

VETERINARY SCHOOLS REACH OUT TO BUSINESS

An exciting new collaborative project to improve the links between the veterinary schools and practices was launched at a meeting hosted by the RCVS in May. Extramural Study (EMS) co-ordinators from all the UK veterinary schools met to discuss the initiative, "Reach out to Business", which is being funded over four years by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The project will establish a Veterinary Business Liaison Unit, based initially at the Hertfordshire campus of the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, which will provide a 'one-stop' unit to manage the active collaboration between veterinary practices and the universities.

The Unit will provide an administrative infrastructure to co-ordinate undergraduate clinical extramural studies at national level.

This takes further the work initiated last year by the veterinary schools and funded by the RCVS Trust, which led to the publication of the EMS manual for participating practices (available on the RCVS website at www.rcvs.org.uk/education/ems.html). Whereas the RCVS manual brought together information on EMS from all the veterinary schools, the 'Reach out to Business' initiative will enable schools to unify the national approach to EMS for the benefit of participating practices.

The project flows naturally from the recommendations made in a number of reports such as the Silver project, and draws on outcomes of meetings between EMS co-ordinators, RCVS and SPVS in recent years.

In developing innovative approaches to the organisation of EMS, the project will ensure that the schools continue to work together for the benefit of students and practitioners alike.

Other areas to be explored during development of the project include delivery via the internet of a broad range of information from the schools to those practices participating in EMS. Further updates on the project will be given in RCVS News as the work proceeds.

CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA DEADLINES

As reported in the March issue of RCVS News, the deadline for initial enrolments and for those applying for final approval of experience for all Certificate and Diploma subjects is **Wednesday 1 November 2000**. Further details may be obtained from the Education department (education@rcvs.org.uk).

WHISTLEBLOWING

A veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse who has concerns about the competence of a colleague is encouraged to discuss the matter with the principal, senior partner or senior veterinary surgeon of the practice. If the matter cannot be resolved with such an approach, any concerns should be brought to the attention of the College's Professional Conduct department.

FELLOWSHIPS MADE MORE ATTRACTIVE

Have you ever considered an RCVS Fellowship? Why not think about it! RCVS Council has just amended the Fellowship bye-laws so that a broader range of subjects may be offered for a Fellowship by Thesis. You can now do a thesis on development and management of the profession, for example. The two other routes to RCVS Fellowship are by Meritorious Contributions to Learning, or by Election, both of which are awarded at the discretion of RCVS Council.

Fellowship is the oldest and most venerable award offered by the RCVS and it is seen by many as the ultimate goal of their career. For most MRCVSs, the route would be Fellowship by Thesis. This can be attained from practice without necessarily having to spend time away or neglecting a livelihood. There is no requirement either to attend approved centres or practices. What is required is a subject for a thesis (to be approved by the Board), and entry fee, a supervisor and a lot of hard work to achieve a high standard of presentation.

In the past, a number of candidates who may have been eligible for the Fellowship by Thesis route have opted instead for an RCVS Diploma. There are, however, some fundamental differences between the two awards. Whereas Diplomates show the highest ability in demonstrating academic and clinical skills to critical examiners, Fellows, through their research, push frontiers by creating new knowledge in a wide range of subject areas.

If you would like further information, please contact Judith Walker at the RCVS on 020 7202 0703 or by emailing education@rcvs.org.uk.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE - UPDATE

Two Lay Observers, Susan Pyper and Paul Marland, have attended meetings of the Preliminary Investigation Committee since September 1999 to allow independent persons unconnected with the profession to observe the disciplinary work of the College that is not carried out in public. Paul Marland presented the first annual report at the June meeting indicated that whilst the College's procedures were fair and detailed, self-regulation was an onerous responsibility and should be afforded more resources. He said that the disciplinary procedures for minor transgressions should be strengthened and that the College should consider new legislation to allow a system of fines to be introduced against those veterinary surgeons found guilty of minor breaches of the Guide. A summary of the report will be available in due course. Please contact the College or visit the RCVS website.

