Property laws make no distinction between animals and inanimate objects, such as tables and chairs, leading to criticisms that the legal system undervalues the human-animal bond, and calls to replace “animal owner” with a more appropriate term. Opponents warn that renaming this relationship may make pet ownership so problematic and costly as to actually damage the bond.
Boulder, Colo., made history in 2000 when the city added “guardian” to the section of its municipal code addressing animal ownership. It was the first instance of a city referring to the legal relationship between a person and a pet as something other than owner and property.

The city council reasoned that Boulderites who internalize the idea they are pet guardians and not just property owners may be more inclined to treat animals humanely and be responsible pet owners.

As explained by In Defense of Animals, the San Rafael, Calif.-based animal protection organization behind the national guardian campaign, a pet guardian doesn’t buy a pet but adopts a homeless animal instead. She provides the pet with veterinary care, doesn’t let it run loose, and trains the animal not to be aggressive. Such are the potential benefits of identifying the owner-pet relationship as guardianship, according to the IDA.

The campaign started tallying successes around the country, most notably in Rhode Island, where in 2001 the legislature added “guardian” to the state animal ownership statutes. Today, pet-owners in 17 cities, one state, and two counties in California can legally refer to themselves as animal guardians.

Pet guardianship was, and is still today, thought of as a force to potentially redefine society’s relationship with companion animals, for better or for worse.

Yet in the years since Boulder became the first pet guardian city, what, if anything, has the campaign achieved? Are animals in guardian jurisdictions better off than those in nonguardian areas? What of concerns pet guardianship will be a basis for litigation redefining the legal relationship between people and at least some types of animals, namely, companion animals? In the common law tradition, a guardian is an individual appointed by a court to act in the interests of a person, such as a child or incompetent adult. Could not a court be convinced that a dog or cat is more like a dependent whose interests should be protected than a piece of property?

Apart from anecdotal accounts, there’s no evidence a pet guardian treats animals more humanely than an owner. In 2009, the JAVMA published a study of dog owners in two California cities—Berkeley, a pet guardian city, and the nonguardian Hayward. Researchers reported owners classified as guardians were no more attached to their dogs than were owners in the city without such a designation (JAVMA 2009;234:896-900).

In pet guardian jurisdictions, the practice of veterinary medicine carries on as usual. “We don’t believe the guardianship issue has changed our ability as veterinarians to practice routine veterinary medicine,” observed Dr. Marcia Aubin, president of the Rhode Island VMA, which thinks guardianship ordinances could take away an owner’s right to make choices for an animal.

And as for the campaign’s legal impact, animals are just as much personal property today as they were before the campaign and, as such, lack the necessary legal standing for

Though the campaign to reclassify animal owners as guardians has lost momentum, the veterinary profession remains wary
Winning hearts, changing minds

The person who started the pet guardian campaign, Dr. Elliot Katz, didn’t set out to redefine the property status of companion animals. “I am afraid that society is not ready for that,” the In Defense of Animals president and founder acknowledged.

The city councils and Rhode Island legislature would not have adopted “guardian” if it would have altered the legal relationship between an owner and a pet, Dr. Katz said. In every pet guardian jurisdiction, he explained, the ordinances are clear that “owner” and “guardian” are interchangeable and that the responsibilities and liabilities of a guardian are no different from those of an owner.

A longtime veterinarian and activist in the animal protection movement, Dr. Katz believes much of the nation’s animal welfare problems stem from a belief that animals are property instead of sentient beings deserving of respect. Efforts to protect animals from mistreatment are often little more than “Band-Aids” if the fundamental philosophic problem goes unaddressed, he said.

“Until the paradigm changes as to how society sees and treats other species, starting with the animal companions we bring into our homes, until the mindset [changes] that they are little more than pieces of property, the same cycle of exploitation, abandonment, and abuse will continue,” Dr. Katz said.

The goal of the pet guardian campaign, Dr. Katz says, is to change this attitude by teaching the public to use a word that encapsulates the idea that people have a duty to provide their companion animals with “respect, responsibility, kindness, and lifetime veterinary care.” He chose “guardian” not because of the word’s legal meaning, but rather, because a guardian is defined as a protector.

State and local lawmakers embraced the term out of an understanding the word can effect positive changes for animals, Dr. Katz said. Although he has no concrete data indicating “guardian” has, in fact, done this, Dr. Katz nevertheless believes the campaign is slowly but surely having an impact on how domesticated animals are seen and treated.

