Volunteers
Extending our Reach
We couldn’t do it without you

Every day, through our educational and service programs, Tufts Veterinary School works to support a highly diverse constituency: our students and alumni, companion and farm animal owners, equestrians, neighbors, public health officials, wildlife conservation agencies, veterinarians, humane organizations and others. And every day, in so many ways, what makes this work possible is the support of the same highly diverse constituency. You—our volunteers, collaborators and donors—are the FOUNDATION of our success.

You are:

• farmers, who volunteer to host first-year Tufts students on your farms to give them “real life” experience;

• veterinarians, some alumni, others not, who mentor students in problem-based learning classes on campus, or in your workplaces at veterinary offices, zoos and aquaria, specialty hospitals, in the field in Kenya or Costa Rica, in offices at the Centers for Disease Control and the Federal Drug Administration;

• police officers, who bring your K-9 patrol dogs to donate blood for other dogs;

• academicians from other Tufts campuses and other institutions, who lecture on our campus, collaborate on studies, and offer special learning opportunities to our students;

• friends, who come to the Henry and Lois Foster Hospital for Small Animals to cuddle ailing cats and walk recovering dogs, who clean cages and fetch tree limbs, grasses and stones to create habitats for patients in our Bernice Barbour Wildlife Medicine Building, who sit quietly in the middle of the night with sick foals in the Marilyn M. Simpson Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the Hospital for Large Animals;

• students, faculty and staff who sit on committees, organize campus social and community outreach events, bring speakers to campus and tutor peers;

• and philanthropists, whose generous participation in the Tufts Tomorrow campaign has literally transformed the look of our campus, launched innovative new programs, and created the beginning of an endowment that will ensure the future of Tufts Veterinary School.

This issue of *Tufts Veterinary Medicine* recognizes you. On behalf of all of us at Tufts, I thank you. We simply couldn’t do it without you!

Philip C. Kosch, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Dean
Tufts researcher shows how to build a case against animal abusers

A ground-breaking study headed by Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine will give veterinarians the tools they need to help prosecute animal abusers. The one-year study began in September and is the only one of its kind in the U.S. Forensic pathology is not yet taught in veterinary schools here, and veterinary internships or residencies in the specialty are nonexistent.

Dr. Annette Rauch, V86, MS00, assistant research professor, Department of Environmental and Population Health, is the principal investigator for the pioneering study, which also includes the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL-Boston), the Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA), and Dr. Terry G. Taylor, V90, a board-certified veterinary pathologist.

The study is the only one of its kind in the U.S., where forensic pathology is not yet taught in veterinary schools, and veterinary internships or residencies in the specialty are nonexistent.

“We want to offer assistance to practicing veterinarians by providing information on what they need to do regarding evidence in cases of animal abuse,” Rauch said. “These include the photos they need to take, and the tissue samples they need to send to board-certified pathologists.”

Many states have increased the penalty for animal cruelty from a misdemeanor to a felony, however, abused animals may stay in shelters for several months until congested courts are able to try alleged abusers. “As the penalties for animal abuse increase, so does the burden of proof,” Rauch said. “The purpose of our project is to collect evidence that can be used in a court of law.”

Working with the law enforcement staff of the MSPCA and ARL-Boston, Rauch will follow actual cases of animal abuse and document evidence collected in the prosecution of the cases. Taylor will perform all post-mortem examinations at Angell Memorial Hospital in Boston. Along with evidence law enforcement officials collect at the crime scenes, a database of information and photographs will be posted on a web site that is still in development.

Practicing veterinarians have taken pathology courses, Rauch explained, “but forensic pathology is very complex and difficult. We’re trying to move the education process further along by making resources readily available,” she said.

Initial funding for the study is being provided by The Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust and The Rhode Island Foundation.

Fred Launer receives Childers Award

Tufts Veterinary School has honored Fred D. Launer with the Henry E. Childers Award for exceptional contributions of time and talents when teaching veterinary students.

An animal health technician with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS), Launer has been the co-instructor of the swine component of Tufts’ clinical skills laboratory course since its inception in 1988, contributing a total of about 900 hours. He has consistently received some of the highest student reviews for teaching in that course. Launer has also arranged and conducted trips to swine farms for interested students in Tufts’ selectives program.

“Tufts understands the importance of our own technical staff in the education of our students, and of technicians to the successful practice of veterinary medicine,” noted Dr. Anthony Schwartz, professor and associate dean for Academic and Outreach Programs. “Because of that, it is more than appropriate that a technician receive this award.”

Launer has worked with the USDA since 1977, and has dealt with outbreaks of hog cholera and exotic Newcastle disease in New England, and avian influenza in Pennsylvania. He has also worked on eradication and surveillance programs for several diseases in multiple species during this period. In addition, Launer was the USDA representative for a 1994 swine health regulations review and a 1996 Florida swine health protection review.

Irwin Leav receives distinguished alumnus award

Dr. Irwin Leav, distinguished professor, Biomedical Sciences, was one of six Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine alumni honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award during the college’s 2002 Oath and Hooding Ceremony. These awards are presented to alumni who are well known for their accomplishments and outstanding contributions to society.

