Nearly 1,000 registrants, guests and spouses gathered in Birmingham, Ala., last October for the 104th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association and the 43rd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians.

The Sheraton Birmingham Hotel served as the headquarters and proved to be an excellent meeting facility for USAHA. Thirty one resolutions were approved by the membership on a wide range of subjects and are posted on the association’s web page (www.usaha.org).

Committee reports and news releases pertaining to the annual meeting also can be accessed from the USAHA web page. Written proceedings of the meeting are being prepared by the

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Joan Arnoldi Reflects On a Career in APHIS

by Joan M. Arnoldi, DVM

Editor’s note: Prior to joining APHIS, Dr. Arnoldi served as the nation’s first woman to be appointed as a State Veterinarian (Wisconsin). She relates that the National Assembly of Chief Livestock Health Officials (State Veterinarians), then all male, presented her with a silver cup in recognition of this milestone. “Wasn’t that a nice gesture?” she remarked to me.

In 1986 and 1987, she was elected Third and Second Vice President, respectively, of the USAHA, the first woman to hold these offices since the Association was founded in 1897. She was unable to continue as an officer in USAHA after joining APHIS in 1988, otherwise, she would have subsequently served as the Association’s first woman president.

Joan is enjoying retirement and raising Arabian horses in Verona, Wisconsin.

As I look back on my career in APHIS, four very distinct phases occurred. Each had its challenges and rewards which, though unplanned, prepared me for the next phase.

Regulatory Enforcement and Animal Care (REAC)

I arrived in Washington, D.C., from Wisconsin in 1988, where I had served as the State Veterinarian and Administrator for Animal Health. I was not sure what I was going to be doing, but Acting Administrator Jim Glosser assured me that I was qualified to lead this new APHIS unit, REAC. How naïve and unprepared I was for the federal bureaucracy and the job challenge. APHIS had just undergone a major reorganization and everyone was either angry or very concerned whether or not this new organization could function effectively. REAC was a combination of the enforcement part of Veterinary Services and the animal welfare function. At the time, Regulatory Enforcement (RE) was a fully

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Great Attendance at Birmingham Meeting

by J. Lee Alley, Secretary

Nearly 1,000 registrants, guests and spouses gathered in Birmingham, Ala., last October for the 104th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association and the 43rd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians.

The Sheraton Birmingham Hotel served as the headquarters and proved to be an excellent meeting facility for USAHA.
President’s Corner

GREETINGS TO ALL. It is my fervent hope that each of you and your families had a great holiday season.

From all reports we had a very good meeting in Birmingham. Most members with whom I spoke were complimentary about the meeting. We had nearly 1,000 in attendance.

Thirty-one resolutions were approved by the general membership and a number of recommendations were generated from our committees. The resolutions have already been distributed to the targeted audience. The recommendation letters that have been received to date have all been completed and distributed. However, several committee chairs have not developed recommendation letters to date. If you happen to be one of those chairs, please get your recommendation letter to the office as soon as possible.

While, from all reports our meeting in Birmingham was very successful, we do have a dispute with the hotel. We are working with representatives of the hotel to resolve this dispute and hope to be successful in our efforts.

Bob Hillman

Government Relations Committee Will Meet in Washington, D.C. in Early February

by Mack Lea, First Vice President

The USAHA Committee on Government Relations will meet in Washington, D.C., February 11-15, 2001. This committee meets annually to communicate with federal officials responsible for animal health programs, animal health research, food safety, drug issues, animal welfare and wildlife.

This meeting serves as a forum for USAHA as an organization of state officials, university personnel and industry representatives to voice ideas and concerns involving animal health issues at the federal level and provide information, data and support for issues vital to the entire U.S. livestock industry.

The committee is composed of USAHA’s elected officers, the immediate past president, presidents of the USAHA’s four regional animal health associations, the chair of the district-at-large and the AVMA representative to the Association.

For the past several years, USAHA committee chairs have been invited and encouraged to attend the meeting in Washington, D.C. The same invitation is extended to chairs for the meeting this year. It is hoped that as many as possible will attend. If the chair cannot make the meeting, the vice-chair will be most welcome. The strength of the USAHA lies in its committees. It is very important that as many committees as possible participate in the Government Relations Committee meeting.

