

NEWSHOUND

Summer Edition

The Official Surrey Veterinary Society Newsletter



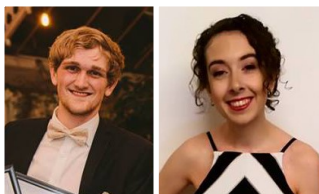
Co-edited by Daniel Gillett & Alexia Yiannouli. Design by Alice Peacock & Salomé Summerfield

Issue 10

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Editors' farewell

By Daniel Gillett & Alexia Yiannouli



May 1429. The English forces laying siege to Orléans are routed by the French, led by Joan of Arc, a young firebrand with revolutionary ideas and an inextinguishable spirit. History, as ever, repeats itself; we depart from our tyrannical roles as co-editors, to be replaced by Salomé. We can only hope Newshound's new editor does not meet the fate that the above metaphor implies.

Simply put, and not wishing to exaggerate, it has been a year. In many ways, a year in which Newshound exceeded our expectations. We have enjoyed and appreciated the engagement of staff and students and we will be recognising a few of our real highlights with The Houndies; that's right, Newshound has its very own awards show. Getting one matters about as much as getting a first on a BVMSci degree.

We've also appreciated the response to our competitions. Fear not, winners from last term, we are working on prizes. Our own high standards alone are responsible for the delay in you getting these. It has nothing whatsoever to do with financial difficulties. After all, money and VetSoc go together like rabbits and oral penicillin. Prizes outstanding will arrive with the deserving recipients in due course. This of course includes Priya and the VCTF team, a spaniel who dropped out of Police Academy and a fish whose POTM victory was in no way controversial.

This edition isn't just an exercise in self-indulgence. We have an interview with a famous figure, some adventures in the world of veterinary public health, the first entry into the fifth year diary of Surrey's middle child year group and there might even be a joke or two along the way.

We set out to create a space for students and staff to express ideas, have a giggle, do a crossword and occasionally get angry about a controversial topic. We aimed for encouraging debate and response articles, and instead we fell just short, encouraging GIF responses on Facebook and many utterances of the phrase "I'm definitely going to write a response to that." It leaves something to work on for next year.

We need to thank the team that have regularly contributed from the start. Firstly, a big thank you to Alice, our long-suffering design guru. We were also grateful every month for regular submissions from columnists Becca, Tamsin, Meg and Siobhan; your efforts, ideas and talents did not go unnoticed. Thanks is also owed to our proof readers Emma, Ellie and Julia, who found grammatical errors we didn't even know existed. It is a great pleasure to officially grant our anonymous undercover detective, Mr Harrison Mackenzie, an honourable discharge from active duty. Finally, we would like to thank and give our best wishes to the incoming editor-in-chief Salome, who has stepped in to the role with aplomb.

On which note, we should probably sign off. Newshound's future, we hope, is bright. Brighter, certainly, than our own. We trust it is moving into safe hands; we look forward to seeing which of our ideas remain, which new ideas are brought in and which columns are sacked in the style of Caen 1346. We don't expect to have changed minds or made anyone laugh, but we do hope we have occasionally made you slightly smirk and exhale softly from your nose. If nothing else, we provided some expensive coasters.

Best wishes,

Daniel and Alexia

The Houndies

Welcome to the First Annual Houndies Awards. This is where we recognise the highlights of the year and show our appreciation for your submissions.

Best In Consultation Guest

This award was a tough one. There are so many fantastic candidates, each memorable for different reasons. Felix, memorable for producing an interview that was largely unprintable. Emily, memorable for being our first student interviewee and going to town the most on Dan's fashion choices.

Cecilia Gath shared with us top tips on spaying male cats and making the most of a career in the equine industry. Mike Cathcart revealed his fear of unplanned questions until the socks and sandals came along at which point preparation was no longer necessary. Mark Chambers unveiled his surprising death metal past, which I think shocked David Tisdall as much as it did us.

In Consultation was one of our favourite columns to put together. Every single guest was a privilege to interview and we cannot thank our guests enough for their time. One guest, however, snuck ahead by a nose and truly deserves this award. Our first guest - an amateur pastry chef, equine surgeon and the only guest kind enough to buy us coffee.

The award for Best In Consultation Guest goes to...Professor Chris Proudman.

Best Guest Submission

We could not possibly list every guest submission, but we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who put forward articles for Newshound. You all made Newshound the shared space we hoped it would be.

Opinions on a wide range of issues, from fireworks to fox hunting. Heartfelt discussions on bone marrow, blood donations, volunteering and LGBT representation. News bulletins on choir concerts, Strictly and the findings of our undercover, anonymous report. We received more than we expected as we put together Issue 1 a little over a year ago.

It was so hard to choose the winner of this award. Should it go to Stuart, giving it his best BBC Sport Match Report impression? Or should it go to Cinderella, who reminds us all that our bad first dates could always be worse?

A difficult decision, but in the end, we felt there was one article that won it by a nose.

The award for Best Guest Submission goes to...Saskia Partridge and Elinor Hardcastle for The Ponies of VSC.

Most Controversial Article

And the nominees are: Becca Fruin, with Vets Who Aren't Vegetarians Are Hypocrites. Becca Fruin, with Vets Who Aren't Vegetarians Are Hypocrites. Becca Fruin, with Vets Who Aren't Vegetarians Are Hypocrites. And finally, a surprise nomination, Becca Fruin, with Vets Who Aren't Vegetarians Are Hypocrites.

The award for Most Controversial Article goes to...

Becca Fruin, with Vets Who Aren't Vegetarians Are Hypocrites.

The Uncle Bob Wholesomeness Award

This award is gifted to the animal-related story that most touched our hearts. A story which stood out from the darkness of today. A wholesome little beacon of light. The kind of story that makes you want to watch Billy Elliot whilst eating a milky bar.

The Uncle Bob Wholesomeness Award goes to...Jenny Dawn, for her story of rescue bunny Gwynedd, who survived against the odds, finding love along the way.

