



# RCVS

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons



# news

NOVEMBER 2000

## NORTH AMERICAN VETERINARY SURGEONS TO PRACTISE IN THE UK

Council has approved an agreement with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) to enable veterinary graduates from schools in America and Canada, which have been accredited by the AVMA's Council on Education, to apply for RCVS registration. If agreed by the AVMA and CVMA, the agreement will come into effect on 1 March 2001. Until now, the RCVS has only recognised 3 of the 4 Canadian schools and graduates of other north American schools have been required to pass the statutory membership examination before being eligible for registration. The new arrangements will enable RCVS to access information from AVMA visitation reports and National Board Examinations results in order to assess whether or not a veterinarian has the necessary knowledge and skill to practise in the UK.

RCVS will also shortly be required to consider the experience and qualifications of EU nationals who hold veterinary degrees from non-Member States because of an imminent amendment to the Directive which allows the free movement of EU veterinary surgeons. Until now, only graduates from Member States with EU qualifications have been eligible for RCVS registration.



*RCVS President, Roger Eddy, with AVMA President James Nave, after their meeting in September 2000.*

## MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?

RCVS has agreed the following mission statement that should help the public and profession at large to understand the role of the RCVS more clearly:

**The role of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons is:**

- **To safeguard the health and welfare of animals committed to veterinary care through the regulation of the educational, ethical and clinical standards of the veterinary profession, thereby protecting the interests of those dependent on animals and assuring public health.**
- **To act as an impartial source of informed opinion on animal health and welfare issues and their interaction with human health.**

A strapline has also been agreed to be used on RCVS stationery, all publications and the website to read:

**Promoting and sustaining public confidence in veterinary medicine**

Together, the two statements should go some way to easing concern that some of the profession and the public may be unclear about why the RCVS exists and what its main aims are.

## PAUL STAINES MBE

RCVS Council and staff were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of Paul Staines MBE in October after a short illness. Paul had been appointed to RCVS Council in 1998 by the Privy Council as one of three non-veterinary members. He owned a farming business in Devon which manufactured pig and cattle buildings and equipment. He served on the Farm Animal Welfare Council for 12 years and sat on RCVS External Affairs and Finance & General Purposes Committees. Paul was recently appointed Chairman of Disciplinary Committee. RCVS President, Roger Eddy paid tribute to Paul at the Council meeting on 2 November, calling his contribution after just two years 'invaluable'.

## RCVS DAY 2001

RCVS Day will be held at Church House, Westminster, SW1, on 6 July 2001. The provisional timetable is as follows:  
10.30am - Prayer of Thanksgiving  
10.45am - AGM, to be followed by a question and answer session  
12.15pm - Reception for all guests  
1.15pm - Buffet lunch at RCVS for award winners and invited guests

## HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THE RCVS WEBSITE RECENTLY?

Since the last edition of RCVS News, the web team has made significant changes to the RCVS website. Over 300 people use the site daily, excluding those who just look at the Home Page. The most popular sections of the site are veterinary nursing, professional conduct and the RCVS Wellcome Library. The following are new additions to the site:

- New version of the RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct ([www.rcvs.org.uk/professional\\_conduct/index.html](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/professional_conduct/index.html))
- Online version of the RCVS Trust Gift catalogue with downloadable order form ([www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/giftsintro.htm](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/giftsintro.htm))
- Manpower Survey 2000 - Full Report
- New Education section ([www.rcvs.org.uk/NewEducation/introduction.html](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/NewEducation/introduction.html))

Over the next few months, the site will be developed further to incorporate a slightly improved navigation system, a new membership section and a 'Find-a-Vet' facility. The RCVS website is by no means static and feedback on any part of the site is greatly appreciated. Why not have a look for yourself at [www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk)?



*A new range of gifts from the College raising additional funds for the RCVS Trust's programme of support for veterinary education and training.*

## REGISTER OF MEMBERS 2000

Members paying the full home or overseas annual retention fee will have received their copy of the 2000 Register of Members with this issue of the RCVS News. Additional copies of the Register can be obtained from the Publications department at the RCVS (telephone 020 7202 0762) for £30 including postage. Retired members can buy a copy at a reduced price of £15.

## 2000 MANPOWER SURVEY

The Key Findings of the 2000 Manpower Survey has also been sent to all members with this copy of the RCVS News. Many thanks to all of you who took the time to fill in the form. If you want to read the full report, it can be downloaded free from the RCVS website in Adobe Acrobat format.

