



USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 32, No. 4, December 2004

RECORD BREAKING ATTENDANCE FOR USAHA'S 108th ANNUAL MEETING AND AAVLD'S 47th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

It was a record attendance for the 108th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the 47th Annual Conference of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) in Greensboro, North Carolina, October 21-27, 2004. Total registrants attending this year's meeting was 1342—best ever. This year we had 52 registrants from 14 foreign countries.

The Presidents Reception and Dinner on Sunday evening was one of the highlights of the meeting. Special guests attending the Dinner included North Carolina Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture David Smith, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Under Secretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs Bill Hawks, USDA Administrator, Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service Ron DeHaven,

United States Department of the Interior, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks Paul

agriculture in the United States.

David Thain, President, National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, presented the 16th Annual National Assembly Award to Steve England, New Mexico State Veterinarian.

Terry McElwain, AAVLD Past President, presented the E.P. Pope Memorial Award to Bruce Akey, New York Assistant State Veterinarian.

The USAHA/

AAVLD plenary sessions, scientific sessions and committee meetings were all well attended. This year's meeting agendas brought a number of first-time attendees, especially the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) discussions during the Committee on Livestock Identification meeting.

Forty-three resolutions were developed by the different USAHA science-based committees. These reso-

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2005 USAHA officers: (front row, left to right) Lee Myers, Rick Willer, Bret Marsh, James Leafsteadt. (back row, left to right) Don Hoenig, Jones Bryan, J Lee Alley

Hoffman, and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) President-elect Henry Childers.

Ron DeHaven, Administrator, USDA, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), presented the "Administrators Award" to Joan Arnoldi retired Michigan State Veterinarian. This award is presented each year during the USAHA annual meeting to a individual who has made a significant difference in protecting and improving the health of animal

President's Corner

Rick Willer



It is with great pleasure that I share my first "President's corner" message. It has been an honor to serve this Association on the Executive Committee for the past three years and I am looking forward to the coming year as your 109th President.

As United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Secretary J Lee Alley reports in this newsletter, our 108th Annual Meeting in Greensboro was an unqualified success. Attendance continues to increase. This is due in large part to the recent efforts to bring new stakeholders to the USAHA "table" encouraging full participation in our deliberative process; both in the form of individual members as well as new members on our Board of Directors. Last year, we added five new Official Governmental Agency partners and three new Al-

lied Industry Organization members. This year, six new partners were added to the Board including three Official Governmental Agency representatives and three new Allied Industry Organization members [see

Greensboro meeting hosted government dignitaries and many new members

page 14 for list of new Board of Directors members]. Our efforts to bring in new partners is in recognition of the need to be inclusive rather than exclusive when addressing the extremely complex animal health issues of today. In addition, we must recognize the past and continuing

support of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) leadership for their strong support through record attendance of Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) employees. Their active participation in USAHA is critical to the continuing success of our mission.

We appreciated Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman's presence at our Annual Meeting. She was able to work a short visit into her extremely busy schedule. The Executive Committees of American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) and USAHA, USAHA District Presidents and the leaders of the National Assembly were able to have a working lunch with the Secre-

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A Message from AAVLD President Dr. Gary Osweiler



Dr. Gary Osweiler

Our respective meetings and their joint and collaborative efforts have concluded with another very busy agenda and scientific program. We have been fortunate to have a previous succession of visionary and committed leaders that have delivered important initiatives to build upon. This year the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) scientific sessions delivered 157 scientific and plenary presentations as well as cooperating in the Joint United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)/AAVLD Plenary Session for continuing education of our di-

verse membership. Beyond that our combined total committee activities relied on your talent, dedication and participation to move forward with an expanding agenda for animal health. The combined staff and professional input of AAVLD and USAHA included many effective individuals working to deliver a product superior to what either of our groups could reach alone. Both plenary sessions were very well attended and added substantially to our perspective on TSE's and to aspects of surveillance that will challenge us in the future. The Joint Plenary Session speakers were consistently informative, interesting and thought provoking.

AAVLD has grown substantially in responsibility and involvement at

a national level. Just four years ago that involvement was formalized by completion of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) outlining our respective responsibilities for diagnostics and surveillance. As we entered the new millennium, that beginning provided a basis to support the challenges faced by both of our organizations in foreign animal disease readiness, new and emerging domestic disease issues and the threat of bioterrorism related to food animal production. This state-federal-producer interaction provides opportunity and challenge—both of which are important to growth and excellence.

The foresight of our previous lead-

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NORTH EASTERN UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION BREAKFAST MEETING

Dr. Nancy Halpern, President

Approximately 40 people attended the North Eastern United States Animal Health Association (NEUSAHA) Breakfast meeting, which was chaired by Dr. Jeff Hamer, New Jersey's Division of Animal Health's Assistant Director, in my absence. Dr. Bob Eisner served as secretary and Dr. Don Lein provided the treasurer's report. After a welcome, distinguished guests were introduced and provided brief statements. Under Secretary Bill Hawks talked about the future of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the important role that the states will play in that future.

He concluded with the very positive slogan "working together works." Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Administrator Ron DeHaven welcomed everyone and spoke about the new bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE) Trade Agreement with Japan. Deputy Administrator Dr. John Clifford spoke about the BSE testing, the new system of reporting, and the importance of national animal identification. Both United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) President Dr. Don Lein and USAHA President-Elect Dr. Rick Willer provided brief words of

welcome, and thanked everyone for their support with USAHA.

