Rockin’ Round the Clock: The LSU Emergency Service Operates 24 Hours a Day
LETTER FROM OUR DEAN

In 2013, the LSU SVM will celebrate 40 years of veterinary medical education. In 1973, we accepted our first class of 36 students, all from Louisiana. Since then, we have grown tremendously. We have graduated 2,492 veterinarians and over 364 MS and PhD students. We have moved from temporary housing on LSU's main campus to our own building.

The hospital that started out in temporary buildings adjacent to our current site is now a state-of-the-art medical facility housed within the LSU SVM building. Our hospital services have expanded since then as well.

While the hospital has always served our patients on a 24-hour basis, we began accepting emergency cases at all hours approximately five years ago. We provide full-service emergency care for any patients that can get to us. This issue of *La Veterinaire* chronicles some of the cases admitted to our hospital for emergency care.

Our hospital improvements also include a new dynamic endoscope to better diagnose our equine patients. You'll learn about that in this issue as well. We also have several new faculty members who have joined the LSU SVM family.

Our research program continues to be a vibrant part of who we are and is supported by grants from both government and industry. The SVM held $46.8 million in extramural grants and contracts during 2010-11; our research partnerships provide us with the resources to investigate diseases that affect both animals and people.

Our commitment is to our core mission: to save lives, find cures, and change lives every day. We will continue to provide the best education for our students, superior and compassionate care for our patients and ground-breaking research that improves the lives of both animals and people.

Peter F. Haynes, DVM, DACVS
Dean

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Rockin’ Round the Clock
The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary Teaching Hospital provides round-the-clock care for our patients seven days a week, 365 days a year. Learn about a typical weekend in the Small Animal Clinic. Full story, page 2.

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Cover Image
Veterinary technician Ashley Wilson (left) and fourth-year veterinary student Randee Monceaux, prepare feline patient Minoux, to receive a blood transfusion in the Small Animal Intensive Care Unit at the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

La Veterinaire
The News-Magazine of the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine

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Mission:
The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine is a dynamic community dedicated to saving lives, finding cures, and changing lives through outstanding clinical and community service, educational excellence, and groundbreaking scholarly research.

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On http://www.facebook.com/, search for “LSU School of Veterinary Medicine” and become a fan. For Twitter, go to http://twitter.com/LSUVetMed and click “Follow.”
At 6:30 p.m. on a Sunday, while you’re sitting down to a family dinner, veterinarians, technicians and students at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary Teaching Hospital are taking care of patients. Some of these patients were brought in during regular business hours, but others have arrived after hours for emergency care. In 2011, over 2,400 patients were admitted to the LSU Emergency Service (that’s an average of more than 200 per month). If your pet needs veterinary care after 5 p.m. or on a weekend, the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital is here for you.

On a recent weekend in January, the Emergency Service saw 26 patients (11 on Saturday and 15 on Sunday). The veterinarians on duty work 12 hour shifts, the technicians are on for 10 hours, and the students are on for eight hours. Interns are assigned to the service to see emergencies during weekdays. They are assisted by veterinary students on the appropriate services, so if a patient comes in with a fracture, the orthopedic surgery service would lend a student.

When small animal internal medicine resident Dr. Jocelyn Garber arrived for her shift at 8 a.m. on Sunday, she first checked on her Companion Animal Medicine Service patients from the previous week. Then she started seeing the emergency patients as they arrived. In between caring for patients, Dr. Garber called owners and referring veterinarians to update them on the status of her patients.

One patient presented for emergency care on Sunday was Minoux, a 10-month-old female cat whose owners were referred to the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital by their veterinarian. On physical examination, Minoux’s mucous membranes appeared very pale, and a rapid blood test revealed profound anemia with a packed cell volume of 6% (normal for cats is 28-50%). After blood was drawn for further diagnostic tests and blood typing in preparation for a transfusion, Minoux was placed in an oxygen cage. Diagnostic possibilities included hemorrhage, a blood parasite, and bone marrow disease. Minoux became more energetic following the two-hour transfusion; however, test results indicated pancytopenia (reduced red cells, white cells and platelets), which subsequently turned out to be due to a bone marrow disease.
Riley, a 3-year-old male Golden retriever, was brought in by his owners because he had vomited 15 times that day. Veterinary students Callie Habrun, Ho Cheol Shim and Alex David radiographed Riley’s abdomen to rule out intestinal obstruction or a foreign body. Although the radiographs revealed an enlarged spleen, no specific cause of vomiting was determined.

Riley received supportive medication for nausea and some fluids to counter possible dehydration. After Riley was stabilized, he returned home with his owners later that evening with instructions to bring him back if he vomited any more that night.

Avery, a female golden retriever-Chow mix, had been diagnosed with a urinary tract infection by her regular veterinarian earlier in the week. Her owners were concerned that her infection was getting worse, so they brought her to the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital for evaluation.

A urine sample was collected from Avery, and veterinary technician Claire Webster and veterinary student Alex David performed an ultrasound of her bladder. No abnormalities, such as bladder stones or cancer, were detected. Emergency duty intern Dr. Jessica Leeman submitted the urine sample to the Clinical Pathology service for a bacterial culture. Like Riley, Avery left with her owners to go home that night.

On Monday morning, emergency duty interns Drs. Jessica Leeman, Sandra Tisdelle, and Benjamin Polansky met with Dr. Mark Acierno, associate professor of companion animal medicine, to discuss the weekend’s patients. Following rounds, patients are transferred to the appropriate services (e.g., a patient with a fracture is transferred to the orthopedic surgery service, a patient with an abdominal mass goes to the soft tissue surgery service, etc.).
Said Dr. Leeman, “I like having primary case responsibility, and I also like the fast-paced environment we have on the emergency service.”

“I was on the rotation for two weeks,” said Randee Monceaux, fourth-year veterinary student. “I liked that the patients were all different and all were a challenge. The hours were long, and some of our patients were so critical that even our best efforts were not enough, but I think the emergency rotation was helpful, and it will help me be more prepared to respond to critical patients when I’m a veterinarian.”

Fourth-year veterinary student Alex David was assigned to the emergency service and also had several emergency shifts as part of her six-week surgery rotation and four-week medicine rotation. “I enjoyed not knowing what would come in next,” she said. “The emergency cases are more practical for the private practice setting, and they gave me the opportunity to practice timely diagnosis and treatment. It was tough to work for most of the night and wake up early enough to take care of hospitalized patients before the start of the rotation the next morning, but I think that the emergency service is a beneficial rotation for all future veterinarians because most veterinarians will encounter emergency situations at some point in their career. The emergency rotation enabled me to practice assessing and triaging critical cases and to perform diagnostics in a timely manner.”

Added Dr. Garber, “While it’s difficult to see a young animal that was previously fine but then had some significant trauma, like a car accident, I like the cases that have something wrong that I can make better, particularly when there is a good prognosis.”

Clinical faculty in all specialty areas are available for back-up consultations as required after regular business hours.

FROM TOP: Alex David, Ashley Wilson and Randee Monceaux prepare Minoux for a blood transfusion.

Alex, Randee and Dr. Jessica Leeman ultrasound Avery’s bladder.

Dr. Jocelyn Garber discusses Minoux’s status with her primary veterinarian.

Dr. Leeman and Alex go over Avery’s status and discharge instructions with her owners.
**If Your Pet Needs Emergency Care**

If your pet needs medical care at any time, call 225-578-9600. You can also bring your pet directly to the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

The Small Animal Clinic has doctors in the hospital 24 hours a day.

**If Your Horse or Farm Animal Needs Emergency Care**

For emergency service for horses or farm animals, call 225-578-9500.

The Large Animal Clinic has an on-call doctor who will come to the hospital as needed, so you should call ahead if you are bringing an emergency case after-hours to the Large Animal Clinic.

FROM TOP: Veterinary student Ho Cheol Shim examines Riley.

Veterinary students Alex David, Callie Habrun and Ho prepare Riley for radiographs of his abdomen.

From left, Dr. Lorrie Gaschen, professor of diagnostic imaging; Dr. Jessica Leeman; Dr. Alexandre Le Roux, diagnostic imaging resident; Dr. Mark Acierno; Dr. Sandra Tisdelle and Dr. Benjamin Polansky, both companion animal medicine and surgery interns.

From left, emergency duty interns (from left) Dr. Sandra Tisdelle, Dr. Benjamin Polansky, and Dr. Jessica Leeman (right) discuss the weekend’s patients with Dr. Mark Acierno (center).
Researchers at the LSU SVM often partner with industry in the search for new treatments for animal and human diseases. Frank Andrews, DVM, MS, DACVIM, professor of veterinary medicine and director of the Equine Health Studies Program, brings experience and expertise to corporate/academic partnerships to develop new treatments for horses.

In a recent study funded by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc. (BVIM), Dr. Andrews participated in research to develop the drug pergolide to treat one of the most common conditions of horses older than 15 years, equine Cushing’s disease, otherwise known as pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID).

Horses with PPID exhibit hirsutism (long, curly hair coats that do not shed properly), increased water consumption, lethargy, muscle wasting, laminitis, and secondary infections, including sole abscesses, tooth root infections, and sinusitis.

The pituitary gland, at the base of the brain, normally produces a wide array of important hormones that regulate organ functions. In PPID, the middle lobe of the pituitary gland (pars intermedia) becomes enlarged and overproduces cortisol. In healthy horses, cortisol production is inhibited by dopamine so that release of the hormone is tightly controlled. Horses with PPID do not seem to produce dopamine in adequate levels so that cortisol release continues unabated without regulation. In this sense, lack of dopamine production in PPID is analogous to the diminished dopamine availability observed in human Parkinson’s disease; however, because a different part of the brain is involved, the resulting disease is quite different.

The clinical trial undertaken by Dr. Andrews in collaboration with researchers at Michigan State University and Oklahoma State University, in a multicenter effort, demonstrated that the clinical signs of PPID can be controlled by administration of pergolide, which apparently acts as a dopaminergic agent.
substituting for dopamine and inhibiting excessive cortical production from the pars intermedia of the pituitary gland.

Horses in the study showed improved hair coat, more complete and timely shedding, increased muscle mass, and a better mental attitude. In addition, there was less risk of developing laminitis and infections, such as sinusitis, pneumonia, and tooth root abscesses.

These studies resulted in pergolide being accepted as the first Food & Drug Administration-approved drug for treatment of PPID in horses. Dr. Andrews also assisted BVIM in developing a website to educate clients and veterinarians about PPID (http://www.prascend.com).