## DIRECTORY OF PRACTICES DELAYED – SORRY!

Thanks to all of you who returned the forms we sent to check details for the Directory of Practices. The response has been so overwhelming that it will take us a while to enter all the changes, and regrettably, this will delay the publication of the new Directory until the New Year. We will be checking the details more often in future – but it would help us if you could keep us up to date with any changes in your facilities or staff. Please contact Membership on 020 7202 0739, email [membership@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:membership@rcvs.org.uk) or return the card in the Directory to do this.

## VETGATE

A new free service aimed at providing access to high quality animal health Internet resources to students, researchers, academics and practitioners in the animal health field, was launched at the Royal Society on 2 November. The service, known as VetGate, offers access to a searchable catalogue of Internet resources hand selected and evaluated according to published quality guidelines. It has been created by a team of specialist information professionals based at the University of Nottingham, the RCVS Wellcome Library and the Royal Veterinary College and is part of a wider service providing access to quality Internet resources in the health and life sciences - BIOME <http://biome.ac.uk/>. Unlike generic search engines, which take little or no account of quality in the results they provide, BIOME only directs users to resources that have been selected for their quality and relevance to the subject. BIOME is part of a national network of subject-focused Internet services, the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) <http://www.rdn.ac.uk/>, funded by the UK Joint Information Systems Committee.

Also under development is a free online tutorial, the Internet Vet, due to launch in May 2001. The Internet Vet is one of a number of subject-based tutorials aiming to help end-users improve their Internet information skills, and is part of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) Virtual Training Suite (<http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/>). The first set of subject-based tutorials is already available, which includes the Internet Medic (<http://omni.ac.uk/vts/medic/>), a tutorial focusing on the health and medical field.



*Michael Wills, Minister for Learning and Technology at the VetGate/BIOME launch at the Royal Society on 2 November*

## ANNUAL RETENTION FEE

It is unfortunate that around 500-600 members are removed from the Register each year for non-payment of the annual retention fee, normally because contact with each individual has been lost. Veterinary surgeons are required to inform the Registrar of a change of address or name within one calendar month and are reminded that it is their personal responsibility to pay the relevant annual retention fee to maintain their name on the Register. Failure to receive an annual retention fee notice does not excuse non-payment. Members who have not received an annual retention fee notice by 31 March annually are advised to contact the Membership department.

One of the problems seems to be that practices do not always review all direct debit mandates set-up for their employees nor do they cancel those that are extant for employees who have left the practice. Practices are reminded that the annual retention fee notice is sent to the member's registered address, and this may be different to the practice address. As a result, the practice may not be aware of the RCVS's notification to an individual veterinary surgeon that the fee will be collected by direct debit.

## PROPOSALS TO EXTEND THE SCOPE OF THE REDUCED RATE RETENTION FEE

At the moment the only members who can benefit from the reduced rate fee (£20) are:-

- i. those over 60 who have retired from practice and all gainful employment of a veterinary nature, and;
- ii. those of any age who have retired from practice or any gainful employment by reason of ill health, parenthood or family commitments.

It is accepted that this no longer reflects the working patterns in the profession and it has been agreed that some amendments to the current Regulations will be considered in the next round of Committees in February 2001 so that changes could be made in time for the fee year which starts in April 2002.

From the recent Manpower Survey it is clear that the age at which veterinary surgeons retire is changing and that increasing numbers of men and women are taking career breaks for a variety of reasons. The current thought is that anyone who is not currently employed in a position which requires being on the RCVS Register could benefit from a reduced fee. This category of members would not necessarily be described as 'retired', which can be an inappropriate term, for example, for those on maternity leave. Suggestions would be gratefully received by e-mail to the registrar@rcvs.org.uk

## FARRIERY

Veterinary surgeons are permitted to carry out farriery, but farriers are not permitted to carry out veterinary surgery. In theory, the division between the roles of farriers and veterinary surgeons should be clear, but in practice the dividing line often becomes blurred. Normally this is not a difficulty and the two work closely together to solve problems. However occasionally this liaison breaks down – usually to the detriment of the horse.