A business meeting followed the breakfast. The association confirmed Dr. Don Hoenig's nomination as Third Vice President and Drs. Bob Eckroade and Ernie Zirkle as the Members-at-Large representing NEUSAHA. Dr. Mary Jane Lis gave a report on the upcoming annual meeting of NEUSAHA to be held April 11-13, 2005, in Mystic Seaport, Connecticut. The agenda for that meeting is under development and the location should serve as an exciting venue for all participants. ■

North Central District Met at Annual Meeting

Dr. William Hartmann, President



Dr. William Hartmann

The North Central United States Animal Health Association (NCUSAHA) met on Sunday, October 24, 2004, in conjunction with the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Annual Meeting being held in Greensboro, North Carolina. Dr. Bill Hartmann, NCUSAHA President, focused the meeting on four topics: Implementation of the National Animal Identification System, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) surveillance, emerging animal disease reporting and the National Johne's Disease Control Program. During the meeting the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary William Hawks, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Administrator Dr. Ron DeHaven and Veterinary Services (VS) Deputy Administrator Dr. John Clifford updated the group on current USDA activities.

Dr. Robert Ehlenfeldt, NCUSAHA Vice President, presented the draft strategic plan for the National Johne's Disease Control Program. This plan was drafted by a subcommittee of the USAHA Committee on Johne's disease. The primary goal of this plan is to reduce the prevalence of Johne's disease in the United States over the next five years. To accomplish this goal the plan identifies five objectives: Increase producer participation, improve educational efforts, close gaps in knowledge about Johne's disease, improve reporting and develop an eradication plan.

Dr. Valerie Ragan, VS Assistant Deputy Administrator, provided a review of progress on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). She used as an example the \$18.6 million that has been provided to states in the form of cooperative agreements for implementation of premise identification. She reported that 12 states have been trained and are entering information into the system, with the goal of all states par-

ticipating by mid-2006. Dr. Ragan shared with the group that an Interim Rule is being drafted that will add electronic identification and other devices as official identification, and will make removal of or tampering with such devices illegal. She reported that USDA has held 14 NAIS listening sessions, and that more are scheduled. Finally, a bill is being drafted that will amend the Animal Health Protection Act to assure the confidentiality of information collected through the NAIS.

Dr. Ragan continued with comments on BSE surveillance. To date approximately 92,000 samples have been collected nationwide. Oversight of the surveillance is transitioning from the incident command structure to routine surveillance.

VS Assistant Deputy Administrator Dr. Larry Granger provided a perspective on emergent animal disease reporting. He discussed the importance of encouraging reporting of disease events without adversely affecting international trade. ■

Southern Animal Health Association Meets in Greensboro

Dr. Mack Lea, President

The Southern Animal Health Association (SAHA) met on Sunday, October 24, 2004, in conjunction with the 108th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA). This meeting was its usual lighthearted gathering of regulatory veterinarians with a focus on Southern hospitality and eating. The presiding official for the eating part was Dr. Jones Bryan. Everyone enjoyed a delicious breakfast buffet complete with a more than adequate supply of grits—thank goodness.

Seventy-five people attended the meeting including a number of Yan-

kees—that's anyone other than a Southerner; also known as the enemy. Notable Southern dignitaries present included United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary Bill Hawks and Wally Hester.

Special guests included Drs. Don Lein and Rick Willer, President and President-Elect of USAHA, respectively.

On a more serious, but brief note, the group heard updates from a number of USDA officials including Mr. Bill Hawks, Dr. Ron DeHaven, Dr. John Clifford, and Animal Plant Health Inspection Service

(APHIS) Regional Directors Drs. Jose Diez and Jere Dick. Jere is not the Eastern Regional Director, but he was there and made the report.

A general discussion of a number of topics of interest ensued. Topics included a resolution passed by the Plant Board concerning Tropical Soda Apple, avian influenza (AI) testing on commercial poultry premises and in live bird markets, the southeastern equine passport program, and animal ID including an update on the Southeast Livestock Network from Jim Akers.

The meeting adjourned with an agreement to gather again in New Orleans in June 2005. ■

Western States Livestock Health Association

Breakfast Meeting, Greensboro, NC



President Dr. Wayne Cunningham

The Western States Livestock Health Association's (WSLHA) breakfast meeting was held Sunday October 24, 2004, at the

United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) Annual Meeting in Greensboro, NC. Over 60 animal health officials and producers attended the meeting. The meeting agenda was multifaceted on current western animal health issues.

Presentations were given by Dr. Lynn Creekmore, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) Western Region Epidemiologist and previous chronic wasting Disease (CWD) director for the agency, provide an updated about the current captive CWD situation and national captive CWD program and

the 2004 vesicular stomatitis outbreak. Dr. Bob Meyer, Western Region Tuberculosis (TB) and Brucellosis Epidemiologist, provided an update on 2004's TB surveillance and cases. He expressed a special concern about dairy calf rearing facilities and their roll in moving TB within the national dairy industry. Dan Manzanara, New Mexico's Livestock Director reported about the current TB status and regionalization plan. Neil Hammerschmidt provided an update on the current activities with the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), implementation projects and future state funding. Dr. Jim Logan, retired Wyoming State Veterinarian, provided an update on the Wyoming brucellosis situation in and around the Greater Yellowstone Basin and the brucellosis infected herd in Gillett, Wyoming, that was identified in the South Dakota regulatory laboratory. Concern was expressed that laboratory error had occurred since the DNA fingerprint was very close to the South Dakota brucellosis bison herds fingerprint. Dr. Barb

Powers, Colorado State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Director, reported on that institution's efforts in bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) surveillance and Colorado's carcass disposal plans. Dr. Keith Roehr gave a brief overview on the National Animal Health Emergency Management System (NAHEMS) activities and future plans.

