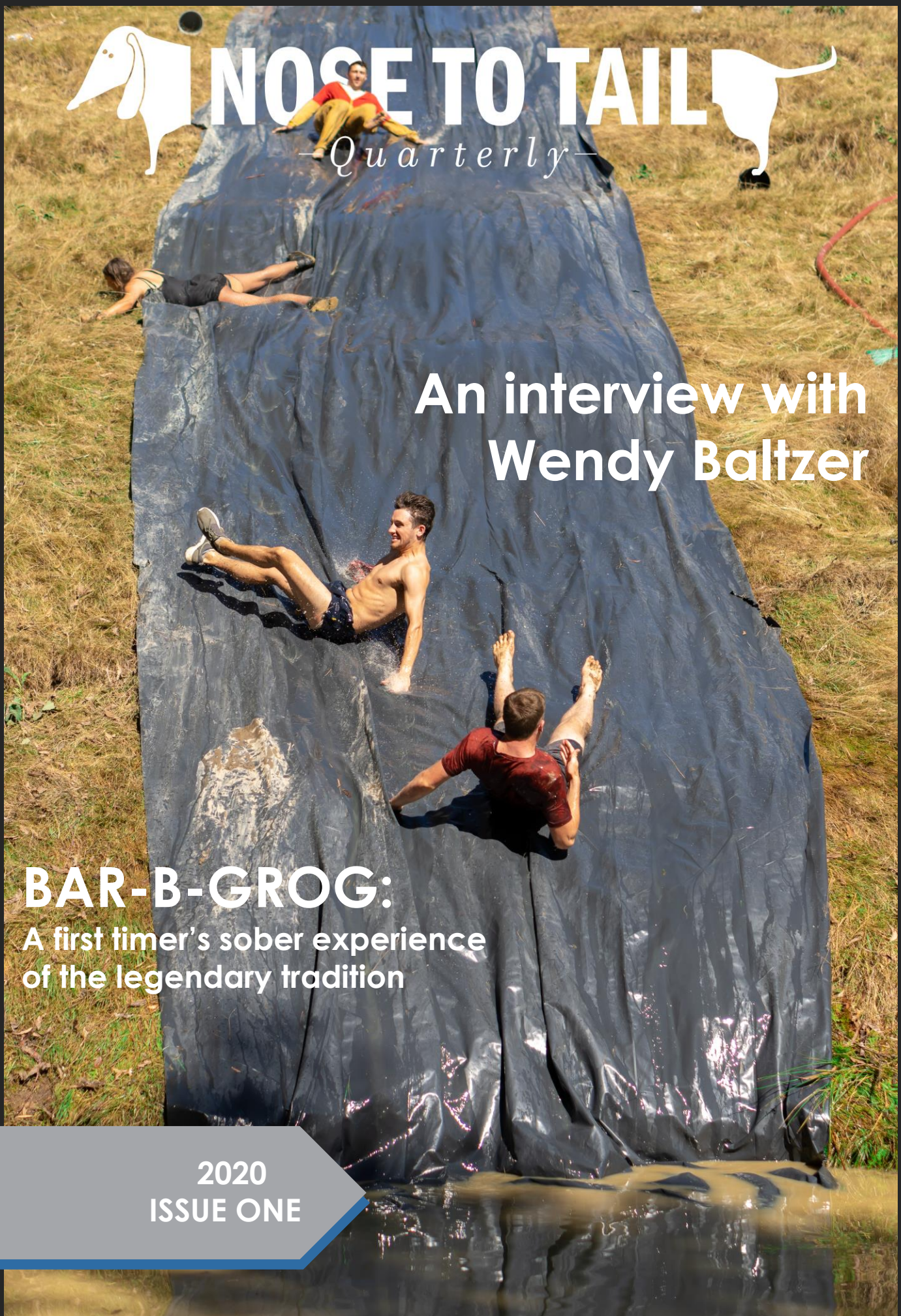
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Quarterly
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BAR-B-GROG:
A first timer's sober experience of the legendary tradition
2020
ISSUE ONE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello everyone! I Hope you are staying safe inside your respective bubbles. Perhaps enjoying a cheeky takeaway? As you may have gathered, unfortunately for the time being Nose to Tail will have to go back to being online only. But, if things all go to plan, you will be seeing us back in our physical print glory in semester two! Nevertheless, I hope you all enjoy the very first issue of Nose to Tail for the new decade!

