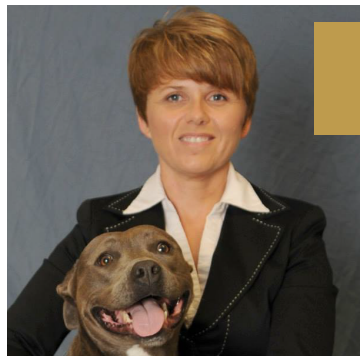


# VPA UPDATE

News for Independent Veterinary Professionals

February 2020



## We're "Going Big" with IVPA's Vision for 2020



It's hard to believe we are already several weeks into the new year — and new decade. I hope you enjoyed the holidays, found a little time to rest and recharge, and are now enjoying a successful winter season. 2020 is often associated with clear vision. It seems only appropriate for IVPA that 2020 be a year of clarity, because this is the year we make it clear that independent hospitals aren't going anywhere. This is the year we help clients gain clarity about the consolidation taking place within the industry, and when we encourage them to find out if their local vet is *truly* local.

This is the year we build our member base to a level that gets AVMA's attention and earns us a seat in the House of Delegates. This is the year independent practitioners level the playing field so that private ownership remains a viable and rewarding career path and veterinarians remain at the center of leadership within the profession. This is the year we want to happen, but in order to make it happen, we need your help!

For those of you unable to make the member call on 2/5, we unfortunately had some technical difficulties and the meeting was not recorded as planned. We are exploring options for getting the information to you. This newsletter is a first step; it provides further details about the initiatives we introduced on the call, including our membership referral program and "Vet Local" marketing campaign. Our association is at a crossroads. We must work together to grow in size and make our voices heard — loud and clear! Thank you for your participation in our association and for your continued support of IVPA.



Bonnie Bragdon, DVM, MS  
President, IVPA

## Member Referral Program: Spread the Word about IVPA

Almost two years ago, IVPA was formed to advocate for independent veterinarians and promote the value of locally owned and operated practices. During this time, consolidation has continued at breakneck speed, with several new acquisition companies entering the industry as they have seen corporate owners and other aggregators expand their footprint throughout veterinary medicine.



Now more than ever, private practitioners must come together in their fight to stay independent. This is why IVPA exists. We are the only nonprofit association dedicated exclusively to the needs of independent veterinary practitioners and private practice owners, and we are grateful for all you who have joined in support of the cause. IVPA is over 300 members strong, but in order to achieve the goals we've established as necessary to help independent veterinarians survive in the current landscape, and successfully implement the many initiatives we have planned for 2020, we have to grow. A lot. For example, to meet our goal of representation in the AVMA House of Delegates (which many of you have indicated is a high priority), we need to triple our current membership.

So, we're undertaking a membership drive and want you to **SPREAD THE WORD!** Start telling as many private owners as you know — colleagues in your community, in your state, in your alumni groups, in any professional organizations to which you belong — about IVPA and encourage them to become members. **If four "Practice Owner" level members join based on your referral** (there will be a place on the application where they can indicate this), **you will receive ONE FREE YEAR OF MEMBERSHIP IN IVPA** credited at your next renewal. Sample copy for a referral letter/email is available in the member section of our website. Begin compiling those lists of those you know want preserve independent ownership!

## Are you encouraging your clients to vet local?

A quick scan of member websites revealed that many of you are not promoting that your practice is locally owned and operated. While we all know about the changes taking place in the veterinary industry, our clients do not.

We're excited to announce our campaign that aims to educate clients about corporate consolidation and explain why it should no longer be assumed that a veterinary practice is a small business owned by a community member. The campaign includes:



- A redesigned window cling/sticker that emphasizes pride in local ownership
- An explainer video, produced by Veteos and sponsored by BabelBark, that can be customized for your business (visit [www.veteos/ivpa](http://www.veteos/ivpa) to make one)
- Content and imagery that can be used in your marketing materials and on social media
- An informational website ([www.vetlocal.us](http://www.vetlocal.us)) that links to our "Find A Vet" map where consumers can search for independent practices near them. Be sure to check it out and let us know what you think!

All content and images, as well as the IVPA video, are available in the member section of our website.

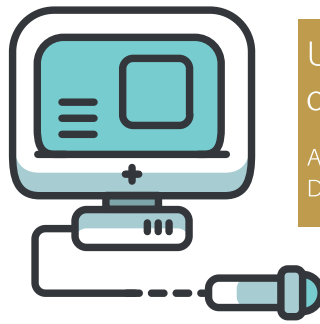


## Marketing Morsels: #vetlocal

Social media is the place to engage with current/potential clients, to express your practice personality, and to communicate about topics you believe are relevant to your followers.

When you post content on social media, whatever the topic, you can include hashtags that will allow your post to be seen by a wider audience. Hashtags originated on Twitter, but are now used on many platforms, especially Instagram and, to a lesser extent, Facebook.

