TEXAS STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS
333 Guadalupe, Suite 2-330
Austin, Texas 78701-3998

DOCKET NUMBER 1996-15
RUANN PITTMAN, DVM
LICENSE NUMBER 4756

AGREED ORDER

This agreed order has been entered between Dr. Ruann Pittman and Ron Allen, the Executive Director of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, in concurrence with the Board Secretary. It is presented to the Board as a recommendation only. If the Board elects to reject or amend this agreed order, the defendant, Dr. Ruann Pittman, will be granted a continuance at her option.

Dr. Pittman does not contest the allegations set forth in the Complaint, attached as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein for all purposes, and agrees that: (1) the Board may treat the allegations of fact and law as true; and (2) the findings shall have the same force and effect as if evidence and argument were presented in support of the allegations. Respondent understands and intends that by so stating, she is not admitting the truth of the allegations, but is merely agreeing that the Board may enter an Order treating the allegations as true without the necessity of receiving evidence in support thereof.

SUMMARY OF CHARGES:

Dr. Pittman violated the Rules of Professional Conduct: Rule 573.22 - Professional Standard of Humane Treatment by failing to properly suture a surgical incision and Rule 573.52 - Patient Record Keeping by failing to properly annotate the patient medical records with medications used, dosage, and method of administration, and Section 14 (a) (5) of the Veterinary Licensing Act, article 8890.

RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

Official Reprimand.

CONDITIONS:

Agrees to abide by the Rules of Professional Conduct, Texas Veterinary Licensing Act and Laws of the State of Texas and the United States.

RUANN PITTMAN, D.V.M.

RON ALLEN, Executive Director
TEXAS STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

July 8, 1996
The foregoing Agreed Order, entered into between Dr. Ruann Pittman, the Board Secretary, and the Board's Executive Staff, and having been presented to the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners as a No Contest Plea, was accepted by the Board, and the Board, on the 3rd day of October, 1996, ordered that all penalties and conditions as stated therein be complied with the same as if evidence had been heard and Findings and Orders issued.

Executed this the 3rd day of October, 1996.

John A. Wood, D.V.M., President

James N. Gomez, D.V.M., Vice-President

Michael J. McCulloch, D.V.M., Secretary

Howard Head, D.V.M., Member

Robert Hughes, Jr., D.V.M., Member

D. Carter King, D.V.M., Member

Sharon O. Matthews, Member

Jean McPadden, Member

Joyce G. Schiff, Member
DOCKETED COMPLAINT NO. 1996-15

TEXAS STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY § TEXAS VETERINARY MEDICAL
MEDICAL EXAMINERS § LICENSE NO. 4756
vs. § 1996 RENEWAL CERTIFICATE
RUANN PITTMAN, DVM § NUMBER 5029+P

COMPLAINT AFFIDAVIT

Before me, the undersigned authority, a Notary Public in and for Texas, on this day personally appeared Charles Adkins, who after being duly sworn, did depose and say:

On or about March 13, 1995, Charles Adkins, being an employee of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, did in the course of such employment, make certain investigations into the professional conduct of one Ruann Pittman, D.V.M., 2504 S. 5th Street, Temple, Texas 76504, Veterinary License Number 4756, 1996 Renewal Certificate Number 5029+P, a practitioner of veterinary medicine in the State of Texas. As an employee of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, I, Charles Adkins, do hereby present the following complaint against Ruann Pittman, DVM.

I.
On or about December 14, 1994, Ms. Barbara Hodkinson, Killeen, Texas, brought her dog "Shep" to the Temple Small Animal Surgery Clinic, Temple, Texas, for OHE surgery. Pre-surgical examination by Dr. Ruann Pittman disclosed a visible mass in the abdomen. Upon palpation, a grapefruit size mass was verified in the mid-abdominal region. Ms. Hodkinson was advised of the findings by Dr. Pittman and was briefed on treatment options. Ms. Hodkinson authorized the OHE surgery, removal of the tumor, and euthanasia if the dog could not be saved.

II.
On or about December 14, 1994, the surgery was performed by Dr. Pittman without any apparent complications. Recovery from the anesthesia appeared to be within normal limits. The incision was sutured in 3 layers with 2-O gut. "Shep" was discharged on December 14, 1994, and Ms. Hodkinson was advised to call the clinic, if there were any problems. A review of the patient medical records failed to disclose the medications used, dosage, and the method of administration.

III.
On or about December 19, 1994, Ms. Hodkinson called the clinic and appeared to be concerned about "Shep's" incision. She was advised by the clinic's receptionist to bring the dog to the clinic. However, due to the travel time and distance to the clinic she declined. Ms. Hodkinson allegedly

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requested that Dr. Juanita Dual, veterinarian on call for Dr. Pittman, call her at home. Dr. Dual called and advised Ms. Hodkinson to wrap the dog in a belly wrap for support.

IV.
At approximately 12:30 a.m., on December 21, 1994, "Shep" was seen by Dr. William H. Palm, Belton Small Animal Clinic, Belton, Texas, as an emergency case, because the animal was in lateral recumbency and in shock. An examination by Dr. Palm disclosed a suture line approximately 25 cm long, extending from the umbilicus caudally. The cranial most 4 cm was open and two 30 to 35 cm loops of small bowel were protruding. Surgery was performed by anastomosing the bowel in two places. There appeared to be no evidence of subcutaneous or subcuticular sutures present. Also, all simple interrupted sutures of the rectus muscle had pulled loose from one side. A minimum of five of those sutures failed to include the facia overlaying the abdominal musculature. Due to the swollen liver with tumor like masses, and a poor prognosis for recovery, Dr. Palm recommended euthanasia. On December 21, 1994, verbal permission was given by Ms. Hodkinson to Dr. Palm to euthanize "Shep".

V.
Dr. Ruann Pittman violated Rule 573.22, - Professional Standard of Humane Treatment, by failing to use the proper sutures after surgery. This failure led to complications and the ultimate decision to euthanize the animal. Dr. Pittman also violated Rule 573.52, Records Keeping, by failing to annotate the patient medical records with medications used, dosage, and method of administration, and Section 14 (a) (5) of the Veterinary Licensing Act, article 8890.

ARTICLE 8890, SECTION 14

(a) . . . the Board may revoke or suspend a license, impose a civil penalty, place a person whose license has been suspended on probation, or reprimand a licensee . . . if it finds that a licensee:

(5) has engaged in practices or conduct in connection with the practice of veterinary medicine which are violative of the standards of professional conduct as duly promulgated by the Board in accordance with the law;

The foregoing complaint is submitted to the Secretary of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners on this the 11th day of July, 1996.

Further, Affiant sayeth not.

Charles Adkins Affiant

July 9, 1996
SUBSCRIBED and SWORN TO before me by the said Charles Adkins this the 11th day of July, 1996

[Signature]
Mike Carroll, Notary Public in and for Texas

The foregoing Complaint is hereby filed and docketed with the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and styled Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners vs. Ruann Pittman, D.V.M. under Docketed Number 1996-15, this the 11th day of July, 1996.

[Signature]
Michael J. McCulloch, D.V.M, Board Secretary
Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners