



USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 26, No. 2, June, 1999

USAHA VISITS NATION'S CAPITAL



Left to right: President-Elect Ernie Zirkle, 1st Vice President Bob Hillman and 3rd Vice President Mack Lea discuss animal health with U. S. House of Representative Committee on Agriculture staff members John Goldberg and Andy Johnson during February visit to the nation's capital

Government Relations Committee and Chairs Meet With Agencies, Allied Organizations, Legislative Staff

by Bob Hillman, First Vice President

The USAHA Government Relations Committee met in Washington D.C. during the week of February 15 – 19, 1999. Attendees included the Board of Directors, District At Large representative, AVMA representative,



Bob Hillman

District Presidents, and Committee Chairpersons or Vice Chairpersons. Attendance this year was somewhat lower than last year because several members had

timing conflicts. Those in attendance reported that the meeting was very productive.

It is not possible to cover, in a short article, all the issues and items that were discussed during the week. This is an attempt to hit the high points. During the week the Committee met with representatives from the Animal Agriculture Coalition, American Veterinary Medical Association, National Association of State De-

San Diego Annual Meeting Begins and Ends One Day Earlier in the Week

Thursday, October 7 through Thursday, October 14, 1999

The combined 1999 annual meeting of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) and the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) in San Diego will begin on Thursday, October 7, 1999 and will adjourn on Thursday, October 14.

The format of the upcoming

meeting will be similar to last year, however, the combined annual meeting in San Diego will start and adjourn on Thursday, rather than Friday, as in years past. As a result, most scheduled activities will start one day earlier in the week compared to previous years. For example, most USAHA committees that met on Monday in last year will meet on Sunday in San Diego.

The reason for starting one day earlier in the week is to reduce the

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President's Corner

A SYNOPSIS of the purpose of the USAHA, as written in our Constitution and Bylaws, is as follows:



Dick McCapes

- Its mission is to serve as forum for communication and coordination among state and federal governments, universities, industry and other groups on issues of animal and public health.
- It serves as a clearing house for new information and methods.
- It acts to develop solutions to animal health related prob-

lems based on science and the ability to develop a consensus.

This triad of purpose pretty well describes the bedrock foundation upon which our 102 years of unparalleled achievement in animal health is based. It served our country well in 1897 when USAHA's founders sought a science-based, consensus solution to Texas fever. It continues to serve us well in 1999.

David Espeseth, Chair of the Biologics and Biotechnology Committee has written a wonderful, must-read article in this newsletter (page 5) which documents the fundamental role USAHA and the Committee have played since 1909 in assuring the availability of safe and effective veterinary biologics. Through his words, one

can clearly identify the three parts of USAHA's purpose at work over a span of 90 years.

Upon reading David's article, one is also struck that progress generally occurs incrementally. And the key to long-term, steady progress is an enduring national forum acceptable to all parties.

USAHA has been our country's enduring national forum for animal health for the past century. Our challenge today is to assure, to the extent possible, continuation of this preeminent role of service to the nation.

The 1997 Long Range Plan submitted by Larry Williams and approved by the Executive Committee is our guide to the imme-

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AAVLD and USAHA Officers Meet in Richmond

Opportunity to Improve Annual Meeting Explored

Officers of the AAVLD and USAHA with primary responsibility for planning the combined annual meetings of the two organizations met in Richmond, Virginia, on Saturday and Sunday, April 18 and 19, 1999.

The meeting was held in the offices of Virginia State Veterinarian Bill Sims and was hosted by Bruce Akey, Director of Virginia's veterinary diagnostic laboratory system.

Representing AAVLD were Doris Miller, President; Bruce Akey, President-elect; Dave Zeman, Vice President and; Art Bickford, Secretary/Treasurer.



From left: AAVLD officers - Bruce Akey, President-elect; Dave Zeman, Vice President; Doris Miller, President; Art Bickford, Secretary/Treasurer. USAHA officers - Bob Hillman, First Vice President; Ernie Zirkle, President-Elect, and not shown, Dick McCapes, President.

USAHA was represented by: Dick McCapes, President; Ernie Zirkle, President-elect and; Bob Hillman, First Vice President. John Shook, USAHA Secretary/Treasurer was unable to attend.

The purpose of the Virginia meeting was to explore further opportunities to improve the com-

bined AAVLD/USAHA annual meeting for their respective members.

The USAHA had just completed Phase I of a two-phase study and reorganization of its annual meeting schedule and format. AAVLD was represented in this reorganization effort.

One of the recommendations to emerge from the USAHA study was the need to pursue discussions between AAVLD and USAHA on ways to better coordinate their respective annual meetings.

The Virginia meeting initiated these discussions.