David Favre, who teaches animal law at Michigan State University College of Law, believes the pet guardian campaign has succeeded in raising awareness about how the legal classification of animals as property undervalues the human-animal bond. Property laws don’t distinguish between living beings and nonliving things, yet society and the legal system itself acknowledge a person has a duty to an animal that he doesn’t to any other kind of property. “There are no anti-cruelty laws for pianos,” Favre pointed out.

In January, a bill was introduced in the New York legislature that would authorize the awarding of damages for the loss of comfort and companionship of a pet in wrongful death and injury lawsuits. The justification portion of the legislation, which would also authorize the court to appoint a guardian to recover damages for an injured pet, criticized the legal system for treating animals as property, call-
Moreover, must the veterinarian in this scenario seek judicial guidance to be certain she is complying with the law?

The potential for these sorts of legal dilemmas motivated the AVMA in 2003 to adopt a policy statement that reads, in part: “Any change in terminology describing the relationship between animals and owners, including ‘guardian,’ does not strengthen this relationship and may, in fact, harm it.”

Later, the Association convened the Task Force on the Legal Status of Animals, which in 2005 issued a detailed list of potential negative repercussions that guardianship could have on animal owners, service providers, society, and animals.

Guardianship is a fiduciary relationship—the highest civil relationship owed by one person to another—in which a guardian must always act in the best interest of the ward. If this relationship were applied to animals and their owners, Dennis says any number of legal dilemmas could unfold. In veterinary medicine, for instance, euthanasia could become far more problematic because how can ending an animal’s life be in its best interest?

Dennis sees animal guardianship as a slippery slope—once society grants animals some of the same rights as people, where does it stop? Could animals one day even have the same legal right as people do to reproduce? “If so, then spaying and neutering of animals could be at an end,” he said. “Now these things seem absurd when we say them;” Dennis acknowledged, “but these are the repercussions of when you bring human guardianship law over and transplant it into veterinary medicine.”

When he has spoken with lawyers wanting to change the property status of animals, Dennis has suggested they use a term with no legal significance, such as “caretaker,” yet they insist on guardianship. “The reason it has to be guardianship is they want that body of law coming over and applying to the animal,” Dennis explained.

**What’s in a word?**

While Dr. Katz intends for guardianship to improve animal welfare by changing attitudes and behavior, many people see the campaign as a Trojan horse.

A guardian may indeed be a protector, but the veterinary community, breed associations, and other campaign critics point out the word also has a legal definition. In law, “guardianship” is a relationship in which a person is responsible for the care of a ward. If an ordinance or statute describes an animal owner as a “guardian,” the argument goes, then can’t a court be petitioned to apply to an animal at least some of the obligations owed to a human ward?

In such a scenario, an animal guardian wanting to euthanize his cat instead of paying for a costly lifesaving procedure could face legal action for not acting in the cat’s best interest. Moreover, must the veterinarian in this

“To lawyers, ‘guardian’ has a considerable amount of legal significance. Ownership and guardianship are not matters of semantics; they’re not interchangeable terms.”

—GREGORY M. DENNIS, ATTORNEY
AVMA POLICY
Ownership vs Guardianship

Terminology Describing the Relationship Between Animals and Their Owners

The American Veterinary Medical Association promotes the optimal health and welfare of animals. Further, the AVMA recognizes the role of responsible owners in providing for their animals’ care. Any change in terminology describing the relationship between animals and owners, including “guardian,” does not strengthen this relationship and may, in fact, harm it. Such changes in terminology may adversely affect the ability of society to obtain and deliver animal services and, ultimately, result in animal suffering.

Not everyoneworries the guardian campaign will usher in a new era of jurisprudence where animals are granted new rights, however. Bonnie Lutz is a Santa Ana, Calif., attorney who has represented veterinarians in administrative actions and lawsuits since 2001. She sees two factions at work within the pet guardian campaign: those who believe calling pet owners “guardians” benefits animals and those wanting to use guardianship as grounds for providing animals with more rights. So far, the latter hasn’t had any success, Lutz says, and likely won’t.

“When you look at the actual code sections, it’s very clear,” Lutz said. “They have a statement in there that for all purposes ‘owner’ is ‘guardian’ and ‘guardian’ is ‘owner.’ Essentially, it was a distinction without a difference. It didn’t change anything.” For guardian codes to have any legal power, Lutz said, language is needed to clarify how a pet guardian is different from an owner, but such a distinction isn’t made.

Lutz thinks the AVMA has made the public aware about the unintended consequences that could result from legally redefining the owner-pet relationship. “It was important that the AVMA and others came out strongly against this, just to give people a wake-up call so those who might be on the fence, thinking this sounds like a good idea, understand there could possibly be negative ramifications,” she said.

