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## Montana Veterinary Medical Association

# Newsletter

SPRING/SUMMER 2025

## President's Message

**Linda Kauffman, DVM | MVMA 2024-25 President**

Dear MVMA Members,



Greetings from the Bitterroot Valley! The last time I wrote we were waiting for smoke to clear; now we have smoke again but only from controlled burns. Spring is around the corner and marked by brave bulbs showing up out of the ground as well as the baby calves bouncing around the fields. Also noted in my world is the

copious amount of normal hair loss for spring shedding in horses!

This spring the “old business” is still on my mind.

1. **Mid-Level Practitioner Legislation.** A draft request at the Montana Legislature for creation of a mid-level veterinary professional appears to be dead for this 2025 session. Stuart Doggett, MVMA executive director and longtime lobbyist, communicated with the bill sponsor regarding our concerns and opposition to this concept and the bill was dropped. Read more on page 6.
2. **Rocky Vista University in Billings** has planned the groundbreaking ceremony for their Proposed College of Veterinary Medicine for May 29. Dr. Barr Gustafson, MVMA president-elect, and I plan on attending at the invitation of Dr. Robert Murtaugh, founding dean.

### 2025 Montana Legislative Session

The session seems to be flying by. If you have been monitoring the progress of bills on the MVMA “watch list,” then you are aware of items we have discussed within the legislative committee and among other interested members. See page 6 to read a complete update on the Session from Stuart.

**HB 41** is important to note as it has been signed into law by the governor and will go into effect October 1, 2025. This bill will move gabapentin to a Schedule 5 drug. I refer you to the DEA for record-keeping information and storage. Hopefully you have been following our newsletters and bulletins so this won't be a surprise to you!

**HB 418** is another bill of note that was tabled in committee and therefore is dead this session. This bill would have banned mRNA vaccines for use in animals. MVMA opposed this bill as did many other animal industry groups in the state. I am grateful to Dr. Szymanski, our state vet, who thoroughly and professionally responded to many questions from legislative committee members during the hearing.

**HB 860** is a bill to establish a loan program for veterinary training. At press time, the bill was soon to be heard in committee. MVMA supports the concept of loan

**President's Message continued on page 3**

## Welcome New Members!

The following new members were approved at the Membership Meeting during the 2025 Winter Meeting in Bozeman. To apply for MVMA membership, visit [mtvma.org/join](http://mtvma.org/join).

### Life Members

Dr. David Berst, Billings  
Dr. Kevin Syvrud, Helena

### Full Members:

Dr. Lisa Brinlee, Billings  
Dr. Claire Dileo, Harlowton  
Dr. Matthew Evans, Bozeman  
Dr. Madison Gratch, Bozeman  
Dr. Melissa Guillory, Belgrade  
Dr. Megan Harwell, Missoula  
Dr. Lauryn McDowell, Bozeman  
Dr. Emily McNeilly, Helena  
Dr. Robert Murtaugh,

Wimberley, TX

Dr. Kristin M. Myers, Lewistown  
Dr. Kayla Pederson, Manhattan  
Dr. Emma Peterson, Belgrade  
Dr. Morgan Potton, Deer Lodge  
Dr. Kamron Ratzburg, Shelby  
Dr. Ava Riccardi, Livingston  
Dr. Michelle Richardson, Helena  
Dr. Jeff Schucker, Wibaux  
Dr. Lynn Short, Stevensville  
Dr. Freyja Swanson, Helena  
Dr. Kevin Wellington, Clancy

### Student Members:

#### North Carolina State University

Natalie Watts

#### Washington State University

Jacy Ayers

Caroline Boozer

Mel Bruskotter

Olivia Fletes

Mia Foster

Caitlyn Franke

Molly Garretson

DeLaney Hinman

Meriel Hoxworth

Justin Marsh

Shelby Martinell

Mikayla McClintock

McKenna Quirk

Gabrielle Smart

Sarah Welborn

Yue Yang

Bozhao Zhang

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## MVMA members gather in Bozeman for Winter Meeting

More than 160 MVMA members, technicians, office staff and guests gathered at the GranTree Inn in Bozeman for the 2025 Winter Meeting. Dr. Barr Gustafson, MVMA president-elect, planned the meeting.

The gathering included 14 CE credits and speakers on a wide variety of small, large and mixed animal topics. The team from the Montana Department of Livestock was also on hand to shed light on current animal health issues affecting the state and entire U.S.

The general membership business meeting included updates from AVMA leadership, the Montana Board of Veterinary Medicine, WIMU program and others.

Special thanks to our dedicated sponsors (listed on page 23) who help make MVMA's CE events possible and affordable to participants.

## Register now for the 2025 MVMA Summer Meeting

The 2025 MVMA Summer Meeting will be held June 26-28 at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. Dr. Linda Kauffman, MVMA president, has gathered a variety of nationally-recognized speakers from across the country to present 15 hours of continuing education on wide-ranging small and large animal topics. **See pages 7-12** in this newsletter for all of the meeting details and a registration form. And keep in mind, you can easily register online by going to the MVMA website at [mtvma.org](http://mtvma.org).

Please note, attendees are encouraged to make hotel room reservations as soon as possible. A limited number of discounted rooms is available at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort starting at \$249 per night plus taxes/fees. Reservation Information: 800.332.3272 or online at [fairmontmontana.com](http://fairmontmontana.com). Refer to Group ID 28715 for the special rate.

## MVMA Committees to meet prior to Summer Meeting

MVMA's six committees will meet via Zoom starting in a few weeks. All members are invited and encouraged to participate in MVMA's committee process, and will receive notice via email on topics and Zoom information. Contact the MVMA office with any questions.

### MVMA Committees

**Companion Animal** (small animal practice, diseases, breeding)

**Disaster Preparedness**

**Large Animal** (bovine, equine)

**Membership Services** (member benefits, CE programming, member communication & engagement)

**Policy/Regulatory** (legislative, animal welfare, public health)

**Practice Management** (veterinary technicians, staffing, wellness, scholarships, leadership development)

If you have an issue you would like included on a particular committee agenda, please email Beth at the MVMA office: [bemter@montana.com](mailto:bemter@montana.com).

Committee reports will be presented at the General Membership Meeting on Saturday, June 28 at noon during the Summer Meeting at Fairmont Hot Springs.

## MVMA Executive Board

### President

Dr. Linda Kauffman  
Stevensville

### President-Elect

Dr. Barr Gustafson  
Browning

### Vice President

Dr. Julie Oghigian  
Bozeman

### Secretary/Treasurer

Dr. Alan Goldhahn  
Bozeman

### Director

Dr. Chelsey Petz  
Three Forks

### Director

Dr. Laurie Gaugler  
Hobson

### AVMA Delegate

Dr. Duane Colme  
Livingston

### AVMA Alt. Delegate

Dr. Garrett Ryerson  
Bozeman

### Past President

Dr. Scott Damby  
Lewistown

### Executive Director

Stuart Doggett

### Assn. Coordinator

Beth Emter

[mtvma.org](http://mtvma.org)

[info@mtvma.org](mailto:info@mtvma.org)

# ASSOCIATION NEWS (continued)

## Nominations sought for MVMA Board position

During the June Summer Meeting, MVMA members will be electing one new member to the Executive Board. In accordance with the Association bylaws, candidates must have been an active member of the Association for at least three years, three of which must be immediately prior to his/her nomination, and shall have attended one of the regular sessions during this three-year period.