Dr. Andrews has performed many studies on the pathogenesis, treatment, and prevention of equine gastric ulcer syndrome (EGUS). The anatomy of the equine stomach makes it uniquely predisposed to the formation of mucosal ulcers, which leads to poor performance, colic (abdominal pain), roughened hair coat, lack of appetite, and weight loss, a real problem in both weanling and performance horses. Recently there has been considerable interest in the use of plants, herbs, minerals and natural agents offered as feed supplements to prevent EGUS and gastric ulceration in humans.

Using a model where he can assess the impact of supplements on gastric mucosal integrity, Dr. Andrews is currently investigating the efficacy of several feed supplements to prevent EGUS, including an extract of Seabuckthorn berries (\textit{Hippophae rhamnoides})\textsuperscript{b} and a combination of performance minerals and a gut-conditioning agent.\textsuperscript{c} Initial studies of this latter product appear promising for the prevention of EGUS after initial treatment.

To better understand gastrointestinal function, Dr. Andrews has been using a wireless capsule\textsuperscript{a} gastrointestinal monitoring system that measures pH, temperature, pressure, and transit time after it is swallowed. As the capsule passes through the gastrointestinal tract, it transmits data to a monitor attached to the patient. This allows an accurate and non-invasive estimation of gastric emptying time (the time required for food to pass through the stomach) and transit time through the rest of the gastrointestinal tract. Dr. Andrews found that the adult horse empties the stomach in approximately eight hours and it takes about 48 hours for material to traverse the entire 140 feet of a horse’s intestines. Dr. Andrews believes that such a non-invasive model will allow him to assess the impact of medications on gastrointestinal function and assist in the diagnosis of diseases of the stomach and intestines that alter motility, such as duodenal strictures (narrowing) and colic.

“By building relationships with industry, academic research institutions, such as LSU, can put into practice and explore the feasibility of cutting-edge technology and innovative medicines to diagnose and treat diseases affecting horses and other animals,” said Dr. Andrews.

\begin{itemize}
\item[a] Prascend\textsuperscript{®}, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., St. Joseph, MO 64506.
\item[b] SeaBuck\textsuperscript{TM} Complete and SeaBuck\textsuperscript{TM} GastroPlus, Seabuck, Equine LLC, Midvale, VT 84047.
\item[c] Egusin\textsuperscript{®}, Centaur, Inc., Overland Park, KS, 66225.
\item[d] SmartPill\textsuperscript{®}, SmartPill Corporation, Buffalo, NY 14203.
\end{itemize}
The LSU SVM has a new tool to help diagnose upper respiratory problems in horses. Mick, a 10-year-old Thoroughbred gelding, was examined using the dynamic endoscope (a video camera that is used internally). Lauren Brown of Baton Rouge, La., Mick’s owner, said that Mick had left laryngeal hemiplegia (found on a prepurchase examination).

Lauren said that the horse made a “roaring” noise when ridden, but he recently became exercise intolerant and was refusing jumps. Laura Riggs, DVM, PhD, DACVS, examined Mick and decided to use the dynamic endoscope to diagnose him because he was having trouble breathing. “Many upper airway diseases are dynamic in nature, meaning they only occur when the horse is exercising,” said Dr. Riggs. “At rest, the airway may appear normal or not as severely affected. The dynamic scope was used to confirm the severity of the known problem (laryngeal hemiplegia) and rule out any other secondary issues.”

The dynamic endoscope is first secured to the noseband of the bridle of the horse. It is attached to a battery pack and processor attached to a saddle pad worn by the horse. The fiber optic endoscope is then placed in the pharynx. The image is recorded while the horse exercises and can be played back at normal or lower speed for evaluation.
Said Dr. Riggs, “In this case, the horse was diagnosed with grade IV left laryngeal hemiplegia obstructing the airway when he was worked. No other abnormalities were noted.”

The Optomed DRS endoscope system is installed in five steps. The first step is the installation of the endoscope into one of the horse’s nostrils. The second step requires the endoscope to be attached to a special DRS bridle. In the third step, the processor is attached to the saddle pad, and in the fourth step, the transmitter-recorder is also attached to the saddle pad. For the last step, the examination of the upper respiratory tract is displayed on the receiver’s screen in real time. It takes about five minutes and two people to install.

Mick underwent a prosthetic laryngoplasty (“tie-back”) and laser ventriculocordectomy (removal of the vocal cord and ventricle on the left side. For the tie-back procedure, an incision is made in the throat just behind the mandible. A heavy suture is placed between two areas of cartilage in the larynx to mimic the non-functioning cricoarytenoideus dorsalis muscle (muscle of the larynx), which is responsible for holding the larynx open during breathing. This suture holds the cartilage out of the airway and enables the horse to breathe without obstruction or noise when it exercises.

Mick has a good prognosis for return to jumping without exercise intolerance or noise. According to Lauren, he is currently exercising and doing great.

IMAGES FROM TOP LEFT: Dr. Laura Riggs places the endoscope on Mick. After the saddle is placed on Mick, the camera is inserted into his airway via his nose. Dr. Colin Mitchell and veterinary student Emily Collins assist Dr. Riggs with the video monitor. Veterinary technician Nick McClure exercises Mick in order to examine his airway while he’s in motion. Dr. Riggs, interns, residents, and students observe Mick and the receiver screen.

