



CVM Today

News from the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University

Summer 2004 ♦ Vol. 6 No. 1

Up to Bat

*Cardiovascular Research
Takes Flight*



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ONE SPIRIT
A&M
 ONE VISION
THE TEXAS A&M CAMPAIGN

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Staying the Course

Meeting the Needs of Our Rapidly Changing Profession

At a time when most universities are eliminating faculty positions and reeling from other budget reductions, Texas A&M University is staying the course and moving rapidly forward. President Robert Gates has initiated an exciting plan to recruit over 400 new faculty to help establish Texas A&M University as a Top 10 public institution by 2020. The implementation of this innovative strategy is well on its way.

As our part of this growth spurt, the CVM is planning on adding 37 new faculty members during the next four years. Our faculty search committees are identifying highly qualified applicants to strengthen specific clinical/teaching/research areas of excellence identified as our "Signature Programs."

The college formally instituted the Signature Program approach to academic excellence a few years ago, and the university recently expanded this basic concept university-wide as a strategy to further advance academic programs of excellence and move A&M upward in national rankings. The overarching goals are to improve the student experience, enhance diversity, and advance faculty and their programs.

Expansion of our faculty, combined with the growing sophistication of our profession, demands significant investment in our facilities and diagnostic/therapeutic technologies. We have invested \$1.4 million to build a 30-stall equine pavilion and reproductive laboratory for work with both the mare and stallion; over \$3 million in classroom refurbishing and addition of electronic media; \$1.4 million to add new facilities for intensive care, emergency medicine, anesthesia, and endoscopy in the small animal hospital; \$8 million in building a new state-of-the-art necropsy teaching theater and biowaste facility; and half a million dollars each for expansion of the vivarium and building a new hay barn.

Other additions, especially to the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital—the CVM flagship—are being planned as we speak. Plus, President Gates recently announced yet additional good news—funding has been identified and planning has begun for construction of a new campus building for interdisciplinary research and teaching in the life sciences. The academic areas identified for this new facility include veterinary medicine, agriculture, engineering and science. The building will cost an estimated \$100 million.

Expansion of the life sciences programs at A&M is coming at the right time to accommodate rapid growth in biomedical research. The CVM research enterprise alone has doubled during the past six years, growing from \$10 million per year in research grants and contracts to currently over \$20 million per year. Recently, the newly formed federal Department of Homeland Security awarded an \$18 million grant to a Texas A&M University faculty-led consortium of four universities for the study of foreign animal diseases and zoonotic diseases. Our CVM faculty have been working overtime in high gear!

Speaking of working "overtime," I must publicly acknowledge and sincerely thank my staff members, Sherry Adams and Martha Huebner, for the wonderfully successful Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction held April 3rd. Thanks to their leadership, hard work and dedication, our first-ever benefit auction attracted over 800 people who raised about \$80,000 to help fund scholarships for our veterinary medical students.

The tremendous support from alumni, parents, faculty, staff, students and friends for the inaugural Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction was truly remarkable. Over 300 auction items, ranging from books and everyday items to fantastic trips, handmade treasures, and unique collectibles, were donated for the auction. I send a heart-felt "thank you" to each and everyone who attended and helped with this wonderful event, and I especially want to acknowledge the college's development council for their support.

To ensure that everyone in the College of Veterinary Medicine family had an opportunity to attend the first auction, the college scheduled several annual milestone activities on the same weekend. Although our staff was a bit worn down by Sunday afternoon, I think all agreed that holding Homecoming and our Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, the college's Awards and Honors Convocation, the White Coat Ceremony for VM1 students, Parents' Weekend and the Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction all during the same weekend presented a unique opportunity to bring everyone together to celebrate our profession and work toward the common goal of raising money for scholarships for our professional students. Please plan to join us for this exciting weekend next year in April.

We recently graduated 118 professional women and men of the DVM Class of 2004. Our own President Gates was the commencement speaker, and his speech focused on the resurgence of the important role that veterinarians play in public service, national defense, and homeland security. Dr. Gates emphasized the key first-responder role that veterinarians can play in identifying exotic animal diseases and zoonotic diseases in our rapidly changing world. Because of the extraordinarily important implications of his commencement address, President Gates' remarks are printed on page 2 of this issue of *CVM Today*.

All in all, this is truly an exciting time to serve as dean of your College of Veterinary Medicine. The expertise, dedication, and quality of our faculty, staff, and students continually renew my commitment to help advance our status from the fourth-ranked veterinary college in the nation to number one! However, we can't do it without your help. Remember, my door is open and your recommendations and input are important. And the coffee is always hot!



Dean H. Richard Adams

A Broader Perspective

University President Robert Gates' 2004 Commencement Remarks

This is a first for me. Since coming to Texas A&M University, I have presided over 18 commencement ceremonies, soon to be 22. Yet, this afternoon is the first time in my life I have given a commencement address! However, I have listened to many, and I must warn you that the record in terms of interest and entertainment is not encouraging.

At my undergraduate commencement, at the College of William and Mary in Virginia, our commencement speaker was the very aged senior senator from Virginia, A. Willis Robertson. The only thing that kept us awake during his address was high tension over whether he would live long enough to finish his remarks.

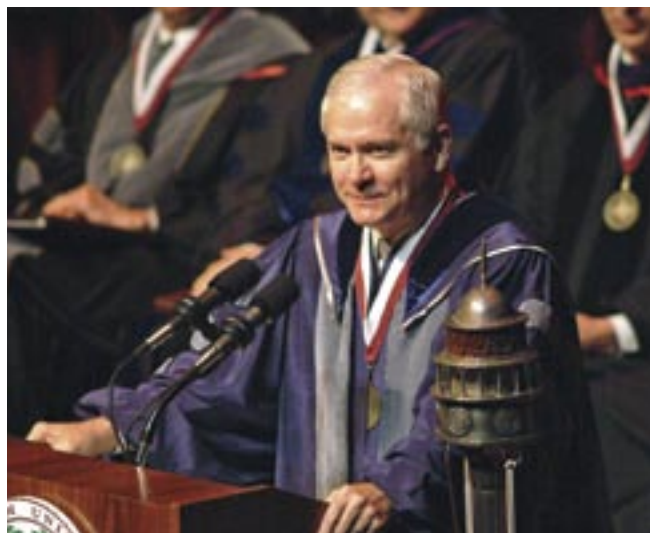
The commencement speaker when I received my doctorate at Georgetown University in 1974 was former Attorney General Elliott Richardson. Richardson was a great hero, having resigned his office the preceding October rather than obey President Nixon's order that he fire Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. Richardson rose to speak to a thunderous standing ovation, complete with whistles, cheering and foot-stamping. However, he was such a mind-numbingly boring speaker, he concluded his remarks to tepid applause.

As with every commencement speaker, I have thought about what message I should offer you, especially in light of the fact that a year from now you probably won't remember who your commencement speaker was, much less what he had to say.

So, my message to you today is a simple one, one that you will have reason to recall nearly every time you pick up a newspaper or watch the news. Events in the world are changing your profession in profound ways, ways that will pull you from clinics and veterinary hospitals and research into the world of terrorism, biological weapons, homeland security and global disease control. You may have contemplated a quiet rural or suburban practice somewhere, but the odds are most of you will at some point—even in such a practice—find yourselves on the front lines of the new world disorder.

We face two dangers relevant to your profession, and they likely will overlap at times. The first is the threat of biological weapons. As Adrienna Mayor writes in her new book, *Greek Fire, Poison Arrows and Scorpion Bombs*, these weapons have been around for several thousand years, from the first time Hercules dipped his arrows in serpent venom. Indeed, she reminds us that "the word for poison in ancient Greek, *toxicon*, derived from *toxon*, or arrow." She writes also that ancient toxicology treatises from the Mediterranean and India describe a frightening array of marine creatures, insects and snakes that can be used to attack enemies, and notes also the use of poisons and contagions as the prototypes of modern biological weapons.

