



# THE CORNER INFORMER

*The Newsletter of The Southeastern Michigan Veterinary Medical Association*

Volume 26 Issue 4 December 2020

## OUR PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Another fall in Michigan has brought us brilliant colors and, hopefully, some trips to cider mills to enjoy the special treats that our local area provides abundantly. The holiday season is approaching and, with all the uncertainty that this year has brought, we cautiously hope for the comfort and warmth that this time of year brings with it.

This year has certainly brought with it many challenges and, interestingly, several unforeseen opportunities. Our ideas regarding what truly is essential have likely changed in the last several months. We have spent less time traveling and more time at home. We have learned new technologies to help us connect across the miles – for family visits, for meetings and for continuing education sessions. Many veterinary hospitals have offered curbside services or modified how our daily practice has been managed several times in the last few months. Other people have worked from home, blurring the line between work-life balance even more. Supporting other local small businesses has likely been on our minds as we hope that others will continue to support ours. If nothing else, 2020 has shown us that we are all connected, even when we are socially distanced.

Hopefully, we have drawn some comfort from the support of family and friends in this odd journey together through 2020. Perhaps we have found that there are still so many things to be truly grateful for in our daily lives. I would like to thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to serve as the SEMVMA president this year. I have learned so much about this wonderful organization and have the utmost respect for our colleagues who donate their time to contribute to its success. SEMVMA continues to actively

support our profession with quality continuing education opportunities, albeit, in a virtual capacity for this 2020-21 cycle. The online format still brings us top notch seminars from nationally and internationally recognized experts in their field. It is true that we miss the camaraderie of gathering together in person, but on the upside, no one will know if you attended the meeting in your pj's flanked by your dogs and cats! If you haven't tried the current CE format, there are several sessions left and registration is simple to complete. More information about the upcoming CE program is available on our website at [www.semvma.vet/ce-calendar.pml](http://www.semvma.vet/ce-calendar.pml)

Every January, SEMVMA hosts our Annual Membership Celebration and the show will go on in 2021. The event will be held virtually on January 13, 2021, and all members are encouraged to tune in. We will formally thank our Council members

who have completed their terms and welcome newly elected members onto the Council. Every year, SEMVMA recognizes a few members who have contributed to the profession and the organization in unique ways and we are excited to give these awards at the Celebration event. Additionally, our veterinary technician student scholarships will be awarded that night. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the event virtually.

As we look ahead with hope and anticipation for the future, I invite you to find that silver lining from 2020, which has made you smile and enriched your life, in even a small way, rather than dwell on the year that wasn't. I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season. May 2021 bring you and your families health, peace and happiness!

– Cheers! *Tari*



*Tari Kern*

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Veterinary Medical  
Association**

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## 2020/2021 CE PROGRAM WE ARE GOING VIRTUAL

The Southeastern Michigan Veterinary Medical Association Continuing Education program will be held virtually this year. The seminars will run live on their scheduled date. We have adjusted our pricing as follows:

CE Package – Member - \$450.00

CE Package – Non Member - \$650.00

Individual Seminar – Member - \$100

Individual Seminar – Non Member - \$175



### SEMVMA Veterinary Continuing Education Program

02/24/2021 – Dr. Douglas DeBoer: Dermatology  
Sponsored by Purina

03/24/2021 – Dr. David Williams: Ophthalmology

### SEMVMA Technician Continuing Education Program

02/24/2021 – Stacey Booms, LVT: Neonatal Care

03/24/2021 – Dr. David Williams: Eye Anatomy and Physiology

The Technician Continuing Education Program will be offered virtually as well. The seminars are FREE to clinics with member doctors. Non Member clinics can attend for a charge of \$20. Pre-registration is required.



# MEMBER Spotlight



**Dr. Michelle Meyer**, Serenity Animal Hospital, has some exciting news. Her husband, **Steve Meyer**, was elected to the Utica Community Schools Board of Education. His new role is a 6 year term and will be very important (and stressful). He will be dealing with many issues, including face to face vs. remote teaching and determining who will be the new superintendent. He is, however, very happy to have the community support! *Congratulations Steve!*

Serenity Animal Hospital was chosen via a video submission contest by **Dr. Andy Roark** as one of three winners for technician week. *All technicians got a coffee from him!*

**Norm Bayne** will soon be a grandfather two times over. His son and daughter-in-law are expecting a baby girl in March 2021. They currently live in Houston and have **Henry** who is 2 1/2 years old. **Gail** and Norm are super excited to have a grand-addition very soon. *Congratulations!*

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! Our goal of this section is to let members know what is occurring in our lives outside of veterinary medicine. Please notify us of your recent family additions, graduations, honors, achievements, fund raising activities, civic group associations, outdoor activities and the like. Please call us at 248-651-6332 or email us at [adminsevmva@sevmva.com](mailto:adminsevmva@sevmva.com)

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Please join us in welcoming the following new members to SEMVMA...

**Dr. Kaitlin Bahlmann**, Ontario Veterinary College, 2015 Exclusively Cats Veterinary Hospital, Waterford, MI

**Dr. Carol Musselman**, MSU, 1980 Bangor Veterinary Clinic, Bay City, MI

**Dr. Ashley Brazen**, MSU, 2020 Shelby Veterinary Hospital, Shelby Township, MI

**Dr. Barbara Putnam**, Oregon State University, D'Adamo 2014 Veterinary Hospital, Livonia, MI

**Dr. Sarah Babcock**, MSU, 2004 Animal & Veterinary Legal Services, PLLC, Harrison Township, MI

The 2020 membership committee is composed of 3 members:

Michelle Meyer, DVM (Chair) [michellemeyerdvm@gmail.com](mailto:michellemeyerdvm@gmail.com), Tim Duncan, DVM, [Duncan@oaklandanimal.com](mailto:Duncan@oaklandanimal.com) and Tari Kern, DVM [tkerndvm@yahoo.com](mailto:tkerndvm@yahoo.com). Please feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions. If you know of a veterinarian in the area who is not a member but may be interested in joining, please contact any member of the membership committee of the SEMVMA office and we will be happy to send them information.

# MAKING YOUR PRACTICE MORE CAT FRIENDLY AND TRANSFORMING THE FELINE EXPERIENCE

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There is a growing trend to add a furry feline to US households, however we know not as many cats come in regularly for veterinary checkups. We also know that both cats and cat owners (and sometimes our veterinary teams) are stressed just

thinking about the veterinary visit. Veterinary practices can and should stand out to provide a unique feline-specific experience for cats and caregivers.

## A FEW WAYS TO MAKE YOUR PRACTICE CAT FRIENDLY RIGHT NOW

While many of you are pros in handling cats in a respectful and gentle manner, there are probably others at your practice who are still perfecting their skills. Below are key, easy-to-implement takeaways to share with your team that you can adapt immediately!