ABOVE: The top image shows a horse with a normal airway. The middle image shows Mick’s airway prior to treatment. The bottom image shows Mick at his first post-surgery event in February.
Fabio Del Piero, DVM, PhD, DACVP, tenured full professor in Pathobiological Sciences, graduated from University of Milano, Italy, and obtained his American College of Veterinary Pathology (ACVP) specialty certification while at Cornell University, where he worked in pathology and virology. He obtained his PhD in the pathogenesis of zoonotic arboviruses in mammals and birds. Research activity includes the study of the pathogenesis of infectious diseases and comparative pathology. He is an avid diagnostician with no species boundaries and is internationally renowned for his expertise in equine pathology. He received the Ljudevit Jurak Award for his studies and teaching in the field of comparative pathology. He is a member of the board of directors and vice-president senior of the C.L. Davis foundation and a member of The British Veterinary Research Club. He has served on several ACVP committees and the editorial board, and he was the program chair of the 2009 ACVP meeting.

Lisa “Abbi” Granger, DVM, DACVR, assistant professor of diagnostic imaging in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, received her BS from the University of Memphis in 2003 and her DVM from the University of Tennessee in 2007. She was most recently a radiology resident at Kansas State University. Dr. Granger is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Radiology.

Jon Fletcher, DVM, DACVIM, visiting assistant professor of companion animal medicine, received his DVM from the LSU SVM in 2005. He then completed a small animal medicine and surgery rotating internship at Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine before returning to LSU SVM for his companion animal medicine residency, which he completed in 2008. He was most recently a staff internist at a private specialty hospital in south Louisiana. He is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. His interests include endocrinology and the management of auto-immune disease.

Martha A. Littlefield, DVM, MS, clinical assistant professor in Comparative Biomedical Sciences, received her DVM in 1992 and her MS in 1994, both from the LSU SVM. She was a veterinarian at Perkins Road Veterinary Hospital from 1982-86 before becoming an instructor at the LSU SVM from 1986-2002. She then served as assistant state veterinarian for the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry through 2010. She is the co-founder of the Louisiana State Animal Response Team and most recently served as director of the LDAF’s Feed, Fertilizer and Agricultural Liming Commission. She received the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association’s Veterinarian of the Year Award (2002) and the Everett D. Besch Distinguished Service Award (2009). She is interested in CNS endocrinology, stress in horses, hearing in cats, gross anatomy, histology, behavior, neuroanatomy, regulatory medicine, emergency preparedness, public health, and zoonotic diseases.

Kenneth Pierce, DVM, DACVO, assistant professor of ophthalmology in VCS, is a native New Orleanian.
He received his BS from Tuskegee University in 2001 and his DVM from the LSU SVM in 2005. In 2006, Dr. Pierce completed a Small Animal Medicine and Surgery internship at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine. In 2007, he traveled to southern California to complete a specialty ophthalmology internship with Eye Care for Animals and B. Braun, Inc. He then completed a four-year Comparative Ophthalmology residency at Michigan State University and MS degree in 2011. Dr. Pierce is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists. His clinical interests are acute bullous keratopathy and progressive retinal atrophy. His research interests are heritable retinal diseases.

**Caryn Reynolds, DVM, DACVIM,** assistant professor of cardiology in VCS, received her BS from the University of New Mexico in 1997 and her DVM from Colorado State University in 2006. She completed her cardiology residency at the University of Pennsylvania in 2011. She is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (Cardiology). Her clinical interests are diagnosis and treatment of canine and feline heart disease and interventional cardiology. Her research interests are cardiac biomarkers, quality of life measures in dogs and cats with heart disease, and canine degenerative mitral valve disease.

**Duane Robinson, DVM, PhD**, assistant professor of companion animal surgery in VCS, was born in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. He received his DVM (with Honours) from the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph in 2000. Following graduation he spent a year in private small animal practice before returning to the Ontario Veterinary College for a rotating internship. The following year he was a surgical intern at Affiliated Veterinary Specialists in Orange Park/Jacksonville, Fla. He then joined the Orthopedic Research Laboratory at Iowa State University. During this time, he also worked as an emergency and community practice clinician in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital at Iowa State. In 2006, he began a combined PhD/Small Animal Surgery Residency at the University of Minnesota, which he completed in 2011. Dr. Robinson’s research interests include orthopedic/implant-related infections, in particular the role of bacterial biofilms. Clinically, Dr. Robinson will be splitting his time between the orthopedic and soft tissue services.

**Cathryn Stevens-Sparks, MS**, instructor in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences, received her MS from LSU in 1999 and is expected to receive her PhD from the LSU SVM in 2012. She has served as a teaching assistant in the Gross Anatomy Lab at the LSU SVM since 2004. Dr. Sparks’s dissertation research focuses on veterinary anatomy and physiology with a special focus in neuroanatomy and neurophysiology.

**Julia Sumner, BVSc, DACVS**, assistant professor in companion animal surgery, received her BVSc from the University of Sydney in Australia in 2001. She spent several years in general companion animal practice before completing medicine and surgery internships both in Sydney and at Kansas State University. Dr. Sumner became a member of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists (small animal surgery chapter) in 2003, and went on to complete a surgical residency at the University of Wisconsin in 2011. Dr. Sumner is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. Her research interests include mechanisms of caudal cruciate ligament damage in dogs and treatment of urinary incontinence. At LSU, she divides her clinical time between orthopedics and soft tissue surgery.
Students in the Class of 2015 began their veterinary education at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine in August 2011. Five members of this class already have a special relationship with the LSU SVM—they have a parent who also attended the LSU SVM.

