



USAHA

Protecting Animal and Public Health Since 1897

United States Animal Health Association Newsletter - Vol. 27, No. 3, October, 2000



Incoming President Hillman Sets Focus For Next Year

by Bob Hillman, Incoming President

During the four years that I have been an officer in our association, we have seen a number of changes to improve the annual meeting and our ability to address the needs of animal agriculture in the United States during the 21st century.



Bob Hillman

The Long Range Plan has been approved and is being implemented. Full

A major item ... of business ... will be to ... employ a half-time Executive Director ...

implementation will be dependant upon approval of the Constitution and Bylaw amendment and approval of a dues increase at the Birmingham meeting. President Zirkle has outlined the procedure to affect these changes in his President's Corner article.

A major item of business, during my term as President of our association, will be to recruit, select and employ a half-time Executive Director. Upon approval of the Constitution and Bylaw amendment and a dues structure

sufficient to provide funding for a half-time Executive Director, I will appoint a search/selection committee to identify and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. We hope to be able to fill the position by early in 2001.

Two years ago, Dr. McCapes appointed a Sub-committee of the Program Committee and charged it with developing a Standard Operating Procedures Manual for USAHA Committees. This manual is currently in what we hope is the final draft. It will be dis-

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Welcome to Birmingham

104th Annual Meeting October 19-26, 2000

by J. Lee Alley, Secretary

The USAHA/AAVLD Annual Meeting will be held October 19-26, 2000, at the Birmingham Sheraton Hotel in Birmingham,



J. Lee Alley

Alabama, where attractions are abundant. Take a poignant look at the struggle for human rights at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the 16th Street Baptist

Church. Smell the roses at the Botanical Gardens and shop at the Riverchase Galleria's 200 plus stores.

We are expecting 900 to 1,000 participants to review, discuss and develop solutions to issues of animal health and disease control, food safety, public health and animal welfare.

AAVLD sessions begin on Thursday, October 19th, with special workshops on Reporting Antimicrobial Susceptibility Results and on Serological Test Validation and Standardization. Committee and Subcommittee meeting kick-off on Friday, October 20th.

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President's Corner

BY THE TIME you read this, all of your plans for the Birmingham meeting should have been made. We are looking forward to another agenda filled meeting with lots of major issues being addressed. Your Board of Directors consider the most important Association item of business for the annual meeting is to come away with a dues increase that will finance the 1999 Board recommendations pertaining to the Long-Range Plan and specifically the financial means to hire a half-time, retired Executive/Director. The procedure to accomplish this is a two-step pro-



Ernie Zirkle

cess.

- **First**, the membership must approve the proposed constitutional amendment for the Executive Committee to set dues. This proposed amendment was discussed and then approved by the Executive Committee last year and must now be approved by the general membership this year.

- **Second**, the Executive Committee must vote on a specific dollar amount increase in dues.

It is estimated that the hiring of a part time Executive Director will cost the association approximately \$55,000 per year. As I have mentioned in my visits to the regional meetings and in this column, it is critical that we have a presence in Washington, not to lobby, but to be available to have input in issues that are critical to

our livestock industries and to help influence how federal government agencies are affecting the way we do things today. The most recent example is the proposed Animal Health Protection Act and the attempt to impose regulations State Veterinarians could not live with. We will have lots more information on this for consideration in Birmingham

ANOTHER MAJOR ITEM to come before the membership is the revised Constitution and Bylaws. The committee co-chaired by Larry Williams and J. Lee Alley has revised it into a document that makes sweeping changes. These changes provide for the participation of our international stakeholders and yet allow decisions in committees to be voted upon by

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AAVLD NEWS

by Bruce L. Akey
President, AAVLD

The American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) has reached a turning point in its history. With more than 1,100 members now, the demand for member services, along with the steadily increasing involvement of the organization with national and international issues, has brought to bear pressures to reshape the way the organization functions. The Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation (JVDI) has grown in stature from four to six issues a year also. These growing pains have brought on the need for additional, formalized supporting infrastructure for the AAVLD. A



Bruce Akey

full-time administrative assistant has been added for the JVDI Editor and another such position is being developed for the Secretary-Treasurer.

As part of a joint effort with the USAHA, a set of Standard Operating Procedures for Committees has been developed and reduced to writing this year. As with the USAHA, the AAVLD's committees are the backbone of the organization and this new SOP will help ensure uniform operation of those committees, the carryover from Chair to Chair of the vital work of the committees and encourage productive activities that are of specific benefit to the membership.

Another major effort this year was to conduct an in-depth strategic planning effort to chart both the short-term and long-term directions of the AAVLD. The intention was to not only identify critical issues that needed to be

addressed, but to formulate specific strategies and action plans to address those issues. This effort appears to have been successful and will be inculcated into an annual review and update process to make sure the organization continues to move forward. Longer term strategies that were developed included:

- Gain recognition of AAVLD accreditation as a viable, internationally acceptable, quality-based process for accreditation in order to insure acceptance of work performed in AAVLD accredited laboratories.

- Implement programs to increase the pool of individuals interested in pursuing careers in veterinary diagnostic laboratories in order to insure an adequate supply of future well-trained diagnosticians.

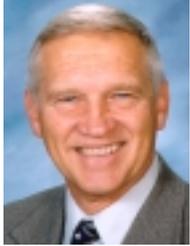
- Centralize administrative functions in order to provide continuity and improve efficiency of pro-

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Veterinary Medicine's Responsibility and Role in Environmental Health

Bennie I. Osburn, Dean
School of Veterinary Medicine
University of California, Davis

Environmental issues are a major concern of our society today and will continue to challenge us in the future. The consequences of global warming, emerging diseases, air pollution, water quality, wildlife conservation, mitigation decisions associated with development, and conservation of species, among others, are all associated with the changing environment.



Bennie Osburn

Society's concern for human health and for the health and welfare of all animals in natural habitats places veterinary medicine in a favorable position for future opportunities. Veterinary medicine provides the educational background to address the challenging environmental issues of society in the most comprehensive manner of any profession. The strong grounding in animal health, public health, individual animal medicine, population health, epidemiology, toxicology, microbiology, clinical medicine and client relations are all unique to the professional education of veterinarians.

Veterinarians are also adept at addressing complex disease and management issues that involve ecosystems in agricultural settings and wildlife in their natural habitat. Examples of ways that the veterinary profession can play important roles addressing environmental issues are now being addressed at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California, Davis.

The faculty have developed a plan to address environmental

health issues through the research, teaching and service mission over the next ten years. The areas of major interest include air, water, land and the animals and humans that inhabit them. Focused Centers for Comparative Respiratory Biology and Medicine, Aquatic Toxicology, Vectorborne Disease Research, Wildlife Health, and Fish Health have faculty participating in the initiative.

In addition, a new program, the Masters in Public and Environmental Health, is under development to train future "ecosystem health clinicians" who can apply multidisciplinary academic knowledge to practical problem-solving initiatives. Faculty from the Centers as well as faculty from the Masters in Preventive Veterinary Medicine will participate as instructors and mentors for the program.