Stephen Ware, the Chairman of the Preliminary Investigation Committee, reported to Council that since its last meeting 25 new cases had been considered, 4 cases were referred to solicitors and 2 referred to Disciplinary Committee. The details of 4 cases concluded by the Committee were reported.

The first case involved inadequate professional care of two dogs, spayed and castrated respectively. Investigations also revealed each dog, whilst held by its respective owner, had been "anaesthetised" using Large Animal Immobilin, a practice which the Committee considered posed an unacceptable risk to all concerned. The PI Committee would have referred the case to the Disciplinary Committee but, in view of the veterinary surgeon's age, agreed to accept his permanent retirement.

The second case concerned a cat whose owner had sought treatment for an injured right back leg. The veterinary surgeon had subsequently operated on the left back leg and then ignored the owner's concerns in relation to the right leg, which was later treated by another veterinary surgeon. The Committee informed the veterinary surgeon that he should have examined the cat properly prior to surgery and that his conduct when the client sought clarification was unacceptable. Advice was issued and the case closed.

In the third case the veterinary surgeon was asked to euthanase a 15-year-old dog that had become incontinent. The veterinary surgeon refused to carry out the euthanasia indicating that the animal should be treated. Recognising that the decision to have a pet put to sleep is difficult and painful, the Committee advised the veterinary surgeon that he had been wrong to insist on treatment against the client's wishes and that he should have carried out the euthanasia as requested. The case was closed.

The fourth case involved a request for emergency treatment. The client had spoken with the receptionist who it appeared had dismissed the case. The Committee advised that this assessment should be made by a veterinary surgeon. The case was closed.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RCVS YEAR - THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

Few now doubt that change is at the top of the agenda for the profession; it is affecting us all, it is accelerating and influencing what we do and how the public, the media and the politicians perceive us. The question, therefore, is how have we prepared for change?

- We have a clearer definition of our role and how we relate to BVA
- We have better mechanisms for responding to sudden demands from the media or from political or special interest groups
- Our Treasurer has initiated a strategic review of our financial and accommodation needs
- We have initiated preparations for a new Veterinary Surgeons Act, which seems likelier than for 20 years
- We have prepared a realistic future format to liberalise the opportunities for veterinary surgeons who wish to work more closely with suitable trained paraprofessionals while safeguarding the clinical welfare of animals; this will create new roles for veterinary nurses, adding to the opportunities created by the new degree courses, the equine qualification and the National Vocational Qualification
- We have initiated a new review of veterinary education and continued the follow-up to the Selborne Report on Veterinary Research.

The area of greatest threat is the pressure for change in the use of veterinary medicines; in this we will need to safeguard, as ever, the interests of our patients and those who depend on them.

PRETORIA DEGREE RECOGNISED

RCVS Council has approved recognition of the BVSc degree from the University of Pretoria following a visit to the new school by an RCVS visiting team in November 1999.

MONITORING OF QUALIFICATIONS IN AUSTRALASIA & UK

Council has approved a draft Agreement by which RCVS would agree a system of visitations with the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council in which Observers from the UK and Australasia would participate on a reciprocal basis. This follows many years in which RCVS Council has reported concern about the effects of funding cuts on the Australian Universities. Once the Agreement is signed, copies of Visitation Reports will be sent to either RCVS or AVBC Inc. who will be entitled to grant or withhold, or continue or withdraw recognition of the relevant qualification or to specify action to be taken to remedy deficiencies. The qualification would then be recognised as the basis for registration by RCVS or any of the New Zealand or Australian Registering authorities. Given that each of the Australasian States has its own equivalent to the Veterinary Surgeons Act, the Agreement will be signed by all the State Boards as well as AVBC Inc. The outcome should be a method of evaluating veterinary education in Australia and New Zealand which is consistent with that used in the UK, which in turn is linked with the system used across Europe by EAEVE (European Association of Establishments of Veterinary Education). In this way the qualifications recognised for the purposes of practise in the UK should all be of a consistently high standard. The only outstanding flaw is the reluctance of the European Commission to take any action when category one deficiencies are found in a European veterinary school.

