

BREAKING NEW GROUND



Last year, I had to hold two very loyal dogs in my arms while my veterinarian put them to sleep to end their suffering. Their deaths were just four months apart. Carley, my chocolate Lab, and Tradd, my English Springer spaniel, were 16 and 13 years old, respectively.

Did I cry? You bet I did, and so did my veterinarian. All he could bring himself to say, each time was, "They sure were real good dogs, Keith." All I could do was nod my head "yes" as I kept pulling the bib of my cap down level with my sunglasses to hide my red eyes.

I swore after Carley's death that I would never have another pet. They are time-consuming and expensive, and they usually live short lives. However, my wife and kids didn't believe my tough talk, nor did my best friend.

He had a new black Lab puppy, and she was great medicine for what ailed me. In my mind, she was going to be my pet away from home. Then my buddy tricked me into meeting her sister. She was the last in the litter and the largest of the puppies. What a face—and a very big face at that. It was love at first sight for both of us. Maggie

and I have been together about a year now, and I tell everyone I don't know how I ever got along without her!

I guess it's that human-animal bond thing you hear and read so much about. Because of a generous gift from Nestlé Purina pet food, we are about to begin a visiting lecture series on the human-animal bond. We plan to bring international experts in to discuss the latest research in this area and its impact.

Increasing the number of lecture series at MSU is a priority of the State of the Future campaign. You might consider establishing one yourself.

If I see you on campus, I'll be sure and show you the picture of Maggie in my wallet. I really don't know how I ever got along without her!

Keith Gaskin, CFRE
Senior Director of Development
College of Veterinary Medicine

CVM Campaign Progress Is Steady

To enable the College of Veterinary Medicine to look ahead with confidence and enthusiasm, with a clear sense of direction and the determination to help Mississippi prosper, we set challenging goals at the beginning of State of the Future: The Mississippi State Campaign. Our young college is fortunate to have a significant number of loyal supporters who share our dream of moving beyond the static financial support of the state. By enabling us to endow scholarships, professorships, faculty chairs and innovative programs, their support is allowing us to steadily move forward. When the campaign began in 2001, we determined our goals by evaluating input from the leadership of the university, the foundation, the faculty and the staff of the CVM, as well as our external constituency.

The CVM has a \$19.5-million campaign goal with emphasis placed on creating much-needed endowments for students and faculty, renovating facilities and annual and other campaign support. With the teamwork of CVM faculty and staff and the incredible contributions of our alumni and friends, we have nearly reached our goal. We are proud to report today, with just a year and a half left in the campaign, \$17.5 million in gifts and pledges has been raised.

These gifts have made a difference in areas such as humane ethics and animal welfare, graduate studies, faculty research and training for our veterinary students.

We want to thank our many supporters and those who are currently considering gifts. Our job is not finished, and we need your help in identifying new supporters who share your passion for improving health and safety for our animals and environment, which affects all of our lives.

In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." If you are enthusiastic about the CVM and our efforts, contact Keith Gaskin, senior director of development for CVM at (662) 325-3815.

Friend's Love of Nature Inspires Louisiana Native

Shortly after the 2007 spring turkey season, Rawlston "Bubba" D. Phillips Jr. made a generous contribution and pledge to the Polly Anderson-Newsom Memorial Scholarship at MSU. He was a close personal friend of Anderson-Newsom and enjoyed spending numerous spring turkey seasons hunting with her and the Anderson family.

Although Phillips is a Louisiana resident and supporter of a number of educational institutions and philanthropies in his state, he did not hesitate to send his support across the Mississippi state line.

"The decision to support the Polly Anderson-Newsom Memorial Scholarship was really an easy one. What better way to honor such an avid conservationist and wildlife enthusiast than to support the scholarship established in her name?" Phillips said. "The scholarship promotes the pursuits she enjoyed throughout her life and helps to ensure the future of our forests and wildlife. She was a wonderful lady and talented outdoorswoman, and I am delighted to contribute to her scholarship."

Anderson-Newsom was awarded the Mississippi Wildlife Federation Conservationist of the Year award for her work in wildlife and forestry. She released turkeys from Virginia and Pennsylvania to boost a small native flock in southwest Mississippi. Her family also supplied turkeys to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks for release into other areas.

In keeping with Anderson-Newsom's strong interest in wildlife conservation and forestry, this scholarship was established to permanently perpetuate her memory and the qualities of life for which she stood.

"I know that she would be so proud of her family and friends for supporting this effort," Phillips said.

If you would like to contribute to scholarships that will assist future professionals in sustaining and conserving our precious natural resources, contact Jeff Little at 662-325-8151 or jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu.

College of Forest Resources

Foundation Gift Propels Mississippi in Motion

With the aid of a significant grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, the Mississippi State University Extension Service has implemented a statewide program to promote physical fitness and healthy nutrition among Mississippi residents.

Mississippi in Motion, an initiative endorsed by Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour, is designed to promote healthy lifestyles through exercise, proper nutrition and social support. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the insurance company, is funding the project. The foundation's grant resulted from the successes of a pilot version of the program by the MSU Extension Service.

"We're trying to change the health culture in Mississippi with a focus on prevention and healthy lifestyles," said Wade Overstreet, executive director of the foundation. "The Mississippi in Motion program really embodies all of our aims."

The program is more than just a way to lose weight, said Jane Clary, an associate extension professor in the Department of Food Science, Nutrition and Health Promotion and administrator of the program.

"This grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation to implement the program will help people improve their quality of life through positive lifestyle behaviors," Clary said. "Mississippi in Motion isn't a diet but a program to help people make positive behavior changes for life."

Mississippi in Motion gives individuals the skills, knowledge and support to adopt healthy habits for a lifetime, she added. The program involves a statewide, community-based, 12-week intervention designed to promote healthy eating and to encourage positive physical activity behaviors among adults.

The initial Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation grant in 2006 brought Mississippi in Motion to a 10-county area—Attala, Claiborne, Lowndes, Scott, Simpson, Hancock, Newton, Wayne, Wilkinson and Winston, as well as the MSU and Mississippi University for Women campuses.

"We look forward to working with individuals in the communities throughout the state to empower them for life," Clary said. "Daylong workshops on health issues often have little impact on people's lifestyles, but Mississippi in Motion tends to increase participants' chances of losing weight and staying healthy because of the social aspect of the program. Each member can help the others maintain regular visits to the gym or a walking exercise program—especially when a few start to lose willpower."

For more information on Mississippi in Motion, visit www.msucare.com/health/health04/ms_in_motion/.