The Executive Board meets twice per year on the day prior to the Summer and Winter meetings, with interim conference calls held as needed. Each board member also serves as chair for one Summer and Winter Meeting, selecting topics and speakers.

Board terms are 7-years, advancing from a Director (two years) to Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President, President-Elect, President and Past President.

Nominations will be forwarded to the Nominating Committee for consideration, and a slate will be presented for a membership vote during the Summer Meeting. If you are interested in nominating yourself or another MVMA member, please contact Beth at the MVMA office: [bemter@montana.com](mailto:bemter@montana.com).

## MVMA Classifieds offer members exclusive benefits

Do you have clinic items for sale? Trying to sell your practice? Reach a wide audience by advertising on MVMA's online Classified Ads page at [mtvma.org/classified](http://mtvma.org/classified). Here you can post on any of three pages: Relief Services, Practices For Sale and Miscellaneous For Sale. Posting is simple: email a detailed ad to MVMA at [bemter@montana.com](mailto:bemter@montana.com). All posts are free of charge to members and can be placed for any length of time.

What if you have an open position at

your clinic? Or are you job hunting? MVMA's Job Board is a great member resource. Access the page through the MVMA website at [mtvma.org/classified](http://mtvma.org/classified). Listings are free to members, but you will need your MVMA member login information to create a post. You can also bump your post to the top of the board as a "featured" listing for an additional fee. Contact Beth at the MVMA office with any questions or for a special member code for staff to make posts ([bemter@montana.com](mailto:bemter@montana.com)).

## ~Save the Date~ Upcoming MVMA Meetings:

### 2026 Winter Meeting

January 22-24

GranTree Inn—Bozeman

### 2026 Summer Meeting

June 25-27

Delta Colonial Hotel—Helena

## President's Message (Continued from p. 1)

forgiveness for DVM education and will work to ensure the bill helps address Montana's rural veterinary shortage.

On the national level, MVMA has joined 37 organizations and 50 state groups in reigniting support for the *Rural Veterinary Workforce Act*. The measure would help address veterinary shortages by increasing opportunities for large animal veterinarians, assisting states in the need for public practice veterinarians, and removing tax burdens associated with the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP).

**Coming in May/June: Committee meetings** – Please join us by Zoom to discuss various topics related to veterinary medicine in our state.

Some of the topics to be addressed in committees are:

- Drafting a statement regarding the **Mid-level Practitioner issue** to help the public understand this new designation and to help veterinarians educate their clients on the differences between a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and a Masters program in veterinary medicine.
- **Power of 10** - planning for the next group and possible funding for the program.
- **A mentoring program statewide to help connect veterinarians** for the purpose of friendship and support for various aspects of the profession (work/life balance, finances, mental health, family,

work place problems etc.).

- Consideration of **allowing reduced or free attendance of MVMA Life Members** at our conferences.

Committee meeting schedules and Zoom information will be emailed to members in the coming weeks. Other topics of interest? Let us know!

Thank you for your interest and participation in our state organization, which can only be as strong as the participating members.

All the best this spring and I look forward to seeing you at Fairmont for our Summer Meeting!

Sincerely,

*Linda*

Linda Kauffman, DVM | Stevensville  
MVMA President 2024-2025

# IN MEMORIAM

## Thomas Jakob, DVM



Thomas Philip Jakob, 66, of Bozeman, Montana passed away Sunday, February 23, 2025.

Tom was born on April 20, 1958, in New Jersey. He was preceded in death by his son, Thomas P. Jakob, Jr., and by his parents, John and Lois.

Surviving Dr. Tom are his wife of 40 years, Heidi; his children, Emily, Andrew (Kaley), Harper, Riki, and Carlie (Logan); his grandchildren, Murphy, Simeon, Samuel, Solly, and Naomi; his sisters, Karen (George) of Virginia and Lauren of North Carolina; his aunt, Winnie; and many nieces and nephews and numerous other extended family members.

Tom enjoyed mountaineering (including Eiger, Matterhorn, Denali, Mount Whitney, Mount Rainier, and numerous first ascents), ice climbing, hiking, gardening, being a connoisseur of homemade pancakes and waffles, tinkering in his woodshop, collecting rocks, land cruisers, dogs, cats, hoarding sweets, and moving through life on his own terms. In his wilder years, he also enjoyed hot air ballooning, raft guiding, rebuilding vehicles, and egging frat houses.

Tom graduated from NC State in the inaugural veterinarian class of 1985. He started his own clinic, Cottonwood Veterinary Hospital, on December 26, 2006.

Tom was known within the

community for his compassion and care, not only to his clients, but to their fur babies of all sizes and shapes. He will be missed by ALL of God's creations.

In lieu of flowers, his family asks that donations in memory of Dr. Thomas Jakob be made to the Maya Jakob Memorial at Opportunity Bank to help provide financial assistance to those in need of veterinary care.

A Celebration of Life was held on March 29 at The Commons in Bozeman.

## Jason Tordale, DVM



Jason was born May 8, 1966. His early childhood was spent on the Fairfield Bench attending the rural school of Greenfield until moving to Conrad, Mont., the end of his fifth-grade school year. He attended the rest of his elementary, junior high and high school years in Conrad, graduating High School in 1984.

As a young child, Jason was involved in 4-H, raising sheep and cattle, and was also active in FFA. After graduation, he briefly attended Concordia College in Moorehead, Minn., and after a break eventually enrolled at Montana State, graduating in 1990 with a Bachelor of Science Degree. He then pursued his dream of becoming a veterinarian, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Science from Washington State University, and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Oregon State

University in May of 1997 and from WSU in December of 1997. He then went on to receive his Masters of Health Policy and Administration in May 2016 from WSU.

In June of 2011, Jason was involved in a car accident near the Montana/Idaho border, leaving him a quadriplegic. At the time of his accident, he was working as a veterinarian for the USDA. Although Jason's life as he knew it was forever changed, he never ever gave up. Four days after his accident, he told his mom that during the night he saw clearly two paths. He could take one he called the "low road" where he could be angry and bitter with God and the world. The other, the "high road" where he could choose to fill his life with joy. He chose the "high road."

Jason obtained a Certificate of Ordination to All Churches and Christians Everywhere in June 2017. Jason was a man of deep faith with the Lord, he loved life but he was not afraid of death.

He married Cathy Chambers in 2022, and they shared many travels to Montana and various other places. They were active in their church and always participating in functions. They were each other's rock and even though they were married for a short time, they made the best of their time together.

Jason is survived by his wife, Cathy, parents Ernie and Karen Tordale, sister Charla (Dennis) Rearden and stepchildren: Jessi Rowe, and daughter Natalia Vallad, Jennifer (Tim) Gimp; children Charlee and Tre; Jasmin (Matthew) Shackelford, Justin (Claire) Fauth and son Asher, and Jake (Kim) Fauth Josiah, Jenna and Clover; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Jason was preceded in death by both maternal and paternal grandparents and cousin Brian Graf.



## WIMU Student Spotlight: Missoula native McKenna Quirk

*Missoula native McKenna Quirk was awarded the 2025 Rex Anderson Memorial VLC Travel Award of \$2,000, allowing her to attend the AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference in January in Chicago. She will soon complete her first year of the WIMU veterinary medicine program in Bozeman. This fall she and her cohort will move to Pullman, Wash., for the final three years at Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine. She expects to graduate in the spring of 2028.*

### What led you to pursue veterinary medicine as a career?

My interest in becoming a veterinarian was sparked at a young age when I went with my mother to the vet's office for appointments for our horses and dogs, and continued to develop with my participation in 4-H and FFA. As an active 4-H and FFA member, I participated in the horse and dog projects, and also raised market lambs and hogs. While I have explored other career options, none offer the intellectual rigor, critical thinking, and emphasis on service that I have found in veterinary medicine. The ability to impact the lives of animals and their owners, coupled with continuous learning captivates me like no other profession.