Amanda “Mandy” Seemann’s father, Paul Seeman, Jr., received his DVM in 1983. She is from Thibodaux, La., and she received her BS in Animal Sciences from LSU. Her father co-owns a practice in Thibodaux with two other LSU SVM graduates—Dr. Dawn Koetting (LSU SVM 1984) and Dr. Natali Robichaux (LSU SVM 2000).

Chris Rumore’s father, James Rumore, Sr., received his DVM from the LSU SVM in 1981. Chris is from Rayne, La., and was an undergraduate at LSU. Dr. Rumore is a mixed animal practitioner and Chris’s mother is an economics teacher at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.

Bridger Smithers’s father, Dr. Mark Smithers, received his DVM from the LSU SVM in 1984 and practices in Atlanta, Texas. Bridger is from Doddridge, Ark., and attended Texarkana-Texas A&M.

Matt Greene’s father, Dr. Gary M. Greene, received his DVM from the LSU SVM in 1982. His mother is also a veterinarian. Matt is from Covington, La., and attended LSU.

Christian Lay’s father, Dr. Blaine Firmin, received his DVM from the LSU SVM in 1994. Dr. Firmin owns a clinic in Slidell, La.
How old were you when you knew you wanted to be a veterinarian?

**Mandy:** I was probably about 5 or 6. It was about the time I got my first cat and was allowed to go on farm calls with my dad and watch him perform surgeries on dogs at his clinic.

**Chris:** Quite some time now. While growing up, it was always interesting to watch my father interact with his clients and patients. I can honestly say that he is a great role model and I want to be like him someday.

**Bridger:** Very earliest was 7 years old. I actually intended on going to medical school and then came back to the idea of vet medicine.

**Matt:** I was 20.

How many pets do you currently have?

**Mandy:** I have two pets. Sawyer is my 3-year-old male whippet, and Monkey is my 4-year-old female domestic shorthair.

**Chris:** Way too many to name. We own horses, dogs, cats, llamas, parrots, sheep, and goats. We also used to own camels and antelopes as well.

**Bridger:** I have two cats, Ace and Pixel.

**Matt:** I have a 2-year-old Brittany spaniel.

What type of veterinary medicine are you most interested in?

**Mandy:** I am interested in everything from farm animal medicine to small animal critical care. I'd really like to get to know the full spectrum of veterinary medicine before I pick a specific concentration.

**Chris:** Mixed practitioner (mostly horses, dogs, and cats).

**Bridger and Matt:** Mixed animal.

What do you hope to do following graduation?

**Mandy:** Following graduation, I would like to work in private practice and possibly own my own practice eventually.

**Chris:** A lot of things can happen in the next four years, but hopefully I can work with my father and build up knowledge and lessons that he would provide for me to become as successful as he is today.

**Bridger:** I am not sure yet. Wherever the Lord leads me.

**Matt:** I'd like to work in private practice.
ABOVE: Attending the May 2011 Diploma Distribution Ceremony at the LSU SVM are (from left) Dr. Stephen Gaunt (LSU SVM 1977), professor; Dr. Joseph Francis, associate professor; Dr. Carrie Elks, PhD recipient; Dr. Kevin Macaluso, associate professor; Dr. Piyanate Sunyakumthorn, PhD recipient; Dr. Peter Haynes, dean; Dr. James Miller, interim associate dean for research and advanced studies; and Dr. Christopher Mores, associate professor.

ABOVE: Aviane Aguillard (Class of 2015) receives her blue coat from Dr. Joseph Smith (LSU SVM 1989) at the August 2011 Year I Coating Ceremony. Dr. Smith is president of the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association, which sponsors the ceremony along with the Arkansas Veterinary Medical Association and Hill’s Pet Nutrition.

ABOVE: Members of the Class of 2015 participate in the Freshman Leadership Experience in August 2011 so they can get to know each other and some of the faculty and staff before orientation and classes begin.

RIGHT: Veterinary students compete in the volleyball tournament at the annual Fall Family Picnic in October 2011.
LEFT: Erika Fauth (Class of 2013) presents her poster at the annual Phi Zeta Research Emphasis Day in September 2011. Pictured with her are Dr. Mark Acierno, associate professor of companion animal medicine, and Dr. Carley Saelinger, cardiology resident.

BELOW: Attending the Diploma Distribution Ceremony at the LSU SVM in December 2011 are (from left) Dr. Stephen Gaunt (LSU SVM 1977), professor of veterinary clinical pathology; Dr. Petrisor Baia, MS recipient; Saybl Sprinkle, MS recipient in August 2011; Dr. Laura Riggs, assistant professor of equine surgery; Dr. Wes Baumgartner, PhD recipient; Dr. Ronald Thune, head of the Pathobiological Sciences department; and Dr. James Miller, interim associate dean for research and advanced studies.

ABOVE: Veterinary students demonstrate to visitors at the 30th Annual Open House on February 11 how the equine treadmill is used in research.

RIGHT: Third-year veterinary student Carolyn Wong explains how anesthesia is used in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital to Open House visitors. Over 4,700 people visited the LSU SVM for the 2012 Open House.
In December 2005 a 3-month-old bottlenose dolphin became trapped in a crab trap line near Cape Canaveral, Fla., in the Indian River Lagoon. The story of the baby dolphin’s rescue and rehabilitation is the basis of the Warner Brothers movie, “Dolphin Tale.”

“Her mother had likely learned to scavenge the bait from crab traps and as the baby dolphin lingered above on the water’s surface she became entrapped in the float line,” said Dr. David Kilpatrick (LSU SVM 1988). What happened to the baby dolphin’s mother is unknown; when rescuers came to the scene she was nowhere to be found and never appeared prior to retrieving the baby from the lagoon for transport. The baby dolphin would come to be known as “Winter” because she was found on a cold winter day.

Winter was originally sighted by a fisherman, who contacted local authorities. She was rescued by a team of marine mammal stranding responders from Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and Hubbs-Seaworld Research Institute; Dr. David Kilpatrick (LSU SVM 1988) was the veterinarian on the team. Arriving on the scene in an undeveloped area off the barrier island on the Indian River, they carefully disentangled Winter from the crab trap lines. After assessing Winter’s injuries, the team began looking for facilities that are permitted to provide care for protected marine mammals in Florida. Dr. Kilpatrick said, “Clearwater Aquarium in Clearwater, Fla., was able to accommodate her, so we began the slow drive across the state in a specially-fitted truck for transporting injured marine mammals. Winter remained stable during the trip, and we arrived in Clearwater near midnight. She was placed in a special pool and provided with constant attention as she was far too weak to swim unattended.”

“In my original examination of Winter, it was apparent that the rope entrapment of her peduncle [tail] and fluke [tail flipper] had severely compromised the blood supply to the area, raising the high probability that necrosis [tissue death] and loss of the tail fluke were likely,” he added. Euthanasia is a serious consideration in these cases, as injuries to wild dolphins often require long-term care in rehabilitation facilities.
and the acclimatization to human care and feeding often makes return to their wild environment impossible.

“Winter was calm and relaxed when handled and examined in the water,” said Dr. Kilpatrick. “Although I knew retrieving her from the lagoon and placing her in a captive environment would likely preclude her ever returning to her native life in the wild, Winter had unintentionally become an orphan and was completely helpless as a direct result of human activities. In a sense, we owed it to Winter to restore her life as best as possible, and the many unknowns of her future would have to be addressed as they became manifest.”

The rescue and transport of Winter to the Clearwater Aquarium was the first step in a long and extensive effort to save her life. Despite round-the-clock care, the tail fluke and last two vertebrae deteriorated and eventually separated from the tail. She was unable to propel herself through the water with up-and-down motion of the tail. She moved herself through the water by swinging the tail laterally back and forth like a fish and, although this was effective, a potentially life-threatening complication of this activity in a growing dolphin is scoliosis. After many arduous trials and failures, the dedicated efforts of the staff at Clearwater Aquarium and Hangar Prosthetics and Orthotics, Inc. were eventually able to develop a tail-fluke prosthesis for Winter that would both adhere to her body without irritation and withstand the incredible forces of propelling a 400-pound dolphin through the water.

“Although there were a few consultations regarding Winter’s care during the first few weeks, the remainder of her long-term rehabilitation and recovery were the result of the remarkable volunteers and staff at Clearwater Aquarium and Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics. After Winter’s tail fluke was lost to disease, intensive efforts were made to devise a prosthesis that Winter would tolerate, could withstand long immersion in saltwater, and was of great overall durability. This process was time-consuming and fraught with many failures and required the determined, donated efforts of Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics over a sustained period of time. In solving Winter’s prosthetic needs, new insights were gained in the field of human prosthetics. Along the way, Winter has become a source of inspiration for individuals with disabilities of all ages and the public at large. In giving Winter the benefit of the doubt, we have helped not only her but ourselves.”

Dr. Kilpatrick received his DVM from LSU in 1988. He is the owner and a practicing veterinarian at Southside Veterinary Hospital in Vero Beach, Fla., and an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee veterinarian at Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies in Ft. Pierce, Fla. He sees wildlife cases weekly and has periodically assisted with marine mammal strandings and care for 14 years. You can see videotape footage of him and many of the marine mammal rescuers and rehabilitators during the actual rescue and rehabilitation of Winter at the end of “Dolphin Tale.” 🦈
What made you want to be a research scientist?

Yes, I was a “professional student;” and that was because I truly enjoyed the academic setting. In a hopeful effort to bolster my opportunities for a future career in academia, I took a chance on entering the DVM/PhD program at LSU. My thought was that a solid foundation in animal medicine would be the ideal platform for conducting ethical and meaningful biomedical research in an academic, government, or industrial laboratory.

What is your current title and place of employment?

Currently, I am the Chief of Preventive Medicine and Veterinary Services for the US Military Training Mission (USMTM) to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I also provide preventive medicine and veterinary services to all of the other US entities within the Kingdom, including the US Embassy – Riyadh, the Office of the Program Manager – Saudi Arabian National Guard (OPM-SANG) Modernization Program, the Office of the Program Manager - Facilities Security Forces (OPM-FSF), and the 64th Air Expeditionary Wing (military working dog support). This will be a two-year tour in the Kingdom. While not a research-oriented assignment, it is an assignment required to broaden my experiences with the Army Veterinary Corps mission.

What is your primary area of research?

My previous assignment was four years at the US Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD) where I was Chief of the Medical Toxicology Branch. There, I was charged with supervising and managing a group of five civilian scientists, their research programs, and their technical support teams. My own research project was aimed at characterizing the “moment of exposure” respiratory physiological effects of nerve gas inhalation with and without the use of bronchodilator-steroid combination therapy. This project is ongoing even while I am stationed in Saudi Arabia.

How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your career?

