

# VPA UPDATE

*News for Independent Veterinary Professionals*

*November 2019*



## Welcome and Bylaw Amendment Update

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter! We look forward to providing you with important information, and updates about IVPA's board, membership, industry partners, and the profession in general. This issue is jam-packed, so be sure to read it "cover to cover", and if you have news to share that would be of value to our readership, we want to hear it. Information on how to submit your story ideas, contributions, etc. can be found at the end of the newsletter. Let's get started!

As you know, one of our association's goals is to become a member of the AVMA's Allied Caucus, with a seat in the House of Delegates, so that we can more effectively advocate for independent practitioners. Here's an update on our progress:

- We submitted an amendment proposal earlier this month to challenge the required number of association members needed to obtain a seat (currently 1% of total AVMA membership, or roughly 900). The proposal required at least 50 signatures from IVPA members who were also members of AVMA, and we easily exceeded that. Many thanks to all who signed.
- AVMA will "pre-evaluate the resolution and help us edit as necessary to receive full consideration. A final version will be submitted on Dec. 9 and reviewed by the AVMA's Board of Directors and House Advisory Committee, who will provide a recommendation to the House of Delegates prior to their formal consideration and vote at the Veterinary Leadership Conference in January.

You can continue to support this effort by contacting your board members and state AVMA representatives to the House of Delegates (particularly in those states with more representatives, such as CA, NY, TX, and FL) and letting them know why this matters. Every opportunity to communicate with the influential members of this group brings us one step closer to achieving this crucial goal, so make your voices heard! And as always, encourage your colleagues to help us grow by joining IVPA.



Bonnie Bragdon, DVM, MS  
President, IVPA

## IVPA Teams Up with Lighthouse for New Insurance Benefit

Though you've hopefully seen the emails from IVPA's executive director Terry Tosh, we want to make sure you are aware of our newest benefit which aims to address a major concern that has been expressed by membership:



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
INSURANCE GROUP



IVPA has partnered with Lighthouse Insurance Group to provide exclusive access to affordable health insurance for our members, their employees, and families. During the current enrollment period (which runs through December 15), you can sign up for health insurance and related coverage options, including major medical, short-term health plans, vision and dental plans, critical care coverage, life, and several different supplemental health options. Many people will be seeing at least a 4% decrease in premiums for 2020, so now is the perfect time to get your coverage.

These health plans can be designed for individuals or small groups (including part-time, seasonal and other employee classes that have not typically been covered) and tailored to your unique health and financial needs. The team at LIG will find you affordable coverage from major carriers regardless of where you live in the United States. Plans will be effective January 1, 2020 (or sooner). This opportunity is exclusive to IVPA and is extended to ALL members. To discuss options with a member of the Lighthouse team of licensed advisors, call 877-755-0104, or visit [www.ligmembers.com/ivpa](http://www.ligmembers.com/ivpa) to schedule an appointment and receive a no-obligation quote. Remember, open enrollment ends on December 15, so act quickly to learn more.

## BabelVet Offering Complimentary 12-Month Subscription



Would you like to free up busy exam rooms while still serving the needs of your pet patients? The BabelVet platform does just, enabling you to offer clients remote medical progress exams and patient monitoring for minor health and wellness issues.

Telehealth is gaining popularity in human medicine due to its flexibility for both practitioners and patients. With BabelVet, you can optimize your veterinary team during office hours and address routine medical matters in off-peak periods using the power of technology. BabelVet connects to BabelBark, a free client app for storing pet health information, allowing practice and client to share real-time data and interact on their own timelines.



All IVPA members are eligible to receive a 90-day, no risk trial; however, BabelVet is currently offering a complimentary 12-month subscription (\$2,400 value) to one IVPA member in exchange for participation in their software trial. Click on the BabelVet logo to learn more. If you're interested in trying BabelVet, email Tanya Cooper at

[tanya@babelbark.com](mailto:tanya@babelbark.com) and mention that you're a member of IVPA.

## Customizable "Buy Local" Video Coming Soon



Click on images above to learn more about these great companies.

Video is one of the most powerful marketing tools at a veterinary practice's disposal today. In keeping with our mission to promote the value of independently owned and locally operated practices, IVPA leadership worked with the experts at Veteos to create a short, animated video that can be used on social media, in your practices, on your website, or anywhere you want to promote the "Buy local" theme.