Bill Hawks, USDA Under Secretary, Dr. Ron DeHaven, APHIS Administrator, Dr. John Clifford, VS Deputy Administrator, Dr. Don Lein and Dr. Rick Willer, USAHA President and President-Elect, respectively, addressed the group and provided an overview of the last years activities and achievements.

Four resolutions were approved by the WSLHA. Dr. Oldham the newly appointed Wyoming State Veterinarian presented two Brucellosis resolutions.

Dr. Wayne Cunningham, Colorado State Veterinarian, presented three vesicular stomatitis resolutions, two of which were approved. ■

National Animal Identification System (NAIS) Progress Toward Implementation

Update on Some of the Animal Identification Activities and Issues Since the 108th Annual Meeting

Bob Hillman, DVM

Chair, Committee on Livestock Identification



Dr. Bob Hillman

Significant levels of activity are occurring in many states across the country and at the national level. Rapid progress is being made to initiate premises identification in the states and on tribal lands. Thirty-two states and one tribe have requested to use the Standardized Premises Registration System (SPRS) provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the premises identification system for their states and tribes. The SPRS is operational in 21 states. Eleven states and three tribes have elected to use one of the nine state/private premises identification systems. Three of these have been

designated as Compliant Premises Identification Systems by USDA. The goal is to have a premises identification operational in all states and tribes before mid 2005.

The draft State Standards for Implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), was accepted by the Committee on Livestock Identification as a work in progress has been forwarded to USDA for development into a draft Uniform Methods and Rules. USDA staff has begun work on this document and when completed, will distribute the draft document to stakeholders for review and comment. We hope to see publication of this draft document in the early months of 2005.

On November 8, 2004, USDA

published an interim rule – Livestock Identification; Use of Alternative Numbering Systems, Docket No. 04-052-1. Under the provisions of the interim rule, the electronic individual identification numbers, group/lot identification numbers and premises identification numbers are official numbers and numbering systems that could be utilized as official identification in animal health programs. The interim rule is careful to point out that the interim rule does not *require* the use of the new identification systems. Additionally, the interim rule prohibits the removal of official identification devices. The comment period for the interim rule closed on January 7, 2005.

The NAIS Advisory Subcommittee-

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European Union Regionalization Request Site Visits

November 3-12, 2004

by Dr. John Schiltz, Iowa State Veterinarian



Dr. John Schiltz

I had the distinct pleasure, as a state veterinarian representative, of participating on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health

Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) site review team to the European Union. The European Union site review included the following countries/diseases: Poland: classical swine fever (CSF) and swine vesicular disease (SVD); Hungary: CSF; Lithuania: CSF, SVD, and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD); Slovakia:

CSF, FMD. I was assigned to a team that reviewed Poland and Hungary. During our time in both countries, we visited Border Inspection Points (BIP), large and small scale swine production facilities, and regulatory veterinary offices at the central (national), regional, and district level. The following are some of my observations:

Poland:

Overall, the measures Poland has in place for preventing and controlling a CSF outbreak are sound. The measures provide a substantial degree of confidence in the ability to detect, contain, and control an incursion of the disease. CSF monitoring has been in place since 1996 and the last re-

ported case was 1994. Officials reported production of 5 million market swine per year, and 300,000 breeding animals.

Poland has 16 provincial (regional) offices, 301 county (district) offices, and 9 border veterinary offices (5 land, 3 sea). Poland uses approximately 2,000 private veterinarians to assist in carrying out regulatory functions. Polish officials informed us that there are 700,000 swine farms in Poland, and 650,000 of these farms produce less than 50 pigs per year.

The small farms we visited were primarily raising swine for their personal consumption. The impressive veterinary infrastructure in Poland

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Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory Capabilities

Dr. Lyle Vogel, AVMA

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) hosted a meeting to discuss the future of the United States foreign animal disease (FAD) research and diagnostic laboratory facilities during the USAHA Annual Meeting in Greensboro, NC. Previously, USAHA investigated this Nation's foreign animal disease laboratory capacity, capabilities and future at Plum Island, New York, and published a special edition of the USAHA Newsletter on the topic in October 2003. The meeting in Greensboro was a follow-up to a previous meeting organized and hosted by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in September 2004 of stakeholders and federal government departments and agencies. A steering committee comprised of commodity organizations and government representatives organized both meetings. The purpose of this meeting was to further develop a strategy to rebuild/modernize the foreign animal disease laboratory capacity in the United States.

During both meetings, the stakeholders received informational briefings from the involved government agencies and reached a consensus on a number of issues. Those consensus issues include: the importance of continuing to co-locate research, diagnostic, and training functions together in future FAD laboratories; recognition that the current Plum Island Animal Disease Center needs to continue to provide daily FAD diagnostic, research and training functions for many more years even if a decision is made soon to rebuild the facility because rebuilding may take seven or more years to implement; that in the meantime, the current facility must be maintained and improved as needed; that there is a need for additional FAD diagnostic and research capabilities in the United States; that our needs and objectives should drive how a new facility (or facilities) is designed and where it is located, and not let the facility design and location constrain what can be accomplished; and that the stakeholders should continue to work together to develop a strategic plan with a realistic obtainable timetable for rebuilding or modernizing

the FAD laboratories. Numerous questions remain to be addressed. What are the scientific and educational objectives of a 21st century FAD laboratory? Should a new laboratory be limited to doing research, diagnostic, and education on only foreign animal diseases or should the mission be expanded to include emerging zoonoses, environmental issues, and surveillance programs?