The citation notes that Leav contributed significantly to the field of veterinary medicine during the formative years of Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine and has served Tufts in various roles, including assistant to the dean, associate dean for Basic Science, associate dean for Academic Affairs, and associate dean for Research. He is actively involved with teaching pathology to Tufts veterinary and medical students. The author of more than 60 papers, Leav has received continuous funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institutes for Health during the past 19 years.

IN BRIEF

Launer awarded Childers Award

Launer “more than appropriate to receive award for contributions to veterinary education”

Leav awarded alumnus award

Leav is honored for contributions and service to veterinary medicine

Leav is noted for contributions to the development of veterinary medicine at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, including serving as assistant to the dean, associate dean for basic science, and associate dean for academic affairs. He is active in teaching pathology to Tufts veterinary and medical students and has received continuous funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institutes for Health during the past 19 years.

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Volunteers are essential

“The Tufts Wildlife Clinic could not survive without the help we get from volunteers.”

– Dr. Mark Pokras, V’84, Director, Tufts Wildlife Clinic

From the clinics to the classrooms to off-campus services, so many areas of Tufts Veterinary School’s operations are enhanced by the contributions of volunteers. You’ll find Wildlife Clinic volunteers cleaning cages, out in the fields picking clover to feed to rabbits and waterfowl, or shopping for fresh fish and vegetables for injured hawks and ospreys. “Volunteers also include wildlife rehabilitators, whose skills dramatically extend our reach,” Pokras added.
Volunteers in Tufts’ Hospital for Large Animals and Henry and Lois Foster Hospital for Small Animals also help staff by cleaning cages, walking and grooming animals, and talking with people who call Tufts’ Pet Loss Support Hotline.

Many of the facilitators in Tufts’ Problem Based Learning course are also volunteers (see page 12). These veterinarians give their time and expertise helping students learn to think like veterinarians.

“Our volunteers are very special people,” said Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Lahey, who developed the program after volunteering for five years in the intensive care unit of Tufts’ Foster Hospital.

Lahey’s experience convinced her that volunteering at Tufts “is a privilege not to be taken lightly,” she said. “It’s great to be surrounded by people who share love and respect for animals—it’s almost a calling.” Following are profiles of some of the very special people who volunteer at Tufts Veterinary School.

Volunteering at Tufts is a privilege

“You may start out cleaning cages, but it’s one of the most important things you can do for an animal who’s hospitalized,” said Kathy Lahey, volunteer coordinator. “Animals may not appreciate all the medical help they are getting, but they certainly appreciate having a clean cage.”

As the person in charge of the school’s volunteer program, Lahey brings commitment born from experience. For five years, she volunteered three days a week in the intensive care unit of Tufts’ Foster Hospital for Small Animals.

One of her favorite memories is also a good example of the important job only a volunteer can do. While the medical staff was busy tending to the animals in the intensive care unit, Lahey remembers, “sitting for a long time with a very sick dog, encouraging him to eat, one tiny bite at a time.”

“To be a part of the best veterinary medicine team in the country is such a privilege.”

Volunteers provide the important help that makes things run smoothly. “We provide the extra pair of hands that are so often needed,” Lahey said.

What she looks for in a potential volunteer is the willingness to make a commitment. Realistic expectations are important, too.

“I get calls every day, but sometimes people don’t understand what it’s like to volunteer at an animal hospital,” she said. “The animals we see aren’t healthy and happy; they’re sick, injured and scared.” Successful volunteers, no matter what their age, have maturity and common sense.

“Sometimes you’ll come in and the situation is extremely busy, the staff is concentrating on an emergency and they won’t have time to answer your questions,” Lahey explained. “Volunteers have to adapt, make themselves useful, and not get in the way.

“But if you’re patient and reliable,” she added, “you’ll soon be part of the team. To be a part of the best veterinary medicine team in the country is such a privilege.”

The extra pair of hands

“I’m the extra pair of hands,” said Melissa Webster, a volunteer at Tufts’ Hospital for Large Animals. She’s just what the busy staff needs; someone trained to check on the status of recovering animals and keep accurate records of their condition. Sometimes her extra hands are needed to help restrain an animal during a procedure, or to walk horses down to the scales so they can be weighed.

During foaling season, Webster’s efforts were especially valuable. She sat with sick newborn horses, calming them so they wouldn’t detach from respirators and cleaning them up after bouts of diarrhea.

“It’s an activity that requires a lot of attention,” Webster explained. Her ‘extra pair of hands’ are a great help to the professional staff.

Webster owns two horses and notes that, “if one of our animals gets sick, I dive into research to find out what’s wrong with it. I find veterinary medicine fascinating.”

Describing herself as “a casualty of the dot-com crash,” Webster previously worked in business development for an Internet company. She said her volunteer service at Tufts “has been an interesting respite.”

Tufts’ faculty and staff are “…such champions of the animals, I signed up to help with the foals.”

Webster came to Tufts last winter with a friend whose mare was being evaluated. “I had the good fortune to watch Dr. Mary Rose Paradis, Beth Torello and other technicians at work,” she said.

“They’re such champions of the animals, I signed up to help with the foals.”

