

NOSE TO TAIL

—Quarterly—



2021
ISSUE TWO



Wool Building 1 on a Friday
A tanka poem

Like a new-born lamb
Taking its first steps of life
The projector shakes.
Body in a path lecture
But mind buying a latte.

Hope you enjoy this second issue of Nose to Tail! We cover some fun and important topics such as recycling in Palmerston north, and the recent "Pink Hair Day" celebrated by staff and students in order to raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing in the veterinary profession. We also caught up with some new-grads and chatted about the working life. All of this, wrapped up in a beautiful shade of pastel pink (lovely colour, if I do say so myself) - what more could you ask for?

Happy Reading!

Julia Burton & the Nose to Tail Team

From the

PRESIDENT

Exams are looming, semester 1 is almost over, and before you know it the 2nd and 4th years will be braving the mud and cow sh*t with their calving placements.

We've had a great few weeks with the new grads back in town, celebrating one of the most jam packed happy hours yet! The band 'Equal phase' absolutely rocked the night away, and it was a great chance to learn about how the real world is treating the Class of 2020. Big congratulations to our recent graduates.

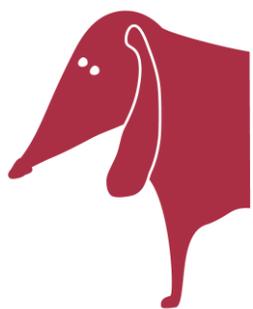


Mr Vet was an absolute hit, with Kugan Thevar taking out the highly prestigious event. What a great send off for our final BVT class! Big credit must go to the BVSc 3 class for putting on an entertaining evening for us all, and hopefully raising a fair bit of money for their halfway day!

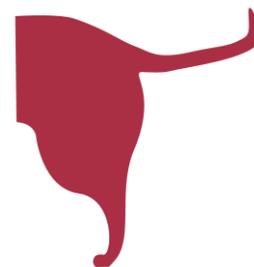
Upcoming events in the new few weeks include the movie night funded by MUVSA and the Veterinary Wellbeing Initiative - so make sure you get along for a great chance to get back into the old fashioned movie theatre. We also have the BVSc accreditation in week 12, the final happy hour of semester one, and dare I say it... EXAMS.

All the best for the final few weeks. Work hard, play hard, and enjoy your mid-year break!

Tatjana Wagner



CLUB TALK CATCH-UP



Massey Equine Club

The Equine Club has an almost entirely new committee this year with a great group of 2nd - 4th year vet students. We teamed up with SVECCS for our first talk of the year with Dr Stuart Gordon giving an excellent presentation on Equine Colic Emergencies in late March. Important take-home messages were that heart rate is an important indicator of severity, always carry euthanasia solution to a colic and if your patient is an old grey Arabian... you're going to have a bad time.

This month we had Dr Erica Gee give an excellent talk on Breeding the Older Mare. Erica has a wealth of knowledge and is very passionate about breeding. The most fun fact we learnt was that while fertility decreases and complication rates increase in horses over 14 years of age, ponies will easily keep producing into their mid-twenties. It seems they really are the devil after all!

We were thrilled to see some new faces at our latest talk and look forward to meeting more of you throughout the year. We have a talk on Dentistry coming up (date TBA) and are aiming to get a practical underway with Student Day at the Races coming back this year where we will shadow Ellie from Totally Vets on race day.

SVECCS

SVECCS is hosting their biannual emergency care conference in July. We're planning to spend the day with our local professors teaching us emergency procedures with a focus on veterinary CPR. There will be hands on learning with a dummy and quick drug calculations to get us prepared for real life. We are hoping to have an ET tube training station as well!

Massey Students Complementary Veterinary Therapy Club

The Massey Students Complementary Veterinary Therapy Club aims to spread the word about holistic veterinary medicine and encourage people to keep an open mind about treatments that are not strictly conventional. If there are any topics relating to complementary veterinary therapies that you are interested in, check us out on Facebook and send in a request for a talk on there!

We are also having our introductory talk on Friday 21st May at 12.30pm! The talk is going to be held on zoom and there are prizes up for grabs for the first few people to turn up. More details can be found on the MCVT Club Facebook page.