- Treat all cats with respect and empathy.
- When cat caregivers make appointments, provide them with tips on how to get their cat to the veterinarian and education on cat carriers. Also, ask if the cat is fearful during the visit so you can recommend covering the carrier with a towel or blanket. **Bonus Resource:** Client Brochure – “Getting Your Cat to the Veterinarian” ([scroll to bottom of catvets.com/client-brochures](https://catvets.com/client-brochures)).
- Let cat caregivers know that when cats are acclimated to the carrier, they usually have less stressful veterinary visits. **Bonus Resource:** Carrier Information for Clients ([catfriendly.com/cat-carriers](https://catfriendly.com/cat-carriers))
- Reduce feline environmental stressors within your veterinary practice.
  - Sight: In the waiting areas, use room dividers (such as a shoji screen, bookshelf or chairs) and/or towels sprayed with Feliway to cover carriers and prevent visual triggers, like seeing other animals.
  - Smell: Use Feliway in the waiting area and exam room to comfort the cat, and even spray it on your coat or scrubs. Clean hands and equipment in between each visit to reduce smells. Use lint rollers as well to remove hair that can carry smells.
  - Sound: Use sound dampening rugs, sound panels, or low classical music to lower the sound impact on cats. Remind the practice team to speak softly when cats are in the practice (both in and out of the exam room), especially in buildings where sound travels easily.
- Aim to conduct the entire examination, procedures, and any sample collection all in the same room. Bring in all necessary equipment to the room prior to starting the appointment. Practice doing procedures in the room. Clients will thank you for not moving Fluffy out of the room, and your patient will thank you as moving them to the back of the house treatment area will increase stress because a cat will have to reacclimatize to the new space (which there is usually not time to do).
- Look out for signs or actions that indicate fear, anxiety, frustration, and pain in cats.
  - Some signs include the cat’s ears rotated to the side or flattened, dilated pupils, whiskers splayed, hiding or retreating to the back of the cage. If you see any of these signs, pause, and let the cat have a break. Make sure the cat has a place to hide under a warm towel sprayed with Feliway.
- Avoid quick movements and direct eye contact which are known to cause stress in cats.
- Practice Feline-Friendly Handling. **Bonus Resource:** Guidelines, Videos, and Free Webinar ([catvets.com/handling](https://catvets.com/handling))
- Give the cat a sense of control and be gentle.
  - Allow the cat to come out of the carrier on its own while you are taking the history, or conduct the exam in the bottom of the carrier covered with a towel if the cat is most comfortable in it.
  - Allow the cat to choose where they are most comfortable and conduct the examination

in that location. It might be on the window sill, in your lap, on the table, on the floor, the carrier, etc.

- o Promote positive emotions with treats, food, grooming, play, caring/nurturing during the examination and procedures.
- o Massage the cat's facial glands to comfort them during the exam and/or procedures.

- o Sometimes a cat may be too stressed even with a break, and may need to be sent home with an appropriate analgesic, anxiolytic and/or sedative for administration prior to the next appointment.

- Looking for other ways to increase cat visits? **Bonus Resource:** 10 Solutions to Increase Cat Visits ([catvets.com/public/PDFs/Education/Solutions/solutionsbrochure.pdf](http://catvets.com/public/PDFs/Education/Solutions/solutionsbrochure.pdf))

## CAT FRIENDLY PRACTICE® AND CAT FRIENDLY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The Cat Friendly Practice® program is a global initiative designed to elevate care for cats by reducing the stress for the cat, caregiver, and the entire veterinary team. The AAFP invites the entire veterinary community to participate in this new initiative through one of three individual certificates: Cat Friendly Veterinarian (CFV), Cat Friendly Veterinary Professional (CFVP), and Cat Friendly Veterinary Advocate (CFVA).



Enrolling in the program is simple. After completing the certificate, participants will have access to a resource center with additional information, logos, customizable certificates, and more. Please visit [catvets.com/certificate](http://catvets.com/certificate) for more information on the program and enrollment.

### CHOOSING A CAT CARRIER

**CAT CARRIER TIPS:**

- Leave the carrier out at home.
- Line the bottom with familiar bedding.
- Place toys and favorite objects inside.
- Spray inside with feline facial hormone.
- Reward your cat upon entering carrier.
- Drape a towel over the front entrance.

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### 5 WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS FOR VETERINARY EXAMS

- #1 Cat carrier acclimation**
- #2 Withhold food before exam**
- #3 Favorite toys**
- #4 Treats & rewards**
- #5 Anti-anxiety medication**



# AMANTADINE FOR DOGS AND CATS

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**Lauren Retallack DVM, DACVS-SA, CVPP**  
**Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons - Small Animals**  
**Certified Veterinary Pain Practitioner**

Amantadine is gaining popularity as an alternative analgesic in dogs and cats. However, many practitioners have limited experience with it. To summarize, I've put together a quick FAQ about it below.

## WHAT ARE NMDA RECEPTORS AND SENSITIZATION?

First, a quick reminder of the pain pathway:

Injury ➔ transduction ➔ transmission ➔ modulation ➔ projection ➔ perception

An injury occurs, and the noxious stimulus is converted into an electrical signal by transduction. The electrical signal is relayed to the spinal cord by peripheral nerves through transmission. The spinal cord modulates the signal, deciding if any specific reflexes are needed, and relays the information up to the brain through projection. The brain (periaqueductal gray matter and reticular formation particularly) then perceive the signal as pain, and cause the plethora of physiological, metabolic, behavioral, and emotional changes in response.