The availability of the DVM/PhD program at the LSU SVM was great for me. The fast pace and challenging administrative navigation of the program made the subsequent transition to military/government life a breeze. I also was fortunate that my first military assignment was at a government research lab whose focus was respiratory toxicology.

What are some of your most memorable moments from LSU?

LSU football! Even though there was a bit of a bowl-drought during my years in the Tiger Band (1997-1999), tailgating during vet school was a BLAST!

Graduation–A bittersweet moment that signified the end of the 10 best years of my life (so far). Yes, it took 10 years to get three degrees.

I’d like to acknowledge four people who took a chance on me: my fantastic and (relatively) patient mentors, Dr. Arthur Penn and my Graduate Committee, Drs. Steven Barker, William Henk, and Dan Paulsen).
What made you want to be a veterinarian?

At first, I was impressed with a local veterinarian who let me observe a surgical procedure on my own pet, and, at first, I wanted to become a veterinarian so that I could do surgery on pets. That did not pan out. Now, in the later stages of my career I see that veterinary medicine is an exciting and broad field of medicine that provides tremendous opportunities that reach many aspects of animal and human health.

How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your career?

I had excellent instructors all throughout veterinary school, many of whom inspired me and helped me after graduation with advice and recommendations that helped to shape my career.

What was the LSU SVM like when you attended?

It was new and exciting. It was a young school with a high level of enthusiasm with students, staff and faculty. There was the excitement of being in the first full class of 80 students, the move from the on-campus halls to the new building and hospital, and easy parking! I became very close to many of my classmates and faculty. It was like having an extended family.

What does the LSU SVM mean to you?

LSU provided the foundation of my career. I am very proud to be a Tiger and I am always honored to be introduced as an LSU Graduate from the Class of 1980.

What is a memorable moment from your time as a student at the LSU SVM?

There are so many it is hard to pick one. I love the humorous moments, so I will pick the time that Ralph Abraham was taking notes for the class but was going to be absent for a lecture. He asked me to take notes that day and I did. Ralph had an amusing habit of kind of scratching his front teeth if he was really concentrating on a lecture. I would tease him about that asking if his incisors itched. So, when taking notes for the class, I added a small comment that indicated one of the clinical signs associated with Erysipelothrix infection in pigs is that it causes their teeth to itch. It was incorporated into the notes and printed out. A few weeks later, when it was time to study for the test, Ralph was studying and found the comment. He then had to get up in front of the class and explain that it was an error. Pigs really did not have itchy teeth.

At the University of Florida, Rick has received the Teacher of the Year Award (2002 and 2008), the Distinguished Teacher Award (2002), the Support Service Clinician of the Year Award (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007), the Clinical Sciences Teacher of the Year Award (2009), and the UF Research Foundation Professorship Award (2010). Dr. Alleman also gave the commencement address at the UF CVM in 2003 and 2011.
Dr. William “Bill” James has retired effective September 30 after 28 years with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. His most recent position was chief public health veterinarian and executive associate for regulatory operations in the USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). In 2009, Bill received the LSU SVM Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Dr. Paul Seemann, Jr., (LSU SVM 1983) and Dr. Dawn Koetting (LSU SVM 1984) completed their second successful recertification for the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. Paul and Dawn are both Canine/Feline specialty diplomats. Paul chose the new alternate pathway, and Dawn chose to recertify by examination. Unlike most specialties, the ABVP requires recertification every 10 years. Dr. Dennis French, former LSU SVM professor of food animal medicine, presided over Dawn’s test in Chicago, Ill. Dawn and Paul are partners in a practice at Ridgefield Animal Hospital in Thibodaux, La.

Dr. Susan Hughes Paul and her husband, Phillip, had their second child, a girl, on August 1, 2011. Her name is Jenna Marie. She weighed 7 lbs., 15 oz. and was 20 in. long. She is welcomed home by her big sister, Maranda.

Dr. Shirani (Ambiavagar) Hickman and her husband, Dave, welcomed their newest addition, daughter Annie Grace, born Father’s Day, June 19, 2011. Annie weighed 6 lbs. and was 19 inches long. She is adored by her big sister Patty Jo, who is 4 years old. The Hickmans live on Lake St. John in Ferriday, La.

Dr. Rebecca Lynn Emanuel Murray married Patrick Murray on November 28, 2009. They have two children: Gabriel McCain and Annalise Lorio. Annalise was born on September 22, 2010. She weighed 6 lbs. 14 oz. and was 20 1/4 inches long. The Murrays reside in Sterlington, La.

Dr. Kristen Ussery is working at Hope Animal Clinic in Marble Falls, Texas. Her husband, Bryce, is working on the University of Texas campus in Austin, and they reside in Bee Cave, Texas. Hope Animal Clinic is a mixed animal practice.

Shirani works in Natchez, Miss., at Natchez Veterinary Clinic. Dave owns his own pond consulting business, Professional Fisheries Services. The Hickmans are active at Calvary Baptist Church in Vidalia, La., and are in charge of the church kids’ Awana program.
The LSU SVM is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2013. In honor of this, we're asking our alumni, faculty, staff, and students to share their favorite stories of the LSU SVM. You can email your story to Gretchen Morgan, director of annual giving and alumni affairs, at gmorgan@lsu.edu.
Local Girl Asks for Donations in Lieu of Birthday Gifts

Ariel Sully is not your typical 8-year-old girl. Instead of birthday presents, she asked her friends to bring donations for the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine to her party. Ariel’s birthday party was held on October 8 (her birthday is October 7), and she had a large donation jar at the park during her party.