The corporatization of veterinary medicine is a topic that you should feel comfortable sharing about on social media. Though it's no secret to those of us in the industry, most pet owners are largely unaware. You can reinforce the "Vet Local" message every time you post by using the hashtag: **#vetlocal**. Give it a try!



## Ultrasound: The right choice to create long-term sustainable profit

Article contributed by Chrissy Laughlin,  
Director of Business Development at SonoPath

The landscape of veterinary practice ownership is rapidly changing, due in large part to the rapid rise of corporate-owned veterinary practices. This has resulted in an increasingly competitive environment where finding ways to differentiate your practice is critical to your survival. Two specific areas that are inherent to your success are profitability and complexity of service. You must have both for long-term, sustainable growth.

Today's clients are more knowledgeable and willing to invest in their pet's care. They have a multitude of options for veterinary services, and will seek out veterinary partners that offer a wide range of modern diagnostics services. Ultrasound is rapidly gaining popularity as a valuable diagnostic service, and offers a way for veterinarians to generate additional revenue.

### Profitability and Ultrasound

According to a recent report, [the global veterinary ultrasound imaging market is expected to grow by over 5% between 2019 and 2025](#). Using very conservative numbers, your practice should be able to earn at least \$700/month in additional revenue from ultrasound services (above your equipment payment). Based on these numbers, every practice in North America should be able to afford an ultrasound, and should make it a priority purchase in their practice. Download the cash flow calculator [HERE](#).

### Complexity and Ultrasound

Ultrasound has a fairly high-level of complexity involved, and is a VERY user dependent modality that requires advanced training and practice. Leveraging ultrasound as a key differentiator, you'll need to be able to do more than "cystos" and FNAs. This will require a certain level of ultrasound machine, the correct probes - and most importantly the training that will have you scanning at high-levels, and getting definitive diagnoses quickly. This is where you need to commit to the modality. Your scanning skills and the quality of your machine are the difference between success and failure. So many people give up, either because they had a subpar machine, and mistook that for user error, or they simply did not get adequate training. When the right veterinary ultrasound machine and good training come together, an amazing new world opens up.

### Next Steps

You'll need to determine which type of system is right for your practice. Options range from low-end utility machines, used machines, and new machines. Pricing can range anywhere from \$5,000 up into the \$50k price range. We recommend that you begin with a new machine, in the \$30-\$45k price range. That should get you a system that can properly image the organs and structure you'll need to provide diagnostic value.

**YOU'RE INVITED TO ATTEND A WEBINAR**  
**UTILIZING CONNECTED CARE TO IMPROVE CLIENT ENGAGEMENT AND PATIENT MEDICAL OUTCOMES**

**Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 6pm EST**

**Presented by:**



**Bruce Truman,**  
Vice President of Business Development, BabelBark



**Tanya Cooper,** Director of Veterinary Sales, BabelBark



**BabelBark**  
Connecting the love.™

• Space is limited, so register today •  
 • by clicking anywhere on this invitation. •

Today's consumers rely on technology for every aspect of their lives, even veterinary care. Clients are seeking convenience, accessibility and transparency in their interactions with you and your team.

The BabelVet platform offers a unique solution for facilitating two-way communication with your clients, as well as providing you with regular health status updates on your patients to help improve medical outcomes. This webinar will introduce you to the BabelVet (practitioner) and BabelBark (client) platforms, demonstrate use cases, and highlight the many benefits of implementing this powerful technology into your practice.

**PRACTICE OWNERS WHO ATTEND THIS WEBINAR AND SIGN UP FOR A FREE TRIAL WILL ALSO RECEIVE A FREE IVPA MEMBERSHIP FOR ONE YEAR (credited at time of initiation or renewal). CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO REGISTER.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** The webinar "Is Your Practice Owner at Risk of 'Going Corporate'?" that was originally scheduled for this date has been postponed for later in the year.

## Industry News

Following are brief summaries, along with links to full articles, of some of the latest industry news that may be of interest to you.



### Independent Veterinary Laboratories Face Extinction:

Regional labs are quickly becoming a thing of the past as Antech, Idexx and, most recently, Zoetis, continue to dominate the landscape: Click [HERE](#) for the full article.

**Veterinary Insight Drives Pet Medication Industry:** Pet owners typically follow the advice of veterinarians regarding both prescription and non-prescription medication recommendations. Many owners are also opting to have their pet's prescriptions filled at the clinic rather than going to an outside party. Click [HERE](#) for the full article.

**The Current State of Cannabis Research in Veterinary Medicine:** The buzz (pardon the pun) around CBD and other cannabis products has sparked many questions from pet owners. With only a few veterinary-specific studies available, practitioners have to rely on both animal and human medical data. Click [HERE](#) for the full article.

**What Do You Need to Know About Coronavirus?** The human coronavirus, which originated in China but has since spread, is believed to affect only people, not animals. There are some facts veterinarians should know in case they get questions from their clients. Click [HERE](#) for the full article.