NMDA (N-methyl-D-aspartate) receptors are voltage and glucose gated calcium channels that open in response to action potentials. They detect increases in activity, and work to improve efficiency of the synapse, resulting in increased "learning" of the synapse. This allows for certain pathways that are more consistently used to respond faster.

In the central nervous system, NMDA receptors increase with stimulation, resulting in prolonged depolarization within the dorsal horn of the spinal cord, causing wind-up. This can even be self-propagating, as they activate each other. Additionally, glial cells accumulate in the dorsal horn of damaged nerves, and release signals (like IL-1, IL-6) that further increase sensitization. Calcium channels change in activity and type, also contributing to sensitization.

In the peripheral nervous system, sensitization occurs as a result of the "inflammatory soup" of nucleotides, peptides, eicosanoids, histamine, etc. that are released as a result of wounding and the inflammatory cascade. All these factors and cytokines increase nociceptor activation, including the silent or "sleeping" nociceptors, causing sensitization.

Sensitization results in repeated activation of channels on the NMDA receptor complex, causing an influx of ions, which has three major effects on pain:

- 1) Decreased pain inhibition
- 2) Decreased opioid efficacy
- 3) Neural remodeling from chronic stimulation, causing increased anti-nociceptive input needed to block pain, resulting in wind-up.

Thus, inadequately treated pain causes opioid tolerance. In order to treat chronic pain, a multimodal approach which treats the wind-up is necessary.

## WHAT IS AMANTADINE?

Amantadine is an antiviral drug with NMDA antagonist properties. When used alone, it does not appear to be particularly useful as an analgesic; however, when used in conjunction with other analgesics (such as NSAIDs or gabapentin), it can have a significant effect. In humans, amantadine was developed for use against Influenza A, though it is not currently recommended for this purpose.

## WHY USE AMANTADINE?

Amantadine is particularly useful as an adjunct analgesic, and especially for patients with chronic pain. Those patients with osteoarthritis, or similar inflammatory types of pain, may not respond well to gabapentin or pregabalin. Given the variability in response to tramadol, this also may not be a great option. Amantadine can serve as an excellent additional analgesic in a multimodal approach, with limited side effects.

As we're coming to discover, many cats suffer from osteoarthritis as they get older. Adding amantadine to a pain regimen of gabapentin, or similar, is a cost-effective alternative to daily or even intermittent buprenorphine.

### WHICH PATIENTS CAN RECEIVE AMANTADINE?

Amantadine is relatively safe and can be used in most patients. Any patient where an additional analgesic is needed is a potential candidate. Those patients with more severe pain and chronic pain conditions are excellent candidates, and amantadine should be strongly considered for these cases.

As an aside, antiviral medications, including amantadine, are banned in chickens, turkeys, and ducks. It is listed as a prohibited substance by the International Federation for Equestrian Sports. Any animals to be used in a competition should inspect the rules and regulations of that competition prior to use.

### WHAT IS THE DOSE OF AMANTADINE?

Amantadine is dosed at 3 to 5 mg/kg every 12 to 24 hours. I tend to start at the low end of the dose and give it once daily. For patients with severe pain and/or wind up, every 12 hour dosing may be indicated. Amantadine must be taken regularly to see an effect. Reports of the time to effect are variable, and range from 3 to 21 days. Typically, I feel we see some clinical effect within 3 days of starting this medication, though this improves further with longer administration. Patients with more severe, refractory pain may benefit from a ramp up schedule increasing the dose and/or frequency over a few days to weeks for maximum effect. Amantadine is not a controlled substance.

### WHAT ARE THE FORMULATIONS OF AMANTADINE?

Amantadine is available through most pharmacies as 100 mg tablets or capsules, and 10 mg/mL solution. Both are relatively low cost. Both formulations appear to be well tolerated by dogs and cats, though the liquid does not seem to be particularly palatable.

### WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF AMANTADINE?

Patients typically exhibit mild sedation that is worse when starting this medication, similar to gabapentin. Other side effects can include anxiety, loose stools or diarrhea, and restlessness. Cats may exhibit more side effects than dogs.

In humans, patients with end-stage renal disease should not receive amantadine. Caution and reduced dosages are used in humans with severe hepatic disease, renal disease, congestive heart failure, and seizure disorders. The literature suggests following similar guidelines in dogs and cats.

### KEY POINTS

- Amantadine is an NMDA receptor antagonist that is given orally
- Amantadine works best when combined with another analgesic, such as gabapentin or an NSAID
- Dose: 3-5 mg/kg PO every 12 to 24 hours. Start once daily at the low end and increase as needed.
- Give this medication regularly for best effect (at least 3 days).
- Side effects are limited, and include sedation and occasional GI signs.
- Any patients with chronic and/or severe pain are good candidates. Osteoarthritis and bone tumors are perfect examples.

I hope this article gives you some new ideas for your patients. If you have questions, I'm happy to talk with you further: [LRetallack@ovrs.com](mailto:LRetallack@ovrs.com).

# SEMVMA ACADEMY

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The Southeastern Michigan Veterinary Medical Association developed the SEMVMA Academy to celebrate the commitment of veterinarians to the continual improvement of their professional knowledge and competence achieved through continuing education. There are many reasons to apply for Academy membership. Members are listed on the SEMVMA Academy web page for the current year and there is a link for members of previous years. The Academy web page listings show up on web searches when clients search an Academy member's name. Membership in the Academy is free to members and the application process is simple. To qualify, you must demonstrate 50 hours of CE during the prior year; this can include web based learning, self-study, and more (see [SEMVMA.com/academy](http://SEMVMA.com/academy) for more information). Visit our website at [www.semvma.com/academy](http://www.semvma.com/academy) to download your application.

Applications must be submitted by February 14, 2021.

## -2019 ACADEMY MEMBERS-

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Steve Bailey, DVM, DABVP – Exclusively Cats Veterinary Hospital  
Michelle Carter, DVM – LaFond Veterinary Hospital  
Grace Chang, DVM – Southfield Veterinary Hospital  
Kathy Christy, DVM – Oakland Hills Veterinary Hospital  
Jill Crisp, DVM – VCA Beech Road Animal Hospital  
Melissa Doolin, DVM – VCA S.C.S. Animal Hospital  
Judy Duderstadt, DVM – Gibraltar Veterinary Clinic  
Ashley Elzerman, DVM, MS – Oakland Veterinary Referral Services  
Marj Field, DVM – Furever Friends Veterinary Services  
Tari Kern, DVM, CCRP, CVMA, CVSMT – Pawsitive Steps Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine  
Laura Kulinski-Masell, DVM – Levan Road Animal Hospital  
Molly Lynch, DVM – Country Cat Clinic  
Michelle Meyer, DVM – Serenity Animal Hospital  
Karen Michalski, DVM – Serenity Animal Hospital  
Shelby Motoligin, DVM – Animal Emergency Center  
John S. Parker, DVM – Briarpointe Veterinary Hospital  
Cheryl Rice, DVM, DACVIM, GDVWHM – Oakland Veterinary Referral Services  
Julie Sherman, DVM – Serenity Animal Hospital  
Dave Smith, DVM – Leader Dogs for The Blind  
Sandy Smith, DVM – Animal Health Clinic of Fenton  
Emily Socks, DVM – Oakland Hills Veterinary Hospital  
Stephen Steep, DVM – Oxford Veterinary Hospital  
Melissa Theyyunni, DVM – Animal Emergency Center  
Kelly Wilson, DVM – Leader Dogs for The Blind  
Andrea Zelten, DVM – Jeffrey Animal Hospital



## NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENT POLICY

In order to preserve the educational and informative purpose of the SEMVMA newsletter, the SEMVMA council adopts the following policy regarding advertising. Ads should be submitted to Barb at [adminsevmma@sevmma.com](mailto:adminsevmma@sevmma.com). Practices or businesses with a common owner shall be treated as one business or practice for the purpose of this policy (referred to as "Common Owner Business or Practice"). A common owner is a person or entity which owns 5% or more of an entity or practice. Shareholders or sole proprietors of an entity or practice shall be considered an owner along with the entity that holds an interest in the business or practice.