The idea was that the two organizations, although distinct in their respective missions and objectives, had significant areas of common interests that might be more effectively addressed in a

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National Assembly Meets Mid Year in Nashville

by Mack Lea, President, National Assembly and Third Vice President, USAHA

For the second consecutive year LCI has hosted a mid year meeting of the National Assembly of State Chief Livestock Health Officials in conjunction with the LCI annual meeting. This year the National Assembly met in Nashville on Sunday, March 28th, one day before the opening of the LCI meeting.



Mack Lea

Attendance at the meeting was good with 27 states being represented by their respective state veterinarians or assistant state veterinarians.

The meeting format changed somewhat, starting at 2:00 p.m.. Sunday afternoon and lasting until 9:00 in the evening. There was

a break for dinner arranged by the National Assembly which gave everyone a chance to continue discussions begun during the afternoon on an informal basis.

A number of guests attended the meeting. The group heard reports from Dr. Dick McCapes, president of USAHA concerning the current status and activities of that organization since its annual meeting last October.

Mr. Rick Kirchhoff, executive director of NASDA, invited the National Assembly to participate more fully with NASDA in animal health issues. The National Assembly is an affiliate organization of NASDA.

Dr. Bruce Akey, president-

elect of AAVLD provided an update on the newly initiated National Animal Health Reporting System. Dr. Akey is encouraged by the initial response and infor-



mation submitted by the participating states. He would like to encourage all states to participate in the NAHRS program.

Dr. Joan Arnoldi, deputy administrator for APHIS, reported

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Veterinary Response to Exotic Animal Disease

Broad Coalition Meets in Ames, Iowa

by Gale Wagner, Texas A & M University and Chair, Committee on Parasitic and Hemoparasitic Diseases and Parsiticides

Free trade in food animals and products makes U.S. agriculture and public health vulnerable to emerging pathogens and exotic diseases, either accidentally (the risk increases as trade expands), or deliberately (bioterrorism).

As the USDA, APHIS seeks to prepare national response plans for such emergencies, part of their planning involves the role of practicing veterinarians and state veterinary diagnostic labs as a first line of defense.

Are our new veterinary graduates ready for such challenges? Obviously, the current system of accreditation of veterinarians has been effective so far, but increased international travel, inter-

national trade of food animals and products, and the threat of bioterrorist activity increase the need for new and continuing education on appropriate recognition and response.

The USDA, APHIS decided to organize a group discussion focused on ways to increase the preparedness of veterinarians and state veterinary diagnostic laboratories to recognize and appropriately respond to outbreaks of exotic animal diseases.

The meeting, "Mobilizing the Veterinary Profession to Recognize and Appropriately Respond to Exotic Animal Disease Threats" was held in Ames, Iowa, February 11-12, 1999. Drs. Larry Williams and myself were invited to represent the USAHA. Other organizations that were represented included the AAVLD, the AVMA, AAEP, AASP, AAWV, the Secretary of Agriculture's Ad-

visory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases, USDA-ARS, the National Pork Producer's Council, the Centers for Disease Control, the U.S. Army, the Department of Defense, the National Assembly of Chief Livestock Health Officials, and several university types!

Obviously, many things were discussed, including expanding FAD training opportunities, raising awareness among practitioners, broadening the subjects covered in the accreditation process, making emerging and exotic diseases a focus of re-accreditation, adding topics to existing curriculum and developing specific modules on emerging diseases, bioterrorism, etc., ways to strengthen relationships between state diagnostic labs and practitioners, and between the labs and veterinary faculty.

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Case Report: Brucellosis in Bison

by Sam Holland
State Veterinarian, South Dakota

Patience, Persistence, Perseverance, these are words familiar to those involved in the National Brucellosis Eradication Program. Urgent, Imperative, Emergency are words added to the brucellosis vocabulary in recent years.

South Dakota's cattle have been "free" of brucellosis for over nine years. Yet the state remains a Class A island in the continually enlarging sea of free states. This dilemma is due to the presence of one large brucellosis infected buffalo herd. On January 27, 1999, the parties involved were asked to "please take one giant step toward finally getting this herd cleaned up and released from a 17 year quarantine."

The Triple U Buffalo Ranch was established in 1960. By the 1970's and 1980's it had become, at that time, the largest buffalo ranch in the world. This 65,000 acre ranch in western South Dakota became well known throughout the world for its location and beauty, being used for commercial hunts, advertising, and a few movies, most notable and recent, the film setting for Kevin Costner's "Dances with Wolves."

The ranch's buffalo population in recent years ranged from 3,500 to in excess of 5,000 animals. Brucellosis was most probably present from the day of the ranch inception, as animals were acquired from other herds known to be infected. As the ranch grew little was done to control brucellosis. During the 1960's limited use of strain 19 occurred and starting in 1982 extensive use of strain 19 as a calfhood vaccine was used by ranch management.