Growing up in Wyoming and Montana, I have seen the vital role that veterinarians play in rural communities. Working at both small and large animal practices in the greater Bozeman area, I feel that I have contributed in very meaningful ways to maintaining the health of the Gallatin Valley agricultural community. Many of our clients at both clinics are farmers and ranchers, and I have assisted with a wide range of services from vaccinating heifers and performing lameness exams on horses to examining working dogs.

My journey toward veterinary medicine has been shaped by meaningful experiences, a dedication

to service, and a thirst for knowledge.

### Why did you select the WIMU program for your veterinary studies?

I selected the WIMU program for my veterinary studies because of the tight knit and supportive community. Our class of 15 students works closely with our professors to ensure that we all have a strong understanding of the various concepts taught in class. Each of our professors check in periodically with students, and they are personally invested in our success both in and out of the classroom. We also get a great deal of hands-on experience because of our small class size. I have been able to receive individual coaching on my suture and general surgical skills, as well as basic clinical skills such as blood draws and auscultation.

As an undergraduate at Montana State University, I participated in undergraduate research with Dr. Diane Bimczok on *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*, an economically important bacterial pathogen to the sheep industry as it causes chronic pneumonia with resulting decreased productivity. During my time as a WIMU veterinary student I have been able to continue to work with Dr. Bimczok and have been awarded a summer research fellowship position with her lab to assist with their *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* vaccine trial.

### What are your future goals after graduation?

After graduation I would like to pursue an internship in either large animal or equine medicine to expand my clinical

experience. I am also passionate about large animal veterinary research and finding applicable, evidence-based solutions and treatments that producers can utilize. After graduation I would like to participate in large animal research clinical research as much as possible. Given the shortage of large animal veterinarians in rural Montana, my ultimate goal is to return to Montana to serve the agricultural communities that have shaped me into the person that I am today.

### What is the biggest challenge of veterinary school? And what is your favorite part?

Everyone says that the first year of veterinary school is like drinking from a firehose, and I have found that to be absolutely true! While it can be overwhelming at times, everything that we are learning is interesting and will be applicable in clinical practice, and I can see the purpose in each lecture, lab, and site visit.

My favorite part about studying veterinary medicine is learning about a wide variety of species and studying collaboratively with individuals who have different interests. Having worked mostly in large animal settings, my understanding of exotic and small animal medicine is limited. Being able to talk through various concepts with my classmates who are more knowledgeable about other areas is interesting and it also helps me remember those important concepts. Truly, the best part about studying veterinary medicine is the people!

*Learn more about the Rex Anderson Memorial VLC Travel Award at [avmf.org/grants-and-scholarships](http://avmf.org/grants-and-scholarships).*



The Montana Legislature began the second half of the session on March 14, and is scheduled to conclude on May 3 if they use

all 90 meeting days as allowed by the State Constitution. With the fast start to the second half of the session, it appears lawmakers should be done by the end of April.

This legislative session has been a busy one for MVMA at the State Capitol. Your staff and lobbyist appreciate the input from our active board and legislative committee members. We also appreciate the great testimony our volunteer leadership and members have offered in support or opposition to some of the bills listed below.

### Mid-Level Practitioner bill not introduced

A bill draft request was made, LC 3353, to pursue the idea of a Mid-Level Veterinary Practitioner in Montana similar to the initiative passed in Colorado. After MVMA discussions with the bill requester that such a bill did not have consensus and would be *opposed by MVMA*, the bill idea was dropped and not introduced in the first half of the session. As a result, **this bill draft request appears dead** for the session since it is not a revenue measure and did not make the required transmittal deadline.

### Other bill highlights

#### House Bills:

**HB 41—Generally revise dangerous drug schedule.** This bill passed the legislature and has been signed into law, classifying gabapentin as a

Schedule V drug in Montana. As such, **starting October 1, 2025 gabapentin will be a controlled substance under Montana Law.** The bill was requested by Attorney General Austin Knudsen and supported by law enforcement across the state as an effort to curb increasing problems they are seeing related to the use and abuse of gabapentin. *MVMA did approach the supporters to discuss a veterinary exemption to the measure*, but they did not concur. Moving forward, **veterinarians who use gabapentin will have to take the same logging and reporting steps similar to when they use other controlled substances.**

**HB 78: Adopt pet insurance model act.** It has passed the House and Senate and at press time was awaiting signature by the Governor. It will go into effect October 1. *MVMA supports this measure.*

**HB 418—A bill to ban mRNA vaccines in Montana for animals.** This bill would have seriously limited options for veterinarians and their clients and could have affected interstate commerce. *MVMA leadership and staff delivered compelling testimony against the bill*, along with the Montana Farm Bureau, Montana Pork Producers, Montana Stockgrowers and others. The bill was tabled in the House Ag Committee and is **dead for the session.**

**HB 860—A bill establishing a DVM education loan program for Montana students committed to serving in underserved rural areas.** *MVMA supports this bill* as a way to address the veterinary shortages seen around the state.

**HB 867—A bill to establish a medical assistance program under the Board of Veterinary Medicine.** In line with MVMA committee discussion last fall,

this bill offers resources to licensees seeking treatment for addiction or mental illness. Similar programs exist with other state licensing boards. *MVMA supports this bill.*

#### Senate Bills:

**Senate Resolution 45—Confirm Governor Appointees to Board of Veterinary Medicine.** This resolution calls for Senate approval of three people the Governor recommends be appointed or reappointed to the Board of Veterinary Medicine. These include Garrett Ryerson, DVM, Tia Nelson, DVM, and Joshua Donald as Public Member. *MVMA supports this resolution.*

**SB 149—Revise emotional support animal laws.** The bill requires a health care practitioner to determine an emotional support animal "provides emotional, cognitive or other similar support." The bill was amended and then passed the Senate. It is awaiting for final action in the House. *MVMA supports this bill.*

**SB 155—Create a food safety panel.** The bill did not pass the Senate Health, Welfare and Safety Committee and has been tabled. *MVMA opposes.*

**SB 475—Prohibit Aluminum in Vaccines.** This confusing bill would have prohibited numerous vaccines used in Montana and banned the sale of vaccines commonly used for animal care. *MVMA opposed this bill* along with the Farm Bureau, Montana Chamber of Commerce, the MMA and many others. The bill has been tabled and is dead for the session.

### MVMA bill information available online

Visit [mtvma.org/legislative](https://mtvma.org/legislative) for the most up-to-date information on bills being tracked by MVMA. You will need login information to access this page.



**JUNE 26-28**

**FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS RESORT**

**FAIRMONT, MT**

**Montana Veterinary Medical Association**

# 2025 Summer Meeting & Trade Show

## ▪ Meeting Information ▪

**15 Continuing Education Credits | Trade Show Featuring our Allied Partners**

**Pre-Registration—by June 6**

- MVMA Members—\$410
- Non-MVMA Members—\$555
- Technicians/Office Staff—\$220
- Single-Day Registration available

**After June 6 or On-Site Registration**

- MVMA Members—\$460
- Non-MVMA Members—\$605
- Technicians/Office Staff—\$270

**Free for Students or Life Members (no CE)**

- Pre-registration is required; any meal tickets must be purchased.

