

ACLC General Meeting

17 October 2022 via Zoom

Present: Dawn Duncan, Miguel Marquez, Cherri Hudson-Brown, Nancy Sharp, Candis Stern, Julie Basile, Linda Mandel, Mari Rodriguez, and Jaye Williams

Dawn opened the meeting. Our general meetings use the same Zoom link and are held on the second Monday of each month unless it is a holiday. We review the mission each time.

Media and Communications – presented by Dawn

Dawn feels good about how the fundraiser went in terms of interactions with attendees and the films selected. It was hard work and a lot of fun. On 26 September, Dawn presented at a Las Cruces City Council work session, which was recorded by the city. We don't have a clip of just Dawn's portion yet, but we have requested it. Work sessions are different than open sessions because no one is allowed to comment or ask questions; only the presenters interact with the councilors. Three council members gave Dawn their business cards and said during the meeting that they are fully in support of our mission.

Dawn asked the council that day to host a meeting with all local veterinary professionals, because it is harder for them to ignore council members. At that meeting, we'd like to talk positively about incentives the city can provide and ways we can partner to lessen the burden on our vets and expand their services by helping them recruit new vets, a goal ACLC is working heavily on right now. Mayor Miyagishima is working to set up the meeting. Dawn drafted a letter for him to send, and encouraged him to set a time on a weeknight at 8 (since some vets close at 7) or a weekend at 5 (since Animal Hospital runs until 4).

Channel 7/ABC reported on the Las Cruces City Council work session although they weren't in the chambers. They reported from the video and Dr. Calista's practice.

Also on 26 September, Dawn presented to the Mesilla Board of Trustees. It was a friendly and warm meeting, and she felt very encouraged by the amount of support expressed.

If you know any Mesilla trustees or Las Cruces councilors, please personally thank them and share how much you appreciated ACLC's being able to present to them.

When NMSU students heard about what we are doing, they decided to do a news story on it. Cera Moots, who produces the show, attended the fundraiser and met with Dawn a week later for a deeper dive. She wanted to know more about Fergus and how ACLC got started. It aired on 11 October.

Dawn and Julie Basile dealt blackjack at the Community Foundation of Southern NM's (CFSNM) annual gala, their biggest event of the year. They were the first blackjack table as people walked into the casino area, and made it lively and fun. At the end of the evening, attendees place their chips in the bucket of the organization they want to support. Our bucket overflowed despite there being 46 other nonprofits present and competing for donation vote chips. We don't know yet how much we'll get from that financially yet. After the CFSNM takes out their cost for the event, they will share the profits with the top four or five organizations. Each of those organizations will have to fill out a **grant application for that, due before Thanksgiving**, and we'll receive more details later.

Fundraiser – presented by Miguel

We earned \$7,700 from the 18 September fundraiser. We sold 83 (80 online and 3 at the door) tickets at \$20 each, netting \$1660. We comped two tickets to KRWG TV crew so they could attend and cover the event, for a total of 85 attendees not including those working the event. As the theater seats 100, we did very well. Through the Mesilla Valley Film Society, we also collected monetary donations of \$1,445. Further, we received \$505 in check and \$40 in cash donations, totaling \$1990 in monetary donations from the event. We netted \$4,050 from silent auction sales of 84 items. We collected 116 items and 32 were unsold.

We will sell unsold items through Mesilla Valley Estate Sales online December 7-14, with pickup of purchases Dec 16 & 17. James is our contact and will train us. **We will send out more information.**

We have had a total of \$59,805.30 in general fund donations received from 98 donors year to date. Of those, we spent \$2,073.06 on printing, subscriptions, postage, event insurance, and movie rights. We also spent \$193.40 on CFSNM administration fees, which is 5% of the month-end balance, leaving a total of \$57,538.67 in general fund monies and \$65,238.67 including the fundraiser monies. This includes two \$20,000 by a single anonymous donor for vet school debt relief, which is greatly appreciated!

Website Updates – presented by Miguel

We added to the list of “Our Generous Supporters.” Miguel added a video by the Founder/Chief Medical Officer/CEO of VetTriage and added the price of a session (\$50). He added Dawn’s 11 September interview on KRWG’s Puentes radio show regarding the nation’s great veterinary shortage, a report on Dawn’s 26 September presentation at the Las Cruces City Council work session, and the 11 October news piece by NMSU Channel 22. We always add the minutes of our general meetings to the Meeting Minutes page for full transparency. **We invite everyone to read that to stay apprised of our progress.** We also continue to add pet stories and **encourage everyone to contact a board member to submit your story and photo of your pet.**

Current Action Items – presented by Dawn

Tracking Volunteer Hours:

Dara would normally be discussing volunteer hours, but Dawn will discuss it today in her absence. Dara created a volunteer hours worksheet. The Board is requesting that all volunteers (including board members) track the time they spend working towards our mission. This is important for a few reasons. Many grant programs require matching funds, and the time donated by volunteers usually counts as a match, so it's very helpful to get in that habit. Moreover, grant reviewers and donors often take into consideration how active an organization is in terms of volunteer time when considering funding decisions. Our volunteers are incredibly dedicated; we have a good core group of very active volunteers. It only makes sense to be intentional about tracking the time so we can more precisely tell that story. This will lend a lot of weight to our credibility, especially as a young organization. Finally, we would like to be able to understand our volunteers' time commitments for planning purposes and so that we are in a better position to acknowledge and thank volunteers for their hard work.