The AAVLD Board of Directors is holding a midyear board meeting in Washington, D.C., at the same time and will participate in the Government Relations Committee meetings with federal agencies. The officers of both organizations will have an opportunity to meet to enhance common interests and goals.

For more information or questions concerning the Government Relations Committee and the meeting in February, please contact Mack Lea at 225-925-3980 or maxwel_l@ldaf.state.la.us.

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 President Bob Hillman has announced that Bret Marsh, State Veterinarian for Indiana and long-time member of USAHA, will become the editor of the "USAHA" newsletter. Marsh will assume the editorship duties from outgoing editor Dick McCapes, who served in this capacity for the past six years.

Dr. Marsh indicated that he and Denise Derrer, Public Information Director, in coordination with the USAHA office, will be responsible for the newsletter content and prepress development activities.

Marsh will take the helm of the newsletter beginning with the regular spring edition. Two special editions of the newsletter, currently in development, will be published during the transition.

Article submissions and content suggestions may be sent to Dr. Marsh via email at (animalhealth-board@boah.state.in.us) or by phone at (317) 227-0300.

Dr. Marsh is an active member of the Association and is former chair of the Epizootic Attack Committee. He was recently named by President Hillman to chair the Pseudorabies Committee.
Unanimous Support for New National USDA Labs

Passage of Resolution Advocating Construction of Ames, Iowa, Facilities Championed by 17 USAHA Committees

by Bob Frost, Second Vice President

The 104th USAHA annual meeting, consisting of the nation’s largest coalition of animal agricultural producers, chief state livestock health officials, federal and state agencies, regulatory, scientific, and industrial groups, provided unanimous support for USDA’s proposed “ARS-APHIS Master Plan for Facility Consolidation and Modernization” in Ames, Iowa.

The widespread stakeholder support was solidified by the action of 17 USAHA committees in sponsoring Resolution #1 (see adjoining box), which, in turn, was unanimously approved by the Association’s membership during the final business section.

Prior to the Birmingham meeting, John A. Schmitz, chairman of the Committee on Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Lama, realized that all USAHA committees are affected in one way or another by the three federal facilities at Ames. He, therefore, distributed the proposed resolution for support of the Master Plan to all committee chairs.

Throughout the week-long meeting, the directors of the three USDA facilities and an Iowa State support group met with as many committees and groups as time allowed to present an understanding of the progress of the Master Plan and to fine tune the wording of the resolution.

Resolution #1 was sponsored by the following USAHA committees:

- Animal Health Information Systems
- Bluetongue and Bovine Retroviruses
- Brucellosis
- Captive Wildlife and Alternative Livestock
- Food Safety
- Foreign and Emerging Animal Diseases
- Import/Export
- Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Lama
- Infectious Diseases of Horses

and to Johne’s Disease
- Parasitic Diseases
- Pharmaceuticals
- Pseudorabies
- Transmissible Diseases of Poultry and Other Avian Species
- Transmissible Diseases of Swine
- Tuberculosis
- Wildlife Diseases

Congress appropriated 9 million dollars for the Master Plan

First-time Attendees to USAHA Annual Meeting Give Their Impressions

Editor’s Note: For four individuals, who attended the Birmingham meeting to discuss the construction of the proposed new national USDA laboratories, it was their first USAHA meeting. They were asked to jot down their impressions of the experience and their responses follow:

This was the first USAHA meeting that I have ever attended, even though I have spent my career in animal health. My excuse is that I have been working mostly overseas.

I had heard a lot about USAHA in my travels, so I was very keen to see the beast in action.

It really is a unique forum, bringing together researchers, policy makers, producers, feds and...
Nation Marks Milestone in Brucellosis Eradication Program

by Larry Mark, Press Officer
(703) 451–3954, webmaster@usaha.org

RICHMOND, Va. Jan. 9, 2001—As the year 2000 drew to a close, the nation marked an historic moment in the fight to eradicate brucellosis: For the first time in history, there is no known brucellosis infection in commercial cattle or bison in the United States.

“We reached an apparent zero infection in late December when Florida lifted a quarantine on a previously infected herd that had been cleaned up and Texas depopulated its last known infected herd,” said Dr. Bob Hillman, president of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA). USAHA, an organization composed of state and federal veterinarians, laboratory diagnosticians, researchers, academicians and livestock producers, has been instrumental in developing and recommending implementation of standards for the cooperative state-federal brucellosis eradication program.

Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that causes cattle and some other species of animals, such as bison and elk, to abort, deliver weak calves or produce less milk. In humans, where it is also called undulant fever or Malta fever, the disease causes severe flu-like symptoms that can last for months or years if left untreated.

Hillman pointed out that no newly infected herds have been found in the United States since last July when infection was discovered in a cattle herd in Navarro County, Texas. “However,” he added, “we can’t afford to relax our surveillance efforts. This is an insidious disease whose signs are not always easily seen.”

Hillman noted that currently the only remaining foci of brucellosis in the United States is in the Greater Yellowstone Area, which includes Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, the National Elk Refuge and portions of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, where free-ranging bison and elk are infected. These animals pose a disease threat to cattle in surrounding brucellosis-free states and serve as the only known source for reintroduction of the disease into domestic cattle and bison herds.

Hillman said that state and federal officials are working to develop and implement plans to control and eventually eliminate brucellosis from bison and elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

Currently, 46 States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are classified as brucellosis-free, meaning that they have had no infected cattle or domestic bison herds for at least one year and have active surveillance programs in place for the disease. Four states—Florida, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas—are in the final stage of eradicating the disease and, with no known infection at this time, are now in the final one-year countdown phase.

The brucellosis eradication program is carried out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in cooperation with the cattle industry and animal health agencies in the various states.

Efforts to combat brucellosis began as part of a cattle reduction program in July 1934 because of extreme drought conditions. The program lapsed during World War II, but was accelerated in 1954 as an eradication effort with additional funds. At that time, an estimated 124,000 cattle herds were infected with the disease.

A major boost to program operations came in 1978 when a special commission completed a two-year study by concluding that “control leading to eradication is biologically feasible.” By August 1990, the number of quarantined herds had dropped below the 1,000 mark and five years later to fewer than 100. In 1997, the Brucellosis Emergency Action Plan, which provided additional funds and procedures, was implemented.

“Our progress in eradicating this disease can be directly credited to producer cooperation and the efforts of state, federal and private veterinarians,” Hillman said. “All are to be congratulated. But, while we have reached this historic milestone, we can’t become complacent about this insidious disease. We must continue active surveillance until we are sure that no more infected herds exist in the United States.”

It has been estimated that if brucellosis were allowed to spread, beef and dairy production costs would increase by an estimated $80 million within 10 years.

Editor’s Note: The above news release is posted under “News” on the USAHA webpage (www.usaha.org). Also, see “Reunion of Brucellosis Workers” on page 6.

I can give you a six-word formula for success: “Think things through—then follow through.”

Edward V. (Eddie) Rickenbacker
200 Attend Gathering for “Bang’s” Veterans

The first reunion of brucellosis workers was held at Birmingham, Ala., on Oct. 23, 2000, in conjunction with the 104th annual meeting of the USAHA. There were some 200 people in attendance at the evening affair that included a delicious meal and time for fun and reminiscence. Workers from every facet of the brucellosis eradication program were in attendance.

Dr. Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator, USDA, APHIS, VS, representing the federal partnership of the brucellosis program, spoke briefly on the status and progress of the program and the tremendous accomplishment in reducing the disease level to the point of virtual eradication from cattle and domestic swine. Dr. Bob Hillman, State Veterinarian of Idaho, representing the state partnership, reviewed various aspects of the brucellosis program and changes that brought the program to its present level of success. He was particularly complimentary of the “people in the trenches,” namely, livestock inspectors, animal health technicians and veterinary medical officers, in the success of the program. Dr. R.K. Anderson, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota, Schools of Veterinary Medicine and Public Health, representing the industry side of the partnership, spoke about some key changes made in the brucellosis program during the 1970’s that put the program on the road to success.

Dr. Valerie Ragan, National Brucellosis Epidemiologist, USDA, APHIS, VS, served as the mistress of ceremonies for the evening. She did a pictorial review of various people and activities associated with the brucellosis program that was both historical and frequently humorous. The last event of the evening was a videotape entitled, “The Disco Cow,” which starred J. Lee Alley, Mike Gilsdorf, John Ragan, and Claude Barton. Needless to say, this comedy of misdirected questions produced no academy award nominees.