Examples of environmental issues and/or problems that can and have been used as case studies for teaching are as follows:

Case Study 1

The issue of cryptosporidiosis in humans resulting from animal waste contaminating water supplies has long been a concern of public health officials. In California, these concerns prompted water districts and the California State Department of Health and Human Services to recommend removal of livestock, such as cattle and horses, from critical watershed areas. A similar initiative is now underway in New York state. Livestock owners and animal agricultural groups in California requested the assistance of veterinarians to address important public policy issues that would have significantly reduced live-

New USDA Laboratories Essential

Congress Urged to Fund NADC, NVSL and CVB Master Plan

by Bob Frost, Third Vice President

Increasing concern to our membership over the past number of years about the conditions of three USDA research and diagnostic laboratory and regulatory facilities located in the Ames, Iowa, area has prompted the USAHA Board of Directors to develop a plan of action to help secure funding for the APHIS/ARS Master Plan.



Bob Frost

USAHA became aware of the seriousness of the condition of these laboratory and facility complexes during our last few Government Relations Committee meetings in Washington, D.C., and "USAHA" newsletter articles described the seriousness of the situation in 1998. This, in turn, led to discussion on how to secure financing to rebuild and modernize.

During this same time period, ARS's National Animal Disease Center, and APHIS's National Veterinary Services Laboratories and Center for Veterinary Biologics have combined their previous individual efforts on new construction and modernization to a joint plan for shared facilities.

At the direction of the board, Dick McCapes and Bob Frost traveled to Ames for a week in July. The board felt the necessity to understand and document the need for these facilities first hand. The intent of USAHA is to edu-

Animal Health Research Neglected

by John Melcher
Former U.S. Senator, Montana
Consultant to AVMA Govt. Relations Div.

Mention "medical research" and together we all nod wisely - that's what we want.



John Melcher

But when it comes to animal disease research, there is a growing gap in federal spending between animal health research dollars spent compared to that spent on human research.

The inter-relationship between animal and human health is being neglected on the animal side. As veterinarians, it is our responsibility to lead the effort to correct this dangerous imbalance.

ance.

The AVMA Legislative Advisory Committee is considering developing a new research bill and lobbying for its passage. It would be a new initiative to turn around the trend of less appropriations for animal health research in comparison to human health research. This would be a long-term commitment to generate solid backing not just from us in veterinary medicine but also universities, the bio-medical and public health professions, producers and consumer groups, and the general public—including hunters and fishers interested in animal well being. That is practically everyone, and everyone has a stake in animal health.

I know the task we face in

passing new legislation in Congress. It is not just knowing and understanding the need; it is conveying to the general public and Congress that the cause is urgent and that the result of neglect of animal health research spreads disease.

A case in point is the spread of TB in white-tailed deer in Michigan. What do we need to know about deer that is different from domestic livestock? Obviously, wildlife disease control will not all be solved solely in the laboratory but will inevitably require more basic knowledge of the epidemiology in deer. And that is only one disease in one species.

We can list a number of diseases among wildlife species that infect livestock, and/or birds and/or

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CVM Update

by Bert Mitchell, Associate Director
Policy & Regulation, CVM, FDA

The Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), like all other parts of the Food and Drug Administration, faces yearly increases of about 7 percent for inflation in overhead costs and mandated salary increases. Without additional funding to pay for that 7 percent,



Bert Mitchell

FDA is forced to use program operating funds to pay for the inflationary increases.

Throughout the 1990s, CVM took on its share of new work under the Food Safety Initiative. Although funding was available for the Initiative, the related overhead costs also increased, and there was no new funding to pay them. Also, the Agency and all its Cen-

ters had to absorb the costs of the government-wide streamlining initiative and new unfunded legislative initiatives such as the Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act and the Animal Drug Availability Act (ADAA.)

One consequence of these changes was a 21 percent reduction—between fiscal year 1994 and 1997—in staff for CVM's Office of New Animal Drug Evaluation (ONADE), even though this function is the Center's highest priority. And, the Center had protected ONADE from reductions as long as possible.

Also, increasing workload has taken staff members in ONADE away from their main job - reviewing animal drug applications. Increasingly, the drug review staff is being asked to write regulations for the FDA Modernization Act, the ADAA, and guidance documents. These are all core functions, but they have also lead to a significant reduction in the

amount of staff time (FTEs, or Full-Time Equivalents) involved in new animal drug review work.

CVM in Fiscal Year 2000 was given an additional \$1.6 million and 14 FTEs for pre-market application review. For this review, CVM committed to:

- More than twice as many pre-approval study inspections (up to 115, from the previous 50);
- Maintaining pre-submission conferences at the FY99 level;
- Developing new electronic submission pilots; and
- Reviewing and acting on 65 percent of New and Abbreviated New Animal Drug Applications within 180 days of submission.

For all other programs, CVM committed to:

- Develop new collaborations on epidemiological research with other government agencies;
- Conduct on-farm epidemiol-

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An Assessment of Canada's Animal Health Emergency Response Capability

by Matt Taylor, Project Secretariat
Stakeholder Collaboration Project for Animal Health in Canada¹

Canada's animal health status is critically important to the country's livestock industry. The National Animal Health Program (NAHP), administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), has been responsible for maintaining or improving this status. Loss of this status or threats to the status jeopardize:

- the country's livestock population, comprised of over 30 million large animals, plus a large poultry sector;

- the country's human health population of 30.5 million scattered over a country that is 3,400 miles wide at its broadest point; and

- industry's access to the markets from which over 200,000 producers generate an estimated \$60 billion in direct and indirect contributions to the Canadian economy.

Stakeholders initiated the Stakeholder Collaboration Project for Animal Health in Canada,¹ upon consideration of the following issues:

- the perception that the NAHP's capabilities may be less than desired, particularly with respect to emergency response, communication and long-term planning;

- the relatively heavy reliance of Canada's livestock industry upon export markets to absorb production—over 50 percent in the case of the beef and swine sectors—highlighting the importance of an effective NAHP;

- declining government resources for this and other programs, accompanied by a shift in government's role from a 'sole agency' to a 'lead agency' with stakeholder support – for which the corresponding shift in industry's role is only beginning to occur;

- the globalization of trade, risk factors and information, with countries acting on the latter to close their borders and otherwise maintain their zoosanitary status;

- the increasingly virulent traditional risk factors, coupled with emerging risk factors affecting animal and human health and trade but for which there is little information; and

- the changing legal environment arising from the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its standard-setting body, the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), and the increasing importance these organizations place upon a country's national veterinary infrastructure.

Three aspects of the NAHP are being studied in the Project, with the limited time and resources available. Conclusions of the study regarding emergency response capability are presented in this report. The other issues being studied are: communication and resources. The Project was initiated in January 2000. A final report will be presented for consideration at the December 2000 meeting of the Canadian Animal Health Consultative Committee – Canada's counterpart of the U.S. Animal Health Association.

In the project's study of Canada's animal health emergency response capability, the following tools were considered:

- A case study of a recent outbreak – since controlled and eradicated in accordance with OIE standards;

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¹ The Stakeholder Collaboration Project for Animal Health in Canada is made up of some 20 stakeholder organizations including: commodity associations, provincial animal health departments, professional associations, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and veterinary schools.