So please start tracking your hours immediately. To make this easier, **Dawn will send out a tracking form you can use, or you can use whatever system makes sense to you.** We are looking for hours and minutes and ask that you be as accurate as you can within reason, to about 15-minute increments (or finer if you'd like). **At the end of each month, please email your new totals to Dara Parker at daraparkernm@gmail.com.**

Dawn called attention to a few parts of the form. You can print it to write on or use it electronically. If you enter your data via computer, any cell shaded in gray contains a formula. Provided you don't delete that cell, it will automatically populate so you don't have to do the math. That requires that you enter your time spent in

hh:mm format (the total hours and minutes, not an actual time of day). Also, there is room for notes and a workspace. You can use this form or track hours in any way that makes sense for you.

You can send Dara the completed form or just the totals. Either way, unless we send out a specific request, we will not be recording any notes, just the monthly, annual, and lifetime totals. Because we formed late August 2021 and would like to report based on our anniversary - and since we held our fundraiser in September - we'd like to capture our best estimate of hours spent last month and the previous part of this month. So please estimate that as best you can and then track more formally from here on out. **Please send your September estimates to Dara ASAP. Also, when you send them to Dara for the first time, please also include your phone number.** If you have any questions at all, please get in touch with Dara at daraparkernm@gmail.com.

Connecting with Vet Schools for Recruitment:

This has been our new big push. Some of us have been using a template prepared by Dawn, tweaking it for different schools. Each has taken on different states based on connections to those states. Jaye got great information from UC Davis and Cheri made an incredible personal connection with Iowa State just in the last few days. Dara is making connections with Long Island University, Dawn did Texas and will be doing Minnesota unless a former faculty member there takes that on. We are trying to find out when their annual or semesterly job fairs are; usually they are twice a year. We are learning whether we can send our brochures there, make presentations, whether they are live or virtual, etc. Some of these we have missed, but we'll be ready for spring. Iowa State is just revamping how they do their job fair. A lot of campuses just use a national database of job postings, but many schools are realizing they can do a lot more. Iowa State is creating Partner Practices (PP), and we can be a PP as an umbrella organization for all our vets here, or individual practices can participate separately. If a PP is a big corporation, it is expected to give a \$500-1000 donation to their scholarship fund. If a PP is small, nonprofit they expect \$100-500, and they're fine with us giving \$100 to be a part of this. Then we can have posters, brochures, and do a 10-minute presentation at each of their job fairs. Dawn is very encouraged by this connection. We have a few more states to cover, and then we can start looking internationally.

This also means trying to work with our vet services here to let us help them and figure out ways to create intern- and externships, even for 2 weeks. If we find that we can get those going, we may come back saying we need to find a place for an individual to stay.

Candis said she contacted Michigan State and Colorado State to find out what we're looking for. Do you want me to reach out to learn more? **Dawn** said yes and **will give her the template.** Nancy will take Michigan off her list. Candis used to live there.

Special Thanks – presented by Dawn

We had such a crushing last couple of months, and many were "all in" to get things done in time, especially for the fundraiser. Dawn wanted to extend a special thank you to those who helped: Julie Basile and her husband Bob, who were outside the entire time we prepared for the silent auction taking pictures of all 116 items on a hot day; to Miguel and his partner Tony who allowed us to store all those items in their home for an extended time with a lot of people coming back and forth and managing the list of items, etc.; all those working before and during the auction including Jean Berlowitz (did a lot to help set up the auction and run that room), Nancy Dionne (she and Dawn picked up the majority of the donated items), Linda Mandel, Judy Bosland, Candis Stern, Liz Reed, Karen and David Woronoff, Jackie Garcia, and all board members; Kelly and Michael Carvlin, who sponsored the concession stand; and everyone who donated anything! Thank you also to Mari for being here tonight and deciding to become involved.

New Graphic Design Projects

Dawn introduced our new board member, Julie Basile. She has done way beyond what a typical volunteer does. She is our professional photographer and graphic designer, and does it all for free. She connects Dawn with NMSU vet school where she used to work and constantly brings ideas to the board. Therefore, it made sense to add her as our second board member-at-large and keep her duties the same while honoring her work and making her a larger part of the idea generation that happens at board meetings every two weeks. Julie said she was honored for the board to ask her to join them. She really believes in this issue. She is a native of Las Cruces and understands the problem of shorthanded veterinarians and vet technicians.