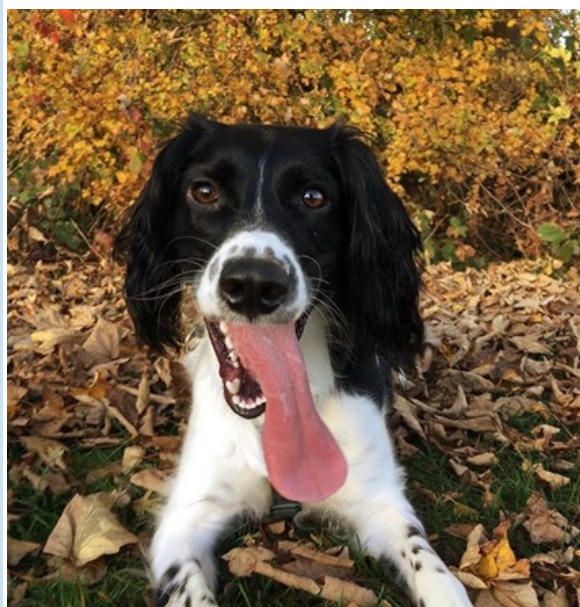
As part of the Houndies awards, we've included a special segment dedicated to our beloved pets, and who better to judge the ultimate winner of winners, but Sue Philips, to give her - somewhat - impartial judgement to crown...

Best in Show.

No, hang on...

The Pet of the Year.

Those who just missed out:



Rufus (April winner)

"Hi everyone! My name is Rufus and I'm a trainee sniffer dog that didn't actually make the cut. Now I live in Derby where I can have all the fun barking at people whenever I smell anything illegal, much to my family's embarrassment... My favourite things to do are pretend I've never seen a cat before (even though I've lived with one for 3 years) and try and make friends with any dog I see anywhere! I hate water a lot though and refuse to walk in the rain without my raincoat on - I am a Springer Spaniel, honest!"

Sue says: "Absolutely gorgeous but I have a soft spot for springers and afraid I may be accused of bias"

Daisy (June winner)

"Hi, I'm Daisy, single mother of 3. I was a happy only dog until a month ago, where I suddenly became a mother of 3 at age 11 (or 77 in human years). They steal my food and my bed, and disturb my peace. Luna (the Cavapoo) is the smart one, and keeps the others entertained for me. Lili (pictured front) is gentle, and keeps Jana (pictured back) in line, which is no small task as she's the stupid, clumsy one. But I love them all the same."



Sue says: "Lovely photo of your family. I can empathise with the torment of 3 children (nothing in the fridge etc) - I have three of my own - but they will also bring you lots of happiness - enjoy!"



Larry (Jan/Feb winner)

"Hi, my name's Larry, and as you can see by my face I'm not best pleased about my new Christmas jumper. Mum says I need it to keep my bald bits cosy, but I'm not convinced that's the sole reason. I'm slightly obsessed with bananas and humping people in black trousers."

Sue says: "Have every sympathy with being made to wear ridiculous clothes by a mother, (actually it's quite a nice Christmas jumper and looks very good on you) - but can't condone public displays of affection (PDAs) with anything in black trousers."

After much deliberation, the award goes to...

Bronze - Blacky (May winner)

“Hi my name's Blacky and I've just had my 10th birthday! Arguably I have an attention span longer than that of a revising vet student... I enjoy nothing more than munching on some broccoli, splashing about and gravel grazing. From a fishy friend, remember to just keep swimming!!”

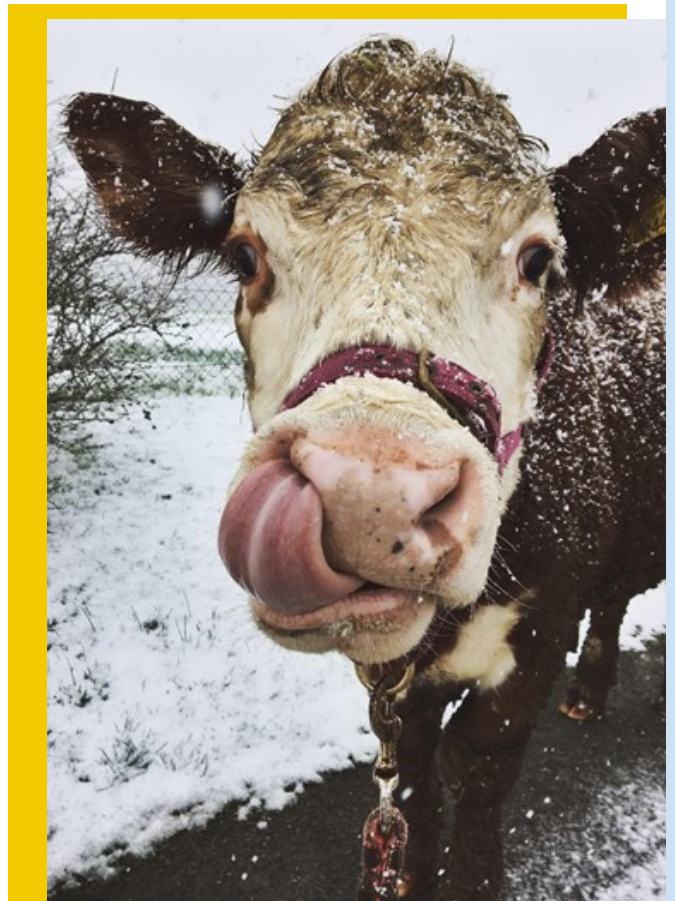
Sue says: “For such profound words that will resonate with all of us –‘keep on swimming’. Your picture exudes a wisdom that can only be achieved with age.”



Silver - Uncle Bob (2008-2019 RIP) (December winner)

“This is Uncle Bob, most commonly known as Bobbles. He’s an 11 yo standard poodle and he has anxiety, who can relate? Literally takes amitriptyline! He should be pet of the week because he loves to run and chase balls (again, who can relate?) but he’s too old to do it anymore so he needs another vice. Being a BNOC would make his day.”

Sue says: “For being open about your mental health – and something that many of us can relate to. Your expression says it all – I’m only sorry the award has to be posthumous.”



Gold - Judge (March winner)

“Hi my name is judge and here I am enjoying my first taste of snow- literally! I was born with a twin sister but unfortunately my mum didn’t like me as much as her, so I got myself a new human mum instead! She insists on taking me for walks and dressing me up in ridiculous costumes but I enjoy it really and all the other cows are jealous of my extra attention.”