STREAMLINING COLLEGE AND TRUST FUNDS

College Prize and Award Funds

Several of the trusts within the Prize and Award Funds (Charities administered in connection with the RCVS) no longer have sufficient funds to meet their objectives and are effectively being funded by the RCVS. The Trustees of the Prize and Award Funds have therefore decided to pass resolutions removing restrictions on the expenditure of the relevant endowed capital, where necessary (complying with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993). In accordance with their various objectives, the capital of the following trusts will therefore be spent:

- Share Jones
- H Livesey
- Francis Hogg
- Sir F T G Hobday
- R W Hall of Barry
- Fitzwygram Lawson, Walley and Williams
- J H Steel Memorial Medal
- J T Edwards Memorial Medal
- Jubilee Memorial and Bursary Prize
- Benevolent Fund
- Aleen Cust Research Scholarship

The Trustees have also decided that it would be more appropriate for the G N Hall (an endowed trust), the Sir Frederick Smith Fund and the Spencer Hill Bequest to be managed by the RCVS Trust and propose to transfer the capital of these trusts across.

The MacKellar Mitchell Wright Funds

Since the 1970s many members of the profession have received awards from funds administered by the RCVS Trust in memory of Professor J G Wright, Professor W M Mitchell and John Campbell MacKellar. The Wright and Mitchell funds received subscriptions from across the profession, while the MacKellar was established with donations from SPVS members. To enable the continuation of awards that are of a reasonable size in today's money, the Trustees have decided to amalgamate the three funds.

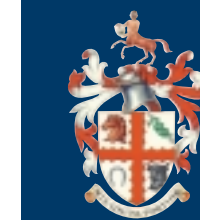
The original purposes of the funds will be included in the amalgamated fund, mainly to award grants to graduates of UK and Republic of Ireland veterinary schools for: (i) travel scholarships to study subjects relevant to the art and science of clinical veterinary practice, or (ii) projects or studies related to a clinical or managerial aspect of general veterinary practice.

Formal Notice of Amalgamation

The Trustees of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Trust, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1, hereby give notice that they have passed the following Resolutions, in accordance with the Charities Act 1993:

- Under Section 75, to authorise expenditure of the capital of the Professor J G Wright Memorial Fund.
- Under Section 74(2)(a) to transfer the assets of the MacKellar Fund to the Professor W M Mitchell Memorial Fund
- Under Section 74(2)(d) to change the name of the Professor W M Mitchell Memorial Fund to the MacKellar Mitchell Wright Fund.

Copies of the Resolutions may be obtained by applying in writing to: Trust Manager, RCVS Trust, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF. Any interested person wishing to make representations about these Resolutions may do so within a period of 6 weeks from 7 June 2000, by writing to the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales at Harmsworth House, 13-15 Bouverie Street, London EC4Y 8DP, quoting charity reference number 230886.



RCVS news

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons



JUNE 2000

VETERINARY NURSES TO TAKE BLOOD SAMPLES

RCVS Council approved new guidance on interpreting the words of Schedule 3 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act which define which acts of veterinary surgery can be undertaken by Listed veterinary nurses. Listed VNs may take blood samples. This is an act of veterinary surgery, but listed VNs may give companion animals medical treatment or carry out minor surgery (not involving entry into a body cavity) under veterinary direction. Council has now decided that taking blood samples falls within the scope of what a Listed VN can do.

INCREASE IN RETENTION FEES

Following a lively debate at its June meeting, RCVS Council has agreed to increases in the levels of Annual Retention Fee payable from 1 April 2001. The proposals are to increase the UK member fee to £200, the overseas fee to £80 and the registration fee to £220. No changes are proposed to the Retired Members' fee.

The pattern of the past has been that Council has not sought to increase the registration and retention fees every year. Last year the increase was modest and two years ago there was no increase in the retention fee. The consequence of this is that every now and then it is necessary to seek a significant increase, if only to keep pace with inflation and the increasing demands made on the College.