Past President Pat Smith Passes Away

From the Sacramento Bee, Saturday, August 12, 2000

Dr. Patton "Pat" L. Smith, past president of the USAHA (1990/91), passed away peacefully at home August 9, 2000, at the age of 69. A retired veterinarian native Californian



Pat Smith

and resident of Sacramento for 37 years, he leaves his wife Carol of 44 years, son Reed Smith of Coronado, and daughter Tracy Smith-Lyon of Sacramento and

five grandchildren who will always remember him as "Paka" who loved them.

Dr. Smith graduated from the University of California, Davis, with a Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine, 1954, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, 1956 and Master of Preventive Veterinary Medicine, 1968.

In 36 years of dedicated public service to the State of California, he served as Field Veterinarian, California State Veterinarian, Chief of the Bureau Animal Health, and at his retirement, Assistant Director of the Division of Animal Industry of the Department of Food and Agriculture.

Dr. Smith contributed to California's livestock health and disease control while serving in various capacities with professional organizations including his services as president of the United States Animal Health Association, as President of the National Assembly of Chief Livestock Health Officials, as President of the Western States Livestock Health Association, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Western Veterinary Conference

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Yellowstone Bison and Brucellosis: Does Population Size Really Matter?

by Keith Aune, Laboratory Supervisor
Wildlife Research Laboratory
Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

A secondary but important issue surrounding the problem of brucellosis in Yellowstone bison is determining an acceptable population size for bison in this ecosystem. Population management and ecosystem carrying capacity for Yellowstone elk have long been debated and many issues remain unresolved.

For bison, the issue of population size has not been predominant because expansion beyond Yellowstone has been a relatively new event. Prior to 1980, the bison population grew steadily but remained below 2,000 animals and bison rarely migrated from the park. During the following two decades, the population grew to nearly 4,000 animals and distribution expanded to envelop habitats adjacent to Yellowstone National Park.

As a result of this range expansion, management debates emerged that have been primarily directed toward disease management concerns. Specifically, bison exiting Yellowstone National Park carry an important disease, brucellosis, that has a significant potential to affect Montana's cattle industry.

What had been local management debates during the early 1980's grew to a full-blown public firestorm following the mass out-migration of bison in 1988-89 and again in 1996-97. The flames were fanned when disease-management programs implemented by the State of Montana resulted in the death of hundreds of bison in an attempt to prevent the spread of the disease brucellosis. These programs have been dramatically shaped and reshaped by public debates and evolving agency policies

in an attempt to minimize lethal impacts to bison populations. Increased tolerance of bison has resulted in annual out-migrations of bison into Montana and extensive hazing¹ programs were implemented recently to mitigate bison mortality and control the distribution of bison.

... important underlying population issues are often overlooked. How many bison can Yellowstone National Park support?

Although many and diverse views are expressed about the necessity of disease-control measures or the methods of disease control, the important underlying population issues are often overlooked. How many bison can Yellowstone National Park support?

Well before significant public

this biological issue since bison populations were primarily managed within Yellowstone Park and under a policy of natural regulation.² For Montana there was simply no means to regulate this population growth through typical wildlife management programs that have been implemented with great success throughout the nation.

Population management and disease issues became entangled when expanding distributions of bison in Yellowstone Park resulted from unrestrained growth in bison populations. An examination of the relevant historical data reveals that when bison populations remained below 2,000, out-migrations were rare events and minor in consequence (Table 1). At this population level the potential for bison and cattle to co-mingle were very small. When bison distribution expanded and population size exceeded 3,000, bison out-migration became nearly certain and, further-

Table 1.

The probability of out-migrations of any size by total bison population, 1968-99.

Population Level	Northern Boundary	Western Boundary	Parkwide
500-2000 (N=9)	0.333	0	0.333
2000-3000 (N=11)	0.364	0.636	0.818
>3000 (N=8)	0.625	1	1

debates about brucellosis emerged, state wildlife and livestock agencies were concerned about the population growth, ecological carrying capacity and range expansions of bison. In fact, boundary control programs were in place in Montana as early as 1967 and hunting programs were attempted in the mid 1980's. However, there have been no successful remedies for

more, the magnitude of bison removals by lethal means exceeded 200 for 5 of 8 years. When populations approached 3,000, Montana experienced significant social-political conflict and incurred extensive management costs associated with managing the risks for transmission of brucellosis.

An important detail overlooked

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Yellowstone Bison and Brucellosis

from page 6

in many analyses of out-migration and population size is the great dissimilarity between habitats in various regions of the Park and the subsequent separate population segments.

Yellowstone Park borders.

If we look at bison removal from the population by herd segment we see two somewhat different patterns (Figures 1 and 2).

- In the northern herd, bison removals (which is not always an accurate measure of out-migration intensity because of changing

migrations and at least some lethal removal of bison have occurred every single year since 1985 along the western border of the Park.

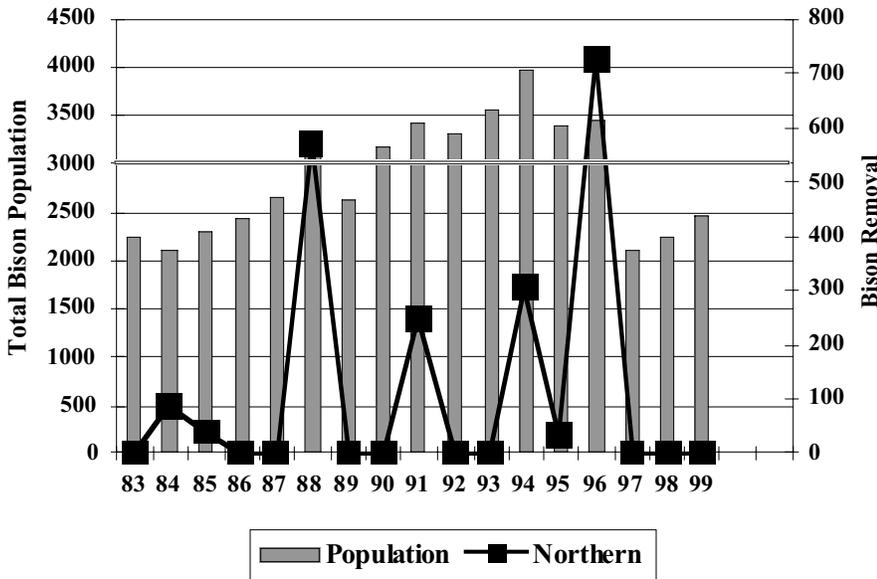
A clearly chronic problem is emerging in the West Yellowstone area as opposed to the more periodic, but intense, events in the northern herd. Some of these recent migration patterns may have been shaped by fires in '88-'89 that opened a forest landscape along the western regions of Yellowstone. Use of these and other newly discovered grassland habitats have been annually reinforced by learned behavior of herd groups. These differences between herd segments are very significant from a disease management perspective and even more enlightening from the population management perspective.

Some important conclusions seem obvious when examining data from past experiences with bison migrating into Montana.

- **First**, there are apparent differences in the pattern of out-migrations between bison herd segments, which are very likely inspired by ecological factors such as climate, population size, and habitat.

I believe the central herd clearly has discovered new grassland habitats well outside the western boundary and are beginning to in-

Figure 1. Bison removals near the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park by year over total population, 1983-99.