Sue says: “Anyone who can clean (pick) their nose with their own tongue has to be acknowledged.”

The Veterinary Public Health Association (VPHA) is a division of the British Veterinary Association and is a lead in the advancement of veterinary public health within the UK and abroad. The association's roles include the development of legislation, delivery of animal and public health official controls, management of zoonotic disease outbreaks, food animal production, education, research and animal welfare.

Each summer, a student from each vet school is invited to attend a week-long masterclass to learn more about veterinary public health. I am privileged to have had the opportunity to attend the masterclass which took place in Edinburgh this summer. This year's Masterclass group consisted of students from Edinburgh, Bristol, RVC, UCD, Nottingham, Surrey and even Albania. On the evening of Sunday 24th June, all the students met in Edinburgh and were shown to our hotel by very hospitable Edinburgh students.

The Easter Bush vet campus is a 40-minute bus from Edinburgh city so we had a bit of an early start the first morning to make sure we arrived on time and got the correct bus. We were greeted at the vet campus by Dr Alex Seguíno and Dr Cristina Soare, the public health lecturers, and were given a tour of the university campus, the equine and large animal referral hospitals and the Roslin Research Institute. After the tour, we worked through a Dioxin outbreak investigation based on a real case and followed the protocol of a risk assessment, exposure assessment and risk characterisation. We then discussed tracking, tracing and the importance of labels in food safety. After lunch Cristina gave a lecture on wild game and the sequence of events that must happen and the legislation surrounding how wild deer can enter a commercial market for consumption. We also discussed notifiable diseases of cervids including pressing matter of chronic wasting disease (CWD) caused by a prion. After lectures we had the evenings free so on the first night, we saw the sights of Edinburgh city including Grey Friars Bobby, the Castle and walked the Royal Mile back to the hotel.

On Tuesday we worked through cases of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) outbreak in Scottish venison burgers. STEC is very serious as it causes Hemolytic-Uremic Syndrome and correct identification is vital. Sero-typing is also important and there are many ways in which this can be done, for this practical we used PCR. We made up our mastermixes and ran the product on agarose gel to identify the strain present in the samples.

On Wednesday we visited the Scottish Deer Centre. We learned lots about deer husbandry, DEFRA regulations on keeping deer and the current problem in Scotland of overpopulated deer. We also saw Elk, Wolves and an over-friendly European Brown Bear who liked to lick the rangers' faces! There is a market for bear vets, if anyone is interested. We had the rest of Wednesday free and decided to climb Arthur's Seat and we were very lucky with the weather as the views at the top were incredible. After, the students and lecturers met up in Edinburgh for a VPHA dinner.

On Thursday morning we visited the Trading Standards office, which handles welfare cases. We discussed some very interesting welfare cases and their outcomes and implications for both the vet and farmer. After the trading standards we went to Stirling Livestock Market and saw cattle being auctioned. After we walked around the market and assessed holding pens. In the afternoon when we arrived back at the vet campus Alex delivered an African Swine Fever lecture and the latest research findings of this disease. The Edinburgh students kindly hosted a Mexican and boardgame night on the Thursday evening to see us off.

On Friday morning we had a meat inspection class in the post-mortem room with Edinburgh's 5th year vet students on their public health rotations. We covered identification of *Dictyocaulus*, Fluke, *Cysticercus* and how to distinguish post-mortem changes from consolidation. We each performed a post-mortem examination of chickens from a local farm and a carcass inspection of a sheep.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself at the VPHA Masterclass and would highly recommend it! It was a great experience talking to other students from vet schools and spending evenings in Edinburgh with the new friends I had made. It also counts as a week of EMS for public health which is a bonus! If anyone has any questions about the VPHA Masterclass feel free to contact me – cb00727@surrey.ac.uk

Supplementary pictures for this article will be attached to the Newshound release email



Pioneering American animal welfare scientist, bestselling author, and renowned autism spokesperson are amongst only a few of the titles that could be used to describe Temple Grandin and her role in reforming livestock welfare. Alexia had the opportunity to sit down - hypothetically speaking, of course, with the distance of the Atlantic and a seven hour time difference between them - with Temple Grandin when working at the Vet Record over the summer.

A: Thank you so much for taking the time to speak to me Dr. Grandin - we finally managed to get around the time difference and speak to each other! It's really great to hear that you will be speaking at the London Vet Show in November!

T: No problem at all, I always try and call people back. I thought I'd start by talking about the importance of stockmanship, as I'll be talking a lot about that later this year. I'm also going to be talking about the principles of cattle handling and the things that a new cow coming into a herd would be afraid of. The new heifer coming into the milking herd - she'll stop at the shadow, or stop when there's a vehicle parked next to the facility, when the other cars would walk just by it. People need to be aware of that, they need to remove the vehicle and give the heifer time to look at it. I'm also going to discuss how novelty is both frightening and attractive. It's attractive if you let the animal approach it. It's scary if you just shove it in their face. That's true for dogs and cats too.

“Novelty is both frightening and attractive. It's attractive if you let the animal approach it. It's scary if you just shove it in their face”

- Temple Grandin

A: With regards to farms in the UK - they are on a much smaller scale to those in the US, but a lot of them have already applied a lot of your methods to their farm practices.

T: Some facilities I have are too big for farms in the UK, but the principles still apply - for example that scared new heifer that I mentioned previously; those principles are the same. I've got a new book out now for small farms called 'Temple Grandin's guide to working with farm animals'. It has facility layouts for small farms that would be easier to incorporate in smaller farms.

A: In your opinion, do you think we're getting it right as a nation, or are there any areas that you feel where we're still getting things wrong compared to the US? Are there any areas that strike you as needing improvement?

T: It very much depends on the farm. People want to buy the new thing that is going to solve all their problems. I was recently visiting a very nice feed yard in Mexico. One of the things they were doing was something I talk about all the time - they were bringing a small number of animals at a time into the crowding area in a single file race. They were bringing six calves and half grown heifers at a time up to the handling facility. Other people might try to bring 15 at a time, which would be way too many. **Small groups are really important and it takes a lot of discipline to enforce that.**

“Small groups are really important and it takes a lot of discipline to enforce that.”