Kia Kaha! ☺

Julia Burton + the *Nose to Tail* team

from the

PRESIDENT

Hello and welcome to 2020!! I'm sure we can all agree its been a wild start to the year, and a really interesting time of history to be a part of. We started off the year just like any other, coming back from an awesome summer to catch up with friends and to get our heads around what the new year would bring for us in vet school. Just as we started to settle in, BAM! The world turned upside down and everything went crazy! No one could have anticipated Covid-19 and what it would bring for us as students.

Covid-19 hit the world like a freight train, leaving so much devastation around the world. While we as a country have managed to be smart and prevent the high infection rates and death tolls many other countries have seen, that is not without sacrifice. We have had to forgo the comfort of family and friends to keep ourselves safe. For many, this has meant constant worry and loneliness, while for others this means skipping events meant to be celebrated. Sadly, for some students, this has also meant that they cannot get home to see sick loved ones or say goodbye to those that have passed.

For us as university students, the weeks leading up to the government lockdown were filled with confusion, while we all just desperately tried to keep breathing and figure out how to keep studying for upcoming tests that we weren't even sure were still happening! Even now, we aren't sure how things are going to play out with our degree, with many of our fellow students still living in uncertainty. To you I would say, while we aren't sure exactly how its going to be, we do know that we will all get there, maybe just with some added detours!

I know it has been stressful, but I have been so impressed with how everyone has adjusted to this unprecedented situation. I am very proud to be the MUVSA president for such an adaptable, strong and caring community. So until we get to see each other again, hopefully next semester, continue to stay strong, healthy and kind!

Maithreyi Sundaresan

an interview with Wendy Baltzer

Catherine Nelson and Jack Cameron catch up with one of our favourite surgeons before she crosses the ditch onto new adventures in repairing pets' misadventures.

How did you come to be a small animal surgeon?

When I was a vet student at UC Davis, I had planned on going into mixed practice when I graduated (my parents had a 300 acre ranch in California). I even worked part time in the large animal ICU as a nurse and as a research assistant studying Tritrichomonas foetus infections in cattle.

When I got to my surgery course as a 3rd year student, we had labs on small animal surgery and I really liked it. One of my professors, Clare Gregory (first person to do renal transplants in cats) told me in one of the labs that I should be a small animal surgeon. He suggested that I apply for internships. That's when I switched my focus to small animals.

I was accepted to an internship at Cornell and had a difficult time there – they did not think I was focused or serious enough about surgery. So after the internship I went into private practice as an emergency vet, which I very much enjoyed, but I did not like the hours. I then got in touch with Kurt Schulz at UC Davis and he gave me a research project which resulted in my first publication as the first author.

I applied for residencies but did not get one. However, I was accepted to a surgical residency in Dallas Texas, the Dallas Veterinary Surgical Center. I loved my experience there and the surgeons I worked with. Following that internship I was accepted to a combined PhD-surgery residency program at Texas A&M University and was there for 6 years.

I completed a PhD with Theresa Fossum, and it was great learning from her as she is a left handed surgeon just like me. While at A&M, I also met my husband Craig Ruaux who was doing a post-doc in the GI lab. I had such a great time in my residency and really loved the people there and I am still in touch with them today.

What advice would you give someone who is aiming to become a surgeon?

I would say that it's extremely difficult to get a residency so you have to start preparing early. I would recommend identifying a surgeon as a mentor and completing either a case report or research project with them as a student so that you are published. You can also work with spay neuter clinics to gain experience in surgery.

> *"The gaffe had punctured through his hard palate and was coming out his right eye…"*

Apply for an academic internship right out of vet school; don't wait and go into private practice - this markedly reduces your chances of a obtaining a residency position. Finally, the boards exam at the end of the residency is super difficult with pass rates at 50-60%. Because of this, we look for residency applicants that have good grades, as this is an indicator that they will pass boards.

We, as surgeons, want to train other board certified surgeons (either by Australasian Fellowship or diplomate) so we want to train people that will be able to pass boards.

Tell us something about yourself that students wouldn't expect.

I was once an Olympic level ice skater and competed against Tonya Harding – who was very mean and would not share the ice while training.

What is the strangest case you've ever seen? Or the most interesting?

