



EDITOR'S LETTER

If You Missed It...

Lynne Johnson-Harris, LVT, RVT | Editor in Chief



I have had the pleasure of being involved with NAVC for more than 27 years as a speaker, moderator, member of the Board of Directors, and President. But after last week, all I can say is...wow!

NAVC just completed its 2017 Conference—the last one with that name—in its new home, the Orange County Convention Center (OCCC). Of all the NAVC Conferences I have attended, this one was the most amazing.

Some of the highlights:

- We unveiled a new name for the conference: the NAVC Veterinary Meeting and Expo, or VMX. The new name reflects the fact that NAVC is no longer just a conference, but a whole community that includes VetFolio, Institute, publications like *Today's Veterinary Technician*, and much more.
- It was another record year for attendance. The conference hosted more than 17,000 veterinary healthcare professionals and offered more than 1200 CE hours. Veterinary technician tracks alone accounted for 77 hours of CE.
- The Exhibit Hall was one huge—and busy—place! More than 700 exhibitors representing all areas of veterinary healthcare were present. It was a mile from end to end, I'm sure (I walked it several times a day).
- Congratulations go to Kara Burns, MS, Med, LVT, VTS (Nutrition), and Kenichiro Yagi, BS, RVT, VTS (ECC, SAIM). Kara received the

NAVC Veterinary Technician 2016 Speaker of the Year Award; she was also honored with this award in 2013. Ken received the NAVTA Veterinary Technician of the Year Award.

- The entertainment was outstanding. We were inspired by Robin Roberts, co-host of *Good Morning America*, who launched the conference at its General Session. Mike Rowe shared his "dirty jobs" with us at the Opening Ceremony, and Darius Rucker rocked the house as part of our annual Concert Series. Football fans watched the "Big Game" on the big screen at a party that featured food, fun, and adoptable puppies!
- Veterinary technicians, veterinary technician students, and practice managers had the chance to recharge and network in their own space—the Veterinary Technicians' Lounge—and then stepped into "Wonderland" at a sponsored reception.
- Finally, on the last night, we stepped back into the '60s and '70s, with people dressed in go-go boots, miniskirts, leisure suits, and all, at the Studio 54 Finale Party.



RECHARGING in the Veterinary Technicians' Lounge.

I'll admit, it wasn't a perfect transition. Change is always hard, and it takes a lot of hard work. But I know the NAVC folks—myself included—are already on the job for a great 2018.

So if you missed the last NAVC Conference, I invite you to join us at the first VMX at the OCCC South Concourse, February 3 through 7, 2018. It will be awesome! ■

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Write me at ljohnson@navc.com.