Following 1982 when buffalo became amenable to Federal and State laws on brucellosis, the only real activity concerning this disease was the implementation of a few lawsuits against USDA and the State Animal Industry Board.

In 1990 the ranch proprietor called me at home late one evening and asked if I thought it would be good to start testing the buffalo. This call began a clean-up program that continues today.

Initial testing in the herd disclosed overall infection rate in excess of 20% (50% of breeding bulls and 20% of cows). From 1990 until present, herd clean up made significant progress with major setbacks occurring in 1994 and 1997.

The ranch founder passed away in late 1993 and the estate settlement placed clean-up efforts on 'hold' for over a year. This resulted in an elevated reactor rate when testing and clean up resumed.

Again in 1996, the most severe winter in history began in November and ended in May 1997 and reversed progress. Groups got mixed together, there was inability to test, and climaxing with over 2,000 buffalo drifting in a major blizzard more than 20 miles from the ranch.

This event resulted in an emergency roundup involving numerous state agencies and private assistance. The roundup was very successful, by the way, as over 2,000 buffalo were gathered with choppers and snowmobiles from 400 square miles of prairie and returned to the ranch within ten hours. Luck was on our side, this was all done on a nice day.

The next day winter resumed with 58 degrees below wind chill. Herd testing and clean up resumed in 1997 and accelerated



Dr. Sam Holland, State Veterinarian for South Dakota, was recently presented a Certificate of Appreciation by USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services for his work on brucellosis control in bison.

The presentation was made by Dr. Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator for Veterinary Services, during the February, 1999 meeting of the USAHA Government Relations Committee with APHIS personnel in Riverdale, Maryland.

The inscription on the certificate stated:

"In recognition of the initiative, persistence and diligence you have displayed in working toward the resolution of a long-standing bison brucellosis problem in South Dakota."

"Because of your effort and influence, a significant barrier to the eradication of brucellosis from your state and the nation has been achieved."

Dr. Holland, on the left below, is shown accepting the award from Dr. Torres.



Biologics and Biotechnology Committee News

by David A. Espeseth, Chair, Committee on
Biologics and Biotechnology

The USAHA has played a key role in the establishment and development of regulatory policy and standards for veterinary biological products in the United States.

Federal supervision of biological products was proposed at the thirteenth meeting of the USAHA in 1909. This was followed by a resolution passed at the nineteenth meeting of the USAHA in 1911, which indicated the USDA should supervise production of all veterinary biological products and the distribution of hog cholera virulent blood, serum, and vaccines should be under direct supervision of State authorities.



David Espeseth

These actions, no doubt, were only part of the discussions and agreements between State, Federal, and Industry experts that lead to the development and passage of the Virus Serum Toxin Act of 1913 to ensure all veterinary biological products shipped interstate were pure, safe, potent, and effective.

In 1941 the USAHA Biologics Committee was established. Ten years later it was expanded to become the Biologics and Pharmaceuticals Committee. In 1961 this committee was split into separate Biologics and Pharmaceuticals Committees.

The USAHA Biotechnology Committee was established in 1986 to address issues relating to new diagnostics and biologics that were being developed

New Chair Enthusiastic About Government Relations Efforts

by Robert J. Eckroade, Chair, Committee on
Transmissible Diseases of Poultry & Other
Avian Species

Many if not most USAHA members attend the annual meeting to gain new knowledge, new insight and promote our interests in solving a disease problem, an animal species problem and more recently perhaps an international issue. Members usually struggle to attend multiple committee meetings in order to achieve their goals.



Bob Eckroade

Since the USAHA works primarily through committees, it is very important for committee chairs, particularly new chairs, to understand what their responsibilities are to USAHA, what happens to their recommendations and resolutions, and how the USAHA interacts with various agencies and other groups.

But what happens after the meeting is over is probably a mystery to most of us. The USAHA Board of Directors and the Governmental Relations Committee meet in Washington D. C. in February for five days to continue its interaction with various Federal Government Agencies and other groups such as the AVMA, Animal Agriculture Coalition and NASDA.

Committee Chairs are invited to this meeting. As a newly appointed chair, I decided to attend this year. Based upon my experience, I believe that all chairs should attend at least once and early in their appointment. Yes, I know its another week out of a professional career and all of the other meetings and responsibilities.

The first half-day was devoted to understanding committee operation and responsibilities, com-

mittee activities between annual meetings, balancing the make-up of the committee, and the use of sub-committees. We were each handed a copy of "Robert Rules of Order" which is to be passed along to our replacement chairs. Fortunately, we were also given a review of some of the most often used portions of this document. It should help chairs in dealing with occasional problems of discussion and voting by members-only on some controversial issues. Perhaps one of the most important insights gained at this meeting is that of understanding the use of Resolutions and how the procedure works.

