Record Attendance for USAHA / AAVLD Annual Meeting and Conference

New record breaking attendance for the third consecutive year for the 109th Annual Meeting of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the 48th Annual Conference of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) in Hershey, Pennsylvania, November 3-9, 2005. Total registrants attending the meeting was 1,428, the best ever. There were 74 registrants from 20 foreign countries.

The Presidents Reception and Dinner on Sunday evening was one of the highlights of the meeting. Special guests attending the Dinner included Dennis C. Wolff, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Henry Childers, President of American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and his wife Pat, Bill Hawks former Under Secretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), John Clifford, Deputy Administrator, Veterinary Services (VS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS),

Secretary Johanns Considers USAHA Proposal on NAIS

Dr. Bob Hillman, chairman of USAHA’s Committee on Livestock Identification, visited with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Michael Johanns on January 17.

During their visit the USAHA representatives delivered an invitation to Secretary Johanns to host jointly facilitated sessions about the NAIS. Drs. Marsh and Hillman were tasked with making the trip during USAHA’s annual meeting in November, following the adoption of Resolution 5, regarding NAIS’s tracking database.

According to Dr. Marsh, these meet-

Special Recognition of Dr. and Mrs. Lowell R. Barnes

As President, it is my pleasure to present a special recognition of Dr. Lowell Barnes, one of our life members, and his wife Maryhelen. Dr. Barnes has spent a lifetime protecting our nation’s animal agriculture as well as being a long-time and active member of the United States Animal Health Association. And of course, Mrs. Barnes has been with him every step of the way providing her support.

Dr. Barnes earned his DVM degree in 1935 from the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine. As you
In response to a motion passed during the membership session in Hershey Dr. Bob Hillman, Chair of the Committee on Livestock Identification, and I met with Secretary of Agriculture Michael Johanns to discuss the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Dr. Hillman and I offered to jointly host with USDA a series of facilitated sessions to further discuss the implementation of NAIS. Unlike previous meetings on animal identification, these sessions would be structured in such a way that individuals identified by the many stakeholder groups would meet in a facilitated session to determine where there is agreement, as well as identify those areas that present challenges to our industries, and therefore need definitive solutions. The Secretary was very pleased to meet with us, and he pledged to review the offer and respond back.

In response to Resolution 39, which called upon USDA to continue to support the work of the Inter-American Group for the Eradication of Foot and Mouth Disease (GIEFA), I traveled to South America to express USAHA’s support of their Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) eradication effort. I met with government and agribusiness leaders in Brazil and Ecuador. Although there have been some recent setbacks in their progress, I am confident the South American countries understand the importance of eradicating FMD from the Western Hemisphere. They have pledged to aggressively pursue the goal of eradicating FMD by the year 2010.

The USAHA Committee on Government Relations will be meeting in Washington, D. C. in mid-February, and we will be meeting with government and industry leaders to address the issues brought forward by our membership at the meeting in Hershey. All of the resolutions and recommendations from the USAHA Committees have been forwarded to our colleagues in several federal agencies, and we will meet with them to discuss the actions they have taken thus far.

I am planning to attend each of the district meetings this year, and I look forward to seeing each of you there. If I can be of service to you, please let me know.

Dr. Bret Marsh

Charles Beard Inducted into Agriculture Research Service (ARS) Science Hall of Fame

Dr. Charles W. Beard, who served 21 years as director of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Southeast Poultry Laboratory, Athens, Georgia, has been inducted into the ARS Science Hall of Fame. The ARS Science Hall of Fame recognizes agency researchers for outstanding career achievements in agriculture science. Inductees are nominated by their peers for making major contributions to agriculture research. The scientists must be retired or eligible for retirement to receive the honor.

During his 28-year career at ARS, Beard developed the test for the detection of avian influenza antibodies in se-

(Continued on page 8)

New Commentary On Potential for Avian Influenza Human Pandemic

Over the past several months the reported number of bird deaths and subsequent human deaths resulting from exposure to influenza A-infected birds has increased, making front-page news worldwide. In response to heightened concern about the possibility of a resultant influenza pandemic, CAST has prepared a new Commentary, Avian Influenza: Human Pandemic Concerns.

The likelihood that the next human influenza virus remains primarily an animal disease, there is hope that a pandemic can be prevented. But according to Task Force Coauthor Dr. Donna K. Carver, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, “Every new poultry infection, and subsequent human exposure, gives the virus opportunity to exchange genetic material with other influenza viruses and increase the chance that the bird influenza will become a significant human disease.”

