70th Year Reunion

The Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine recently celebrated its 70 years of Excellence during the College’s Alumni Weekend event. Departmental alumni, faculty, and friends gathered following the football game with Marshall University and the College’s activities. The OSU Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine was the first such department in a college of veterinary medicine in the United States.

Dr. Kent Hoblet and Dr. C. Richard Dorn

Dr. Dorn was chair from 1975 to 1987 and guided the Department through an expansion that included the addition of the Food Animal Health Program located on the Wooster campus.

Drs. Charles Neer, Kent Hoblet, C. Richard Dorn, Gary Bowman, Bill Epperson, and John C. Gordon
Marysville, Ohio – As blood flowed from the horse’s clamped-open mouth, some witnesses groaned and others grimaced. But while onlookers turned away one by one, Allison Lash squeezed in for closer inspection. She had already anesthetized the 1,000-pound animal, checked its vital signs and sterilized the area to be worked on.

It was all part of her role as assistant to her teachers – two veterinarians who used foot-long extraction tools and a ball-peen hammer to rip a 3-inch-long abscessed tooth from the horse’s lower jaw.

Then came Lash’s turn to be the doctor.

While the horse was still down and woozy, one of the vets instructed Lash – a senior at Ohio State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine – to pull two more teeth.

Lash strained and grunted but managed to remove the teeth with a few tugs, one good twist and a lot of sweat.

“I’m not as brave as I should be sometimes around the bigger animals”, she said. “But working on these horses is interesting – definitely a whole different ballgame from pulling tiny teeth on a cat or a dog.”

Lash represents what industry leaders say is today’s typical veterinary student: a woman who is not sure she’s interested in doctoring farm animals.

This fall, 78 percent of OSU’s incoming veterinary students are female. Of the nearly 10,000 students in programs nationwide, 76 percent are women. The gender-disparity trend began in the early 1980s.

Last year – not coincidentally some say – the number of graduating veterinarians choosing to solely practice large-animal or food-animal science was approaching an all-time low.

Now some OSU officials say they hope that a $1.5 million large-animal clinic under construction on County Home Road north of Marysville will help recruit more students to farm practice. A new federal law that, if funded, would offer education subsidies to vets who work in underserved areas also could help.

“An off-campus clinic like that at OSU is the closest thing to a real-world setting that a veterinary student can ever get,” said Dr. Andrew Maccabe, associate executive director of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges and a 1985 graduate of OSU’s veterinary college.
“The best was to learn to treat farm animals is to be on an actual farm.”
Recognizing there is no teaching substitute for llama castration or for setting a broken leg on a raging bull, OSU has operated the ambulatory clinic since 1970 from a modest and a run-down mobile home in rural Union County.

All senior students spend two weeks there, working dawn to dusk on area farms – and handling emergency calls on weekends and nights – while learning from the four full-time veterinarians who practice and teach there.

The clinic, which draws about 16 percent of its operating budget from university coffers, is widely hailed. None of the country’s other 28 veterinary schools offer a similar program. Unique because of its rural setting and focus on farm animals, it also allows students to learn business skills because the clinic is 85 percent self-supported, Maccabe said.

While clinic director, Dr. Bimbo Welker doesn’t see his job as recruiter, he said he hopes some students passing through the doors see a side of animal care they might have overlooked.

“The think that because they had a cat growing up instead of a calf, that that’s what they have to work on,” he said. “It’s part of our job to dispel that notion. They don’t have to choose. They can do it all.”

At the clinic, students treat horses, cows, bulls, llamas, and other livestock in a 13-county, largely agricultural region of central, western, and southwestern Ohio.

There is no doubt, Maccabe said, that women are every bit as capable of working with large animals as men are. “We use our brains in this business, not so much our brawn.”

But he said students’ career paths are a function of their interests and background, and “it seem, perhaps, women tend to have interests that lean toward more conventional veterinary medicine.”

There’s plenty of speculation about the perceived flagging interests in large-animal medicine as a career, said Jim Flanigan, spokeswoman for the American Veterinary Medical Association. The association and a task force have commissioned a Kansas State University study for answers.

“We want to separate theory from reality,” Flanigan said. The shortage “may have to do much more with generation than gender.”

Fewer of today’s vet-school students – male or female – come from an agrarian background, so farm practice would be a new way of life, he said.

Amanda Elpiner said her two-week stint in Marysville was an eye-opener. During her rotation, she spent a good deal of time examining pregnant cows on a Logan County farm. As a drizzle began to fall and the humidity level quickly rose one afternoon inside the 400-head dairy barn, the sweat kept dripping faster from Elpiner’s brow.

She couldn’t wipe it, though, because the plastic sleeve covering her from fingertip to shoulder was coated with a half-inch of cow manure.

“It’s a great way to warm up you hands,” said Dr. Richard Meiring, who saw a need to lighten the mood inside the steamy, smelly barn.