Much ado about nothing?

So why hasn’t there been a flood of lawsuits aimed at getting courts to declare that dogs and cats in guardian jurisdictions are entitled to at least some of the same considerations as human wards?

University law professor, doubts pet guardian ordinances will be of any use to a plaintiff petitioning a court to recognize the ordinances as actually entitling pets to new rights. “If all it is is a word change, and no substantive provision has changed, then I don’t see a court taking that word and transforming the law,” he said.

The ALDF has paid little attention to the campaign, Tischler said, and she doubts it has had any meaningful success in improving the way animals are treated. Still, she can’t categorically rule out the possibility of ALDF ever appealing for the use of pet guardianship in a lawsuit, though she was hard-pressed to envision a scenario in which the ordinance would be of value.

“If we were to do that, we would probably only go after some egregious harm that had been committed,” she explained. “We would have to very carefully analyze whether that law gives us anything that we don’t already have through another means.”

Tischler estimates most members of the animal law community are, like herself, using existing laws for the benefit of pets, livestock, research animals, and wildlife, and are less focused on convincing a court or legislature to say a certain class of animals is entitled to protections beyond those already available.

“These are all things we can work toward gaining measurable improvement (on) and, hopefully, in some instances, eliminating some of the most egregious practices, like foie gras,” Tischler said. “We don’t need to address the property status in most of the litigation we handle. However, you can anticipate that it will be raised by certain attorneys in certain contexts in the coming years.”

Joyce Tischler is founder and general counsel of the Animal Legal Defense Fund, an organization of lawyers headquartered in Cotati, Calif., who use the legal system to “protect the lives and advance the interests of animals.” Tischler, like Lutz, regards the pet guardian ordinances as having little legal significance, since the lawmakers clearly intended “owner” and “guardian” to be used interchangeably.

“State legislative resources.”

An AVMA resource on pet guardianship—“Ownership versus Guardianship”—is available at www.avma.org in the Advocacy section under “State Legislative Resources.”
Proposal to schedule propofol draws reactions

Veterinary community differs on necessity, agrees that disposal could become a burden

A proposal to list the anesthetic propofol as a controlled substance has elicited a mixture of reactions from veterinarians, who disagree on whether the designation would be an undue burden.

In late 2010, the Drug Enforcement Administration solicited comments on a proposal to list propofol as a schedule IV drug under the Controlled Substances Act because of the potential for abuse. The agency restricts the use of schedule IV drugs to DEA registrants, and imposes various requirements on users, including security and record keeping obligations.

As support for its concerns about propofol abuse, the DEA cited a survey of 126 academic programs in human anesthesiology. Eighteen percent of programs reported diversion or abuse of propofol between June 1995 and June 2005. Seven of 25 propofol abusers on record had died of overdose.

Individual veterinarians as well as organizations representing veterinary interests submitted comments on the proposal to schedule propofol.

Most veterinarians wrote in opposition to the proposal, arguing that the abuse of propofol is not common enough to justify designating the drug as a controlled substance at the expense of veterinary practices in terms of time and cost.

Some veterinary organizations opposed scheduling propofol, and others did not. The AVMA's comments to the DEA focus on addressing difficulties with disposal of propofol if the drug becomes a controlled substance.

Disposal difficulties

“The DEA cites research that 28 percent of drug abusers of propofol die as a result of this abuse, so the AVMA understands the DEAs actions to stop diversion of propofol from its intended use,” said Dr. Ron DeHaven, AVMA chief executive officer. “However, propofol is also an effective drug used in veterinary anesthesia, and we want to make sure that the burden of disposing of it under the DEAs rules doesn’t discourage veterinarians from utilizing propofol.”

In comments to the DEA, the AVMA expressed overall concern that scheduling propofol might result in a decrease in use of the drug by some veterinarians because of the burdens of registration, record keeping, and disposal under DEA rules.

Regarding disposal, the AVMA noted that propofol becomes unusable within a short time after a vial is opened and that veterinarians often use only part of an open vial. The AVMA expressed concern that if propofol becomes a controlled substance, DEA rules might not allow veterinarians to continue disposing of unusable propofol into an absorbent substance for incineration or disposal as solid waste.

Working with the AVMA Committee on Environmental Issues and Council on Veterinary Service, the AVMA Council on Biologic and Therapeutic Agents and Clinical Practitioners Advisory Committee wrote comments to the DEA. Among the authors was Dr. Charles A. Lemme, owner of Blairs Ferry Pet Hospital in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and representative of the American Animal Hospital Association on CPAC.