The rest of the week was devoted to meeting with various governmental agencies. High level personnel reported on specific disease problems, agency policy or changes in the agency policy and how certain new and old programs were working. In many cases, in-depth discussion followed these reports and provided the opportunity for presenting other views. So, committee chairs with concerns about government programs or policy would have an opportunity to review them with high level USDA or FDA officials. We also had the opportunity to discuss any resolutions that had been forwarded.

I encourage all committee chairs to attend next year's meeting to take advantage of the opportunity to better understand how USAHA works and how you as a committee chair can be more effective. You will also have made new friends in USAHA, and will have met and know many more players in important federal agencies. See you there.

There is no royal road to anything. One thing at a time, and all things in succession. That which grows slowly endures.

Josiah Gilbert Holland

USAHA in Washington DC

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partments of Agriculture, FDA, FSIS, ARS, VS, CVM and staff members for the House Committee on Agriculture.

On Monday morning the Committee met in executive session to discuss activities of the week and discuss several business items. Mr. Sam Serata, an attorney, led a discussion of Roberts Rules of Order and stressed that Roberts Rules of Order can be utilized by chairpersons to control a meeting. He urged USAHA to formally adopt Roberts Rules as the official format for conducting meetings. Roberts Rules of Order can be utilized to resolve some of the conflicts with international membership.

Dr. Francois Elvinger, Chairman of the Standard Operating Procedures Subcommittee provided a draft of the SOPs for committees. The subcommittee will have a final draft to the Program Committee at the annual meeting.

Dr. Ernie Zirkle is working, through the Program Committee, to develop a mechanism for membership to review Committee Reports at the annual meeting. This action is necessitated by the amendment to the by-laws which eliminated oral committee reports. Dr. Zirkle reported that a review mechanism will be in place by the annual meeting. Most likely, a separate room will be set up wherein interested members could review the committee reports before they are acted upon.

Major topics of discussion for the remainder of the week included the following topics: agency budgets; need for increased activities by USAHA; program disease updates; research updates and reports; updates on disease outbreaks in other countries; the Food Safety initiative; antimicrobial resistance and bioterrorism. Each of these topics is briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

Budget projections for FY
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Government Relations Committee in Washington, D.C.



Attorney Sam Serata



Ernie Zirkle and Francois Elvinger,
Government Relations Committee



Rich Kirchhoff, NASDA



Amy Mann and Kirk Ferrell, AAC



Bernadette Dunham and John Melcher, AVMA ('98)



Tom Billy, Gary Stefan and Dan Vitiello, FSIS

USAHA in Washington, DC
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2000 will be flat or decreasing. However, there is hope for increased funding for animal health programs, animal disease research and food safety. Additional funding for countering bioterrorism will be provided for some of the federal agencies. Agencies expressed appreciation for the help of USAHA in achieving some increased funding for animal health and research in FY99 budget.

AVMA and the Animal Agriculture Coalition both urged USAHA to make its expertise available and become more active in addressing animal agriculture and animal health issues with members of congress and the administration. AVMA representatives stated that USAHA is the best authority on these issues and urged USAHA to join with AVMA and AAC as coalition partners on Capitol Hill.

Veterinary Services staff provided updates on the program diseases, emergency program activities, trade issues with Canada, Mexico and Australia. Veterinary Services is planning to implement an interim rule to implement provisions of the draft TB Emergency Action Plan.

The major emphases of the Brucellosis program staff are to complete eradication in domestic livestock and address brucellosis in wildlife in the Greater Yellowstone Area. VS staff also reported on the Classical Swine Fever risk assessment and a proposed interim rule to provide surveillance for this disease. Additionally, staff reported on the Avian Influenza outbreak in Mexico and efforts of USDA to ensure the ability to export poultry and products into Mexico.

The Import Export Staff discussed Canadian trade issues and recent negotiations with Canada to relax requirements for slaughter swine and equine. The staff also discussed the attempt to import



Committee members on the Metro

Joan Arnoldi, John Clifford,
Marion Sztatolowicz and Tom Walton at APHIS



Alfonso Torres, Chester Gipson, Gary Colgrove and Keith Hand, APHIS



Karen James, APHIS

Linda Logan-Henfrey and Keith Murray, ARS



Paul Raynes, Steve Sundlof and Bert Mitchell, FDA



Some of the participants gathering at the door of the restaurant for the banquet arranged by APHIS

www.usaha.org webpage update

by Larry Mark, USAHA Webmaster, email address: webmaster@usaha.org

The USAHA Web site (www.usaha.org) continues to grow as we add new features and pages. Here are some of the things we've added in the past few months:



Larry Mark

- A search engine. Enter the word you're looking for (i.e., listeriosis) and you'll get a listing of all the pages that contain that phrase. Very useful if you remember a reference to an item but can't recall in what context or on what page.