There are also committee positions available. Being a committee member will look great on your CV and you'll get opportunities to meet and form networks with vets who are currently practicing in the field! Looking forward to seeing you all at future talks!

Cloven Hoof

We recently had one of our busiest talks of the year, New Grad Chats. We had two legends, Tom Harsant and Laura Gardyne, come up from the south and give us all the tips and tricks on what the first few months in the job are really like. Moral of the story: you will be useless and know absolutely nothing. But the positive note is no one expects you too! So yay!

PETSEX was the acronym of the evening; E stood for "Enter the rectum" as apparently you can't pregnancy scan if you're in the vagina. Weird. As to what the rest of the letters stood for, I am not even sure if Tom knew himself.

A huge thank you to our speakers for coming, it was a great talk. We wish them all the best for their careers and can't wait to go do placement with them in the future. Hint, hint.

Upcoming events:
25th May: Chats with Cathy for career success
August: Student calving chats- Merchandise and Field trip coming soon!

Keep up to date on our Facebook page "The Cloven Hoof Appreciation Club".

PINK HAIR DAY

To find out more and support the cause, visit: givealittle.co.nz/cause/help-improve-wellbeing-for-veterinarians

If your view of the vet school has seemed even more rose-tinted than usual lately, you're not alone. Although two hours of staring at gram stains can definitely do that to a student, this pink hue expands far beyond Infectious. On April 24th, staff and students came to Massey with their hair dyed pink to celebrate the first ever Pink Hair Day, with proceeds going towards the Elizabeth Veterinary Benevolent Fund. Initiated to raise awareness of mental health problems in the veterinary industry, Pink Hair Day was the brainchild of Jane Langton-Burnell, director of the VTH. It was inspired by the recently-named New Zealander of the Year, Siouxsie Wiles, who demonstrated that brilliance is not limited to the brain.

Collection boxes for the Elizabeth Veterinary Benevolent Fund are distributed throughout the VTH. For the more tech-savvy (and cash-phobic) amongst us, there is also a link to a GiveALittle page somewhere in the depths of your inbox, where you can make a donation! Managed by the NZVA, this charity previously provided financial support to members and their families in times of hardship. Now it has expanded to fund free counselling for vets, the Mentor Scheme, the Veterinary Wellness Program and the Prelude to Practice seminar for fifth year students. Mental health- much like physical health- is something we all take for granted until we don't have it, so take the opportunity to support the charity that will support you when the world is looking a little less rosy.



Catherine Nelson

NEW GRAD INTERVIEW

We caught up with Nose to Tail's favourite new-grads to check in with what they've been up to since graduation.



Where do each of you currently work and is that where you thought you would end up a few years ago?

Georgia: I currently work at The Lifestyle Vet in Auckland. When I first started vet school, I wanted to be a wildlife vet. I wanted to go to Africa and Asia and work with the beautiful native animals, just like many other aspiring vets but as I worked through the degree I developed a love for the other animal species we learnt about. As I gradually moved towards fifth year, I decided I wanted to be a mixed animal vet. I found that I liked working with large animals whilst using my small animal diagnostic skills. Lifestyle work fitted this perfectly for me as I get to work with a diverse range of species. Lifestyle vetting was definitely not something I was thinking about in my early years of the degree, but in my latter years I realised it was the perfect job for me.

Samuel: I work in companion animal practice at Franklin Vets in Papakura. Working with people and their pets was my motivation for entering the degree. However, through placements I discovered that I took a lot of enjoyment from production animal work. I chose to go into companion animal practice in the end because while there's routine work in both fields as a new graduate, the progression in production animal work seems to be into consultancy for the most part, whereas in companion animal work you can direct your career into special interests that piqued my interest more: imaging, surgery, ECC etc. Small animal work is probably a bit more relentless than production animal work as a new graduate with a lot of different presentations all the time; it's a bit overwhelming sometimes, but that's where the variety and job satisfaction comes in for me.



Andre: I am a rotating companion animal intern working primarily in small animal emergency and critical care. This definitely was not what I thought I was going to do when I first started but to be fair I didn't really have a plan when I got in to vet school. Over the course of the last year, with all our rotations, I realised that I was going to get bored quite quickly. I am not saying that general practice is boring, because it is definitely not. It's just that a lot of what you do is routine surgeries, like desexing, and that holds little to no joy for me as I don't like surgery very much. So, I signed up for the internship because I knew it was mostly critical care. So far, it has been good - I don't have to cut anything, ever. The hope now is that I will complete the internship, go into residency and then go on to specialise.

