

# Veterinary Research News

## Community

### High-volume neuter clinic a ray of hope on American Indian reservation

At times, the noise inside the garage is deafening. Several dogs housed in cages lining the concrete floor bark anxiously, while others sleep or sit quietly. "Dogs are good medicine. They bring joy and laughter to the children," says a woman, a member of the Sicangu Lakota tribe, for whom the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota is home.

Near a stack of tires are two bathrooms where wide-eyed cats in cages and pet carriers are sequestered from the din. Most days, the garage is the place vehicles owned by the tribal government are maintained. From Oct. 16-20, 2013, however, the facility served as a bare-bones, high-volume neuter clinic where rabies vaccinations and basic veterinary care were also available, all free of charge, partly as a result of support from the AVMA and American Veterinary Medical Foundation.

Veterinary services on Rosebud are a luxury. The reservation is located in Todd County, S.D., the second poorest county in the United States, where 48.4 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, according to U.S. census data. What's more, the nearest veterinary hospital is more than 40 miles away, in Nebraska. "Most people on the reservation barely have enough money to take care of their family, let alone their pets," explains the Lakota woman, who asks not to be named. "Rabies shots and deworming are beyond most family budgets."

For many years, when the stray dog population on Rosebud grew too large, the Lakota rounded up the dogs and shot them—a common practice on many American Indian reservations, where resources to address the overpopulation problem humanely are scarce. Now, Rosebud is an example of a successful, high-volume neuter

program run by a nonprofit partnering with a community living in endemic poverty.

There were times when the number of stray and free-roaming dogs on the Rosebud reservation posed a serious problem. People were bitten; dogs were abused or left to fend for themselves. The roundups were the most efficient remedy. In late 2002, tribal leaders decided to adopt a more compassionate method of dealing with the dogs. They reached out to Spay First, an Oklahoma nonprofit providing high-volume pet neutering in areas of chronic poverty, to help reduce the population of unwanted dogs humanely.

Spay First held the first high-volume neuter clinic on the reservation the following year, and the dog roundups stopped. Ever since then, the clinics have been held up to three times a year. Pets relinquished at the clinics are sent to animal shelters in other parts of the country for adoption or are humanely euthanized.

Spay First Executive Director Ruth Steinberger says Rosebud is on the front line of the spay-neuter movement, because few impoverished communities take a prevention-based

approach to managing unwanted dog and cat populations. "We're not teaching the Lakota how to treat animals better but reminding them how to be good stewards," Steinberger explained.

Within two years of holding the first high-volume neuter clinic, the results were already becoming manifest. "In 2005, we learned from the two local grocery retailers that as the number of dogs on the reservation declined, the sales of dog food increased. That's pretty telling," Steinberger said.

A year later, the director of school programs on Rosebud wrote to Steinberger about the neuter clinic's success. "(T)here has been a very visible—indeed, remarkable—difference in the number of stray animals," Dennis Gaspar wrote, in part. Steinberger estimates close to 8,000 cats and dogs have been neutered on Rosebud since 2003.

The AVMA and AVMF started funding the high-volume neuter program on Rosebud in 2012. The AVMF has approved a budget of \$100,000 each year from 2012-2015 for equipment, supplies, and the salaries and travel expenses of the veterinarians



Thomas Valandra brought his pet dog, Chico, to the temporary neuter clinic on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation for a rabies vaccination.

Photo by R. Scott Nolen

and veterinary technicians staffing the clinics. Dr. Sheilah Robertson, an assistant director in the AVMA Animal Welfare Division, has been medical director for three of the clinics.

"AVMA and AVMF's decision to be involved in this project signaled that animals in chronic poverty are not just numbers," Steinberger said. "Their hands-on involvement sets an example for the world."

Drug logs show 177 dogs and cats were either spayed or castrated during the October clinic. Volunteers from the Lakota tribe and trustees from the reservation jail kept the process going by checking animals in, cleaning cages, and providing rabies vaccination tags. Surgeries were performed from morning to night, with staff often working 11-hour days.

Dr. Tiffany Tupler was the primary surgeon at the clinic. Two years after earning her DVM degree from the University of Florida, Dr. Tupler performs high-volume spays and castrations on a contract basis. When she first learned the details about the clinic at Rosebud, she was reminded of her work among impoverished communities in foreign countries.