“Melissa is a great volunteer,” said Torello, senior veterinary technician, Hospital for Large Animals. “She is someone I would love to have as a member of my staff—that’s the best compliment I could give.”

continued on page 6
Volunteer prepares to become veterinary student

Volunteering in the intensive care unit at Tufts’ Foster Hospital for Small Animals is an important step on the path to a new career for Nancy Boren.

After graduating from Wellesley College, Boren worked for the Manhattan district attorney in New York City and attended law school, “but I decided it wasn’t for me,” she said. She was accepted into the post baccalaureate premedical program at Brandeis University and is taking science classes there to help her achieve her new goal: acceptance into veterinary school.

“My experience at Tufts has confirmed that my career switch is right.”

After taking classes, Boren volunteers at Tufts on Friday afternoons. “It’s a busy time,” she said, “so I usually check to see if there is laundry or dishes to wash.” To keep the unit running smoothly on weekends, Boren also makes sure there is an ample supply of flushes - syringes filled with a heparin and saline solution to prevent blood clots. Every time an intravenous line is disconnected, reconnected or used to administer medication, a flush is administered to ensure the line functions properly.

On a busy weekend, the intensive care unit goes through hundreds of flushes. When it’s not so busy, Boren takes dogs that are ambulatory outside for walks, “my favorite part of the job,” she said.

Boren is enthusiastic about her role as a volunteer and certain that she’s heading in the right career direction. “My experience at Tufts has confirmed that my career switch is right,” she said. “I feel confident this is the right career for me.”

Artist is inspired to sketch and care for wildlife

Andy Volpe is an artist whose interest in raptors led him to volunteer at Tufts’ Wildlife Clinic and sketch some of the wild creatures he met there.

“My goal is to capture the essence of a wild bird in a drawing.”

You’ll find several of Volpe’s drawings on the walls at the wildlife clinic. He’s also held wildlife drawing workshops for children and adults.

“My goal is to capture the essence of a wild bird in a drawing,” Volpe said.

In the two years since he started volunteering, Volpe has encountered a variety of wildlife. One of his most memorable was a rare golden eagle that was shot in Maine and brought to Tufts for treatment.

“Its wing was shattered, but it was still such a regal bird,” Volpe said. “The veterinarians were able to fix its wound, but the eagle couldn’t survive in the wild, so it was sent to a nature center in Maine.

“In my third weekend of volunteering, an injured bald eagle was brought in,” Volpe continued. “I held its wing while Dr. Tseng wrapped it. Later, after it recovered, I got to see it released—that was exhilarating.”

As a volunteer on weekends, Volpe’s duties range from cleaning cages and washing laundry to answering the phone.

“People call in with questions; they’ve found animals and don’t know what to do,” he said. Staff and volunteers consult a wealth of reference materials and pass on the latest information, sometimes suggesting a caller contact a member of the Massachusetts Wildlife Rehabilitators Association. These dedicated volunteers work with the staff at the clinic and care for all manner of wildlife, from baby birds and squirrels to snakes, turtles and wood ducks.

Getting a close up view of wildlife in action is one of the benefits of his volunteering, Volpe said.

“It’s fascinating for me to see how differently birds of the same species react. You could have three red tail hawks and each one would react differently to being handled,” Volpe said. “For one, we had to present its food in a certain way or else it wouldn’t eat; other birds are very picky about the kind of food they’ll eat. We have to think up different combinations; it’s almost like being a gourmet chef for birds.”

Volunteering is her reward

Carey Atkins, a Ph.D. student in virology and immunology at UMass Medical School, says she became a volunteer at Tufts’ Wildlife Clinic “as a reward to myself for passing my qualifying exam.” Atkins adds that she has always been interested in animals. “My goal is to somehow use my research for the welfare of animals. They’re the underdogs in the research universe.”

Like most of the new volunteers at
the wildlife clinic, Atkins started out cleaning cages. But in the two-and-a-half years since she started, Atkins has taken on additional responsibilities and now interviews potential volunteers and conducts orientations.

“Being a volunteer is a great experience … I’ve especially learned how to be creative in getting some of our animals to eat.”

“Being a volunteer is a great experience; I’ve learned so much,” she said. “I’ve especially learned how to be creative in getting some of our animals to eat.”

Atkins remembers her first encounter with a wild bird. It was Archie, the barred owl who lived at the clinic for 16 years before she died in June 2001. “I was a bit intimidated,” Atkins admitted, “now, I make sure the new volunteers start with smaller birds.”

A typical shift for Atkins includes sitting in on rounds, where staff members gather to discuss the status of their patients and “tag teaming with the veterinary students,” she said. Sometimes that means the volunteer with experience acts as instructor for the students who spend a two-week rotation at the clinic.

“They get the benefit of our experience,” she said. “Our goal is to help them learn.”

To volunteer at Tufts Veterinary School, you need to meet these criteria:

• be at least 18-years-old to volunteer at the Foster Hospital for Small Animals; 21-years-old for the Hospital for Large Animals;
• have medical experience and/or experience with animals;
• make a commitment of at least four hours per volunteer session for a period of 6 to 12 months.

For more information, call Kathy Lahey at (508) 839-5395, X-84503

TUFTS ANIMAL EXPO REGISTRATION TOPS 3,000

More than 3,000 people from around the country attended the third annual Tufts Animal Expo at Boston’s Hynes Convention Center in September to learn about innovative animal health and welfare practices.