As a follow-up to the reunion, Dr. Terry Conger, Epidemiologist, Texas Animal Health Commission, has agreed to put together a book of memorabilia of the brucellosis program. In order for him to do this, he will need articles and pictures from many people. These should be sent to Dr. Conger, Texas Animal Health Commission, P.O. Box 12966, Austin, TX 78711-2966.

Editor’s note: See “No Known Brucellosis in Commercial Herds,” page 5.

In most things, success depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed.  
Charles de Secondt
printer and will be mailed during early 2001.

The Joint USAHA/AAVLD General Session on Sunday evening, including the Presidents’ Reception, was a highlight of the meeting. Tom Williamson, President of the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, and Billy Powell, Executive Vice President, Alabama Cattlemen’s Association, welcomed the attendees to Alabama.

Mo Salman, Colorado State University, was presented the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Administrator’s National Animal Health Award by APHIS Administrator, Craig Reed.

Wes Towers, Delaware State Veterinarian, was honored as the recipient of the 2000 National Assembly Award by National Assembly President Tom Hagerty.

One amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws was approved by the membership. This amendment gives the Executive Committee the authority to establish the amount of the association’s annual dues. The Executive Board approved new dues beginning at the conclusion of the 104th Annual Meeting. The new dues are $100 for individual members and $600 for official and allied organization members.

The Executive Board also approved increased non-member registration fees for the annual meeting. Registration fees for non-members beginning in 2001 will be $300 for pre-registration and $350 at the meeting.

The Executive Committee, chaired by President-elect Bob Hillman, reviewed the re-write of the constitution and bylaws. The proposed new Bylaws will be included in the proceedings of the 104th Annual Meeting. This document will be presented to the general membership during the 105th Annual Meeting.
During the last Business Session, Treasurer Wes Towers reported on the Association’s financial status and President Zirkle updated members on the “state of the Association.” President Zirkle then passed the gavel to President-Elect Hillman, who, in turn, spoke to the membership on his plans for the upcoming year.

Past President Dick McCapes presented outgoing President Ernie Zirkle with the USAHA plaque commemorating his year as USAHA President and the gold USAHA Past President’s Key.
VS Safeguarding Review To Begin

Will Aid Ability to Respond to Adverse Animal Health Events

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

Foot-and-mouth disease in Argentina and Uruguay—Nipah virus in Malaysia—classical swine fever in Great Britain. The world is teeming with animal diseases. Diseases we do not have in this country.

The prospect of an adverse animal health event, such as the introduction of FMD, grows as our interaction in the global environment expands. As an agency, Veterinary Services (VS) is challenged in its safeguarding efforts with the need to protect animal health within the framework of an ever-changing global economy and international agreements.

Additional pressures on our safeguarding abilities come from emerging diseases, invasive species, potential risks from wildlife diseases spilling over to domestic livestock, concerns about agro-terrorism, and genetically modified disease agents. It is essential for this country to have an effective and efficient system that maximizes our capacity to detect, respond and correct any adverse situation regardless of its source.

NASDA Conducting Review

That is why Veterinary Services is undertaking a safeguarding review. It will be conducted by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). Given the cooperative nature of VS’ animal health programs, the selection of NASDA made a great deal of sense. Each state plays an integral part in protecting U.S. animal health on a national level by implementing standardized animal health regulations, conducting surveillance, assisting with foreign animal disease investigations, and responding to potential disease introductions.

NASDA’s review panel and committee chairs are comprised of individuals representing industry, academia and the states whose expertise and knowledge is deep. Gus Douglass, Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, is chairing the safeguarding review. Lester Spell, Commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture, is vice chair.

Beth Lautner of the National Pork Producers Council is heading the Detection and Surveillance committee; Richard Ross of Iowa State University is chairing the Exclusion committee; Martha Roberts of the Florida Department of Agriculture is chairing the International committee; and Donald Lein of Cornell University is heading the Response committee. Additional members of the review panel are Peter Timoney, University of Kentucky; Richard Breitmeyer, State Veterinarian for California; Sherman Wilhelm, Florida Department of Agriculture; Paul Rogers, American Sheep Industry; Bob Hillman, Idaho Department of Agriculture; Sharon Heitala, California Diagnostic Laboratory; and Gary Weber, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

Covers Four Main Areas

The review will look at what is working well, what needs to be addressed, and what enhancements or new initiatives would improve the overall safeguarding system covering four main areas:

• Exclusion activities - those things designed to prevent the introduction of invasive species, pests and diseases into the country.