## Practice Spotlight: Neabore Vet Clinic - neaborevet.com



*The Team: Michelle, Dr. Neabore and Lydia, with some very well behaved patients*

Neabore Veterinary Clinic's mission is to meet the needs of pets and humans in their local community by providing the highest quality service and veterinary medicine at the best value. In many cases, there is no one "right" answer to veterinary care, because every patient, every client, and every circumstance is different.

Scott and his team, including LVTs Michelle and Lydia, assist clients in evaluating and choosing veterinary care options based on their goals and concerns for their pet's health. Services include: wellness care, same-Day Sick Appointments, Surgical and Dental Procedures, X-rays, Ultrasound, and Emergency Blood Work.

The clinic is located in Haddonfield, NJ, and will celebrate its one-year anniversary in May. Dr. Scott Neabore is a graduate of the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University and worked as a general practitioner and part-time ER doctor for Compassion First for three years prior to starting his own practice.

# Welcome New Members



The following members have joined IVPA from 11/15/19 - 2/17/20:

## PRACTICE OWNERS

Jeffrey Wayman, Cass County Animal Hospital, Belton, MO  
Kelly Hoyt, Heritage Animal Hospital, Olathe, KS  
Christopher Garg, Fifth Avenue Animal Hospital, Edmonds, WA  
Megan Shannon, Cherry Knolls Veterinary Clinic, Centennial, CO  
Catherine Sinnott, Woodstock Animal Hospital, Woodstock, IL  
Jason Gross, Corvallis Veterinary Hospital, Corvallis, OR  
Warren Fleming, Firehouse Veterinary Clinic, Plymouth, MA  
Kristin Brand, Richmond Veterinary Clinic, Richmond, IL  
Arline Rosenfeld, Buxmont Veterinary Hospital, Feasterville-Trevoze, PA  
Mey Nevo, Carver Lake Veterinary Center, Woodbury, MN  
Glen Grier, Jaffrey-Rindge Veterinary Hospital, Jaffrey, NH  
Carolyn Sutor, Gladwyne Animal Hospital, LLC, Gladwyne, PA  
Tracy Kusik, Trout Creek Veterinary Center, Hobart, WI  
Catherine Lindstrand, Isabella Cat Clinic, Mt. Pleasant, MI  
Edie DeMaria, Pets Aloud Veterinary, Mahwah, NJ  
Lisa O'Neill, Animal Care Center of Brentwood, Brentwood, TN  
Michelle Gengler, Duvall Veterinary Hospital, Duvall, WA  
Douglas Kratt, Central Animal Hospital, Onalaska, WI  
Colby Burns, North Tampa Veterinary Specialists, Odessa, FL  
Michael Hargrove, North Shore Veterinary Hospital, Duluth, MN  
Yanneth Shuykin, North Hills Animal Hospital, Atlanta, GA  
Jill Patt, Little Critters Veterinary Hospital, Gilbert, AZ  
Linda Kopija, Hobson Valley Animal Clinic, Woodridge, IL

## VETERINARIANS

Lisa Wirth, Tucson, AZ  
Jillian Schrier, Herndon, VA  
James Pearce, Memphis, TN  
Richard Pence, Columbus, OH

## AFFILIATES

ASPCA Health Insurance, [www.aspcapetinsurance.com](http://www.aspcapetinsurance.com)  
Gateway Services, [www.gatewayservicesinc.com](http://www.gatewayservicesinc.com)  
Matt Wright, MW Radiology, [www.mwradiology.com](http://www.mwradiology.com)  
VetTech Payments, [www.vettechpayments.com](http://www.vettechpayments.com)  
PromoVet, [www.promovet.vet](http://www.promovet.vet)  
VetResults, [www.vetresults.com](http://www.vetresults.com)  
Summit Veterinary Advisors, [www.summitveterinaryadvisors.com](http://www.summitveterinaryadvisors.com)

## PARAPROFESSIONALS

Christine McKee, Mission Viejo, CA  
Carlo Prats, Miami, FL

## STUDENTS

Linden Drake, Stillwater, OK

## Have you completed the member survey yet?

Be sure to let us how IVPA can continue to meet your needs as independent veterinary professionals. This survey is completely anonymous, so please be as open and honest as possible. There is no deadline, so you can complete the survey at your convenience. Click on the clipboard image to access the survey. Thanks in advance for your participation and feedback.



## Tell Us About It

Do you have anything you'd like to share with the group?



Send it our way. We welcome any and all contributions from members (photos, articles, success stories, interesting cases, hints and tips, etc.) to this newsletter – your newsletter.

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

**Editor:** Brian Evans, DVM, Board Member  
([brian@sdcoastalanimal.com](mailto:brian@sdcoastalanimal.com))

**Associate Editor:** Deb Rock  
([deb@grammarcentric.com](mailto:deb@grammarcentric.com))

## Facebook Group and Discussion Forum for IVPA Members



Be sure to check out our members-only Facebook group for those looking to buy or sell a practice. Click on the pin image or visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/veterinary.practice.for.sale/>



And our discussion forum, (available only to practice owner and veterinarian members) which you can access through the "Login" tab on our website home page, or by clicking on the laptop image on the left.