In Yellowstone National Park, there are two distinct (some people believe three) population sub-units.

- The central herd includes the largest number (about 2,000) of bison, which tend to utilize habitats along the western boundary of Yellowstone. These bison occupy a predominantly forested habitat with interspersed meadowlands. Some portions of these habitats were significantly modified in the 1988-89 wildfires. Snowfall in this area is significant and critical winter habitat inside the Park is often confined to areas with geothermal activity or along water courses.

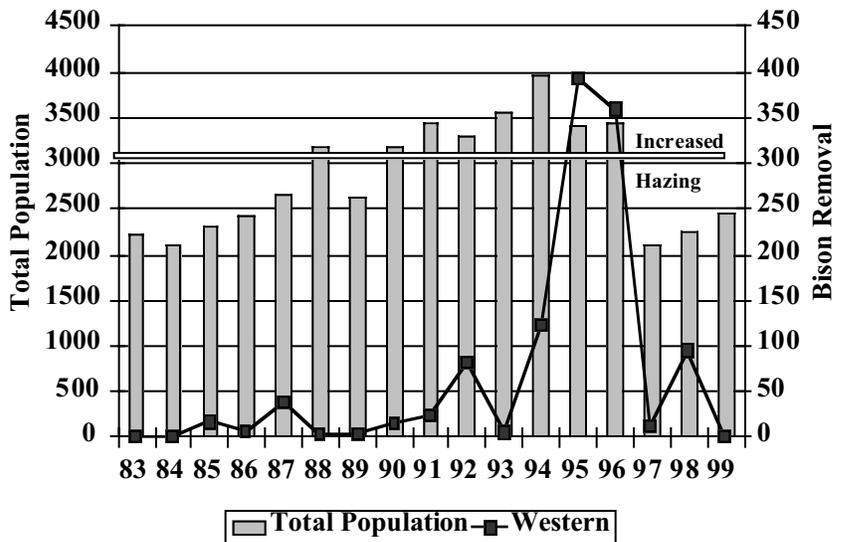
- The Northern herd includes about 500 bison that use a vast rolling valley bottom, which is composed mostly of open grassland. The climate is milder, winter snow-pack is commonly less severe and important winter habitat for elk and bison is more abundant within and just adjacent to

management policies) have been periodic and large in magnitude during the past decade.

- In the central herd the removal pattern appears more chronic despite some very intense efforts to avoid lethal removal of bison from winter ranges in Montana. Out-

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Figure 2. Bison removals near the western boundary of Yellowstone National Park by year over total population, 1983-99.



Yellowstone Bison and Brucellosis

from page 7

tegrate these new resources into their annual habitat use patterns. Furthermore, they are annually subjected to more severe winter snow conditions and limited winter range availability.

The northern bison have integrated some habitat outside of the park, but utilize them on a more intermittent basis when severe winter weather and crusting snow force migrations to milder habitats at lower elevations. The northern population herd unit has previously experienced periodic, but severe, mortality that resulted in population reductions and regressive distributions.

- **Secondly**, the probability of migration into Montana is certainly related to population size. The density of bison on available winter habitat is a very likely factor contributing to range expansions and the increasing exploration of new habitats adjacent to the Park.

- **Finally**, the out-migration of bison is the most critical factor that sparked many of the debates over management of the disease brucellosis. This is considered by many to be the root of the issue and perhaps one possible solution to the problem from a disease-management perspective. However, not everyone looks at the issues from that single angle.

Regardless of your perspective it is obvious that population size matters and is very relevant to brucellosis risk management.

1 Hazing - The active movement of bison from specific geographic areas where they are not allowed by agency policy using harassment by vehicles, snowmachines, horsemen, and/or helicopters.

2 Natural regulation - This is a hypothetical process whereby populations of wildlife are regulated by forces of nature. The forces are exerted on reproduction, recruitment of young and natural mortality to limit the population to some level suitable to the natural environment.

New Bill Seeks to Modernize USDA Laws

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

Recognizing that prevention, detection, control and eradication of diseases and pests of animals are essential to protecting animal health, human health and the economic interests of livestock and related industries, Congress is seeking to modernize USDA statutes.

The Animal Health Protection Act of 2000 (AHPA), H.R. 4801 has been introduced by Rep. Colin C. Peterson (D-MN) and Rep. Richard W. Pombo (R-CA). It will update and consolidate laws that policy makers and others say are now just a patchwork with gaps, conflicts and duplications. In fact, some statutes authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to address pests and diseases affecting animals date back as far as 1884.

Among other things, the AHPA would:

1. Consolidate 20 existing animal quarantine authorities into

one comprehensive law.

2. Expand the definition of animal disease to ensure that noninfectious diseases and other conditions affecting animal production can be addressed.

3. Increase civil penalties to ensure that production agriculture is protected against the consequences of violations of the law.

4. Improve authority to investigate violators.

5. Improve consistency with international obligations.

The proposed bill takes into account the complexities of the modern world. For example, the term "livestock" in this new bill would be defined to cover all farm-raised animals, and the term "move" has been defined to cover all methods by which an animal or article can be moved including being released into the environment. The bill attempts to parallel

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Linking New Data to Old Principles: Salmonella Risk Reduction at the Farm Level

by Ed Mallinson, Professor Emeritus
Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine

With funding support from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association, data has recently been obtained by Maryland researchers that suggest: a) the prevention of water/leakage/spillage; and b) the provision of gently drying uniform patterns of airflow, at the modest rate of ≥ 100 ft/min, in close proximity to litter/manure surfaces, could be major features of a HACCP program for poultry production. This is not to say that other preventive

practices (e.g., hatchery sanitation, properly pelletized feeds, fly control, etc.) are now unimportant.

However, the Maryland perspective suggests that just as proper food preparation and handling neutralize those occasional introductions of contamination at the kitchen end of the food safety continuum, litter/manure management strategies that deter the multiplication of introduced salmonellae and contribute to their death or inactivation are vitally important farm management practices.

The Maryland group believes that significant, practical, environmentally-friendly risk reduction opportunities exist when airflow is improved over litter/manure.

Spouses' Activities in Birmingham

Spouses' events start on Sunday, October 22nd, with brunch at the Sheraton. The Alabama Poultry and Egg Association will be cooking omelets. Entertainment will be vocalist Kristi Higginbotham.

Tours are being scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, October 23rd and 24th. The Monday tour will depart the Sheraton at 10:00 a.m. and include visits to Birmingham's Historic Five Points South and Mountain Brook. Lunch will be at The Club, and Delores Hydock, actress/story teller will entertain with a dramatic talk.

Monday afternoon will include time for treasure hunting in Birmingham's antique malls or shopping at the Riverchase Galleria.

Tuesday's activities include touring historic Birmingham. Learn about the Civil Rights District with visits to the Civil Rights Institute and the Sixteenth Avenue Baptist Church. Enjoy lunch at the Botanical Garden's tea room, and a tour of the gardens 67.5 acres of glorious nature.

The cost of tours will be \$45.00 each day. Please register for tours with the Richmond office as soon as possible.