• International information - collection and analysis of data is needed for timely decision making on risk analysis, create regulations, identify threats and facilitate trade.

• Domestic surveillance and detection - those activities that monitor for diseases/pests affecting the United States animal population. Detection includes activities to identify diseases/pests not known to occur in this country or in particular regions of the United States and other animal health events.

• Response - actions needed to prepare for and address adverse animal health events.

VS’ expectations for this review are very high. It is a unique opportunity for a comprehensive independent external review that will provide a broad range of insights to further strengthen our safeguarding approaches. The value of animal industries in the U.S. is more than $100 billion, and the value of animal exports is more than $11 billion, making the safeguarding role a crucial one, and giving Veterinary Services the chance to engage customers and stakeholders in a discussion and assessment of our activities.

USAHA supports USDA labs from page 4

with the stipulation that only 2 million dollars could initially be spent in preparing architectural and engineering costs along with an assessment of the role, scope, and needs of the animal health institutes and facilities in Ames. Both of these analysis will be completed and included in the Secretary of Agriculture’s report to Congress in March, 2001.

A special edition of this newsletter will feature the Master Plan and coincide with the ARS-APHIS report to the Secretary. At that time, nation-wide stakeholder support will be needed to emphasize the urgency in implementing the Master Plan.

The multitude which does not reduce itself to unity is confusion; the unity which does not depend on the multitude, is tyranny.

Blaise Pascal
functioning unit of well-trained, very professional individuals, whereas Animal Care (AC), as a separate unit, did not exist. This meant that AC had to be built from scratch while new animal care regulations were being developed. These regulations were very controversial with the regulated industries, animal protection organizations, the Congress, USDA, etc.

I found my way to Dr. Glosser’s office. He welcomed me warmly, pointed to a large stack of folders, which he had been saving for me, and said my office was in Hyattsville. So much for instructions! I didn’t know where Hyattsville was nor how to get there. However, I did manage to arrive in Hyattsville and was told that my office was on the sixth floor. Still carrying the large stack of folders, I found my office. No desk, no chairs, no secretary, etc.

Four years later, RE was serving not only Animal Care, but all APHIS programs with an excellent investigative and enforcement service. Animal Care was a fully functioning organization of well-trained and dedicated veterinarians, animal health technicians, scrutiny and support people—all of whom really wanted to improve the well-being of animals. New animal welfare regulations were in place that, for the first time, incorporated the idea of psychological well-being of certain animals, rather than engineering standards. All of this was accomplished with a great deal of public scrutiny on the people trying to build the organization and accomplish their new tasks. What a wonderful group of caring federal employees. I learned so much from them and have total respect for the fine job they are doing yet today.

In accomplishing all of this, one does not win popularity contests and APHIS decided to put a new person in the hot seat. I was given a wonderful new career opportunity.

National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL)

From Washington, D.C. to Ames, Iowa, what a contrast—the people, the lifestyle, the job. I needed to totally adjust. The laboratories, which included the Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory on Plum Island, were a fully functioning, well-regarded organization well isolated from the politics and hectic pace of headquarters. The laboratory personnel were a group of highly trained scientists and support staff, many of whom had been in place for 20 to 30 years. My experience and skills in designing a new organization and representing a controversial unit in the public spotlight were not needed here. I needed to gain acceptance and learn as quickly as possible what changes I might make to improve the climate for the talented employees of NVSL, who were being impacted by ever-increasing workload and declining resources. I was, and still am, so impressed with the talent that exists in Ames. A unique situation exists there. The National Animal Disease Center (NADC) of ARS, Iowa State University (ISU) and NVSL—all working to improve animal health in a collegial and mutually supporting manner—was a pleasure to observe and be a part of. The result of this was some excellent science.

After some observation time and learning from NVSL employees, it seemed that a new management system that would involve more decision making by the employees would benefit the laboratories. There would be great benefit if we could tap into the wealth of knowledge that existed. With the help of an outside contractor, a new system was installed that allowed all to have input into management of their organization.