Representing 45 states, the District of Columbia, and four other countries, registrants included veterinarians, veterinary technicians, groomers, breeders, trainers, pet sitters, equine professionals, wildlife professionals, animal assisted therapy professionals and others who work with animals.

“We were delighted to bring together such a diverse and enthusiastic crowd,” said Dr. Philip C. Kosch, dean of Tufts Veterinary School. “As in previous years, our programs were timely, informative and, in some cases, provocative.

“More and more people are recognizing the connection between animal and human health, including the human/animal bond, zoonotic diseases, and our food supply,” Kosch added. “Tufts Animal Expo offers an ideal arena for exploring all aspects of animal health and welfare and how they impact public health.”

Jack Hanna, one of America’s most beloved naturalists and adventurers, drew an enormous crowd to Expo’s opening ceremonies. Earlier in the evening, Dr. Marty Becker, a veterinarian, teacher, author and media personality, received the Leo K. Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian Award from Hills Pet Nutrition, Delta Society and the American Veterinary Medical Association, for helping promote the human/animal bond.

More than 175 leading animal care companies contributed to the upbeat and informative ambiance in Tufts Animal Expo’s exhibit hall. These included Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Hartz, Merial, the Iams Company, IDEXX, Novartis, Nestle Purina, Veterinary Practice News, Bide-A-Wee, and others.

Plans for next year’s expo are already underway. For more information call 508-887-4723 or visit the web site at www.tufsanaimalexpo.com.
Pet therapy volunteers develop human-animal connections

Delphy, a three-year-old golden retriever, is greeted with smiles and hugs when she pays a weekly visit to the UMass Adolescent Treatment Program at Westboro State Hospital.

From the first day when one of the girls planted a big kiss on the dog’s nose, Delphy’s presence has boosted the spirits of the young patients. One of them even overcame the terror she used to feel when a dog approached. Bitten as a child, the girl cowered in a corner of her room when Delphy first came in with her owner, Dr. Marie-Anne Faissler, a veterinarian from Switzerland, who volunteers with Tufts’ Animal-Facilitated Therapy Program.

“It was four months before the patient became comfortable with Delphy,” said Judy Phillippo, COTA/L, certified occupational therapist at the adolescent program. “We reassured her and she could see how gentle the dog is.”

Besides being well-trained, Delphy is also certified as a therapy dog.

“After a few weeks the girl came to the door of her room, then she’d get as far as the doorway of the room where Delphy was, gradually edging closer,” Phillippo continued. “Now she has no fear.”

Giving and receiving affection from the dog is a major benefit for the teenagers; most of them come from traumatic backgrounds, and any kind of touch can be a trigger for powerful emotions, Phillippo noted. “Petting Delphy is very calming; it’s also the only opportunity they have for personal contact.”

“Delphy is a catalyst,” added Faissler. “She allows the kids to express emotions. continued on page 9
She also offers them an easy access to unconditional love.”

“Even the kids who are having a bad day and don’t feel like interacting with the dog smile when they watch Delphy with the others,” said Phillippo.

Playing with the dog has an added benefit. Because she was born in Switzerland, Delphy was trained in French, so Faissler gave each of the teenagers a card with translations of several commands. This added another dimension to the sessions, as the youngsters learned to say “assis” to get Delphy to sit and “couché” to lie down.

“You see the smiles…it seems like such a little thing, petting or playing with a dog, but it means so much.”

– Harue Midtmoen, Coordinator, Tufts Animal-Facilitated Therapy Program.

“The adolescent treatment program is a perfect match for Delphy and me,” said Faissler, who moved to Massachusetts with her husband, Dr. Dominik Faissler, Tufts Veterinary School assistant professor of neurology. Although she plans to return to work in the future, Faissler said, “I’ll make time to continue to volunteer with Delphy.”

Such dedication is contagious among volunteers and healthcare professionals who work with Harue Midtmoen, the volunteer who coordinates Tufts’ Animal-Facilitated Therapy Program. Ever since she started the program in 1997, Midtmoen’s enthusiasm, dedication and love for animals have guided its development. Midtmoen said she became convinced of the importance of animals in peoples’ lives after her husband died and she found comfort with her Abyssian cat. When she retired after a successful career in business, she volunteered with the Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. A staff member there suggested she might be interested in the newly formed Center for Animals and Public Policy at Tufts’ Grafton campus.

“I met with the Center’s first director, Andrew Rowan, who suggested I get involved in their pet visitation program,” Midtmoen recalled. “He gave me about a dozen books to read on the subject, and I made a 180 degree turn from my business career.”

But the organizational skills, creativity and drive Midtmoen used as an executive served her well as she developed the pet therapy program.

Midtmoen found volunteers as well as trainers and programs to certify the dogs. As a result of her tireless advocacy for the program, the dogs have been welcomed at nursing homes, senior centers and after-school programs.

“Harue is a great ambassador for Tufts,” said Dr. Gary Patronek, director of the Center for Animals and Public Policy.

“Her program emphasizes to society the profound role animals play.”

One of Midtmoen’s favorite success stories involves a boy who was severely abused as an infant. He and his two older brothers were frequently locked in a dark room along with a large, black German shepherd, trained by the boys’ parents to be an attack dog.

