We will award \$1,000 to two candidates who are currently or have previously worked in the practice of an SFVMA member, and have a stated desire to return to SF after graduation.

Submissions should include a personal statement from the student, a letter of recommendation from the veterinarian, and proof of enrollment at an accredited RVT program. The deadline for applications is **May 1 annually**.

Questions should be sent to **Phil Watt** at sfvmapresident@gmail.com.



Associate Veterinarian, VCA Tamalpais Pet Hospital

VCA Tamalpais Animal Hospital in the San Francisco Bay Area is seeking a personable, passionate veterinarian to join a growing 2.5 doctor practice as a full-time or part-time associate.

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Amalia Zacher, DVM, Residency Trained

DERMATOLOGY

Meagan Painter, DVM, DACVD

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Lily Johnson, DVM, DACVN

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Dr. Albert Mughannam, May 14, 2018

Cataracts: Diagnosis and Treatment

Dr. Cynthia Cook, Aug 28, 2018

Pigmented Ocular Masses,

Dr. Gwendolyn Lynch, Nov 7, 2018

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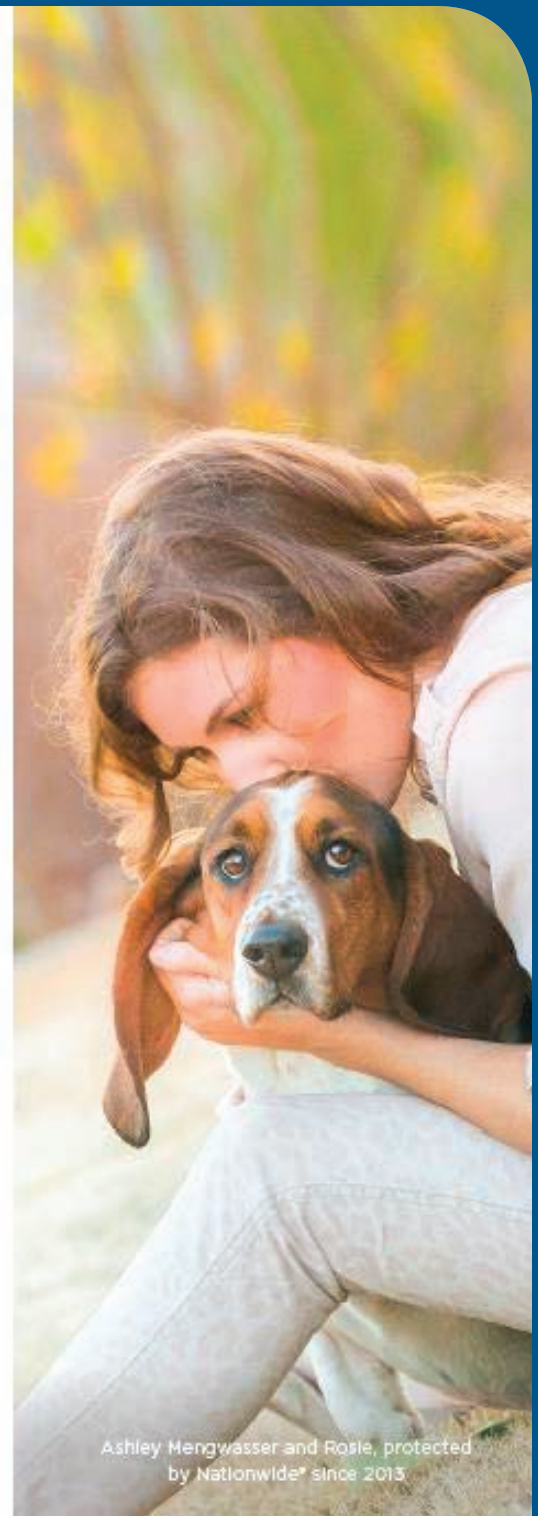
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Volunteer Vet Techs assist one of our licensed Volunteer Veterinarians with exams and nail trims at our Ask The Vet consultations. Our vet exam room is located in the PAWS building in the Mission neighborhood of San Francisco.