The authors suggest that stopping the spread of this virus will decrease the opportunity for the virus to adapt to humans, and eradication needs to occur at the farm level in the countries where it is currently circulating. “Funding of prevention, surveillance, and eradication efforts in the at-risk countries will provide tools needed to facilitate the eradication process of the virus where it is detected and will prevent further spread and subsequent economic loss,” says Dr. Elizabeth A. Krushinskie of the U. S. Poultry and Egg Association, Task Force co-author.

“In addition to outlining and assessing AI virus and historical pandemics,” concludes CAST Executive Vice Presi-

(Continued on page 7)
News Briefs

USDA Continues Enhanced Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Cattle Surveillance

USDA will not ramp down its enhanced BSE testing of high-risk cattle in December as many have speculated, but will continue the program through at least the first quarter of 2006.

The department announced its plans this week, with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns stating he wanted to be sure that all regions of the country were adequately represented in the testing program, and that otherwise healthy animals are tested as part of USDA’s public commitment on animal testing.

Salmonella Data Shows Incidence Reduction in Beef

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) released the latest data on their regulatory testing for Salmonella. FSIS tests different categories of beef (steers/heifers, cows/bulls, and ground beef) to ensure the operations are meeting the performance standards for Salmonella under the Pathogen Reduction/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (PR/HACCP) final rule. For calendar year 2004, the percent of positive sample sets decreased for all three beef categories from previous years, and have declined dramatically since implementing PR/HACCP in 1996. More information is posted on USDA’s website at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/science/progress_report_salmonella_testing_1998-2004/index.asp.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Surveillance

USDA’s Enhanced BSE Surveillance Program continues having already tested over half million high-risk animals for BSE since June 1, 2004. As of today, the program has tested over 620,000 targeted animals at highest risk for BSE and has found only one confirmed case, evidence that our firewalls are working and the prevalence of this disease in the U.S. is extremely low. Testing 268,500 animals can detect BSE at a rate of 1 in 10 million adult cattle at a 99 percent confidence level.


The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the 2004 U.S. Animal Health Report. This report is a national overview of domestic animal health in the United States. This is the first report of its kind for the United States.

The report addresses the many components of the U.S. animal health infrastructure, animal population demographics, new initiatives and approaches to foreign animal disease surveillance. As an annual publication, the 2004 report will be updated and refined each year, providing another venue to communicate with stakeholders and the public about Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) programs.


IAFWA Recognizes Dr. John Fisher

Dr. John Fischer, Director of Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS), received this year’s Special Recognition Award from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). The award is presented each year to an individual who has distinguished him or herself through outstanding commitment to wildlife management. Sometimes this is in the form of dedication to a single critical effort, but many times the award is given for a career-long history of achievement. The award was presented at the Annual Meeting of IAFWA, held in Nashville, Tennessee, September 11-16, 2005. This is an important and prestigious award. The staff of SCWDS is extremely proud that John and SCWDS have been recognized. For more information about IAFWA and the Special Recognition Award, visit their website at www.iafw.org.

Dr. Wolf Receives Donald E. Bailey Award

Dr. Cindy Wolf was presented the Donald E. Bailey Practitioners of the Year Award for 2005 by the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners. Dr. Wolf, of the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, was recognized for her efforts in small ruminant medicine.
The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is exploring sites for a proposed National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility to replace the aging Plum Island Animal Disease Center.

The Plum Island Center, provides the only research and diagnostic capabilities for many high-consequence foreign animal diseases. It is also the only United States laboratory equipped with research facilities that permit study of these diseases in livestock.

The proposed NBAF would replace the Plum Island Center and enhance capabilities for biological and agriculture defense. The new facility would modernize and integrate agriculture biocontainment laboratories for zoonotic diseases, foreign animal diseases and human pathogens in support of the mission of DHS, United States Departments of Agriculture, and Human and Health Services.

The NBAF would be about 500,000 square feet on at least 30 acres. The DHS is requesting expressions of interest for possible locations from federal agencies, state and local governments, industry, academia and other parties and organizations.

The proposed NBAF would replace the aging Plum Island Establishment a list of sites to include in an environmental impact statement.

The deadline for expressions of interest is on March 31, 2006. Details are available from a January 19, 2006 notice in the Federal Register, which is online at www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/. Information is also available at www.dhs.gov/nbaf or Glynis Fisher by e-mail at glynis.fisher@dhs.gov or by fax at 202-205-3204.