To help resolve this, the Farriers Registration Council has issued guidance on the relationship between farriery and veterinary surgery which MsRCVS, particularly those involved in equine work, may be interested to see. Copies of the guidance may be obtained from the Farriers Registration Council on (01733) 319911 or by e-mail at [frc@farriery-reg.gov.uk](mailto:frc@farriery-reg.gov.uk)

## DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

Since the last issue of RCVS News, the Disciplinary Committee has heard inquiries into two members of the profession, both of whom were struck off the Register.

Patrick Colm Fox's name was removed from the Register following his involvement in the sale of official certificates to allow UK cattle to be exported to Europe as if they were of Irish origin and the fraudulent conversion of a cheque. Mr Fox had already been sentenced to 12 months imprisonment at Dublin Criminal Court in January 2000 and was released on 1 June 2000 before he appeared in front of the RCVS.

Henry Terence Pressman's name was removed from the Register following an offence in which he was found to be driving a motor vehicle with a quantity of alcohol that exceeded the prescribed limit. He had already been convicted at Liverpool Crown Court under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, sentenced to 3 months imprisonment and disqualified from driving for 5 years.

Both of these cases are reported on in more detail under the Professional Conduct section of the RCVS website and will be reported more fully in the RCVS Annual Report 2001.

## CLINICAL RECORDS

The Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998 are concerned with the processing of personal data and it had been considered that these Acts did not apply to clinical records held by veterinary surgeons. However, following a recent dispute on this issue the Data Protection Office has advised that in general these Acts do apply to such records.

The Data Protection Commissioner has stated that "if data includes information about an individual, for instance a name and address, then that information is likely to be personal data about that person. If the clinical records held by veterinary surgeons includes such information, and that information can be processed by reference to that individual, it should be supplied in response to a subject access request [statutory fee £10] made under the Data Protection Act 1984".

Any copies of clinical records supplied to clients must be intelligible and whilst ordinary veterinary words and phrases do not need to be explained any abbreviations or codes must be explained.

The 1984 Act only applies to clinical records held on computer whereas the 1998 Act applies to any paper records and X-rays held as part of a relevant filing system. The 1984 Act is applicable now. The 1998 Act is applicable to new practices but for those practices processing records on 24 October 1998, it does not apply until 24 October 2001. The Acts do not affect ownership of records.

## DON'T FORGET TO DISCUSS FEES!

One of the most common complaints from clients is a failure of the veterinary surgeon to address the issue of cost when treatment options are discussed. A common response from veterinary surgeons is 'the client did not give any indication that fees were an issue - surely it is the client's responsibility to alert the veterinary surgeon if they foresee difficulty paying the bill'. Part 1D, of the Guide to Professional Conduct states that "veterinary surgeons should (g) give realistic fee estimates based on treatment options and (h) keep the client informed of progress, and of any escalation in costs once treatment has started". The welfare of the animal comes first, but the onus is on the veterinary surgeon to raise the issue of fees with the client. The sooner potential difficulties with payment are identified the easier it should be to decide upon treatment or other appropriate options.

## PRIVY COUNCIL APPEAL

On 19 October 2000 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council heard an appeal by Mr Meredydd Jones, against two charges found against him by the Disciplinary Committee on 1 February 2000. The first charge related to an incident in July 1997 when Mr Jones had certified a horse as "found dead, suspected lightning strike", without getting out of his car and examining the animal, which was completely covered by black plastic. The Disciplinary Committee decided that this amounted to serious professional misconduct and this was upheld by the Privy Council.

The second charge alleged that Mr Jones had examined an animal when unfit through alcohol to do so. The incident had occurred in May 1998 and Mr Jones argued that new evidence not available at the time of the Inquiry would exonerate him. The Privy Council accepted that this new evidence should be heard and decided that the College's Disciplinary Committee should rehear this one charge.

The case was therefore remitted back to the Committee and the direction that Mr Jones' name be removed from the register was quashed. After rehearing the second charge the Committee will be required to give a judgement based on the first charge and any finding on the second charge.

## PI COMMITTEE

There have been 3 meetings of the Preliminary Investigation Committee since the last RCVS News, during which 53 new cases, as well as ongoing cases, were considered. Of these, 7 cases were referred to solicitors for investigation and formal statements, 1 of which has been referred to the Disciplinary Committee. Four cases are specifically highlighted.