Dr. Lemme said DEA rules specify that registrants should contact their local agent for authorization whenever they want to dispose of a controlled substance. If propofol becomes a controlled substance, the AVMA is asking the DEA to define a process for convenient disposal of propofol on an ongoing basis. Dr. Lemme said disposing of propofol via a reverse distributor would be costly and impractical.

“I think as long as the disposal issue can be taken care of, that probably most practitioners will continue to use it like they have been,” Dr. Lemme said. "The bookkeeping aspect of it, while it’s a
Varying viewpoints

The Texas VMA was one of the veterinary organizations that opposed the proposal to schedule propofol. In comments to the DEA, the Texas VMA wrote that it “urges the DEA not to list propofol as a controlled substance because the benefits of such a listing will be far outweighed by the negative impact it will have on the veterinary profession and the pet owning public.”

The Texas VMA expressed concern that veterinarians could be left without any injectable anesthetic agents that do not require registration, record keeping, and disposal in accordance with DEA rules.

Etomidate is one anesthetic agent similar to propofol that is not a controlled substance, said Dr. Robert E. Meyer, president of the American College of Veterinary Anesthesiologists. Nevertheless, he said, etomidate is very expensive and can have adverse effects such as acute adrenocortical suppression.

The ACVA did not submit comments on the proposal to schedule propofol, instead offering input on the AVMA’s comments. Dr. Meyer said the ACVA believes that propofol should become a controlled substance because of the abuse potential.

“It would be a pain if it became controlled. I mean, we would still use it. But I think some practices wouldn’t use it ... if it had to be put under lock and key.”

—— DR. GREGG K. TAKASHIMA, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN ANIMAL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

The American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine wrote to the DEA asking the agency to reconsider the proposal to schedule propofol. Among its comments, ACLAM expressed concern that scheduling propofol will result in little decrease in abuse potential.

“It would be very easy for anyone involved in handling or administering propofol to overstate the amount used for the procedure and to divert the overage for personal use,” ACLAM wrote.

The American Veterinary Distributors Association wrote to the DEA asking the agency not to schedule propofol because of the burden this would place on veterinary distributors.

While AAHA did not submit comments on the proposal to schedule propofol, AAHA president Dr. Gregg K. Takashima said the organization’s leaders generally agreed with the AVMA’s comments—that scheduling propofol could lead to a decrease in use of the drug and that the DEA would need to address the disposal issue.

Dr. Takashima regularly uses propofol at his practice, Parkway Veterinary Hospital in Lake Oswego, Ore.

“It would be a pain if it became controlled,” Dr. Takashima added. “I mean, we would still use it. But I think some practices wouldn’t use it ... if it had to be put under lock and key.”

The DEA proposal, supporting materials, and public comments are available at www.regulations.gov by searching for the docket number, DEA-2010-0022. The comment period has ended.

KATIE BURNS

This spring the AVMA will launch MyVeterinarian.com, an online resource where the public can search for veterinarians by location, species served, and medical services offered.

Thousands of practices around the country have been added to the site since the AVMA began spreading the word about the free member service late last year.

“We have had an overwhelmingly positive response from the practices that have signed up. In only a few short months there has been tremendous feedback, including suggestions that have already led to improvements in the new resource,” said Dr. Kevin Dajka, director of the AVMA Membership and Field Services Division.

“The AVMA is proud to offer a new member service, especially one without any added cost to the veterinarian, that enables each practice to have an increased online presence and has the potential to drive new clients into the practice,” he said.

MyVeterinarian.com lets veterinarians list all the particulars about their practice: name, address, phone and fax numbers, hours of operation, species served, services offered, and veterinarians practicing at the facility.

Pet owners visiting MyVeterinarian.com can compare clinics side by side to see what each offers. The site allows visitors to share the information they find by e-mailing it to friends or family members. They can also find a map to the business and print the information as a reference.

AVMA members can go online and add their practice to MyVeterinarian.com by going to the site’s “Clinic Login” section, and clicking “Not Yet Registered” to start the process.
Miller joins AVMA Washington office

In February Dr. Whitney Lee Miller joined the AVMA as an assistant director in the Governmental Relations Division. Dr. Miller will work as a lobbyist on Capitol Hill on behalf of the veterinary profession.

"I am really excited about beginning my position at the AVMA GRD. I will be advocating on behalf of the profession on vital issues at the national level," Dr. Miller said. "It is a rare opportunity to be able to affect legislation, and I hope to effectively bring the expertise and the importance of veterinary medicine to the attention of Congress."