Continued over the page...

What is your favourite aspect of your current job?

Georgia: Firstly, my colleagues are great and feel like my family. As well as that, I love that I have the ability to properly work up cases to a high standard, as we were taught at Massey, and provide the best care for clients. Having clients willing to go the extra mile and put everything into their animals is fantastic. I love that.

Samuel: My favourite part of the job is a consult with a presentation that is immediately clear to you. Then you have the rest of the consult time to make a connection with them and their animal, and you also have time to write your notes. Staying ahead is really satisfying and very important for me. If I fall behind, the next patient I see won't get the level of care they deserve, unless I push back the following consult too. New graduate life is treading water, and a straightforward consult is a foothold that allows me to stay afloat. It really helps to be in a practice like mine with fantastic senior vets who consistently take time to talk through cases I'm having issues with, and patient nurses who understand new graduate limitations, and help you learn on the job.

Andre: The complete disorganised chaos is beautiful. You don't know what is going to come in on any given shift. Sometimes you are sitting around twiddling your thumbs with one patient sitting in a cage just staring at you. But other shifts are chaotic - like I think my craziest shift was when I was discharging a patient when someone ran out to me and said: "We have just started a resuscitation, we need you to come back and run the code". Then, as I stood up, the doors opened and someone came in with an actively seizing dog. I was like, ooh, spicy! But it all worked out. You just have no clue what is going to happen and it never happens at a convenient time, ever.

"People are really happy to know that you're going to chat with your colleagues and make a consensus and then come back and make a plan."

What is one thing that has surprised you about working as a veterinarian?

Georgia: The things you thought you knew well in vet school are less concrete when you're in a stressful or fast-paced environment. It is incredible how when you're put under pressure in a situation and you don't have half an hour to figure out a diagnosis like you would on Kuracloud, it is hard to unlock the information in your memory, and I find that I have to work a lot harder to draw upon clinical knowledge and skills.

Samuel: In community practice in 5th year you do maybe four consults a day and you feel absolutely snowed under. As a new graduate if you're doing fifteen minute consults, you may see consults into the double digits before you've even had your lunch. It becomes the new normal, and it is doable if you have a great support team behind you.

Andre: Oddly enough, I found the exact opposite to Georgia. Something gets dropped in front of me and out of a desire to do something, I just start doing things. Most of the time it works. I am mostly just surprised by the people, in general. All the clinicians at the university are immensely supportive. There is not a single one of them who doesn't have the time of day for you which is great.

Many students feel under-prepared for entering real-life practice, do you find you are often unsure of what to do and what do you do to combat this?

Georgia: It is a given that you will be unsure of yourself as a new graduate. You are constantly self-reflecting and self-criticising between client interactions. My favourite thing to do after a call out is to say that I am going to email a summary of what I have said to them. The summary usually also includes a whole lot of information that I only remembered to tell them after I left the property!

Samuel: You can always take the patients out the back; I no longer make excuses for this. People are really happy to know that you're going to chat with your colleagues and make a consensus and then come back and make a plan.

Andre: You do get stuck with stuff which you have no idea what to do with, especially over nightshift, when it is just one of the interns and a nurse. There is a second on-call system so there is always someone to talk to but sometimes when there is a lot going on you don't have time to step away and call someone. There is a lot of educated crafting; making plans which work in theory and then just hoping that your skill-set is enough. Sometimes it is and sometimes it is not, and that is when you need help. I am fortunate enough that when I need help there is always someone there.

Applying for jobs as a new grad is quite an intimidating prospect; do you have any tips for standing out in job interviews? And how about determining if a clinic is a good place to work at?