Dr. Tupler said, "Usually, these are the kinds of clinics we set up internationally in countries that have limited veterinary access or there are a high number of feral and stray animals. This is not something you'd expect to see here."

Dr. Robertson couldn't agree more. "A lot of people that live in the U.S. aren't exposed to the many animal-related issues that go with extreme poverty," she said.

### **World Veterinary Association looks to past, future during congress**

In 1863, Dr. John Gamgee of Britain convened the first international congress of veterinarians to discuss control of epizootic diseases. From that meeting in Germany evolved the modern World Veterinary Congress and World Veterinary Association.

The WVA celebrated its 150th anniversary during the 31st WVC, Sept. 17-20, 2013, in Prague. The 2013 conference offered multiple tracks—with a symposium on animal

welfare, a summit on partnerships in animal and human health, and a summit on mental health in the veterinary profession. The conference attracted more than 1,350 attendees from 75 countries, including a delegation from the AVMA.

The functions of the WVA have expanded beyond conducting scientific congresses, said Dr. Lyle P. Vogel, one of two North American councilors to the WVA and previous AVMA assistant executive vice president.

"The WVA is the organization that gets the voice on the world stage to speak for the profession and to advance the interests of veterinarians worldwide," Dr. Vogel said.

He said the WVA has a seat at the table with global organizations. The association has memorandums of understanding with groups such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE), and the World Health Organization.

At the 2013 congress, the WVA signed a memorandum of understanding with the World Society for the Protection of Animals. The groups agreed to work together to promote education in animal welfare, awareness of welfare issues, and effective rabies control.

Dr. Vogel said the WVA is taking more ownership of its congresses, traditionally hosted by member organizations. The association also has moved from holding congresses every three years to every two years and might move to holding a congress or other conference every year.

The WVA Presidents Assembly, meeting at the 2013 congress, approved changes to simplify and modernize governance of the association. Dr. René A. Carlson, volunteer AVMA director of international affairs, led the committee that developed the final proposal.

Two key changes provide for a new officer structure and for equal geographic representation on the WVA Council, Dr. Carlson said. The officers will be a president-elect, president, and immediate past president rather than a president, immediate past president, and two vice presidents. The WVA Council will consist of the

officers plus two representatives each from six regions and two from international veterinary organizations. Europe had more representatives than other regions.

Dr. Carlson recently announced that she will be a candidate for president of the WVA. Among her goals is to expand the membership so the association is truly the global voice of veterinary medicine.

"WVA, I really think, has great potential that just hasn't been realized," Dr. Carlson said. "We have to help each other to build all of us up—whether it's animal welfare, education, or food safety. We have to all work together."

The scientific program at the 2013 congress covered a spectrum of species and other subjects.

The two-day Global Veterinary Seminar on Animal Welfare concluded that veterinarians should be shepherds in the field of animal welfare but with close collaboration with others. Among the speakers was Dr. Gail C. Golab, director of the AVMA Animal Welfare Division.

The second WVA summit was on "Global Well-being—a Partnership of Animal and Human Health." Topics included institutional collaboration, partnerships in disease control and emergency response, and cooperation in education and research. High-level support for the WVA summit came from the FAO, OIE, and WHO.

The Veterinary Professional Wellness Summit focused on mental health of veterinarians and veterinary students. The International Veterinary Officers Coalition sponsored the wellness summit, and Dr. Carlson served as the moderator.

Also at the 2013 congress, the WVA presented three veterinarians with the John Gamgee Award for outstanding contributions to veterinary science and the veterinary profession. The awardees are Dr. James H. Steele (now deceased) of the United States, the father of veterinary public health; Dr. Milton Thiago de Mello of Brazil, an educator and a pioneer in microbiology and primatology; and Dr. Bernard Vallat of France, director general of the OIE.

## Mazet elected to Institute of Medicine

University of California-Davis professor Dr. Jonna Ann Mazet has been elected to the Institute of Medicine, one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine.



Dr. Jonna Ann Mazet

Gregory Urquiza/UC-Davis

Dr. Mazet was one of 70 new members announced at the IOM annual meeting this past October. Membership is given for demonstrating outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service.

Dr. Mazet is a professor of epidemiology and disease ecology and director of the Wildlife Health Center and One Health Institute at UC-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. She is also global director of PREDICT, part of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Emerging Pandemic Threats Program, which is working to develop and support a global early warning system.

