

# SVME Newsletter

Newsletter of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics Volume 11, Number 3      October 2005

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## ***President's Message***

***Dear SVME Members,***

It is a beautiful fall here in Eastern Canada. The leaves are turning despite the warmer than normal weather and the storm activity seems to be calming down in the Atlantic after unleashing such devastation on the gulf coast. I regret that I was unable to attend the meeting in Minneapolis. I understand that the ethics session went very well and that the awarding of the first Shomer Award to a very deserving Dr. Carl Osborne was a distinguished event.

We have a very eager group of Board Members this year. I am looking forward to a productive year with those who are continuing (Drs. Morgan, Wright, Block and Dixon) and I extend a grateful welcome to two new members Dr. Anna Worth (President-elect) and Dr. Francois Martin (Parliamentarian). I would like to thank Dr. Speth for his service on the board through the years and great thanks go Dr. Sylvie Cloutier, although she has not really left us as she has continued to aid us in the management of the website and the organization of the September teleconference for the Board.

The board met over the telephone in September and discussed a number of areas where we would like to put our efforts this year. We would like to stimulate more discussion on the list serve as well as to increase our visibility and interaction with other societies and associations that have complementary interests to SVME. We plan to increase our outreach efforts including following up on an initial mailing to the Deans of North American veterinary schools as well as encouraging the formation and continuation of student SVME chapters. In the same vein, there are plans to re-vitalize the Student Essay Contest - watch the website for more information on this.

One of my personal interests is the changing environment and culture of veterinary practice and how this may affect the roles and responsibilities of the veterinary professional. An effort to increase our discussion and attention in this area is not intended to diminish the continued attention to and discussion of animal welfare issues as they arise within the scope of veterinary medicine. In looking over the topics of the AVMA ethics

*continued pg.2...*

## President's Message *Continued...*

sessions organized by SVME for the past few years there has been a recent concentration on (important) animal welfare issues and I would like to re-establish some discussion and examination of professionalism and what that means and how it is expressed in veterinary medicine today. A definition of a profession that I have always liked is found in Bailliere's Comprehensive Veterinary Dictionary, (D,C, Blood and V.P. Studdert (eds). Bailliere Tindall/WB Saunders London, UK. 1988):

*"2. a calling or vocation requiring specialized knowledge, methods and skills, as well as preparation, in an institution of higher learning, in the scholarly, scientific and historical principles underlying such methods and skills. A profession continuously enlarges its body of knowledge, functions autonomously in formulation of policy, and maintains by force of organization or concerted opinion high standards of achievement and conduct. Specifically in this regard it maintains and polices a code of ethics and conducts a professional organization of which a large majority of the profession are members. Members of a profession are committed to continuing study, placing service above personal gain, and are committed to providing practical services vital to human and social welfare."*

In the past few years, there has been increased examination of the culture, practice and application of scientific research and technology as it relates to society. There are some interesting systemic changes within these realms that parallel cultural change within the veterinary medical (and human medical) profession such as commercialization and corporatization. In addition, alterations in the way society perceives science and scientific professions will likely have implications for the continued self-regulation of these professions. For those interested in this topic, I would direct you to two short and interesting articles on this topic, which can be found on the web:

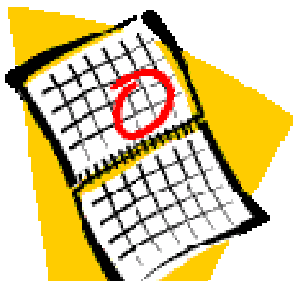
1. Giovanni Frazzetto. The changing identity of the scientist,  
EMBO reports vol. 5 | no. 1 | pp 18-20 | 2004  
<http://emboreports.npgjournals.com/cgi/content/full/5/1/18>

John Ziman. Why must scientists become more ethically sensitive than they used to be?  
Science, Vol 282, Issue 5395, 1813-1814, 4 December 1998  
<http://sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/282/5395/1813>

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to interact with this society and I look forward to an interesting and energizing year ahead.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Horney DVM PhD  
President, SVME*