- Temple Grandin

A: I guess you have to get the balance right between people wanting to get a job done faster and people wanting to get it done more with welfare in mind. It's really interesting to see how people need to understand that doing it that way is effectively more efficient.

T: They can get it done faster - the speed is determined by how fast they can vaccinate, ear tag animals and so on, but it does require a lot more walking to get six animals up at a time.

People get lazy when they say they'll start to bring eight cows up at a time. I watched one herdsman on the Mexican farm get to the last few cows, and there was maybe 10 cattle left waiting to be run up. He brought up six first and then the final four.. It would have been very tempting just to bring all 10 but he did not do that.

A: That's really interesting! What do you think are some of the most common mistakes that you've seen people make when handling and managing animals?

T: People moving too many at a time is a common mistake. The first thing people have to do is calm down when they handle animals. If you're not calm, the cow or pig will know you aren't calm and it makes everything worse. When an animal gets completely scared and excited it takes 20 minutes for it to calm back down. They are really horrible to handle when they're in a scared and agitated state. The first thing people have to do is change their attitude towards the animal. The other thing that I've found with stockmanship is that there's about 20% of people that when you train them they can turn into really good stock people. Then there are others you have to supervise. There are some people who just shouldn't be handling livestock who like to be mean to them - those people need to get some other job that doesn't involve handling livestock. They can do something with the tractor in the field, but they should not be handling the livestock. I'm really pleased with what the feedyard in Mexico was doing - next door to the feedyard is a place that handles livestock atrociously. It gets back to the attitude of the management. The feed yard that I recently went to has a wonderful attitude, and the one next door was so different - the managers in the second farm just didn't care.

A: Wow what a difference! Especially with the two farms being so close to each other as well...

T: This is not even 20 years ago, this is right now - two places next door to each other with such different levels of management is crazy.

A: When you go to visit these farms, are you there to give advice?

T: I try to advise them - but ultimately management has got to have the attitude to handle cows correctly. The first step is to ensure that the management clearly says 'this is how we're going to do things'. The ones that only allow six cattle up at a time, not 15, are excellent. Another feed yard I went to made sure that they walked the cattle in the yard at all times and didn't hurry them on. Other farms I've seen have run cattle through the feed yard very quickly which causes all sorts of problems.

A: Relating back to your main principles of improving animal welfare- what does a 'good life' and 'good death' entail and mean to you?

T: First of all, they've got to be handled quietly so that they go to the stunner in a calm state. It's very important in a slaughterhouse to remove distractions. The one I recently went to in Mexico had a slaughterhouse attached. Their handling in the lairage was excellent - they were using lead steers. The other farm we visited used stainless steel to make a lot of things - mainly because it's easy to clean. But there's a problem with stainless steel - the cattle were seeing their own reflection in the stainless steel stunbox door, which was causing problems. You can't paint something like that, so they will have to put a plastic panel over it. It's very reflective, and in the slaughterhouse it's important to remove all forms of distraction. The workers there were doing a really good job of handling, but the cows were balking at their own reflection. Every time someone came up the little stairway beside the stunbox, it scared the next animal - and so I advised them to put a metal shield up there to block their view. That farm was using a Jarvis pneumatic drill which was working just fine. With a stun gun, one of the most important things is to take care of its maintenance. If you don't take care of it then it won't work properly. People forget that the Jarvis pneumatic has three pieces: it has the gun, the air supply, and the balancer. You have to take care of all three of those things. I still have to keep talking about basics to people - those two feed yards in Mexico are a good example of how everything comes back to management.

A: I suppose it always comes back to the most simple things that people often miss.

T: Another thing - when you bring cattle into the crowd pen, you want to have space in your single file so that when they come into the crowd pen, they just keep walking through.

You don't want to bring them into the crown pen when the race is full because they will all turn around on you. Allowing small groups in and space in the race is paramount.

A: I've read a lot about the subject, but going off topic slightly - what are your views on non-stun slaughter?

T: That's a controversial area. In the US there is complete exemption; there are no rules. The situation I've got over there is that I have to make it work - I don't have any other choice. Details about procedures are extremely important. One Kosher knife works a whole lot better from any other knife in the knife catalogue. Another thing you can use is the restraint device - if you've got cattle vocalising, put them in the restraint device. You've got to restrain the animal in a nice way. Some of the restraint devices squeeze the animal too hard, and that's very bad. There might be engineering problems with the hydraulic pneumatics making them squeeze the animal too hard, and that would need to be fixed. I find a lot of problems with that. If you're on a farm with 20-30% of animals bellowing and you're putting them in a restraint device - you need to fix the restraint device, period. The other problem I encounter is cutting that take a long time to bleed out. With the very best welfare in mind I'd prefer to stun them. But, in situations where I'm not allowed to stun them, there are now things that you can do to improve their welfare. You can improve it a lot - the right kind of knife, the cut position is really important, calm the animal going into a restrainer. It requires a lot more process control than regular stun slaughter. In other words, when it gets sloppy, it gets bad very quickly. Stunning an animal is so much easier if you do it right. The main thing with captive bolt is maintenance - I can't say that word enough; maintenance maintenance maintenance! You've got to maintain your gun, period. Where religious slaughter is done sloppily, it's really bad. When it's done perfectly, you can get it up to an acceptable level. But it has to be done perfectly. That all goes back to management. Sometimes there are engineering problems that are to blame - for example the air pressure in the restraint devices are an engineering problem that need fixing in different ways. Sometimes there needs to be an engineering change, not a management change.

**“ Maintenance - I can't say that word enough;
maintenance maintenance maintenance! ”**

- Temple Grandin

A: That's really interesting. Here in the UK there has recently been a lot of debate around non stun slaughter, with the government wanting to ban it. A lot of different halal methods now involve stunning...

T: There's a difference between sloppy and well done. A lot of it is done very sloppily.

A: There's a lot of debates here about banning it or creating more legislation for it...