The youngster was being treated at Worcester Youth Guidance by therapist Kathy Perkins, LICSW. “I worked with the boy and his adopted parents for two-and-a-half years,” Perkins said. “Though he was able to work through most of the destructive behavior caused by his abuse, he was still terrified of dogs.”

After attending one of Midtmoen’s presentations, Perkins asked if she would help.

Midtmoen called on Dorothy Gilbert, whose German shepherd, Max, had been trained and certified. Gilbert, Midtmoen and Max visited the Guidance Center and over time the boy’s fear disappeared. “At the last session, Max and the boy were rolling on the ground together,” Midtmoen said.

Watching the bonds develop between people and animals is rewarding, she continued. “You see the smiles…it seems like such a little thing, petting or playing with a dog, but it means so much.”

For more information about the Tufts Animal-Facilitated Therapy Program, or to volunteer, contact Harue Midtmoen at (508) 839-7991.
Honored with Outstanding Alumnus Award, Dr. Michael McGuill says veterinary medicine is the noblest of all professions

There’s a saying that goes: ‘If you were arrested for kindness, would there be enough evidence to convict you?’ Through my short number of years as a veterinarian, it’s the kindnesses of others towards people and animals that I recall most vividly, and at the end of the day, it’s the kindnesses that I hope define me more than any achievement or award. At the end of the day, I hope I’m convictable.

I’ve had opportunities to work in clinical practice, public health and, now, industry, and in all of them, I’ve had unbelievable opportunities to learn and to grow, but more than anything, to witness acts of kindness.

When I was in Tokyo during a senior year elective rotation, I saw what happens in Japan when a dog dies in a veterinary hospital. The staff clean and groom the body, place it in a casket overflowing with chrysanthemums, and make a formal presentation of the body to the dog’s human companions in a ritual of grief and respect.

Some acts of kindness seem so routine they barely register to the larger world, but their impact is profound.

After I helped organize a group that turned into Phinney’s Friends - a program that provides support for pet owners with AIDS - I watched over the years as volunteers walked dogs and changed litter boxes for pets belonging to hundreds of people so sick they wouldn’t have been able to keep their pets otherwise.

Some acts of kindness succeed by their sheer persistence.

When the state began to consider a way to keep rabies off of Cape Cod through a program to give oral rabies vaccine to wild raccoons, I saw a grass roots group of nonprofessional women organize conferences and letter-writing campaigns to legislators until Tufts agreed to take the lead and the state agreed to kick in the money.

Most of the time, being Dr. Rabies, or Dr. West Nile Virus, or Dr. Lyme Disease, meant being the bad guy. I will always remember having to tell the 80-year-old couple that the raw milk they fed to several dozen guests at their 60th wedding anniversary party was from their cow that died of rabies.

I’ll always remember telling the astounding mom that her 10-year-old son needed to be evaluated for possible rabies exposure because he had contact with a freshly dead cat that was found to have died of rabies: on a bet from his friends, he picked up the cat by the tail with his teeth and swung it around. I’ll always remember telling the history teacher that the woodchuck he found dead on the side of the road, and which he was using to teach his junior high school students about Colonial America by having them all participate in skinning it without gloves, was rabid.

And I’ll always remember the almost daily task of calling a pet owner to tell them that their unvaccinated pet dog or cat fought with a rabid skunk or raccoon and needed to be euthanized. After all, this was a member of their family. How could they possibly be punished so terribly for having forgotten something like a vaccination?

I believe we have chosen the noblest of all professions, and that at some deeply spiritual level, the many kindnesses we’re all responsible for are making a difference. A kind word for a client facing the death of a favorite pet, the gift of euthanasia for an animal that can no longer understand or bear its own pain, all of the hundreds of kindnesses we’re all responsible for are making a difference.

It’s as if every act of kindness is a footprint pointing acts of evil in the wrong direction, and if enough of those footprints accumulate, they have the power to lead a blind man safely out of a burning building, to protect a four-legged family member of someone dying of AIDS, to stop a horrible disease like rabies from entering one part of the planet. It is our oath and our privilege to give kindness.

Michael McGuill is currently employed by Decision Resources, Inc., as director of epidemiology. Prior to that, he held several positions at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, including state public health veterinarian. McGuill received his doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Tufts University, a master of science degree in epidemiology and a master of fine arts degree from the University of Massachusetts, and a bachelor of arts degree in English from Wheaton College.
In a first-of-its-kind collaboration, the Tufts Wildlife Clinic is joining forces with The Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies in Dartmouth, Mass., to investigate threats to coastal and seabird populations in the southeastern Massachusetts communities of New Bedford, South Dartmouth, Fairhaven and Westport.
“Students who have experienced PBL hit the ground running when they get to the clinics because the program helps them understand the clinical process.”

- Dr. Anthony Schwartz, professor and associate dean for Academic and Outreach Programs.

