

## **Veterinarians Are Amazing!**

**By Henry Heymering**

Isn't it amazing? Veterinarians are (at least in Florida, and soon to be everywhere if the AVMA's model Veterinary Practice Act is adopted) upon passing the state veterinary boards, the experts in horseshoeing, saddle-fitting, massage, homeopathy, acupuncture, and essentially everything else that can benefit any animal – even when they have had no training or education in those fields. Any veterinarian who passes the state boards is instantly, without any study, more of an expert in horseshoeing than someone who has practiced and studied the field for 20 years, or even 50 years.

There are only two possibilities here: either every single veterinarian who becomes licensed is an amazing genius-savant who can master any and every complex specialty without any exposure to them ... or the veterinary association is making a gross and greedy grab for control over the specialties of other professionals.

It's not the individual veterinarians, but the organization. The AVMA's draft of a model veterinary practice act from December 2002 (the last one made public) suggested that "To ... alleviate, or prevent animal disease, illness, pain ... by any method or mode; including ... application of any ... apparatus ... or the rendering of advice ...with regard to the above." Without specific exemptions, this clearly includes normal horseshoeing as being veterinary medicine. Under these guidelines it would even be illegal to mention that preventing standing water would reduce the mosquitoes, and disease!

As with the existing Florida veterinary practice law, we get reassurances that the above is not what is meant by the law – and the law will never be enforced in that manner. Such reassurances are hollow and meaningless. As long as the law reads as it does it may be enforced that way and is a danger to all.

These veterinary practice laws make it illegal to do things to prevent or alleviate disease. So I suppose we are required by law to make animals lame and keep them uncomfortable?

The veterinary association has taken a position in opposition to all other animal-related specialties and in opposition to the rights of animal owners. If they don't take steps to back off and correct the problem, this action by the veterinary association is going to backfire in a big way and set back respect for veterinary medicine for many years to come.

All the best,

- Henry

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