At the conclusion of the meeting in Greensboro, three subcommittees were created to work on specific issues. They are: 1) A summarization of previous studies and recommendations concerning the future of FAD research and diagnostic laboratory facilities; 2) Develop definitions for the group to enable uniform understanding of the issues and transparent communications; and, 3) Identify the immediate and long range services and products required for the FAD diagnostic and research laboratories. I will continue to chair the steering committee, consisting of organizational representatives, created to coordinate this effort. ■

CONTROL BOARD DECLARES ALL STATES FREE OF PSEUDORABIES (PRV)

In conjunction with the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Annual Meeting in Greensboro, the PRV Control Board moved Pennsylvania, Texas and Florida to Stage V, free of Pseudorabies, thus bringing all 52 states and territories to free status in commercial swine production.

The control board meets regularly at USAHA since being organized by

the PRV Program Standards. The Program Standards of the USAHA Committee on Pseudorabies (PRV) were adopted in 1988 and have served well as a guideline for federal, state and industry cooperation in eradication of PRV.

In 1990, a goal of eradication by year 2000, was set. In 2000 we had all but 13 states at stage V and now can announce the completion of that

goal in 2004. Continued surveillance and diligent attention to the areas of potential interface with feral swine are necessary to keep the nation free of PRV in the commercial swine herds. However, a great deal of satisfaction can be taken from this successful program, as it has become somewhat of a model for future eradication efforts. ■

Keynote Speaker President's Reception and Dinner Dixie Snider, M.D.



Dr. Dixie Snider
Chief of Science,
CDC

Dr. Dixie Snider, Chief of Science, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), was the keynote speaker at the annual United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)

and American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) President's Reception and Dinner on Sunday evening, October 24, 2004. The title of his presentation was "Addressing Emerging Infectious Diseases: A Partnership Between the Veterinary and Human Health Committees." He stressed the importance of the state and university diagnostic laboratories and state departments of agriculture and state

boards of animal health working closely with state departments of public health concerning emerging infectious diseases and zoonotic diseases. Examples cited were recent emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases such as monkeypox, SARS, and anthrax, as well as wildlife that may carry diseases that affect domestic animals and man.

Dr. Snider was raised on a farm in Kentucky, and he continues to maintain ties with family and the horse and cattle industry in his home state. He supported the development of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network System (NAHLN) and the working relationship of this system with CDC's Laboratory Response Network (LRN) at the state and federal level.

His closing statement was that through federal funding from CDC to

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Secretary Ann Veneman Attends USAHA/AAVLD Annual Meeting

On Tuesday, October 26, 2004, Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman attended the United States



Animal Health Association (USAHA) Annual Meeting and American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Annual Meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina.

During Secretary Veneman's visit, she joined the USAHA and AAVLD Executive Committees, USAHA District Presidents, and National Assembly officers for a working luncheon. USAHA and AAVLD thanked the Secretary for her leadership and for the close working relationship she maintained with the two organizations during her tenure as Secretary of Agriculture. ■

USAHA Committee on Aquaculture Meets

The Committee on Aquaculture Committee met on Sunday afternoon, October 24, 2004, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Chairman Scott Lapatra presided over the meeting, which included a brief overview of the National Aquaculture Association presented by Betsy Hart; an update on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) by Valerie Ragan, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS); a review of the progress of the National Aquatic Animal Health Task Force by Jill Roland and John Clifford, USDA-APHIS-

VS; and an update on the activities of the Aquatic Veterinary Medicine Committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) by David Scarfe. The committee approved two resolutions. The first resolution requested that USDA-APHIS-VS begin to work immediately to establish sufficient, annual funding for the long-term maintenance of the USDA-APHIS-VS infectious salmon anemia (ISA) program including indemnification for loss incurred by U.S. salmonid growers in the implementation of the program.

The second resolution asked

USDA-APHIS-VS to determine if the data needed to perform credible risk assessments exists and to identify information gaps. Furthermore, the resolution requested that appropriate steps should be taken to fill in these gaps for the prevention of the introduction and the potential establishment of viruses of finfish (as identified in the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan) of economic significance into the U.S. commercial farmed fish industry sectors.

Both resolutions were approved during the General Membership meeting and by the Board of Directors. ■

USAHA / AAVLD Annual Meeting: Coming Together To Share Information and See Old and New Friends and Colleagues

President's Dinner and Reception



Many Meetings and Many Great Speakers



USAHA / AAVLD Annual Meeting: Coming Together To Share Information and See Old and New Friends and Colleagues

Luncheon with Secretary of Agriculture Veneman



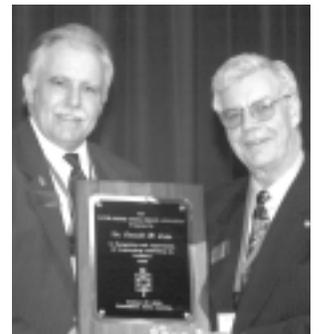
Fabulous Tradeshow



Good Conversation



Much Deserved Awards and Recognition



Committee on Diagnostic Laboratories and Veterinary Work Force Development Inaugural Meeting in Greensboro

Robert Frost

The Chief Veterinary Officers of North America Drs. Brian Evans, Canada; John Clifford, United States; and Jose del Valle, Mexico, joined members of the United States Animal



Health Association (USAHA), American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD), and Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) at the inaugural meeting of the Committee on Diagnostic Laboratories and Veterinary Work Force Development.

The October 25 evening meeting, co-chaired by Dean Bennie Osburn, President of the AAVMC and Bob Frost, Past President of USAHA, was held during the USAHA's 108th Annual Meeting, Greensboro, North Carolina. Forty-five committee members and guests spent two hours discussing North America's laboratory and veterinary workforce initiatives, which resulted in a resolution and a recommendation.