She and her friends donated over $260 for the veterinary school. “I am very proud of my daughter for this very unselfish decision,” said Kerry Sully, Ariel’s mother, who is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. “We found a hurt turtle in the road and brought it here,” added Kerry. “Ariel reminded me of that when she told me she wanted to raise money to help animals. She said she wanted to help the animals at the LSU hospital.” She wants to be a veterinarian when she grows up.

Ariel and some of her family and friends presented the donation to Dean Peter F. Haynes on October 12. Ariel received a medal and a certificate for her generosity, and she and her guests were given a special tour of the veterinary school.

Pearls & Tiger Paws Celebrates Mike’s Birthday

On July 23, Pearls & Tiger Paws, a volunteer league for veterinary medicine, hosted an event at Circa 1857 in Baton Rouge, La. July 23 is the birthday of Mike VI, LSU’s live tiger mascot, so Pearls & Tiger Paws hosted this “get-to-know-us” event to celebrate Mike’s birthday.

The event included food, music, and a silent auction. Guests also got the opportunity to learn about Pearls & Tiger Paws, which supports the work of the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

The group’s mission reflects that of the LSU SVM: a dynamic community dedicated to saving lives, finding cures, and changing lives through outstanding clinical and community service, educational excellence, and groundbreaking research. Pearls & Tiger Paws is a volunteer league dedicated to veterinary medicine at LSU in every way!

What a “Pearls & Tiger Paws” League Membership means to you:

- You’re joining a team of volunteers dedicated to animals receiving the best possible care,
- You’re serving as an ambassador for the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine’s excellent work,
- You’re receiving Invitations to special events such as the Birthday for Mike the Tiger at Circa 1857, as well as receptions at south Louisiana restaurants and museums or the homes of some of our members, and
- You’re developing relationships with people interested in brainstorming and planning exciting future projects like the veterinary school’s 40th anniversary in 2013.
If you would like more information about Pearls & Tiger Paws, please contact Laura Lanier, director of development, at 225-578-9826 or ilanier@lsu.edu. You can also follow Pearls & Tiger Paws on Facebook.

LSU SVM HONORS DR. DANIEL J. HILLMANN

Dr. Daniel J. Hillmann, one of the founding members of our faculty and professor of veterinary anatomy and cell biology, retired on July 29, 2011. Every student from the charter class through the class of 2014 owes their foundation knowledge of veterinary anatomy to Dr. Hillmann. In honor of his great service to the faculty, staff, and students at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and to the profession of veterinary medicine, Mayor-President Kip Holden proclaimed that September 1, 2011, was “Dr. Daniel J. Hillmann Day.” Dr. Hillmann was presented with a copy of the proclamation at his retirement reception on September 1.

The mayor’s proclamation stated, “Whereas, the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine is the only academic program in veterinary medicine in the State of Louisiana; and whereas, instruction in macroscopic (gross) anatomy is central to and essential for students studying to become graduate veterinarians; and whereas, Daniel J. Hillmann, DVM, PhD, Professor of Veterinary Anatomy and Cell Biology, has taught gross anatomy to every student who entered the LSU doctor of veterinary medicine program since the opening of the program (2,494 graduates and 249 current students); and whereas, Dr. Daniel Hillmann has been an immensely popular and effective professor with many teaching awards to his credit and has been an inspiration and role model for many other LSU faculty; and whereas, Dr. Daniel Hillmann has retired effective July 29, 2011, after 38 years of service to LSU and his many colleagues and present and former students wish to honor him and his long record of achievements.”

To further honor Dr. Hillmann, the LSU SVM created a scholarship in his name as an enduring legacy. As the first scholarship in the School’s history to be awarded to incoming Year I veterinary students, the Dr. Daniel J. Hillmann Scholarship Fund will change the life of a person embarking on a career in veterinary medicine. Join us in honoring him with a gift to the Dr. Daniel J. Hillmann Scholarship Fund. To make your gift, please contact Betty Karlsson at bkarlsson@lsu.edu or 225-578-9870, or you can make your gift online at http://www.vetmed.lsu.edu. Click on the “Give Now” button. Then select “Give Online Now Using Your Credit Card” and select the Dr. Daniel J. Hillmann Scholarship Fund.
The LSU SVM’s Advancement Team is dedicated to the LSU SVM’s mission of saving lives, finding cures, and changing lives every day. Your passion, your time, and your treasure helps us improve the lives of both animals and people. If you would like to learn about how you can partner with us in our mission, please contact any member of our team.
March 24  “Animals in Art” Show Opening Reception, SVM Library
March 24 – April 29 “Animals in Art” Show Exhibit, SVM Library
April 26 Spring Reception and Staff Awards
April 27 Awards and Honors Banquet
May 5-6 Annual Conference for Veterinarians and Veterinary Technicians
May 14 SVM Commencement
May 18 Diploma Distribution Ceremony for Advanced Studies Students

For information on these and other upcoming LSU SVM events, call 225-578-9900 or go to http://www.vetmed.lsu.edu (“Events” link under “About SVM”).
Planning is underway for the LSU SVM’s 40th anniversary in 2013. To help celebrate our 40th year educating future veterinarians, we are hosting the annual SAVMA Symposium as well as other special events for alumni, faculty, staff and students. Please watch for announcements in our publications and on the SVM’s website at www.vetmed.lsu.edu.