Volunteer Vet Techs do not need to be licensed vet techs, but must have a minimum of one year experience working in a veterinary environment, and feel comfortable performing animal restraint and animal handling tasks within a limited clinic environment.

Please contact Program Coordinator, Volunteer Services,
Walter Campbell for more information and to apply to volunteer:

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- *Should I accelerate mortgage payments or increase my savings?*
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Conference Education

Pre-conference Day Sessions: topics such as hypertension, effects of emotional well-being, constipation, localizing feline dyspnea, update on IMHA, hypotension, & acute pancreatitis

Complex Disease Management: topics such as why comorbidities are the norm, positive retroviral status with comorbidities, triaditis with concurrent disease & conditions, diabetic cushingoid cat, IBD in the diabetic cat, hyperthyroidism & CKD, cardio-renal syndrome, CKD & chronic enteropathy, cardiomyopathy & thromboembolic disease, heart disease & respiratory disease, nutritional triage for concurrent diseases, integrating pharma & non-pharma, peri-operative cat with renal disease, senior cat nutrition when comorbidities exist, changing the way we use NSAIDs with comorbidities, anesthesia for HCM & other diseases, changing therapy for antimicrobial risk when comorbidities exist, lymphoma & heart disease, GI lymphoma and diabetes, OA pain with renal or cardiac diseases, renal lymphoma in the azotemic cat, skin disease when corticosteroids are contraindicated, & more

Technician/Nurse Track: topics such as fluid therapy, hepatic lipidosis, feeding tube management & complications, nutritional management of vomiting & diarrhea, physical rehab, diabetes, refeeding syndrome, & more

Practice Management Track: topics such as work-life balance, risk management, implementing feline-friendly techniques, does Cat Friendly Practice® impact your team's risk of injury, team building, & more

Luncheon Sessions: topics such as retrovirus updates, maintaining muscle mass on renal diets, chronic viral URI, heartworm, hypertension, CKD, & more

*Speakers and sessions subject to change.

October 31 – November 3, 2019
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Dr. Keely Commins

www.sfpetbehavior.com | keelydvm@sfpetbehavior.com

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SFVMA
SAN FRANCISCO
VETERINARY MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION



Balboa Pet Hospital, in beautiful San Francisco, California, provides comprehensive veterinary care services, including: emergency, preventive, diagnostic, surgical and dental services, as well as pet acupuncture and boarding. We are looking for a full-time experienced associate veterinarian to join our small animal (and some exotics) practice. Our team is well-established and supported by experienced RVTs and VAs. We are a generous sized hospital that has been in practice with current owner since 1966 and AAHA accredited for 30+ years. Quality of life is a priority to all of us. We are located just a few blocks from Ocean Beach & Golden Gate Park. You can see the bison in the park during your lunch break! We have a friendly staff and a fun working atmosphere.

Our appointment hours are 8-6 Monday-Friday & 8-5 Saturdays.

Benefits include: Competitive salary and Medical, Dental, Vision, Vacation and Sick time, CE, DEA License, CVMA, SFVMA, & AAHA memberships.

**** Part-time applicants also welcome to apply ****

Sound like a good fit? Check out our website at balboapethospital.com and email your resume to: ldelrosso@balboapet.com or alice@balboapet.com

Full-Time Associate Veterinarian Wanted

San Francisco Pet Hospital is seeking a full-time associate veterinarian to join our four-doctor team and some relief shifts to be covered. We offer a collaborative, team-centric work environment where you can thrive. We have been serving our clients and patients for almost 40 years and have built a practice offering the best service and compassionate care to what we know is the most fabulous group of patients and clients in San Francisco. Using a strong focus on client education and building bonds with our clients that last for years our busy full-service general practice will offer you a varied and challenging caseload which will make each day interesting and engaging. You will definitely grow as a clinician when you are a part of our team. Most of our support team has been with us for years. They are incredibly welcoming and exceptionally skilled and will provide you with exceptional support in your daily clinical practice. We practice in a charming and unique building in one of the coolest neighborhoods in San Francisco with easy access to fantastic restaurants, trendy bars, fashionable boutiques and a famous park with the iconic Painted Ladies just two blocks away. Within our walls we offer all of the bells and whistles that allow you to practice exceptional medicine in an advanced general practice setting including:

