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**Skips Pharmacy does the FVMA Annual Convention.**

by Cyndi Lenz RNC

The Florida Veterinary Medical Association’s annual convention was held at the Buena Vista resorts. It has been a yearly event for us for the last six years (except last year we were stuck down here after Hurricane Frances). I was surprised and very honored to receive an award from the FVMA for my work on helping to get the pharmacy law vetoed by the Governor. It was really my pleasure.

The entire experience just reinforced my commitment to pay attention to what is going on.

I can guarantee you there will be new Pharmacy and Veterinary laws coming down the pike. Which brings me to the message from the General Assembly. It is so important to find out who your representatives are. The next step is for them to know who you are. Make an appointment with your representatives and go visit them. I’ll just add my own opinion-invite them to your monthly county veterinary meeting and have a conversation with them. This way when they are voting for a bill they can actually picture you. When you call them they can put a face to the name.

There was also a short but very informative presentation by Dr Cynda Crawford from the University of Florida regarding Canine Influenza. The alert that you all got is also listed at http://www.fvma.com.

If you haven’t had a chance to attend this yearly convention or the regional conventions are lots of good programing for you and your staff. I think the FVMA does any exceptional job finding timely and interesting subjects.

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**The Joy of Microchiping**

by Cyndi Lenz RNC

A few years ago someone called me about a dog that needed to be re-homed. I drove all the way down to Miami and brought him back and had him scanned. He had a microchip. I called his owners. He had been missing for 6 months. He just traveled from place to place. He looked like he never missed a meal the whole time. The family was thrilled to get him back.

A few years ago a man called me because his dog got out during a thunderstorm. I told him I would keep an eye out for his dog but to call animal control and report the dog lost. Six month later I got a call from this girl. Her mother had a stroke and had taken in a golden six months before-the dog had been running around in a thunderstorm.

When I got this call I remembered the guy and called animal control got his number and they were reunited. The dog was literary 3 blocks away from the guys house. To me this was a little miracle.

Another little miracle happened. I got an e-mail from my friend Greg ,who does rescue work out west. A golden named Buddy was found in a New Mexico shelter. He had a microchip and was now being returned to his little boy in West Palm Beach. Buddy had been lost during Hurricane Jeanne last year. Unfortunately, Buddy can’t tell us how he made it out all the way to New Mexico. (Maybe he could tell me because I would really like to go there!)

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Katrina Aftermath Through The Eyes of One Veterinarian
South Florida Vet Goes to Help in Hurricane Relief
by Cyndi Lenz RN

Days after the tragedy in Louisiana Dr. Michael Berkenblit from Village Animal Clinic in North Palm Beach, threw his gear in his car, strapped gas on the top, and sped to Louisiana State University. Dr. Berkenblit, a local veterinarian who had previous ties to Louisiana State decided he wanted to go and help. He spent two weeks setting up and working in an ICU. With 50 patients in the ICU and very little man power he had to clean cages, feed, walk, and medicate the animals that were placed there. After being there for a week he realized that no one was coming to help. For all of us sitting comfortably in front of our computers following this story and thought everything was under control -it wasn’t. According to Dr. Berkinblit, there was a huge disconnect between V-MAT (The veterinarian team connected with FEMA & the AVMA), HSUS and the USDA.

Lamar Dixon, the main staging area, had to be shut down because the sewage backed up. There were too many animals and not enough people.

Calls for help to the people that were supposed to be responsible for coordinating this effort brought little relief 3 1/2 weeks out. Dr. B. also managed to coordinate to bring a planeload of 150 animals down here to Palm Beach County. This effort was coordinated through the Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League. After the pets arrived they were divided up among Humane Societies between Vero and Miami. I heard just yesterday on the news that one dog was being reunited with his owners who were staying in Virginia. If you google “Katrina Reunion” there are countless stories regarding wonderful reunions of people and their dogs.

I know these circumstances were the worse possible. I thank Dr. B. for his going and doing what he did. I am hoping that we can learn from the lessons of this tragedy to look at what we have in our own neighborhoods and how we, as a community, can prepare.

I know this. If my dogs got lost for any reason I would want them back. Both of them are micro-chipped. I wouldn’t want anyone finding anyone’s dog and not trying to get the dog back where it belonged. This is not the judgement of a shelter or any rescue person. You get stray dogs scanned- period -end of story. You place an ad in the newspaper. You call your lost and found. Maybe one day we could have one computerized place to put this information. How much would that cost? If you have an issue about the shape of the dog then you discuss with the owners. Use this opportunity to educate people that may not know better. Be a positive force in your community.

If your dog is not chipped then get them one for Christmas, Hanukkah their birthday or gotcha-day. I can’t think of a better investment.

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Skip’s Weblog
For announcements and interesting information we can’t wait to get out check out weblog. There is a link from the quick links box at www.skipspharmacy.com
There is a new little logo on our newsletter. We are now proud members of the American College of Veterinary Pharmacists. This organization is dedicated to providing the veterinary population with the best pharmaceutical care available. They are composed of Pharmacists whose practice sites are veterinarian-only or veterinarian-specific pharmacies, including vet hospitals, vet school pharmacies and independent pharmacies. The list of pharmacists reads like a who's-who in veterinary pharmacy. There is a list of standards of practice which each pharmacy must adhere to. These standards are a litany of what we have been preaching for the past 6 years. In a nut shell, we pledge to provide the patient, owner and veterinarian the benefit of our unique knowledge set. Furthermore, we pledge to maintain the patient-physician-pharmacist triad in all of our interactions. We pledge to support the public health by not introducing into the food chain products that are detrimental to any member of that food chain.

The benefit to our clients and patients is that we will have access to a whole host of different practice sites, which will bring different perspectives to our practice. I look forward to interacting with this group. I would hope that you will take advantage of our involvement and challenge us with your “difficult” cases.

September was a month of kudos’ to Skip’s Pharmacy. Cyndi got an award at the Florida Veterinary Medical Association’s for her involvement with the legislative effort to reduce the quality of veterinary pharmacy. She, in her own way, badgered, hassled, incited and otherwise pushed hundreds of vets and politico’s to prevent this travesty from happening. The interesting thing is that Skip’s Pharmacy would not have benefited one way or the other if the law had been passed. We would not have decreased our dedication to quality by allowing unsupervised compounding, or tech calls for new orders, or accepting narcotic prescriptions faxed by patients. We stand four square with the veterinary profession to provide the best care we can. We will not sit by and allow other members of the pharmacy profession to legislate poor pharmaceutical care, because it is in their best financial interests.