In addition the Treasurer (Bertie Ellis) explained that the College needs to plan ahead and anticipate the likelihood of new legislation and the need to devote increasing resources to handling complaints and disciplinary matters. He referred to six or more current reviews of issues relating to the College's responsibilities, the greatly increasing media interest in the College's activities and the effect this may have on the numbers of complaints requiring investigation. It was agreed that the College must be able to respond quickly and in an informed way on policy matters and that it would be wholly unacceptable if the College were not able to properly discharge its statutory responsibilities because of financial constraints and lack of resources.

It was pointed out that the fees being proposed now would not be levied until 2001 but that because RCVS fees need to be formally approved by the Privy Council and MAFF it is necessary to plan this far in advance. The Treasurer stressed that the danger of not making such prudent provision was the very real risk of incurring a deficit, which would be embarrassing for the College and might suggest that it was not properly in control of its financial affairs.

INDEMNITY INSURANCE MADE COMPULSORY

At its meeting on 1 June 2000, RCVS Council adopted the recommendation from the Advisory Committee, that:

"Veterinary surgeons must ensure that all their professional activities are covered by professional indemnity insurance or equivalent arrangements. Such cover may be held individually or through an employer."

Council's decision to adopt the proposal for compulsory indemnity insurance followed consultation with a number of veterinary organisations including BVA and will take immediate effect, although allowances will be made for appropriate arrangements to be put in place.

The requirement for mandatory professional indemnity insurance is a measure of public protection that can be offered and enforced by the College and now forms part of the Guide to Professional Conduct 2000. There are similar requirements for many other professionals.

Employee veterinary surgeons are advised to find out from their employers if cover is provided as part of their employment contract. Occasional work outside a veterinary surgeon's main employment may require separate cover.

RCVS News Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF
Tel: 020 - 7222 2001 - Fax: 020 - 7222 2004 - e-mail: ExtAffairs@rcvs.org.uk - website: <http://www.rcvs.org.uk>

CHANGING YOUR REGISTER ENTRY

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE OR FAX NUMBER/EMAIL ADDRESS

Members should inform the Membership department of any permanent change of address within 28 days of the change. Changes of address, telephone or fax number or email address can be made by letter, fax, telephone, or email to Membership@rcvs.org.uk. Please state if the changes are to a private or practice address.

CHANGE OF NAME

Notification of a name change through marriage should be made in writing, only if the member wishes to change her name in the Register. Changes of name for other reasons should be made in writing with a copy of the deed poll.

CHANGE OF BANK

Members only need to notify the College of a change of bank if they pay their annual retention fee by Direct Debit, when they should request a new Direct Debit mandate.

NB: When contacting the Membership Department it is helpful if you are able to quote your Membership Number.

MANPOWER SURVEY

Thank you to all members who took the time to fill in and return the Manpower Survey 2000 questionnaire. By the end of April the RCVS had received about 9400 forms, a response rate of about 50% from the total membership. The report of the Survey will be published as a booklet and on the RCVS website (www.rcvs.org.uk) in the summer. Further reports will be made in RCVS News.

RCVS DIRECTORY OF PRACTICES

The RCVS has recently been contacting veterinary practices not currently included in the RCVS Directory of Practices. If your practice is not included, you may receive a letter from the College soon. To be sure of an entry, which costs nothing, and a free copy of the Directory, please call the Publications department at the College on 020 7202 0762, and leave us your name and address.

RETIRED MEMBERS

There is a special category of members of the College who qualified before university degrees became the normal route onto the Register. For many of these members 'MRCVS' are the only letters they have to put after their name. If they were to come off the Register they would have nothing to show they had ever had a veterinary qualification. For a number of years these members have been pressing either for (1) to be able to stay on the Register free of charge or (2) for something which would record their veterinary qualification, whether or not they stay on the Register. Views on this anomaly were registered strongly at the Regional Meeting held in Maidstone in March 2000.

Council has accepted the following recommendations:-

- those members who wish to stay on the Register but elect to go on the retired list shall continue to pay a reduced retention fee (currently £20) and be listed separately in the Register as MRCVS Ret;
- those members who chose not to pay a fee, or for other reasons decide not to stay on the Register, who gained their MRCVS by direct examination [before the 1966 Act and 1967 Charter] shall be entitled to use the letters MRCVS (Ret) but not to hold themselves out as being on the RCVS Register. Such retired former Members will not receive College mailings or be entitled to vote.