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**USAHA Supports National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative**

John Fischer

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) resolved at its annual meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania to fully support the development and implementation of a National Fish and Wildlife Health Plan by an inclusive working group of appropriate governmental and non-governmental organizations under the leadership of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). A similar resolution in support of the initiative was passed during IAFWA’s annual meeting in September. During recent years, communication and cooperation have increased dramatically between USAHA and IAFWA and the collaborative development of a National Fish and Wildlife Health Plan will offer ample opportunities for both organizations to bring together the diverse stakeholders with concerns for fish, wildlife, and domestic animal health. USAHA support of the initiative is based on the following facts.

The importance of maintaining healthy populations has long been recognized by fish and wildlife managers and several disease issues are of growing concern to natural resource, animal health and public health professionals and the publics they serve. Significant diseases, such as plague, hemorrhagic disease, pasteurellosis, chronic wasting disease, botulism, West Nile virus, whirling disease, and others have been found in wild and farmed fish or wildlife populations in North America and can have significant impacts on resources. Reservoirs of economically important diseases like bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis have inadvertently become established in native wildlife and threaten livestock industries in some areas of the United States. Foreign animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), which was eradicated decades ago, and highly pathogenic avian influenza, which never has been reported in North American wildlife, also are of concern. The intentional or accidental introduction of these diseases or others could significantly impact wildlife, domestic animal, or human populations and would require a coordinated multi-agency response.

State fish and wildlife agencies are the principal front-line managers of fish health and public health professionals and the publics they serve. Significant diseases, such as plague, hemorrhagic disease, pasteurellosis, chronic wasting disease, botulism, West Nile virus, whirling disease, and others have been found in wild and farmed fish or wildlife populations in North America and can have significant impacts on resources. Reservoirs of economically important diseases like bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis have inadvertently become established in native wildlife and threaten livestock industries in some areas of the United States. Foreign animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), which was eradicated decades ago, and highly pathogenic avian influenza, which never has been reported in North American wildlife, also are of concern. The intentional or accidental introduction of these diseases or others could significantly impact wildlife, domestic animal, or human populations and would require a coordinated multi-agency response.

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**Dr. Leon Russell**  
First American Elected WVA President

Dr. Leon H. Russell, Jr. became the first American elected president of the World Veterinary Association (WVA).

For the next three years, Dr. Russell will head the world’s oldest international professional organization comprising nearly a hundred member countries.

“I’m very honored and humbled by your vote,” Dr. Russell told members of the WVA Presidents’ Assembly who elected him. “I will be president to everyone, and I will hear you when you speak.”

The WVA works closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization, and similar organizations on matters of food safety, food security, antimicrobial resistance, animal welfare and zoonotic diseases.
USAHA / AAVLD Annual Meeting

President’s Reception

Various Well-Deserved Awards
Rick Willer,
USAHA’S 2005
President, Passes
The Gavel To 2006
President, Bret
Marsh.
North Central District
Robert Ehlenfeldt

Approximately 65 people attended the North Central District meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania. After welcomes and introduction of guests Dr. Jack Shere updated the District on recent events in the Eastern Region. Drs. Rick Willer and Bret Marsh presented information from the president’s and president’s-elect viewpoint on USAHA issues.

Drs. Bill Hartmann and Linda Glazer made an extensive presentation on bovine tuberculosis in Minnesota. They reported on the investigation of the infected herds to date as well as trace forwards, trace backs and resources needed to do the job.

There was an open discussion on Canadian cattle import problems primarily with numbers of cattle received not matching the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) and missing identification. Dr. Steve Halstead presented information on the Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) regionalization concept.

Dr. Bob Ehlenfeldt gave a brief presentation on Wisconsin’s preparation for hosting the summer 2006 District meeting. This meeting will be held at The Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin, June 13-15.

The meeting concluded with a treasurer’s report and the election of Dr. Steve Halstead as president-elect.

Northeast District
Nancy Halpern

The Northeast District held its biannual breakfast meeting on Sunday, November 6, in Hershey, Pennsylvania during the 109th Annual Meeting of USAHA. Following opening remarks from the president, Nancy Halpern, John Clifford provided a comprehensive update from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS). Rick Willer and Bret Marsh also provided comments from United States Animal Health Association (USAHA).

The association approved the treasurers’ report as well as the proposed by-laws for the association. The Northeast District Annual Meeting is rapidly approaching. The meeting will be held from Monday, March 13 through Wednesday, March 15 at the Seaview Marriott Resort & Spa, in Absecon, New Jersey. The meeting will include a laboratory, rabies, and Regional Dairy Quality Management Association (RDQMA) session on Monday, followed by a conference dinner at the near-by Renault Winery. Additional topics for the remainder of the conference will include Hot Topics such as the emerging influenza’s, ongoing concerns including implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), and the continued expansion of chronic wasting disease (CWD). For more information about the meeting, contact Joanne Lontz at Joanne.lontz@ag.state.nj.us.