In conjunction with NADC and the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine, the NVSL became a key member of the Ames Center for Animal Health, which allowed even better pooling of resources and gave recognition to the unique talent in Ames.

I also determined that NVSL had an international role that needed to be strengthened. It had been individual and somewhat piecemeal up to that point. If NVSL was going to accept international exposure, there was a need to improve credibility and verification of techniques and standards. What was needed was a quality-assurance program that was verifiable and could easily be shared with others. At first, the idea met with some resistance—who was this person from Washington questioning their methods and results? Once again, turning the challenge over to the people who knew the most, the employ-
Veterinary Services was a well-established organization with a long list of major achievements and a proud heritage in disease control and prevention. Several major eradication programs were nearing completion. There still existed, however, unhappiness underlying all of this due to the reorganization nine years previous, which stripped away part of the organization. Many employees still took this very personally.

As Deputy in VS, the challenges arrive on your desk with regularity, each requiring that pertinent information is gathered, analyzed and a decision made with very little pause as the next problem has arrived and is demanding your attention. I quickly learned to rely on the many experienced and knowledgeable professionals in VS. I soon discovered that a very important and demanding role in this position was not only to listen and respond to the concerns of our domestic livestock industries, but to function in an international capacity as well. To lead the U.S. delegation in OIE was an awesome experience. I was able to rely on our experienced partner in APHIS, International Services, for guidance in this function. I was able to see progress in our relationships with several countries as I worked with my OIE counterparts in other countries to solve animal health concerns.

The greatest crises that occurred during my tenure was the world-wide panic over BSE. Protecting this nation without causing undue public concern required making some controversial decisions. It was essential to rely on the best science available. The hog cholera epidemic in the Netherlands and again in the Caribbean weighed heavily upon VS when you realize what is at stake should any of these problems enter the United States Veterinary Services was the most satisfying position in my professional career and I am grateful to have had that opportunity.

The Administrator’s Office

One day the telephone rang. It was the new APHIS Administrator asking would I like to be Associate Administrator for APHIS? My thoughts were racing; could I really do that in APHIS with all of its complexities and multitude of programs? How long do I have to consider that? The answer—unless you tell me no right now, you are the APHIS Associate Administrator. I could not say no to this exciting new challenge. With many regrets, I gave up my position in VS and moved to the Administrator’s Office.

The challenges here were very different. I needed to be a very quick study to learn, in general, all of the APHIS programs. It is difficult to become a generalist and totally dependent on others for technical and detail informa-

Meeting with USAHA Committee on Government Relations, Hyattsville, Maryland, 1999.

**Letter to the Editor**

by Bob Frost, Llama producer, Lincoln, California

“How many bison can Yellowstone National Park support?” More importantly, how many healthy bison can Yellowstone National Park (YNP) support? Let us then examine that same carrying capacity and slip a brucellosis diseased herd factor into the equation.

Keith Aune in his article (October 2000, USAHA Newsletter) “Yellowstone Bison and Brucellosis: Does Population Size Really Matter?” has the facts right out in the open. Historically when bison numbers are below 2,000, there is not any migration out of the park.

The federal agencies involved must reduce the bison herd to below 1,500 animals and apply some programs that have been successful in Wind Cave National Park, Custer State Park, and Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma. The common theme in the above-mentioned schemes was to drastically lower the bison population.

The purpose of this letter is not to detail a specific formula for determining YNP bison carrying capacity and brucella control, but rather to point out that the first step is clearly defined by Keith Aune’s article. Reduce the YNP bison population to below 1,500. Then federal agencies should start an aggressive program for brucellosa eradication and see how the bison and the park’s ecosystem respond in the next 10 to 15 years.

Oh yes, and about that “public acceptability” on methods of disease eradication. Since when, in our nation’s 80-plus years of tuberculosis and brucellosis eradication programs, has public opinion overruled scientific policy on zoonotic disease eradication?

**Thanks for your support!**

by Dick McCapes

This is the last regular edition of the “USAHA” newsletter for which I will serve as editor.

Early last year, I informed the Association that I would step aside from these responsibilities. A search for a replacement was initiated and President Hillman has just announced that Bret Marsh will be the editor starting with the spring edition (see page 3). This is great news!