Fast forward from the ancient world to College Station,



University President Robert Gates makes his first commencement address before students and their families at the CVM graduation ceremony.

Texas, just two weeks ago and the announcement that Texas A&M University will lead a federally funded research center to prevent, detect and respond to animal diseases—an effort in which College of Veterinary Medicine faculty will play a central part. Who will fund this effort focusing on such diseases as Rift Valley fever, foot-and-mouth disease and avian influenza? The Department of Homeland Security.

Why? Because nearly 40 nations have biological weapons capabilities, and with such proliferation, it is likely that terrorist groups possess or seek to possess such weapons as well. Such weapons are important because, as the past dozen years have made abundantly clear, no nation or group on Earth dares to attack the United States in a conventional military offensive. Terror and guile are the weapons of the weak against the strong—and have been throughout human history.

Should animal diseases be used against us, for either economic or epidemic purposes, veterinarians likely will be the first responders—the first to detect the problem and be called upon to act. Like firemen and police in a city under attack by bombs or hijacked airplanes, you likely will be the first on the scene.

The second threat is the ease and speed with which local or regional diseases can spread around the world because of both human travel and transportation of animals and animal products. You are more familiar than I am with examples of this, such as West Nile virus, SARS, mad cow disease, and others. The challenges of disease spreading from animals to humans—and vice versa—seem certain to grow. The result is that you are far more likely than any previous professionals in your field to work with public health services and researchers and practitioners in human medicine.

...continued on page 9

Up to Bat

Cardiovascular Research Takes Flight

It's not a bird, it's not a plane and it's definitely not Superman—no, they're bats and they've taken up residence at the College of Veterinary Medicine! These creatures of the night might help Assistant Professor Dr. Christopher Quick shed some light on the secrets of vascular health.

Many studies involving the vascular system often focus on arteries or veins, which are easier to measure when studying blood pressure and flow. However, it may be that smaller veins and arterioles play an important role in preventing blood vessels from shrinking and in preventing organ failures. Research into this micro-system is often hindered by the use of anesthesia and euthanasia which both prevent accurate measurements of blood pressure and flow. And that's where the bats come in.

Quick has successfully bypassed this problem by identifying a new animal model for veterinary vascular research. Unlike most bats, pallid bats

have membranous, non-pigmented wings that are easily illuminated. Quick can examine them under a microscope and observe both the structure of the vascular system and the movement of individual red blood cells.

But where did the bats come from? Last August, Quick and his team drove

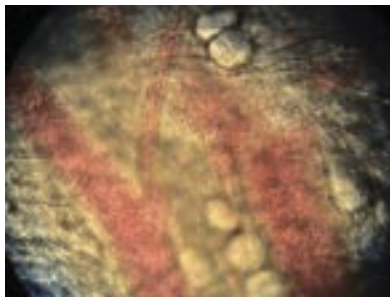
Unlike most bats, pallid bats have membranous, non-pigmented wings that are easily illuminated under a microscope...

over 11 hours to inspect the attic of an old schoolhouse in Valentine, Texas, where a colony of pallid bats were believed to reside. The tip paid off, and with gloves and pillowcases in hand, 14 bats were captured and brought back to the college.

But that wasn't the hard part. Missy Young, a research assistant in the Quick lab, had the job of learning bat husbandry, which included training each animal to fall asleep on their backs inside a clear pressurized container affectionately called the "Bat Box." In addition to falling asleep, the bats were also trained to extend one wing to allow researchers to examine their vascular structures and blood flow.

"Bats are not like dogs—they will not come when you call them," says Young. "So we decided to use a mix of repetition and behavior modification. I started out by placing them inside rodent restraint tubes for 15 minutes at a time and then worked my way up."

Young's patience was rewarded with most of the bats lying in the bat box for up to three hours. This accomplishment has benefited vascular research allowing Quick to bypass the use of anesthesia, yielding accurate blood pressure and velocity results, including a detailed illustration of the entire vascular bed.



Top Left: Individual red blood cells can be seen in the wing of a Pallid bat under a microscope.

Bottom: The CVM houses a colony of 14 Pallid bats each with very different personalities.



Bat Facts from Bat Conservation International

- The pallid bat of western North America is immune to the stings of scorpions and even the seven-inch centipedes upon which it feeds.
- A single brown bat can catch 1,200 mosquito-sized insects in just one hour.
- The 20 million Mexican free-tail bats from Bracken Cave, Texas, eat approximately 200 tons of insects nightly.
- A colony of 150 big brown bats can protect local farmers from 33 million or more rootworms each summer.
- African heart-nosed bats can hear the footsteps of a beetle walking on sand from a distance of more than six feet.

The Land that Time Forgot

Improving Veterinary Medicine in Mongolia

In land-locked Mongolia, which is scoured by whirling dust storms and baked by the sun, nomadic herders are finding new ways to improve the health of the animals that their very lives depend upon.

"Veterinary medicine in Mongolia is circa 1900. They just don't have the money or educational tools to advance," said Dr. Clay Ashley, CVM Class of 1991, who is with the Christian Veterinary Mission.

"Our purpose in Mongolia is to try to help develop their veterinary expertise. This is important because there are 2½ million people in Mongolia and 32 million animals. They are a country of nomadic herders and their whole culture is developed around the health of their animals," added Ashley.

"We have hosted over 100 short-term veterinarians, many from Texas, others from Canada, Australia, Ireland, Korea and China, who want to help. It has been very exciting to see people who are willing to give of their time and pay their own expenses to make a difference. They come to give and to share. To see people do that is a real blessing."

Known as "Maleen Ench," the animal doctor, by Mongolians, Ashley knew his path would lead him abroad even before applying to the professional program.

"In my interview for veterinary school, when asked, 'Why do you want to be a veterinarian?,' I told them that I wanted to do overseas mission work."

Upon graduation, Ashley spent 7½ years in mixed animal practices in Corpus Christi, Texas, and Tacoma, Washington. He later gained valuable experience in the Air Force as a Public Health Officer and base-level Epidemiologist when he was deployed to Bosnia and Egypt.

Ashley was not certain where his overseas mission work would take him, but after he and his wife, Tracy, went to Africa on a short-term mission trip, they were determined to follow their dreams.

"We had started the adoption

process for our two Chinese daughters (Mia and Jade), so we approached Dr. Kit Flowers, Director of Christian Veterinary Mission, and inquired about China. He told us that there were no workers in China, and asked if I would consider going to Mongolia. I said, 'I need to go home and pray about this and find out where Mongolia is.' Since China was not an option, and we felt good about Christian Veterinary Mission as an organization, we accepted the three-year Mongolian assignment."

In 2000, Ashley arrived to live in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. "I had my visa through the veterinary college and was on loan to them. I was not paid a salary by the school, which, if required, would have been \$50 per month."

Ashley taught "Western Veterinary Medical Skills" at Mongolian State Veterinary College, which is part of the Mongolian Agriculture University. "Their veterinary curriculum is a five-year bachelors program so many students start at age 18 and graduate at 23."

"The Mongolian veterinary students don't receive any hands-on training or clinics during school, so everything they learn is theory." Ashley helped establish a veterinary training center and the project employed 14 Mongolian State Veterinary College graduates who were instructed on how to teach other Mongolian veterinarians in their native language.

"I started a two-week rotation program where students in my class could work at the training center and actually get hands-on experience and learn to do a basic physical exam and go through the decision-making process."

He also worked in the rural areas of four different provinces. "Many of the veterinarians left the profession when the government privatized the system in 1998." The veterinarians that con-



Top: Horseracing Mongolian style.

Middle: Dr. Clay Ashley demonstrates a procedure for Mongolian veterinarians.

Bottom: Dr. Ashley, wife Tracy and daughters Mia and Jade.

tinued to practice had to learn how to market and charge for their services.