- A "forum." This came at the suggestion of Neal Black who -- so far -- is the only contributor. It provides a place for USAHA members to "sound off" on subjects germane to the organization; i.e., animal health or welfare or trade topics. (Thus, we wouldn't post your comments on such topics as abortion, civil rights, political candidates, etc.)

- The Grey Book. A review of USAHA's 1998 revision of its "Foreign Animal Disease" book by Dr. Lonnie King, dean of the Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine, along with information on how to purchase copies, highlights this new Web page.

- Constitution/bylaws revision initiative. Proposed by President McCapes, this most recent link from the home page provides an easy way for the Revision Committee to communicate among themselves as well as providing members a way to give the Committee input on this important undertaking.

- Ideas! This link provides an easy way for you to give us your ideas and suggestions as to how we

Int'l Llama Association News

by the International Llama Association

The International Llama Association (ILA) represents llama and other camelid owners located in the United States and several other countries. The ILA is a non-profit corporation and its purpose is to educate members and the public as to the caring for, breeding and raising of llamas and other camelids. The address of the IPA is PO Box 1891, Kalispell, Montana 59903. The telephone number is 406-257-0282, the fax number is 406-257-8780, the email address is ILA@InternationalLlama.org and its website address is www.InternationalLlama.org.



The health of the United States herd is one of the main issues of concern and interest to the ILA. The ILA has supported extensive medical research into the health of

llamas and other camelids and has cooperated with animal health officials in developing regulations dealing with these animals.

The ILA educates its members and the public as to health issues and developments and helps its members understand their responsibilities as part of the United States livestock industry.

The ILA benefits from its membership in the USAHA by keeping current on issues confronting the United States livestock industry and in being able to communicate information relevant to llamas and other camelids to other members of the USAHA. Members of the ILA are active members of several USAHA committees and the ILA is committed to participating actively in the livestock community.

can improve the way we provide animal health information on the Web. (The author would particularly like to see more use of this link!)

- Bulletin Board. This page has been around for awhile, but it's a place where information about our members can be posted. If you have material you'd like to see here, send me an e-mail at webmaster@usaha.org and I'll post it on our Web bulletin board.

- USAHA Directory. This has been around for awhile, but I find it very useful if I want to find out the e-mail address of a particular State Veterinarian or Allied Group.

All of the above features are linked from our home page (www.usaha.org).

And, of course, we still have our primary links listed in a table that's prominently displayed on the home page and at the bottom of many of our other Web pages. This provides access to such topics as our

meeting dates, allied organizations, committees, reports and speeches, information categorized by animal species, animal health historical items, resolutions, and key links to other animal health sites.

The latter is area where I can use input from our membership. If you find some interesting animal health/welfare sites as you surf the net, e-mail them to me and I'll add them to our "key links" page.

Judging by the number of "hits" on our counters, the most popular of our links is Species Info (1,959 since December '97) followed by Key Links (1,781 since the same date). Our home page has registered a grand total of 6,479 visitors since November '97 (as of 3/31/99)!

What's ahead? As we go to press, Dick McCapes and I are exploring options for the best way to make this newsletter available to you via the Web.

USAHA in Washington, DC from page 7

Australian cattle through Mexico. Staff is developing a protocol to address this issue. Committee members expressed a number of concerns about both of these trade issues.

ARS staff reported on several research efforts including: Avian Leucosis Virus – J, an emerging pathogen that appears to be the result of a recombinant event by existing virus; Bovine Tuberculosis research to develop a model for TB in deer, determine the role of saliva in transmission in deer and a pen study to determine potential transmission from deer to cattle; Johne's disease research to complete development of a PCR test and re-evaluate the ability of pasteurization techniques and temperatures to destroy the Johne's organism; Brucellosis initiatives include bio-safety and efficacy of RB51 in elk and bison, DNA fingerprinting techniques, and development of improved adjuvants for brucella vaccines; Vesicular Stomatitis studies on role of vectors in transmission, potential vector reservoirs and development of rapid test panels for various strains of Vesicular Stomatitis virus, including strains exotic to the United States.

ARS staff also discussed joint planning efforts by ARS, VS and CVB for development of combined facilities for NADC, NVSL and CVB at Ames. Current facilities and technologies are out dated and out-moded. If brought to fruition the combined facilities will meet the needs of our industries, be completed sooner and cost less than stand alone facilities for each agency, provide up to date technologies and meet containment, animal care and quality standards.