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed to and supported the newsletter over the past six years. And in particular, I want to thank Wes Towers, who, as USAHA President in 1994/95, asked me to serve as editor. His confidence and support set in motion one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life.

Writing, developing a story, page-layout and electronic publishing technology have been engrossing hobbies of mine for some time. From my viewpoint, President Towers’ request was one of those wonderful serendipitous events that occur from time to time in life.

USAHA has played a central role in my business and professional career since attending my first meeting in 1963 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. And serving the Association the past six years as both an officer and as editor has been most rewarding.

At age 67, my plan for the future is “no plan” and I am looking forward to this new “adventure.”

**USAHA**

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USAHA Newsletter, Vol. 28, No. 1, January, 2001
tion. I quickly was introduced into the complexities of briefing the Undersecretary or even the Secretary on issues of the moment. Most of my phone calls were no longer of a technical nature, but needed a rapid response to an issue with broad and serious implications. This was indeed a very challenging environment. As in previous positions, but now more than ever, the role of my colleagues on the APHIS Management Team was critical to the functioning of the Administrator’s Office. A valuable camaraderie and mutual support resulting in long-lasting friendships exists in that team and contributes to the overall success of APHIS.

Summary

I cherish my time spent with APHIS and am grateful for the many opportunities that I was offered. APHIS is well regarded all over the world and can point to numerous successes during its existence, which have served agriculture and public health well. The real strength of the organization lies in the hard-working, dedicated employees of APHIS. The future is bright as the need for APHIS continues to grow. The challenge will be to continue to attract a work force with this dedication.

First-time Attendees

from page 4

state operators. This is a powerful recipe for success.

If we are to stay ahead of the seriously changing curve in animal health, getting good decisions from debate and teamwork is critical. The USDA contingent were really pleased that members gave such outstanding support for new facilities in Ames.

When members take initiatives like this, USAHA is a very powerful agent for change. So, I decided to join up, even though payment can be difficult from someone with Scottish genes.

But I need help for the next meeting. Advice on the agenda is my top priority; understanding it obviously takes takes a lifetime of study. I hope that by then we will have funding for the Ames plan. If not, I am sure that Bob Frost will have us put on another song and dance act for support.

by Jim Roth, Exec. Director, Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologics

I was impressed with the breadth of topics covered at the US Animal Health Association meeting in Birmingham. It was interesting to witness the interaction of veterinarians, producers, government officials, industry representatives and university scientists as they listened to scientific presentations and worked to develop consensus on animal health issues of major national and international importance.

The resolutions that were developed at the meeting will help to guide animal health policies for the nation. One of the most valuable aspects of the USAHA meeting is the opportunity to interact with a wide variety of colleagues and to build collaborative interactions.

by Gary Steinke, Director of Governmental Relations, Office of the President, ISU

As the Director of Governmental Relations for Iowa State University and as someone who provides information and guidance on various agriculture-related issues to members of Congress and to State legislative officials, I was very impressed with the USAHA conference I attended in Birmingham this year.

Not only was the conference very strong on the science side of the equation, but the right blend of policy and information sharing took place, which made this conference one of the most informative and intense I have ever attended.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your conference, and I hope the USAHA will invite me back to attend next year.

by Jane Gaylon, Program Coordinator, Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologics

I attended the USAHA annual meeting in Birmingham in October. The meeting provides an excellent format for producers, researchers, state and federal government officials, and representatives of the commodity groups to work together to overcome animal disease threats in the United States. I was most impressed with the level of enthusiasm of the participants at the meeting and their dedication to improving animal health and production in the United States.

Book Reviews

from page 14


This is a biography of that remarkable scientific genius Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), emphasizing his revolutionary observations and unique proofs that the earth rotates around the sun, a tender, supportive and enduring relationship between he and his oldest daughter, a cloistered nun, decades of tribulations with fools and nay sayers—including persecution by the Inquisitors of the Catholic Church—and, finally, the legions of followers throughout the world to whom he brought light and brave leadership. A fine read.


This is the first of a series of 20 historical seafaring novels by Englishman O’Brien about the adventures of Captain Jack Aubrey, of the British Royal Navy and his friend Stephen Maturin, the ship’s surgeon, at the end of 18th and early 19th centuries and during the Napoleonic wars (www.wwnorton.com/pob).