Additionally, Dr. Mazet founded California's Oiled Wildlife Care Network at UC-Davis as well as the Health for Animals and Livelihood Improvement project, which aims to reduce infectious disease transmission in the Ruaha ecosystem of Tanzania.

As a professor in the School of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Mazet mentors veterinary and graduate students and postdoctoral trainees, and provides service to government agencies and the public regarding emerging infectious disease and conservation challenges.

"I feel like I'm being honored for a body of work that is only possible because I've been lucky to work with an amazing team," Dr. Mazet said of her election to the Institute of Medicine. "We can only begin to solve global problems by working effectively together across disciplinary, geographic, and political boundaries."

## New diagnostic lab planned in Nebraska

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln plans to replace its Veterinary Diagnostic Center. Built in 1975 on

UNL's East Campus, the center no longer meets modern laboratory standards, according to a university press release.

The center provides testing services for professionals and organizations across the nation, processing 13,000 cases annually, and training for students at the university's School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, which has a primary focus in infectious diseases.

An accreditation review in late 2011 by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians indicated deficiencies, including poor ventilation, obsolete building design resulting in increased risk for cross-contamination of contagious pathogens and diagnostic errors, overcrowding and limited space for future growth, and inaccessibility for people with disabilities.

During the 2012 session, the Nebraska Legislature approved, and Gov. Dave Heineman signed, legislation to build a new center. Total project cost is \$45.6 million, of which \$4 million is to come from private or other funds. The \$41.5 million will be appropriated over 10 years in financial bonds. The state funding is contingent on the university successfully raising its share.

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education approved plans to replace the aging building on Oct. 30, 2013. The proposed 65,000-square-foot diagnostic laboratory is the most complex and costly per square foot that the commission has ever considered, Mike Wemhoff, facilities officer at the commission, was quoted as saying in a Nov. 1, 2013, Omaha World-Herald article.

University officials hope to launch the project before the end of 2014.

## Mississippi State creates host-pathogen interaction center

Mississippi State University has been awarded a \$10 million grant for five years of support from the National Institutes of Health to further research focusing on diseases that affect animal and human health, according to an Oct. 3, 2013, MSU press release.

The main focus of MSU's new Center for Biomedical Research Excel-



Photo by Tom Thompson/MSU

Dr. Keun Seok Seo examines cultures of *Staphylococcus* organisms in his laboratory at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

lence in Pathogen and Host Interaction is related to infectious diseases. Researchers will be looking at how hosts react to *Staphylococcus* infections, how long *Listeria* organisms can live in bile, and how various flu viruses attack hosts, for example.

The NIH's Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence provides competitive grants in support of multidisciplinary centers that strengthen institutional biomedical research capacity.

The research will be conducted among three centers at MSU: the College of Veterinary Medicine; the Institute of Genomics, Biocomputing, and Biotechnology; and the Institute for Imaging and Analytical Technologies. The college will administer the grant and research activities.

"It is an extremely competitive process. Most of the applicants are human medical colleges," said Stephen B. Pruett, PhD, head of basic sciences at the veterinary college and principal investigator on the COBRE grant.

The grant establishes a unique mentoring program for a core group of researchers.

The MSU researchers in this group are Bindu Nanduri, PhD, and Dr. Keun Seok Seo, both assistant professors in basic sciences at the veterinary college, and Dr. Henry Wan, an associate professor in systems biology at the veterinary college.

"Dr. Seo is leading the way in *Staphylococcus aureus* research. What



he's studying is leading to vaccines that could protect cattle and humans from dangerous *Staph* infections," Dr. Pruetz said.

Janet Donaldson, PhD, associate professor with the university's department of biological sciences, conducts research on the ability of *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Escherichia coli* to be resistant to antimicrobials and to colonize the gastrointestinal tract.

The researchers also will work collaboratively to design infectious disease research projects to secure further NIH funding.

### Research awards conferred

The following individuals are winners of the 2013 Zoetis Award for Veterinary Research Excellence. The Zoetis award recognizes researchers whose innovative studies have advanced the scientific standing of veterinary medicine.