Even better, it can also be customized with your practice information to provide an even more personal touch. The process for creating your personalized video will be easy and fast, with turnaround of 48 hours or less. Veteos is putting the final touches on the video now; it will be released at the beginning of next year and premiered during our January member call. We want to extend special thanks to our friends and colleagues at BabelBark (part of the product suite that also includes BabelVet), who provided the financial support necessary to produce this high quality, professional video that we know you will enjoy having as a client education resource.

## Member Survey



As our membership continues to grow, we want to make sure we are "checking in" to see how IVPA can continue to meet your needs as independent veterinary professionals. We recently developed a member survey and encourage all members to respond at their convenience. (There is no deadline.) This survey is completely anonymous, so please be as open and honest as possible. **Click on the image above to access the survey.** Thanks in advance for your participation and feedback.



## ATTN: Associates and Paraprofessionals

- Have you ever thought about what you would do if your practice owner decided to sell to a corporate buyer?
- Do you know what your options are, and are you aware of how your decision can affect the corporatization of veterinary medicine overall?

IVPA wants to help you prepare for this real possibility. Mark your calendars for an upcoming webinar we're hosting on this important topic. More details will follow in the next newsletter.

**Is Your Practice Owner at Risk of "Going Corporate"?**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2020**  
**Time TBD**

## Looking for Expert Input

Associations are made up of members, and members make the association. Would you be interested in contributing your clinical, management, or other expertise to the group through professional development activities, such as leading or participating in a committee, presenting a webinar, authoring content shared exclusively with our members, etc.? If so, contact Terry Tosh, IVPA's executive director ([terry@iveterinarians.org](mailto:terry@iveterinarians.org)) to discuss how you can become an active participant in our future initiatives.



## Trending in Industry

The upcoming issue of JAVMA reports that two new veterinary colleges are moving forward – one in the east and one in the west.



Long Island University and The University of Arizona have received letters of reasonable assurance of accreditation from the AVMA Council on Education. The Long Island University College of Veterinary Medicine is currently accepting applications for the Fall 2020 inaugural class. The University of Arizona closed its application window for the Fall 2020 cohort earlier this month, but will begin accepting applications for Fall 2021 in January. This is a great indication that veterinary medicine is still a viable and sought-after profession. Congratulations to these two new colleges and best of luck to their future students!



LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY  
College of Veterinary Medicine



College of  
Veterinary Medicine

Also of note, efforts by veterinary workers to unionize continue and have met with some success. You can read about the background of this movement and how it got started at: <https://www.avma.org/News/JAVMANews/Pages/171101a.aspx>. (Please note, AVMA will not allow linking to its website, so copy and paste this link into a new tab/window.)

## IVPA Board Members

**Bonnie Bragdon, DVM, MS** – President (VP of Marketing and Veterinary Affairs, Zomedica, Ann Arbor, MI)

**Don Woodman, DVM** – Vice President (Practice Owner, Animal Hospital of Northwood, Safety Harbor, FL)

**John Borzillo, DVM** – Secretary (COO, Central Wisconsin Ag Services, Alma Center, WI)

**Patricia Hill, DVM** – Treasurer (Practice Owner, East North Veterinary Hospital, Greenville, SC)

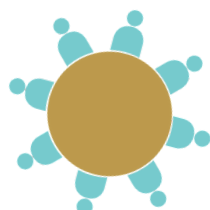
**Chris Bryant, DVM** – Member-at-Large (Practice Owner, Cherokee Animal Hospital, Canton, GA)

**Grant Jacobson, DVM** – Member-at-Large (Practice Owner, The Hometown Veterinarian, Marshalltown, IA)

**Brian Evans, DVM** – (Practice Owner, Coastal Animal Hospital, Encinitas, CA and Carlsbad, CA)

**Scott Neabore, DVM** (Practice Owner, Neabore Veterinary Clinic, Haddonfield, NJ)

WORKING TO MEET THE NEEDS  
OF OUR MEMBERS AND TO  
CHAMPION THE BENEFITS  
OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP



## Marketing Morsels



With Thanksgiving soon upon us, we'll naturally be seeing the usual social media post that provides advice for keeping your pet safe and healthy during the holiday. (No table scraps!) While this is important information that your practice should certainly share, the good news is there are many sources you can link to that provide those safety tips. (AVMA, ASPCA, PetHub, Dogster, The Bark, etc.)