The **first** case involved a failure by the veterinary surgeon to attend an emergency. The client requested a home visit, but was told to bring his collapsed dog to the surgery. He explained that he was unable to lift the dog because he was unwell and had only recently been discharged from hospital. The Guide to Professional Conduct 2000 states that "It must be recognised that in some cases attendance on a sick or injured animal away from the practice premises will be necessary." The Committee decided that although generally it is the condition of the animal rather than the circumstances of the owner that determine whether a home visit is required, in this case, the client's extreme circumstances were relevant and a home visit ought to have been made. The offer to see the dog at the surgery was, therefore, inadequate in this particular situation. The case was closed with advice.

In the **second** case, RCVS received information about a veterinary surgeon's website. There was concern that as part of his professional practice, veterinary medicines were sold for animals not under his care. The veterinary surgeon agreed to comply with the RCVS's advice on the provision of veterinary services via the Internet, and in these circumstances the matter was closed with advice.

The **third** case concerned a cat that had been anaesthetised without the consent of the client. The client had signed a consent form specifically requesting that no anaesthetic be given. The veterinary surgeon accepted that there had been a breakdown in communication and that the information concerning the client's wishes had not been passed to him. Taking into account the full and frank response from the practice the case was closed with advice.

The **fourth** case concerned a client who had arranged to have her dog spayed. The day before the operation she telephoned the practice to cancel the operation. The practice had a policy of booking no more than one major operation a day and the cancellation caused some annoyance as there was then no operation booked for that day. The veterinary surgeon requested a cancellation fee from the client and the client lodged a complaint. The Committee noted that the client had been with the practice for 4 years and at no time had been warned that a cancellation fee could be charged. In these circumstances the Committee decided that a cancellation fee was inappropriate. It was the Committee's view that if such fees were to be charged, clients should be fully informed of such a practice. The case was closed with advice.

## IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE APPROVAL OF CENTRES FOR VN TRAINING

Important changes to the way in which veterinary practices are approved to train veterinary nurses (VNs) will be phased in during 2001. These changes are being introduced for two reasons. First, it has become apparent that, whilst able to provide good practical training of veterinary nurses, many smaller practices have found difficulty in complying with the required bureaucracy and costs of being an independent approved centre. Approved Training and Assessments Centres (ATACs) have had to work in comparative isolation to provide the necessary training and assessment of student VNs. Second, the RCVS does not have the resources to visit over 1,200 active ATACs regularly in order to assure quality, or to provide close support for their assessors and internal verifiers. The College must be in a position to do this in order to comply with the national quality assurance criteria for an S/NVQ awarding body. The aim of the changes is to reduce the bureaucracy and costs for veterinary practices whilst improving the levels of support available to those involved in training veterinary nurses.

In brief, the College will introduce arrangements for the approval of group, or consortium-based VN training centres next year. This will mean that practices are able to share the responsibilities and costs of managing VN training, rather than for each independent practice to shoulder these alone as at present. It will also enable the RCVS to provide the level of support and quality assurance for centres. Some of the new training centres will be led by approved veterinary nurse training colleges whilst others will be formed around existing commercial practice groupings or co-operative groups of independent practices. There will still be the facility for larger practices to retain independent approval if they wish and are able to meet the required criteria and costs of centre approval.

The changes will bring about a significant reduction in the number of centres approved by the RCVS, although not in the overall number of practices training veterinary nurses. It is hoped that some small practices, until now discouraged from training will be able to participate in the new arrangements.

Full details of the changes will be published in RCVS Veterinary Nursing News shortly. This publication is sent to all ATAC principals and Listed veterinary nurses. If you are not on the circulation list and would like a copy, please contact the Veterinary Nursing department on 020 7202 0756 or email [vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk).

## CHANGES TO VN ENROLMENT DURING 2001

From July 2001, all student veterinary nurse enrolment will be conducted by the RCVS. The BVNA has managed VN enrolments for a number of years and has done much excellent work to improve the processes, especially during the changeover to the new training scheme. However, the preparation for re-accreditation of the VN S/NVQ awards in 2002 has brought about a need to streamline the administration of the VN training scheme and to improve cost-efficiency.

The new enrolment procedure and application packs will be disseminated to practices and VN colleges in the New Year. Please look out for this information to ensure that enrolling students use the correct documentation.

The RCVS would like to thank the BVNA for its long and valued assistance with VN enrolments. BVNA will, of course, continue to be a point of reference for VN careers and to represent veterinary nursing professional interests to the awarding body.