**Ways to Register:**

- **Online:** Fast, easy and secure. Complete registration form and pay by credit card or invoice at [mtvma.org](http://mtvma.org).
- **Mail:** Complete the registration form on page 12 of this brochure and mail with payment to: MVMA, PO Box 6322, Helena, MT 59604.

**Proceedings:** Proceedings will be available online prior to the meeting. *Printed proceedings will not be made available at the meeting.*

**CE Certificates:** Once attendance is verified, CE certificates will be sent to attendees within two weeks of the meeting.

## ▪ Golf Scramble ▪

MVMA is excited to host a 9-Hole Golf Scramble at the Fairmont Golf Course on Thursday, June 26 at 2:00 p.m. MVMA members, allied partners and guests are invited to participate, and golfers of all levels and abilities are welcome. Check the box on your registration form, and additional sign-up information will be released soon via email and online registration.

## ▪ Room Reservations ▪

A block of MVMA rooms has been reserved at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort.

- \$249/night plus taxes & fees (+\$17/resort fee per night)
- Discounted rates will be available through May 27 at 12:00 noon or until sold out.
- Reservation information: 800.332.3272 or at [fairmontmontana.com](http://fairmontmontana.com). Refer to group ID 28715.

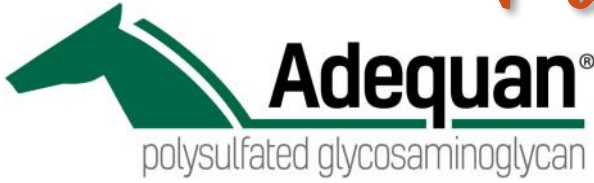
*Rooms available through the MVMA Block are limited, so we encourage you to make lodging reservations early to take advantage of special Summer Meeting pricing.*

**Questions?** On the web: [mtvma.org](http://mtvma.org)

Email: [info@mtvma.org](mailto:info@mtvma.org) | Phone: 406.447.4259

**Special thanks to Dr. Linda Kauffman, MVMA president and chair of the 2025 MVMA Summer Meeting. We are grateful for all of her time and dedication toward making the Summer Meeting a success!**

# Platinum



# Gold



# Silver



# Bronze





Thursday, June 26

10:00 am – 1:00 pm MVMA Executive Board Meeting

2:00 pm MVMA 9-Hole Golf Scramble  
Fairmont Golf Course

6:30 pm Steak Fry—Beaver Dam Park Pavilion  
Anaconda

Sponsored by  **Boehringer Ingelheim**  **MWI Animal Health**  
cencora

Friday, June 27

6:30 – 8:00 am Registration

7:00 – 8:00 am Breakfast Buffet

8:00 am – Noon Small Animal Session 4.0 CE  
*Renee Schmid, DVM, DABT, DABVT*

*Pet Poison Hotline, Directory of Veterinary Medicine*

**Toxicology Toolbox: The Pitfalls and Triumphs of Managing the Poisoned Patient**—Appropriate patient assessment, proper assessment of a toxicity, staff safety when handling symptomatic patients, common decontamination methods, most ideal drugs for toxicity management, common patient management needs, and general patient follow-up needs

**Top 10(ish) Toxins Affecting Dogs & Cats**—Obtain in-depth information regarding the 10 most common toxins in dogs and cats, learn clinical signs and ideal decontamination needs for each toxin, and discuss most current treatment recommendations for each toxin.

Large Animal Session 4.0 CE

*Amelia R. Woolums, DVM, MVSc, PhD, DACVIM, DACVM*  
*Mikell and Mary Cheek Hall Davis Endowed Professor of Beef Cattle Health and Reproduction-Mississippi State University*

**The Amazing Immune Response: Review and Update:** Review of the innate and adaptive immune responses, and the aspects of each that are critical for protection from infection by viruses, bacteria, and parasites.

**Vaccination and Immunity in Calves:** Update on unique aspects of the immune response in calves, and discussion of the results of field trials testing the benefits and limits of young calf vaccination.

**BRD in High-Risk Cattle: New Developments:** While immunodeficiency due to stress is commonly blamed for bovine respiratory disease in recently weaned beef calves, recent findings suggesting a role for other mechanisms will be discussed.

**Respiratory Viruses in Cattle: What's New?:** Everyone knows about IBR and BRSV, so this talk will review other viruses that can contribute to BRD in cattle.

**Antimicrobial Resistance in Bovine Respiratory Disease:**

Historically, antimicrobial resistance did not appear to be a problem in bacteria that contribute to BRD, but evidence that things are changing will be presented.

Noon – 1:30 pm Trade Show Opening/Lunch Buffet

1:30 – 5:30 pm Small Animal Session 4.0 CE

*Marlene Hauck, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (Oncology)*  
*Oncology Research Leader, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health*

**What Makes a Drug a Drug:** Discussion around targeted therapies for cancer and the difference between a compounded drug and a drug from a pharma company:

- Immuno-oncology therapeutics
- Lymphoma
- OSA'S new treatments

Large Animal Session 4.0 CE

*K. Gary Magdesian, DVM, DACVIM, DACVECC, DACVC*  
*Professor of Medicine & Epidemiology, UC-Davis College of Veterinary Medicine*

**Antibiotics for the Equine Practitioner 1 and 2**

**What's New with Diarrhea and Colitis?**

**New Genetic Diseases and Tests to be Aware of**

Approx. 2:30 pm Break in Trade Show

6:00 – 7:00 pm Social Hour in Trade Show

Sponsored by



7:00-8:30 pm Dinner Banquet, Awards, Keynote Speaker

Saturday, June 28

6:30 – 8:00 am Registration

7:00 – 8:00 am Trade Show/Breakfast Buffet

8:00 am – Noon Small Animal Session 4.0 CE

*Jessie Zito, DVM*  
*Clinical Assistant Professor, Small Animal Emergency Kansas State University Veterinary Health Center*

**Small Animal Emergency Medicine:** Clinical application of point-of-care ultrasound; approach to hemoabdomen patients; common neurological emergencies, including cluster seizures, status epilepticus, intervertebral disc disease, and vestibular disease; diagnosis and treatment of feline idiopathic cystitis.

## Saturday, June 28 (continued)

8:00 am – Noon Large Animal Session 4.0 CE

**Amelia R. Woolums, DVM, MVSc, PhD, DACVIM, DACVM** (2.0 CE)  
*Mikell and Mary Cheek Hall Davis Endowed Professor of Beef Cattle Health and Reproduction-Mississippi State University*

**Coughing and Snotty Noses: What's Going on in my Sheep/Goats/ Llamas/Alpacas?** This presentation will provide an overview of common causes of respiratory disease in small ruminants and camelids, with discussion of the approach to diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, and case examples.

**Neurologic Diseases in Small Ruminants and Camelids: Practical Update.** In this talk, we'll review common causes of neurologic disease in small ruminants and camelids, highlighting the approach to diagnosis and treatment.