Having this necessary post already covered gives you the chance to engage with your clients on a more personal level. On the day before Thanksgiving, instead of asking clients "What are you thankful for?" ask them to comment on how they think their pet would answer that question. Answers could be things like hikes, snuggles, dog-friendly ice cream, comfy beds (that may or may not be their human's), etc. This not only gives clients the opportunity to get creative when thinking like their pet, but also reminds them of the positive difference they are making in their furry family member's life.



To receive files of this social media-ready post (for Facebook and Instagram), email Deb Rock:

[deb@grammarcentric.com](mailto:deb@grammarcentric.com)



## IVPA Goals

**GOAL 1:** Become a member of the AVMA's Allied Caucus with a seat in the House of Delegates to allow IVPA to advocate within organized veterinary medicine.

**GOAL 2:** Actively promote the value of independently & locally operated practices to consumers through social media.

**GOAL 3:** Level the playing field by negotiating with partners to provide competitive cost advantages to independent practices.

**GOAL 4:** Educate current and future veterinarians on the value of practice ownership.

**GOAL 5:** Support current practice owners to improve the sustainability of independent ownership.



## Welcome New Members



The following members have joined IVPA since 9/1/19:

### PRACTICE OWNERS

Patricia Campbell, Westbridge Veterinary Clinic, Palmetto, FL  
Ilonka Ambros, Veterinary Emergency Center, Bradenton, FL  
Janice Price, Windmill Animal Hospital, Abilene, TX  
Joshua Winston, Sun City West Animal Hospital, Sun City West, AZ  
Amanda Leef, Heal Veterinary Clinic, Watertown, MA  
Jillian Salisbury, Scioto Trail Animal Clinic, Portsmouth, OH  
Michael Hatcher, Premier VetCare, Smyrna, TN  
Andrea Mayberry, THE Grove City Veterinary Hospital, Grove City, OH  
Jeffrey Powers, Jordan Valley Animal Clinic, East Jordan, MI  
Wendy Kashenider, Dewitt Veterinary Hospital, Dewitt, MI  
Kelly Byam, Abel Pet Clinic, Elk Grove, CA  
Elizabeth Hill, Eldora Veterinary Care, Eldora, IA  
Amy Carter, Animal Hospital of Fairview Park, Fairview Park, OH  
Anthony Remillard, Acupet Veterinary Care, Hudson, FL  
Donna Raines, Landrum Veterinary Hospital, Landrum, SC  
Jamie Snow, Snow Animal Health Care, Eaton Rapids, MI  
Aimee Castor, City Cat Vet Clinic, Seattle, WA  
Jennifer Boyle, Sewickley Veterinary Hospital, Sewickley, PA  
Kenneth Roberts, Nonantum Vet Clinic, Landenberg, PA  
Judy Bumbarger, Conover Veterinary Hospital, Conover, NC  
Cynthia Orange, Paw Haven Animal Hospital, Winter Haven, FL  
Ryan Steen, Frey Pet Hospital, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Jeremy Gransky, At Home Veterinary, LLC, Natick, MA

### VETERINARIANS

Rachel Samsel, Bloomington, MN  
Stephanie Henley, Pensacola, FL  
Jessie Kolisch, Columbia, MI

### AFFILIATES

Jim Morrison, Posh Dog Knee Brace  
Kelly Gordon, Dapper Veterinary Marketing  
Cindy Trice, Relief Rover

### PARAPROFESSIONALS

Daniel Levine, New York, NY  
Ashliegh Boudreaux, Greenville, SC  
Andrea Lange, Portland, OR  
Jessica Bergum, Portland, OR  
Shalini Ramsubeik, Ajax, ON  
Michael Thompson, Seattle, WA  
Henry Aruca, Miami, FL  
Natalie Smith, Winter Park, FL  
Heather Rutherford, Portland, OR

## All Member Call

Our annual member call is scheduled for January 29. Time is TBD. Discussion topics include a report on last year's activities as well as plans for the upcoming year. There's a lot to talk about, so we hope you'll be able to join us!



## Tell Us About It

### NEWS

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)

**Associate Editor:** Deb Rock  
(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.