- Completely outfitted surgical suite including electrocautery and surgical laser
- Abaxis in-house laboratory equipment
- Rigid and flexible endoscopy
- Digital X-ray and digital dental X-ray systems
- Ultrasound



OUR TEAM

San Francisco Pet Hospital's mission is to provide the highest standard of veterinary services through friendly, informative, and compassionate patient and client care. Our team values teamwork and collaboration, and we always strive to keep our work environment fun, supportive, and engaging.

Qualities that make you an ideal candidate to join our amazing team: the desire to build connections through kindhearted engagement with our clients, their pets, and your team; having heart and passion for the incredible work we do and having fun doing it; and the desire to grow with us! You will also need to a California veterinary license in good standing. With all of that we will be here to welcome you!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Julie Robinson, RVT
Hospital Administrator
julie@sfpethospital.com

San Francisco Pet Hospital
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San Francisco, CA 94117
(415) 931-8312

CLASSIFIED ADS

COMING SOON!

PEX 2292 Shelter Veterinarian Position at San Francisco Animal Care and Control

SFACC will be posting an open position for a FT shelter veterinarian in September. SFACC is a taxpayer-funded, open-admission animal shelter. Since 1989, SFACC has provided housing, care, and medical treatment to wild, exotic and domestic stray, lost, abandoned, sick, injured, and surrendered animals. SFACC's doors are open to all animals in need regardless of species, medical, or behavioral condition.

The job description and classification will be changing slightly when the posting is live but you can find the current job description here:

www.jobapscloud.com/SF/specs/classspecdisplay.asp?ClassNumber=2292&R1=&R3=

Interested parties may send an email (with resume) to:

Margarita Gonzalez-Diaz — margarita.gonzalez-diaz@sfgov.org

or

Shari B. O'Neill, DVM — shari.oneill@sfgov.org

**Want to do something that saves lives,
feels good and helps your community?
Then volunteer to help animals when
disasters strike in California!**



Thousands of animals need care during and after disasters. Some 63% of California households have pets, including an estimated 10 million pet cats, nine million dogs, and one million horses.

Other pets, farm animals, and wildlife also need assistance during and after disasters like earthquakes, floods, and wildfires.

Veterinary professionals are vital to animals during disasters. The mission of the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CAVMRC) is to provide veterinary professionals with the training and credentialing necessary to support animal health and public health.

Deployment is always voluntary. Volunteers get involved at whatever level works for them – assistants are needed as well as leaders, part-time responders are as welcome as those who can help out for a week or two, plus there are ongoing roles in areas such as planning and disaster response. Volunteer participation can be a matter of life or death for rescued animals and means the world to the owners of those animals.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE CAVMRC

The CAVMRC provides veterinary professionals:

- Credentialing necessary to support animal health and public health emergency response.
- Continuing education and training opportunities that allow you to strengthen your skills to better serve your practice, your community and our state.
- Networking and information sharing opportunities with veterinary team members across the state.

WHO CAN JOIN THE CAVMRC?

You don't need any prior disaster response experience or training to join the CAVMRC. The entire veterinary practice team is welcome, including:

- Veterinarians
- Registered veterinary technicians
- Veterinary assistants, office managers and all support staff members
- Students in veterinary medical programs
- Retired veterinary professionals with a current license

PROGRAM AFFILIATION

The CVMA registered the CAVMRC as a unit of the Medical Reserve Corps under the California Emergency Medical Services Agency and works in cooperation with local, statewide, and national agencies. The CVMA has played an important role in preparing for and responding to disasters in California since 1994 and builds on this experience with this new affiliation.

For more information visit the CAVMRC website:

cvma.net/resources/disaster-response-program-2/california-veterinary-medical-reserve-corps-cavmrc/