**Kelli Matheny, DVM -Professional Services Veterinarian** (2.0 CE)  
*American Regent Animal Health*

Sponsored by



**PSGAG - Three Decades of Evidence**  
**Practical Management of Equine Joint Disease**

Approx. 9:30 am Break In Trade Show  
 Noon – 1:30 pm Lunch Buffet  
 General Membership Meeting

1:30 – 4:30 pm Small Animal Session 3.0 CE  
**Joseph Wakshlag, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (nutrition), DACVSMR—**  
*Chief Medical Officer, ElleVet Sciences*

Sponsored by **ElleVet**  
 SCIENCES

**Cannabinoids in Small Animal Practice: More than Pain**  
**Neutraceutical for Joint Disease: Let's Go With the Evidence**  
**Combating Obesity: From Fat to Fit**

Large Animal Session 3.0 CE

**Elle Terhaar, CEO—ReproScan Technologies**

**Looking to set yourself apart during preg-checking season?** This session will focus on enhancing technical bovine ultrasound skills, including: Fetal aging, Fetal sexing; Identifying abnormalities.

**Additional strategies for adding value through ultrasound utilization** in rural mixed animal practice and effectively managing client expectations.

## Speakers

**Marlene Hauck, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (Oncology),**



completed her DVM at Colorado State University, a rotating internship at the University of Illinois, and oncology residency at North Carolina State University. After completing her PhD at Duke University, she joined the faculty at NCSU, where she remained until retirement in 2016.

Dr. Hauck's clinical and research interests included genomic alterations in sarcomas, the impact of hyperthermia in combination with radiation or gene therapy, and targeted therapies. She was "semi-retired," living in Montana with her husband, working part-time doing oncology locums and consulting until January 2021, when she joined Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health as Oncology Research Leader.

**K. Gary Magdesian, DVM, DACVIM, DACVECC, DACVCP, CVA,** received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of California-Davis, and went on to undertake internships at Texas A & M University and a residency at UC Davis.



Dr. Magdesian is a Diplomate of ACVIM, ACVECC and ACVCP, and also holds Certification in Veterinary Acupuncture (CVA). He is currently a professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at UC Davis.

**Kelli Matheny DVM, MS,** graduated from Purdue University with a B.S. in Animal Science followed by a Master's in Animal and Dairy Science from Mississippi State University (MSU). While at Purdue and MSU, Dr. Matheny competed on the intercollegiate hunter-jumper circuit, completed a research thesis in equine reproduction, and served as a teaching assistant for several undergraduate equine courses.



Dr. Matheny earned her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree from Western University of Health Sciences. After completing a post-doctoral internship in equine medicine and surgery, Dr. Matheny pursued a career in equine private practice. She focused on providing personalized, thoughtful care to a variety of patients and disciplines with a special interest in sports medicine, preventative care, and emergency medicine.

*Speakers continued next page*

**Speakers continued from previous page**

Throughout her career, Dr. Matheny has been passionate about community outreach. She has participated in educational events for her community and enjoys mentoring students and new graduates to foster a solid foundation for the future of veterinary medicine.

Dr. Matheny joined American Regent in 2025 as a Professional Services Veterinarian where she continues to provide education and promote the health and welfare of equine patients and companion animals throughout the United States. Dr. Matheny currently resides in Northern California.

**Renee Schmid, DVM, DABT, DABVT**, is the director of Veterinary Medicine for Pet Poison Helpline, and senior veterinary toxicologist for Pet Poison Helpline/SafetyCall International.



Dr. Schmid graduated from Kansas State University and is a Diplomate of both the American Board of Toxicology and American Board of Veterinary Toxicology.

While at Pet Poison Helpline, Dr. Schmid has had the opportunity to manage thousands of cases involving animal poisonings. In addition, she has presented on various toxins and leadership at both state, regional and national conferences as well as national webinars. Dr. Schmid has published scientific book chapters on a variety of toxins and general poisoning therapies, and has also published numerous peer-reviewed scientific articles.

Dr. Schmid serves on the Editorial Advisory Board for dvm360 and is a peer reviewer for Merck Veterinary Manual and various veterinary medical journals.

**Elle Terhaar** grew up on a ranch in the mountains of Colorado, where she gained hands-on experience working with a mobile large animal veterinarian during her teenage years and college summers. After attending Dordt College in northwest Iowa, Elle joined ReproScan Technologies, where her role has evolved from sales and marketing to CEO.



In her current position, Elle collaborates with bovine and mixed animal practitioners to integrate ultrasound technology into their practices, enhancing their ultrasound services. She also serves as a RACE-approved instructor for both an advanced bovine reproductive ultrasound course as well as a small ruminant ultrasound course. Now based in Winterset, Iowa, Elle and her family enjoy raising purebred Charolais cattle.



**Joseph Wakshlag, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (nutrition), DACVSMR**, received his veterinary degree from Cornell University in 1998, followed by a PhD and nutrition residency, completed in 2006 and 2010, respectively.

He became a diplomate in the American College of Veterinary Nutrition in 2008 while also becoming a diplomate in the American College of Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation in 2010.

Dr. Wakshlag has been a faculty member at Cornell University since 2006, and is currently the Professor of Nutrition and Chief of Service. His research interests have varied from cancer cell biology and nutraceuticals and obesity, but more recently have focused on sporting dog physiology and the use of cannabinoids in veterinary medicine. His expertise in the area of cannabinoids has led to his becoming Chief Veterinary Medical Officer for ElleVet Sciences.

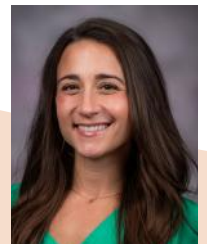
**Amelia Woolums, DVM, MVSc, PhD, DACVIM, DACVM**, is



the Mikell and Mary Cheek Hall Davis Endowed Professor of Beef Cattle Health and Reproduction in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University. Dr. Woolums received her DVM in 1988 from Purdue University. She then completed an internship at Kansas State University, a Large Animal Medicine Residency at the University of Saskatchewan, and a PhD at UC Davis, where she studied the immune response of cattle to BRSV vaccination.

Dr. Woolums is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, and the American College of Veterinary Microbiologists. At Mississippi State University Dr. Woolums has teaching and clinical service duties, and she conducts research on bovine respiratory disease and immunity.

**Jessie Zito, DVM**, graduated from the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine in 2022. She then relocated to Manhattan, Kan., where she completed a Small Animal Rotating Internship in Medicine and Surgery at Kansas State University's Veterinary Health Center. Following her internship, she joined the faculty as a Clinical Assistant Professor in Small Animal Emergency.



As part of her clinical responsibilities, Dr. Zito trains small animal rotating interns and fourth-year veterinary students as they rotate through the Small Animal Emergency service. She also serves as the course coordinator for the Basic Emergency and Critical Care course for second-year veterinary students, where she presents lectures on various topics. Additionally, she contributes lectures to the Advanced Emergency and Critical Care course for third-year students.

Dr. Zito and her husband, Justin, have lived in Manhattan, KS for three years with their German Shepherd and two cats. They enjoy spending their free time staying active outdoors.

**Registration Available Online!** Save postage and time—pay with a credit card at [www.mtvma.org](http://www.mtvma.org).