NB: Retired members may not engage in veterinary practice.

RCVS COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

The result of the 2000 RCVS Council Election to fill six vacancies on Council was:

Bob Michell	2204
Wendy Harrison	2130
Des Thompson	2086
Stephen Ware	1982
Barry Johnson	1872
Chris Chesney	1808

The top six candidates were elected

Ian Mason	1764
Margaret Pannell	1269
Bertie Ellis	1228
John Hoare	895
Thomas Lonsdale	359

The number of ballot papers returned was 4095.

RCVS DAY

RCVS Day will be held on **Friday 7 July 2000** at Church House at the Conference and Banqueting Centre, Church House, Deans Yard, Westminster SW1. Details were included in the March edition of RCVS News, but if you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact Nina Swart at the RCVS on 020 7202 0761. Tickets are **free** and will be allocated on a "first come, first served" basis.

RCVS REGIONAL MEETINGS

RCVS Officers will be attending Regional Meetings in November 2000 in Carlisle and Leeds. Dates and venues have yet to be confirmed but keep an eye on the RCVS website and the veterinary press for details!

Topics discussed at the March Regional Meetings included retired members retention fee, details of the VN scheme, surgical mutilations and illegal imports of drugs.



Regional Meeting - March 2000

MILLENNIUM PRIZE RESULTS

Veterinary surgeons, nurses and students were invited in the March edition of RCVS News to enter the Millennium Prize competition, awarded for the most imaginative and well-reasoned view of the future of veterinary medicine. The winners of the Prize were judged on 1 June 2000 and are as follows:

- 1st Ms A L Woods**
- 2nd Mr P Cawardine**
- 3rd Mr M B de C Giles**

The winning essay was entitled "Knowledge and Practice: The Future of Companion Animal Medicine?" and the winner has been invited to present her essay at RCVS Day in July.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE HEARING

Mr Cameron James Murray

On 3 May 2000 the Disciplinary Committee heard an Inquiry into Mr Cameron James Murray, who was convicted of four offences at Suffolk Magistrates' Court in October 1999 and fined £1,700.

Mr Murray qualified in Australia and practised there for 3 years before taking up employment at Swayne and Partners in Bury St Edmunds in April 1997. His experience was predominantly with small animals but according to one senior partner of the practice he had more experience with large animal work than many recently qualified UK graduates.

In December 1999 he examined a sheep taken to a branch premises by a client's shepherd. The sheep was examined first in the back of a vehicle in which it had been brought and then on the pavement, because there were no facilities for farm animals at the branch premises. There were obvious signs of a fractured femur with crepitus and although the possibility of surgical repair was discussed it was agreed that the cost would be prohibitive and Mr Murray recommended that the animal should be slaughtered. The senior partner at the branch premises was involved briefly in the discussions with the shepherd.

The shepherd then took the sheep home and for endorsing this Mr Murray received two convictions under the Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997: for aiding and abetting transport of a sheep not fit for the intended journey by reason of it suffering a broken femur and aiding and abetting the transport in a way likely to cause unnecessary suffering. The third conviction was under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 and at the hearing Mr Murray recognised that he was not familiar with the legislation and guidance relating to casualty sheep.

Some 6 days later on 5 January 2000 there was a request from the client's farm manager for an 'owner's declaration for casualty slaughter'. Mr Murray indicated that the senior partner at the branch premises asked him to sign the form and that reluctantly he had signed it but backdated it to 30 December 1999, the date when he had seen the sheep. He left the rest of the form blank.

When the sheep was subsequently slaughtered on 18 January 2000 it was in such a poor condition that the Official Veterinary Surgeon at the abattoir was of the view that it had been caused unnecessary suffering. Mr Murray was convicted under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 for causing unnecessary suffering by unreasonably providing a blank signed and backdated certificate stating the sheep was fit to be transported when it was suffering from a broken femur. The farm manager was also convicted of causing unnecessary suffering and fined £1,500.