T: Somebody just needs to be the person who fixes things, and I'm a very non-political person. In my country there's a total exemption, and so I have to focus on making it work. There's a big difference between it being done right and being done badly. I want to get back to measurement - I like measuring things. I have my measurements for regular slaughter and measurements for stunned slaughter. I count how many cattle out of 100 were made unconscious on the first shot. In our guidelines it's now 96% and it used to be 95%. Somebody's going to fail an audit if they can't achieve that. When we first started measuring 20 years ago, it was horrible with all the broken guns and other problems we encountered. You've got to have a good gun - so we measured the percentage of animals that were shot unconscious on one shot. We also measure vocalisation - vocalisation is a very sensitive measure of bad things going on in the stunning area. Cattle falling down is also something to measure for welfare quality too. Use of the electric prod is also looked at. I can measure those things. Then with Kosher and religious slaughter I also measure vocalisation - for example, with a bad restraint device, you can have 20-40% cattle bellowing just from the restraint device. If you fix the device, and that often does require engineering changes, you can get that down to 5% just by fixing a valve, for example. Then you measure slipping, falling and using of electric prod in the same way you would for regular slaughter.

A: In terms of measurement, when you speak at the London Vet Show you were going to mention your audit techniques..

T: One of the concepts that I really like is the concept of critical control points, and I'll be talking about that at the London Vet Show. You want to measure the most important things - let's use traffic safety as a model. The police don't go out and measure a hundred things - the main things they measure is drunk driving, speeding, running stop lights and signs, texting and seatbelts. Other things like turn signals are important, but are nowhere near as important as the things I've just told you. These are critical control points for traffic safety. It's a similar approach to welfare auditing. Someone would fail an audit if only 80% of the cattle were shot unconscious in the first shot - that would fail an audit, period. That's a control point. Or 10% of cattle fall down in the facility when being handling - that would also fail an audit, even if they had points on other stuff. Because it's failing a critical control point, it would fail an audit. The other thing when being a commercial person doing an audit is that I have to have very clear guidance about when I'm going to take a slaughterhouse off my approved slaughter list. I have to have very clear guidance about that for legal reasons - it's beyond a super big mess, let me tell you. That's why you have to have very clear guidance. I can also do some animal welfare auditing on the plant - lameness, dirty, swollen joints - new scorecards for scoring knee joint erosion. Lameness is a super big critical control point - lame cattle suffer, so it's important to get it down to a really low level. When I see a welfare issue, it's usually something that I'm going to have to fix at the farm. Lameness is a really big one that's seen. Another is old dairy cows that have been allowed to deteriorate to an extremely bad condition. Filthy dirty cattle is another big problem. These are the three really big problems that I look out for. You can get lameness in beef cattle lying on concrete for too long. Beta agonists and growth promoters can also contribute to that. Another factor is genetic - you breed for more carcass weight, and also end up breeding for worse leg conformation at the same time. My outcome measure in a slaughterhouse is lameness. Farmers need to measure things such as leg conformation - finding out specific reason for a dairy cow being lame.

A: I totally agree - all those things are just so important.

T: My approach to welfare is this: the first thing I do is approach it like traffic safety. I want to go after the really important critical control points - with other audit methods it just gets far too complicated. If I was running a commercial supply chain, I've got to make sure that the really bad stuff is not in my supply chain. For example, a dairy with 35% lame dairy cows, or awful videos online of people hitting dairy cows, or cows with really bad swollen hocks; I have to make sure that stuff isn't in my supply chain. If a pig farm banned gestation stalls, they need to make sure that farm doesn't have them. That's easy - it's a yes or a no trait. You either have them or you don't. Lameness is a continuous trait. You're never going to get lameness down to zero. If I'm running a commercial supply chain I have to have a cut off point, and this is for legal reasons. It's so that when they are delisted they can't come back and sue the auditing companies. It can be such a mess - this is one reason why I'm so adamant that the audits have to be clean and very clear. For example, the police measure speed with a device, drunk driving is measured with a breathalizer - you have to calibrate that device. You either do it or you don't. A seatbelt is either on or not. The police can see your phone logs to see if you were on the phone when driving.

A: Exactly - there's no ambiguity there at all.

T: All five of those traffic critical control points are very clear. That doesn't mean that I'm saying it's ok not to use a turn signal, or to drive in the wrong lane when you're making a turn, but those things are nowhere near as important, and not many tickets are given out for that. The tickets are going to be for drunk driving, speeding, running a red light, seatbelts are not on, and texting. Especially if there's an accident - then they pull phone logs and you end up in a lot of trouble.

A: That makes complete sense - and it's such a logical way of thinking about it. In the near future, in the next few years, using these measures you've put in place, what do you hope to see for animal welfare in the US, as well as what you hope to see for animal welfare on a more global scale?

T: I think customers are getting more and more concerned with the bad videos that are surfacing on the internet at the minute. I originally come from a commercial background on supply chain management - I worked for a lot of major retailers, and the first thing you have to do when running a supply chain is make sure some hideous views of animals don't get photographed by a phone and put up online.

I'm talking about abusive handling or neglect - huge swollen hocks, that's one of the really awful videos that surfaced in the last year. I have to make sure that isn't going on in my supply chain. That's the first step. Then I'm going to start measuring things - like lameness, swollen hocks, dirty dairy cows...

A: I suppose it all comes back down to those main things, like everytime you look at something, it's going back to basics, but that are also very important.

T: The worst thing is the bad videos that have been posted online. One video showed a cow with a hock swollen to the size of a basketball - that's disgusting! But that means going right back to basics. The reason for the swollen hocks is that there wasn't any bedding in the facility. I think it's important that animals have positive emotions - that's going to be affected by housing. One thing I liked in the recent farms I saw in Mexico was that they were very dry - the cattle were clean. In your system in the UK, to keep them clean on the straw beds, you have to make sure that you put enough straw in. One of the biggest problems in a bedded building is a failure to use enough straw. That's the number one problem. You've got to put enough straw in there, and keep putting it in there, and keep those cattle clean. Dirty cattle, to me, are a critical control point. I don't like dirty cattle. Some people say that I'm not worrying about higher levels of welfare, but the very first thing I do is make sure that I don't have filthy dirty cattle, swollen hocks, lame dairy cows, or fat bulls that are laying in dirty. I need to make sure I have controls for that. You also have to consider things such as pasture access. You then have to discuss what the pasture is like - some people would consider a pasture to be a dirt block with one piece of grass and some people think it's ok to call that a pasture! In my book 'Is proving animal welfare practical?' it states that 75% of that ground has to have plants with a root system on it or else it isn't a pasture. Putting some straw on a ground isn't a pasture. I've recently learned all about how to work and gain electronic feed mills - I'm not going to tell you how to do that, I'm not running a school for crime here! (laughs)

“ Positive emotions is stocks people who love their animals and stroke their cows, and the cattle respond really well. ”

- Temple Grandin

A: I just think it's so fascinating! Are you looking forward to speaking at the London Vet Show? What are your expectations?