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Two Day Rate (Friday & Saturday) – includes CE, registration packet and all meals			
Total of 15 CE Hours	Through June 6	After June 6	Your Fee (includes meals)
MVMA or VMA Member of Other State (not practicing in Montana)	\$410	\$460	
Non VMA Member	\$555	\$605	
<input type="checkbox"/> Technician <input type="checkbox"/> Office Manager	\$220	\$270	
<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member <input type="checkbox"/> Student <b>No CE Awarded</b>	free	free	Free (select meals below)

One Day Rate – includes CE, registration packet and all meals for one day				
Friday: 8 CE Hours	Saturday: 7 CE Hours	Through June 6	After June 6	Your Fee (includes meals)
MVMA or VMA Member of Other State	Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$345	\$395	
Non VMA Member	Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$490	\$540	
<input type="checkbox"/> Technician <input type="checkbox"/> Office Manager	Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$190	\$240	
<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member <input type="checkbox"/> Student <b>No CE Awarded</b>	Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	free	free	Free (select meals below)

Guest/Life/Student Meals	Guest Name:	Meal Fees – Life, Students, Guests ONLY	
Both Days – all meals		\$185	
One Day Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	Friday only	\$120	
	Saturday only	\$80	
Thursday Evening Steak Fry <small>Sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim/MWI Animal Health</small>		No charge	\$0
Friday Trade Show Social/Dinner Banquet <b>ONLY</b>		\$55	

MVMA 9-Hole Golf Scramble – Thursday, June 26 – 2:00 p.m.   Fairmont Golf Course	
Check here if you are interested in participating in the Golf Scramble: <input type="checkbox"/>	Registration will be emailed.

Please let us know if you and/or your guest have any dietary restrictions:

Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Lodging:** A limited number of discounted rooms is available at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort starting at \$249 per night plus taxes/fees. Reservation Information: 800.332.3272 or online at [fairmontmontana.com](http://fairmontmontana.com). Refer to Group ID 28715.

Send Registration Form with payment to: MVMA, PO Box 6322, Helena, MT 59604

Or register online at [mtvma.org](http://mtvma.org).

Questions? Call or email: [info@mtvma.org](mailto:info@mtvma.org) | (406) 447-4259

# Power of 10 members learn about legislative process in Helena



A group of seven veterinarians from the latest Power of 10 cohort, led by Dr. Katie Rein of Crazy Mountain Veterinary Service, had an opportunity to engage in the legislative process at the “Calling on the Capitol” event. Sponsored by Montana Farm Bureau, the gathering was held February 10-11.

Calling on the Capitol included meetings with legislators, department heads, and Governor Greg Gianforte. The group also got to sit in on Legislative Committee hearings on issues affecting Montana’s food animal industry, and attended a Senate Floor Session to see firsthand how their elected representatives make laws.

Dr. Rein has served as chair of the Power of 10 program for several years, acting as a mentor for young vets in practice for less than 10 years.

“I brought these vets here to network and wanted them to see what it’s like to be more involved in the legislative process,” said Rein. “The content at Calling on the Capitol has been amazing.”

Dr. Rein said she had never sat in the gallery to listen to a Senate Floor Session, and meeting with Governor Gianforte proved especially memorable.

The Calling on the Capitol marks the final meeting for the 2024-25 cohort, which has been participating in leadership development sessions throughout the past year.

MVMA will begin the process of selecting candidates for the next

Power of 10 Group soon. All MVMA member veterinarians who graduated within the past 8 years are encouraged to take part in this valuable program.

Special thanks to all of this year’s participants, as well as to Dr. Rein and Dr. Mark Albrecht, for their valuable contributions to the Power of 10!

## Power of 10 Class of 2024-25

- Dr. Makayla Balogh
- Dr. Alyssa Bennin, Three Forks
- Dr. Cody Boyce, Lewistown
- Dr. Madison Comes, Lewistown
- Dr. Markee Dupea, Billings
- Dr. Lacey Fahrneier, Roberts
- Dr. Jessica French, Big Timber
- Dr. Emily Gosda, White Sulphur Springs
- Dr. Lilly Griffin-Duncan, Belgrade
- Dr. Chris Kimbrell, Belgrade
- Dr. Madison McCann, Shepherd
- Dr. Whitney Potts, Lewistown
- Dr. Michael Whitmore, Havre

## Thank You, Winter Meeting Sponsors!



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rmurtaugh@rvu.edu | www.rvu.edu



Robert Keene, DVM  
robert.keene@boehringer-ingelheim.com | (801) 231-5752  
Morey Ray  
morey.ray@boehringer-ingelheim.com | (406) 366-8864  
Patrick Schumacher  
patrick.schumacher@boehringer-ingelheim.com | (406) 672-3818



Patrick Wilson | 406-370-4074 | pwilson@mwianimalhealth.com  
Sarah Coffield | 406-595-2116 | scoffield@mwianimalhealth.com  
Lyle Shores | 406-670-1984 | lshores@mwianimalhealth.com



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erika@bvspets.com  
1110 Campbell Rd.  
Bozeman, MT 59718

# WIMU veterinary program in 11th year of educating Montana students

## Alan Goldhahn, DVM - MSU WIMU Teaching Professor



The WIMU Regional Program in Veterinary Medicine is currently in its 11th year of instruction. Funding was received allowing for an increase in the class size from 10 to 16 students for the 2024-2025 enrollment. This group is comprised of 10 WIMU students, two WICHE students who are Montana residents, and four nonresident students.

The program continues to be successful as Montana WIMU students—who attend their first year of veterinary instruction on the Montana State University campus—receive high praise after arriving at Washington State University for their subsequent three years of study. Another plus: an accreditation review by the AVMA last November found only positives.

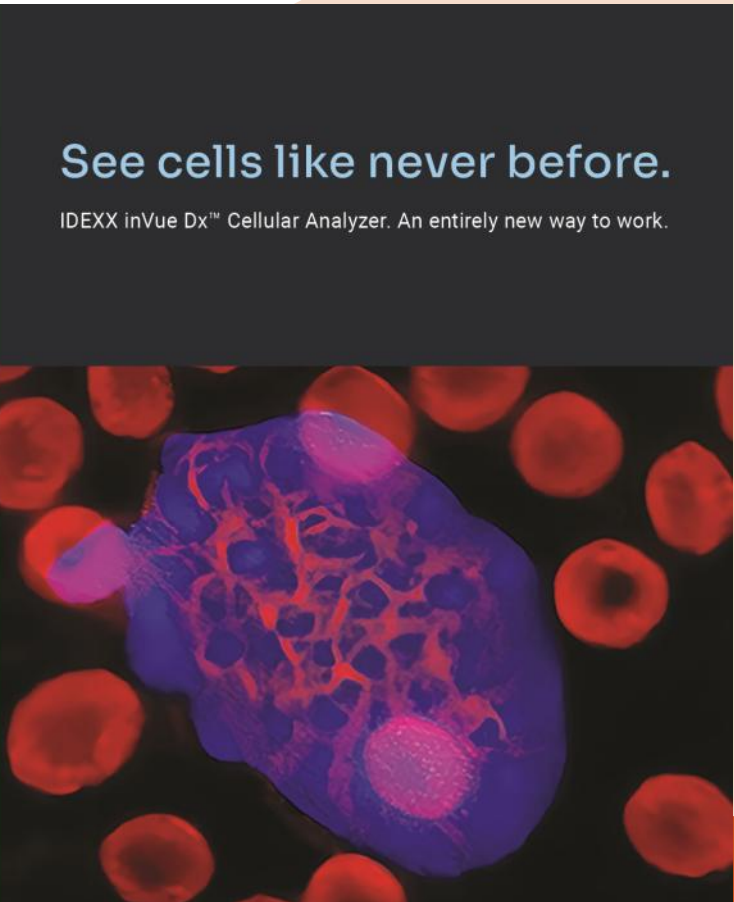
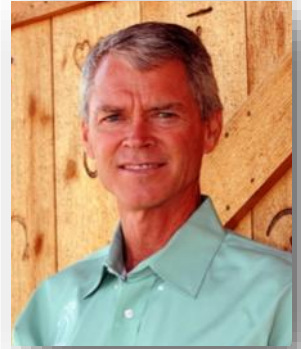
In looking at the opportunity of Montana residents to attend veterinary school, the application process for the WIMU enrollment for the fall of 2025 included 15 Montana students. Of those, 12 were granted an interview and 10

students were made an offer. Applicants have until April to accept the offer.