"They had no concept of how to run a business. With grants provided by the United Nations, Swiss Development Relief, and Heifer International, we were able to set up a program to help 12 rural veterinarians privatize their practices," notes Ashley.

In 2003, Dr. Michael Willard, a professor at the College of Veterinary Medicine, presented a one-week small animal seminar to the faculty at the Mongolian State Veterinary College. "He was teaching things that were technically above what they could do, but it did show them how far veterinary medicine had progressed and what was possible," said Ashley.

Dr. Ashley and other veterinary professionals are making a difference in the land that time forgot.

By a Nose

Texans Make Strides in the Quarter Horse Racing Circuit

Thundering hooves pounded across the finish line as a cheering crowd yelled with excitement when a horse, who was not favored to win, dashed through the finish line at Grand Prairie's Lone Star Park November 29, 2003. Mitowilard won the Texas Classic Futurity, winning a \$1,088,856 purse, making it the richest race ever run in Texas. Cheering the loudest was Dr. Nub Neighbors, a small animal veterinarian from Denton, Texas, and owner of Mitowilard, the horse that ran into the big money head-first. His gelding defeated Lett Her Zoom by a half-length after running 400 yards in 19.63 seconds.

Mitowilard was not accustomed to winning big and neither was his owner, Dr. Neighbors. After several unsuccessful races, Mitowilard seemed discouraged according to trainer Toby Keeton, who decided that what Mitowilard needed was a self-esteem boost that would give him the heart to race. Keeton convinced Neighbors to let Mitowilard run in a tag—a less competitive, small purse race—and it was there that Mitowilard found his winning stride at Lone Star Park streaking past and finishing $2\frac{3}{4}$ lengths ahead of the competitors.

During the Texas Classic Futurity trials, Mitowilard took the fifth fastest qualifying time. When the big chance came Mitowilard showed heart. With jockey Nicky Wilson, Mitowilard took home the \$470,858 purse for winning the race.

Neighbors graduated from the College of Veterinary Medicine in 1975 and continued his love for animals, both big and small. After 20 years of "playing with racehorses," Neighbors enjoyed his biggest victory. "This is tops," Neighbors said of his first victory in a high stakes race.

Mitowilard wasn't the only Quarter Horse winner to be backed by a proud veterinarian. Snow Big Deal is owned by "IV," a partnership of four Texans, one of whom is a 1966 graduate of the

College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Gene White, along with partners Russ Heydenreich, Wes Cooper and Steve Anderson made a grand showing with Snow Big Deal at Ruidoso Downs on August 31, 2003. Earning \$33,790 and setting a 440-yard track record, Snow Big Deal flew past the competition to claim the All American Derby.

White is an equine veterinarian in Roanoke, Texas, and he knows horses.

"You never think one can be this good. You just hope," said White. "We knew he had a lot of talent and he was just on the verge of being a big horse—today he's a big horse."

Texas veterinarians are staking claim in some of Texas' biggest Quarter Horse races. With Mitowilard and Snow Big Deal in the lead, hopefully Texas will give the rest of the US a run for their money.



Racers, start your hooves! From the starting gate down to the finish line, horseracing fans flock to the stands at Lonestar Park to see their favorite thoroughbreds compete for the coveted purse.

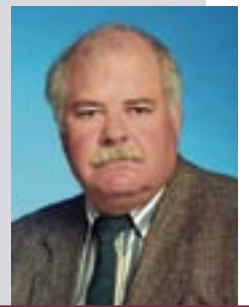
Dr. Kent Carter Appointed Texas Racing Commissioner

Appointed by the Governor of Texas to serve on the Texas Racing Commission, Dr. Kent Carter of the College of Veterinary Medicine will dedicate the next six years of his life to fulfilling the responsibilities of commissioner. In addition to being a Professor and Chief of Medicine for the Large Animal Clinic, Dr. Carter is one of nine policymaking members of the Texas Racing Commission.

"As the only veterinarian currently serving on the commission, I hope that my experiences and training will provide insight on some issues that will come before the commission," says Carter. He will hold the term through February 1, 2009.

The responsibility of the Texas Racing Commission is to "regulate and supervise every race meeting in this state involving wagering on the result of greyhound or horse racing." The mission is to vigorously enforce the Texas Racing Act by ensuring "consistent and accurate revenue stream to the state, safe racing facilities, fair and honest racing activities, and accountable use of economic incentives funded through pari-mutuel racing."

With prior work in raising, selling, and racing Thoroughbred horses, Carter states, "I feel I will have some education and experience that will aid in making decisions in the commission that will help guide and improve the racing industry."



Dr. Kent Carter

Testing the Test

New Assays Determine the Accuracy of Detecting Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Swine Fever

Experimental technology to rapidly detect foot-and-mouth disease was recently tested in Texas this spring as the result of an agreement between the US Department of Agriculture and the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine.

The agreement, which also tested classical swine fever, means that Texas A&M University researchers are responsible for testing cattle and hogs with new assays to determine the tests' accuracy in populations of disease-free animals.

"We're testing a test, not testing for disease," said Dr. Garry Adams, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. "The United States is currently free of these diseases, and such technological advances will improve our ability to respond to a foreign animal disease crisis should one develop."

Adams is collaborating on the project with Dr. Geoffrey Fosgate, Assistant Professor of Veterinary Anatomy & Public Health. The US Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Research Service funded the \$750,000 study through the US Department of Homeland Security. Scientists from ARS, the USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Texas A&M University are collaborating on the project.

Currently, foot-and-mouth testing may only be performed at the US Plum Island Animal Disease Center in New York, a high-security biocontainment facility. The usual method of confirming foot-and-mouth includes virus isolation—a procedure that, although accurate, may take up to a week to

obtain results plus the time required to ship samples to Plum Island. New, rapid tests that could be performed in the field would enable officials to quickly detect and stop massive spread in a disease outbreak, researchers said.

The tests in Texas were made possible through cooperation with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, the state's largest public agriculture research agency with herds at more than 10 locations.

"Playing a role in the development of this technology goes hand-in-hand with our mission of doing research to assure the highest quality food and fiber products, a sustainable environment and economic viability throughout the state and national agricultural industry," said Dr. Robert Whitson of College Station, Experiment Station Deputy Director.

A 2001 foot-and-mouth outbreak in the United Kingdom resulted in an estimated \$4.9 billion (US dollars) loss in its agriculture industry. A similar percentage income loss for the agricultural industry in the United States during 2001 would have amounted to \$9 billion, researchers say, because of export market losses and eradication expenses.

"The potential threat from foreign animal diseases gives great urgency for this kind of development and evaluation of new diagnostic tests," said Dan Dierschke, Texas Farm Bureau state director. "Texas has long been a leader in the cattle business, so we are proud to see this bold step toward reducing the likelihood that an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease would be economically devastating to our nation."

The new experimental testing procedures being evaluated use "real time" polymerase chain-reaction technology to identify genetic material specific for the viruses that cause foot-and-mouth and classical swine fever. No active foot-and-mouth virus is being used in Texas.

"Such procedures can give results in less than one hour and could be modified to test livestock on location during outbreak situations," Adams said.

The Texas study is important, Adams said, because polymerase chain reaction-based tests sometimes yield positive results when the sought-for disease is not present. Positive reactions may be caused by non-disease organisms in the environment that have similar genetic material to the disease being tested.

"Our role is to determine the extent that non-pathogenic organisms will interfere with the functioning of these new experimental diagnostic tests," Adams said.

To accomplish this goal, nasal and blood samples were collected from more than 2,000 healthy cattle and swine in Texas for testing with these new assays.

Samples were collected by study personnel and transported to the College of Veterinary Medicine at College Station for testing. Samples were also shipped to Plum Island to allow for any confirmation tests, if necessary, during the project.



Dr. Garry Adams



Dr. Geoffrey Fosgate

"Our role is to determine the extent that non-pathogenic organisms will interfere with the functioning of these new experimental diagnostic tests."