Dawn M. Boothe, DVM, PhD,  
Auburn University

Paul Russell, PhD,  
University of California-Davis

Gregory C. Amberg, PhD,  
Colorado State University

Jonathan Cheetham, VetMB, PhD,  
Cornell University

Sergei G. Tevosian, PhD,  
University of Florida

Donald A. Harn, PhD,  
University of Georgia

Dan Rock, PhD,  
University of Illinois

Jeffrey J. Zimmerman, DVM, PhD,  
Iowa State University

H. Morgan Scott, DVM, PhD,  
Kansas State University

Mandi J. López, DVM, PhD,  
Louisiana State University

Loïc Déjardin, DVM,  
Michigan State University

Al Beitz, PhD,  
University of Minnesota

Mark L. Lawrence, DVM, PhD,  
Mississippi State University

Charles Brown, PhD,  
University of Missouri-Columbia

Natasha Olby, VetMB, PhD,  
North Carolina State University

Li Wu, PhD,  
The Ohio State University

Mason Reichard, PhD,  
Oklahoma State University

Stuart Helfand, DVM,  
Oregon State University

Carolina P. Lopez, PhD,  
University of Pennsylvania

Joanne B. Messick, DVM, PhD,  
Purdue University

Ignacio Lizarrago, MVSc, PhD,  
Ross University

Ulrike Zieger, DVM,  
St. George's University

Samantha Shields, DVM,  
St. Matthew's University

Barry T. Rouse, DVM, PhD,  
University of Tennessee

Michael C. Golding, PhD,  
Texas A&M University

Sam Rountree Telford III, ScD,  
Tufts University

Woubit Abdela, DVM, PhD,  
Tuskegee University

Gerhardt G. Schurig, DVM, PhD,  
Virginia-Maryland Regional Col-  
lege of Veterinary Medicine

Douglas R. Call, PhD,  
Washington State University

Pedro Paulo Vissotto de Paiva Diniz,  
DVM, PhD,  
Western University of Health Sci-  
ences

Tony L. Goldberg, DVM, PhD,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

## AVMA

### House of Delegates to deliberate again on homeopathy, acupuncturists

The AVMA House of Delegates will deliberate for a second time on two proposals related to alternative medicine: a resolution that would discourage the modality of homeopathy and an application for membership from the American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture.

In January 2013, the HOD first considered the resolution that would discourage homeopathy as an ineffective practice. The theory of homeopathy is that diseases can be cured by administering extreme dilutions of substances that in a healthy individual would produce signs similar to those reported for the disease.

Delegates referred the resolution to the board to consider referral to the AVMA Council on Veterinary Service.

The board referred the resolution to the COVS and the Council on Research.

The COR scanned the literature for evidence on the clinical efficacy of homeopathic treatments. The council found that studies claiming a benefit from homeopathic remedies in veterinary medicine were either anecdotal in nature—that is, case reports—or were generally flawed in the experimental design or analysis. Furthermore, the council found that well-controlled clinical studies generally failed to substantiate any beneficial effect of homeopathic remedies. The COR concluded that there is no clinical evidence to support the use of homeopathic remedies for treatment or prevention of diseases in domestic animals.

The COVS recently revised the AVMA policy on Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Veterinary Medicine—with approval by the HOD in July 2013—and believes the policy clearly states the AVMA's position that the same standards should be applied to any treatment modality. The COVS believes that the AVMA should not at this time single out homeopathy or any other treatment modality in alternative or traditional medicine for additional scrutiny of effectiveness.

The board agreed that it is not the purview of the AVMA to adjudicate individual therapies, whether traditional or alternative, and that the current policy on alternative medicine is adequate. Therefore, the board recommended that the HOD disapprove the resolution on homeopathy.

In July 2013, the HOD considered membership applications from the American Holistic VMA and the American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture. The House admitted the AHVMA as a member but referred the AAVA application to the board to research AAVA's representation of acupuncturists.

The board collected a series of messages from AAVA leaders and Dr. Narda G. Robinson, founder and director of the Medical Acupuncture for Veterinarians program. The AAVA leaders said the academy has members from across the spectrum of acupuncture philosophies. Dr. Robinson, on the

other hand, asserted that the AAVA has demonstrated a commitment to traditional Chinese medicine above her program's philosophy, which emphasizes a scientific approach.

The board, feeling that the AAVA is representative of veterinary acupuncturists, recommended approval of the academy as a member of the HOD.