USAHA

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Birmingham Symposium on "Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases"

by Gale Wagner, Chair
 Committee on Parasitic Diseases

Last October, the Committee on Parasitic and Hemoparasitic Diseases and Parasiticides met to discuss why parasites have become so central to free trade and animal movement, and why the detection and control of parasites has become such an important issue.

Several anecdotes were presented and discussed, including a dog from Panama with undetected screwworm, South African *Amblyomma* ticks on an imported tortoise, Zambian ticks on a traveling cat, and babesiosis (Texas fever) in cattle in Texas for the first time in more than 40 years!

All these instances reflect the growing concern that as people and animals move often and more easily, the U.S. animal agriculture and public health becomes disturbingly vulnerable to ticks, fleas, mosquitos and the disease agents they can transmit.

The committee discussion concentrated on emerging parasitic diseases because of the potential of many of the disease agents to infect humans as well as animals, and because of the high profile of emerging diseases and their vectors among the public. We decided that we want our committee to identify those areas where U.S. agriculture is particularly susceptible to pathogen introduction, and how to manage those areas to reduce future pathogen introductions. In other words, we will be concentrating on risk factors and risk management, and interpreting information, not just listening to reports. We also decided to present options for a name change

www.usaha.org webpage update

by Larry Mark USAHA Webmaster,
 e-mail address: webmaster@usaha.org

This will be brief, as I—along with many of you—are getting ready for the annual meeting in Birmingham this October.

Our web site stands at nearly 24,000 "hits" at the end of August. I think we will hit the 25,000 mark—maybe even 26,000—by the time we get to Alabama.



Larry Mark

As you (hopefully) have noticed, I've recently revamped our Home Page to give it a "cleaner" look and perhaps make it more user friendly. I'd appreciate any feedback.

In past columns, I've mentioned setting up "private" spots on the Web for USAHA members—a place where they could discuss issues with other members outside the public view or perhaps where members of a particular committee could edit and work on a document.

We now have two such sites: <http://usaha.intranets.com> for all USAHA members and <http://usaha-johnes.intranets.com> for members of the Johnes' Disease Committee.

We're using a commercial service that's free (they get their money through advertisements), but it does what we want to do in terms of setting up a site where we can post material that only selected individuals can access. To be useful, however, we need more folks involved. I hope to talk to many of you at the annual meeting to get your views on this—and any other aspect of our USAHA Web presence. So be thinking of your ideas, questions, whatever—and catch me in the press room in Birmingham!

P.S. Don't forget that we'll be posting press releases on the Web as committees meet, so this is a reminder to **committee chairs** to come to the press room and give me a brief summary of major committee actions.

CVM Update

from page 4

ogy studies;

- Develop and enforce import tolerances;

- Expand geographical scope of the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS), while maintaining the same number of human and veterinary isolates;

- Use NARMS data to target outbreak investigations and related studies;

- Further expand NARMS by establishing an international resistance database;

- Develop educational material related to the appropriate use of drugs in food animals;

- Develop recommendations on the prudent use of antimicrobials;

- Work with State and local authorities to distribute education material that FDA developed;

- Expand efforts to develop, evaluate and adapt new molecular methodology for use in identification, epidemiological tracing, and genetic manipulation of foodborne pathogens; and

- Develop and validate models for microbiological hazards.

The Fiscal 2000 budget increased the funding of the animal drugs and feeds program. However, unless FDA receives additional funding to cover current services such as overhead and mandated salary increases, the gains from these increases will be lost within two years. Thus, increased funding is needed to enable FDA to fulfill all its responsibilities in protecting public and animal health.

Canada

from page 5

- A survey of provincial veterinarians – similar to that of the McCapes study presented to USAHA in 1996, but with additional questions and mindful of the Cana-

dian context;

- A survey of industry leaders – similar to the above, but mindful of the industry context; and

- A review of initiatives under way or being implemented in the United States and Australia.

Based on analysis of the above tools, the Project Steering Committee's primary conclusions are that:

1. Stakeholders perceive that Canada's animal health emergency response capability is less than desired, where it should be 'above average.'

2. Stakeholders have specific concerns regarding:

- low awareness of plans,
- low level of understanding for their own roles and responsibilities, and the expectations of others,
- low level of industry preparation, particularly for initial response,
- low level of training and awareness, and
- ineffective communications network.

3. Industry and other stakeholders will bear tremendous costs during the response phase and even more so during the recovery phase of a major emergency – and that the timing and magnitude of these costs will be significantly impacted by:

- planning and preparedness strategies,
- timeliness and effectiveness of initial & follow-up response,
- choice of response strategy, e.g., stamp out vs. vaccination

4. There is strong stakeholder interest now, to participate in and improve Canada's animal health emergency response capability

5. Emergencies are more than an FAD outbreak, and will involve "lead" agencies other than the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, e.g., other "trade" diseases, feed contamination, bioterrorism, natural disasters, and processing plant closures.

6. Stakeholders do not understand the implications of the 'lead agency with shared responsibility' scenario now in place, and their

role or responsibilities in the event of an emergency.

7. Under the "lead agency with shared responsibility," emergencies must be managed in a collaborative manner.

In light of the conclusions noted above, the Steering Committee is recommending that stakeholders:

- prepare an "all hazards" emergency system, starting with FADs, and including plans and understood roles and responsibilities;

- establish an 'animal health network' to create, maintain and implement the system and its related plans;

- develop an awareness program; and

- initiate cost sharing discussions for planning, preparedness, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

The conclusions and recommendations noted relate specifically to Canada's animal health emergency response capability. The Steering Committee has also prepared recommendations specific to communications and resources.

On the basis of the information gathered through the Project, the Steering Committee is proposing that stakeholders envision a Canadian Animal Health System that is an evolving partnership with international recognition for excellence. That System is considerably broader than the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's NAHP, and includes the provinces' surveillance and extension resources, the universities' teaching and R&D resources, and the commodity associations' communication, policy development and financial resources.

To implement the recommendations being proposed, the Steering Committee is also proposing a year-round Canadian Animal Health Council, with the mission of strengthening the Canadian Animal Health System, by:

- Providing strategic leadership;
- Ensuring the animal health needs of stakeholders are met;

Canada

from page 10

- Balancing the interests of animal and human health and trade;
- Facilitating the collaborative and optimal use of all available resources.

This proposal is being put forward in the firm belief that animal health in Canada must evolve towards a more collaborative style of management. This proposal is simply another step in the ongoing evolution of animal health in Canada.

Pat Smith

from page 5

and the California Academy of Veterinary Medicine, and as Chair and a member of various University of California and federal and state committees.

In Pat's memory, the family requests that donations be made to the American Cancer Society/Prostate Research 1765 Challenge Way, Suite 115, Sacramento, CA. 95815.

New Bill

from page 8

the recently passed Plant Protection Act.

The Plant Protection Act, signed by the President earlier this year, consolidates plant health statutes. The USDA and plant-related industries were extremely pleased because of the positive effect the it will have on the safety of US agriculture.

Perhaps the most significant change which the Animal Health Bill addresses is the definition of disease. Historically, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' (APHIS) authority to deal with animal diseases has been limited to contagious or communicable animal diseases. The new definition would include both infectious and noninfectious diseases of animals or any animal health-related conditions detrimental to production of livestock.