T: The way I look at welfare starts with making sure that the farm I'm looking at doesn't have any animal abuse. I've got to make sure that no one's doing anything that if they were filmed doing it, they would look bad. That's the first thing I'd do on my supply chain. The next thing I would do is score things like lameness, dirty animals, sores and lesions, abnormal behaviour observed. Basic critical control points. Body condition in breeding stock, skinny animals - simple things I can score. Behavioural needs would also be looked at - this is a big problem when looking at pigs and sows. My system has banned small battery cages, so I have to make sure that my supplier has the housing system that is specified. Specifying types of housing is a means of addressing behavioural needs. Another thing is positive emotions - cows that are turned out on pasture run around and look happy; that's positive emotions. Positive emotions is stocks people who love their animals and stroke their cows, and the cattle respond really well. A good relationship with the stockperson - that's a massive part of positive emotions. At one of the farms I was visiting the other day, I walked down in front of the feed troughs and the cows barely moved. I've been in feed yards when you've walked by the feed troughs and they've run away from you. That's not a good sign! That's your positive emotions with stockmanship - that's super important. Another thing with stockmanship is that you must not understaffed or overworked. If that happens, you are going to have bad stockmanship. People are too tired - if you end up running 10-11 hour shifts six days a week you're not going to have good stockmanship! They will just be too overworked and stressed. Ultimately, it all goes back to management - at the slaughterhouse and the feed yard. It also comes down to housing and also to painful procedures and giving pain relief. Another thing I found in Mexico is that they do not castrate their bulls - I think this is helped by stockmanship. If you had testicles all over the handling facilities, it doesn't necessarily help with good stockmanship. Especially if they don't clean them up, then you've got a disgusting mess. It's hard to have a good attitude towards animals when you're cutting things off them and they're bellowing. We were pleased to find out that general practice in Mexico is that they don't castrate the feed bulls.

They also don't cut horns - they just give them their vaccinations and ear tags, but they still have a lot of vaccinations. They will moo when you give them an ear tag because they don't like that, but they do have to have ear tags. When people ask me if ear tags are cruel, I just say that they are ear piercings for cows, and that they don't make them get tongue studs! End of discussion about ear tags. They're just pierced earrings for cows!

A: (laughs) that's such a good way of thinking about it!

T: Just to recap - I really want to emphasise the importance of good stockmanship. I really emphasise that - handling facility design and basics. Also assessing animal welfare - first thing is to make sure that something really bad isn't happening on the farm. I come from a background in commercial supply management, so I've got to make sure that something really terrible isn't happening on the farm that ends up getting recorded on a phone. There's also a lot of emphasis on welfare basis; lameness, dirty, sores and injuries, skinny cattle in extensive pasture systems. I have to work on those basics. Then of course behaviour needs must be considered - there are certain housing systems that I won't allow on my supply chain. That's actually easier to do. Then you've got the whole thing of non stun slaughter that's really controversial. Since there's a total exemption in my country I had to figure out how to improve it. The restraining device often encounters engineering problems, which can be fixed but I can't fix them with management. Often these modifications aren't expensive, but it requires extreme detail to procedure.

A: Wow, I think you've summarised the most important points really succinctly!

T: The other problem I have with welfare auditing is that with most systems in most countries, you have a day and a half workshop to train audit workers, so you have to have really simple guidelines to train people. For example, I made a training video for lameness scoring - that's easy. I also did a body condition scoring chart, and a dirty cow chart that people can use - that make it easy for someone to score it.

A: I think that's really good because you want the people who are doing it to know exactly what they need to do and exactly how they need to do it.

T: We have to be simple - there's a tendency to get things way too complicated.

A: People are good at doing that!

T: I've looked at some things on risk analysis - it's so complicated! Why are they making it so complicated? It's just too complicated! They were talking about risk analysis of slippery floors - if 1% of those animals fall down, they've either got to fix the floor, fix the handling, or maybe the animal has poor conformation and shouldn't have been bought. I measure the outcome. If I have a problem with cattle falling, I have something to fix, and that usually involves putting non-slip flooring down, because floors wear out. So it's easier just to measure it and create a solution. In that case, it usually involves removing the concrete or putting a rubber mat down.

A: It's so effective, but also so simple it sounds like people just overlook the more basic solutions in the tendency to overcomplicate.

T: Sometimes it's just overthinking - I also think it's the difference between visual thinking and verbal thinking. The people who make complicated risk analysis are verbal thinkers. I'm a visual thinker - when I see a cow falling and slipping on the floor, my solution is to fix the floor and resurface the floor.

A: That's such an interesting way to think about it, and you're so right - so many people overthink things and it really does overcomplicate them! I just wanted to say thank you so much for taking the time to speak to me, I really do appreciate it.

T: It was really really good to talk to you.

A: Thank you again.



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I've had a strange, slightly haphazard summer; an eclectic mix of an externship with the Vet Record, contrastingly coupled with the unwelcomeness of yet more exams. I soon began to think that this was not what I would usually call the "summer holidays" (with a distinct lack of Corfiot sun). I did, however, get to enjoy three sunny weeks living my best commuter life in London, writing and exploring the city, as well as a short break to the New Forest to enjoy the 30 degree weather with approximately three quarters of the rest of the UK on Bournemouth beach. Some of the highlights were, of course, the Vet Record - three weeks of unsolicited writing really is the dream - and it helped that the British Medical Association has such a beautiful courtyard garden in which I could start each day...

Last year, back when we first started Newshound, I wrote about my new (school) year resolutions, and I distinctly remember one of them was to - quite ardently - not fail any more exams. We all know that didn't happen, but we can move swiftly past that small - and completely inconsequential - piece of information. Maybe final year will be the year I actually start passing things first time round?

My second 'resolution' was to embrace non vet related hobbies...and lo and behold, Newshound began. I also consider the unnecessary - and often debatably unfounded - consumption of bourbon biscuits as falling into this category.