FDA, CVM and FSIS all discussed the Food Safety Initiative. FDA and FSIS are both actively seeking partnerships with the states to address food safety issues. Both agencies have some funds available to support efforts

on the state level. HACCP implementation is proceeding very well. Only 15 of 2,800 small plants had significant problems in qualifying. FSIS reported that Salmonella testing revealed a 50% drop in ground meat and a lesser but significant decrease in isolation from swine, however, prevalence of E. coli 0157-H7 appears to be higher than previously believed.

The major emphasis at CVM is on antimicrobial resistance. Antimicrobial resistance is a growing concern for human health providers, is an international issue and is impacting approval of new products for use in animals. CVM is working to develop a process for new drug approvals that will address antimicrobial resistance while making products available for use in animals.

CVM staff discussed national efforts to address bioterrorism. The FBI has been identified as the lead agency in responding to bioterrorist attacks. FDA will be one of the lead agencies in addressing bioterrorism issues. A number of pathogens are potential agents, including smallpox, anthrax, plague, tularemia, brucellosis and Q-fever. Significant funding increases have been provided to FDA to address bioterrorism.

On Friday morning, several Committee members met with the Majority and Minority Staff of the Agriculture Committee. These members had the opportunity to discuss a number of pertinent issues including: swine depopulation to reduce PRV, funding for Veterinary Services, ARS and FDA/CVM; state meat inspection equivalency; on farm food safety; international trade issues with Canada, Mexico and Australia; and brucellosis and tuberculosis in wildlife.

*The best preparation for the future
is the present well seen to,
and the last duty done.*

George Macdonald

One day earlier in week from page 1

duration of stay at the annual meeting by one day for many USAHA members traveling by air.

Members can fly in to San Diego on Saturday, October 7, to take advantage of the lower air fares and attend USAHA committee meetings the next day, Sunday, rather than waiting until Monday, as in past years. Thus, the meeting duration is reduced one day for many traveling by air.

Last year, the membership voted to eliminate oral committee reports from the General Session. As a result, the closing General Session on Thursday morning, October 14th, will be shortened and will adjourn by 9:30 AM. During this final session, the membership will consider proposed USAHA resolutions. The Executive Committee will meet immediately following adjournment.

These and other changes represent the final implementation of the Phase I of the new annual meeting schedule and format approved by the Program Committee in 1997.

The tentative program schedule for the 1999 meeting is enclosed with this newsletter. Members are urged to study it carefully to become aware of the changes from last year's schedule.

**USAHA/AAVLD Meeting
October 7- 14, 1999
Town & Country Hotel
San Diego, California**

Newsletter enclosures

- Tentative program
- Hotel reservation form
- Registration card: USAHA & AAVLD
- Tour registration form
- Air travel information
- "Foreign Animal Disease" flyer

Case Report

from page 4

with intensified use of RB51 vaccine including boosting, timely testing, reducing herd size to under 3,000, and keeping groups separate. Keeping groups separate is one of the most onerous tasks a large bison operation. The separation of yearlings, two year olds (open and pregnant), main herd (open and pregnant), bulls, cull bulls, etc. leads to attempting to maintain eight to twelve separate populations on the ranch.

By late summer of 1998 progress had resumed to the extent that approximately 1,200 out of 2,700 buffalo had tested negative. These negative buffalo were in separate groups and had received multiple doses of RB51 and appeared to be holding negative (one of the groups had calves at side and was negative on two tests prior to calving).

At this point, the decision was made to approach the ranch owners and USDA and ask if there was a way either or both would consider a partial depopulation with limited federal indemnity over a narrow time frame prior to calving in 1999. After much negotiating and planning, all agreed to such a plan. On January 27, 1999, USDA officials, ranch management, and the State Veterinarian of South Dakota signed an agreement.

This plan called for depopulating prior to May 15, 1999, of all bison from the ranch except for the 1,200 head that have tested negative and are maintained as a separate herd. Under this agreement certain younger animals would be shipped to a quarantined feedlot in Kansas for finishing prior to slaughter. (Thanks to the cooperation of Dr. George Teagarden-Livestock Commissioner of Kansas). Other animals to be depopulated would go direct to slaughter at one of three facilities.

As of March 20, 1999, all preg-

nant animals scheduled for depopulation (over 900 head) had been slaughtered. Plans were going forward to slaughter and move to the quarantined feedlot the remaining bulls and calves.

The remaining 1,200 buffalo on the ranch have all been tested negative. All breeding animals have had two or more negative tests and the "hunt" bulls one negative test. A rigid herd plan remains as part of the agreement to continue 60 day interval testing on the remaining herd for 1 1/2 years and all females that have calved.