Julie said she updated the recruiting brochure that we'll send to vet schools. She also put together a flyer for recruiting that can be sent digitally and is a fast one-pager, also to save on printing costs. These should get the attention of veterinarians and techs about moving to Las Cruces. The last thing she'll be working on for now are rack cards, to put in displays or on front counters that people can pick up. It will be mainly informational, short brochure including our mission, plan, contact information, QR code, and probably VetTriage link. We could also put these in envelopes when sending thank you notes to donors.

Dawn brought up the brochure file to point out the things we added, including articulating our plan. Dawn read the plan. "In order to provide and sustain 24/7 emergency care for pets, our top priority is to recruit new veterinarians to the City of Las Cruces and surrounding communities. To that end, we will work with all of our existing clinics and county services to help expand their services through the addition of qualified staff, helping to host candidates and providing debt relief scholarships for veterinarians committing to work here. We will also work with our government entities and higher education institutions to provide incentives and quality training for veterinary staff as needed. We will use our considerable efforts to create an atmosphere and quality of life for our veterinary professionals that is positive and supportive." The brochure includes our mission, plan, goals, and some information to attract vets to Las Cruces.

Call to Action – presented by Dawn unless otherwise noted

As always, please get friends, family, and co-workers to donate, join, and help us. If anyone wants to help contact the vet schools, please contact Dawn or any board member. **The big thing we need right now is storage for the unsold auction items.** Cherri and Jeff have had them in their guest room since the fundraiser, but will not be around consistently for drop off and pick up. We have to get to 50 items for the Mesilla Valley Estate Sales online auction, so there's even more coming. We need somewhere relatively large and, since we have a lot of artwork, climate controlled. The pickup days after the auction we will have volunteers there as people come to pick up their items. **If you have a room, B&B room, casita, climate-controlled storage shed or locker, or other appropriate space you or someone you know is not using, please contact Dawn ASAP!** Cherri needs things out of her home before Thanksgiving but early November is best. Julie asked if ACLC can rent a secure storage facility? Dawn said we should look into it. Julie said there is one on Picacho that requires a passcode to enter, and Dawn said there is on Hwy 70 that does that as well. Nancy agrees, and used a climate-controlled units at U-Haul, and a small unit would be enough and was maybe around \$120 for a month. (At the time of our meeting, this portion was accurate: We do not have exact dates for the online auction yet. **Action item for Dawn is to email James again and request that he firm up the dates for the auction** so we can plan storage and advertising.) **Dawn secured firm dates for the auction and pickup dates, as noted above: Dec. 7-14 online, pickup on Dec. 16 & 17. Nancy will check on storage units.** Dawn believes this is a legitimate use of funds if necessary. Linda said that a storage space is also easier because trusted people can come and go with the code rather than needing to coordinate with others. Dawn said we won't sign a rental contract until we have firm dates from James. She remains hopeful that Carolyn Horner, an assistant to Mayor Miyagishima, may come up with a storage space for us.

Other

Nancy used VetTriage again and was very impressed with how they helped with Chester. **Dawn suggested adding Nancy's testimonial to our VetTriage page and Miguel agreed.**

Dawn will thank Mesilla Mayor Nora Barraza again. She usually attends our meetings, and she and Las Cruces Mayor Miyagishima provided letters of support. We want to make sure both mayors and cities know how much we appreciate their support.

Mari said she came from the Santa Cruz, CA area, always had pets and was involved in the animal community there. She knows a lot of veterinarians. She has already experienced that you get a lot more for your money here, and drafted something for Facebook to that effect. If she spreads the word to vets in CA, would that be helpful? That wouldn't be schools, but they would have a lot of contacts. Dawn said having those personal connections is huge. When Dawn moved to Minnesota, she went back to Fargo to the vet that had started the Red River Emergency Hospital, a consortium of all the vets. He talked Dawn through what was needed to do that, including financials. If she hadn't worked with rescues and vets for years there, she wouldn't have been able to do that. **Dawn will email Mari the flyer, brochure, and template letter to vet schools** so Mari can share our needs.

Dawn said that if we are to truly have 24/7 emergency veterinary care here, we need experienced veterinarians. We need to feed new graduates into practices to ease the burden on the experienced vets so they can provide the emergency care. So having established vets here is critical. Cherri said that **Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley needs an experienced vet and the posting has been out there for over a year, so if you know anyone, please tell them.** They are asking a lot of that person. Dawn said the ad has been up for two years, but they don't have time to recruit like we do. Cherri said she isn't sure about whether people can make more money someplace else. Dawn pointed out that while one may or may not make less here, the cost of living and taxes are much lower here as well.

Dawn thanked all attendees for joining the monthly meeting. We have over 80 people on the email list, but those attending tonight are the people we count on to get things done. We really appreciate it.