

Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians

Advancing reptilian & amphibian medicine, surgery, & conservation worldwide



ARAV Monthly Herp Blerp

Greetings from the ARAV Technician Liaison

Issue 17, July 2014

Hello my Reptilian and Amphibian shugs,

Where are you going to be October 19-24?! The correct answer is the 21st annual ARAV conference in Disney World!! Fun, sun, and herp medicine! There is no better combination folks. If this is the first time you've been to one of our conferences you will not be disappointed! I was privy to a sneak peak at our the upcoming talks for this year and you will be blown away. Bring the family and make it a two week stay! One with the conference and another just enjoying Florida and Disney World.

Your Herp Blerpin' Tech,

Erica Mede, CVT

Chasing Alphabet Soup Behind Tech Names!

I am so pleased that we have been receiving e-mails and messages about technicians in the field of exotic animal care. With all the questions that have heading our way, I sought out the renowned Jill Murray. Not only is she an RVT (in Canada and part of the US), she is also specialized in Avian & Exotic Companion Animals and Laboratory Animal Medicine. She is who inspired this Technician Liaison to become more than just a CVT!

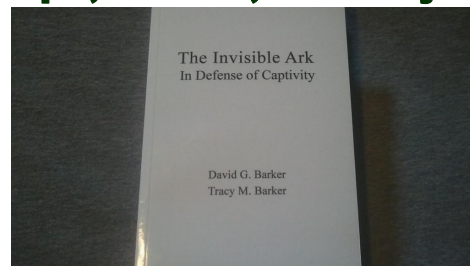
You were the first technician to receive her AVTCP specialization in Exotic Companion Animals, what inspired you to take this step?

I am very passionate about my career, my clients, patients, and both veterinary and technician students. Whenever I take on a new challenge or task I want to succeed and do it well. The first day of Vet Tech school when asked to introduce ourselves and our goals, I stated that I wanted to become a technician specialist working with exotic animals. At the time, the opportunity for a VTS in Exotic Companion Animals did not exist and veterinary technician specialties were relatively new. Despite the odds, I made sure to not turn down any opportunity to learn, regardless of the species. I decided it was vital to develop a strong knowledge base and skill set that would ultimately benefit me with the unique challenges exotic animals present. I always kept my dream in sight and made sure that at the first available opportunity I would be ready to accept the challenge and successfully complete my VTS in exotic animals.

What schooling did you complete prior to your specialization?

I received my Veterinary Technician education from Seneca College in Ontario, Canada. Following graduation, I became a Registered Veterinary Technician with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians. As work opportunities presented themselves, I also became licensed in Kansas and Oklahoma. Recently, I became a registered laboratory animal technologist (RLATG) with the American Association of Laboratory Animal Sciences (AALAS).

Tips, Tricks, and Toys



The Invisible Ark: In Defense of Captivity

A wonderful book about the key to conservation being in pet ownership and the everyday battles of those people especially in the reptile community.



Biology & Conservation of North American Tortoises

A must have book for all tortoise keepers and vets that treat species from North America.

Continued on the Next Page ...

Speaking of schooling, you work for a University, do you believe that the university setting is better equipped you for the rigors of the specialization process?

The veterinary technician specialties are designed so that any technician working in a specialty position has the opportunity to achieve specialization. The university setting does have its advantages with the number and complexity of the presenting cases. Most owners come to the university on referral and wanting an advanced level of care and treatment knowing the associated costs in advance. These complex cases certainly help when building one's application. Academia also has its disadvantages in that the different departments are very specialized. Sometimes achieving the number and diversity of skills required can be difficult as they are often-times performed by technicians in a different department.

How long have you been a member of ARAV?

I have been an ARAV member for 4 years now.

How active are you in ARAV? Conferences? Committees?

Although I have not been an active member in ARAV, I have learned so much through all the learning opportunities that ARAV offers. I enjoy the monthly newsletters, and social media posts. I'm always learning something new! When the opportunity presents itself I would love to become more involved with ARAV and encourage fellow technicians to do the same.

How has your specialization impacted your work? Do your doctors ask more of you?

Receipt of my VTS has provided many opportunities for speaking engagements and publication opportunities. My doctors supported me during the rigors of the application process, and I believe this has greatly impacted their level of respect for my knowledge base, skill set, time management, and drive. (Most technicians do not have the paid time off to prepare and study, so time management and motivation is vital!) Other doctors who I would not normally work with, now, will often come find me for technical assistance or advice, which is humbling, and has opened up different opportunities I would never have imagined.

Is there any advice you would like to give to other technicians studying for this specialization?

For those veterinary technicians considering specialization, I would definitely encourage them to go for it! It is never too early to start collecting information and acquiring a mentor. For those technicians already in the rigorous process; develop a study plan (and stick with it), find a good mentor to help you along the way, and make sure to provide yourself one night "off" a week. Work hard now so you don't have to repeat it later! Receiving the letter stating you have successfully completed your chosen specialty makes the hard work all worthwhile!

If you could do it all again would you?

Yes, definitely. Not only did I advance my knowledge in the field of exotic animal medicine, I met some great people, learned how to better organize my time and have created some valuable opportunities for professional growth and advancement.

ARAV Awesomeness!



A HUGE thank you to Dr. Nicole Johnson who put together the Official ARAV CafePress store! Don't be caught without your ARAV swag.

Visit us at: <http://www.cafepress.com/ARAVshop>



Student Corner

I'm still working on getting the student chapter sign ups to go through the online site, should be up shortly. We are also accepting student posters for the poster contest this year, there will be some more email announcements for it in the coming weeks, but students or anyone wanting more information can contact me directly at cmcd.vmd@gmail.com. Thanks!

Dr. Colin McDermott

ABVP Announcement!



For all of you interested in becoming boarded in Reptile and Amphibian medicine come visit the 19th Annual ABVP Symposium in Nashville, Tennessee October 30-November 2, 2014. Find out more information at www.abvp.com

Research & Conservation Grant Proposal Deadline

This is a reminder that the deadline for Research/Conservation grant proposal submissions is **September 1, 2014**. This year, and in succeeding years, one of the grants will be identified as the *Kevin Wright Memorial Research Grant*. There are only about 6 weeks left to submit your research proposal. Please do not miss the September 1 deadline. Full proposal submission information can be found below and on the ARAV website. Funding decisions will be made by January 15, 2015.

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Mark Your Calendars ...

August 30 - Last day to register for the Vipers Conference and the call for papers. Check the website for more information www.elerpe.org/viperconf.html

October 8 – 12, 2014. **Wild West Veterinary Conference**. Reno, Nevada, USA.

October 18 – 24, 2014. 21st **Annual Conference of the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians**. This will be a concurrent conference with the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians and the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians and will be held at Walt Disney World, Orlando, Florida.

November 9 – 13, 2014. **World Association of Zoos and Aquariums Annual Conference**. New Delhi, India. Contact: www.waza.org.

Questions, Suggestions, or Articles can be Submitted to: e.medecvt@gmail.com