Dr. Miller is responsible for establishing and maintaining communication between AVMA members and congressional staff, pertinent regulatory agencies, state veterinary associations, allied veterinary groups, and advocacy groups to advance the goals of the AVMA.

"I am very pleased to have Dr. Miller join the AVMA as an assistant director in the GRD," said division director Dr. Mark Lutschunig. "Whitney will be spending the majority of her time on animal welfare issues, which is one of the strategic goals for the AVMA. Whitney's past experience as an AVMA fellow will help her navigate the legislative process to advance the AVMA's legislative priorities."

In addition to animal welfare, Dr. Miller is focusing on issues related to the human-animal bond, pet ownership/guardianship, aquaculture, environmental issues, conservation, animal transport, use of pesticides, and zoos and wildlife.

As an AVMA Congressional Science Fellow, Dr. Miller served as the science policy expert to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. She worked extensively on legislative issues pertaining to biodefense, biosecurity, medical emergency preparedness, and public health response and played an integral role in drafting the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism legislation.

Most recently Dr. Miller worked at a small animal private practice, and she will continue to do some small animal emergency relief work. In addition, she volunteers locally at a shelter spay-neuter program. She also has experience with the Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine. She has completed international training programs in South Africa, Japan, and Belgium.

Dr. Miller received her DVM degree in 2008 and her master's in business administration in 2006, both from Colorado State University.

Volunteers sought for AVMF committees

The American Veterinary Medical Foundation is reaching out for volunteers for all AVMF committees. Openings are available on the following committees:

- Committee on the Board: Sets board accountability standards.
- Finance/Administration Committee: Monitors the performance of investments and budget.
- Grants/Awards Committee: Reviews applications from grant recipients.
- Strategic Planning Committee: Develops and monitors the strategic objectives of the AVMF.
- Resource Development Committee: Plans the AVMF fundraising program and serves as an active proponent of the Foundation and its fundraising efforts, solicits donations, and chairs events.
- Volunteer Engagement Committee: Recruits and coordinates volunteers to work on AVMF projects and programs and participates in the Our Oath in Action Shelter Rehabilitation project at the AVMA Annual Convention.

Each committee member is expected to serve as an ambassador of the AVMF, its mission, and its programs; give a personal and financial commitment; recruit others to serve as AVMF board or committee members; and commit to at least one committee conference call meeting per month, a yearly committees summit, and board meetings for that year.

"The more volunteers and ambassadors that the AVMF has engaged in our work, the greater the impact will be on behalf of the medical care and well-being for animals," said Michael Cathey, AVMF executive director. "The AVMF, like all not-for-profit organizations, is governed by—and most all of its activities and programs are delivered by—interested and dedicated volunteers."

Those interested in applying for a position are asked to complete a short survey, which can be found by going to www.avmf.org and clicking on the "Volunteer Opportunities" link under the "How to Help" section. Full committee descriptions are also available at that site.

Contact Cindy Rutkowski by e-mail at crutkowski@avma.org or go to www.avmf.org/volunteer for any questions.
Two landmark decisions came out of the AVMA Council on Education meeting March 6-8 at AVMA headquarters in Schaumburg, Ill.

The council granted full accreditation status for seven years to the National Autonomous University of Mexico School of Veterinary Medicine, Mexico City, and Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in St. Kitts, West Indies.

The two schools are the first to be recognized in their respective countries by the council. Their graduates will now be able to sit for licensure to practice veterinary medicine in the United States or Canada without first completing a foreign graduate examination.

The COE grants accreditation status to foreign schools and colleges of veterinary medicine on the basis of compliance with the 11 standards of accreditation. The accreditation of Ross and UNAM brings the total to 16 foreign veterinary schools and colleges that are accredited by the COE, including five in Canada. The 28 U.S. veterinary schools and colleges are also COE-accredited.

Foreign colleges are required to undergo a preliminary or consultative site visit to determine their preparedness for a comprehensive site visit and are required to correct all deficiencies identified by the consultative team before requesting a comprehensive site visit. That visit is the final step before the council makes an accreditation decision.

Ross veterinary school began seeking accreditation when it submitted a self-study report to the COE in July 2006, and the council conducted a consultative site visit Sept. 17-21, 2006.

The school had to make a number of facilities and programmatic improvements, which it did in the following few years. Ross submitted another self-study to the council in July 2010, and this time the COE, after reviewing the self-study in September of that year, agreed to conduct a comprehensive accreditation site visit, which took place Jan. 16-20, 2011.