## Upcoming Events



Society For Veterinary Medical Ethics Track, AAHA  
Ethical Issues in Veterinary Practice Management, & Law  
Tuesday, March 21, 2006, Long Beach California

Society For Veterinary Medical Ethics Track, AVMA  
New Ethical Directions in The Veterinary Profession  
Sunday, July 16, 2006, Honolulu, Hawaii

UFAW/BVA Ethics Committee Symposium 2006  
Quality of Life: The Heart of the Matter  
13-15 September 2006, The Royal Society, London, UK  
<http://www.ufaw.org.uk/>

# Treasurer's Report

As of September 19, 2005 the checking account balance of SVME was \$1,282.86, and the savings account balance was \$22,758.68.

Dues notices to members were sent in August, and membership dues continue to trickle in. Thank you to all those who have sent in dues on the first call! Although we have a positive balance please keep in mind that SVME is barely self-sustaining on a year-to-year basis, and it is the membership that is the life of SVME. Membership support allows us to provide a listserv, publish a newsletter, and provide programming at AVMA and other meetings. Thank you for your support, and please consider suggesting to a colleague that this organization deserves their support too. If you would like to have brochures to give to colleagues or have other ideas for increasing membership in SVME please contact me at [wright008@umn.edu](mailto:wright008@umn.edu).

Below is information that was given at the SVME annual meeting, which took place at the AVMA meeting on July 17, 2005, as well as a summary of income, and expenses for the 2004-2005 fiscal year that were prepared subsequent to the meeting.

*Respectfully submitted,  
John S. Wright, DVM*

## Condensed Treasurer's Report For Fiscal Year 2004-2005

The figures below indicate cash position of SVME is only slightly changed from one year ago with a difference of \$752.03. As of July 21, 2004

Savings account balance	=	\$22,729.71
Checking account balance	=	\$ 1,929.95
July 17, 2005 balance	=	\$24,659.66
July 21, 2004 balance	=	\$23,907.63
Net change in total balance	=	\$ 752.03

## SVME Income and Expense Summary Fiscal 2004 - 2005

### SVME Income Summary Fiscal 2004-2005

Dues Income	Interest Income	Gift Income	Total Income Fiscal 04-05
725.00	118.66*	1,000.00	\$1,843.66

\* Does not include interest income from 1/1/2005 to present

### SVME Expense Summary Fiscal 2004- 2005 (July 25, 2004 – July 17, 2005)

Newsletter Copy & Postage	Misc. Office Expense	Postage	Brochure Printing	Shomer Award Expense*	Conference Calls	Total Expenditures Fiscal 04-05
306.03	30.60	21.19	672.48	253.06	63.59	1,316.35

\*Does not include \$1,000.00 cash award carried to next fiscal year.

# SVME Honors Dr. Carl Osborne

## *Recipient of the Dr. Robert R. Shomer Award for Outstanding Achievement in Veterinary Medical Ethics*

At the AVMA meeting this past July the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics paid tribute to perhaps the most well known name in veterinary medicine when it presented the inaugural Robert R. Shomer Award to Dr. Carl A. Osborne. The award, named in memory of Dr. Robert R. Shomer, cofounder and first president of the SVME, was made in recognition of Dr. Osborne's contributions to veterinary medical ethics.

By John Wright

I had the good fortune to be a student of Dr. Osborne's in the late 60s, but little did I know at that time of the impression he made and continues to make on the veterinary profession, as well as the relationship between people and animals from a scientific, and philosophical standpoint. Little did I realize that Dr. Osborne would contribute more to the veterinary profession than any other veterinarian.

Many recognize Dr. Carl Osborne's name because he is arguably the world's foremost authority on veterinary nephrology, and urology. This is verified in part by the fact that he has authored or co-authored at least 244 refereed journals, 39 research abstracts, 323 book chapters, 205 non-refereed journals, 192 scientific proceedings, and 3 textbooks, and has edited 20 books. Many associate Dr. Osborne with the Minnesota Urolith Center, which he founded in 1981 and supervises to the present. To date, this center has analyzed more than 450,000 animal uroliths.