It’s 8 a.m. on a foggy fall morning when six second-year veterinary students meet to discuss the case of the cat with seizures. Over bagels and coffee in a small conference room in the David McGrath Veterinary Teaching Laboratory, the students present, discuss and reject several potential hypotheses on the cause of the animal’s illness. During the presentations, the group’s facilitator, Dr. Kathy Trenholm, V88, gauges the students’ understanding by asking them to explain scientific terminology. She also supplements their discoveries with practical advice.
A
s the students struggle to describe certain eye conditions, Trenholm tells them, “Look at the eyes of every animal you examine...you have to look at a lot of eyes...you won’t know what abnormal is until you see a lot of normal eyes.”

When the students eventually hone in on toxoplasmosis as the cause of the cat’s seizures, Trenholm is exuberant.

“That’s it,” she says with a satisfied smile. “Now, how are you going to treat it?”

The students and facilitator are engaged in Problem Based Learning, (PBL), a process that involves small groups working together to identify what they know and what they don’t know, in order to solve a problem; in this case, how to diagnose and treat the cat with seizures.

At the first session, students are given a case study with a selected amount of information provided. Guided by the facilitator, they determine what additional information they need before undertaking their research in texts, scientific journals and the Internet. A week later, they report on their findings before going on to the next phase of the case.

“PBL enhances veterinary student learning of basic science facts and concepts, clinical problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills,” said Dr. Anthony Schwartz, professor and associate dean for Academic and Outreach Programs, who also participates as a PBL facilitator.

“PBL is dedicated to helping get across and reinforcing important and difficult concepts presented in lectures,” Schwartz continued. “A ‘paper’ case of a cat with diabetes mellitus, for example, presents the students the opportunity to learn about carbohydrate metabolism they may be hearing about in their physiology course.

“In a case on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), also known as mad cow disease, issues range from the molecular to the global—how the disease affects the animal, the population, the farmer whose herd is destroyed, the food supply, and then the political ramifications.”

Dr. Lawrence Kleine, associate professor, Radiology, who coordinates the second-year PBL course noted, “Students learn to think in terms of hypotheses and then strategically accept or reject them.

“They learn to think like veterinarians,” he continued. “They learn the vocabulary and thought process a veterinarian uses when approaching an animal.”

During PBL sessions in the fall and spring semesters, students meet in groups of six or so with a facilitator for two hours once a week.

“Facilitators don’t have to be the experts,” Schwartz explained. “They have to guide the students, help them get where they’re supposed to go. For the facilitators, the challenge is to make sure the students accomplish the goals established for the case. In the case of diabetes, for example, you want to make sure the students learn the liver’s role in carbohydrate metabolism—do they understand that the (diabetic) animal has an enlarged, fatty liver?”

“I’ve enjoyed the contact with the students and the feeling that I am making a contribution,”

– Dr. Henry Childers, PBL Volunteer Facilitator.

Because PBL requires small groups, there is a great need for facilitators. Tufts is fortunate to supplement its faculty with volunteer facilitators drawn from other institutions, for example, veterinarians in practice and research. Eleven of the 28 facilitators who worked with students during PBL courses this fall were volunteers.

Dr. Henry Childers, who practices in Cranston, RI, and is an adjunct member of Tufts’ clinical faculty, has been a facilitator since PBL was introduced at Tufts eight years ago. He also currently coordinates the first-year PBL course.

As a credit to Dr. Childers’ exceptional contributions of time and talents, Tufts Veterinary School created the Henry E. Childers Award, honoring volunteers in his name. Childers was the first recipient in 1998. (See related article Page 3)

“I’ve enjoyed the contact with the students and the feeling that I am making a contribution,” Childers said. “In evaluations, students tell me, ‘This is the most exciting course I’ve ever taken.’”

While PBL at Tufts was designed to supplement traditional lecture-based classes in the curriculum, Childers noted that it provides first-year students with a welcome dose of reality.

“First-year students are getting a lot of basic stuff in lectures when what they’re dying to do is work with animals,” he explained, “The PBL sessions help them get a feel for what they’ll be doing as veterinarians.”

Schwartz concurred, adding, “Students who have experienced PBL hit the ground running when they get to the clinics because the program helps them understand the clinical process.”

Tufts veterinary students are very enthusiastic about PBL. In the most recent survey of graduating veterinarians, a solid majority said they had a better understanding of the relevance of basic science as a result of taking PBL courses; 80 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the PBL cases were valuable; 80 percent said it helped identify resources to improve their knowledge base and encouraged lifelong learning; and 87 percent said it improved their problem-solving skills.

Another benefit of PBL is the collegial relationships that develop among students.

“They get to be close friends over these projects,” said Schwartz. “They learn so much—how to interact, how to criticize constructively, how to be self-critical.”

All this helps prepare students for the world outside veterinary school, Schwartz concluded. “They have to be able to interact with clients, explain procedures and diagnoses in ways that people who don’t have a scientific background can understand.”
Cats living in homes where people smoke cigarettes are more than twice as likely as other cats to acquire a deadly form of cancer known as feline lymphoma, according to a first-of-its-kind study in cats conducted by scientists at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine and the University of Massachusetts.

The study, entitled “Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Risk of Malignant Lymphoma in Pet Cats,” was published in the August 1 issue of the American Journal of Epidemiology. The authors conclude that these findings offer a compelling reason to study the relationship between passive smoke and non-Hodgkins lymphoma in humans, which is similar to lymphoma in cats.