Thanks to contributions from dedicated MVMA supporters, the MVMA WIMU Endowed scholarship will be providing \$1,000 to a first-year student each year from now moving forward. In addition, the Ed and Jodi Peretti WIMU Endowed Scholarship Fund—which provides approximately \$5,000 each year— as well as many other funds, help provide each first-year WIMU student with about \$4,500 to help offset veterinary school costs.

Keep the MVMA scholarship fund in mind as a great way to give back to our state and our great profession. Cash, real estate, appreciated stocks, and estate planning are all options. Visit the MSU Alumni Foundation website for more details ([msuaf.org](http://msuaf.org)).

Thanks to the MVMA membership for mentoring students, employing recent graduates, and encouraging our Montana students to return and practice in our great state. The future of our profession remains in good hands.



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# Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory construction moving forward

Construction on the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Bozeman is moving forward, with a projected completion date of February 2026 and move-in shortly thereafter.

During FY 2023, the laboratory staff completed the building design for a new facility to be located just north of its current location on the Montana State University campus. It is a combined lab

complex with the Department of Agriculture's analytical lab and the Montana State University wool lab.

The new construction is designed to increase the operational capabilities of the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Lab well into the future. It features significantly more square footage relative to the current facility, as well as improvements in biosecurity.

**MT Dept. of Livestock  
Animal Health Bureau**

**Dr. Tahnee Szymanski**

State Veterinarian  
tszymanski@mt.gov  
(406) 444-0782

**Dr. Heidi Hildahl**

Veterinarian Supervisor  
heidi.hildahl@mt.gov  
(406) 444-5214

**Dr. Brad DeGroot**

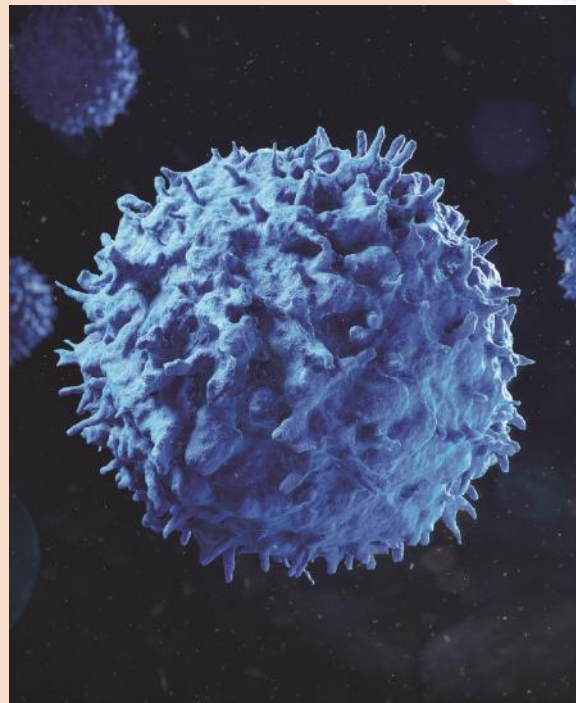
Brucellosis Prog. Vet.  
Bradley.DeGroot@mt.gov  
(406) 444-3374

**Dr. Brenee Peterson**

Program Veterinarian  
brenee.peterson@mt.gov  
(406) 444-2939



*The Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Lab construction is pictured left and below. Photos courtesy of LPW Architecture.*



## IDEXX Cancer Dx testing. Detect lymphoma earlier than ever.<sup>1</sup>

IDEXX Cancer Dx™ testing can be affordably and easily incorporated into IDEXX Preventive Care profiles for at-risk dogs\* and provides actionable insights to inform next steps. What's more, early data suggests that it can detect lymphoma before clinical signs are present.<sup>1</sup>

And that's just the beginning.

Get a glimpse of the future of oncology at [idexx.com/cancerdx](https://idexx.com/cancerdx).



\*At-risk dogs include all dogs ≥ 7 years old and high-risk breeds ≥ 4 years old.

### Reference

1. Data on file at IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. Westbrook, Maine USA. Data based on testing performed at IDEXX Reference Laboratories in North America between November 1, 2024, and December 6, 2024. Analysis Report: IDEXX Cancer Dx Validation, 100282 [008\_CancerDx-Validation-Report-2.Rmd].

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# Montana Board of Veterinary Medicine

www.vet.mt.gov  
301 S. Park Ave,  
4th Floor Helena,

March 2025

Contact Information

[DLIBSDVET@mt.gov](mailto:DLIBSDVET@mt.gov)

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## Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

Montana Board of Veterinary Medicine  
Report to MVMA

March 2025

The Full Board met on February 19, 2025, for a Zoom Meeting.

The board had business as usual with a few reviews & updates from the department specific to board related information.

The department shared information related to the fiscal health of the board, legislative updates in lieu of the ongoing State of Montana 2025 Legislative Session, as well as a review on a recent CE audit.

The board is scheduled to meet in person on Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

Board Information can be found at:  
[www.vet.mt.gov](http://www.vet.mt.gov)



### Mailing Address

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Medicine  
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Helena, MT 59620-0513



Montana Department of  
LABOR & INDUSTRY



# American Veterinary Medical Association update

Sandy Willis, DVM, DACVIM | AVMA District XI Director

AVMA Board of Directors | [avmadistrict11@avma.org](mailto:avmadistrict11@avma.org)



Dear Members of the Montana Veterinary Medical Association,

There is no better way to start this update than to mention the President's Column-Special Edition "Committed to Working on Your Behalf" written by AVMA President Dr. Sandra Faeh and recently published in JAVMA [<https://www.avma.org/presidents-column-special-edition-committed-working-your-behalf>]. Dr. Faeh summarizes work being done by the AVMA to address the recent changes in the federal government.

The AVMA is working for you on many fronts. I have briefly summarized a few of those below. Please reach out if you have any questions and there are also many resources at [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org). I look forward to seeing everyone at the Montana VMA conference in June.

## Mid-Level Practitioner

The AVMA – working collaboratively with the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association and a coalition comprising more than 200 associations, veterinary practices, and individuals – opposed Colorado Proposition 129, a ballot initiative creating a veterinary professional associate (VPA) that narrowly passed in November.

The Colorado State University System has approved a mostly online, five-semester master's degree program to train these VPAs. This program offers minimal in-person laboratory exposure and clinical training. A VPA

will not be able to prescribe medication according to federal law.

The AVMA recently provided comments to the Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine's March 7 stakeholder meeting on additions and revisions to the rules and regulations pertaining to implementation of Proposition 129.

The AVMA will be proactively working with its national coalition partners to oppose similar proposals that may arise in other states, while strongly advocating for proper recognition and leveraging of veterinary technicians and veterinary technician specialists.

The United States is projected to have a sufficient number of veterinarians to care for the nation's pet population until at least 2035. This is according to a recently-published, peer-reviewed study conducted by Brakke Consulting and looking at future workforce needs in the companion animal healthcare space. The analysis cautions that veterinarians may exceed demand when one considers the 10 proposed veterinary colleges that are in various stages of development.

## Telemedicine and the VCPR

The AVMA believes strongly in the value of telemedicine, but not as a replacement for in-person care.