As an emergency vet I had a couple come in with a puppy with a fishing gaffe embedded through his head -- he was screaming and wiggling as the owners were carrying him. The owners were vomiting and dry heaving. The gaffe had punctured through his hard palate and was coming out his right eye. The handle had turned so it was running alongside his neck and body, so every time he moved it put pressure on his skull. He was a 6-month old lab. I had to get the owners to leave, and put an IV catheter in him after sedation with IM morphine. Then I took a large bolt cutter and had to stand on top of the table over the puppy to cut the gaffe in order to get it out. He was so lucky as the gaffe had not penetrated the globe, but had pushed it aside and back into the socket so he did not lose his vision.

Where in the world have you worked?

Well I have worked in California, New York, Texas, Maryland, Oregon, and Washington states. Internationally, I have worked in the US, NZ, and Australia but have given lectures in the US, NZ, Mexico, Canada, Costa Rica, UK, Italy, Sweden, Spain, and Australia.

What's been your favourite place to work? (Not a loaded question!)

My overall favourite place to work was at Texas A&M University as I had such a wonderful time there, however I did not like living there as it was hot and humid and very conservative outside the vet school. My favourite place to live so far has been here in NZ!

Tell us about your favourite Massey memory.

Hmmm, the funniest one was right after I got here. I was teaching some students in a lab about draping a dog for surgery when the leg is hanging and how to take it down from that position sterilely. One of the students asked me why we would hang the leg and asked about a "dog that had fallen out of the back of a ute". I thought he said 'dig f*ckin bicka boot'!

WET, DAZED AND CONFUSED:

A SOBER GROG EXPERIENCE

Photos by Dauntless Photography @dauntlessphotography Dauntless Photography

Bar-B-Grog. Barb-B-Grog? A Massey University School of Veterinary Science tradition. It's simple, yet effective. All the joys of day drinking, sitting in a sh*t-filled paddock, and jostling down a hill on a tarpaulin water slide all wrapped up into one. What more do you need?

I will admit, for the past two years my Jaffa snobbery and freakishly low alcohol tolerance has caused me to write off this event as just another standard Palmy piss-up. But this year, I decided I wanted to dip my toe in the water (*metaphorically*), and get a taste of what being on the rark in the Manawatu was all about. Unfortunately for me, my bank balance also decided that I wasn't going to be able to afford a ticket. So I went with the next best thing - braving it as a Sober Soldier.

The following is a small log of what transpired throughout the day.

9:00 AM - As we walked up to the paddock , I took a moment to take in the calm and the quiet of the morning. It's a nice place with a great view, really, if you take away all the mud and empty vodka bottles.

10:10 AM - Whilst I was desperately trying to blow up a rather sizable pool floatie, a rumble began to stir from beyond the horizon. I looked up, and I saw them - the groggers.
First down the hill were a squad of lifeguards - their journey to the booze at the bottom wasn't quite comparable to the classic Baywatch run. Next was a mob of people decked out in their PPE - fortunately for them we weren't serving any Corona. Some other notable costumes were a couple of brightly coloured vodka cruisers and their basic white girl companions, and some scantily clad nuns brandishing their condom crosses. One particular pair of groggers caught my eye - two elderly ladies fumbled down the hill, desperately clutching their cozied-up teapots, looking for a drop of the good stuff.

11:15 AM - It was fully on. A squad of Winnie the Pooh's were taking turns doing keg stands. The vodka was getting drained as quickly as we could fill the tanks up. The water slide was lubed and people were off, bruising their tailbones left and right. I heard that the slide was much longer than it had been in previous years - this led to some serious air being achieved before the poor buggers launched themselves into the pond.

12:00 PM - The barbeque was fired up, and like a swarm of flies around a daggy sheep's ass, the grogger descended. And my word - it was a mess. It was only a few minutes before the table was covered in a rather nice layer of ketchup and mustard - slip slop slap and wrap, folks.

2:00 PM - By this time, things were starting to get messy - the fifth years were on the top of the hill dancing to Wagon Wheel. Some people were filming a TikTok -- it was getting to be a bit too much. Oh, and another thing - the alcohol was really beginning to settle in.

Let me tell you something. Cat bite abscess? Fine. Bloody diarrhoea? Doesn't really phase me. White girls throwing up half eaten snags and a mystery vodka premix? I'm gone. I'm down there, turning out my stomach right next to them. Call it a group bonding exercise. In order to avoid losing my lunch I busied myself running up and down the hill delivering water to those who needed it. My time at Barb-b-grog was then cut short as I helped some thoroughly sloshed people find their way back to the safety of their flats.

Overall I would say that despite having rather low expectations at the start, Bar-B-Grog has won me over. Despite sounding "horrendously bogan" (Auckland friends, 2019.) getting flung down a sh*tty waterslide in a sh*tty last minute costume turned out to be a pretty exciting experience. I will most likely be attending again next year - although whether or not I'll be sober… we'll find out.