*— Dr. Garry Adams
Associate Dean for
Research and Graduate Studies*

Get Physical

Orthopedic Rehabilitation Program Gets Patients Up and Running

Three hours of massage, healing exercises, personal attention and care each day sounds great to anyone. It may sound even better to a pet owner seeking pain relief and increased mobility for their beloved pet. That's where the College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (VMTH) animal physical rehabilitation program comes in.

The hospital's two-year-old program applies human physical therapy techniques that are specially adapted to meet the needs of animals that have recently undergone surgery, have weight control problems, or simply require extra attention to maintain health and mobility.

Dr. Sharon Kerwin is the orthopedic surgeon heading up the college's rehabilitation therapy efforts with the assistance of rehabilitation veterinary technician Dennis Renner.

Most of the hospital's current physical rehabilitation clients are post-operative patients, particularly dogs and cats, who must re-learn everyday activities like standing, walking and bending. Simple tools such as exercise balls and wobble boards are used to stimulate proprioception, a function relating to the animal's ability to understand the position of one body part to another. Without proprioception, the animal is unable to maintain balance.

Once the animal has regained its balance, it may spend time walking on the hospital's water treadmill. This device allows animals to walk naturally without bearing the entirety of their body weight, thus easing the transition to normal walking.

The treatment program may include the use of an electrical stimulation unit to aid in muscle re-education and/or treatment of edema to prevent muscle atrophy in chronically injured patients.

Recently, a black Labrador Retriever was taught to walk again at

the hospital after becoming paralyzed from the neck down as a result of a car accident. The patient's treatment included nearly a year of electrical stimulation for five days a week with passive range-of-motion exercises twice a day, massage and numerous hours in the water treadmill.

Thanks to advancements in technology and the care received at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, many more veterinary patients will be "getting physical" after illness or accidents.



Top Left: Rehabilitation veterinary technician Dennis Renner carefully flexes a canine's back legs to help it regain strength.

Top Right: Patients get on the ball—an exercise ball, that is—to help improve their balance.



Left: If a canine suffering from severe spinal injury needs extra assistance in the water treadmill, rehabilitators aren't afraid to get their feet wet.

Bottom: The water treadmill is the newest addition to the Small Animal Clinic's Rehabilitation Program and provides exercise for surgical, overweight and sport animals.



A Mentor's Mark

We all know what Dr. Mark Francis did for veterinary medicine. Since I am probably one of the few left who knew him on a personal basis, I would like to tell you about Dr. Francis—the person—and how he touched my life.

I entered Texas A&M in August of 1930. I had \$140, enough for registration and books for the semester. I got a job with Dr. Pat Burns cleaning the laboratory and caring for the animals—whatever he needed me to do. For this, I earned 25¢ per hour. I had another 25¢ per hour job working for J.Y. Henderson, and I rode the three and five-gaited horses for D. Marsteller and kept them in condition for shows.

Even with these jobs, it was difficult to make the \$30 I needed each month for room and board. That was when I would

go to Dr. Francis and say, “I am \$6.00 short this month.” He would reply, “Give me your manuscript.” I wrote on a pad, “I owe Dr. Francis

\$6.00.” He would look at it, hand me the \$6.00, tear up the paper and say, “You will not ever pay it!”

Of course, as soon as I was paid, I paid him. This took place several times during my years at school.

Dr. Francis and Dr. Ball would take me to the gravel pits on the Brazos River. I did the digging with pick and shovel while they looked at prehistoric horses and flowers. Both men had trouble hearing, and on one trip Dr. Francis said, “Sure is a pretty field of cotton.” Dr. Ball said, “Mark, you are crazy. It is not going to rain.” I enjoyed their banter.

During the summer before my junior year, I was working in Port Arthur. Before leaving school, the ex-students association said they would loan me enough money that fall. I received a letter from them in August saying they could not let me have any

money as the seniors had borrowed it all. Remember, these were the Depression years. I wrote Dr. Francis and told him to give my job to someone and what the ex-students association had said. Within 48 hours I got a special delivery letter from him, and he told me to come back to school. The ex-students had made a mistake.

I made it through and received my DVM degree, and as I was leaving college, I stopped by the ex-students association to see how I could repay the loan since I had a job of \$100 a month practicing with Dr. T.O. Booth in Temple, Texas. Mr. Locke with the Association said, “Burke, do you know how you got that money last year?” I said, “I assume you just got some in.” He said, “Dr. Francis came in mad as



Dr. Mark Francis

a wet hen and said, “Why don’t you let the Burke boy have money?” They told him, “Dr. Francis, we do not have any.” Dr. Francis reached in his pocket, came out with a roll of bills, slammed them down and said, “Well, you have some now!” He did not ask for a receipt.

Had it not been for such a wonderful man, I would never have made it through school. You can see why I get misty-eyed when I think of him walking across the drill field on the way to his work with a little choppy walk and a hand sign to everyone he met. He was loved deeply by all the school, not just by me.

I was testing cattle for TB in California and made a picture for him with a cow and her 6-week-old calf, both reacting from TB. I hope he got to see it, as he passed away a couple of weeks later.

— W.Z. Burke, DVM
Troop #A Cavalry
Class of 1934

Horse Sense

There is often an indescribable bond between Texans and horses. Unfortunately for Dr. Jamie Milios-Fehlis, a 1994 graduate of the College of Veterinary Medicine, she never experienced that bond.

This almost-fearless doctor always knew that she wanted to use her healing hands in veterinary medicine, but she did not know that a debilitating fear of horses would create a major roadblock on the way to earning her veterinary degree. She also never expected two extraordinary people to come to her rescue.

When Milios-Fehlis entered the veterinary program in the fall of 1990, she was ready for the challenges of an advanced degree program.

“I knew I was going to have to study and I was prepared to lose a lot of sleep,” she says, “but the turning point came when I actually started dealing with animals.”

Milios-Fehlis soared through her small animal rotations with ease, but she had to use special tactics to survive her first two years of large animal medicine. She recalls regularly positioning her five-foot-tall frame in the back of a group of twenty of her fellow students in the Large Animal Clinic, as far away from the 1,000 lb. topics of discussion as possible.

“It wasn’t until someone handed me the reigns of a horse and asked me to walk it down that long hallway that I knew for sure I had a real problem,” she remembers. “Even now, my palms sweat thinking about it.”

Dr. Joe Joyce, Professor of Large Animal Medicine & Surgery, and Candise McKay, a veterinary technician in the Large Animal Clinic, came to the struggling student’s rescue.

“I would not be a veterinarian today if not for those two people,” says Milios-Fehlis. “They were very supportive on a daily basis, holding my hand, going slowly and letting me do things at my own pace. They taught me that it’s okay to not know what you’re doing as long as you are willing to step up to the plate and give it your best.”

Even though she was certainly



Perspective

...continued from page 2



Dr. Joe Joyce and Candise McKay

stepping up, Milios-Fehlis didn't feel everyone was as supportive as McKay and Joyce.

"When you're a veterinarian in Texas, the rule is: Thou shalt know horse and cattle medicine," she says. "I had the feeling some folks were unsure if I would graduate because of my 'horse medicine deficit.'"

Milios-Fehlis credits Joyce with coming to her aid. "I think I would have failed rotations if not for Dr. Joyce's help and support," she says, "and I will forever be in his debt."

Looking back, Milios-Fehlis understands how important mentoring is at all levels of education and experience. "It doesn't matter where you are in your career, you're always going to come to forks in the road," she says, "and you'll need a voice of reason." Learning from someone else's experiences has helped her to make wiser choices, she says, and to realize her full potential.

Milios-Fehlis, now an associate at the Northern Oaks Bird and Animal Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, and a proud new mother, tries to look at the big picture in life and remember those who have helped her along the way.

"I cannot reflect on my veterinary academic career without thinking of Dr. Joyce and Candise McKay," she says, "I am eternally grateful to them."

