



# Commonwealth Veterinary Association e-Newsletter

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## President's Message

The year 2015, so far, has been a memorable one for the CVA since monumental changes have occurred for the first time in its 48 year history. These changes are very positive and keeping with the times. The CVA has been very fortunate to have young and dynamic new CVA Councillors, who have contributed by suggesting new strategies for the effective implementation of the objectives and goals of the CVA.

At the Officer's meeting in London in June, the CVA also took the decision to stop the publication of the Commonwealth Veterinary Journal and instead have an e-Newsletter on a monthly basis.

Jeff Cave, the CVA Councillor of Australia has taken over the responsibility of managing the CVA website and the e-Newsletter and within a very short span of time the newsletter has been a great success with positive feedback from our readers.

Though the lack of support and funding from the Commonwealth Foundation affected the implementation of new projects, we were fortunate to have the support of Crucell Laboratories to establish a state of the art, rabies diagnostic laboratory in Bangalore, India that is spearheading rabies diagnosis and control programmes in Asia.

With the help of our principal sponsor, World Animal Protection, we were able to hold many regional and International conferences in the Australasia Oceania, Canada Caribbean and Asian Regions and the Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference in Malaysia, all of which were a great success.

While I step down at the end of the year after serving the CVA for 28 years, the CVA has elected new officers for the years 2016-19 who are a mixture of young and experienced energetic individuals led by Dr Peter

Thornber, our current Treasurer, as President, Dr Henry Magwisha, Regional Representative(RR) East Central Southern African Region from Tanzania as Secretary, Dr Jeff Cave who has been managing the Book and Journal Programme and has been associated with the CVA for over two decades as the Programme Director, and debutant CVA Councillor from New Zealand Dr Deborah Kirton as the Treasurer. The CVA is very fortunate to have them at the helm of affairs

I would like to acknowledge the great contribution of Dr Bob McCracken our Programme Director, who will be leaving us, for his unstinted support, guidance and valuable timely advice on all matters. His role in obtaining Norbrook funding will always be remembered. Fortunately for us Dr Karen Reed our Secretary will continue as RR of the UK Mediterranean Region.

I am confident that the CVA will address all of the challenges that the veterinary profession faces today and will also work towards the betterment of quality of life of livestock farmers of the developing countries of the Commonwealth.

S. ABDUL RAHMAN



## Wagga Wagga students thrive on Fiji experience

Twelve 5th year Veterinary Science students from Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia accompanied by two staff members embarked on a two week animal health volunteer program in Fiji. It was the first program of its kind to be facilitated by the

university, and for the students has proved to be the experience of a lifetime.



A highlight of the program, was the first week spent on Beqa, where the students enjoyed the wonderful Fijian hospitality in Rukua Village while establishing and operating a mobile clinic. Through the experience the students faced the considerable challenges of working with limited resources and facilities when setting up and running a mobile (that could be carried by hand or boat) remote veterinary clinic. The issues form part of day to day life for the communities but were new to the students. The clinic provided services to help control reproduction in the dog and cat populations. Through this clinic, the students gained significant confidence, communication



skills and teamwork abilities as well as the expected surgical and clinical skills. Under supervision the students, performed surgical neutering procedures along with countless health checks of animals, and provided education on basic animal care and health management to the island's communities.



Preparation is important and before leaving for Fiji the students campaigned in Wagga Wagga to raise funds to provide the free veterinary services to the communities. Multiple fundraising activities increased awareness of the program and raised funds. Events included a wine and cheese night, fitness class, and a raffle with numerous prizes generously donated by various business owners in Wagga Wagga and throughout Australia. The students also created a website to increase awareness of their program and allow people to donate online. Interest was, overwhelming with the students managing to raise approximately \$A3,000 in a short time. Donations went beyond the monetary and raffle prize donation, with many businesses and



institutions within the Australian veterinary industry and human medical industry, donating surgical and medical supplies.

