When Nevenka Krajsek arrived home from work late on a Thursday night, all she wanted was a good cuddle with her dog Griffley and to relax with a takeaway dinner. Nevenka fed Griffley his usual dinner, and then served herself a special treat – some chicken satay from the takeaway.

As she sat at the table, she heard a crash in the kitchen. Griffley had decided he needed a special treat too – he’d eaten an entire 15 cm skewer of chicken satay, stick and all! Leaving her dinner untouched, Nevenka called her regular vet and was advised to take Griffley to Murdoch University Veterinary Hospital for emergency treatment.

Arriving at Murdoch Pet Emergency Centre, Griffley was examined by emergency veterinarian, Dr Hugh Broun. Although Griffley seemed fairly comfortable at the time, Dr Broun explained the risks of leaving the satay stick included a perforated stomach and/or oesophagus. Dr Broun recommended an endoscope to determine the location of the satay stick and the extent of Griffley’s injuries. If possible, the vet would be able use the endoscope to guide the satay stick back up through the oesophagus and throat, removing it without surgery.

An endoscope is a camera and light contained within a long flexible tube that can be inserted into the patient’s mouth, nose, ear – any delicate space where it’s hard to see. Skilled veterinarians can use this camera to guide long tools for removing foreign objects and look for any damage to these areas.

After Griffley was anaesthetised, the endoscope showed the satay stick was lodged half in oesophagus and half in the stomach. Luckily, there were no perforating injuries only mild inflammation where the stick was causing acid reflux. Dr Amanda Paul used the endoscope to guide the 15 cm skewer out of Griffley’s throat using long handled forceps – without any further injury or the need for surgery.

Because the endoscope allowed the removal of the satay stick without surgery, Griffley recovered from the incident almost immediately. Nevenka said, “He viewed the whole trip to Murdoch as a special outing. He was happy and alert within minutes of recovering from the anaesthetic – the only evidence of his mishap was a shaved patch on his leg.” Nevenka continued, “When I got home, I hadn’t eaten – MY chicken satay was still sitting on the dinner table. But Griffley didn’t learn a thing – he went straight to my plate to steal another chicken satay!”

Murdoch Pet Emergency Centre is open 24 hours with the tools and expertise to help animals needing special care. With the help of the right equipment, Murdoch veterinarians were able to help Griffley survive his satay dinner without the need for surgery. “I’m just grateful there’s a 24-hour emergency centre – things would have been so much worse if I had to wait until morning. I’m glad that Murdoch has the right tools and the right people. Griffley’s treatment was quick and he recovered so well!”
Guest cardiologist brings new skills to WA

Dr. Fiona Campbell and Dr. Richard Woolley, who have provided valuable teaching to the veterinary profession, our resident and our undergraduate students.

In October 2010, Murdoch will welcome Dr. Rob Sanders, a board-certified cardiologist from Michigan State University. Dr. Sanders will provide case-based practical instruction for veterinarians, for our veterinary residents and final year veterinary students. Dr. Kereen Edwards says, “Boehringer Ingelheim is proud to support Murdoch University, facilitating the education of our country’s future veterinarians. In sponsoring the ‘Guest Cardiology Lecturer Series’, we hope to enhance each student’s educational experience and also create an opportunity to interact with some of the world’s leading veterinary cardiologists.” Our thanks to Boehringer Ingelheim for their support of this project.

Students fight to prevent rabies in Africa

Rabies is one of the most prevalent infectious diseases in southern Africa affecting wildlife, domestic dogs, livestock and even humans. The disease is invariably fatal causing suffering to many people and animals in the region. Murdoch students journeyed to South Africa for a once in a lifetime experience vaccinating lions, giraffes and dogs as part of a rabies prevention program. Students not only provide critical veterinary services but also understand how conservation efforts are making a significant difference around the globe.

Hear first-hand about the experience from student Fran Mulligan on the vet trust website www.veterinarytrust.murdoch.edu.au/wildlife.html

Diana Pinch remembered with epidemiology prize

Murdoch graduate, Dr. Diana Pinch, has been remembered posthumously with a prize in Epidemiology awarded at Murdoch’s annual registration day. Donated by the Epidemiology Chapter of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists, the Diana Pinch Memorial Epidemiology Prize, recognizes Diana’s significant work in animal health including fieldwork concerning brucellosity surveillance and delivery of NT government programs.

Diana’s contribution extended beyond her official role, providing advice and encouragement to colleagues and mentoring others within the field of epidemiology. Sadly Diana was diagnosed with cancer in 2004. She moved to Canberra with her partner and young daughter and passed away in August 2005. This award is in recognition of Diana’s contribution to veterinary epidemiology.

Pfizer supports student large animal externship awards

Hannah Deleaharty and Sara Bailey have this year been awarded the first Pfizer Animal Health Externship Award. The externship programme is designed to that final year students can pursue a special interest in the veterinary field. Students make contact with a practicing veterinarian and arrange to spend a fortnight being involved in all aspects of their veterinary practice.

