



World Veterinary Association

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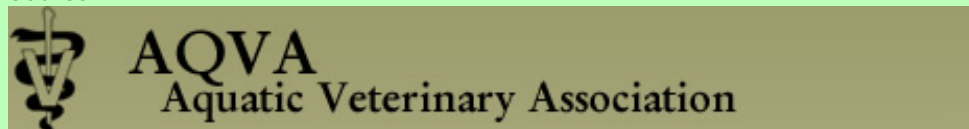
WVA Newsletters

News: [World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association](#)

Posted by: JimEdwards on Aug 19, 2007 - 05:33 PM

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The WAVMA held its first Annual General Meeting in Washington DC on July 18, 2007. Opening the meeting of a large number of attendees WAVMA President, Dr. Peter Merrill, thanked WAVMA sponsors and supporters including Novartis Animal Health (US), Pharmaq (UK), Intervet Norbio (Singapore), Inter-Res Research (Germany), Aquatic Ecosystems (US), AUMS (UK), Blackwell Publishers (US) and Net business (UK). Emphasizing the global reach of WAVMA he outlined the structure and function of the Association that would reach out to all veterinary organizations throughout the world and an estimated 7,500 plus veterinarians already involved with different aspects of aquatic veterinary medicine. He also emphasized the need for an entity such as the WAVMA to help address and focus on educational needs for aquatic practitioners, the clear recognition of aquatics as a unique discipline of veterinary medicine, and the need for credentialing practitioners to be clinically competent in this discipline. These and other needs of members will be developed and driven by WAVMA members that volunteer to form and serve on committees.



WVA President Dr Leon Russell and WAVMA President Dr Peter Merrill.

Other speakers included international leaders in veterinary medicine including Dr. Leon Russell (President, World Veterinary Association President), Dr. Jim Edwards (President, Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations), Dr. Julius Tepper (Treasurer, International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine), Presidents of national veterinary associations (Drs. Greg Hammer - America; John Drake - Canada; Nick Blayney - Britain; Diane Sheehan - Australia) and veterinary organizations with aquatic species focuses, Dr. Hamish Rodger (Fish Veterinary Society), Dr. Carol McClure (Eastern Aquatic Veterinary Association), Dr. Leigh Anne Clayton (Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians).

Uniformly speakers emphasized the need for greater veterinary involvement in aquatic animal health, welfare, and disease response, public health and seafood safety, and stronger recognition of the role and function of aquatic veterinarians (not only within the profession but also throughout the wider aquatic community and the public). Dr. Sheehan illustrated Australian veterinary student involvement in aquatic animal research and private practice in order to gain experience. "One World, One Medicine", the similarities between aquaculture and agriculture, and lessons learned in controlling exotic diseases, was the thrust of Dr.

Russell's emphasis, as he illustrated the need for aquatic veterinarians to ensure a safe food supply and the impact of trans-boundary disease due to the global movements of species and their products. Dr. Hammer suggested the importance of organizations and members supporting new legislation and regulations that would advance veterinary medicine. Dr. Edwards reported how 2.6 billion people in Asia rely on fish in their diet, that Asia currently produces and exports more farmed seafood than the rest of the world, and has experienced several epidemics of globally significant diseases in aquaculture; however, Asia has one the poorest infrastructures for aquatic veterinarian involvement. In the UK and the rest of Europe Dr. Rodger

emphasized the need for aquatic veterinarians as Official Veterinarians who assist governments in regulatory work, and for harmonizing this system with National Veterinary Accreditation Programs that exist in the US, Canada, Australia and elsewhere. Harmonizing such aquatic veterinary programs is pivotal to protection of aquatic industries and National resources from diseases, and the enhancement of global trade. Discussing the spread of Infectious Salmon Anemia from Europe to North America, Dr. McClure emphasized the need for veterinarians involved in surveillance, diagnosis and biosecurity programs, along with National policy modifications to incorporate aquatic veterinarians into national programs – situations that most certainly would have at least protected industries before the disease reached them. From the amphibian and aquatic reptile perspective Dr. Clayton pointed out the recent dramatic declines in wild populations and the similarity of issues facing “exotic species” and aquatic veterinarians in areas such as conservation, industry development, pharmaceutical use and needs, and evolving concerns for potential drug resistance.

General discussion reemphasized the common global need for, and importance of a global organization that help the veterinary profession grapple with a wide cadre of aquatic veterinary issues, and programs to advance the private practitioner dealing with aquatic animal companion or food production practice on a daily basis. Overwhelmingly, the emphasis on the vast opportunities for private practitioners to expand their current practices in any areas of the fastest growing discipline of veterinary medicine permeated the whole meeting.



Drs Chris Walster, Colin Johnston, Julius Tepper, Dusan Palic, Peter Merrill and Tim Miller-Morgan.

During the business section of the meeting members ratified the WAVMA bylaws and elected the 2008 Officers and Directors whose terms will start January 1, 2008. They included Drs. Ron Roberts (UK) – President, Hugh Mitchell (US) – President-Elect, Chris Walster (UK) – Secretary, Dusan Palic (US) – Treasurer, and Directors-at-Large (representing members at large)

Julius Tepper, Tim Miller-Morgan. Together with Dr. Peter Merrill who will assume the position of Past President, these individuals will make up the 2008 WAVMA Executive Board.

Following the Annual General Meeting the Executive Board met to identify the needs and expressed wishes of WAVMA members and decide on the actions needed to address the issues identified including the formation of member-driven committees. Among other things the Board discussed was finalizing an agreement with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (the hosts of the 2008 World Veterinary Congress – Vancouver, Canada; July 27-31) that allows the WAVMA to develop the WVC aquatic veterinary medicine program, to hold the 2008 WAVMA Annual General Meeting, and possibly develop a special workshop for aquatic veterinarians on developing and implementing aquaculture biosecurity certification programs for finfish operations in conjunction with this meeting.

Veterinarians and veterinary organizations that have an interest or involvement in any aspects of aquatic veterinary medicine, and wish to join or become affiliated with the WAVMA should contact the Secretary (Chris Walster – Tel +44 1785 258411, Fax +44 1785 258416, Email chris.walster@onlinevets.co.uk) and visit the WAVMA website (www.AquaVets.org).

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