My third resolution was to step out of my comfort zone. I made it to fifth year (just about), and I think that's about as far out of my comfort zone as I can get before existing in a different universe. So, in essence, I have achieved almost two out of three of my resolutions, which I'd say is somewhat miraculous considering my somewhat hyperbolic crawling through each academic year.

What stretches me further out of my comfort zone is the questions that have started slowly filtering in, such as: what kind of vet do you want to be, where do you want to work, have you started thinking about jobs yet? And the answer is...I have no idea what my future holds after I finish next summer - I don't even know what my future is going to be in a month, let alone in a year or for the rest of my life. And although tempting, I'm not exactly sure that 'escape to Corfu and write a bestselling novel' is really a viable option to consider.. While everyone around me starts to think about jobs, my thoughts go down a much less clinical route (as if you weren't already aware).

My aspiration to go into journalism dumbfounds many and confuses most - it's going to be very interesting when I get asked this question on each rotation - until I explain my reasoning behind the seemingly hair-brained career prospect. I have no idea if my aim of going into veterinary journalism is feasible, but everyone always talks about anything being possible if you want it and work for it hard enough...so who knows! My bullet journal now features in the Vet Record for vets across the country to see, which is completely surreal in itself. I've met so many vets over the last few years who have diversified, so it might not be that uncommon of a concept after all.

I write this while finishing up the first week of rotation one - my business special elective at Vet Partners in York; a gentle - and interesting - introduction into final year. I feel like when September arrives, and brings with it the start of clinical rotations, my outlook on final year might be slightly more realistic; but for now I'm going to enjoy being able to explore different parts of the country, and if all else fails - the dream of novel writing in Corfu really is only a plane ride away.



As a relatively new owner of an adorably dim, but lightning-fast couch potato, I have recently been made aware of the on-going controversies surrounding the greyhound racing industry, and the inflammatory language and accusations thrown around when discussing it. Oscar is my beautiful, not-quite-racer dog; unfortunately his gait is not that of a graceful athlete, but is much more similar to a lanky tornado bowling across a field, so he wasn't trained to race and instead rehomed. But I wonder what kind of life he would have had on the track; are we failing the welfare of these dogs?

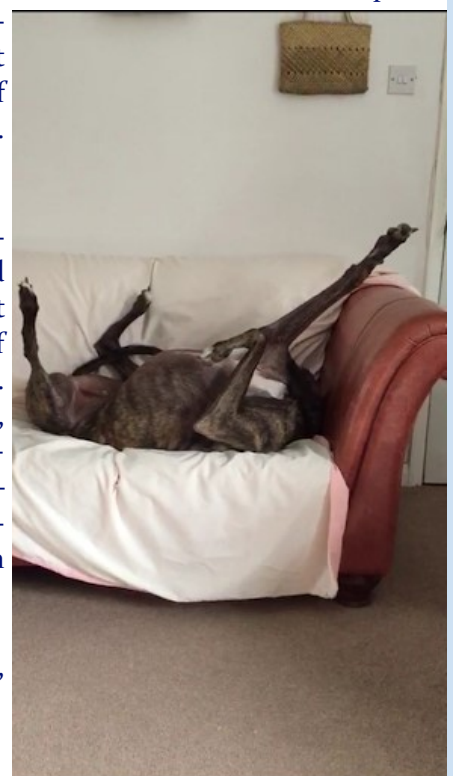
As I begin to research more, I manage to find little credible information. The Society of Greyhound Veterinarians, (affiliated with the BVA), have limited information available to the public about their role. Further searching reveals that GBGB do have a welfare statement on their website, and a whole team of people dedicated to ensuring regulations are upheld. They even have some funding available to contribute to expensive veterinary costs. But I still find little from a vet's perspective. This is understandable; the media's favourite hobby is twisting people's words to fit their own narrative. However, this leaves certain unnamed (PETA) animals rights groups free to publish, whether factual or not, with no one to contest them.

Fortunately, I had the privilege of speaking to a track vet. Having worked in the industry for over a decade, when they started out, 'economic' trackside euthanasia was common for some vets. However my source states that they have never euthanised a dog where it was not medically necessary; "Many trainers will keep retired dogs in kennels until they find the right sofa". The power of track vets seems to be extensive. Whilst most trainers are seen to be compliant, those that aren't are dealt with using a series of warnings, sanctions, and drop-in visits. They can also receive warnings for taking their dogs to other vets for euthanasia when it is not medically indicated. If there is a serious concern, trainers can be referred to a national enquiry, where they may be fined up to £2500, as well as risking the possibility of losing their licence. Like the horse racing industry, random drug testing is common, as well as regular kennel inspections.

During the 3 days of hot weather we were treated to this year, there was outcry about dogs made to race in the scorching (for us brits) 30 degree heat. However, as the track vet rightfully points out, a 45 second run after being transported in temperature-controlled vans and kept in air conditioned kennels is not comparable to a 45 minute walk in the midday sun. Many people spreading misinformation about this industry have never experienced it themselves, and it seems they would rather criticise from the side lines. The way I see it, if the dogs don't enjoy running and chasing, they don't get put on the track. There's no point investing in a racing dog that doesn't enjoy racing.

Whilst there are reports of puppy-farmed puppies bred in excess, and retired greyhounds being exported abroad, these cases seem rare and sources are not necessarily credible. Of course, it's difficult to know what happens to the breeding dogs and young puppies that are out of sight of the tracks and vets, but this is not an issue unique to greyhound breeding. As with the farm and equine industries, economics will always factor in, but the massive improvements over the last decade in the UK, with economic euthanasia at tracks being incredibly rare or non-existent, and retired dogs often being cared for by trainers, educating young vets is becoming ever more important to ensuring the continuation of welfare in the sport.

Evidently, Oscar didn't much like chasing (lucky for the cat) or racing, and is currently in his favourite position, upside down on the sofa.



It's the final countdown (*insert dramatic music here*)



BIO: Hello! I'm Alice and I'm a current 5th year. I may be retiring from the design post at Newshound but I am far from finished subjecting you to my ideas! This article is meant to give you an idea of what 5th year is like whilst also being somewhat entertaining... I hope! Although I doubt anything as exciting as Siobhan's A&E trip from last year's 5th year diary will happen to me... (My dog's name is Jessie, I know that's what you're really reading this bit for).