“It has long been believed that the major cause of feline lymphoma was feline leukemia virus,” explained Dr. Antony S. Moore, a board-certified veterinary oncologist and director of Tufts’ Harrington Oncology Program. “The results of our study clearly indicate that exposure to environmental factors such as second-hand tobacco smoke has devastating consequences for cats because it significantly increases their likelihood of contracting lymphoma.”

Several recent studies in humans have suggested that people who smoke tobacco may have an increased risk of contracting non-Hodgkins lymphoma. In addition, other studies have suggested that children of parents who smoke may have an increased risk of developing lymphoma. The results of these studies, however, are often hard to prove due to the myriad of other risk factors that people face.

In sharing their living environments with humans, cats are exposed to many of the same environmental contaminants as their owners, including tobacco smoke. Exposure levels in cats continuously kept indoors may actually be higher than those of human household members, who often spend extended periods of time outside their homes. Cats may become exposed by inhaling the smoke or by ingesting it when they groom themselves and lick particulate matter off of their fur.

“We believe that feline exposure patterns to environmental tobacco smoke may mimic those of young children living in households where adults smoke and where the children inhale tobacco smoke or ingest particulate matter by mouthing contaminated objects,” said Dr. Elizabeth R. Bertone, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

“Our findings offer another reason for smokers living with pets and children to try to ‘kick the habit,’” Bertone added. “Quitting smoking will not only reduce their risk of cancer, heart disease and diabetes, but may reduce the risk of cancer in their children and pets, as well.”

Dr. Laura A. Snyder, V02, co-authored this study in collaboration with Drs. Bertone and Moore. The investigation was supported by the National Institutes for Health, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Cape Cod Cat Club and the International Feline Foundation.

Feline lymphoma is the most common cancer in cats, and often involves their intestinal tracts. Cats that contract lymphoma are usually about 10 years old. The typical treatment protocol involves chemotherapy and possibly radiation therapy for a course of about six months. The cost of treatment is $2,000 to $3,000. Approximately 65 percent of cats that receive treatment go into remission, and about 25 percent of them survive for more than two years.
Horse thrives with care from Tufts

When her beloved Morgan, Caleb, lost his spirit, energy and 20 pounds in one week, Jan DiRuzzo heeded the advice of Dr. Conrad Jones, her veterinarian in Kingston, Rhode Island, and brought the horse to Tufts’ Hospital for Large Animals.

C apleb had been running a temperature as high as 104 degrees and had lost all interest in food. “He was miserable,” said DiRuzzo. “He’s usually such an exuberant horse. He has a great heart and the energy and spirit of a five-year-old.”

But the horse that arrived at Tufts’ Hospital for Large Animals was listless and had no interest in food. A battery of tests indicated bacteria in Caleb’s stomach fluid. Treatment with antibiotics brought the bacteria count down in a few days, but the horse’s fever remained.

DiRuzzo drove from Rhode Island every day to visit Caleb. “We consider him a member of our family,” she explained. “It was important for me to be there to check on him and reassure him.” She was also in frequent consultation over the phone with her daughter, a veterinarian who practices in Anchorage, Alaska.

“Caleb was my daughter’s mount through high school; she was very concerned about his treatment,” DiRuzzo said.

A deadline also loomed. The family had planned a trip to Alaska to visit their daughter, but they didn’t want to leave their sick horse. Exploratory surgery was scheduled, but at the last minute, an emergency caused it to be cancelled. By the following day, Caleb showed marked improvement.

“It was almost as if he knew,” DiRuzzo said. Caleb continued to improve, eagerly eating the carrots and treats that staff members brought him.

“Finally, we able to see the horse the DiRuzzos know,” said Dr. Mary Rose Paradis, associate professor, who headed the team that treated Caleb. Assisting in his care were Dr. Shane DeWitt, a resident, and Elizabeth (Betsey) J. Theve, V2003, a fourth-year student. Though Caleb required extended hospitalization, the DiRuzzos felt confident about the care he was receiving and proceeded with their trip to Alaska.

“We got updates by phone from the staff and Betsey even sent us pictures,” DiRuzzo said.

Now that the family and horse are back in Rhode Island, DiRuzzo describes their experience as “fabulous.”

“The care, concern and support we received from the administration and the veterinarians was outstanding,” DiRuzzo said. “If we could have that kind of treatment in human medicine, we’d all be better served.”

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A Letter from the President

On June 30, 2002, the university concluded the Tufts Tomorrow campaign, having surpassed our $600 million goal by raising a total of $609 million. This is a wonderful achievement that has strengthened Tufts immensely. To all who participated in making this campaign such a tremendous success—administrators and faculty, trustees and overseers, volunteer leaders, friends of specific programs, our dedicated development staff, and most of all, our many very generous donors—I offer my heartfelt thanks.

Through your good efforts, the campaign achieved several very important goals. Building the endowment, especially for student financial aid and faculty support, was one of the university’s highest priorities. The campaign raised more than $222 million for endowment, including $86 million in endowed funds for scholarships, fellowships, loan funds, stipends, and internships university-wide, significantly increasing the university’s capability to provide financial assistance to students. The campaign also received commitments from generous benefactors to establish 34 new endowed and term professorships throughout the university. By recognizing and rewarding excellence, these commitments are enabling Tufts to retain its most outstanding faculty members and to attract highly distinguished scholars.