The HOD will consider the homeopathy resolution and AAVA application during its regular winter session, Jan. 11 in Chicago. Proposals going to the delegates are available at [www.avma.org/about/governance](http://www.avma.org/about/governance) under "House of Delegates." AVMA members can find contact information for their delegates by visiting [www.avma.org/members](http://www.avma.org/members) and clicking on "My AVMA Leaders."

### **Proposal would cease accreditation of foreign schools**

The AVMA House of Delegates will consider a resolution that would call on the Executive Board to cease accreditation by the AVMA Council on Education of veterinary schools outside the United States and Canada.

In July 2011, the HOD passed a resolution for a task force to evaluate the accreditation of these foreign veterinary schools. The Task Force on Foreign Veterinary School Accreditation submitted its report to the board in April 2013 (see *AJVR*, July 2013, page 951). In June, the board reached consensus that the COE should continue foreign accreditation.

Dr. Janver D. Krehbiel, then board chair, wrote: "Allowing international schools to seek accreditation and recognition according to established COE standards improves the quality of global veterinary education. With the growing focus on one health and the global community, it's more important, now more than ever, that we foster international collaboration and communication; accreditation serves a vital function in this regard."

The New York State Veterinary Medical Society submitted the resolution that calls on the board to discontinue foreign accreditation. The statement about the resolution cites some of the challenges of accrediting foreign schools, such as the com-

plexity of applying a common set of standards in diverse countries.

"The focus of the Council on Education should be to continually improve the quality of the graduates, programs, and institutions of domestic and Canadian veterinary colleges," according to the statement.

The COE currently accredits 46 veterinary schools—28 in the United States, five in Canada, and 13 in other countries.

The House of Delegates will consider the resolution during its regular winter session, Jan. 11 in Chicago. Proposals going to the delegates are available at [www.avma.org/about/governance](http://www.avma.org/about/governance) under "House of Delegates." AVMA members can find contact information for their delegates by visiting [www.avma.org/members](http://www.avma.org/members) and clicking on "My AVMA Leaders."

### **International Accreditors Working Group to meet in London**

The AVMA Executive Board during an Oct. 25, 2013, conference call authorized an AVMA delegation to participate in an International Accreditors Working Group meeting Jan. 23-24 in London.

In 2007, the AVMA Council on Education, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and Australasian Veterinary Boards Council agreed during a meeting in Melbourne, Australia, to explore a process of conducting joint accreditation site visits at veterinary schools that were being accredited separately by each of the three entities.

Toward that end, an International Accreditors Working Group was formed and met in 2007 and 2011. Each of the three parent organizations approved a plan proposed at the 2011 meeting to conduct four joint site visits by 2014 in accordance with AVMA COE guidelines and standards. Three visits have been completed, with the fourth scheduled for this May to Massey University in New Zealand.

The RCVS will host the meeting, which will precede an AVMA COE site visit to University College Dublin School of Veterinary Medicine, saving travel costs.

The AVMA delegation will comprise the current and immediate past

AVMA staff consultants to the COE, Drs. Karen Martens Brandt and David E. Granstrom; one COE member who was selected by the council, Dr. John R. Pascoe (who is also the COE representative to the AVMA Committee on International Veterinary Affairs); the AVMA associate director for international and diversity initiatives, Dr. Beth Sabin; one representative from, and funded by, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, Dr. Deborah Kochevar; and, one representative from, and funded by, the Canadian VMA, if it accepts the invitation.

The RCVS has invited the South African Veterinary Council and the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education to the January meeting as observers.

The agenda will include discussions on continuation of the joint site visit approach, refinement of that process, and future directions for veterinary accreditation.

The COE sees ongoing cooperation with the RCVS and AVBC in joint site visits—with each accrediting body making its own accreditation decisions—as a laudable goal.

### **Speakers invited for 2015 AVMA convention**

The AVMA is seeking proposals from veterinary professionals and other individuals who would like to present a session at the 2015 AVMA Annual Convention, July 10-14 in Boston.

Starting Jan. 21, 2014, potential speakers can submit their presentation proposals electronically by visiting the "Speakers" page at [www.avmaconvention.org](http://www.avmaconvention.org).

Additional information is available by emailing [avma\\_ce@avma.org](mailto:avma_ce@avma.org).

