

Community Engagement Newsletter



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Veterinary Science
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LOATE CVC: A TEAM EFFORT

Dr Dave Kenyon (Veterinarian)

There are more than 40 South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) Community Veterinary Clinics (CVCs) throughout South Africa. One of the busiest clinics is the Loate CVC in Soshanguve, North of Pretoria.

CVCs are held every second Wednesday and we deliver primary health care to 70–200 dogs on each clinic day. This has been going on for about 15 years.

It is very much a team effort, with various vets involved in managing and manning the clinic, supported by CVC staff, volunteers and state vets. The focus of our work is Primary Health Care: Vaccination, parasite control and sterilisations.

Education is a vital part of what we do and one of the main reasons for the success of the project. It is satisfying to see the level of pet care improving over the years, and to see how pet owners are now correcting



The Loate CVC team in action at Soshanguve, north of Pretoria

and assisting each other on the best way to care for their dogs.

Although there are only a handful of vets that can attend the clinic days, we seldom

have a shortage of volunteers: from concerned lay people to visiting foreign vets, to vet students from Onderstepoort campus. The sterilisations are done at veterinary practices in Pretoria. We have

a long list of vets willing to assist. In fact, many will call us and complain if we haven't sent them sterilisations for a while.

The State is a valuable partner at Loate CVC, as they (GDARD) supply virtually all the vaccines and dewormers that we need. Now that the Compulsory Community Service (CCS) programme has started, we have access to enthusiastic young vets that assist at every clinic.

From humble, uncertain beginnings at "Oom Tshabe's" small private home, the Loate CVC has grown into an important part of the community. Our vision is to eventually establish a permanent veterinary practice in the area, staffed by local community members. We are well on our way to achieving this.



Clients and their pets at the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) Community Veterinary Clinic (CVC) in Soshanguve.

MEETING

A Community Engagement Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, 28 October 2015 @ 13h30.

The 2014 Vet Books for Africa journey

Matthew Huckle (BVSc V)

What a privileged and amazing adventure it turned out to be. The trip fulfilled our wildest expectations and taught us many essential lessons. Some 39 days on the road is not for the faint hearted and the committee fared extremely well.

Blistering hot temperatures, a lack of accommodation and strict borders were only a few of the many challenges faced. We had tough times, but the committee managed to find solutions to ensure that it was a trip worth remembering.

On our journey to our first university in Zimbabwe, we stayed over in Selebi Pikwe, Botswana and Gweru, Zimbabwe. On arrival, we were warmly welcomed by our fellow Zimbabwean veterinary science students. We soon became friends



The Vet Books for Africa team grazing with the locals.

once they showed us their veterinary campus. Our group then split up for the night staying at these students' houses. This gave us a chance to socialise and get a better understanding of the life of a Zimbabwean veterinary science student. The following day we had our official book handover with the Dean and other honorary staff (University of Zimbabwe) attending the ceremony. The amount

of gratitude expressed by these staff members reflected the good work our organisation had done.

We then headed to Zambia. Pitching a tent on the side of the road with no accommodation in sight meant I could not shower for a while (tough times). We then journeyed through Lusaka and arrived at the Chipembele Wildlife

Trust. This is a centre which promotes conservation to local communities. Youngsters from the community come to the centre to learn about conservation and wildlife. This deters hunting and the consumption of bush meat. The centre also cares for abandoned and previously abused animals. I'll never forget Doug, the fully grown hippo, eagerly waiting to greet us. We then donated many necessary items to the centre before getting our hands dirty by cleaning out the cages of the rescued monkeys (which was not easy). The Samora Machel School of Veterinary Science at the University of Zambia then awaited our awesome services. We obviously did not disappoint. By delivering textbooks here, we enhanced education at two African universities. What a success.

We then travelled through the beautiful country of Malawi en route to Tanzania. Travelling east through Iringa, we arrived at the Sokoine University in Morogoro. Another successful handover was completed with a thorough tour of the different departments, including a memorable visit to their Pathology Department. We then travelled north toward Arusha, but not without our share of bakkie trouble. Moritz Huber then got us out of major trouble with his bakkie expertise and cool, calm and collected attitude. We finally got to Arusha where we spent the night.

After crossing the border, we arrived at the beautiful campus of the University of Nairobi where we met up with our friend Linus from the Jane Goodall Institute (another charity we were teaming up with). He accompanied us on our tour and attended the official book handover with the Dean of the Faculty. We then teamed up with our fellow Kenyan veterinary science students and the Jane Goodall Institute to implement a Community Veterinary Clinic (CVC) in the Mara. We vaccinated many sheep and cattle against diseases prominent in the area and gave some critical advice to the farmers present. Working with animals in the Mara was an unforgettable experience.

But wait, our mission was not complete. We then left Kenya and travelled back south through Tanzania en route to the Lilongwe Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) in Malawi. On arrival, we noticed the tremendous work being carried out there. All the abused and neglected animals from the area were brought here for medical attention. By supplying the dogs and cats with brand new items such as leashes, collars, toys and bowls, we made both the animals and staff very happy (what a great success).

We then journeyed in to the land of Portuguese speakers, Mozambique. With few people understanding English, it was quite hard asking for directions to the



The team helping out and having fun while doing so.

university hidden in Maputo. On our 39th day of the trip we arrived at the Eduardo Mondlane University of Mozambique. With most of us being homesick, we really wanted to return to Pretoria. We however, put our feelings aside and successfully completed our final book handover and experienced an awesome tour of the faculty. The last trip left was the stretch back west on the N4. Luckily, no problems occurred at the border and we returned safely.

