

Irish Veterinary Nurses Association Congress 2018

The Irish Veterinary Nurses Association (IVNA) and members celebrated the ninth annual IVNA Congress in May 2018 at the Red Cow Hotel Dublin. The continuing veterinary education event has ran successfully for nine years with the dedication and contribution from the IVNA's committee and members, writes Ann Marie Byrne RVN



Marguerite Tracey, Royal Canin with Jennifer Carroll, RVN Veterinary Nurse of the Year 2018 and Lisa Joyce, chairperson, IVNA. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.

This two-day event was no different from all the others held by the IVNA in that the Congress received outstanding support from both Veterinary Nurses and Sponsors, with 136 delegates attending in total and a trade-show exhibition with 22 exhibitors.

Among those exhibitors included the IVNA Charity of the Year 2018, Community Cats Network (CCN) nominated by the IVNA and its members. The CCN performs vital animal-welfare services in the Cork area with their trap-neuter-release (TNR) programme, which has resulted in aiding the treatment of 5,000 cats this year alone. CCN received lots of interest and support at their stand by delegates and we will be promoting their services and encouraging members to get involved in fund raising events throughout the year.

LYME'S DISEASE AWARENESS

We were also delighted to welcome Tick Talk Ireland to the Congress this year. Tick Talk and the IVNA are working together to raise awareness of the dangers of Lyme's disease and how it affects people and their animals. This disease is on the rise and the symptoms can vary greatly, from mild to severe, if not diagnosed early it can be a very debilitating condition, which is completely preventable and treatable. We would like to thank Kerri, Agnieszka and Siobhan for their strength and for sharing their stories with us on how they have been effected by Lyme's disease. We

look forward to working together to raise awareness and help support Tick Talk Ireland and its members in the future.

IRISH VETERINARY NURSES UNITE

The IVNA were also delighted to include in their exhibition-stand, members from the newly established sub-committee, Irish Veterinary Nurses Unite (IVNU). The IVNU objectives are to work towards improving the working conditions of Irish veterinary nurses to create a sustainable future in the veterinary nursing profession. During the Congress, nurses were encouraged to participate in the National Veterinary Nurse Professional Survey to assist us with achieving our goals.

TOPICAL PROGRAMME

The Saturday scientific programme was presented by experts in their field on topics such as surgical work of a referral practice, presented by Shane Guerin and Mairead Deasy; while positive mental health at work was brought to us by Helen Chan, this is an area which greatly effects those involved in the veterinary industry. Canine and feline behaviour also featured and a discussion on the national stray-dog strategy in Ireland presented by Dr Maureen Maguire, Roisin Foran and James Madden.

After the day's lectures, they enjoyed the evenings social activities, which included the IVNA Awards.

The Sunday programme consisted of practical sessions, which



Melanie O'Donoghue, Bayer with Vicky Fenlon, Practice Manager of the Year 2018 and Lisa Joyce, chairperson, IVNA. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.

featured more on behaviour, and diagnostic topics including capnography, blood pressure and diagnostic imaging. The delegates enjoyed the interactive sessions presented by Maureen Maguire, who had her two helpers to demonstrate in the practical. Also, included were very detailed videos, and discussions on canine behaviour and key tips to look out for in relation to dog-aggressive behaviour.

Georgina Murphy gave a practical session focusing on monitoring blood pressure in patients, delegates were given the opportunity to learn and use a blood-pressure monitor, the Doppler, and also learned about direct blood pressure monitoring. Georgina also demonstrated the V-gel, discussing capnographs to enhance anaesthesia monitoring back in practice.

William Hayden educated delegates on various radiographs including thorax, abdominal, pelvic images and their positioning, with minimising film faults.

AWARDS CEREMONY

The IVNA Awards Ceremony took place on the Saturday evening, which celebrated the Veterinary Nurse of the Year, Student Veterinary Nurse of the Year and Practice Manager of the Year.

The awards took place after a BBQ and a few drinks. Melanie O'Donoghue from Bayer read the winning nomination for Practice Manager of the Year Vicky Fenlon,

Cara Vetgroup, while Joe Campbell from Allianz presented the Student Veterinary Nurse of the Year to Nicole Yong Ming from Avenue Veterinary Hospital, Dundalk. Royal Canin's Marguerite Tracey read and presented the Veterinary Nurse of the Year to Jennifer Carroll RVN from The Veterinary Clinic, Bantry.

Jennifer's nomination, which was submitted by Penny Kinsella, treasurer, Rural Animal Welfare Resources (RAWR), described Jennifer's dedication to the TNR scheme in Bantry, her work with homeless animals and her determination to recruit other veterinary practices in the West Cork area to participate in the scheme.

All winners were present with a trophy, and a hotel voucher worth €500 and €250 respectively. Congratulations to our award winners and nominees. We received an amazing amount of fantastic nominations this year for the judges as all were deserved winners.

We would like to thank all our speakers and contributors and of course our members as without their support none of this is possible. The committee have already begun the preparations for the 2019 event which promises to be bigger than ever. In 2019 we will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the IVNA Annual Congress. This is a momentous occasion not only for the IVNA but for the profession in general and we hope everyone will come to celebrate the moment with us.



Siobhan, Kerri and Agnieszka, Tick Talk Ireland exhibition stand at the Congress. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.



Joe Campbell, Allianz with Nicole Young Ming, Student Veterinary Nurse of the Year 2018 and Lisa Joyce, chairperson, IVNA. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.