*Claire Shellim, one of the first VNs to qualify under the new S/NVQ Scheme this summer.*

## NEWLY QUALIFIED VETERINARY NURSES

A number of reports have recently been received by the RCVS concerning student veterinary nurses who have assumed the uniform and identity of a qualified VN on receiving their level 3 (second year) examination results. Practices are reminded that a student nurse does not qualify to enter the VN List until S/NVQ level 3 has been achieved and all training time has been completed. Level 3 cannot be awarded until the portfolio has been externally verified. Passing the examination is only part of the qualification.

The existence of a recognised veterinary nursing qualification, with associated legal dispensations to undertake delegated veterinary procedures, makes it important to draw a clear distinction between qualified (and Listed) and unqualified nurses. Job titles (and distinguishing uniforms where used) should make this clear to colleagues and clients.

## VN EXAMINATION CLOSING AND PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION DATES

Practices are reminded that the closing dates for VN examinations in 2001 are 15 April for summer examinations and 1 October for winter examinations. Entries arriving after these dates will be rejected.

Portfolio submission is linked to examination and the latest dates for submission are **30 September** for summer candidates and **31 January** for winter candidates. Extensions to these dates are not awarded; Practice Principals must be satisfied that candidates can realistically complete the necessary work before sanctioning an examination entry. Late submission incurs an additional fee.

## DELEGATION TO PARAPROFESSIONALS

In June Council approved proposals for increasing the range of tasks which veterinary surgeons may delegate to appropriately trained paraprofessionals. BVA Council endorsed the proposals and they were put to the Minister of Agriculture.

Now MAFF are pressing ahead with orders to allow trained technicians to use ultrasound scanning to test for pregnancy in cattle, carry out certain dental procedures in horses and artificially inseminate mares. Changes to the rules on veterinary nurses in Schedule 3 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act will come next. RCVS proposes that they should be allowed to treat animals of any species, not just companion animals, once they have had the right training.

## SUCCESSSES IN RCVS CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA EXAMINATIONS

A total of 186 people entered for RCVS Certificate and Diploma examinations this year, with 153 proceeding to take the written, clinical, oral and practical examinations in the spring and summer. Unfortunately, 25 candidates failed at the first stage on their submitted work, and a further 8 candidates withdrew before the examinations took place. Of those that continued, however, 129 were successful in the examinations overall, with 108 achieving the RCVS Certificate, and 21 the Diploma. These figures are similar to 1999, which saw 110 people receiving Certificates, and 18 achieving Diplomas.

Small Animal Surgery continues to be a popular subject, with 28 entered for the Certificate examination this year, of whom 20 eventually passed. Veterinary Cardiology had one of its most successful years, with 10 Certificate passes, and 1 pass at Diploma level. Radiology had the largest Diploma entry, with 5 candidates succeeding this year.

### Future dates for Certificate and Diploma examinations

The deadline for new enrolments has already passed for this year (1 November). If you are interested in enrolling for a Certificate or Diploma in the future, you will now need to wait until next year. In the meantime, information on Certificate and Diploma examinations is contained on the RCVS website ([www.rcvs.org.uk/NewEducation/postgradquals.html](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/NewEducation/postgradquals.html)). Revised information packs for each subject will be available in the Spring, following general updating by the subject Boards.

For those who are already enrolled as candidates, and who will have received final approval of their experience, the deadline for submitting an examination entry for 2001 is 1 March. The written examinations next year will be held on 7 or 8 August 2001 at the University of London examination halls.

For further information on Certificates and Diplomas, contact the Education department, on 020 7202 7236, or email [education@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:education@rcvs.org.uk)

## THE VETERINARY SCHOOLS 'REACH OUT TO BUSINESS' INITIATIVE GETS UNDERWAY

As reported in the June 2000 issue of the RCVS News, the four veterinary schools in England, in co-ordination with the two Scottish schools, have been granted funding by The Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) to establish a Veterinary Business Liaison Unit (VBLU) based at the Royal Veterinary College (RVC).

This is an exciting new initiative to improve the links between the veterinary schools and practices. The primary role of the unit will be to establish a national infrastructure for further improvement of Extramural Studies (EMS) for veterinary students. This involves the development of a network of high quality work-placement centres and provision of appropriate learning material to these centres.

The unit will also be involved with a range of activities to enhance the functional relationship between veterinary schools and practices. This will initially be through the production of a VBLU website, which will provide material for training centres as well as becoming a source of clinical information for veterinary practitioners.