Students at Ross complete their basic science curriculum during seven 15-week semesters at the St. Kitts campus. Each student then completes a final year of clinical rotations at one of 22 COE-accredited veterinary schools in the United States.

A new class is admitted each semester, three times a year: September, January, and May. The most recent class, admitted in January, had 138 students.

Nearly all students at Ross University are American or Canadian citizens who return to North America to become licensed and pursue careers. Since its founding in 1982, the school has graduated more than 2,500 veterinarians.

“Achieving AVMA accreditation further affirms our commitment to excellence in veterinary education,” said Dr. David J. DeYoung, dean of the Ross veterinary school. “We are pleased with the decision of the accrediting board and look forward to working with other AVMA-accredited schools and our affiliate clinical partners in the United States to advance the future of veterinary education.”

—DR. DAVID J. DEYOUNG, DEAN, ROSS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Although Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine is a foreign school, about 98 percent of its students come from North America.
Federal veterinarians launch their Vet2011 events

Department of Agriculture veterinarians welcomed one of their former chief veterinary officers, AVMA CEO Ron DeHaven, back to Washington, D.C., Feb. 4 to help kick off their celebration of the veterinary profession’s 250th anniversary.

Dr. DeHaven keynoted the USDA’s Vet2011 opening ceremony. The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service is the largest federal employer of veterinarians in the U.S., followed by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Attending or conferencing in were about 300 people, including FSIS and APHIS veterinarians, Capitol Hill staffers, and agriculture and industry representatives.

“For me it is a homecoming,” said Dr. DeHaven, who served as APHIS administrator from 2004-2007. Fellow speakers were Elisabeth Hagen, MD, undersecretary for food safety; Dr. John Clifford, APHIS chief veterinary officer; and Dr. William James, FSIS chief public health veterinarian.

The FSIS and APHIS have plans to hold several events this year focused on veterinarians’ contributions to public health. The FSIS has built a special exhibit and is using the Vet2011 concept to promote its veterinarian recruitment efforts. The agency’s Vet2011 website is www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/Vet2011.

“I can’t thank FSIS enough for hosting this kickoff for government veterinarians,” Dr. DeHaven said. “We need to talk to the general public and not just ourselves about veterinarians’ contributions to animal health and public health, and give the public a better understanding of the roles of veterinarians in these areas.”

City, and afterward, laid out recommendations for improvements that UNAM, like Ross, would need to implement to work toward accreditation. Enough progress had been made, according to the COE, that it was willing to grant a request from the school for a comprehensive site visit, which was made in November 2009.

At its spring meeting Feb. 28-March 2, 2010, the council made an adverse accreditation decision regarding UNAM, which the veterinary school appealed.

Meanwhile, federal regulatory changes by the Department of Education, which went into effect July 1, caused the council to revise its Accreditation Policies and Procedures manual in eight areas. This included changes to the portion of the manual related to the structure of the appeals process.

Before, when the COE made an adverse accreditation decision, it would send information to the institution about identified deficiencies at the same time it notified the institution of the decision.

Now, the council provides the institution an opportunity to submit a written response regarding any deficiencies identified by the site team. This response is considered by the council before it takes any action.

In accordance with the changes made to comply with DOE guidelines, the council was required to vacate its earlier decision so that UNAM could respond in writing about each deficiency noted in the evaluation report prior to an accreditation decision. The council during its fall meeting Sept. 19-21, 2010, considered UNAM’s response and decided to visit Mexico again the first week of February 2011. Using the resulting information, the council voted to grant the school full accreditation.

Malinda Larkin
Canada’s practical educator

Andrew Smith founded country’s first veterinary college, educating thousands

Dr. Andrew Smith, founder of Canada’s first veterinary school, was not without his critics.

In the 1860s, Dr. Smith established the private, two-year program that eventually evolved into the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph. By 1908, when he turned over the college to the provincial government, it had produced more than 3,000 graduates.

“Controversy over the length and content of the curriculum and the easy admission and graduation requirements dogged Smith’s college almost from its inception,” wrote A. Margaret Evans, PhD, former chair of the University of Guelph Department of History, in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography. “Nevertheless, he seems to have been justified in considering that his form of veterinary education was the practicable one to introduce into the young country.”

‘A store of persistence’

Born in Scotland in 1834, Dr. Smith attended parish school and worked on his family’s farm before entering the Edinburgh Veterinary College at the age of 25. After graduating from the two-year program in 1861, he received an appointment as veterinary surgeon to the Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada with the purpose of heading a school to train veterinarians.