The definition was broadened to prepare for situations that have arisen in the past and are likely to recur. For example, APHIS was asked to assist with the disposal of radioactive animals during the Three Mile Island accident, but could not because it did not have the authority to use appropriated funds to respond to a situation involving a non-infectious condition.

This new bill would authorize the Secretary to work cooperatively with other Federal agencies, states and state political subdivisions, national governments, local governments, other nations, domestic and political organizations and individuals to carry out the Act, and in the administration of regulations for the improvements of livestock and their products.

The AHPA also increases civil penalties and gives the Secretary authority to issue subpoenas to those whose activities (such as smuggling animals into the country) could harm US agriculture.

For additional information on H.R.4801 contact APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs at (202) 720-2511.

Ticks

from page 9

to the membership. By January, the votes were in and we are now the Committee on Parasitic Diseases.

The members agreed that our committee could provide a constructive framework for a national dialog on several important issues. We decided to organize a symposium for the meeting in Birmingham entitled "Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases - A Critical Priority." The symposium speakers will be expected to raise the issues and describe the risk factors involved. The participants (industry, government, education) in the round-table discussion at the end of the symposium will consider the

steps that can be taken to minimize the risks.

The symposium is scheduled for 12:30-5:30 p.m., Sunday, October 22nd. The tentative agenda:

- The current threat of heartwater to the cattle, sheep, and goat industries, and to white-tailed deer populations in the United States: Risks associated with importations of reptiles and wild game animals from Africa.

- The current status on the diagnosis and management of heartwater

- The Progress of the Caribbean *Amblyomma* Programme and the French tropical bont tick eradication program in the French West Indies towards the eradication of the tropical bont tick from the Caribbean

- The potential role of *Amblyomma maculatum*, the Gulf Coast tick, in the transmission and dissemination of *Cowdria ruminantium* in the United States.

- Regulating the importation of reptiles and wildlife into the United States—Issues and Challenges

- Changing factors that influence the prevalence of infestations of fever ticks in the Quarantine Zone and the implementation of the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program

- Risk of babesiosis in herds of U.S. cattle, horses, and native and exotic wildlife

- Diagnosis and mitigation of acaricide resistance of *Boophilus microplus* to acaricides: Immediate and potential impact on the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program

- Status of research to develop recombinant vaccines to protect livestock against tick-borne hemoparasitic diseases

- Industry, government and education roundtable to discuss of issues of concern, risk assessment, and risk reduction in relation to ticks and tick-borne diseases affecting livestock

AAVLD News

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cesses currently shared by a variety of committees and officers.

- Promote and establish Veterinary Diagnostic Labs as contributors to food safety, zoonotic disease, water and environmental pathogen detection and bioterrorism initiatives in order to utilize Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory's expertise.

- Expand AAVLD income sources in order to establish a strong long-term funding base for the organization and its programs (JVDI, Foundation, annual meeting, etc.).

- Increase membership involvement in AAVLD activities in order to accomplish organizational objectives.

As part of the strategic planning review, a communications survey was conducted to determine the methods and amounts of communication AAVLD members felt were most beneficial for them. Results indicated that while the majority of members have now accepted receiving electronic versions of the quarterly newsletter, they were not yet ready to switch to an all electronic version of the JVDI. Also, in general they were satisfied with the amount of communication received from the Executive Board, but many would like to see improvements made in the AAVLD web site. Towards that end, a complete review of the web site will be carried out and an overhaul is expected by the end of this year.

Many issues will continue to challenge AAVLD member laboratories in the coming year and will be topics of discussion this year in Birmingham such as antibiotic resistance monitoring, national and international accreditation, bioterrorism and food safety testing. There will be a special Plenary Session at the Birmingham meeting devoted to a look at the future of veterinary diagnostic laboratories with representatives from industry, government and private practitioners laying out

their visions of what they will need from AAVLD laboratories in the future. Please consider attending this special session on Monday, October 23rd, from 8 a.m. to noon in Birmingham and add your insights into the ongoing development of the AAVLD.

Environmental Health

from page 3

stock grazing, recreational horseback riding and packstock use over large areas of rangeland in the state. A veterinary faculty member proceeded with a comprehensive project that evaluated the ages of livestock and horses shedding organisms in the feces, determined the parasite load at different times during the life of an animal, sampled wildlife populations to determine their contributions to environmental contamination, evaluated the soil conditions necessary for disease organisms to survive, sampled watershed areas for evidence of the organisms and evaluated the molecular epidemiology of animals and human isolates of several organisms.

As a result of this study, scientific criteria has been established for designing livestock management plans that allow for economically important livestock activity to continue in these watershed areas while simultaneously reducing the water quality risk from such pathogens as *Cryptosporidium parvum* that can be found in the manure of cattle and horses. As a result of these studies, it was concluded that adult livestock and horses contribute insignificant quantities of the parasite to California watersheds, with minimal risk posed to the environment and water supplies when reasonable beneficial management practices are utilized by ranchers, equine enthusiasts, and packstock operators.

Furthermore, it was determined that certain wildlife species, including the ubiquitous California ground squirrel, shed higher quantities of the *Cryptosporidium parvum* on a per kg body weight basis compared to livestock species, sug-

gesting that much of this water quality concern may be inappropriately focused on ranching and domestic animal use on California watersheds.

The outcome of these studies permitted local water quality districts and federal land management agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service, to make science-based policy decisions relevant to livestock activity on watershed regions in California. The School of Veterinary Medicine played a critical role in this project because faculty applied knowledge of animal health, public health, infectious disease expertise, epidemiology, and synthesized the appropriate aspects in scientifically meaningful ways important to the livestock and public health sectors. In addition to their scientific credibility, veterinary faculty also brought to the table an understanding of attitudes and concerns of stakeholders from private business, non-governmental groups, and state agencies that fostered effective discussion among all parties.

Case Study 2

Over the last few years, major tire fires in California have resulted from lighting strikes at tire dumps containing millions of tires. For example, a 55-acre fire of 7 million tires burned in Tracy, California for more than eight months in 1998-99. The by-products of the burning include thick acrid smoke containing products of pyrolysis and oil. The pyrolytic compounds are of various particle sizes with some particles as small as 10 microns. These small particles are highly carcinogenic and often contain additional contaminants, including heavy metals such as lead. The particulates settle on plants which readily absorb them and incorporate the toxic principles into all parts of the plants. These plants then carry the carcinogens into the food supply whether the plants are for animal or human consumption. These products can then be consumed in meat, milk or eggs.

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Environmental Health

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Many of the small particulates are inhaled and find their way into the lower airways where they may be absorbed and become systemic, predisposing individuals to cancer. Particulates left on the plants or as dust are washed away by rains into streams where the toxic products often cause large numbers of fish and other aquatic species to die off. Contaminated water supplies also place other wildlife and human populations at risk.

The issues associated with these catastrophies call for expertise in toxicology, public and animal health, water quality and food safety, all areas of central relevance to veterinary medicine.

Case Study 3

There has been considerable concern over the decline of the Peninsular Bighorn sheep population in California. There has been speculation that diseases such as blue-tongue, pasteurellosis and scabies, among other infectious diseases, have been instrumental in the population decline. Subsequent evaluation of the decline in population has been associated with the increased population of predators such as the mountain lions. This along with other factors led to placing Bighorn sheep on the endangered species list.