Johanns
(Continued from page 1)

USHA Supports Health Initiative
(Continued from page 4)

Avian Flu Pandemic
(Continued from page 2)

ings would present a new opportunity for USDA to work with stakeholders to move ahead to the final goal: a viable nationwide animal identification system. Under USAHA’s proposal, each stakeholder group would designate up to three individuals to participate. The meetings would be facilitated—not just listening sessions—to hammer out strategies for achieving the end goal.

Dr. Marsh applauded the work of the national species working groups and the USDA, but, he acknowledged, the time has come to move to the next step. “We need to get down to a smaller group of people who understand the finer details of how this system has to work,” he said. “Then we need to identify the common ground with the hope of moving this initiative forward.”

During the meeting, Secretary Johanns pledged to consider USAHA’s offer, tasking his staff to review the proposal. Dr. Marsh stated that USAHA is looking forward to the Secretary’s response.

and wildlife resources for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of its citizens, and collectively, the nation. As the principal managers of fish and wildlife resources, state fish and wildlife agencies have primary authority and responsibility for managing free-ranging wildlife, including diseases, and this authority extends to most federal lands. In view of the increasing need for fish and wildlife managers to effectively address disease issues, IAFWA, in cooperation with appropriate governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, including USAHA, is undertaking the development of a National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to protect the health of fish and wildlife resources, as well as the health of domestic animals and humans, in the United States and eventually, in cooperation with Canada and Mexico, throughout North America.

Teacher John M. Bonner, CAST’s new president, “CAST’s new Commentary also evaluates the structure and function of AI viruses as they impact human cases of influenza, outlines pandemic risk assessment, and provides references for further information.”

CAST will be releasing a Companion Piece – Avian Influenza: Trade Issues – In February 2006.

The full text of Avian Influenza: Human Pandemic Concerns (CAST Commentary QTA 2006-1) is available online without charge at the CAST website (www.castscience.org) along with many of CAST’s other scientific publications.

CAST is an international consortium of 37 scientific and professional societies. It assembles, interprets, and communicates credible science-based information regionally, nationally and internationally on food, fiber, agriculture, natural resources and related societal and environmental issues to its stakeholders—legislators, regulators, policymakers, the media, the private sector and the public.
Dr. John Kopec (COR ’65), 69 Churchton, Maryland, died July 3, 2005. Prior to retirement, he worked for the Department of Agriculture. Dr. Kopec began his career with the USDA in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, where he assisted with screwworm eradication. He then worked at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, before becoming area veterinarian-in-charge in Montana. Later, Dr. Kopec worked with brucellosis eradication in Hyattsville, Maryland. He was a veteran of the Air Force. Dr. Kopec’s three sons and a daughter survive him.

Dr. A. R. McLaughlin (KSU ’47), 83, Madison, Wisconsin, died December 3, 2005. Known for his expertise in bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication, he worked for the state of Wisconsin’s Animal Health Division before retiring in 1991. Prior to that, Dr. McLaughlin served as an epidemiologist for the Department of Agriculture. Early in his career, he was in mixed practice in Nickerson, Kansas.

Dr. McLaughlin was a life member of the United States Animal Health Association and the Wisconsin VMA. His wife, Frances; five sons; and a daughter survive him. Memorials may be made to Monona Senior Center, 1011 Nichols Rd., Monona, WI 53716-2530; or Hooked on Bands (helps others get started in a band or playing an instrument), c/o Louise Oasen, 2829 Milwaukee St., Madison, Wisconsin 53704.

Dr. John Mason, formerly with USDA and the U.S. Public Health Service, died July 4, 2005. Dr. Mason began his career with a private veterinary practice. He then moved on to government service in 1946 when he became a staff veterinarian for the United Nations. He administered the USDA’s Mexico Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Program, investigated encephalitis and worked as a malarialogist for the U.S. Public Health Service. He was chosen as director of the Salmonella enteritidis Control Program when it was created in 1990.

Dr. Mason retired from government service in 1994 to be a private food safety consultant to the poultry and egg industry. In 2000 he received the Workhorse of the Year Award from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association.

Mrs. Michele Turner who served as the Executive Officer of the California Wool Growers Association for 15 years died February 2, 2006. She received the Sheep industry’s highest honor, the Golden Fleece Award in 1983. She also served on the United States Animal Health Association’s Committee on Sheep and Goats, and chaired the committee for 12 years. She was appointed by President Reagan to represent the United States on the Tri-National Research Committee on Animal Health.