She may never experience the type of relationship that many Texans have with horses, but, with her mentors and heroes, Milios-Fehlis has a bond that will last a lifetime.

It is entirely appropriate that Texas A&M University should play a leading role in responding to both of these threats. Our nearly unparalleled ability to integrate research on plants, animals and humans in the Colleges of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and the Health Science Center gives us the tools and the opportunity to make a significant contribution *and* to render an enormous public service.

Our new life sciences building, which will house interdisciplinary research involving specialists in all those fields as well as engineering and perhaps others, will place us in the forefront of institutions working not only on the problems posed by the threats I have described but also to take advantage of opportunities to advance both human and animal health science. And the College of Veterinary Medicine's signature research programs in biodefense and emerging infectious diseases as well as environmental toxicology—together with the college's new faculty additions—will place this college squarely in the middle of all that activity and in a leading role nationally.

In sum, your career as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine is likely to involve experiences and roles rather different than you imagined when you began this field of study. You will have multiple new roles as public servants, guardians, sentinels—roles in some respects harkening back to an earlier day in your profession.

Whether you intend to practice, to teach, or to do research, in a clinic, a university or in the private sector, I hope you will embrace the role of public servant and guardian. I think it no exaggera-

tion to say that our nation's economic well-being and the health of our people depend upon this broader view of your professional responsibilities.

I realize my message is a sobering one. It has not been my intention to depress you, but rather to bring home to you a different perspective on the profession you are about to enter. Your knowledge, your insight, your caring, and your service are more necessary to us now than perhaps ever before.

I also hope I have offered a more optimistic view of the future than did Woody Allen in a speech where he said, "More than anytime in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness, the other to total extinction. Let us pray that we have the wisdom to choose correctly."

Seriously, you enter your profession at a time of great challenge and excitement. Never have your skills been more important and more necessary. I am confident you all will make this university and your college very proud.

A final thought. Don't miss the chance today to thank your parents, your families, and your faculty for their support and help during your education. Now, go out, be successful, make lots of money, and send it all back to Texas A&M. Good luck, God bless and Gig 'Em.



Dr. David Prior, Executive Vice President and Provost, Dr. Robert Gates, University President, and Dr. E. Dean Gage, Associate Dean for Professional Programs, stand ready to hood new graduates from the College of Veterinary Medicine's DVM Class of 2004.

Bridging the Culture Gap

Broadcasting from a tent in the hot desert of Iraq, Lt. Col. Frank Miskena, DVM was one of the first voices heard on international airways in April 2003 as the Iraqi people took their inaugural steps toward liberation. A year later, students and faculty at the College of Veterinary Medicine listened intently as Dr. Miskena shared his experiences in both the veterinary and military fields.

Miskena is an Iraqi-born American citizen who is most famous for helping bridge cultural gaps between Iraqi citizens and American troops. He is also a knowledgeable veterinarian with a Master's degree in Pathology and three successful veterinary clinics in Detroit, Michigan.

As an honored guest of Dr. Jeffrey Musser, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, Miskena spoke to a group of 3rd year veterinary students, faculty, and graduate students in the

Department of Veterinary Pathobiology in a seminar entitled, "Veterinary Services & Beyond: Using Veterinary Medicine to Bridge Cultures."

Miskena spoke freely about his experiences as both an Iraqi and a member of the American military. His key message centered on respect and courtesy in both the military and veterinary fields.

"Think of yourself as an American ambassador," says Miskena. "Treat others with dignity and not as someone inferior. We are not better than them and they are not better than us."

Miskena knows first-hand how important it is to treat others with respect. As a member of the 308th Civil Affairs Brigade in the US Army, he works with Iraqi civilians and US military forces to restore education, health care and food distribution back to the war torn area. In fact, Miskena met Musser on the American Association for Bovine Practitioners email list serve

while seeking donations for the now devastated veterinary school in Iraq.

It was at this same institution, the University of Baghdad College of Veterinary Medicine, that Miskena received his DVM degree in 1973. Since then he has served in the Iraqi Army, joined the US Army and attended the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology where he completed a residency program.

His veterinary experience eventually led him to the National Zoo where he worked in pathology and shortly thereafter was promoted to colonel. He was assigned to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds working in environmental toxicology as a lab animal veterinarian.

Miskena went on inactive duty in 1990 and served in the Veterinary Preventative Medicine division of the 308th Civil Affairs Brigade before being activated as part of the Joint Task Force "Shining Hope" in Germany and later in support of "Operation Enduring Freedom" in Kuwait and Iraq.

Although Miskena's veterinary and military experiences have taken him all over the world, he strongly believes in a commitment to community.

"Whatever you do, wherever you go, always remember to maintain a strong relationship with your mentors and your friends," Miskena said. "You are not just a veterinarian—you can affect policy and important issues. Remember to think outside your box and beyond your borders."



Lt. Col. Frank Miskena, DVM, discusses his experience as an Iraqi-born member of the US Armed Forces with Dr. Jeffery Musser and a group of 3rd year veterinary students.

The Inside Scoop

The College of Veterinary Medicine recently hosted President and CEO Ronald Brakke, of Brakke Consulting, Inc., one of the most experienced management/consulting firms serving the animal health industry in the world for a special presentation. Brakke spoke about important trends currently affecting the veterinary medical profession including food safety and practice management.

"What happens in the global economy impacts the US animal health industry," said Brakke. "It influences food animal production, companion animal medicine and it impacts your practice and your career."

"Issues in the press such as mad cow and foot-and-

mouth disease have caused many consumers to question the safety of their food, even in the United States," said Brakke. As the food animal market evolves, large animal veterinarians will likely no longer deal with individual farmers and producers but rather large food production companies who have more purchasing leverage and a desire to control quality and food safety from conception to consumption. This change in food production could bring sweeping changes in veterinary education.

"One of the things I say at veterinary institutions is that veterinarians are taught a lot about diagnostics, but they are often not taught herd management. Many times the nutri-

Referrals at the VMTH

The College of Veterinary Medicine has many components with the largest being the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (VMTH). The focus of the VMTH is to teach the clinical science and practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and health care. The practice includes primary care and referral patients.

Primary care patients provide students with the opportunity to work in clinical settings and apply learned knowledge and techniques. Referral patients provide referring veterinarians and attending faculty the opportunity to share in the investigation and management of diseases and challenging cases. Therefore, students benefit from exposure to a wide variety of learning experiences.

Students are involved in each case since the hospital is designed to be a teaching classroom and laboratory. Faculty members direct the care of each patient by ordering examinations, tests, treatments and feeding programs carried out by veterinary students and trained veterinary medical technicians.

The attending clinicians at the VMTH are veterinarians focused on teaching, patient care and research. Specialized fields include: animal behavior, anesthesiology, cardiology, clinical pharmacology, critical care, dermatology, feline medicine, ophthalmology, gastroenterology, oncology, internal medicine, neurology, orthopedic sur-

gery, neurosurgery, soft tissue surgery, theriogenology and medical imaging including radiology, ultrasonography and nuclear medicine.

Patient appointments are scheduled by referral veterinarians or owners (primary care). Please note that a large portion of time is committed to classroom teaching and research, so it may not always be possible to make an appointment with a specific faculty member.

Before sending emergency referrals, please call so the VMTH can arrange for appropriate support personnel.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Large Animal Clinic (979) 845-3541, (888) 778-5521—**Veterinarians Only**

Large Animal Field Services (979) 845-9135

Small Animal Clinic (979) 845-2351, (888) 778-5523—**Veterinarians Only**

Zoological & Wildlife Medicine Services (979) 845-4300

VMTH Fax (979) 845-6226.



tionist on site has a better handle on herd health than the veterinarian,” said Brakke. “Though this is a controversial statement, I say it to make people think.”