The project has been given a great boost by the appointment of its new Head, Ian Foster, who took up his post in October 2000. Ian graduated from the RVC in 1994 and has spent the past six years working in predominantly small animal practice, with the exception of an internship in Wildlife Medicine and Surgery with the RSPCA in Cheshire. His enthusiasm for student training in practice and the fact that he is himself a relatively recent graduate, afford him a great understanding of the task he faces in his new position. Ian is joined by Peter Richards, software developer for VBLU, who will assist him in establishing the unit's website and its continued development.

## RCVS COUNCIL ELECTIONS

In accordance with the provisions of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Council Election Scheme 1967, six persons who must be members of the Royal College resident outside the Republic of Ireland (unless being resident in the Republic of Ireland he/she has retained the right to vote in Council elections, pursuant to the provisions of the Veterinary Surgeons (Agreement with the Republic of Ireland) Order 1988 will be elected in 2001 to be members of the Council of the said Royal College, for a period of four years from the Annual General Meeting in July 2001.

The current members of Council will retire at the Annual General Meeting in 2001 and are eligible for re-election, namely:

**Professor W P H Duffus BVSc MA PhD MRCVS**  
University of Bristol  
School of Veterinary Science  
Langford House  
Bristol BS40 5DU

**Mrs C P Gripper BVMS MRCVS**  
120 Logan Street  
Bulwell  
Nottingham  
NG6 9FW

**Mrs P J Nute BVSc MRCVS**  
The Veterinary Surgery  
Higher Trenant  
Wadebridge  
Cornwall PL27 6HB

**Mr G N Ostle BVSc MRCVS**  
Gladstone Veterinary Clinic  
16B Gladstone House  
High Street  
Hadley  
Telford  
Shropshire TF1 4NF

**Mr J Parker MA VetMB FRCVS**  
High Holborn Farm  
Little Kimble  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP17 8TF

**Mr M Richer BVetMed CertSAM**  
MRCVS DipLaw Barrister-at-Law  
233 Riverside Mansions  
Milk Yard  
Wapping  
London E1W 9SY

Nominations of persons for election to the Council must be submitted in writing on the prescribed form which may be obtained from, and which must be returned to her, the undersigned, duly completed on or before **31 January 2001**.

The Nomination Form may be accompanied by a Statement from each of the candidate's proposers of **not more than 100 words** for publication to members with the voting papers.

Candidates may submit a Statement of **not more than 500 words (inclusive of contact details)**, together with a recent photograph (larger than a passport photograph), for publication with the voting papers. This should be received by the **Registrar no later than 31 January 2001**. Wherever possible, the statements from the candidates and proposers should be sent in electronic form (on disc in Word, or by e-mail to [registrar@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:registrar@rcvs.org.uk)), as well as hard copy. Please note that no late submissions will be accepted and those exceeding the word count will not be included unless adjustments can be made before the closing date.

Voting papers will subsequently be distributed to all members of the College, other than those who are resident in the Republic of Ireland who have not retained their right to vote in Council elections (see above) on or before 5 March 2001. Each nomination form must bear the signatures and registered address of two proposers. **NO** proposer may:

- Nominate more than one candidate; or
- Be a member of Council; or
- Reside in the Republic of Ireland, unless he/she has retained his/her right to vote in Council elections. (see above)

It should be noted that the term "proposer" includes not only the person who would normally be so described but also the person who may often be described as the "second". The nomination form must also bear the signature of the candidate, including his/her willingness to accept nomination.

**J C Hern**  
Registrar

## EUTHANASIA

Council adopted the Advisory Committee's recommendation that no veterinary surgeon should be obliged to carry out the euthanasia of an animal, unless required to do so under statutory powers as part of their conditions of employment. The advice is included as part of the update to the Guide set out on an accompanying A5 leaflet.

The Committee's report also gave more details of the Preliminary Investigation Committee's decision that prompted this debate. In the case the owners believed that their dog's quality of life was irretrievably impaired. The owners also said they had already made a prior arrangement with one veterinary surgeon at the practice for euthanasia, but were then dealt with rudely and abruptly by another veterinary surgeon who declined to carry out the euthanasia. Full details of the Advisory Committee's report may be viewed at the College's web site [www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk).