Barb Martin, Director of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), reported that 43 laboratories in 37 states are currently participating in the NAHLN, but only 12 laboratories are funded as part of a pilot project. A one-time appropriation of \$85 million is needed to fully fund the NAHLN's participating laboratories and provide expansion to remaining states. Thirty million dollars per year is needed to provide ongoing maintenance and sup-

port for the NAHLN. A resolution was passed supporting funding for the NAHLN (reference web/resolution).

Dr. John Clifford stated that the United States is working with Canada and Mexico on a number of issues and expressed a commitment to continue the emergency response coordination. Canadian, Mexican and U. S. representatives agreed there is a need for interagency and cross jurisdictional cooperation, a need to increase collaboration among the diagnostic laboratories and a need to develop a North American Laboratory Network to improve harmonization and standardization among the continent's diagnostic laboratories. Canada's Dr. Paul Kitching, Di-



rector, National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease, Winnipeg, Manitoba, stated that he and a U.S. team met at his laboratory prior to the Greensboro meeting and reported that there is cur-

rently progress in bringing the Winnipeg BSL-4 laboratory into the NAHLN system.

The Committee also passed a recommendation supporting the "Veterinary Medical Education and

Workforce Development Act of 2004." Dean Osburn reported that the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) was working to have new legislation in-



troduced in Congress to authorize a program of competitive grants for the veterinary medical colleges to build capacity and increase the number of veterinary students.

Dr. Rick Willer, incoming President of USAHA, sent a letter of recommendation that is being utilized by AAVMC office in Washington to support the "Veterinary Education and Workforce Development Act". Senator Wayne Allard of Colorado has agreed to sponsor the Bill and this effort on the Hill will be used as further evidence of the support needed to develop the workforce to address veterinary public practice including bioterrorism/agroterrorism and foreign animal disease threats.

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Names in the News



Dr. Lonnie King

Lonnie King, Dean of the Michigan State University, College of Veterinary Medicine has been elected to the Institute of Medicine.

The Institute of Medicine is a part of the National Academy of Sciences. Its members are elected through a highly selective process that recognizes people who have made major contributions in the fields of medical science, health care and public health.

This honor is usually reserved for physicians and researchers who study human health issues. ■

Bret Marsh, USAHA, President-elect, has been elected Treasurer of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Dr. Marsh currently represents Indiana in the AVMA House of Delegates and is a member of the House Advisory Committee representing federal or state government veterinarians. ■



Dr. Bret Marsh

President Bush Names New Secretary of Agriculture



Governor Mike Johanns

On Thursday, December 2, 2004, President Bush named Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns as his new agriculture secretary.

Johanns grew up on an Iowa dairy farm and began work as a lawyer in the Nebraska Sand Hills area. He is a proven ally in promoting home-grown fuels, such as ethanol

and bio diesel and larger farm exports.

President Bush described Johann as “an experienced public servant from America’s agricultural heartland” who would work for wider U.S. access to foreign markets, greater land stewardship and lower taxes, including permanent repeal of the estate tax.

United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) welcomes Governor Johann as the next Secretary of Agriculture. ■

National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials Fall 2004 Meeting

The fall meeting of the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials was called to order by President David Thain on Saturday afternoon, October 23, 2004. More than 40 states were represented along with Guam. Under Secretary Bill Hawks, Dr. Ron DeHaven and Dr. John Clifford, representing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), gave brief reports on a variety of important topics. Frank Galey, Dean, College of Agriculture, University of Wyoming, Dr. Jim Logan (recently retired Wyoming State Veterinarian) and Dwayne Oldham, current Wyoming State Veterinarian, reviewed the brucellosis problems in

the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). Richard Mayer discussed the facilities and needs of the USDA-Agricultural Research Service (ARS)-Arthropod-Borne Animal Disease Research Laboratory (ABADRL) located in Laramie, Wyoming. Lee Myers discussed a resolution from the Southern Association of State Department of Agriculture (SASDA) requesting funding for the National Veterinary Medical Service Act. Robert McLean discussed the needs of the USDA-Wildlife Services (WS) Wildlife Research Center located in Fort Collins, Colorado. Bob Ehart and Rick Kirchhoff from the National Association of State Departments of

Agriculture (NASDA) briefly discussed opportunities to cooperate with the National Assembly. Rick Sibbel, President of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) reported on a survey they conducted regarding the national animal identification initiative. Major issues identified were confidentiality, cost, and database management. A closed session was held during which homeland security, animal identification, and the future direction of the National Assembly were discussed. The next scheduled meeting of the Assembly will be during the spring meeting of NIAA in St. Paul, Minnesota in early April 2005. ■

Vesicular Stomatitis Transmission Studies

Vesicular stomatitis (VS) has been recognized as a disease of livestock and other animals for over a century, and while the causative agents have been studied intensively in the laboratory, specific virus transmission routes have remained obscure. Arthropod vectors are thought to be involved in epizootic transmission, however their specific role has remained controversial. It is not known how vectors become infected because a sustainable viremia, which is believed to be necessary for the infection of arthropod vectors, is absent in livestock following natural or experimental VS virus infections.

In recent studies conducted by the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study with support from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program, significant progress was made in understanding the transmission of the New Jersey serotype of VS virus (VSNJV) and the role of black flies in VSNJV epidemiology. Transmission of VSNJV to livestock hosts by black flies was confirmed and it was found that viremia was not necessary in order for the flies to become infected with the virus while feeding on an infected host. The studies showed that black flies became infected with VSNJV by feeding on virus-rich lesions and by co-feeding with infected black flies.

