



# Zweig

From the Harry M. Zweig  
Memorial Fund for Equine  
Research at Cornell University  
College of Veterinary Medicine



No. 60 November 2015

## Ruffian celebrates its first year

June of 2015 saw the end of Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialists' (CRES) inaugural year, a milestone met with celebration and excitement for the future. To mark the occasion, trainers, owners, veterinarians, and friends were invited to CRES headquarters, located across from the historical Belmont Park in New York, where they listened to talks about the progress of the first year; toured the facility to view equipment such as the brand-new standing MRI; and socialized with staff and other horse lovers.



CRES patient Sam I Am

CRES doctors Norm Ducharme, Alan Nixon, Lisa Fortier, Kyla Ortved, Samuel Hurcombe, and Practice Manager Jill Nordberg discussed the various achievements during the first year of operation. These highlights included caring for approximately one thousand horses, with procedures ranging from bone scans, to respiratory surgeries, to fracture repair.

Audiences were particularly struck

by the story of Sam I Am, a colt rescued and cared for by CRES clinicians when his mother died during labor, and named in honor of Dr. Sam Hurcombe.

Further remarks were made from dignitaries including Dr. Scott Palmer, equine medical director for the New York State Gaming Commission, who discussed the state of the horse racing industry. Erin King Sweeney, horse owner and councilwoman of Hempstead, N.Y., presented Former Dean Michael Kotlikoff and Nixon with a certificate of recognition on behalf of the town board, saying the clinic "really is a gem." Kotlikoff closed the talks by



announcing that the client entrance would be named the

Dan and Jane Burke Foyer, in recognition of the Burkes' generous support for equine programs at Cornell.

Guests were then given tours of the facility, with a chance to see the state-of-the-art stalls, surgery rooms, and X-ray areas. CRES officials also revealed the new standing MRI machine. The machine represents a significant improvement over older MRI machines



that required equine patients to be anesthetized, leading to complications for the animal. With the standing MRI, excellent images of the lower leg can be taken without the normally associated risks.

With their team of experts, CRES is poised for an even better second year as the caseload continues to grow and horse owners from Long Island, New York State, and beyond benefit from the clinic's care and dedication.

# Funded Zweig researcher Tom Divers receives honors



Memorial Fund researcher, has long been renowned for his expertise, and this year two different prestigious organizations have added to his list of recognitions. The American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) gave Divers his annual Robert W. Kirk Award for Professional Excellence, which recognizes “outstanding achievements and dedicated service to the veterinary profession by ACVIM Diplomates...with national and international recognition for their contributions and service.”

Divers has also been tapped to give the 2015 Frank J. Milne State-of-the-Art Lecture during the AAEP’s 61st Annual Convention in Las Vegas. His lecture, “The Equine Liver in Health and Disease” will provide a state-of-the-science review of diseases of the equine liver, including causes, diagnostic testing, treatments and prognosis.

Cornell’s Dr. Thomas Divers, section chief of large animal medicine, and funded Harry M. Zweig

Those who know Divers agree that such honors are well-deserved. “I can vouch for the fact that he’s one of these outstanding individuals,” says Dr. Norm Ducharme, James Law Professor of surgery and medical director of Cornell’s Equine and Nemo Farm Animal Hospitals. “There might be someone as good in the world as him, but there isn’t anyone better.”

Divers exudes a genuine passion for his chosen career; “During my internship I realized how excited I got over emergency, critical care, and internal medicine patients, particularly horses and dairy cattle,” says Divers. “It’s kind of evolved from that point, and I’ve enjoyed the complexity of the cases, solving the problems, and trying to help the animals, owners, and referring veterinarians while teaching the students and residents a little bit on the way.” Divers goes on to say that the many residents he’s helped train “have taught me more than I taught them!”

Divers received his DVM from the University of Georgia in 1975, and has published more than 190 peer-reviewed scientific publications, authored several book chapters, and co-authored three textbooks. “He’s not really Tom Divers—he’s THE Tom Divers,” says colleague Dr. Kathleen Mullen, equine veterinarian at Littleton Equine Medical Center in Colorado. “He’s a pretty important guy, and he’s helped so many people, so many animals over his career.”