## THE FUTURE OF VETERINARY EDUCATION

A new Education Strategy Steering Group has been set up under the chairmanship of Professor Neil Gorman, to undertake a review of the key issues facing education and training in the veterinary profession, and to formulate a strategy for the College to meet those challenges over the next ten years. Amongst the issues to be covered will be threshold standards of professional competence, the role of employers and practices in education and training; whether registration should continue to be 'life-long' and the likely impact of any changes in policy on the education system; CPD; and the role of postgraduate certificates and diplomas. The Group has held its two initial exploratory meetings, and aims to produce a draft report for consultation within a year. Further updates will be provided on the RCVS website, and in future editions of RCVS News. For information, contact Freda Andrews, Head of Education, on 020 7202 0702, or email [f.andrews@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:f.andrews@rcvs.org.uk)

## NEW SAFEGUARDS ON SHEEP DIPS

Members will no doubt be aware of new safeguards being introduced on OP sheep dips. These safeguards are designed to minimise the risks associated with contact with the dip concentrate.

The Medicines (Exemption for Merchants in Veterinary Drugs)(Amendment) Order 2000 which came into effect on 9 October 2000 requires that the supplier of OP sheep dips provides the purchaser with two pairs of suitable protective gloves and a copy of the laminated sheet detailing the advice and warnings for handling concentrated dip.

Although the law is not legally binding on veterinary surgeons, the RCVS expects its members to support this initiative in the responsible use of medicines in anticipation of the re-introduction of OP Sheep dips.



### THE RCVS TRUST'S STORY

Members of the RCVS were recently sent the Trust's Annual Review, reporting on our activities over the past year and a half. Copies of the Review and the Trust's new Catalogue of RCVS Gifts may be obtained from the Trust office at Belgravia House,

telephone 020 7202 0741 or email: [trust@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:trust@rcvs.org.uk). Both publications may also be accessed in the Trust section of the website at [www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/trust.html](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/trust.html)

### TRUST GRANTS PROGRAMME EXTENDED IN 2001

The range of projects eligible for support from the RCVS Trust is being extended. On offer are academic grants, awards for personal or organizational projects, travel scholarships, bursaries for veterinary nurses, and grants for veterinary surgeons needing to re-train for a career change or after a career break. Background information and application details are available from the RCVS Trust and may also be found on our website: [www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/awards.html](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/trust/awards.html). The first closing date is 15 January 2001. Following is a list of Trust grants offered for work commencing in 2001:

- Millennium Residencies in Production Animal Medicine
- West Scholarship for Feline Research
- Connie Ford Retraining Grants – for veterinary surgeons making a career change or returning after a career break
- MacKellar Mitchell Wright Award for travel or other general practitioners' projects
- Walker Memorial Award for DCHP and DSHP candidates
- Small Grants – £500 to £5000 grants for projects meeting the Trust's objectives
- Veterinary Nursing Training and CPD Bursaries
- Veterinary Nursing Travel Scholarships

### SHARING THE "ART" OF VETERINARY SURGERY AND MEDICINE

College Members may have seen announcements of **The Jim Gourley Prize** in recent issues of *The Veterinary Times*.

Jim Gourley has made a generous gift to the RCVS Trust to set up this new prize to encourage practitioners to share innovative or ingenious techniques they've developed in their clinical practice. Prize money to the winner will be upwards of £500, accompanied by a certificate and gift. The winning article and best of the rest (maximum 800 words) will be published in *The Veterinary Times*. Closing date: **31 December 2000**. Rules and full details of The Jim Gourley Prize are available from the Trust office and from our website.



*RCVS President, Roger Eddy, and Registrar, Jane Hern, with some of the new RCVS Trust gift items. Additional copies of the gift catalogue may be obtained from the RCVS Trust.*

### CREDIT CARD SUCCESS

Good news about the RCVS Credit Card which in the first 9 months had been taken up by over 600 UK veterinary surgeons, nurses and professional associates — and contributed some £7300 to the RCVS Trust's coffers.

Thank you to members continuing to use the RCVS credit card one year on! For all "active" cards, the Trust automatically receive a further boost of income via the annual anniversary royalties — this is additional to the royalties we earn every time RCVS cards are used for retail purchases. We're aiming to double the number of card-holders by September 2001, the second anniversary of the card launch. If you aren't sure how to apply for your RCVS credit card, please contact the Trust office for an information leaflet.