This effort has taken patience and, at times, persistence under adverse circumstances by all parties involved. I can recall one of the early herd tests - prior to use of good corrals, hydraulic chutes, electric prods, etc. - towards the end of an 18 hour day of testing less than 150 animals - hearing from a chute-side ranch assistant, "Doc, you must be the most patient man in the world."

Well, it may be that I simply had dull teeth and my lips fail to bleed, but with the great determination of ranch management, USDA, and my crew of testing personnel, it certainly appears there has been a giant step taken towards moving forward with the clean up and release of an almost 40-year problem in the brucellosis program!

AAVLD & USAHA Meet

from page 2

jointly during the combined annual meeting.

The Virginia discussions were wide ranging, including a briefing on the purpose and makeup of the two organizations.

The participants agreed there was significant overlap of common interests and that these interests could be better addressed by joint program planning between the two organizations.

The two areas where joint planning seemed likely to be most productive were joint AAVLD/

USAHA scientific sessions and joint AAVLD/USAHA committee meetings.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed to explore a new paradigm for the annual meeting schedule and format which has as its main objective the scheduling of joint AAVLD/USAHA scientific symposia and joint AAVLD/USAHA committee meetings at a time convenient for both AAVLD and USAHA registrants.

Accommodation of allied organizations who meet in conjunction with the combined annual meeting would also be part of the planning. A framework of a schedule to accommodate the new meeting paradigm was developed.

Both organizations agreed to put together a draft of their respective annual meeting schedules based on the above paradigm. These will then be combined into the new framework and discussions will continue later this summer.

Should the new framework turn out to have clear advantages for the combined annual meeting participants, it would be presented to the respective organizations for discussion, perhaps as early as this fall.

In the meantime, the current annual meeting schedule and format, as described in the article on page 1, will be utilized in 1999.

"Perfect freedom is as necessary to the health and vigor of commerce, as it is to the health and vigor of citizenship"
Patrick Henry

USAHA

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National Assembly

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on a wide variety issues, concerns, and activities presently going on at the national level. In addition to the thorough report on APHIS activities, Dr. Arnoldi answered questions and participated in the remainder of the meeting to provide some insight on a number of issues of concern.

The National Assembly wishes to extend a most sincere thank you to all the guests that joined the meeting and for the important information and ideas presented.

A wide variety of topics were discussed at the meeting. These topics included NVSL testing fees; availability of RB51 vaccine; environmental temperature requirements for pets handled by airlines; updates on the Greater Yellowstone Area brucellosis controversy, the emergency preparedness program and the Pseudorabies eradication program.

Following dinner the National Assembly met in executive session.

The next meeting of the National Assembly will be in October, 1999 during the annual meeting of the USAHA in San Diego, California.

Veterinary Response To Exotic Disease Threats

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The gathering of information and ideas will continue. Part of our role as a national organization is to provide a forum for discussion on how state animal health organizations and veterinary colleges are developing emergency response plans at the state or regional level, and how these can be effectively integrated into the national plan. Watch for one of these workshops at San Diego!!

The wiseth mind hath something yet to learn.

George Santayana

Biologics & Biotechnology News

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through recombinant DNA techniques. Since this committee shared several issues with the Biologics Committee, these committees were combined in 1995 to form the current Biologics and Biotechnology Committee.

Although it has gone through some metamorphosis, the USAHA Biologics and Biotechnology Committee has provided a strong voice in shaping biologics regulatory policy and standards for over 58 years.

The Biologics and Biotechnology Committee currently has 73 members representing a diverse cross section of State and Federal Animal Health agencies, livestock production and pet industries, biologics manufacturing, veterinary practice, and academia. The committee provides a unique opportunity for discussion of veterinary biologics and biotechnology issues in a setting where regulatory authorities, biologics manufacturers, biologics users, and academia can participate.

Information exchange has been a large part of the committees activities over the years as new products and technologies are developed that have required the establishment of new animal health policy and biologics standards.

In the early 1980's, concerns for the growing, largely unregulated, intrastate production of veterinary biologics, were discussed in the committee. These discussions eventually lead to the passage of an amendment to the Virus Serum Toxin Act in 1985, that placed all biological products shipped in or from the United States under the oversight of USDA.

The development of recombinant DNA derived products such as the gene deleted pseudorabies vaccine and companion diagnostics that permitted the differentiation of vaccinated animals and animals exposed to virulent field virus, provided a new tool for use

in the control and eradication of pseudorabies in swine. New policies for how these products should be used and regulated were addressed in the biologics and biotechnology committees as they were being developed which facilitated their efficient licensing and rapid application in the pseudorabies program.

The committee also provided a forum for animal health officials to raise early concerns for the sensitivity and specificity of the companion pseudorabies diagnostic tests and for the industry to make appropriate adjustments. Similar actions are ongoing for Mycobacterium paratuberculosis diagnostic test kits. Such communications and discussions between the biologics manufacturers, regulatory authorities, research community, and biologics users are essential for the coordination and development of animal health programs that involve the use of biological products.