Brakke also encouraged small animal veterinarians to think about the recent changes in demographic profiles of the population and how cultural differences may impact preferences for pet ownership and animal health.

“If you’re going to be a veterinarian, never forget who your customer is—the ultimate customer that all veterinarians have is the animal. That’s what drives the market. If we don’t meet the needs of the animal, then there is no market.”

Brakke also shared his insight on the veterinary medical industry including company consolidation, small animal pain management and drug compounding.

Ronald Brakke, President and CEO of Brakke Consulting, Inc., delivers valuable advice to faculty, staff and students concerning veterinary market trends.



Leading the Way

Texas A&M University has been selected as the lead institution for the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense, a crucial component of the Department of Homeland Security.

Four institutions will be primary partners in the new center, two each located in Texas and California. They are Texas A&M University (lead institution); the University of Texas Medical Branch; the University of California at Davis; and the University of Southern California. The consortium will also include Texas Tech University and the University of Maryland.

The consortium is expected to share an \$18 million allocation from the Department of Homeland Security over the next three years.

"We are very pleased and honored with this designation from the Department of Homeland Security," said Texas A&M University President Robert Gates.

Dr. Neville Clarke, who has extensive administrative experience as a former director of the Texas A&M University System Agricultural Experiment Station and as director of the USAF Medical Research Programs, has been named to head the center. Texas A&M University created the Integrative Center for Homeland Security in 2002 and Clarke serves as the interim director.

"The selection of the Texas A&M University consortium is very rewarding for the involved faculty and involves a tremendous opportunity and responsibility for that part of homeland security that affects the health and safety of livestock across the United States," said Clarke.

The Texas A&M University consortium was one of two announced by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. The other new consortium will be headed by the University of Minnesota.

"I am delighted that Texas A&M University and the University of



Dr. Neville Clarke, Director of the Institute for Countermeasures Against Agricultural Bioterrorism, addresses a group at the Food and Agriculture Biosecurity Summit in Austin.

"The selection of the Texas A&M University consortium is very rewarding for the involved faculty and involves a tremendous opportunity and responsibility for that part of homeland security that affects the health and safety of livestock across the United States."

*– Dr. Neville Clarke
Interim Director
TAMU Integrative Center for
Homeland Security*

Minnesota and their teams are partnering with Homeland Security in our efforts to address agro-security challenges," said Secretary Ridge. "I am confident that the cooperative work of these two Centers of Excellence will help further the Bush Administration's efforts to ensure the security of the nation's food supply and protect against foreign animal diseases."

"Protecting our food and agriculture systems is a top priority for President Bush," said Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman. "Research conducted at these institutions will greatly enhance our ability to protect against animal and plant pests and diseases and food pathogens."

The new center will focus on the threats posed by zoonotic (diseases

passed from animals to humans) and foreign-animal diseases. In its initial stages, the new center will concentrate on three specific diseases that are clear and present threats: foot-and-mouth disease, Rift Valley fever and avian influenza.

Officials said that by working with these three diseases the Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense will serve as a national resource of information and will produce effective products for immediate treatment and application.

The first three years of work by the center will focus on biological research and outcomes; developing databases and models that can be used for predicting needs, treatments and testing; and expanding resources and educational programs directly related to foreign animal and zoonotic diseases.

Officials said the new center will be created after negotiations are completed and will continue to grow and expand in its first three years. Each project will have a specific deadline, and more than 30 projects are expected to be completed in the first three years.

Rift Valley fever affects livestock, including cattle, sheep and goats, and humans in Africa. It is named after a trough that stretches 4,000 miles in eastern Africa. The disease is spread through mosquito bites and also by contact with body fluids or blood from an infected animal. It can cause serious injury or death.

Foot-and-mouth disease affects cloven-hoofed animals, such as cattle, deer, sheep, pigs and goats. It can cause significant loss of productivity and in young animals can be fatal on a large scale.

Avian influenza, more commonly known as bird flu, can be especially harmful to poultry producers and severe outbreaks have been reported in southeast Asia. Deaths in humans have been reported, and investigations are ongoing to determine the source of human infections.

An American in Paris

Over the past few years, he has enjoyed fancy French restaurants, chic Parisian boutiques, Metro rides all over the city and even a ride on the majestic *Queen Elizabeth 2*. He's *très chic*, especially for a dog. Dexter, who was recently at the College of Veterinary Medicine's Small Animal Clinic for chylothorax surgery, is not only a world traveler but also a champion Frisbee player and a crowd favorite at competitions.

Drs. Theresa Fossum, Michelle Mertens and their surgical team performed a thoracic duct ligation and a pericardectomy on Dexter. His prognosis was good and several months later he is back to his lively self.

It is hard to imagine this charismatic canine once lived in a cage in a veterinarian's office with a sign that read "Needs a Home." A home is exactly what Dexter found with Ed and Linda Calhoun in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

"Ed fell in love with him immediately and couldn't believe someone would actually give him away," says Linda Calhoun. From then on, Ed and Dexter were inseparable.

Dexter's interest in Frisbees began when he was just a puppy and eventually turned into a bit of an obsession.

"We couldn't even say words beginning with the letter 'F' or he would go nuts," says Calhoun. When he was three years old, Dexter got his shot at Frisbee glory. The Calhouns entered Dexter in a Frisbee dog contest where he dazzled the crowd with impressive jumps and his contagious energy. Dexter went on to win the competition and many others, including the national finals. He also appeared on Animal Planet and performed at the Texas State Fair in Dallas for an audience of thousands.

When Linda and Ed moved to France, Dexter adapted well to Parisian life. But, as they say, "There's no place like home," so the Calhouns moved back to the US where Dexter will appear in two short artistic films and enjoy his retirement from the Frisbee championship circuit.

How do you say "star quality" in French?



To Dexter, "F" is for "Frisbee" and he is never without his.

Stevenson Center Expands

On June 14, 2004, the Stevenson Companion Animal Life-Care Center celebrated the substantial completion of its brand-new 3500 sq. ft. facility expansion. With the additional space, the center will now accommodate approximately 60 animals, four student residents and provide a nice complement to the previously completed, three-stall large animal barn.

Since 1993, when the existing facility opened, the Stevenson Center has consistently grown in enrollment and currently

houses 22 cats and dogs as well as a pony and a llama, making expansion necessary. As a privately funded center, with no public funding, a \$700,000 building budget would have been difficult if not for the numerous gifts made by many generous supporters.

Bridging the new and existing facilities is a beautiful memorial garden that provides a place for visitors to remember those animals that have passed away while living at the center. Near the memorial

garden is a new feline room with a special space for chronically ill felines such as those suffering from FIV or Feline Leukemia. In addition, there are also three canine living areas containing four kennels each for feeding and sleeping, each with its' own private yard. There is also an aviary that can accommodate several large bird species such as the macaws, parrots and cockatoos enrolled in the center.

The Stevenson Center benefits the College of Veterinary Medicine in many ways including: providing an invaluable source of geriatric patients for veterinary students to learn about, attracting endowments in support of both the center and \$4.5 million in student scholarships, and by providing employment for student workers and residents who care for the center's furry and feathered residents.

The dedication and open house for the newly expanded facility is scheduled for September 17, 2004.



The Stevenson Center expansion nears completion. The dedication of the new wing is scheduled for September 17, 2004.

New Associate Dean for Professional Programs

Congratulations to Dr. Deborah Kochevar for being named the College of Veterinary Medicine's new Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

Kochevar brings with her over 18 years of service to the college in various positions including her current position as Professor in the Department of Veterinary Physiology & Pharmacology. She is also a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Clinical Pharmacology and holds a joint appointment in Medical Physiology.

Until her new position becomes effective on September 1, 2004, Kochevar will work with the current Associate Dean for Professional Programs, Dr. E. Dean Gage and

others to facilitate the transition.

Gage has accepted a new set of challenges by focusing on private gift raising and continued development of the Center for Executive Leadership in Veterinary Medical Education.