Georgia: During my final year placements, I treated my OWNS sort of like job interviews. I aimed to get a good reference from every clinic I did placement with, if not a job offer. When choosing which clinics to do OWNs with, I talked to classmates for recommendations, looked for clinics with particular special interests I wanted to learn about, and simply chose clinics with star ratings of 4.5 or more on Google reviews. Some people might think Google reviews are not reflective of what it is like to be an employee, but I generally found that if the reviews were low and the clients were unhappy, it was likely the staff were unhappy or difficult to work with too. When you do your placements you will definitely get a vibe for the place almost immediately after you walk in. Bad signs for me were staff talking behind each other's backs, clinics that were really messy, exhausted staff, and vets practising poor medicine, such as giving antibiotics for every spey. These are little red flags that suggest maybe this isn't the kind of place you want to be working.

If I found a place I was interested in working though, I would leave them with my CV at the end of the week. You may want to do this even if the clinic is not your dream work environment, as additional job offers can be useful for leverage when negotiating your dream job. I got more job offers from clinic placements than from job interviews alone. It really helps to spend a week, or even a day in a clinic you're interested in, to see how they operate, rather than just a job interview.

"The complete disorganised chaos is beautiful."

Samuel: My approach to employment meant it was at the forefront of my mind through final year. In hindsight, it would have been acceptable to relax a little more. You would think that all of the fantastic clinics with amazing support would advertise early in the year, and the jobs would be snapped up. The fact is, there isn't much of a seasonality to job advertisements. Classmates of ours who took the summer break without having signed for a job were still presented with good opportunities.

Andre: One important aspect of this question to address for all new grads is that you really don't have to worry about getting a job in this climate. It will just happen! Yes, there is a degree of being picky about where you end up and what you want to be doing, but no new grad should go out into the world thinking 'sh*t, it's going to be so hard to get a job,' because it won't be! You could throw your CV into the air and something would fly back at you. It might not be the area you saw yourself working in or the geographical location you desire, but the jobs are there! I ended up sitting only one interview, because by the end of the year I was certain that the internship was what I wanted to do, so I have very little interviewing experience. But I think that there are two aspects; they have to want you and you have to want them. These are both equally important.

"At the end of the day, vet school is all about learning, which really is all about fun if you think about it in the right way."

One piece of advice to current vet science students?

Georgia: Mine would be to take more opportunities at vet school. I would sometimes choose not to go to certain events because I felt like I needed to study for upcoming tests or assignments. But I never actually ended up failing or even coming close to failing any test, so I always studied more than necessary. Most of us students end up overstudying for fear of failure and then we miss out on those opportunities you only get in vet school. The grades you get often don't matter at all in the long run, especially if you're just planning on going out into general practice. When you get out into the real world you can't do any of that cool vet school stuff anymore; there are no more bar-b-grogs, class ski trips, student clubs or happy hours! Take the opportunities while you can!

Samuel: Take the simulated consults in professional studies seriously. Don't write them off, because you will be utilising those skills twenty times a day. Getting across a plan can be difficult especially if there is any type of communication, cultural or cost barrier. And you really do need to be able to chunk and check. You will end up saving yourself a lot of time down the track. It's pretty common that you will give advice to a client, and they will nod, but you know they are still trying to work things out in their head. And you can always tell this by the questions you end up getting at their next visit.

Andre: I would also advise students to take everything with a grain of salt. At the end of the day, vet school is all about learning, which really is all about fun if you think about it in the right way. I would also suggest that if you do find something that interests you, do grasp it and do run with it.

There are loads of opportunities out there that aren't just in general practice, so don't feel like you have to be locked into any one career path.

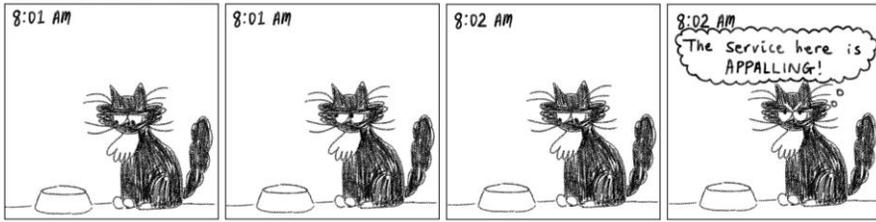
"One of the biggest learning curves: how to write clinical notes that do not suck out your soul but are effective."

Any extra nuggets of wisdom?