Julia Burton

new-grad feature: Victor Sanders

Victor Sanders is a new grad vet that graduated from Massey University in 2019. He currently works in a mixed practice in Waipukurau in the Central Hawkes Bay area.

Why did you choose to work at your current practice?

"The main reason was that it had the ideal mixture of work I was looking for; sheep, beef, deer equine and plenty of smallies. I was also lucky to get a scholarship while I was a student to do placement at this clinic. During my placements, I found that it had a good work atmosphere and I enjoyed working with the team."

What have you found the most difficult about working in a clinic as a new grad?

"Backing yourself; you have a lot of information from your university studies but when you are in front of a client for the first time it can be quite challenging and intimidating. It also takes time getting used to the computer system and making sure you charge people correctly. Plus moving to a new town with new people is an adjustment in of itself."

What are some of the most interesting cases you have encountered?

"There's been quite a few! I've once had to pull out biograss from a dog's eye. Another interesting one was a suspected case of sporadic bovine leukosis in a heifer. I've also done a few post mortems on lambs to try work out the cause of death, as well as a dog that had gastric perforation."

Do you have any advice for students doing placements?

"Everyone talks to one another within a clinic and they will notice how you interact with people. Try treat the receptionists and cleaners the same as you would the big boss who could potentially offer you a job. Be as helpful as you can, because even once you become a qualified vet, there will be times when you need to do the small jobs like clean cages and wash dishes. Don't be afraid to ask for help or say you don't know. Listen to all sources for help; nurses have seen lots of cases before and will have tips and tricks that will make life easier. Remember that you are there to learn and not expected to know everything. However, in saying that, if you are going out on a call or into a consult, some quick revision can help make a good impression."

What is your biggest piece of advice for new grads in the years to come?

"It's a good idea to make some really good cheat sheets so you can refer to these quickly if you need to. I would also say having a good system for your history and physical exam makes things a lot easier. Knowing the common problems reasonably well gives you a good standing, but don't get caught up on the minor details."

Any other advice to current vet students?

"Make sure to have a good work life balance while you're at uni, as once you start working in practice there will be less time to rest. Have a solid base foundation of knowledge and the rest will come with time. If you struggle with comparing yourself to others, remember that everyone has their own trajectory and their own pace. Everyone leaves vet school as a blank canvas and your employers know that you will have some strengths and some weaknesses. Most importantly...have fun!!!"

Interview by Ashlee Larsen

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

If you feel yourself sinking, being pulled under, then you really need to learn to delete your emails once you've read them.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

Time stands still this moon cycle; the walls will begin to close in on you. Get over yourselves, it's happening to all of us. Take up cross-stitch or summat.

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)

A great epiphany lies just around the corner. Maybe it really *was* the 5G all along???

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

Now is the ideal time to embark on a literary adventure from an old source, perhaps begin some of the classics. Steady on now, we're not that bored.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)

You never know when drastic change may come, take advantage of what's in front of you. Guess it's time to get OTP then, never know when we might have another lockdown.

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sep 22)

As Mercury rises this month, it is time to reconnect and find joy in your past. Looks like we're going on yet another teddy bear hunt then. It's only the sixth time this week.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

If the skies seem dull and lacking in light, it's probably because they've been listening to Aunt Cindy. Not even fiery balls of plasma are immune from lockdown you know.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

You will suddenly appreciate the scale of the situation this month. Take it Trump's not a Scorpio then. Didn't think so.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Wisdom is ripe as hardship hits. Guess old Doris from Dargaville will be on the six o'clock news again then, telling us to "be kind at times like this". Cheers Doris, we'd be really stuck without your wisdom.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Stay grounded, Earth sign, as you may feel yourself slip away - Time may be a construct, but those assignment due dates are very real.

Aquarius Jan 20 – Feb 18)

Now may be the perfect opportunity to renew and rebrand yourself. I see you eyeing up that Ashley Bloomfield merch.

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

As the regular university days become a distant memory, there is time to explore new challenges. Will filming yourself taking blood from a cat make you the new Joe Exotic? Now is the time to find out.

Great Oracle Catherine Nelson

CONTRIBUTORS

Julia Burton, Catherine Nelson, Jack Cameron, Ashlee Larsen

Editor-in-Chief
Julia Burton

Contributing editors
Bianca Mercer, Ashlee Larsen