The Disciplinary Committee found that the two offences under the 1911 Act alone and all four of the offences as a whole rendered Mr Murray unfit to practise veterinary surgery. But particularly as he was a relatively new graduate "sadly lacking in adequate guidance from the senior partners in the practice", the Committee suspended Mr Murray from practice for 28 days.

The Committee indicated that the case raised issues for the profession, the College and the farming community and that in view of this, full written reasons would be published at a later date. These will be added to the new Professional Conduct area of the College's website and will also be available from the department.

GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT 2000

The Guide to Professional Conduct 2000 does not include all the currently relevant advice issued by the College either before or after January 2000. For example, the advice on "Artificial Breeding Techniques including Embryo Collection and Transfer" from 1996 still remains relevant, as is the "advice on the provision of veterinary services via the internet" adopted by Council in February 2000. The Guide emphasises principles and more detailed advice on particular areas of practice is included in the annexes. In due course the Professional Conduct department aims to review the existing advice that is not part of the Guide and produce a list of all the advice available from the department. More annexes may also be added to the Guide. If you are in doubt about any advice or you feel strongly that particular advice should be added as an annex to the Guide, please contact the Professional Conduct department (email profcon@rcvs.org.uk).

The profession will be notified during the year of major changes such as the decision at the June Council meeting for mandatory professional indemnity insurance. Any changes will then be incorporated into a revised edition of the Guide which will be issued to members on a regular basis.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR MEDICINES

The new Guide to Professional Conduct emphasises client choice and this includes whether to obtain medicines from a veterinary surgeon or a pharmacist. Veterinary surgeons should not unreasonably refuse to supply a prescription if a client wishes to purchase medicines from a pharmacist, although a reasonable charge may be made for the prescription. A prescription may only be issued, for medicines supplied, for animals under the care of a veterinary surgeon.

MEDICINES: SPECIAL TREATMENT AUTHORISATIONS

Veterinary surgeons sometimes come across a condition which cannot be treated using the medicines available in the UK. It would not be lawful for them to import and supply a medicine from abroad without a special treatment authorisation.

An authorisation must be sought from the Information Management Section (Special Treatment Authorisations) of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). Authorisations are normally restricted to the treatment of individual and named animals, and will not be issued if a suitable product is authorised and marketed in the UK for either animal or human use. The Directorate must be satisfied that the benefits of using the product will outweigh any risks and will not pose a threat to human or animal health or to the environment. Full guidance is available in AMELIA 10, available from VMD or the VMD website, www.open.gov.uk/vmd/vmdhome.htm.

CONTROLLED DRUGS

Although veterinary surgeons should not generally wholesale medicines to other veterinary surgeons without appropriate wholesale licences, the College recognises that sometimes supplies are made to help out a colleague. Such supplies should not include controlled drugs.

IT'S OK TO SAY SORRY

The Professional Conduct department receives complaints from clients who believe that their concerns have not been understood or appreciated. Such cases often involve minor issues of professional conduct, which are pursued because the client has been left with a feeling that the veterinary surgeon does not care.

The Guide to Professional Conduct 2000 advises that all clients should be actively encouraged in the first instance to discuss any problems with the veterinary surgeon treating their animal. A sympathetic approach should be used in response to a complaint rather than immediate denial and defensiveness. An expression of sorrow or acknowledgement that someone is distressed by something that has happened does not in its self amount to admission of liability. In many circumstances an expression of sorrow and recognition of the facts will prevent matters from escalating.

A positive approach to handling complaints within veterinary practices often means that a complaint can be resolved without the involvement of the College.

VETERINARY NURSING EXAMINATIONS

Changes to examination arrangements

This year, the veterinary nursing examinations for both first and second year candidates will take place on one day. The London University Examination Halls (the usual London venue) have been affected by lengthy and disruptive building work. The absence of a suitable and economically viable alternative London centre has necessitated a change to the usual arrangements. The London centre this summer will be the Royal Horticultural Halls in Victoria. The winter examination venue will be announced shortly. It is appreciated that this change will result in the need for some practices to release both first and second year students for examination at the same time. The RCVS will endeavour to restore separate days for first and second year examinations as soon as possible in order to minimise disruption to practice staffing arrangements.