Securing funding for key facilities was another urgent campaign goal, and $110 million was raised for this purpose, enabling the university to undertake the construction of critically important new research space on the Boston campus; outstanding new athletics and student services centers on the Medford campus; and several much-needed new teaching facilities on the Grafton campus. A third major area of need was support for programs and operations, and the campaign addressed these needs very successfully, raising $198 million for current use in support of academic programs and $77 million in unrestricted giving for current use, including several record breaking years of unprecedented generosity to the Tufts Fund, which reached an all-time high of $9.5 million in 2002.

More than 133,000 alumni, parents, and friends contributed to the Tufts Tomorrow campaign to advance the mission of the university. Through your loyalty and generosity, Tufts stands on a far stronger foundation than it did before the campaign. While there is always more to be done, Tufts’ tradition of philanthropy has matured significantly, giving us confidence that we will meet our future challenges with equal success. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lawrence S. Bacow
President
We all should feel a great sense of pride in the successful completion on June 30, 2002, of the Tufts Tomorrow campaign. The School of Veterinary Medicine set a high goal—$68 million—and met it. This is your achievement: the achievement of thousands of friends, alumni and parents who have embraced the school’s mission, who recognize and appreciate what Tufts has accomplished to date, and who are generously investing in, and thereby helping to create, its promising future.

Many of the accomplishments of the Tufts Tomorrow campaign are visible on the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Grafton campus. (If you haven’t visited the campus recently, you should make the trip!) The construction of the David McGrath Veterinary Teaching Laboratory, the Agnes Varis Lecture Hall, and the Bernice Barbour Wildlife Medicine Building supported the long-planned consolidation of all academic activity on the Grafton campus. This summer, the completion of the Richard J. Phelps Athletic Field added another important dimension to campus life. And as I write, the expansion and renovation of the Foster Hospital for Small Animals is underway—a project that recognizes how the Foster Hospital is serving the animal-owning community in more ways and in greater numbers than ever anticipated.

Less visible, but equally important, is how the campaign has enhanced the school’s endowment. Tufts Veterinary School is young and understandably small in its size and quality. The Tufts Tomorrow campaign, with 15 new scholarship endowments, 12 new program endowments, and the establishment of the Marilyn M. Simpson Chair in Equine Medicine, has moved the school in the right direction.

The Tufts Tomorrow campaign also launched important new programs: the Harrington Oncology Program, the Center for Conservation Medicine and the SVF Heritage Breeds Preservation Project among them, initiatives that keep Tufts in the forefront of veterinary education and service.

What has made this campaign especially rewarding on all levels is the participation of so many people, foundations and corporations. All of us affiliated with Tufts Veterinary School respect that every penny that has been donated is donated by choice. Many gifts have been given in memory of individuals committed to animals or in memory of animals that have enriched the lives of individuals and families. In accepting our support, the school also accepts responsibility for using the resources wisely to advance veterinary education and animal health and well being.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the School of Veterinary Medicine marked the end of the Tufts Tomorrow campaign with a record year of fund raising achievement—the first time that the school recorded over $9 million in gifts and pledges. The list that follows acknowledges those donors whose leadership gifts for the Tufts Veterinary Fund and for endowments, scholarships, capital improvements and other restricted purposes contributed to a spectacular finale for the campaign. I regret that space limits us from identifying every donor. Please know that every gift is deeply appreciated.

For the School of Veterinary Medicine, the Tufts Tomorrow campaign has generated essential resources and important momentum. As I thank you for all you have done to support the school, I encourage you to think of this as just the beginning. Together we have accomplished so much. Together we can accomplish so much more.

Henry L. Foster, D.V.M., V83, H92, is Trustee emeritus of Tufts University and serves as chair of the Board of Overseers to the School of Veterinary Medicine.

From the Veterinary School Campaign Chair

Congratulations!

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Henry & Lois Foster
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(508) 839-7918

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(508) 839-5395, ext. 84650

Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine administration
(508) 839-5302

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director of veterinary development and alumni relations
(508) 839-7907 or e-mail: shelley.rodman@tufts.edu

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VG Alumnus/us, School of Veterinary Medicine
W Alumnus/us, School of Veterinary Medicine
X Alumnus, School of Veterinary Medicine
Y School of Veterinary Medicine
Tufts’ sheep can sleep soundly at night, thanks to the watchful eye of Preston, this guard llama gelding who protects the flock from predators. Some wily coyotes had been challenging the sheep, so Marc Page of Sputtermill Ranch Llamas in Petersham, Mass., donated the llama to guard them. “Llamas adapt quickly as guards, challenging unsuspecting predators by stampeding or screaming at them,” said Dr. George Saperstein, chairman of the Department of Environmental and Population Health. “Interestingly, llamas often become attached to the flocks they’re protecting, and can be quite gentle around newborn lambs.”

Page and 25 other llama farmers also donated to Tufts’ Hospital for Large Animals a valuable llama chute, which handlers will use to safely restrain the animals while they’re being treated in the hospital. Each year, Tufts treats about 500 camelids from New England and New York farms. “We are extremely grateful to Marc and other llama farmers for donating the chute to Tufts Veterinary School,” Saperstein said.