

GAVMA
Greater Atlanta Veterinary Managers Association

MINUTES: February 8, 2006

The second meeting of the Greater Atlanta Veterinary Managers Association met at 12:30 PM, on February 8, 2006 at the Advance Micro System Building in Lawrenceville, Georgia. The following 24 people attended: Helen Aleman, Heather Babb, Judi Bailey, Sue Black, Claudia Bradbury, Vicki Cates, Missy Cutler, Chris Early, Judi Jackson, Susan Goodman, Susan Laughmiller, Isabel Smiley-Lewis, Lori Lobel, Eileen Parker, Wanda McGinley, Anita Pfister, Kathy Pitts, Robert Robinson, Anna Rowland, Missy Stallings, Tara Stecker, Cynthia Sturm, Susan Webster and Heather Wilson. Vetgate USA and the Henry Schein Company provided lunch.

Judi Bailey opened the meeting with thanks to Lee Bailey for making the arrangements to use the meeting room at Advance Micro Systems and setting up tables and chairs. Lee also was present to take photos of the meeting. She also thanked our sponsor, Vincent Paolillo from Henry Schein, for providing lunch, and the program.

Vincent Paolillo, the Vetgate Sales Manager for Henry Schein was introduced, and he presented the Vetgate program. Vetgate allows clients to access a variety of their pets' information as well as animal health programs, through participating hospital websites. Depending upon how extensively the veterinary hospital chooses to use the program, a client could potentially schedule appointments, learn about promotions and services the hospital is offering, and order prescription refills and products online. They are in the process of adding a feature of "home delivery" of medications distributed by Henry Schein. The program includes E-mail reminders to notify owners when routine visits and vaccinations are due and E-Newsletters with information on health topics and services available.

Vetgate also offers a Pet ID Card which includes the hospital contact information, emergency information, client and patient information, vaccination history, rabies tag and microchip information. Pets that receive ID cards are also provided with tags that provide the necessary information on locating owners in the event of lost pets. There is a National Pet Registry that includes pets that have received ID cards. The cost of the ID cards is \$3.75. Vetgate recommends that the cost be incorporated into the pet's annual visit.

Dr. Jay Brown, Vetgate USA, spoke about client compliance. He distributed copies of a study written by AVMA-Pfizer, published in JAVMA, January 15, 2005, and discussed the lack of client compliance. He cited various studies:

- Merial and Hills Pet Nutrition study; less than 50% of dogs seen in previous 12 months were compliant with heartworm and flea prevention.

- Between eight and twelve percent compliance with prescribed diets for pets.
- Greater than 50% of veterinarians perceive lack of compliance to be cost.
- Pet owners say lack of information is main reason for non-compliance.
- DVM Magazine Survey of 2004; average veterinarian must see approximately 2,640 patients per year (average of 1.125 visits per year X \$84 per visit) to cover the cost of laboratory and medical equipment, adequate staff (techs, assistants, front office).
- UCDavis has information on their web-site explaining the importance of "informing" pet owners through the use of literature; use hand out brochures, circle/highlight important features, and explain process to owners. Printed handouts for medical recommendations and patient care are extremely important.
- Veterinary Economics Magazine states that the veterinary staff is an extremely important link in client compliance. Compliance increases by 30% if a technician or assistant is in the exam room with the doctor and pet owner. The tech/assistant provides the extra set of ears. (Did the doctor actually state what he thought he said? Did the owner understand the wording the doctor used?)
- Consider the Human-Animal Bond when giving recommendations. All pets deserve the best medical care we can provide, but did the owner drag the dog in on a lug chain or in a Rolls-Royce?

Dr. Brown then discussed the direction of the veterinary profession and the changes that have occurred over the past ten years. Veterinarians will continue to make recommendations face to face, but e-mail reminders and newsletters by e-mail, offer another avenue to reach clientele and will become more commonplace. Ordering medications on line with home delivery offers great potential for veterinarians to hang on to their share of the pie. Ten years ago only 7% of Americans checked their e-mail once per day. Today the average is 73%. The opportunity for client communication has never been greater than it currently is through the use of e-mail. Dr. Brown suggests using DSL in practices. Efficiency is greatly increased when doing computer mailings and e-commerce. Five million offices had DSL five years ago. Today, fifty-five million offices have DSL.

A sign of the future is the "Pet Info Center", or the massive amounts of information available on the internet. As clients continue to come in with pages of printed information off the internet or say "I read on the internet that....." it becomes increasingly important that you supply them with the information.

Dr Brown also had other suggestions:

- Study lost revenue reports. If your computer system is unable to provide this information, insist that it be included.
- Use pictures on the pet's printouts. Compliance can increase from five to twenty five percent.
- Have front office staff take a picture of pet upon entry, and upload to computer before pet enters exam room.
- Get e-mail addresses from clients for communication purposes.

Upon completion of Dr. Brown's presentation, Judi Bailey opened the business meeting.

Old business discussed:

1. Group Name - the association will be known as Greater Atlanta Veterinary Managers Association (GAVMA)
2. Website - domain name is GAVMA.net and GAVMA.com. Both names are registered.
3. Future Meeting Dates – the second Thursday every other month. April 13th, June 8th, August 10th, October 12th, and December 14th. Sponsors are being scheduled for these dates.

New Business discussed:

1. Dues – Membership dues will be \$50 per year and will include
 - Member card with personal ID number that allows members to access to the Forum in the "Members Only" section of the website.
 - Certificate of Membership, suitable for framing.
 - T-Shirt, if we are able to obtain a sponsor.
 - Registration and maintenance of website.
 - 20% discount off Lifelearn products (working on obtaining)
 - Six luncheon meetings per year and potential CE
2. Advance Micro Systems (AMS) has offered their conference room for GAVMA.
3. Officers for the 1st year are:
 - President – Judi Bailey, Animal Emergency Center of Gwinnett
 - Vice President – Judi Jackson, Centerville Animal Hospital
 - Secretary – Claudia Bradbury, Falcon Village Animal Hospital
 - Treasurer – Sue Black, Falcon Village Animal Hospital

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Claudia Bradbury
 Secretary, GAVMA