***“His philosophies regarding one's sense of compassion, ethical behavior, animal welfare, and humane treatment of animals were integral to his teaching.”***

Further, Dr. Osborne is recognized for his abilities as a nurturing teacher who imparts words of compassion, wisdom, and concern for ethical decision making in his lectures. Since July 1964, Dr. Osborne has taught more than 3000 veterinary students and helped to train approximately 160 clinical interns and 100 clinical residents. He has been the recipient of 42 awards, including the

Norden Distinguished Teaching Award, which he has received four times. Former student, Dr. David Antenucci (University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, Class of 2005), said of Dr. Osborne, *“His philosophies regarding one's sense of compassion, ethical behavior, animal welfare, and humane treatment of animals were integral to his teaching.”*

Dr. Osborne is also the author of “Poor Carl's Almanac” which has appeared more than 330 times in DVM Magazine since 1977. As the author of this monthly feature, Dr. Osborne nudges us toward a moral and philosophical thought pattern by insertion of quotations of wisdom, and philosophy from philosophers of past, and present, as well as quotations from scriptures.

As a testament to the value he places on compassion in Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Osborne established the “Compassion Collection” at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Medicine Library, which is a collection of volumes providing learning on all aspects of compassion as it relates to humans and animals, including the application of compassionate concern. Volumes could, and possibly will be written about the contributions of Carl Osborne to the veterinary profession. Suffice it to say that the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics extends congratulations and thanks to Dr. Osborne for all that he has done.

### Some Osborne Quotations

*“We need to constantly remind each other that there are some patients we cannot help, but there are none we cannot harm. No patient should be worse for having seen the doctor.”*

*If you were this patient, are these the diagnostics, and treatments that you would like to have your doctor choose?*

*“Changes in the veterinary curriculum should foster the concept of learning how to learn... (veterinary education) is not just a series of college courses, but rather a life course.”*

**Dr. Carl Osborne...**  
**at the Robert R. Shomer Award Ceremony**  
**July 17, 2005**

## WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE?

Thank you for the opportunity to say thank you to my colleagues and friends. I express my deep appreciation to you all. It fills one with appreciation to be recognized by one's peers, especially when that recognition is linked to the legacy of Bob Shomer.

This opportunity that you have given me today prompted me to reflect on a thought provoking discussion that I had with a graduate student.

How would you respond to the questions,  
“What is our purpose in life? Why do we exist?” What can we do to bring true happiness to ourselves and others? How would you respond?

**Why do we exist** ..... if not to use our God given energies, talents, and resources to provide for the needs and welfare of other beings—animal and human?

**Why do we live**..... if it is not to help and encourage one another?

Albert Einstein put it this way. He said, “Strive not to be a man (or woman) of success, strive to be a person of value. I interpret this to mean that the value of what we unselfishly do to benefit others is of greater overall benefit than the value of what we do to achieve personal success for ourselves. In this context, we become selfish, not by pursuing our own needs, but by neglecting the needs of others.



Won't you agree that our true value in life should be measured in context of what it accomplishes in behalf of others, and not just in light of what it does for us in the way of income or prestige.

Our mission is to serve rather than be served. Therefore, we must uphold the traditional value of caring and sharing by avoiding the contemporary code of making and taking with indifference to the needs of others.



Dr. Earl Dixon (left) SVME President presents the inaugural Robert R. Shomer award to Dr. Carl Osborne

**“What is our purpose in life?”** What can we do to bring true happiness to ourselves and others?

Being guided by the enduring principle that there is greater happiness in giving than receiving.....it becomes apparent that our greatest reward for doing....is....the opportunity to do more.

What we do for ourselves dies with us...what we do for others lives on. The legacy of Dr. Robert Shomer is proof of this principle. And until the day arrives that our lamp of service is extinguished, let us continue to follow his example of giving our talents.....and giving of our energies.....in behalf of others.

# Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, July 17, 2005, Convention Center, Minneapolis, MN: 12:25

Members present: Drs. Earl Dixon (Chair), Sylvie Cloutier, John Wright, Peter Theran, Bernard Rollin

Non-member present: Dr. John Deen

- A. Call to order** - Dr. Dixon presented the agenda of the meeting and called the meeting to order. The order was approved unanimously.
- B. Shomer award** - Dr. Dixon thanked Dr. John Wright for overseeing the organization of the ceremony for the Shomer award given to Dr. Carl Osborne.
- C. Treasurer's report** - The treasurer's report provided by Dr. John Wright noted a balance of 1929.95\$ in the checking account, and 22 729.71\$ in the savings account (total of \$ 24 659.66) as of July 17, 2005. The Society had a net gain of 706\$ compared to 2004. Income is mostly from membership dues, interest income, and a gift of 1000\$ from Dr. Gary Block. Expenses were mainly for publication of the newsletter (387.29\$), mailing fees and others (51.79\$), printing of the brochure (672.48\$) and conference calls (63.69\$). The treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

## **D. Committee reports**

Report from the By-laws committee was presented.

The Bylaws amendment has been proposed to update the objectives and the president-elect and nominating committee definitions, and to add the description of a new committee, the editorial board. The by-laws modifications have been submitted to the membership via the newsletter before the meeting. The Bylaws changes were approved unanimously.

Report from the membership committee was presented.

The society has approximately 70 active members. No membership notice has been sent this year so far but one will be sent soon after the AVMA meeting. Of the 70 or so members, some are students. Dr. Dixon mentioned that the student members at Tuskegee organized 6 seminars last year. Dr. Wright indicated that the University of Wisconsin has an ethics club. The membership committee report was approved unanimously.

**E. Old business** - No old business discussed

## **F. New business**

### 1. AVMA program 2006

The program for the Ethics session at next year's AVMA meeting "New Ethical Directions in The Veterinary Profession" is almost ready. Dr. John Wright presented the latest draft of the program. Dr. Wright also presented a draft of the program for the AAHA that will be held Tuesday, March 21, 2006, Long Beach California. The topic will be "Ethical Issues in Veterinary Practice Management, & Law". The Society is involved in the organization of the program and will be acknowledged.

## **G. Nomination committee report**

### 1. Election of officers

The slate of candidates for SVME officer positions is:

President-Elect - Dr. Anna Worth

Treasurer - Dr. John Wright

Secretary - Dr. Carol Morgan

Parliamentarian - Dr. Francois Martin

## **H. Install officers**

The slate was approved unanimously.

New officers were installed.

The new president is Dr. Barbara Horney.

**I. Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 12.50 pm.

# Meet the Board

## **Barbara Horney - President**

Dr. Horney was born and raised in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Currently she resides in Prince Edward Island (Canada) with her husband, two children, 4 horses, 2 cats and one dog. Dr. Horney obtained her DVM and PhD (Clinical Pathology) degrees at the Ontario Veterinary College. After spending a few years in a provincial diagnostic laboratory she accepted a faculty position with the Atlantic Veterinary College. Her current responsibilities include teaching veterinary clinical pathology, professional service in the diagnostic laboratory and various collaborative research projects. Dr. Horney has developed great interest in ethics including ethics in medicine, science and technology, and professional ethics. She spent a sabbatical year of study on the topic including basic philosophy courses, distance bioethics graduate courses with the Medical College of Wisconsin and an intensive Bioethics course at the Kennedy Institute of Bioethics, Georgetown University in Washington DC.

## **Anna Worth – President Elect**

A 1978 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Worth was a mixed animal practitioner before focusing solely on small animals at her practice in Shaftsbury, VT. Dr. Worth has been an active leader with AAHA and the veterinary industry throughout her career. She is the upcoming Vice President of AAHA. She is also on the Tufts/New England Veterinary Practitioner Liaison Committee, Past President and AVMA Delegate for the Vermont Veterinary Medical Association, Past Chair of the Vermont Animal Cruelty Task Force, and Past President and current Council Member for the National Council for Pet Population Study and Policy. She has recently stepped into the Student Advocate role for the Tufts University and Cornell AAHA Student Chapter wanting to share her knowledge and passion with the future leaders of veterinary medicine.