## Congrats to Kotlikoff

Former Dean Michael Kotlikoff joined the Zweig Committee as Chair in November 2007, holding that position until 2015, when he left the deanship to become provost of Cornell University. During his eight-year term on the Zweig committee, Kotlikoff created an open and collaborative exchange of ideas, and recruited superior equine researchers to the College while broadening their support. From the Zweig Equine Assistant Professor and Zweig Clinical Scientist to clinical fellows and residents, Kotlikoff worked to ensure that successful equine research could flourish thanks to Zweig funding. (For a comprehensive list of awards and publications produced by Zweig researchers, visit <http://www.vet.cornell.edu/research/Zweig/>). On behalf of the Zweig committee, we wish to thank Dr. Kotlikoff for his support, enthusiasm and contributions to the Fund, and congratulate him on his new endeavor as provost of Cornell University.



# Equine endocrinology testing takes off at Cornell



Cornell's Animal Health Diagnostic Center (AHDC) is setting a new standard of care with their equine endocrinology testing services. Veterinarians around the country send patients' samples to the center, particularly when they suspect Equine Cushing's syndrome and/or Equine Metabolic syndrome. Both conditions can eventually lead to laminitis, a serious, crippling disease of the hoof and foot. "The idea is to catch these diseases before a horse becomes laminitic," says Dr. Ned Place, who oversees the top-notch team of technologists at the diagnostic

endocrinology laboratory. The lab tests for tell-tale increases in adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), which is consistent with Cushing's syndrome; and increases in insulin, which points to Metabolic syndrome. Overweight horses are predisposed to developing Metabolic syndrome, thus the hormone leptin can provide additional information, since its concentration in blood serum correlates with body fat levels.

Place and his team work closely with the Equine Endocrinology Group, a group of clinicians and researchers founded by Dr. Nicholas Frank of Tufts University, aiming to standardize endocrinology testing for equine metabolic conditions. Thanks to efforts from this initiative, along with outreach and educational efforts from Cornell extension veterinarians such as Dr. Barb Schanbacher, the AHDC has seen a substantial increase in equine endocrinology tests. Additionally, the Endocrinology Laboratory has a reputation for doing excellent work. "We're pretty persnickety about how we do our testing," says Place. The fastidiousness is paying off—over the past two years the number of samples tested has increased by nearly 75 percent.



**Filly on a mission:** Mission Brief delivered a definitive win at the Harry M. Zweig Memorial fillies at Vernon Downs on Sunday, July 26, 2015. The first-place filly is shown here, with recently retired long-time member and leader of the Zweig committee Mrs. Anna Zweig, and her son, current Zweig committee member Brian Zweig, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine faculty, staff and students.

The Harry M. Zweig Memorial Fund for Equine Research honors the late Dr. Harry M. Zweig, a distinguished veterinarian, and his numerous contributions to the state's equine industry. In 1979, by amendment to the pari-mutuel revenue laws, the New York State legislature created the fund to promote equine research at the College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University. The Harry M. Zweig Committee is established for the purpose of administering the fund and is composed of individuals in specified state agencies and equine industry positions and others who represent equine breeders, owners, trainers, and veterinarians.

## CORNELL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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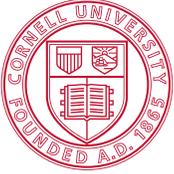
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## Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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# Warnick takes the helm at Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine



Dr. Lorin D. Warnick, professor of ambulatory and production medicine, has been appointed interim dean for the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine by Former Dean Michael Kotlikoff, now provost of Cornell University.

"In both capacities he has been an exceptionally thoughtful and effective leader," said Kotlikoff. "Lorin and I have worked very closely, and I know that he will provide the college with outstanding leadership."

Before becoming interim dean, Warnick was associate dean for veterinary education and director of the Cornell University Hospital for Animals (CUHA). As dean, Warnick now serves as Chair of the Zweig Committee.

"It is an honor to lead the college through this transition," said Warnick. "Mike is an inspiring leader who has fostered enormous growth in our clinical, educational and research capabilities. My highest priority in the coming months is to provide the continuity of leadership that will ensure the success of our current initiatives."

Warnick received his DVM degree from Colorado State University and his PhD in Veterinary Medicine from Cornell University. He is a diplomate in the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine. He joined the Cornell faculty in 1996 and has had responsibilities for clinical service and teaching in the ambulatory and production medicine service as well as research in the epidemiology of zoonotic



infectious diseases and the emergence of antimicrobial resistance.

Meg Thompson, associate clinical professor of imaging and director of Continuing Education, will now oversee CUHA as interim director.

### Have you visited our Web site lately?

[www.vet.cornell.edu/zweig](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/zweig)

This site provides information on the projects and publications resulting from the Zweig Memorial Fund, and demonstrates the objectives of the Fund in promoting equine health in the racing industry. The Zweig News Capsule is published twice

a year, and can be downloaded in PDF format at <http://bit.ly/ZweigNews> Please encourage other equine enthusiasts to visit this site.