The second week based in Suva centred on Fiji based veterinary institutions. During this week the students met and collaborated with the SPCA, SPC (Secretariat of Pacific Community), Ministry of Agriculture and Fiji National University. With each institution, the students learned about the issues facing the Fiji livestock producers and communities. With the SPCA, students learned about issues relating to small animal health and husbandry. A visit to research facilities and the Veterinary Pathology Laboratory in conjunction with SPC and the Ministry of Agriculture provided insight into the livestock, agriculture, crop and public health sectors. The networks formed during this time provided great prospects for an ongoing collaborative program between the Fiji government and Charles Sturt University. The students were excited about the possibilities of research projects and career opportunities.



At Fiji National University, the team met 1st and 2nd year veterinary science students and toured the campus facilities. The Veterinary program at FNU is only recent, commencing just two years ago, giving the students much to talk about and compare in regards to veterinary education in Fiji and Australia. This visit was valuable to the Charles Sturt University students, and they hope it is the beginning of a networking and support program between them and the FNU Veterinary students.



The program in Fiji was more than just an experience outside the comforts and familiarities of veterinary clinical environment the students are familiar with in Australia. Students also experienced another way of life. They enjoyed village life in Rukua, where they were privileged to stay with the chief's family. When not engaged in veterinary work, the team socialized with the villagers, participated in local customs such as kava ceremonies, and attended Sunday church. The program generated cultural awareness, and many friendships were formed with members of the Rukua community. Many left hoping that this is the beginning of an ongoing program to which they can return. The friendships formed with the SPCA and Frontier Fiji, will also hopefully

facilitate a collaborative effort to continue a program on Beqa to include the 7 other villages on the island.



Overall, it was a fantastic experience from which the students claim they all gained more than they felt they were able to provide the Fiji community with their veterinary knowledge and skills. It was an excellent opportunity for the undergraduates to participate in a volunteer program such as this, with the rewards beyond words.



## New CVA Councilor for Australia

My name is Dianne Phillips and I am currently employed as a Program Manager for Animals for the Victorian Government. I am really looking forward to making a contribution to the Commonwealth Veterinary Association. The CVA provides a forum for addressing and sharing our veterinary knowledge and expertise to improve the outcomes for animal health and wellbeing and for the people associated with them across a broad network of countries.

After nearly 20 years in mixed practice in rural Australia and the UK, I undertook further study to become a member of the epidemiology chapter of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists, resulting in a transition to district and regional government veterinary roles covering disease investigations, disease surveillance, animal welfare and emergency response. I have always been a member of the Australian Veterinary Association and have appreciated and enjoyed the role and services our professional organisation provides.

During 2009 I began my interest in the CVA, attending the CVA Pacific conference which was followed by a period as a volunteer vet with my family in Samoa. I was also fortunate to participate in Foot and Mouth Disease Training in Nepal in 2013, which gave a valuable insight into issues

facing some countries managing endemic diseases such as FMD, and their impacts on animal and human wellbeing.



## Recipes from the world - from Scotland

### 'Traitor's' Haggis

Fair fa' yer honest sauncie face  
Great chieftain o' the pudden race....

The old recipes are a bit vague, so might need some experimentation:

- 1 leg of mutton, deboned and minced (or about 1kg mutton mince)... or venison
- 1 kg oatmeal – toast this on a baking tray for about 15 minutes till it starts to go crispy
- 500g chopped suet (preferably mutton)
- 6 anchovies
- Grated zest of one lemon
- Handful of chopped parsley
- Cayenne pepper, allspice, salt and pepper (about 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of each, depending on how spicy you like it)
- 1-6 onions (depending on how much you like onion)
- 500 mL stock (or red wine)
- 4-6 egg yolks to bind

Mix everything together, and:

Either stuff it loosely into a cleaned calf/mutton paunch; sew that up, prick all over and simmer for about 3 hours;

Or, put it in a pudding basin with a suet pastry topping, and steam it as you would a suet pudding.

Aboon them a' ye tak yer place,  
Painch, tripe or thairm.....