Additionally, it was determined that the site of the insect bite plays a role in the clinical course of VSNJV infection in horses and pigs following transmission by an infected insect: When VSNJV-infected insects fed on horses' muzzles or pigs' snouts, lesions consistently formed at the bite sites. Conversely, when insect feed-

ing was restricted to haired areas, such as the abdomen, the consistent result was seroconversion without lesion formation. These data suggest that the bite of a VSNJV-infected black fly at a site other than the muzzle or snout likely would lead only to seroconversion. Because clinical VS developed only in hosts when insect feeding occurred on the muzzle or snout, an area that is not a preferred feeding site of black flies, it is likely that many of the bites received by livestock from VSNJV-infected black flies during an epizootic result in subclinical infection and seroconversion. These findings may offer an explanation for serological surveys conducted after VSNJV outbreaks in the western United States that revealed that the majority of livestock exposed to VSNJV (as determined by seroconversion) never developed clinical VS.

Identification of the specific routes of VSNJV transmission has important implications for disease control measures. Based on results of the SCWDS studies, limiting VSNJV animal-to-animal contact transmission via livestock quarantines on VS-positive premises might provide only a partial solution. Restrictions on animal movement could be less effective where insects, such as black flies, play a role in biological transmission of VSNJV. Therefore, the presence of blood-feeding insects in VS epizootic regions should be considered in the development of VS control and eradication programs. In addition, these data support the need for protecting animals against insect feeding, as well as the need for basic insect control measures.

Complete information on these studies can be found in: Mead et al.,

2004, Black fly involvement in the epidemic transmission of VSNJV, *Vector-borne and Zoonotic Dis* 4: 351-359; and in Mead et al., 2004, Biological transmission of VSNJV by *Simulium vittatum* to domestic swine. *J Med Entomol* 41: 78-82. (Prepared by Danny Mead of the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study for the SCWDS BRIEFS, Vol. 20, No. 2, July 2004.)

Diagnostic Labs and Veterinary Work Force Development

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Dean Osburn emphasized that AAVMC deans and department heads should become members of USAHA so we can build the coalitions necessary to make our congressional initiative successful.

Other outcomes from the Committee included the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) contacting Dean Osburn to draft a proposal for supporting DVM/PhD students for three years with a DHS scholarship, which will be followed with graduate student support through a DHS Center's grant or an Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)/Agricultural Research Service (ARS) program at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in New York. This is to be part of DHS's scholars and fellows program, but more specifically directed to veterinary medicine.

In addition, Dr. Leslie Dierauf, Center Director for the U.S. Geological Survey, National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin, and a member of the USAHA Committee is joining in the support of the proposal. ■

District-at-Large Meeting

Dr. Wilbur B. Amand – Chair
Mr. Glenn Slack – Vice Chair

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) District-at-Large (DAL) met on Sunday, October 24, 2004, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Mr. James Leafstedt, USAHA Third Vice-President, addressed the DAL, thanked them for their support on his bid for Third Vice-President, and pledged to continue to represent the agriculture industry during his time on the USAHA Executive Committee.

DAL chair Dr. Wilbur B. Amand focused the meeting on several topics: the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), an update on the avian influenza (AI) outbreak in Asia and its threat to the U.S. poultry industry as well as its potential as a zoonotic disease, and an update on the Japanese embargo on U.S. beef.

Dr. Rick Sibbel, Chair of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), discussed the results of a survey conducted among the NIAA membership earlier in 2004. It was pointed out by Dr. Sibbel that this was an opinion-based survey and does not represent a scientific measure. Just under fifty percent of those responding to the survey felt that the amount of information and level of education provided to stakeholders was insufficient to allow stakeholders to form an informed opinion on the issue(s). Among the many obstacles noted in survey results were issues of cost to producers, buy-in by the animal industry, funding for the NAIS, and issues surrounding confidentiality of data collected.

Dr. Robert H. Fourdraine, Chief Operating Officer of the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium and Vice Chair of the Steering Com-

mittee of the National Animal Identification Task Force, provided an overview of the structure of the NAIS.

Dr. David E. Swayne, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory in Athens, Georgia, provided an update on the AI outbreak in Asia. He noted that high-path AI (H5N1) has been present in Asia since 1996. To date nine countries had reported H5N1 outbreaks in 2004. This particular strain prefers gallinaceous species to waterfowl. Dr. Swayne noted that there is a real need for more diagnostic facilities as well as Bio-safety Level-3 research facilities to investigate AI in a continuing effort to safeguard the U.S. poultry industry.

Finally, Dr. Peter J. Fernandez, USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Associate Administrator, addressed the issue of the Japanese embargo on U.S. beef following the identification of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in a cow in the state of Washington. Dr. Fernandez noted that the issues still to be negotiated are the diagnostic tests to be used to identify BSE with certainty, issues surrounding the “feed ban,” and details surrounding surveillance for BSE. Negotiations are continuing in hopes of reaching a mutual agreement between Japan and the U.S. and reopening the U.S. beef export market to Japan.

Dr. Wilbur Amand and Mr. Glenn Slack were re-elected to the position of Chair and Vice Chair for 2004-2005. ■

Record Attendance

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lutions were presented to the general membership for approval during the General Membership Meeting Wednesday afternoon, October 27. One resolution was withdrawn by the Committee. The remaining 42 resolutions were approved by the membership. The approved resolutions have been forwarded to the appropriate agencies. They can also be viewed on the Association’s website at www.usaha.org.

Committee reports and news releases pertaining to the annual meeting can also be accessed on the website. Annual meeting proceedings are being prepared and when published will be forwarded to the membership during early 2005.

During the General Membership Meeting, Past President Bob Frost gave the Committee on Nominations and Resolutions report. The Committee report was approved by the membership. President Don Lein passed the gavel to newly elected President Rick Willer. President Willer reviewed his plans for the association during the upcoming year.

Past President Frost presented retiring President Lein with a plaque commemorating his year as President and the gold Past President’s pin.