Samuel: Clients will come to you with multiple issues. It's alright (and oftentimes important) to send them away without dealing with all of them. As I get more experience I have more confidence to tell clients that we need to focus on 'x' today, and at the revisit in seven days we can look at 'y'. While it is prudent from an immunological standpoint to withhold vaccination for some cases, it is also a useful tool in ensuring attendance at the revisit consult.

Thank you to Georgia, Sam and Andre for taking the time out of their busy schedules to give this interview. We wish them the best of luck for the rest of their careers, wherever it may take them!

Bianca Mercer & Ashlee Larsen



Recycling is changing in Palmy...

If anyone ever tells you there is nothing to do in Palmerston North, they are probably correct. However, very few people know of the weekly event happening on a street near you. At about 7.30 in the morning, students trapped in Palmy can wander to the side of the road and watch the weekly recycling race. Experience the rush of adrenaline as you watch the flatmate (who forgot that they were on rubbish this week) battle against the bulk of the wheelie bin and struggle to drag it to the curb. The stakes are high - reach the curb before the recycling truck or face the wrath of their flat when they realise the bin is full - *again*. With the rules set to change on the 17th May, you might be left wondering - what exactly can we shove into our recycling bins?

To put it simply, your big wheelie bin is the white, fluffy cat of the recycling world. It is more than happy to take your (immaculately clean) cardboard pizza boxes, your empty baked bean cans or the metal lids from your pasta sauce. However, give it the wrong type of plastic and it will throw a temper tantrum. The plastic of your water bottles, milk bottles and dairy containers (numbers 1,2 and 5) are okay, however plastics 3, 4, 6 and 7 will be turned away.

To avoid this heart-breaking rejection you just need to check the bottom of your plastic containers for a small triangle with a number at its centre. In contrast, you can rest easy knowing your little glass bin is a Labrador. You can chuck anything in there as long as it's glass and not broken and it will be happy as.

Lauryn Somerville | MUVSA Sustainability Liaison



Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
This winter, it's time to make a wise investment. May I suggest crypto? (cryptocurrency)

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)
You will find yourself following a new path as Jupiter aligns with Mars. Maybe you will end up in a new phase of life? Or maybe you are just using the new horse entry to the wetlab.

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)
You may start feeling hot on the skin this moon cycle. It may just be the library heating, but beware: Kevin has seen Facial Eczema here as late as May.

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
You will fall in love this month. Just be mindful that too much DnB is bad for your brain cells.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
It's time to make some changes alongside the change in season. Are you really going to re-wear that old happy hour costume?

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
This cycle may see you lacking in energy and motivation... Don't give up, you're almost there!

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
You may see yourself in an excess of wealth this cycle. By the way, there are a lot of kittens in need of a new home at the SPCA lately...

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
The new season brings a much-needed close to the tumultuous previous cycle. Take this time to relax and recharge.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)
You will feel experimental toward the end of the month... Embrace the clippers and hair dye. What could go wrong?

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)
Don't let the the gloomy atmosphere of Palmy get to you. Now is the time to go out and explore – both in the physical and mental realm. You may surprise yourself.

Aquarius Jan (20 – Feb 18)
With exam season coming up, it's time to show everyone your A game. Or C+ game, that's okay too. Don't work yourself too hard. Grades aren't everything.

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)
The stars have aligned in your favour this cycle. Maybe you will finally get picked for the SPCA clinic?

Can you guess what these abbreviations (and one mnemonic) mean?

- Nick Cave's 7Fs (Hint: why is this abdomen so big?)
- TPR
- MCHC
- ACVMA (Hint: one of the few laws we should get familiar with)
- People And Dogs Don't Mate (Hint: Chronic CHF management)
- FANI (Hint: "It's never wrong to shoot a cow")
- PCHANNG (Hint: Soft tissue opaque masses ddx)

- Answers*
1. Fat, Faeces, Fluid, Foetus, Flatus, Foreign body and F*cking Big Organ
 2. Temperature, Pulse rate, Respiratory rate
 3. Mean Corpuscular Haemoglobin Concentration
 4. Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act
 5. Pimobendane, Ace Inhibitor, Diuretics, Diet, Monitor
 6. Field Anemia Nearest Indicator
 7. Polyp, Cyst, Hematoma, Abscess, Node, Necrotic lipoma, Granuloma

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