Change of venue for IVNA Annual Congress 2015

The IVNA Committee is in the process of finalising Congress 2015 and, in a change to last year's venue, this year's Congress will take place in the Mullingar Park Hotel on May 23-24, writes Lorraine McDonnell RVN

IVNA CONGRESS 2015

VENUE: MULLINGAR PARK HOTEL DATE: MAY 23-24, 2015 WEBSITE: WWW.IVNA.IE

This year, the IVNA Annual Congress will cover a variety of topics, as suggested by the evaluation forms filled in last year by delegates. In keeping with tradition, on the Saturday night, May 23, we will hold the social evening and the annual awards ceremony for Veterinary Nurse of the Year, Student Nurse of the Year and Support Staff of the Year. On the Sunday, May 24, we will be running our popular practical sessions.

Please visit our website (www.ivna.ie) to view the programme and to register for Congress soon to avail of early bird rates as places are limited, especially for the Sunday sessions. The Congress schedule and registration details will also be distributed in next month's issue of *Veterinary Ireland Journal*.

Last November saw the launch of the Veterinary Nurse, Student Nurse and Support Staff of the Year awards. These awards highlight the incredible work that we, as nursing professionals, along with support staff, do on a daily basis, which may sometimes go unnoticed. The awards allow us to shine a light on just a handful of our



The 2014 Veterinary Nurse of the Year, Femke Bot. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.

colleagues nationally. If you feel you know someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty, why not nominate them? Nominations can be placed by visiting www.ivna.ie and filling in the nomination form. Also, why not place a poster in your waiting room to give clients the opportunity to nominate the person they feel has made a difference to them and their pet?

Our sponsors this year are Royal Canin, Allianz and Medray, who will choose the winner from each category. Both the sponsors and committee are looking forward to reading the nominations.

IVNA NURSE OF THE YEAR 2014

Last year's deserving winner was Femke Bot RVN from All Care Veterinary Clinic, Killarney, Co Kerry. This is just a sample of the numerous nominations she received and it came from one of her clients: "As a client I have had the pleasure of dealing with Femke over the years with all of our pets. I cannot speak highly enough about her. I would trust her completely with all our animals. We have always found her to be extremely caring and compassionate towards them. She has a very friendly, enthusiastic and professional nature about her. Nothing is ever too much trouble for her. She is great to get back to us with answers when we have concerns about our pets. She always keeps us up to date on their progress, post-op. This can be a worrying time for us, as owners, but Femke always manages to put our minds at ease. I have seen her genuine love for animals and their care, on every single visit to the clinic.

"I have also had the pleasure of working under her supervision as a trainee on work experience. She spent endless hours showing me the ropes while also managing the practice. She appeared to manage both to the highest standards, effortlessly. She has a wealth of animal knowledge, as do all veterinary nurses, but where I find Femke differs from others is her ability to explain the most complex animal matters in a very plain, easy-to-understand manner, that any lay person can fully comprehend. She shows true passion for her work. It can be clearly seen that she plays a very important role within the practice. I am sure that All Care Veterinary Centre is well aware of the asset they have in a veterinary nurse like Femke. If I were ever to become a veterinary nurse I would aspire to have the same professionalism and high standards that Femke has. I highly recommend Femke for the Irish Veterinary Nurse Award."

Each winner receives a fabulous award accompanied by a voucher for a hotel break. Don't forget there is a prize for the winning nomination.

MRSA CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENT

An international conference for veterinary nurses to discuss methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and methicillinresistant Staphylococcus pseudintermedius (MRSP), and their management in practice, was held in Athlone Institute of Technology recently. Organised by the IVNA and sponsored by Promed and Interchem, this oneday event featured a high calibre of both national and international speakers, all specialists in their respective fields. Over 200 nurses attended, including representations from the five nursing colleges, making it one of the biggest nursing meetings ever to be held in Ireland. This reflects the very positive and enthusiastic attitude of Irish veterinary nurses. Delegates at the conference heard presentations on MRSA/ MRSP colonisation in veterinary staff, prevalence, risks to human health and veterinary implications, colonisation trends in animals in Ireland, Irish and European trends in MRSA infection and the management of colonisation and infection in healthcare workers and patients. Diagnosis and treatment of MRSA/ MRSP infections in veterinary practice and how antimicrobial resistance affects veterinary and human health was also discussed in detail. A full summary of these presentations will be discussed in a future issue of Veterinary Ireland Journal.

IVNA AT PET EXPO

The IVNA had a stand at

this year's Pet Expo on November 22-23 in the RDS, Dublin. We also launched our Veterinary Nurse, Student Nurse and Support Staff of the Year awards to great interest from members of the general public who attended the Expo. Lots of people relayed heartwarming stories to us about their wonderful vet nurse who had taken exceptional care of their beloved pet. So we look

forward to being flooded with nominations for the awards, which will take place at our Congress in May 2015. Nomination forms will be distributed to practices in the coming weeks and can also be accessed on our website, www.ivna. ie. The Expo was a good opportunity for members of the public to see pedigree show breeds of dogs and cats along with exotics, including a

six-metre, 90kg Burmese python. There were basic behaviour lessons for members of the public who were accompanied by their canine friends. We also had lots of enquiries from people young and old who are thinking of starting a career in veterinary nursing. One of our main functions at the IVNA is to promote our wonderful profession, and we delighted in pointing these aspiring nurses in the right direction.

