

# Community Engagement Newsletter



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Faculty of Veterinary Science**  
Spring: October 2015



## Successful goat farmers' day held in Mnisi

Dr Hein Stoltz (Veterinarian)

A very successful goat farmers' day was held on 26 February 2015 on the premises of the Nazarene Revival Church at Hluvukani in the Mnisi area. The day was jointly organised by Dr Hein Stoltz (representing Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases – DVTD at the University of Pretoria – UP), Dr Bjorn Reininghaus (representing Department of Agriculture Rural Development Land and Environmental Affairs – DARDLEA), Prof Frans Jongejan and Ms Suzanne Busser (representing Utrecht University). The day was attended by approximately 150 people, of which approximately 130 were goat farmers from the area. The organising committee was ably assisted by several officials from DARDLEA, Ms Jeanette Wentzel from Hans Hoheissen Wildlife Research Station (HHWRS) and her staff, Onderstepoort (OP) students on rotation in Mnisi and visiting Utrecht students on internship in Mnisi.

Although Mnisi is considered mainly a cattle-farming area with approximately 15 000 cattle, few people realise that there are also approximately 7 000 goats in the area. This indicates that goats make up a substantial portion of the livestock in the area, yet they may not have received the



*Organising Committee of the Goat Farmers' Day (From left): Prof Frans Jongejan (UU), Dr Bjorn Reininghaus (SV Orpen), Ms Suzanne Busser (UU), Dr Hein Stoltz (UP), Ms Maria King (UU), Ms Marjan de Vos (UU) and Mr Carldon Zwane (Control AHT, SV Orpen).*

recognition and veterinary attention that they deserved, in the past. Over the past two years, a number of veterinary students from Utrecht University have done internships in Mnisi as part of the MOU between their and our respective faculties of veterinary science. The internships revolved mainly around the collection of ticks from livestock, but especially goats. These small research projects have been largely supervised by Dr Hein Stoltz and Prof Frans Jongejan. One of the major findings of these investigations has been

that a large number of goats develop lameness as a result of foot abscesses commonly associated with severe tick infestations, which in turn adversely affect the health and well-being of these animals. Preliminary results also indicated that the application of tick grease to the hooves of goats is an effective and economical intervention to drastically reduce the incidence of lameness in the animals.

In order to ensure rapid feedback to the community, it was decided, in

collaboration with the State Vet (Orpen), Dr Bjorn Reininghaus, to organise a goat farmers' day to educate goat farmers about the risks associated with, and methods to control, ticks on goats. The opportunity to address a large number of farmers was also used to provide additional information on hoof care, animal husbandry (such as nutrition and neonatal care), infectious diseases and tick-borne diseases such as heartwater.

Transport from all the villages in the Mnisi area to the venue was provided by vehicles rented from the southern African Wildlife College. DARDLEA also provided a marquee tent, seating and catering (of a hearty lunchtime meal!) for all the attendees. Although proceedings started a little later than anticipated (due to farmers having to be transported from outlying areas) the meeting also continued well into the afternoon, due to the keen interest of farmers and a rather extended question and answer session. Load shedding briefly interrupted the slide



*Attentive audience being briefed on health aspects of goats.*

presentations, but a standby generator was rapidly employed to rectify the situation!

Feedback after the meeting was extremely positive, many farmers commenting on the fact that it was probably the largest

gathering of farmers ever at a farmers day in the area, that the day was very well organised, and that the information provided was invaluable. They also expressed a need for such information days to be arranged at more regular intervals.

## MEETING

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

# A donation of time

Nico Stoop (DVN1)

On 27 July 2015 a group of the first-year veterinary nursing students set off to Drieziek in the Orange Farm Township to assist Pet Empowerment in Townships (PETS) with animal health care in the community.

PETS is a non-profit organisation that provides basic medical care and sterilisation services for pets of people living in townships. Our aim was to use the nursing skills we acquired to make a difference in the lives of the pets and pet owners.

Although the weather was cold and windy, we were greeted with warm smiles from community members and the PETS community engagement (CEn) team. We performed basic clinical examinations, vaccinated, dewormed, applied tick and



*A group of first-year veterinary nursing students dedicate their time to make a difference in pet health care in the Drieziek community.*

flea treatment, assisted with medical cases and preparation of dogs for sterilisations. In addition we gained valuable practical experience of owner education and handling of dogs and cats.

On our way back to the Onderstepoort campus we reflected on our experiences and concluded that it was a very valuable CEn experience, beneficial not only to the community involved, but to us as

veterinary nursing students as well. We realised what a huge difference the time we spent at Drieziek had on the morale of the community and the health of the pet population. In dedicating our time, we not only gave our time, but a part of our life and we cannot wait to get involved in another CEn project. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and would like to thank community members and PETS for the opportunity.