Beard (Continued from page 2)

rum and egg yolk. This test was widely used during the 1983-84 avian influenza eradication program in Virginia and Pennsylvania and is still relied upon as the primary laboratory procedure for the monitoring of avian influenza in poultry at veterinary diagnostic laboratories in the U.S. and the National Reference Laboratory of Avian Influenza in Ames, Iowa. This test was adopted and is still used worldwide as the definitive test in certifying poultry and poultry products as originating from influenza-free flocks.

Beard was also a member of the team that conceived and developed the filtered air-positive pressure (FAPP) system for the housing of specific pathogen-free poultry. FAPP houses are used worldwide for that purpose.

Beard has conducted experimental studies and published on a wide variety of poultry disease subjects including serology, vaccines, pathogenesis and disease containment. He was the first to demonstrate that not all H7 avian influenza viruses were highly pathogenic. This finding ultimately resulted in a redefinition of the term “fowl plague.”

After leaving ARS, Beard joined the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association as its vice president for research and technology until 2004.
Dr. and Mrs. Barnes

(Continued from page 1)

might imagine, he has been involved in this nation’s animal disease control programs for many years. He served as a regulatory veterinarian for USDA-APHIS in Illinois and New York, and then from 1954 to 1972, as the Indiana Area Veterinarian-In-Charge.

In 1973, Dr. Barnes served as a veterinarian with the Pan American Health Organization and in 1977 he became a consultant to the Indiana Beef Cattle Association. In 1984 served as Acting State Veterinarian for Indiana.

The Barnes’ have been attending USAHA since 1935. As President, it is my distinct pleasure to present this award to Lowell and Maryhelen Barnes.

Annual Conference

(Continued from page 1)

USDA and John Cooper, President, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA).

Paul Otts’ presentation of music, humor, motivation and patriotism during the President’s Dinner made us feel good about ourselves, our careers and our country.

Deputy Administrator, John Clifford presented USDA’s Administrators Award to Bob Hillman, Texas State Veterinarian and Executive Director of the Texas Animal Health Commission. This award is presented each year during the USAHA Annual Meeting to an individual who has made a significant difference in protecting and improving the health of animal agriculture in the United States.

David Thain, President, National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, presented the National Assembly Award to Richard Willer, Arizona State Veterinarian in recognition of his outstanding service and leadership in regulatory veterinary medicine.

Willie Reed, Past President of AA VLD presented the E. P. Pope Memorial Award to Patricia Blanchard, Branch Chief of the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory, Tulare, California. The Pope Award is the highest award given by AA VLD and is presented to an individual who has made noteworthy and significant contribution to AA VLD and to the implementation and recognition of the specialty of veterinary diagnostic laboratory medicine.

Rick Willer, President of USAHA presented the first USAHA’s Presidents Award to J. Lee Alley, Secretary, USAHA. This award recognizes an individual who has provided tremendous support to the USAHA President as well as support for the entire USAHA mission.

Fifty-two resolutions were developed by the different USAHA science based committees. These resolutions were presented to the general membership for approval during the General Membership Meeting Wednesday afternoon November 9, 2005. Resolution 27 was not approved by the membership. The remaining 51 resolutions were approved by the membership. The approved resolutions have been forwarded to the appropriate agencies. These resolutions can be viewed on the Association’s website at www.usaha.org.

Committee reports and news releases pertaining to the Annual Meeting can also be accessed on the USAHA website. Proceedings of the Annual Meeting are being prepared and when printed will be forwarded to the membership. Hopefully during early 2006.

At the General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, Past President Don Lein gave the Committee on Nominations and Resolutions Report. The Committee Report was approved. President Richard Willer passed the gavel to newly elected President Bret Marsh. President Marsh reviewed his plans for the association during the upcoming year.

Past President Don Lein presented retiring President Willer a plaque commemorating his year as President and the gold Past Presidents’ pin.

The other 2005-2006 USAHA officers are: President elect Lee Myers, First Vice President James Leafstedt, Second Vice President Donald Hoenig, Third Vice President Richard Breitmeyer, Treasurer William Hartmann and Secretary J. Lee Alley.

The 2005-2006 District Delegates are: Northeastern District, Bob Eckroade and Ernest Zirkle; Southern District, Wayne Godwin and Gregorio Rosales; North Central District, Velmar Green and Jay Hawley; Western District, H.M. Richards and Bill Sauble.

The 110th Annual Meeting will be October 12-13, 2006 at the Minneapolis Hilton Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota. We look forward to working with you there.