Return Week (28/07/19): "You start uni again on Monday? But it's summer!" If I had a penny for every time I had heard that phrase this summer, I could buy an expensive cup of tea from the... oh wait, nevermind, the café is closed all week.

Despite the lack of vet school café, IMR Welcome Week has been an enjoyable experience. Yes it is packed, with each session somehow containing more information than a Tisdall MCQ, but it's been a week of reuniting with friends, getting to know the lovely VCTFs and preparing for an exciting year of baby-vetting.

Among the exam talk, assignment setting and last-minute rotation changes, we have been able to learn fun new skills such as floristry, drawing, sports and yoga. I chose the floristry taster – Megan Davis (Née Tucker) led a wonderful 15 minute flower arranging class where we made a Hostess Bouquet to take home. Floristry is now a solid plan C for me! Although I don't think my allergies will be pleased to hear that.

A weirdly positive experience for me was actually the midweek mock COP (Clinical Oral Practical Exam, COPs are the exams you have after some rotations – you chat one on one to a lecturer about some cases). Whilst a surprise mock exam sounds like the worst thing ever, it was actually incredibly useful to go into it with no preparation to see how the exams work and to see if I have retained anything at all from the last 4 years. Granted, whilst waiting to be called in to the room, I wished I'd at least googled a T, P or R! However, it turned out I didn't need to worry – not because I knew any of the answers but because it was so relaxed and completely about getting to know the format rather than a surprise knowledge test. I feel much more comfortable about return weeks as a result!

Another highlight of the first week of 5th year was the first Thursday night social of the year, sponsored by VDS. Held at the hospital social club on the hottest day of the year; the event gave students, recent graduates and staff the opportunity to socialise in a fun and relaxed setting.

Now I am at the end of this week I am looking forward to embarking upon my first rotation. It helps that I am at Marwell Zoo – it is somewhere I've been before, and staying in Guildford means I don't have anywhere to travel to this weekend and settle in. I don't know a great deal about what I will be allowed to do, but I have done some EMS at zoos and exotics vets before so I imagine it will be similar – performing post-mortems, observing procedures, carrying out research, and most likely more than a few faecal egg counts! I find zoo work and exotics fascinating and it is something that I would like to go into in my career, so I am hopeful that this month will really give me a head start in that.

Rotation 1 (25/08/19): First rotation finished! Marwell – it's been amazing. I hate to sound cliched but I've loved every minute, learned so much about captive wildlife medicine and I can't believe that my first rotation is already over. This month has really confirmed that a career in this field is the one for me. If I could start working there tomorrow, I'd be there in a heartbeat (...perhaps a deeply hibernating tortoise heartbeat – it's an hour commute). The only things I definitely won't miss are the car park speed bumps – they're brutal!

Now, enough of the gushy stuff, our time at the zoo was pretty packed. We fitted in 4 major anaesthetics (a peccary, a penguin, a marmoset and a stilt), radiography of multiple species, a fair few darting sessions (delivering vaccinations), tens of faecal egg counts, numerous on-section health checks, a fluorescein test on a well-behaved rhino, a very grumpy snake necked turtle and some interesting post-mortems.



Humbolt penguins

Under zoo licencing rules, zoos must perform post-mortems on every single animal that dies – even if they are known to have passed of natural causes. This is because research into zoo species is limited and every post mortem is an opportunity for zoo health screening and learning, both for experienced vets and us students.

As students, we were allowed to take blood, monitor anaesthetics and perform faecal egg counts as well as perform and report our own post-mortems. Taking blood from an anaesthetised Peccary's ear (it's a pig but not a pig... google it), injecting tiny birds, performing invertebrate post mortems and p-p-p-picking up Humboldt penguins were not things I expected to be able to try my hand at on my first rotation.

As well as the clinical work, we worked on projects for the zoo – researching novel preventative medicine strategies (poovers or dung beetles anyone?), new mixed exhibits, lemur ethograms and callitrichid conditions. We then presented our findings to the vet team at the end of the month (unfortunately I still don't know how to pronounce "callitrichid", even though it was my project). In addition, we produced case report presentations and presented a paper at the monthly journal club.



Snake necked Turtle



We were also lucky enough to take a free daytrip to Bristol Zoo. We met the vet team, had a tour of their facilities and explored both Bristol City Zoo and Wild Place. As a bonus we were able to see their new Bear Wood exhibit, featuring brown bears, lynx, wolverines and – now they have deigned to cooperate – wolves.

Another interesting part of the rotation was the Sand Lizard Conservation Project. Marwell Zoo works with conservation projects the World over (my fellow 5th years know all about Marwell's success with Scimitar Horned Oryx for one), but this project is closer to home. The sand lizard is one of the rarest British lizards – and before meeting them on rotation, we had no idea they existed. Marwell have been breeding and releasing these lizards to sand dunes across the South of England for 25 years. We were lucky enough to help health check some lizards ahead of their release next month – handling, examining, measuring and cloacal swabbing such small lizards was certainly a challenge.

Unfortunately, 5th year isn't all fun and post-mortems. The Portfolio looms over us, like the purulent scab of a cat-bite abscess, we had no idea how large and gross it would be within. Whether it be knowledge summaries, daily logs, written assignments and day-one competency records, there's certainly enough to keep us busy (top tip – excel spreadsheets are a lifesaver). Personally, I'm tackling the knowledge summary first, focussing on the effect of diet on atherosclerosis in penguins – I guess I'd better make a start on that (sorry Mike, I did mean to finish it within rotation, honest!)



Peccary that had the procedure



Marwell White rhino

Despite all this paperwork, we still found time to explore the zoo on morning walks in and lunch breaks – walking through the zoo before any guests arrived was a lovely way to start each day (it almost made up for the 5:30am starts). One of my favourite animals was Rica, a Linne's Two Toed Sloth. She is a resident of the zoo's exciting new tropical house and she has 3 hobbies – eating, sleeping and causing trouble. I admire her.

As I already knew, Marwell is a wonderful zoo and it was an honour getting to know all their beautiful animals a little better. I can only hope that my next 7 rotations are as enjoyable (and that there is enough research on penguin heart conditions for my knowledge summary).