“He arrived in Toronto on 23 Sept. 1861, a short, solidly built young man, with dark hair and a beard, a serious, almost sombre countenance, a dignified manner, and, as it would turn out, a store of persistence and sound business judgement,” Dr. Evans wrote.

In early 1862 and the next winter, Dr. Smith delivered lectures on veterinary subjects in conjunction with a winter course in agriculture that the board provided free to the public.

In 1864, he began offering a regular course of study in veterinary science following the British model of two six-month sessions over two years, culminating in examinations.

“To the young profession practi-
‘A benevolent despot’

To improve recognition of veterinarians, Dr. Smith promoted the creation of the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association for “the mutual improvement of its members ... and the advancement of the position and interests of the Veterinary profession in the Province.” He served as the association’s president from its formation in 1874 until its incorporation in 1879.

Dr. Smith also was active outside the profession. He was a founder of the Toronto Hunt Club, Ontario Jockey Club, and Industrial Exhibition in Toronto. He served as honorary governor of the Toronto General Hospital and director of the Consumers’ Gas Company.

“His name did not figure prominently in the veterinary literature of his day, but he was the most widely-known veterinarian in North America and he is referred to as one of ten men in Toronto whom nearly everyone recognized on the street,” said past OVC librarian F. Eugene Gattinger in 1962, during an address for the college’s centennial celebration, which was printed in the Canadian Veterinary Journal.

“He was conciliatory by instinct and practice but in matters of the practical needs of his day he was a benevolent despot typical of other great men of his time.”

Dr. Smith resisted pressure to change at the OVC, Dr. Evans wrote. Dr. McEachran’s rival program in Montreal closed in 1903, having produced far fewer graduates than the OVC, but a trend to longer veterinary courses was one indication that the OVC had fallen behind the times. The profession called for the Ontario government to take over the college.

In 1906, Dr. Smith announced that the OVC would extend its course to three years. In 1908, he leased the college buildings to the minister of agriculture, and the OVC became a provincial institution.

Dr. Smith retained an office at the college as a professor emeritus until his death in 1910. 

Katie Burns

Fate of tax-reporting repeal uncertain

The Obama administration is unhappy with lawmakers’ plans for offsetting $19 billion in lost revenue that would result from eliminating an unpopular tax-reporting provision.

Although congressional Republicans and Democrats agreed the provision should be repealed as a hindrance to economic growth, and both houses of Congress did so, they had not resolved their differences over how to pay for the repeal as of press time in March.

The 1099 reporting provision, part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed last year and slated to take effect in 2012, requires businesses to submit to the IRS a report of any transactions with vendors totaling $600 a year.

Revenue generated by the provision was intended to help cover the costs of implementing the health care law.

The AVMA is one of many organizations opposed to the 1099 provision, saying it would be an unnecessary burden on small businesses.

“Veterinarians will be hard-hit by the massive amount of red tape this requirement will create if it isn’t repealed,” said AVMA President Larry M. Kornegay. “The damage created by this requirement on small businesspeople, such as veterinarians, far outweighs the tax revenues it would generate.”

For months, lawmakers in both parties have called for the tax-reporting requirement’s repeal, and in his Jan. 25 State of the Union address, President Obama expressed his willingness to change the provision.

By early March, the Senate and House had each passed legislation eliminating the 1099 provision and outlining their respective plans for offsetting the lost revenue.

While the White House vociferously objects to the offsets identified by the House and Senate, the Obama administration continues to support repeal of the measure and has vowed to work with lawmakers to find an acceptable offset.

Katie Burns

call out

Comments sought on livestock slaughter petitions

Federal regulators are considering petitions to end the slaughter of temporarily immobile veal calves and ban the slaughter of other nonambulatory livestock.

The Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service is accepting comments through April 8 on two petitions for the agency to issue new rules on disabled livestock.

A November 2009 petition from the Humane Society of the United States seeks to alter federal requirements for cattle that arrive at a slaughter facility unable to stand and walk. The USDA requires euthanasia of nearly all such cattle and disposal of the carcasses outside the food chain, with exceptions for veal calves that are immobile potentially because they are exhausted or cold. The HSUS petition seeks an end to the practice of setting apart such veal calves for treatment and then slaughtering them if they walk and have been assessed as free from disease.

The requirement to euthanize nonambulatory cattle was implemented because of the risk of bovine spongiform encephalopathy to humans, while other species of disabled animals are inspected by FSIS veterinarians prior to a decision whether those animals proceed to slaughter, the Feb. 7 Federal Register notice states. The most recent version of the requirement also was a response to inhumane handling of nonambulatory cattle, the notice states.

