

## **Okay Veterinary Profession, let's not take too much credit for saving the US economy just yet!**

I was thrilled to see how big a role we played in turning this crisis around, but we are not done yet.

Sure, you are back to borrowing money and expanding, purchasing equipment and being better consumers. Keep up the great work and I will give you a pat on the head.

And yes, you are returning to veterinary conferences. Recent conferences are reporting improved attendance. I also know that early bird registration for the NAVC is significantly above last year's levels at this time. CE is once again important.

On a similar note, it was wonderful seeing everyone at this past year's NAVC INSTITUTE (in May in Orlando) and I look forward to seeing more new faces this spring, especially with the exceptional courses and their incredible amount of wet labs, that are being offered.

However, you did not do everything I implored you to do or as quickly as you should have ( in my top ten list to save the economy). Winter will be here before we know it (earlier every year it seems) and I do not want you sitting back on your haunches and licking your chops in front of a fireplace. You also need to realize spring too will follow and with it more and more business. Now is the time to prepare.

Have you heard about the annual American Pet Products Association (APPA) survey this year? Some 80 plus percent of pet owners surveyed stated they were not planning to cut back on pet expenditures this year and many stated they expected to spend more.

There is still time to do your part. I know there will be incredible equipment deals in the NAVC exhibit hall this coming January. Feel free to look me up so I can show you around the exhibits and help you find those deals.

As promised, I will discuss the eco friendly, energy efficient new veterinary full service hospital I helped create in St Croix in the Virgin Islands for Dr. Stacia Boswell. Dr Boswell has always wanted a state of the art facility to practice quality medicine. With the creation of the "The Sugar Mill Veterinary Center", we combined her concern for the environment with her desire for such a facility.

### **On the large scale we have:**

Smart building automation system, special HVAC system, LED lighting system, Energy star appliances, special roofing materials and a pre-engineered building system, Solar Photovoltaic Electric system, wind turbine electric generator, solar water heating system,

**And on a minor (yet still very important) level:**

Paperless practice management system, Digital X-ray technology, rainwater collection system, special flooring materials, parking lot design and materials and special cleaning materials.

Obviously we finish with recycling of waste and reminding everyone about how precious our energy is and the many ways they too can help in this battle.

Building an eco friendly hospital was significantly more costly up front. However, when you evaluate the long term cost savings and the amount of energy that we are saving every day, the choice was easy to make. Everyone who works at this hospital takes immense pride in our facility and what we have accomplished. One can actually see the energy we are saving daily, monthly or yearly on our website. Even our clients are excited about the building and what it represents.

There are many programs available for the future builder of a facility such as this. We were awarded a sizable grant from the USDA to help with the up front costs of the solar panels. There are many such grants available at the moment. Often local and state governments will also have programs available to the eco-conscious builder. It just takes patience (paperwork can be tedious) and persistence.

Every year innovative new products are being created to make this approach not only easier but more esthetic; solar panels are not the most pleasing sight on a roof and I recently learned of both tiles and shingles which have been developed to replace those panels and blend well with the existing roof. Sure, initially they are slightly more expensive, but we all know once they catch on, the price comes down.

Our conference is right around the corner. I look forward to seeing all of you there and of course we will have talks regarding building eco friendly hospitals for you to attend.

**So continue to save the economy and our planet and get yourself to the NAVC in January 2010.**

**View of the roof of the facility with both**



**types of panels**

**Installing the panels**



## **The Automation center- computers**





**The wind turbine**