Words cannot describe the lessons I learned while the experiences I had with my fellow committee members are unforgettable. I feel extremely fortunate and privileged to have been a part of this awesome endeavour. It was a journey of a lifetime.

The outside world: Hluvukani

Cameron Paul (BVSc IV)

As a final year student, working in the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital becomes fairly routine with patient care and practical application of many years of tuition, when suddenly the community clinic rotation comes around.

As they say, change is as good as a holiday, overly eager for a break and yearning for the outdoors, students pack up a vehicle full of supplies and pharmacy orders and head into the great unknown, Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic (HAHC).

It's not until the first day of community clinics that one can fully appreciate the effort involved in running such a project. With a 04:00 wake up call to be packed and ready to leave by 05:00 for the day's work to begin by 06:00. Morning visits begin with dip tank visits that form part of compulsory foot and mouth disease monitoring. The odd patient will be seen in the race waiting to be dipped. A true sense of community is felt with the warm smiles of the local farmers and a greeting in a language you don't understand.



From the dip tanks, the real work begins with callout duties, under the expert direction of Mr Justify Fakude, the environmental monitor, you make your way through a network of tangled dirt roads to cows, goats, pigs or even dogs in distress. Working with what you have and not with what you want is the name of the game in this rural setting, with only a loaded vehicle as your tool shed, you quickly learn that thinking outside the box and being pragmatic is just as important as applying the mounds of information gathered throughout the academic years.

This endeavour would, without a doubt, not succeed without

the tireless efforts and expert guidance of Dr Louise Biggs and her ever-joyful “can do” attitude, untiring compassion for her patients and drive for student education. The HAHC can only grow from strength to strength over the years to become a highlight of any final year’s journey through their practical year.

Cases range from the mundane, yet important vaccination of dogs against rabies to exciting cow herding and advanced wound care in the field with limited resources. All in all, this clinic is an opportunity for students to grow in both their theoretical and practical fields of veterinary medicine.

DONATIONS: All donations received will be used for community engagement purposes, specifically in less-fortunate communities. Please contact one of the following people if you would like to donate money, dog food, collars, leashes, blankets or your time:

Dr Rebone Moerane	012 529 8464	Chairperson: Community Engagement Committee	rebone.moerane@up.ac.za
Sr Sarah Johnson	012 529 8387	Client Liaison: OVAH	sarah.johnson@up.ac.za
Mr Eugene Machimana	012 529 8100	Community Engagement Coordinator	eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

Mamelodi Heart

Marguerite du Plessis (BVSc IV), Photographs by Lindiwe Nkwe

Equipped with jerseys, scarves and beanies, we braved the cold winter morning in eager anticipation of our new rotation: the community-based Mamelodi Animal Health Clinic (MAHC), which is situated on the east side of Mamelodi. As we approached UP’s Mamelodi Campus, we were welcomed by the familiar smell of vetkoek and booming music from nearby taxis.

MAHC is a light, bright clinic with a big heart which epitomises the true meaning of “ubuntu” (human kindness) and Dr Jeanne Rudman, the veterinarian in charge of MAHC keeps the clinic’s heart beating with boundless compassion. While there, we learnt (or were simply reminded of) a few valuable lessons.

1. A dog really is man’s best friend

In the distance, we saw a man walking with desperate determination towards the MAHC cradling his 30 kg pitbull in his arms. The dog was ill and collapsed as it was suffering from severe babesiosis. When we explained to the owner that we would need to do a clinical examination and blood smear in order to confirm the diagnosis, he agreed but insisted on staying at his dog’s side and held tightly onto his dog’s paw to encourage and support his best friend throughout the visit.

2. It is in giving that we receive

A little boy arrived choking on his tears as he carried in his sick, babesia-burdened Africanis puppy. The boy had no money to pay for treatment and could not speak a word of



Just one of MAHC’s many canine clients

English, but was adamant that we should make his puppy better. Everyone chipped in and gave the youngster donations so that the puppy could be treated.

3. Fight for what you love

One of the locals, Chris Mabe, transports sick animals in the area to MAHC for treatment. Chris brought in a rottweiler puppy suffering from the often fatal parvovirus enteritis and he continued to bring the rottweiler puppy in for a number of days for follow-up treatment. Chris even built an enclosure at his house where he could keep the puppy comfortable over the weekend. We found such dedication to helping animals really admirable.

Many students have been given the opportunity to work at the MAHC and



On the road to recovery and loving his chewing toy.

all of us will be the richer for it. We have experienced the true nature of community spirit and learnt how

to make a difference to those less fortunate than ourselves. MAHC is small in size, but big in heart!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Event	Venue	Date
Production Animal Outreach Clinic	Makapanstad and Ratjiepan Project	Wednesdays
Mamelodi Animal Health Care (MAHC)	Mamelodi Campus	Mondays to Fridays
Loate Community Veterinary Clinic	Winterveldt	Twice a month on Wednesdays



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO PUBLISH?

The Community Engagement Committee invites you to submit short articles to be published in the next Community Engagement Newsletter (Summer 2015). The article should not be more than one page long. Contact person:

Eugene Machimana
 Tel: 012 529 8100 (w)
 Email: eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

Visit the UP Community Engagement website regularly for updates about projects and funding opportunities.



**"Be kind to animals.
 Compassion for other living
 beings is a judge of character."**