### **Education council schedules site visits**

The AVMA Council on Education has scheduled site visits to 12 schools and colleges of veterinary medicine for 2014.

Site visits are planned for the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Jan. 13-15 (consultative site visit); University College Dublin School of Veterinary Medicine, Jan. 26-30; Utah State University School of Veterinary Medicine Coop-

erative Program, Feb. 12-14 (focused site visit); Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Feb. 23-27; North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine, March 23-27; University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, April 6-10; Massey University Institute of Veterinary, Animal, and Biomedical Sciences in New Zealand, May 4-9; Seoul National University College of Veterinary Medicine in South Korea, June 1-5 (consultative site visit); University of Utrecht Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in the Netherlands, Sept. 21-25; Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 4-9; Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 26-30; and Oniris Ecole National Vétérinaire in France, Nov. 16-20 (consultative site visit).

The council welcomes written comments on these plans or the programs to be evaluated. Comments should be addressed to Dr. Karen Martens Brandt, Acting director, Education and Research Division, AVMA, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL 60173. Comments must be signed by the person submitting them to be considered.

## Practice

### USDA awards \$4 million for veterinarians in shortage areas

The Department of Agriculture announced Nov. 12, 2013, that it offered awards totaling \$4 million to nearly 50 veterinarians toward repayment of veterinary student loans in return for service in shortage areas.

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture offered the awards through the federal Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program. Recipients must commit to three years of service in a designated veterinary shortage area in food animal practice or public practice.

This is the first time that the USDA has made renewal awards through the ongoing loan repayment program. Previous awardees with

educational debt exceeding \$75,000, the maximum award amount, were eligible to apply for a renewal award.

Following is a breakdown of the awards:

- The USDA offered 46 awards totaling \$4,053,280, comprising loan and tax payments. The mean award was \$88,115, comprising loan and tax payments.
- The mean eligible debt for repayment on new awards was \$115,793. Seventy-nine percent of new recipients received the maximum loan payment of \$25,000 per year, plus tax payments.
- Fifty-nine percent of new awards went to veterinarians who earned a veterinary degree within the past three years.
- The awards are for service in veterinary shortage areas in 18 states. These shortage areas include four in Iowa and three each in Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.
- Thirteen awards were for type 1 shortages, at least 80 percent food animal practice. Twenty-seven awards were for type 2 shortages, at least 30 percent food animal practice in rural areas. Six awards were for type 3 shortages, at least 49 percent public practice.

Additional information about the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, including the 2014 application timeline, is available at [www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp).

### Tail vaccination in cats effective, eases tumor removal

An alternative to a widely accepted vaccination protocol in cats could literally move the needle for treatment of cancer in cats, according to researchers.

"One to 10 cats out of every 10,000 vaccinated against infectious diseases develop cancer at the vaccine injection site," said Dr. Julie Levy, professor of shelter medicine at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine.

"Many cat owners elect not to pursue the most effective treatment—

radical surgery of the tumor—because excision of tumors in the limbs and torso is often disfiguring, painful, and expensive."

The current recommendation of the American Association of Feline Practitioners is to administer vaccinations below the elbow or stifle.

In a study of 60 cats, Dr. Levy and her research team found that administering vaccinations in the distal tail appears to be as effective as administering vaccinations at traditional sites. The researchers say tail vaccination would make surgical treatment of any cancer near the injection site easier, less invasive, and less disfiguring. The research team also found that cats tolerate tail vaccination at least as well as they tolerate vaccination in a distal hind limb.

The Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery published the study results Oct. 9, 2013, online in advance of print.

### FDA advises stricter oversight for hydrocodone products

The Food and Drug Administration believes stricter oversight is necessary for hydrocodone combination products to curb abuse and misuse, triggering its statement Oct. 24, 2013, that the Drug Enforcement Administration should move the products from schedule III to schedule II.

In 2009, the DEA asked the Department of Health and Human Services—which includes the FDA—for a recommendation regarding whether to change the schedule for hydrocodone combination products. At press time in December, the FDA planned to submit a formal recommendation that month to the HHS to reclassify the products into schedule II.

The AVMA has advocated for veterinary access to opioids, including hydrocodone, for several years. A Nov. 1, 2012, letter from the AVMA to the FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Committee underscored veterinarians' needs for hydrocodone in clinical practice and the minimal risk of drug diversion for opioids in veterinary medicine. 🐾