The AVMA believes the VCPR needs to be established in-person to best protect the safety of veterinary patients and the interests of their owners. The basic care that most animals need is preventive care that is tailored to the animals' specific circumstances and doing that requires an in-person visit. The AVMA

supports the use of technology that safely and effectively advances care for our patients.

Currently 41 states mirror the FDA's language for creating a VCPR, with 22 of those states specifically requiring an in-person examination or visits to the premises to establish a VCPR. Seven states and the District of Columbia allow a VCPR to be established virtually, with most putting additional parameters around the use of telemedicine, and many of those being attempts to address concerns associated with over- and inappropriate prescribing (e.g., antimicrobial resistance, controlled substance abuse).



## 2025 AVMA Convention



Registration for the 2025 AVMA Convention in Washington, D.C., July 18-22, is now open. Visit the webpage [avma.org/events/avma-convention](http://avma.org/events/avma-convention) for information.

This year, the AVMA will host the 40th World Veterinary Association Congress, bringing together the global veterinary community. Megan Leavey—former Marine, K9 handler, and subject of the 2017 biopic "Megan Leavey"—will give our keynote address. Our AVMA Concert will feature Grammy award-winning artist Meghan Trainor.

# Dr. Rosie Stoneberg inducted into Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame

Reprinted with permission | montanacowboyfame.org

MVMA Life Member Dr. Rose (Anderson) “Rosie” Stoneberg was one of 24 recent inductees into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame. The 17th class of inductions was celebrated February 8 in Great Falls.

The inductees were chosen from a field of candidates nominated by the general public. Inductees were recognized for their contributions to the history and culture of the State of Montana.

## Living a legacy

Rose Anderson Stoneberg lives on the same land where her grandmother filed a homestead claim in 1918. The Anderson Horse Ranch is remotely located nine miles north of the Missouri River as the crow flies and a 50-mile drive south of Hinsdale. To better know “Rosie,” one must understand the ruggedness of the Missouri Breaks and the solitude of the Larb Hills that have etched and defined her character and life in the same way that wind and weather can shape stone.

The time it takes to travel to Rosie’s ranch is subject to the amount of precipitation the area has received, not to mention the status of one’s four-wheel drive capabilities on dirt roads turned to gumbo. Rosie and her husband, Ron, exist not only off the pavement, but off the grid. Having been raised in the same cottonwood log cabin her grandparents built, Rosie is well-suited to roughing it. Today, the Stoneberg’s have indoor plumbing and solar panels, and a wind turbine provides the modern convenience of electricity. Rather than run to a store to pick up a gallon of milk, Rosie has been known to grab a bucket and milk a cow. The year 2024 marks the first year in 51 years that Rosie has not kept a dairy cow for milking. Self-sufficiency

and a pioneering spirit are essential in a place where requests for a service call cannot be answered, and a cloudy week can make or break the length of a phone conversation.

## Lifelong love of learning

Born August 1, 1946, Rosie began a lifelong love of learning in a one-room schoolhouse near Tallow Creek, about 45 minutes (or 22 miles of bad roads) from her cabin. Rosie continued her high school education in Saco, staying at a rented house in town during the school week and returning to the ranch to work on the weekends. She was encouraged to take typing and shorthand and to pursue work either as a secretary or as a teacher, but Rosie chose a different path and took science classes. She graduated as valedictorian in 1964.

Having decided to formalize her knack of caring for all creatures great and small, Rosie completed two years at Eastern Montana College in Billings and finished her pre-vet courses at the University of Montana, where she met her husband-to-be, Ron. Rosie was denied admission to Colorado State University due to an application limit filled by qualified male students. Undeterred, she achieved her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1971 from Washington State University in Pullman.

## Breaking the mold

Rosie immediately returned to Montana and began practicing at the clinic of Dr. Andy Elting in the fall of



Photo by Robin Walter

1971 in Red Lodge. Owing to Dr. Elting’s side gig as a high school English teacher, Rosie took the day shifts, often working without a great deal of support or a clinical staff. Rosie was not only the first lady veterinarian in the Red Lodge and Nye area, but one of the first female veterinarians in Montana. She broke the mold again when practicing in Circle from 1980 to 1986. The locals in both locations were amazed to hear that a woman vet was working at the clinic. One old rancher made an immediate trip into town when he heard that she would offer a treatment plan for his cattle, partly to collect antibiotics, but mostly to clap eyes on this novelty. Rosie won over doubters with her work ethic and capabilities, and many became regular customers.

Throughout the course of their careers, which eventually took them to the Hinsdale area, Ron’s work as a Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks biologist and Rosie’s skills as a veterinarian intersected, and all manner of animals, both domestic and wild, have been beneficiaries of her care and skill. Rosie served as a vet for a variety of Ron’s studies involving swift fox and bighorn sheep, and an

**Dr. Stoneberg continued next page**

initiative to re-populate the prairie with the endangered black-footed ferret. Rosie has bottle fed orphaned mule deer and antelope fawns and returned various birds of prey to flight.

### Returning to the family ranch

With Ron's retirement in 2003, and following the death of Rosie's father in 2004, they accepted the challenge of taking over the Anderson family ranch as their retirement job. As herd manager and in-house veterinarian, Rosie successfully introduced change of season and rotational grazing to the ranch. Bad drought years caused water shortages, but the grass was resilient enough to withstand the lack of moisture. According to Rosie, her hair turned gray from the stress of making sure her livestock had access to adequate water.

As a life-long supporter of FFA and 4-H clubs, Rosie served as a volunteer, judge, and mentor. Rosie's belief in best serving the health of her animals by monitoring and managing the prairie's natural resources has resulted not only in a model of good grazing practices, but an induction into the Montana Range Day's Hall of Fame in 1996.

### Knowing land and animals best

Rosie began communicating with horses at a young age, and learned to ride bareback on Brownie, a horse she shared with her siblings. She received a pony of her own, Buttermilk, from a neighboring rancher, when she was nine, and by age 12, Rosie was using a saddle (once logging a 14-hour day) whenever she worked cattle. That was right around the same time she assumed most of the responsibility for the herd, as she was the oldest sibling and because her father would often be away from home, especially in the summertime. Rosie has gentled and trained numerous saddle horses, all of whom she can recall by name, adventures, and personality quirks. At the age of 78, it is still her preference to check her cattle and grass by horseback, traveling the same trails she covered with Buttermilk when she was a kid.

In many ways, because she was raised in isolation, the land and the animals are what Rosie knows the best. Some people who have visited the Stonebergs have commented they couldn't stand to live so far away from society, but she sees it differently. Rosie knows it's hard to feel lonely when you're surrounded by blue skies and beautiful sunsets, and any day

the meadowlarks sing and the creek is running is a good day.

Rosie Stoneberg is both a life-long learner and teacher, a multi-generational rancher, an expert on range science and a good friend to all, be they human, hooved, furred or feathered. Rosie is a passionate steward of not only the land and animals, but a way of life. She's a beautiful person inside and out but one who doesn't have a whit of vanity. Rosie Stoneberg is the genuine article—and, quite possibly, the last of her kind.

*Designated by the Montana State Legislature, the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame preserves and passes forward Montana's rich cultural heritage through the celebration of inductees and their notable contributions that have shaped our collective Montana Western heritage. Most of the inductees in the Hall of Fame are not individuals who made headlines or would be considered famous—rather, they are symbols of an extraordinarily diverse culture that makes Montana truly "the last best place."*

Learn more at  
[montanacowboyleft.com](http://montanacowboyleft.com)

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