The other 2004-2005 USAHA officers are: President-Elect Bret Marsh, First Vice President Lee Myers, Second Vice President James Leafstedt, Third Vice President Donald Hoenig, Treasurer Jones Bryan and Secretary J Lee Alley.

The 2004-2005 Regional Delegates are: Northeastern—Bob Eckroade and Ernest Zirkle; Southern—Wayne Godwin and Gregorio Rosales; North Central—Velmar Green and James Lewis; Western—Cal Lum and Bill Sauble.

The 109th Annual Meeting will be November 3-9, 2005, at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania. We look forward to working with you there. ■

President Willer

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tary to discuss important animal health issues. Secretary Veneman is the first Agriculture Secretary to make herself personally available to USAHA. We sincerely appreciate her past leadership and wish her well in her future endeavors.

We were also pleased to have Mr. Bill Hawks, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, share remarks at our President's dinner and attend the Committee on Livestock Identification. As you all know, Under Secretary Hawks has spent many hours

this past year attending "listening sessions" seeking input on implementation of a National Animal Identification System—a system that is a critical component of our animal health safeguarding system.

Also joining us at our President's dinner was Dr. Dixie Snyder, Acting Deputy Director for Public Health Science at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. He discussed the importance of developing a partnership between the veterinary and human health communities at our Sunday evening dinner. A summary of his talk is included in this newsletter. Mr. Paul Hoffman, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks of the Department of Interior, also attended the Sunday evening event. He is committed to working closely with USAHA on the complex wildlife health issues facing us today.

The AAVLD/USAHA plenary scientific session was well attended. AAVLD President Gary Osweiler and I were able to secure six high caliber speakers to address the importance of surveillance for animal diseases. We thank all of our speakers for their insight: Alex Thiermann for sharing his thoughts from a global perspective, Brian Evans for the North

American view point, Lonnie King for emphasizing the public health component, Wayne Martin for his epi-



United States Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman, USAHA and AAVLD Executive Committees, USAHA District Presidents, and National Assembly Officers

demiological perspective, Juergen Richt's discussion of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) as an example of a "slow moving, non-contagious" disease, and David Suarez rounding out the morning with a presentation on avian influenza as a "highly contagious, rapidly spreading" disease. It was clear at the conclusion of the session that human health, animal health and the health of our wildlife are inextricably linked. I hope you had a chance to attend.

Speaking of wildlife—at the conclusion of our Annual Meeting, I formed a Special Committee to address brucellosis issues in the Greater Yellowstone area (GYA). Elk and bison in the GYA are the last remaining "reservoir" for brucellosis in this country. Issues are complex—with no easy solutions. The first focus of the Special Committee is to plan for and hold a working symposium in 2005 to address the research needs for new and improved vaccines, delivery systems and diagnostic tools for brucellosis in these species. Results of the working symposium will be shared at our 109th Annual Meeting in Hershey. President-Elect Bret Marsh is chairing the Committee that includes representatives of APHIS-VS, ARS, National Park Service, National Wildlife Health Center, academia, and

state wildlife agencies from the GYA. Many have poured their heart and soul into this problem and a lot of good work has been done—yet there remains much more to do. We are hopeful that this Special Committee can identify the gaps in research and what the price tag might be so that stakeholders can help secure the necessary funding to improve our tools to eliminate this disease. There will likely be additional charges to the Committee.

A tremendous amount of work was accomplished during the committee meetings.

This is easily seen by reviewing the committee reports that are posted on the USAHA website, a website that continues to be enhanced. As I help in preparing the committee reports for printing in the proceedings, I am in awe at the tremendous amount of work accomplished and the caliber of the presentations. Committees submitted 43 resolutions for consideration by the general membership. As I have done during the past year, I will continue to seek the input from the chairs on issues that arise between our annual meetings.

In closing, I want to wish each of you a happy Holiday Season and a happy, healthy and safe 2005. ■

New members of the 2005 Board of Directors

USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services
USDI-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
HHS-CDC-National Center for Infectious Diseases
National Dairy Herd Improvement Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Turkey Federation

AAVLD President's Message

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ers brought the opportunity for an expanded and cooperative role between AAVLD and USAHA in today's global disease challenges. AAVLD has upgraded and expanded the accreditation process consistent with The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) guidelines to enhance quality of service and to increase confidence and trust in our services at a national and international level. Beyond that, the mutual interest and support of USAHA in supporting the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) and the recent decision by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to include many more laboratories in the NAHLN is very much appreciated. That activity will hopefully result in a nationwide network of state laboratories and federal partners supporting excellence in animal disease diagnosis and surveillance. With USAHA, our combined strengths present a more comprehensive animal health package to our federal

partners, commodity groups and other animal health groups—public and private. At our 2004 meeting, a resolution jointly drafted by USAHA, AAVLD and Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) asked increased support to complete and maintain the NAHLN. Other agencies such as Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) and Laboratory Response Network (LRN) have recognized the role of AAVLD laboratories and are opportunities with those potential partners. Finally, our continued availability to and interaction with governmental agencies will be an important part of our future. AAVLD appreciates the opportunity to work with USAHA to increase our dialog at the federal level through our respective Committees on Government Relations and other groups with interest in animal health and food safety.

State laboratories have made effective partnerships with USDA in response to challenges such as exotic Newcastle disease (END), avian influenza (AI), vesicular stomatitis

(VS) and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Updated recommendations from the AAVLD Strategic Planning Committee (David Zeman, Chair) and the Emergency Preparedness Workgroup (John Andrews, Chair) outline specific plans for improving our effectiveness and readiness. These reports will be available later this year on the AAVLD website. I encourage you to read them and consider how they impact our readiness to respond to animal health needs. The AAVLD Executive Board in 2005 will continue to build on these initiatives; we look forward to working with USAHA to stay engaged with government and stakeholders to improve animal health diagnosis and surveillance.