Corporate ¼ page ads are limited to one business, owner or corporation for each issue of the SEMVMA newsletter. This is in the interest of having the newsletter inform the association and not overwhelm them with ads. The SEMVMA council may modify or waive the application of this policy on a case by case basis at the discretion of the council.

Ads will run only once unless a request is submitted to the Administrative Secretary to run longer. Classified ads are \$15 for 60 words or less and \$25 for 61–100 words. Corporate ¼ page ads are \$135 per issue or \$500 for four issues. Payment is due at the time of the initial ad placement.

SEMVMA Members interested in providing Relief Veterinary Services can advertise in the newsletter at no charge. The classified ads must follow the same guidelines regarding number of words and deadline restrictions as all other classified ads. If you are a SEMVMA member interested in placing a classified ad, please contact Barb at 888-SEMVMA-5 or [www.adminsevmma@sevmma.com](mailto:www.adminsevmma@sevmma.com).

Newsletters are published quarterly: on March 15th, June 15th, September 15th and December 15th. All ads should be submitted to the SEMVMA office by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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# OPPORTUNITIES

## VETERINARIANS

Ortonville Animal Hospital is a busy small animal day practice in Ortonville, MI, seeking a second FT/PT veterinarian. The owner, 22 years experience, strong mentor. The staff, dedicated practice manager, LVT, experience support staff. The practice, computerized, updated in-house lab, dental suite, ultrasound, well equipped. The area, a small suburban town in northern Oakland County, with several small cities, country towns and excellent school districts nearby. Our clients, financially stable and dedicated. You, dedicated, enthusiastic, organized, well rounded. Interest in surgery and dentistry preferred. Salary, benefit package competitive. Send CV to [petcare@ortonvillevet.com](mailto:petcare@ortonvillevet.com). We look forward to meeting you!

## RELIEF VET

Norman Bayne, DVM, MS (MSU '81)–dog and cat veterinary relief work. Caring and compassionate service. Will travel. 248.506.1104 or [norman@baynevet.com](mailto:norman@baynevet.com)

## TECH WANTED

Vet Technician – Part-Time Variable Hours - Leader Dogs for the Blind – Rochester, MI: Under the supervision of the Assistant Director of Canine Health, this position is responsible for assisting in routine, preventative and diagnostic veterinary care to dogs on property (breeding stock, puppies and active dog guides) and assisting the Breeding Department as needed. Responsibilities include, Routine, triage and preventative health care for dogs such as physical exams, vaccinations, ophthalmic, urinalysis, hematology, dermatology and dentistry exams. Perform tests including blood work, x-rays and radiographs. Assist in surgery preparation, anesthetics, and monitoring during and post surgery. Maintains records, performs data entry, schedules appointments and assists with client support and education duties. Ensures proper care and hygiene of pets and provides restraint support during examinations and treatments. Assist with breeding needs (Natural, semen collections and inseminations, trans cervical inseminations, pregnancy, ultrasounds and x-rays). Perform other duties as assigned. Please apply at <https://www.leaderdog.org/about/who-we-are/careers/>

## CLINICS FOR SALE

Indiana, Allen County: Small Animal Practice. Grossed \$775K in 2019. Estimated after-debt income \$160K. 3,600 SF facility with real estate. Possible seller financing. (Code: IN3) Contact: PS Broker 800.636.4740 | [info@psbroker.com](mailto:info@psbroker.com) | [www.psbroker.com](http://www.psbroker.com)

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Indiana, Hancock County: Small Animal Practice. Gross up 19% Year-to-Date! Estimated after-debt income \$112K. 1,500 SF facility with real estate. (Code: IN4) Contact: PS Broker 800.636.4740 | [info@psbroker.com](mailto:info@psbroker.com) | [www.psbroker.com](http://www.psbroker.com)

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