## **John Wright – Treasurer**

Dr Wright's experience and orientation is as a general practitioner of dogs and cats. He is a former practice owner. Dr. Wright is currently an adjunct faculty member and visiting veterinarian at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine. There, he has helped to facilitate student learning on aspects of history taking, physical diagnosis, communication skills - particularly at the time of death or anticipated death of companion animals, behavior, and ethical decision making, among other areas of veterinary practice. Dr. Wright has been the treasurer of SVME since July of 2003. Dr. Wright is a member of the AVMA, AAHA, and Minnesota VMA. He is involved with the American Association of Human-Animal Bond Veterinarians where he serves as interim executive director, and chair of the continuing education committee, and is a past president of that organization.

## **Carol Morgan – Secretary**

Dr. Morgan graduated from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 1988. Since, she has practiced in both mixed and small animal practice in several provinces finally settling in Victoria, BC. After studying philosophy for 2 years at the University of Victoria, she joined the University of British Columbia's Interdisciplinary Studies in 2001. Currently she is in the final stages of finishing a PhD in Applied Ethics focusing on moral decision making by veterinary practitioners. Dr. Morgan has been the SVME Secretary and newsletter editor since 2003. She is the chair of the British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association (BCVMA) Board of Examiners, a member of the BCVMA Practice Accreditation Committee, and past BCVMA Council Member. She is a Board and Executive Committee member of the BC SPCA devotes time to the Canadian VMA's Animal Welfare Committee. Dr. Morgan has an avid interest in the study of normative and empirical ethics and a strong desire to expand the interest and study of veterinary ethics.

## **François Martin – Parliamentarian**

Dr. Martin, M.A., Ph.D., is the Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Animal Well-being (CSAW) and Head of People-Pet Partnership (PPP) in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Washington State University. The goals of CSAW and PPP are to generate and disseminate new knowledge aimed at improving the well-being of animals, to enhance the mutual benefits of human-animal interactions and to develop and present educational and public service programs on animal well-being and human-animal interactions. Dr. Martin research interests focus on how the human-animal bond influences the practice of veterinary medicine and veterinary education. In addition, he is the co-coordinator of Success in Veterinary Medicine, a required DVM course that explores the balance between the science and the art of veterinary medicine as it relates to important issues like ethical decision making, pet loss and grief, self care, the impaired professional, legal issues, animal rights and animal welfare, human-animal bond.

## **Gary Block – Historian**

Dr. Block received his DVM degree in 1991 from Cornell University. Following graduation he completed a small animal internship at Angell Memorial Animal Hospital and an internal medicine residency at Purdue University, attaining board certification in 1995. He obtained a Masters degree in Animals and Public Policy in 1997 from Tufts University with his thesis focused on teaching of veterinary ethics. Dr. Block is a board member of the SVME and the recently founded Rhode Island Companion Animal Foundation. He is also a member of the American Veterinary Medical Law Association and the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights. Dr. Block is past-president and spokesperson of the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association. He is co-owner of Ocean State Veterinary Specialists-a 25 doctor referral and emergency clinic in East Greenwich. He has published numerous papers in veterinary medical journals as well as publications relating to animal welfare.

## **Earl Dixon – Past President**

Dr. Dixon, PhD., recently retired from Tuskegee University where he was a professor of Physiology. He was an active Basic Science Researcher in the area of Red Blood Cell Enzymology and Membrane Transport and taught veterinary physiology and biochemistry in the veterinary school. He was a member of the American Physiological Society and received research funding from the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation. Dr. Dixon has a long standing interest in ethics and attended bioethics workshops at Georgetown University, Iowa State University, University of Lisbon-Lisbon, Portugal, Tuskegee University. He chaired a bioethics symposium "Veterinary Bioethics; Where do we go from here?" in 1999 at Tuskegee, AL. In 2004, he formed a Student SVME Committee at Tuskegee University. He is a member of the Baptist South Hospital Bioethics Committee (Montgomery, AL, 2003-2004) and served as the SVME President-Elect (2004-2005) and President (2005-2006).