"I believe our college sets high veterinary education standards and it will be a great pleasure to work with faculty and students to sustain and improve our program," said Kochevar.

Setting high standards is something Kochevar is accustomed to—she received a Bachelor's degree from Rice University in both English and Biology in 1978, her DVM degree from Texas A&M University in 1981 and in 1987 she received her PhD in Cell and Molecular Biology from The

University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

"The Associate Dean for Professional Programs is a critically important role for the entire college. We had a number of exemplary candidates to choose from and I hope you will join me in expressing sincere thanks to Dr. Kochevar for accepting this key post and its associated responsibilities," said H. Richard Adams, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.



Dr. Deborah Kochevar

Dr. Michale E. Keeling – 1942-2003

Michale E. Keeling, DVM, College of Veterinary Medicine Class of 1966, is considered to be the founding father of one of the most successful chimpanzee breeding and rehabilitation programs in the United States. His concern for animal welfare is legendary.

Keeling combined his veterinary and scientific skills to develop a model animal resource program. For 29 years he was administrative director of M.D. Anderson's Department of Veterinary Sciences located in Bastrop County at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Science Park.

Keeling had been chief clinical veterinarian at Yerkes Regional Primate Center in Atlanta for six years when he joined the M.D. Anderson faculty and moved to the un-built Bastrop site in August 1974. The Science Park's veterinary resources program was formally established to provide specialized animals needed for research.

Over the years, 15 animal species ranging from mice to nonhuman primates have been bred and raised to support diverse biomedical research studies conducted in 21 M.D. Anderson departments and at 29 other institutions and agencies.

Keeling's vision for housing, breeding and re-socializing chimpanzees earned him international respect. Throughout his career he had a profound influence on assuring that animals bred and used for biomedical research anywhere were cared for humanely.

In addition to chairing and being active in state, national and international organizations devoted to accrediting and regulating research animals, Keeling was an advocate for the



Dr. Michale Keeling

appropriate use of animals to help scientists gain knowledge to improve treatments for cancers and other diseases.

From 1981 to 2003, Keeling was a Visiting Professor of Graduate Faculty, Department of Veterinary Public Health at the College of Veterinary Medicine and a Professor of Comparative Medicine at M.D. Anderson. He authored more than 50 scientific articles and 13 textbook chapters. He shared in two patents for innovative animal housing.

Dr. Keeling died in an automobile accident December 21, 2003. He is survived by his wife, Donna, three daughters, one son, seven grandchildren, his parents, four sisters and one brother.

"Mike Keeling was my veterinary school classmate and best friend for over 40 years," said Dean H. Richard Adams. "Mike was truly an outstanding individual who will be sorely missed by our profession and all his friends and colleagues."

Mike Keeling '64 and DVM '66 Memorial Veterinary Scholarship

Please make checks payable to:
The Texas A&M Foundation

Please mail to:
Office of the Dean
Attn: Dr. O.J. Woytek
College of Veterinary Medicine
Texas A&M University
4461 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4461

Congratulations!

Each year the Texas Society for Biomedical Research (TSBR) selects a Texas citizen to receive the TSBR Distinguished Service Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual that has had a positive influence on biomedical research and science education. Past recipients of this award include congressmen and senators, distinguished members in the fields of medical, veterinary medical and lab animal medicine.

The TSBR Distinguished Service Award for 2003 was awarded to Dr. Theresa Fossum, Professor of Small Animal Medicine & Surgery and the Tom and Joan Read Chair in Veterinary Surgery, in recognition of her commitment to the humane use of animals in research.

Fossum's involvement as the spokesperson for the "Survivors Campaign"—without a doubt one of the most successful pro-research campaigns that the Foundation for Biomedical Research has ever developed—was a major factor in receiving the award.



Dr. Theresa Fossum

Fall 2004 College Highlight Calendar

8/23	First day of CVM Fall classes
9/17	Development Council Meeting and Mark Francis Fellows Luncheon
9/26–29	NAVCA North American Veterinary College Administrators
10/29–31	Annual Equine Conference
11/15–12/11	Period for North American Veterinary Licensing Exams
11/19–20	Emergency Medicine for Small Animals
11/25–26	Thanksgiving Holiday, TAMU
12/3–4	Annual Exotic Pets Conference
12/6–10	Fall Semester final exams for CVM Classes 1VM, 2VM & 3VM
12/10–12	Annual Equine Reproduction Symposium for Veterinarians

IN MEMORIAM

Class of '35

Elden Nicholl of Plainview, TX died Nov. 11, 2003

Class of '39

Elbert Lloyd Kelley of Hondo, TX died Aug. 18, 2003

Edwin William Thomas of Lexington, KY died Mar. 19, 2004

Class of '40

Edward Betlach of Bismarck, ND died Oct. 1, 2003

Valton Cox of Lubbock, TX died Sept. 24, 2003

Class of '43

Stewart Madin of Bozeman, MT died Sept. 18, 2002

Willard Ommert of Temecula, CA died Jan. 2, 2004

Raymond Patterson of Rapid City, SD died Nov. 6, 2003

Class of '44

Robert Morin of Clinton, IL died Feb. 4, 2004

Class of '45

Gail Grove of Scio, OR died Oct. 18, 2003

Bernard Waidhofer of Galveston, TX died Oct. 24, 2003

John Colvin of Beaumont, TX died Dec. 13, 2004

Class of '46

Felix Prater of Dallas, TX died July 28, 2003

Grant Ernest Blake of Sun City West, AZ died Dec. 24, 2003

Class of '47

John Spiegel, Jr. of Corpus Christi, TX died on Dec. 22, 2002

Class of '50

Donald Ira Riddle of Paris, TX died Aug. 21, 2003

Class of '52

Phillip Goldston of Ovilla, TX died Nov. 24, 2003

Class of '53

Henry Charles Melius of Metairie, LA, died Nov. 23, 2003

Class of '54

J.C. Wilmer Rhodes died Mar. 26, 2003

Class of '55

Lawrence Waidhofer of Houston, TX died May 18, 2004

Class of '59

Milton Risinger of Terrell, TX died Sept. 25, 2003

Class of '60

James Syler of Athens, TX died June 10, 2003

Class of '61

Franklin Shivers of Van, TX died Apr. 4, 2003

Class of '63

Allan Wisenbaker of Longview, TX died May 7, 2002

Class of '65

William Gerald Cox of Waxahachie, TX died Dec. 15, 2003

Class of '66

Michale Keeling of Elgin, TX died Dec. 21, 2003

Class of '67

Roy Johnson of Arlington, TX died June 28, 2003

Robert Malcolm Letscher of Covington, LA, died Mar. 15, 2004

Class of '70

Carlyle David Dotson of Grapeland, TX died Nov. 29, 2003

Class of '72

Grace Robinson of Dallas, TX died Feb. 6, 2004

Class of '75

Richard Greenwood of Mathis, TX died on Feb. 8, 2004

Class of '78

Kimberly Michels of Kenner, LA died Apr. 19, 2004

Class of '81

Jana Williams of Houston, TX died Mar. 11, 2004

Class of '93

Thomas Lembo of Houston, TX died Jan. 18, 2004

Development Events and Programs Continue to Benefit the CVM

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS

We would like to welcome our new administrative assistant, Noell Vance, to the Office of Development. She will be taking the place of Suzy Keller, who recently retired. Prior to joining the college, Noell worked for the Institute for Countermeasures Against Agricultural Bioterrorism here at Texas A&M University. Noell truly appreciates the importance of the CVM as well as the many roles it plays for our state and nation. She will be happy to assist with any questions about alumni functions and areas of giving for the college.

2005 HOMECOMING AND GENTLE DOCTOR BENEFIT AUCTION

We will set the date for the next Homecoming Weekend soon. It will be a Friday evening in April 2005. We will recognize our Outstanding Alumni with a reception and dinner at the George Bush Presidential Library Conference Center. All nominations will be due in our office by January 7th. The 2nd Annual Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction will be scheduled for sometime in April as well. Please look for the announcement since this is a weekend you will not want to miss.