At the last USAHA meeting in Minneapolis, the committee was given updates on veterinary biologics regulatory developments by the three Directors, Center for Veterinary Biologics. These updates were followed by several presentations on topics such as bovine virus diarrhea vaccination and diagnosis, international harmonization of technical requirements for veterinary biologics, licensing DNA mediated vaccines, paratuberculosis diagnostic test kits, animal care program updates, autogenous biologics, hog cholera marker vaccine and companion diagnostic test, safety testing of veterinary biologics, and the FDA-Export Reform and Enhancement Act.

USAHA members that wish to keep abreast of biologics industry developments and issues, are invited to attend our open committee meetings. The Biologics and Biotechnology Committee provides an open forum for discussion, debate, and coordination of veterinary biologics issues within the animal health community, and we welcome your input.

President's Corner

from page 2

diate future and was discussed in this column in the last newsletter.

Importantly, in my view, this plan maintains the association's purpose while recommending several actions aimed at enhancing its effectiveness.

One of the many followups to implementing the long-range plan was the March meeting between AAVLD and USAHA officers in Richmond, Virginia (described in an article on page 2).

This was an extremely productive meeting from my viewpoint. Not only were solid ideas for improvements in the combined annual meeting developed (the main purpose of the meeting), but I came away with a greater understanding of the goals of AAVLD and its leadership.

Although it is clear that AAVLD and USAHA are distinct organizations with differing purposes, there are substantial areas of common interest. And there is little question in my mind that cooperation in these common areas benefits the membership and the goals of both organizations.

For the past several years, the AAVLD and USAHA Board of Directors have met together during the combined annual meeting. Next year, there will be a second, mid-year, joint board meeting in Washington, DC. This meeting will be in conjunction with the USAHA Government Relations Committee annual visit to the capital. A great idea!

USAHA'S FUTURE will continue to include focus on the regulatory environment governing interstate and international movement of animals and animal associated products. This is our brier patch, so to speak.

Over the past century, we have learned this patch well. And it has been our three-part purpose, carefully crafted over time, which has served as our philosophic and

governing road map. Simply put, it works.

In my opinion, USAHA works because its organizational structure is in reasonable harmony with human action. Get all the parties from the private and public sectors with interest in a particular issue together in a committee room, each with equal voice by way of membership, duke it out, and come to a science-based consensus by vote. Submit reports to the Executive Committee for acceptance and send resolutions to the membership for vote.

Newcomers to this animal health regulatory arena, such as the Sanitary Committees of the NAFTA and WTO trade agreements and the newly empowered OIE, operate differently. These bodies represent, in my mind, an emerging, elitist, global bureaucracy, governed by organizational structures with little correlation to human action and little oversight.

Yet, the fact is, we have ceded tremendous responsibility to these emerging bureaucracies which, over time, will increasingly effect this nation's interstate and international movement of animals and animal associated products. Our brier patch. In my opinion, these bureaucracies are not now up to the job.

USAHA's future, in my mind, includes active engagement and oversight of these emerging, international bureaucracies in the same manner we have engaged and provided oversight to state and federal agencies in this nation the past century ... through representative membership, committee discussion, debate and resolutions.

We have learned, over the past century, how to craft an effective, science-based, animal health regulatory environment in this country to facilitate trade. Over time, I believe USAHA can contribute in a positive way to achieving a similar environment within these international trade agreements. This will take deliberate action.

President-Elect Ernie Zirkle

has just returned from attending the OIE meeting in France, representing USAHA as part of the U. S. delegation. His first hand experience and that of others who have represented USAHA in the past coupled with the knowledge of members who are directly involved with OIE will be of great assistance to USAHA as we consider this arena of engagement.

Having myself been associated with a primary turkey breeding company that engaged in international export and import of breeding stock starting in the 1960s, it seems to me the animal health trade issues remain quite similar despite the new international trade environment. The difference is a new set of rules and who makes the decision.

We can be sure the bugs will not read the new rules and that gaming of these rules by all human parties will quickly become a major endeavor.

This is clearly not a time for USAHA to become insular.

THE 6TH EDITION of the book, "Foreign Animal Diseases," is hot off the press and is available for purchase through the USAHA office.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a one page brochure containing Lonnie King's outstanding and positive review of the new edition along with information on where and how to purchase it.

I encourage each of you to photocopy this one page brochure and distribute it throughout your organization. And share it with others you know who might be interested in its contents.

The Committee on Foreign Animal Diseases is responsible for producing this remarkable publication, on a voluntary basis. They have set a high standard for all of us to emulate.

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