For absolute enjoyment, I have never experienced a more exciting, fun and educational author. I have finished 17 of
President's Corner
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this important issue.

The Safeguarding Review of USDA-APHIS-VS is underway. The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture has been awarded a contract to conduct the review. The review committees have been established. By the time you read this, the first meeting of the entire review group will have been held. A number of USAHA members were selected to serve on the committees. We are pleased for the opportunity to participate in this important effort and look forward to a beneficial outcome of the review.

Efforts are ongoing to develop a legislative proposal that will modernize and improve USDA's animal health statutory authority. It is our understanding that HB4801 is dead. The current effort is to start from ground zero and develop a new bill. The National Assembly and Animal Agriculture Coalition are working with Agriculture Committee staff to develop a bill that we can all support. Dr. Tom Hagerty has developed a committee of National Assembly members to aid in this effort. Dr. Ernie Zirkle is participating in meetings with the Animal Agriculture Coalition and the Agriculture Committee to aid our efforts.

The Government Relations Committee meeting has been scheduled for February 11-15 in Washington, D.C. Dr Max Lea has developed a great agenda for this meeting. We are looking forward to an outstanding meeting. I hope that all the committee chairs and vice chairs can attend.

In December, USDA, USDI and the State of Montana signed the Record of Decision for the Montana/Yellowstone National Park Bison Management Plan. The plan is an improvement over the current Interim Bison Management Plan that has been in place for several years. The plan is a three-phase plan and it clearly establishes boundaries beyond which bison will not be tolerated. It includes vaccination of bison calves and yearlings outside the park with a "safe" vaccine; vaccination of all eligible bison in the park with a "safe and efficacious" vaccine (vaccination in the park must be initiated before initiation of phase 3 of the plan); and requires all of the involved agencies to work side-by-side in implementation of the plan.

It is disappointing to animal health officials that the plan is a bison management plan, not a brucellosis control/elimination plan. However, the plan should be acceptable as a first step toward control and elimination of brucellosis from bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

The items outlined in this article demonstrate our need for a more year around organization. Your Board of Directors is working hard to address issues, participate in events and meetings and stay abreast of issues of interest to our members. These efforts will continue throughout the year.

I plan to attend each of the USAHA District meetings and look forward to seeing many of you at these events. Have a great new year.

Webpage Update
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The USAHA Board of Directors meets by telephone conference call each month. At the Dec. 7 call, the subject of posting minutes of these conference call meetings on the Web was discussed and we are looking at the most feasible way of doing this. I think this will help inform the members about the organization’s activities that occur throughout the year.

The 2000 resolutions and all the committee reports are now posted on our Web site, along with a few speeches. As the proceedings move along in the printing cycle, we will finalize the additional papers and upload them to the Web site.

As always, I’m looking for suggestions and comments to improve our Internet presence. Please feel free to call me or send me an e-mail.

• Larry Mark, USAHA Webmaster; email us at webmaster@usaha.org

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these novels, purchased the remaining three and eagerly look forward to reading them soon at the beach. One day, I know I will read all of these O’Brien books again.

O’Brien, who passed away last year in his 80’s, challenges your mind on every page and on several fronts, including vocabulary, geography, navigation, geopolitics, the construction, rigging, sailing and fighting of wooden men-of-war and, delightfully, the culinary creations enjoyed by sailors and officers in His Majesty’s Ships. Do not miss these books!

“The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror Famine” by Robert Conquest and published by the Oxford University Press.

Unquestionably, the most difficult and unforgettable book I have ever encountered. Conquest presents a carefully referenced work graphically describing Stalin’s and the Soviet communist party’s war (1929-33) against the peasantry of the Soviet Union to force collectivization upon them and, secondly, to destroy Ukrainian nationalism. As a result of this “war,” 11 million peasants died between 1930-37. An additional 3.5 million were arrested and later died in camps, for a grand total of 14.5 million deaths, including 19 percent of the population of the Ukraine. A loss greater than the total deaths for all the nations in World War I.

The difficulty in reading this book is the abject horror one feels when confronted with the grisly and hideously evil brutality and bestiality that Stalin and the communists resorted to and their obscene justification for the mass killing of their fellow citizens as simply a necessary step to achieve communism’s ideal of utopia. Conquest has served humanity well by providing this documentation.