Hannah Deleaharty spent her time at Bell Veterinary Services, a specialist large animal clinic in Queensland. Under the guidance of Dr. Rev Sullivan, one of Australia’s most respected feedlot veterinarians, Hannah got to experience and learn about all aspects of practice as a consulting feedlot veterinarian. A large focus was on behaviour and acclimation of animals and the difference this made to animal health.

Many thanks to Pfizer for providing these awards for students.

Murdoch investing to address rural vet shortage

In a move to address shortages in rural and production animal vets, Murdoch University is refreshing its production animal teaching facilities.

“As vet shortages in rural and production animal practices make headlines in Australia, New Zealand and the United States, we are working to provide students with the best production animal experience we can,” said Professor Ian Robertson, Acting Dean of Murdoch’s School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences.

“We are refurbishing the sheep and pig facilities to showcase best practice, including the most rigorous animal-welfare and human health and safety standards. Additionally, we are upgrading our production labs to assist in the development of breeding stock and artificial insemination.”

Murdoch team wins Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition

A Murdoch team has won this year’s Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest, beating Australian and International competition.

The Murdoch teach not only took the Roy McDonald Shield for overall success at the two-day competition, but it was also the first time in four years that an Australian university managed to bring the shield back to Australia since US teams joined the competition.

The Murdoch team were champions in Quality Evaluation and Retail Cut and Primal Quality Evaluation. The Murdoch team were champions in these categories and won a number of awards for students.

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Diana Pinch remembered

Guest cardiologist brings new skills to WA

Heart problems are common and critical for many of our animal patients”, says Murdoch Senior Lecturer Caroline Marsfield. “With the support of Boehringer-Ingelheim, Murdoch is able to bring the latest developments to WA veterinarians and veterinary students that may improve the lives of animals with heart problems.”

For the past 3 years, Boehringer-Ingelheim has supported the Guest Cardiologist Lecturer at Murdoch University. We have had two visiting veterinary cardiologists (Dr Fiona Campbell and Dr Richard Woolley), who have provided valuable teaching to the veterinary profession, our resident and our undergraduate students.

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Murdoch first to be awarded global accreditation

Murdoch is pleased to announce that it is the first university to receive accreditation using a new “global standard” combining criteria from Australia, New Zealand, United States and Europe.

In September 2009, Murdoch University School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences welcomed 14 visitors representing the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Europe on campus for its Global Accreditation visit. During the accreditation visit, a panel assessed Murdoch’s ability to meet international best practice standards for veterinary education in the following areas:

- Organisation and financial management
- Facilities, equipment and other resources
- Admission and student support
- High quality faculty and clinical staff
- Research to support learning activities
- Innovative curricula with effective outcomes assessment

After analysing reports, inspecting facilities and interviewing staff, students and employers in the veterinary field, the accreditation panel recommended that each participating nation accredit Murdoch as meeting the highest standards.

The accrediting bodies praised Murdoch’s commitment to international teaching excellence and the strong relationships between Murdoch staff, students and the community. The accrediting bodies also highlighted that the School would need to look at building exceptional community support to maintain its current high standards during times of dwindling government support for clinically-based programs and increasing financial pressures for Universities.

Professor lan Robertson, Acting Dean of School shares, “We are proud to have achieved this milestone. It took an exceptional effort from our staff and students and all our supporters. As part of achieving this goal, Murdoch has raised the standard of veterinary research, teaching and care expected in Australia. We thank everyone that supported our efforts with their gifts and pledges for key projects. Thank you. We couldn’t have done it without your help.”

Murdoch PhD students wins Morris Animal Foundation Scholarship

Gunn Kaewmongkol is a veterinarian and a lecturer from Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand and is currently studying tick and flea-borne diseases in Western Australia as part of his Murdoch PhD. The Bartonella species of bacteria is carried by fleas and ticks which may cause inflammatory joint disease, inflammation of heart valve, blood clotting disorder and inflammatory liver disease. His research has been recognised as vitally important for the health of animals with the awarding of a Morris Animal Foundation Scholarship. With only 70 winners worldwide, this award recognises research of exceptional importance.

Providing veterinary care to rural and indigenous communities

For some rural communities, veterinary care is inaccessible. In June, six final year veterinary students and two staff members went to Sandstone, Wiluna and Meekatharra to provide veterinary advice, vaccinations, wormings and sterilisations for needy dogs and cats. Over a two week period, the students performed 75 sterilisations and examined over 150 dogs and cats, as well as providing dental checkups for four horses. Vet students shared information on pet health and care in the remote primary school of Sandstone. In remote regions lacking veterinary equipment, students were required to adapt their skills to the environment. Murdoch students performed essential veterinary services, learned about issues in Western Australia’s most isolated regions and saw some of the great scenery this State has to offer.

Donations to the Murdoch University Veterinary Trust can make a real difference to the lives of animals

Your donation can fund the next research breakthrough, prepare new veterinarians to deliver world-class care and provide equipment and expertise for the most difficult veterinary cases.

100% of every dollar given goes to key priorities in the School and you can earmark your donation for a project that is important to you.

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