As Elpiner contemplated approaching a 1,300-pound cow who looked as if she didn’t know yet whether her eventual veterinary practice would regularly find her on a farm.
“Whatever I’m doing at a particular moment, I like and am interested in,” she said. A short time later, a cow splattered her in the face with manure. Well, maybe not that particular moment.

Lash, who grew up around farms in northeastern Ohio near Massillon, agreed that each day of her clinic rotation was a new experience, mostly enjoyable.

“Doing this kind of medicine every day would be difficult. It’s hard, hard work,” she said. “luckily, I don’t have to make up my mind yet.”

By: Holly Zachariah  hzachariah@dispath.com

A new 9,000 sq. ft. clinic/dormitory is currently under construction in Marysville. The new faculty will house faculty and business offices, a laboratory, surgery, conference room, and living space for 12 students. Completion of construction is planned for February, 2005.

Ohio Dairy Health Management Certificate Program

The Ohio Dairy Health Management Certificate Program is an educational series designed to offer advanced knowledge in an intensive workshop environment to dairy veterinarian practitioners. The course provides a framework to develop applied skills in dairy health management and decision making. The course is open to any graduate veterinarian as an individual or by Practice Plan which allows a practice to choose different veterinarians for different modules. Participants will meet once quarterly for a two-day module. There are 12 different modules. Module #1, The Dairy Industry and Farm Record Interpretation, will commence on December 2, 2004. Other module topics include: economics & business, nutrition, milk quality & system analysis, facilities & cow comfort, disease management and health monitoring, reproduction management, herd
expansion, and personal effectiveness. The program is limited to 20 people. Tuition is $5,000 if paid before January 31, 2005 and $6,000 if paid in installments. For more information, please visit our website at http://prevmed.vet.ohio-state.edu/ext_odhmcpHome.htm or contact Dr. Bill Epperson at (614) 292-9453 or epperson.1@osu.edu

GRADUATES

News from the Graduate Program

The VPM Graduate Program welcomes six new graduate students to the program this fall. Elizabeth Dryburgh finished her BS in Molecular Genetics and is starting a MS program with Dr. Saville. Luke Heider, DVM, is entering a PhD program with Dr. Wittum after spending some time in practice in Michigan. Linda Lord, DVM, MS, is beginning a PhD program with Dr. Wittum after practicing in the Dayton area. Andrew Mack, VME 2, is entering a dual degree MS program with Dr. Funk. Hadi Yassine, MS, comes to us from Lebanon and will do a PhD program with Dr. Y. M. Saif. Wei Zang, BM, studied at the Nanjing Medical University in China and begins her MS program with Dr. Linda Saif. We had three students complete their program this summer: Bill Bremer and Jose Delos Santos, DVM finished their MS degrees with Dr. Stich and Pam Dennis, DVM finished her PhD with Dr. Saville. We also had three of our graduate students begin their veterinary program in the OVM College of Veterinary Medicine: Einav Elietsur (Dr. Saville, advisor), Aaron Ison (Dr. Morishita, advisor), and Jordan Schaul (Dr. Morishita, advisor). We wish them all well as they begin on their new endeavors this fall.

With all the additions and departures, we have 44 active graduate students in our program. J. C. Gordon, Graduate Studies Chair
Dr. Richard W. Meiring, Assistant Professor, Clinical, of Veterinary Preventive Medicine became President of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners at the Association’s annual convention last week in Ft. Worth, TX. The AABP serves a membership of 6,000 veterinarians from across the U.S., Canada, and several other countries. Dr. Meiring received his DVM from OSU in 1972. Prior to joining our Marysville faculty in 1998, Dr. Meiring practiced in Fort Recovery, Ohio. From 1999-2002, he was the District 4 representative to AABP’s Board of Directors. He has also held numerous leadership positions in OVMA, AVMA, and the National Mastitis Council. In 1996, while still in private practice, Dr. Meiring received our College’s Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Kathy Cotter, Clinic Coordinator, at the Department’s Marysville Large Animal Clinic was recently honored as one of 4 recipients of the College’s Distinguished Staff Awards.

When the College was restructured in 1994 the Marysville Large Animal Clinic became part of the Department. OSU’s professional curriculum requires all veterinary students to complete a 2-week rotation at Marysville.
Dr. Heider

Dr. L. E. Heider (DVM, OSU 1964) has been selected as one of 3 alumni from the entire University to receive this year's University Alumni Professional Career Achievement Award. Dr. Heider was a member of the Department’s faculty from 1974 to 1991. From 1988 until 1991 he served as Chair. Following graduation, Dr. Heider was in dairy practice in Sussex County, New Jersey for two years. In 1966 he returned to OSU as an Assistant Professor with responsibilities for teaching large animal medicine and providing ambulatory services. In 1974, he was promoted to professor and became Ohio’s first dairy extension veterinarian. While at OSU he also held positions of Director of Field Services and Director of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. In 1991, Dr. Heider left OSU to become Dean of the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, a position he held until 1998. In 1998, he became interim president of the University of Prince Edward Island. Following retirement from PEI, he became Executive Director of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, a position he currently holds.