Winter Examinations

The closing date for the winter examination is 1 October 2000.

Prior to the summer examination the RCVS was unable to accept a number of late examination entries. In some cases these entries had been entrusted by candidates to third parties (such as training agencies) for processing and failed to reach the College by the closing date. If despatch of an examination entry is entrusted to a third party, the candidate must ensure that the individual (or organisation) is fully aware that the completed entry, and the appropriate payment, must reach the RCVS by this date.

Written examinations will be held on Monday 4 December 2000 and practical examinations will take place during the week commencing 11 December 2000.

Summer Examinations

Summer examination results will be despatched by first class post on Wednesday 16 August 2000. The pass lists will be available on the RCVS website from 10 am on 17 August 2000.

Winter examination results will be despatched (first class) on Wednesday 10 January 2001, the pass lists being available on the website on 11 January 2001. It should be noted that the College does not publish fail or partial pass results on the internet.



Qualified veterinary nurse at work

LIBRARY NEWS UPDATE

Library business plan: the RCVS Wellcome Library is developing a business plan to develop services over the next five years. Key elements include strengthening our document delivery service, marketing services more effectively, and stepping up services to support education, training and CPD.

ASVIN project: the Assessing and Supporting Veterinary Information Needs (ASVIN) project, in which the RCVS is joint lead partner with the RVC, held a successful seminar in Edinburgh in April on collection development plans. The ASVIN project aims to develop collaborative collection development strategies with its eight partners, RCVS and RVC and the other UK veterinary schools, the Animal Health Trust and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin.

Evidence-based veterinary medicine (EBVM): as interest grows in evidence-based veterinary medicine, the Library has put a guide to EBVM resources up on its section of the RCVS website. Comments and suggestions for other resources are very welcome.

Vetgate: the Vetgate project, which is building a quality-evaluated gateway to internet resources in animal health continues to develop and will be formally launched at an event at the Royal Society in the autumn.



Presidents current, future and past: Current President Bob Michell (left) talks to Junior Vice-President Roger Eddy (centre) and Past President Neil Gorman (right) at BSAVA Congress 2000



HOW BIG IS A SMALL GRANT — AND WHO'S IT FOR?

You are exceedingly busy in your veterinary practice — or in your academic department — or in your veterinary association.

Yet you still have time to develop a good idea for a project that you think will improve veterinary practice — or undergraduate teaching — or professional standards. You've done a project budget. It comes to nearly two thousand pounds — another thousand would really improve the work. Now all that's needed is the wherewithal, but where might it come from? Who is interested in this sort of idea?

A round image floats into mind — the word Trust appears — and something to do with "objectives"? Where did the images come from? Oh yes, you saw it earlier when you were checking out the RCVS website at www.rcvs.org.uk (actually, you were looking for details of how to get the new RCVS credit card).

You quickly log on to the site again, try clicking on RCVS Trust and there's the (slightly arcane you think) phrase: to promote & advance the study & practice of the art & science of veterinary surgery & medicine. That's what you want to do with your project! Better still, just above, you see the words Small Grants. Hmmmmm, might as well click on that just to see what's on offer. .

"Grants between £500 and £5000," you read, and further on "projects that meet the Trust's objectives . . . bids may be made at any time . . . decision within 2 months . . . application instructions below . . ." (Oh dear, a 200-word statement to justify the bid — but that shouldn't be too onerous, you decide.) You email the RCVS Trust Manager (trust@rcvs.org.uk) just to make sure it's as easy as it looks. Her reply encourages you to send in your bid — your project sounds just like what the Trust wants to support!

You email the Trust once more and ask to be sent another RCVS Credit Card application form — somehow the other 3 you've received have got lost.

The RCVS Trust has £30,000 to distribute in Small Grants in 2000. Application Guidelines are available from RCVS Trust, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF - Tel 020-7202 0741.