Approximately 10 years ago, a law was passed in California that prohibited hunting of mountain lions. Since the passage of this law, the mountain lion population has increased from approximately 1,000 animals to about 5,000. The principle food source for mountain lions in California has been deer, although there has been good evidence that the Bighorn sheep also serve as a food source for these cats. Associated with the increase of mountain lions have been attacks on humans and on livestock.

In order to develop better criteria for managing the ecosystems that the Peninsular Bighorn sheep, deer, mountain lions and humans occupy, a team of veterinarians, ecologists and wildlife biologists

has undertaken a study to determine key factors of a balanced system important for all species to survive in a natural state. Some of the studies underway include an evaluation of the health status of selected Bighorn sheep, collection and analysis of scat from mountain lions to determine by genetic analysis the food sources of the lion, deer demographics and the impact of human habitat, grazing livestock, and related activities on all of the species. The information collected from these studies will be used by the Department of Fish and Game to improve management of the habitats for these species. Veterinary medicine's leadership comes from training in infectious diseases, epidemiology, wildlife health and management and an understanding of population dynamics of these different species in their natural environment.

Case Study 4

Agricultural production units can also be considered mini-ecosystems. For example in California, veterinarians are playing a leading role in developing criteria and management systems with the large dairy operations. The average dairy in California now has 850 milking cows with many producers milking more than 2,000 head. These large dairies are faced with new legislative restrictions and other demands for improved food safety standards and effective waste management, and additional guidelines for animal welfare practices. The planning and implementation of a systematic approach to address these issues has been included in the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program under the leadership of veterinarians in the Animal Health and Food Safety Branch of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, University of California faculty, dairy producers, processors and dairy veterinarians.

Specific activities include training veterinarians and dairymen about the Environmental Protection Agency guidelines regarding chemical and microbial levels present in waste water runoff from

dairies. Also, education about water quality issues to reduce potential contaminants associated with animal disease and food borne diseases is important. Veterinarians need to stay abreast of these issues and serve as consultants to dairymen as they develop wastewater systems and waste disposal practices. Veterinarians understand the implications of these issues relative to animal and public health issues and requirements.

Another major concern is food safety. The best way to assure on-farm food safety is to develop quality assurance programs based on the established principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). Specific management approaches such as the Breakthrough Management (BTM) and Total Quality Assurance (TQA) principles are being applied to production systems. Veterinarians become well versed in these approaches and can modify the systems to fit dairy management needs. They also consider all aspects of production including feed, medication, health care, and management of cows both in and out of the milking parlor.

Practitioners play a key role in the instruction of employees and later review of program implementation. In addition, veterinarians have ideal qualifications to conduct certification of production system records for milk and dairy beef processors.

Finally, the increasing societal interest in the welfare of animals requires more attention on the part of veterinarians to serve as advisors for management decisions about the welfare issues on production units. Consideration of some of these issues has already paid off in California where the installation of shade structures for dairy cattle has significantly increased milk production.

Again, veterinary medicine is the only profession with the expertise to address these new man-

Environmental Health

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agement challenges. Their broad education background prepares these health professionals for the discipline-based understanding of the issues as well as the means of communicating information to producers, farm workers, environmental organizations and government policy makers and representatives.

This is a new era in which the profession needs to step up as expert advisors and consultants for producers. We are responsible for sustaining agricultural production units, assuring the public health and improving the environmental well being of society and ecosystems. To achieve the delicate balance that will meet these needs, veterinarians in academic settings, the public sector and private enterprise must continue to do their part.

New USDA Laboratories

from page 3

cate its members on the need of the plan, the realities of the plan itself, and the avenues that the members may contribute to making this modernization project a reality.

A considerable amount of time was spent touring, meeting with directors, and interviewing personnel at all three USDA agencies during the week. In addition to the extensive schedule at the facilities themselves, numerous meetings were held in Ames and Des Moines with groups having interest in the Master Plan. A morning was spent with Iowa State University personnel, and an afternoon in Des Moines with the staff of the United States Senators and Congressmen. Also the local Chamber of Commerce and the Ames Economic Development Commission shared their experiences and involvement in their efforts to promote the funding of the project.

As a result of previous information and the above described fact finding trip to Ames, the

USAHA has sent a letter to key leaders in Congress voicing the need to include the \$9 million in the President's 2001 budget for the engineering of the APHIS/ARS Master Plan.

The next effort by USAHA will be to influence the 2002 budget. USAHA will publish a Special Edition Newsletter featuring the Master Plan. This publication will be distributed nationwide to gain a grass roots drive and provide stakeholders with information to educate their respective Congressional representatives on the importance of the APHIS/ARS Master Plan.

Book Review

By Dick McCapes

"Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire," by Jason Goodwin and published by Henry Holt and Company. 1999. 351 pgs.

The involvement of our armed forces in the most recent Balkans' conflict, this time involving Yugoslavian Serbia and its Kosovo region, reinforced a long standing realization that my understanding of this area of the world was limited and that some reading about it was in order.

This is a sweeping and fascinating book about the Ottoman Empire, a people that no longer exist, but who conquered a large part of the world, including the Balkan peninsula, over a six-century period stretching from the early 1300s to the early 1900s. At its height, their empire extended from Tripoli, through Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus, Baghdad, Ankara, Istanbul, Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest and beyond.

Along the way, Goodwin's narrative provides glimpses into the long-standing and seemingly implacable enmity between Serbians and Albanians in the Kosovo region.

A fine read about the rise and fall of a most remarkable and little remembered empire.

ARS Position Vacancy

National Program Leader for Veterinary and Medical Entomology

The ARS National Program Leader for Veterinary and Medical Entomology (GS 0414-92-15, GS-701-15, Salary Range \$84,638 - \$110,028):

1. Serves as the focal point for national leadership and coordination of agricultural research programs relating to insect pests of veterinary and medical importance.

2. As the agency's technical expert for insect pests of veterinary and medical importance, advises ARS senior leadership on related technical and policy issues. Represents and speaks for ARS concerning these insect pest issues both nationally and internationally.

3. Works with ARS scientists and line managers nationwide to assure that the veterinary and medical entomology national research program reflects national priorities and policies, contains acceptable timetables for action, and correctly utilizes available human and physical resources.

4. Examines programs and makes recommendations to achieve both program balance and resource allocation consistent with the best scientific practices and national priorities.

The work requires strong interpersonal skills as well as technical abilities. The chosen applicant must have the ability to organize and lead groups of highly technical experts for the purpose of formulating recommendations and directing and coordinating national research programs. It is critical for the incumbent to be able to work cooperatively and successfully with other National Program Leaders; agencies, in particular APHIS; state veterinarians; industry representatives; and interested organizations.

This permanent full-time position is based at ARS National Headquarters in Beltsville, MD, and requires U.S. citizenship.

Applicants must have a Ph.D. or DVM/Ph.D. and research expertise in entomology.

Look for the vacancy announcement to be posted at www.ars.usda.gov during the week of Sept 18, 2000.

Hillman

from page 1

cussed in the Program Committee meeting and if accepted will go to the Executive Committee for approval. We hope to adopt the manual for the 2001 Annual Meeting. I believe this manual will significantly help committee chairs plan, operate and conduct business in their committees.