# Collaborative community project between adventure with elephants, UP and other partners

Michael Hensman (Adventures with Elephants)

Veterinary science students from the University of Pretoria organised and hosted a fantastic community engagement activity in collaboration with Adventures with Elephants for the fourth year running. On this occasion, learners from Fingerkraal, a nearby community school were invited to meet the elephants at Adventures with Elephants with the aim of raising awareness about nature conservation through fun, educational interaction. Many of the learners had never seen a live elephant before and those that had were generally fearful of them. It was great to see the learners leave having learnt that the value of wildlife and having realised that it's possible to live in harmony with elephants and other wildlife.

A few guest speakers were also invited to speak to the learners about: (1) the role and function of veterinarians

in conservation; (2) demonstrating the workings and equipment used in strategic tracking and tactics in anti-poaching; (3) how community members can assist and play a role in anti-poaching and; (4) the experiences of rangers involved in various conservation efforts.

We hope that the learners left with a greater appreciation for wildlife and for the people who do so much to help conserve it. We also hope that this experience leads to these learners wanting to do more for wildlife in their own capacity and perhaps even look to seeking future careers in nature conservation.

We would like to express our thanks and congratulations to the VPL 300 students who initiated and co-ordinated this project! We look forward to continuing this project in the years to come.



*Learners engaged with real elephants and learned about conservation and participation in anti-poaching endeavours.*



# Mamelodi educational outreach

Naomi Brand, Esti de Wet, Jean-Phillip du Plessis, Isel Esterhuysen, Christophor Feilding, Janelle Maistry and Fraser Martens (BVSc III)

**"Tell me and I forget.  
Teach me and I  
remember. Involve me  
and I learn."  
– Benjamin Franklin.**

Upon our first visit to Mogale Primary School, the learners were ecstatic, peeping through the windows, waving frantically in doorways shouting and screaming, greeting us with a lot of kindness and happiness. What stood out on our visit was one girl, which we first met as we passed by her classroom peeping through a partially opened door smiling at us. Moving along, we noticed she started following us. Eventually it seemed she wanted to take a photo with some of our group members. A small act of kindness made that one girl's day... If our mere presence at the school evoked



*Veterinary Science students with learners from Mogale Primary School in Mamelodi.*

such a reaction from the learners and a simple action of taking time for a photo with one of the learners made one girl very happy, we hoped to achieve even more with our revisit to the school.

Our vision for this project was to promote veterinary science by not just telling, but involving the learners during our time at the school by carrying across our message through an interactive session regarding dog training. We addressed the Grade 6 learners who were divided into three classes. We showed the classes a video about dog training showing simple examples of how to train your dog and how this improved behaviour is to the benefit of the owner. Each session was followed by interactive questions about the video

One could clearly see that the learners were willing to learn as they watched the video with a lot of amazement. We truly enjoyed the opportunity given to us to make a difference and we hope that after our visit, even if it is only one or two learners, that they will remember our talk and apply what they learnt in class in their own community.



*Veterinary Science students promoting the discipline by interacting with learners in a fun and enlightening way.*

**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  
 Sr Sarah Johnson    012 529 8387  
 Mr Eugene Machimana    012 529 8100

Chairperson: Community Engagement Committee  
 Client Liaison: OVAH  
 Community Engagement Coordinator

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# Community clinics - what it really means

Azeemah Parker (BVSc IV)

Having heard about the Hluvukani trip from all the previous groups as being *"the best rotation by far"*, we were excited for the adventure. We'd be living in the Kruger National Park, listening to the lions and hyenas as we enjoyed our braai. We of course did experience all of those things; however, our time spent there was a lot more than just enjoying a two-week break away from Onderstepoort (OP).

Our mentor, Dr Louise Biggs welcomed us on the first day and explained to us what



*Veterinary Science students treating the cattle of local farmers in the Hluvukani area.*

was expected of us and that we would start our mornings at 05:00! This was indeed rather challenging for our group at first. A typical day involved going to the dip tanks

within the Mnisi area and treating cattle that belonged to the local farmers. We would then precede with individual farm call outs and end our day off working at





*The birth of a healthy calf to sustain a farmer's livelihood.*

the Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic (HAHC). Toward the end of the day, we were so hungry, exhausted and hot, we could only think about our beds. Now, while that may sound like I'm complaining, what we gained from this hard work was irreplaceable.

Besides learning an immense amount of veterinary knowledge from Dr Biggs, as well as sharpening our practical skills, we learnt the true essence of community engagement in need.

We spoke to primary school and high school learners, encouraging them to care for animals and promote careers in veterinary science. We spoke to farmers at the dip tanks, educating them on the benefits of energy and protein licks. We even learnt a bit of Xitsonga in the process!

We also learnt about the concept of One Health. We visited a human clinic in the area where met up with the Wits medical students and discussed veterinary, medical and environmental issues that affect South Africa.

The two weeks spent on the Hluvukani trip was more than just a lot of fun, it was truly fulfilling. There is nothing quite like the feeling of having pulled a healthy calf and have the farmer thank you endlessly, because in essence you assisted in saving his livelihood. The work being done at this clinic is more than just a clinical rotation for final years, it's a valuable part of uplifting the community.

## 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.

**"We have more to learn from animals, than animals have to learn from us."**  
 - Anthony Douglas Williams