"WALK OF HONOR" BRICK PROGRAM

We have sold close to 100 bricks since the last issue of *CVM Today*. We invite you to honor and/or memorialize special family members, pets, or someone who has been important in your life with a personalized, engraved brick. These bricks will create a permanent legacy that honors people or pets that have made a difference in your life. Each \$250 donation entitles you to an engraved brick that will be added to

the *Walk of Honor* at the newly renovated front entrance. Two hundred dollars of your tax-exempt gift may be designated to fund a particular activity important to you. The remainder of your gift will be used to enhance the *Walk of Honor*. If you are interested in purchasing a brick, please see our website at www.cvm.tamu.edu/giving for a *Walk of Honor* brick form, or call us at (979) 845-9043 and we will be pleased to mail you a brochure.



Dr. O.J. "Bubba" Woytek

ONE SPIRIT ONE VISION

The Capital Campaign for our college is continuing to be very successful. As of the end of March, the college has credit for over \$46 million of the \$60 million goal. Thanks to our friends and alumni for helping make this possible!

CLASS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to the DVM alumni classes of '65 and '75 who have recently reached the minimum endowed level of \$25,000. The income from these two newly endowed scholarships will provide an annual scholarship to a veterinary student in good standing. These two classes along with the Classes of '41, '51 and '70 now challenge the remaining classes to "step up to the plate" and help future students with the growing costs of a veterinary medical education.

— Dr. O.J. "Bubba" Woytek,
Senior Development Officer
DVM '65

2004 Open House

Scrubbed and ready for surgery, children of all ages made incisions, prepared splints and gave stitches; it's a good thing the patients were all teddy bears! From miniature ponies to teddy bear surgery, the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine celebrated another successful Open House on March 27, 2004.

Over 7,000 visitors gathered on the CVM campus to enjoy the many activities including presentations by Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald from Animal Planet's *Emergency Vets*, Cen-Tex Search & Rescue, Bob Evans and his talented Frisbee Dogs and one of the most popular events, Skidboot, the world's smartest dog.

There were also pictures with Reveille, agility trials and the TAMU

Weight Pulling Club, which offers alternative exercises for fighting canine breeds similar to those used to train sled dogs. In addition to the many events, portions of the Large and Small Animal Clinics were open for tours, which included a live spay/neuter.



"I need stuffing, stat!" Teddy Bear surgery, agility trials, and Skidboot, the world's smartest dog, were a few of the events at Open House.



A Distinguished Fellow

H. Richard Adams, the Carl B. King Dean of Veterinary Medicine at the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine, was recently named a 2004 Distinguished Alumni by the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, PA.

Adams, who also taught at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas and the University of Missouri colleges of medicine and veterinary medicine, earned his BS degree in Veterinary Science in 1965 and his DVM degree in 1966 at Texas A&M University, and his

PhD in Pharmacology in 1972 at the University of Pittsburgh.

The Distinguished Alumni Fellow Award was presented to Adams by the Pitt Alumni Association and University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark Nordenberg on February 27, 2004, during the university's annual Honors Convocation Ceremony. Several hundred attendees heard Nordenberg recognize Adams and two other Pitt graduates for "unique and distinguished accomplishments and for bringing credit to themselves and the University of Pittsburgh."

"It truly is a special honor to be recognized by my alma mater and to have the opportunity to reflect on the career possibilities that were opened to me through my education both at the University of Pittsburgh and at Texas A&M University," said Adams.



Dean H. Richard Adams

Outstanding!

The College of Veterinary Medicine honored Dr. Charles Edwards '49, Dr. Keith Harris '76, Dr. Katheryn Meek '80, Dr. Gerald Parker, Jr. '77, and Dr. Charles Thibodeaux '75 at the college's annual Outstanding Alumni Dinner on April 2, 2004.

"Our Outstanding Alumni have represented the College of Veterinary Medicine and the veterinary medical profession with great distinction," said H. Richard Adams, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.



Dr. Charles Edwards

Dr. Edwards is a former scientific collaborator with UT-M.D. Anderson scientists on bovine ocular squamous cell carcinoma and numerous poisonous plant investigators from several states. Edwards "topped-off" his practice career by writing his autobiography, *Up to My Armpits: Adventures of a West Texas Veterinarian*.

Dr. Harris is a second generation Aggie and was commissioned as a Captain in the USAF. He received extensive pathology training and soared to the rank of Colonel over 22 years. Throughout his professional career he utilized his veterinary knowledge in service to government and industry.

After receiving her DVM from Texas A&M University, Dr. Meek pursued a career in immunological research. She has had a long history of outstanding research accomplishments at the Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Currently, Meek is an Associate Professor of Veterinary Pathology at Michigan State University.

Dr. Parker serves as the first Director of the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Centers, US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, Fort Detrick, MD, and is the highest level scientific advisor to Secretary Tom Ridge, Department of Homeland Security, for animal health, zoonotic diseases, and countermeasures against biological warfare. He has served as the Commander of the US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, the highest level biocontainment research laboratory in our nation.

After receiving his DVM from Texas A&M University, Dr. Thibodeaux entered private practice in Louisiana where he maintained four veterinary practices until 1986 when he joined Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc. Thibodeaux has served Hill's as Technical Services Veterinarian, Professional Services Representative and is now Senior Veterinary Affairs Manager for Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi.



Dr. Gerald Parker



Dr. Keith Harris



Dr. Charles Thibodeaux



Dr. Katheryn Meek

Call for Nominations

The Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine recognizes former students each year who have distinguished themselves by bringing honor and recognition to the veterinary profession, the college and Texas A&M University through our Outstanding Alumni Awards. We invite you to submit nominations for the 2005 College of Veterinary Medicine Outstanding Alumni Awards by January 7, 2005. Awards for 2005 will be presented at the Outstanding Alumni Awards Dinner held on Friday night during the CVM Homecoming and Parents Weekend, April 8, 2005. To request a nomination packet, please contact the Development Office at (979) 845-9043.

The Big Weekend

A New Springtime Tradition for the CVM

After weeks of planning and preparation, the College of Veterinary Medicine opened its doors for one of the biggest weekends in college history. Over 800 alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and friends came together on the weekend of April 2-4, 2004, to celebrate individual achievements and college milestones.

In addition to welcoming back former veterinary students, Friday's events included the White Coat Ceremony for our first-year veterinary students. Following this momentous event was the CVM Honor's Convocation and the Homecoming Banquet, honoring five outstanding veterinary alumni for their service to the veterinary profession.

Saturday began bright and early as veterinary students and their parents were given a behind-the-scenes look at the Small and Large Animal Clinics and the basic science laboratories. Later that evening on the floor of Reed Arena, more than 300 auction items were sold at the First Annual Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction and Dinner.

Sunday brought the tremendous weekend to a competitive and educational close with a golf tournament for students and parents at the Pecan Lakes Golf Course in Navasota, Texas, and a continuing education event for visiting veterinarians on "Bioterrorism and the Practitioner" presented by Drs. Neville Clarke, Lelve Gayle, Murl Bailey, Linda Logan and Garry Adams.

Please make plans to join us for next year's "Big Weekend" in April.



Top Right: 1st year veterinary students receive the coveted White Coat and congratulations from Dean H. Richard Adams.

Middle Right: Special guest Lyle Lovett takes a moment to pose with Dr. John August and his wife, Janet, at the First Annual Gentle Doctor Benefit.

Bottom Right: Dean H. Richard Adams makes his singing debut at the Gentle Doctor Benefit Auction performing "Move It On Over" with Dr. Dickson Varner and *Spur of the Moment*.

Above: Many stunning items were on display for the live auction including a commemorative Texas Flag previously flown over the State Capitol.



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