It is clear that we need to expand membership of USAHA. While we have a broad membership base, we need to expand this base if we are to successfully address some of the challenges facing our industries. To this end, President Zirkle identified the need for and recommended a Membership Committee. I will appoint this committee as soon as possible.

Foreign, exotic and emerging diseases will continue to be a focus of USAHA during the coming year. Part of the Tuesday Scientific Session will be dedicated to a follow-up on OIE and International Issues. President Zirkle has discussed OIE and international animal health issues in several of his articles in the newsletter as well as in his address to the membership when he assumed the Presidency last year. I pledge to continue these efforts.

After having had the opportunity to attend the OIE meeting in Paris this year, I am more convinced than ever that USAHA must play a significant role in development and implementation of strategies to address diseases and pests that are of international significance. We must be prepared to review and comment on OIE proposals. A process is in place and is being fine-tuned to accomplish this task.

I believe a more significant function is for USAHA to serve as a forum to discuss international disease issues and facilitate the formulation of fair, equitable, science-based disease-control strategies. We already have memberships from our North American

neighbors and I believe this is the place to begin our efforts.

The USAHA has been a guiding, and at times a prodding, force in eradication of a number of diseases and the control of others. We are nearing eradication of brucellosis from livestock in the United States. The pseudorabies program is also near completion. With the upgrading of the tuberculosis program, we should eliminate this disease from livestock within a short period of time.

We can eliminate these diseases from livestock, but can we keep them out? Each disease has one or more reservoirs in wild, exotic or feral species. For the most part we have hardly begun to address these and other diseases that are present in wild, feral or exotic species. A portion of the Scientific Session on Wednesday will be dedicated to Wildlife/Livestock Disease Interactions. I hope this session will be a springboard to ignite efforts to address diseases that affect both wild and domestic species.

One of the things we must do if we are to effectively address diseases of concern in wild and feral species is to bring interested individuals and agencies with authority over management of these species to the USAHA table. We also must be willing to go and sit at their table and discuss these issues with them. They must be a part of the solution; otherwise they will be part of the problem. This will be one of our challenges for 2001 and beyond.

Dr. Zirkle has established a standard for service to our association that I will strive to emulate during my term as President. I look forward to the challenge and will serve our association to the utmost of my ability.

See you all in Birmingham.

Only he who keeps his eye on the far horizon will find his right road.
Dag Hammarskjöld

Animal Health Research

from page 4

humans. But what do we know about the epidemiology in the various wildlife, and what do we know on their control and eradication? Obviously the answer is: "not enough."

If our profession believes that animal health research has not kept up, it is our responsibility to assume the leadership role to correct the imbalance and expand the necessary research.

The USAHA is the significant and credible voice to convey that message to the public. Aside from publishing the "urgent need," there has to be a plan for action to bring about the solution.

Starting down the legislative trail to pass a new definitive animal health research mandate is a challenge we can take as a unified profession. A likely beginning is to jointly agree on the most urgent shortcomings—that is a process of consultation on the priorities of our current most dangerous diseases and the steps that must be taken for their control.

The Chinese proverb "that a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step" means to me that the decision once made sets in motion that first step, and that applies to us in whether we want to meet the challenge.

Along the legislative trail—if we embark on the journey to pass a bill—are points that have to be addressed such as drafting a bill that is comprehensive and enforceable. We can do that through legislative counsel of either the House or Senate. There have to be House or Senate sponsors. We can do that. There has to be a united backing from the afore-mentioned producer and consumer, organizations, universities, wildlife groups, fisheries along with hunters and fishers. We can do that, starting with consultations with them on what should the bill accomplish.

That we need more animal health research is a conclusion that

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Animal Health Research

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is self evident. The question we should ask ourselves is, "Have we got a plan to correct it?"

What do you think? I would like to hear from you.

President's Corner

from page 2

United States members only. Our international allies contribute immensely to our meetings and we will encourage greater participation but when there are sensitive issues on the table there are provisions to exclude them from participation as well. This has been a difficult issue but I think the Committee has come up with a plan that will work.

SUPPORT OF USDA'S construction plans for animal disease research and diagnostic laboratories remains of highest priority to our Association.

Dick McCapes and Bob Frost visited Ames, Iowa, to gather information for a special edition of the Newsletter on the proposed upgrade of the three USDA facilities that consist of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) National Animal Disease Center (NADC), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) and the APHIS Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB). As a result of the deteriorated condition of these Federal Laboratories and facilities, the United States is incapable of meeting the standards we require of our foreign trading partners or the worldwide OIE standards of trade. I feel we must do everything within our power to secure the funding necessary to bring these facilities out of their disgraceful situation.

The Plum Island situation is very alarming. Recent articles in the New York times indicate that

there is a very strong opposition among Long Island residents to any enhancement of the laboratory to a BSL 4 facility. Michael Forbes has vowed not to let it happen. Politics being what they are, what are the possibilities of getting any money appropriated for the upgrade in the near future? He was very successful in killing the budget proposals in the last cycle.

Someone needs to take leadership responsibilities to make decisions to assure that there are facilities available for study of disease entities that are also infectious to humans, in an environment that will not hinder scientific research or the admission of infected animals to the facility.

If Plum Island is to be salvaged, we the stakeholders in the facility need to support efforts to enlighten the populace of Long Island to the good things that go on there and relieve the anxiety and paranoia surrounding the myths presently being espoused. We also need to support the appropriation of the funds to upgrade. I call on VS and ARS to get their act together and do whatever it takes to salvage the facility. If you take a firm lead and demonstrate that you truly can work together you will get the support you need.

THIS WILL BE my last regular Newsletter article as your President. The year has passed very quickly and there have been many issues to make it an eventful one. It has been challenging and a lot of fun. It has been a pleasure to serve with a Board of Directors that has worked exceedingly well together. The Board is unanimously supportive of the Long-Range Plan and I'm sure the same dedication and support will follow Bob Hillman as has me.

I look forward to my role as Past President and will assist the Board with the same dedication as while I was President.

Welcome to Birmingham

from page 1

Their Scientific Sessions start on Saturday, October 21st, and continue through Monday morning, October 23rd.

USAHA activities begin with Committee and Subcommittee meetings on Saturday, October 21st. Committee meetings will continue through Wednesday, October 25th.

USAHA will be having two special Scientific Sessions. The first will be Tuesday afternoon, October 24th and will address OIE - International Trade issues. The second scientific session on Wednesday, October 25th, will focus on Wildlife - Livestock Disease Interactions.

The President's Reception and the Joint USAHA/AAVLD General Session will be Sunday evening, October 22nd. Plentiful and filling hors d'oeuvres will be served at the reception.

Special workshops are also scheduled during this year's meeting. These workshops include the John's Working Group, Workshop on Epidemiological Methods and Approaches for Food Safety, Blue Ribbon Panel for Vesicular Stomatitis and the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards.

We look forward to seeing you in Birmingham. Please be sure to make your hotel reservations and to send in your meeting registration information to the Richmond office as soon as possible.

Editor's note: For information on Spouses Activities at the annual meeting in Birmingham, see the article on page 9.

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