2004 Phibro Excellence in Poultry Research Award

Dr. Richard D. Slemons was honored by AAAP as the recipient of the 2004 Phibro Excellence in Poultry Research Award. This award is given for sustained excellence in research in poultry disease and health over a period of 20 years or more and represents recognition by peers for a lifetime's achievement. Dr. Slemons has been a faculty member in the Department since 1986 and has developed an independently funded research program in avian influenza (AI) ecology and epidemiology. He has 19 peer-reviewed publications on influenza alone, and is first author on 14 of those.

Dr. Slemons has had a profound scientific impact on the understanding of the ecology and pathogenesis of AI. His research career has spanned 35 years. While investigating wildlife sources of Newcastle disease virus, Dr. Slemons discovered that migratory ducks were infected with AI virus. This research discovery was the foundation for the concept that wild birds are the reservoirs of all influenza A genes which over time have been transmitted to mammals (horses, swine, and humans). His original discovery in 1972 was published in *Avian Diseases* in 1974 and has been the basis for a new direction of research by other influenza researchers as well as for funding by NIH and USDA for studying the ecology of influenza viruses in wild birds. During the California Newcastle Disease Outbreak, Dr. Slemons discovered that captive psittacines brought into the U.S. could be infected with AI virus. This discovery provided APHIS with the basis to implement the practice of quarantine and importation restriction on psittacines. In addition, Dr. Slemons identified the intestinal tract as the site of replication of AI in ducks and two key sites (kidney and intestinal tract) of replication of low pathogenic AI viruses in chickens. In collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Taudenberger at AFIP, Dr. Slemons discovered that the hemagglutinin gene from the 1918 human virus did not
directly transmit from birds, but must have circulated in humans for several years. Finally, in 2003, Dr. Slemons demonstrated that non-migratory wild ducks could maintain AI viruses over multiple years, being an effective reservoir and source of AI viruses to poultry.

**ACVPM Awards**

The annual meeting of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine was held July 26th during the AVMA Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The following Departmental graduates and faculty received recognition:

**John Herbold, PhD** (OSU, 1981) – received the 2004 Helwig-Jennings Award for significant and lasting contributions to Veterinary Preventive Medicine. John is also President-elect of the College and will become President in 2006.

*Award named in honor of former Department Chair Dr. John Helwig (1950-1975).*

**Will Hueston, DVM** (OSU, 1980), PhD (OSU, 1985) – received the Distinguished Diplomate Award for his work of bovine spongiform encephalopathy.

**Gary Bowman, DVM** (OSU, 1967) and Associate Professor-Emeritus – will continue to serve as Chair of the ACVPM Examination Committee.

**Other Awards**

**Taradon Luangtongkum, DVM**, a graduate student of Dr. Teresa Morishita, was the recipient of the Arnold S. Rosenwald Poster Award from the American Association of Avian Pathologists in recognition of the best poster at the 2004 American Veterinary Medical Association’s Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in July, 2004.
Research Fellowship in Shelter Medicine and Management

The Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine at The Ohio State University has been awarded a graduate fellowship by the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust. The Key Bank’s Discretionary Charitable Trust Committee approved this three-year commitment of $198,000. The trust will be used to support Linda Lord, DVM, MS, (OSU, both in 1999) in her work towards a PhD in Veterinary Epidemiology. This program will provide statewide leadership in promoting interaction and collaboration among and between animal shelter groups and veterinarians. Dr. Lord will also conduct observational research to generate scientific data regarding animal shelter population health and management. It is anticipated that this program will establish the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine as a centralized outreach education and information resource on animal shelter medicine and management for both animal shelters and veterinarians in Ohio.

New Research Funding

(Since July, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P.I.</th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>FUNDING AGENCY</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Thomas Wittum &amp; Dr. Julie Funk</td>
<td>Monitor bacterial resistance genetics in food animal populations, and to track those resistance genetics through the food chain to the consumer population.</td>
<td>Center for Disease Control &amp; Prevention</td>
<td>$448,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Bill Saville</td>
<td>West Nile Virus Contract</td>
<td>Ohio Department of Health</td>
<td>$49,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Teresa Morishita &amp; Dr. Dave Latshaw (Animal Sciences)</td>
<td>Backyard Poultry Flock Health and Nutrition</td>
<td>OSU Animal Sciences Department Poultry Endowment</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTACT INFORMATION

Following the distribution of our first newsletter, we received comments from departmental alumni from all over the world. We greatly appreciate this, and would like to hear from more. Please let us know that you are receiving this newsletter and give us an update on yourself.

The Veterinary Preventive Medicine Newsletter is published electronically on a quarterly basis. It is primarily distributed to College faculty, VPM graduate students, departmental alumni, former and retired faculty, and others who have been or are currently associated with the Department.

Please submit e-mail addresses, articles, and comments/suggestions to Jeff Workman, Extension Program Assistant, at workman.45@osu.edu or 614-292-9453.

- For more departmental information please visit our website: http://prevmed.vet.ohio-state.edu/