Our future holds both challenge and promise. We will succeed by using our greatest resource – a committed and engaged membership working together to make it happen. On behalf of AAVLD I extend our thanks for another year of progress and look forward to working with you in the coming year. ■

National Animal Identification System (NAIS) Progress Toward Implementation Update

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tee met in Kansas City on November 17-18, 2004. Subcommittee members reviewed a USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) draft Strategic Plan for implementation of the NAIS and supported development of detailed timelines for implementation of NAIS. The Subcommittee also urged VS to conduct an in-depth analysis of long-term budget needs for implementation of NAIS and to include these budget figures in the strategic plan.

As of this writing, 42 NAIS cooperative agreement project requests have been reviewed for funding by USDA. Most, but not all of these projects have received final approval. States and tribes have begun implementing the projects. At this time it is too early to provide a progress re-

port on these projects. All of these projects have been or will be funded with approximately \$13 million in Commodity Credit Corporation funds.

USDA is planning to provide additional NAIS cooperative agreement funds to states and tribes with FY 2005 funds. Approximately \$16 million could be available for cooperative agreements. We anticipate that all states will receive some funding. More specific information will be available in the coming months. These funds will be utilized to continue the initial implementation of the NAIS, with emphasis on premises identification. Some funds may also be utilized for infrastructure development.

USDA has begun providing states in which the SPRS is operational with access to the Animal Identification

Repository. This system is not yet fully functional, but is adequate to receive animal records.

You will recall from the Committee on Livestock Identification meeting that USDA has developed a proposed amendment to the Animal Health Protection Act to provide confidentiality protection for data related to the national animal identification system. This proposed legislation has been provided to the Agriculture Committees in both houses of Congress. If we are to achieve congressional approval of this important legislation we must all urge our congressional delegations to support passage of the legislation.

We anticipate significant increases in NAIS activity into the new year as states and tribes begin implementing projects across the country. ■

European Union Regionalization Request Site Visits

(Continued from page 5)

and the apparent knowledge of, and contact with, veterinarians and producers by regulatory officials still provides a level of confidence with respect to disease concerns. While the biosecurity at these facilities was minimal, the obligation, and willingness, of these producers to report problems was reassuring. There was widespread knowledge of the CSF contingency plan by veterinarians and producers. Poland bans waste feeding to swine.

The large swine production facilities visited were former collective or cooperative farms. The biosecurity at these facilities was good—single or double fencing, restricted access, disinfection practices for vehicles and personnel/visitors, etc. Surprisingly, there is very little new animal introduction to these facilities—they raise all replacement gilts, and only introduce new genetics through boars added to their avian influenza program. The protocol for new animal introductions was sound.

Wild boar surveillance is conducted, primarily during the hunting season. Officials reported two positive serology results in 1997. While they have increased surveillance, no additional positives have been identified.

The border inspection points that we visited were brand new. They were very nice, well-equipped facilities, but don't appear to get much use as there is very little trade in live animals. There does appear to be a warranted concern regarding passenger traffic and the risk of disease introduction via animal products or fomite transmission with passengers.

Hungary:

Similarly, Hungary has safeguards implemented for preventing and controlling a CSF outbreak that are sound, valid, and mitigate the risk. Veterinary infrastructure in Hungary is similar to Poland. In addition to the

Central Office, there are 20 county offices. Within each county section are 4-10 district offices. Swine census for Hungary was reported as 5 million, an approximately fifty percent decrease in last ten years. Garbage feeding was banned in September, 2004; previous requirements allowed feeding with adequate heat treatment. Hungary has not reported a case of CSF since 1993. CSF surveillance in Hungary consisted of testing breeding animals in 2002. In 2003, surveillance was expanded to include market swine testing (breeders tested)

The large swine production facilities were very similar to Poland. Of note were programs implemented in Hungary for pseudorabies (PRV) and Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS); the large facility we visited was PRRS-and-PRV free. Production was almost totally enclosed in 1970's vintage buildings that had been remodeled in 1983. Biosecurity was good, new animal introductions were limited and accompanied by isolation and testing protocols, and access was restricted.

The small scale production units were also very similar to Poland.

Wild boar CSF surveillance is obligatory. Surveillance is concentrated in swine dense areas and along the border. They are using an ELISA test on meat juice.

Again, the veterinary infrastructure was impressive. Veterinarians were required to participate in week-long training sessions at the county level and simulation exercises are conducted at both the national and county level. There was good knowledge of contingency plans.

APHIS identified certain information gaps and factors in each region that might contribute to the risk of CSF being exported to the United States. APHIS is asking for additional

information to address these issues so that it can consider appropriate risk mitigation measures.

To be a participant on this site review as a state veterinarian representative was truly a rewarding and educational experience. By participating on these reviews, state veterinarians have the opportunity to provide input and share expertise from a state perspective in this regionalization review process. I would highly recommend this experience to any state veterinarian.

[Editor's note: Dr. Rick Willer coordinates the state representatives on these site reviews and sends out the call for volunteers as site visit trips are planned.]

Keynote Speaker

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the State Departments of Health for their LRN system, every state would be required to fund and support networking and supporting the development of state animal health laboratories and the NAHLN. Currently, there are some states that have already accomplished this agreement with several others working on future agreements. USAHA and AAVLD members at the meeting were encouraged by Dr. Snider's presentation. CDC became a Federal Agency member of USAHA during the Greensboro meeting. We look forward to working with them in the future. ■

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