A March 2010 petition from Farm Sanctuary seeks application of mandatory condemnation to all nonambulatory livestock.

The Federal Register notice states that FSIS tentatively granted the HSUS petition, and the agency is considering measures to ensure other disabled livestock are humanely handled.

To provide comments, go to www.regulations.gov, and search for FSIS-2010-0041.
FDA extends comment period on unapproved animal drugs

The Food and Drug Administration is extending until April 19 the deadline for submitting comments on strategies to address categories of animal drug products that are on the market without FDA approval or other legal marketing status.

The agency’s Dec. 20, 2010, request for comments indicates that the unapproved animal drugs of concern include such products as injectable vitamins; various topical solutions, shampoos, and liniments; electrolyte and glucose solutions; antidotes; and a variety of anti-infective products.

Despite media reports, the AVMA believes that the FDA initiative on unapproved animal drugs does not pertain to compounded drugs, said Dr. Lynne A. White-Shim, an assistant director of the AVMA Scientific Activities Division.

Dr. White-Shim added at press time that the AVMA was drafting comments regarding the FDA initiative on unapproved animal drugs.

According to the request for comments, the FDA is looking for approaches to decrease the number of animal drug products that are on the market without FDA approval or other legal marketing status. The agency is exploring additional mechanisms for these products to achieve legal marketing status, rather than revising the process for approving new animal drugs.

Parties may view the request for comments and submit comments at www.regulations.gov by searching for FDA-2010-N-0528. Comments may be submitted by mail to the Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

Mass bird deaths in Arkansas explained

Three laboratories have concluded that the sudden die-off of as many as 5,000 red-winged blackbirds in an Arkansas city on New Year’s Eve was the result of blunt-force trauma.


Bacteria, viruses, heavy metals, pesticides, and avicides were ruled out as potential causes of death, but tests did find hemorrhaging consistent with blunt trauma. “In most instances, such traumatic injuries in wild birds are due to flying into stationary objects such as trees, houses, windows, power lines, towers, etc.” the report concluded.

On the night of Dec. 31, 2010, between 4,000 and 5,000 blackbirds fell to the ground in Windwood, a neighborhood in Beebe, Ark. Witnesses reported unusually loud noises in the area shortly before the incident, most likely fireworks.

Blackbirds have poor night vision and typically do not fly after dusk. Wildlife officials theorize the fireworks forced the startled birds to fly at a lower altitude than normal. Windwood residents did observe the birds flying at rooftop level and flying into structures and other objects.

The roost flock near Windwood is thought to consist of 1.6 million birds. Weather radar was used to document the width and breadth of the event. Sidney Gauthreaux, PhD, has used Next Generation Weather Radar to archive bird movements and to track migration routes and stopover areas for more than a decade. He says the cloud of birds rising from their roost is documented.

“There is no question that the exodus of birds from the roost is visible in the radar display images,” said Dr. Gauthreaux, a zoology professor and creator of Clemson University’s radar ornithology laboratory. “The first exodus occurred about 10:20 p.m. and contained approximately 6,000 to 7,000 birds per cubic kilometer. At 11:21 p.m., another pulse of birds with a slightly smaller density left the roost.”

Dr. Gauthreaux’s report states no severe weather was over or near the roost at the time.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission flew over Windwood in a helicopter to gauge the scope of the event. No dead birds were found beyond the initial area of fallen birds.
Indiana reviving old committee for ongoing PRRS problem

Indiana animal health officials are reconvening a committee used to coordinate pseudorabies eradication programs during previous decades as the state updates efforts to combat infection with the porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus in swine.

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health plans to convene a Swine Health Advisory Committee to consider how the state can help the swine industry combat porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, or PRRS, said Dr. Bret D. Marsh, Indiana state veterinarian and AVMA treasurer. The board announced in February that it was reviving the committee, which regularly met in the 1980s and 1990s but has been inactive about 10 years.

The Swine Health Advisory Committee’s PRRS scientific subcommittee will consist mostly of veterinarians from private practice, diagnostic laboratories, and universities, and the full committee will include pork industry members such as swine producers and market operators.

PRRS is associated with reproductive failure and postweaning respiratory disease in swine. It was first reported in the U.S. during the late 1980s, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“We are reactivating the committee because the swine industry wants to take a new look at an old problem, and it is the first time the industry has reached out to our regulatory agency in the hope of finding some solutions,” Dr. Marsh said. He cited as evidence of the disease’s harm a report in the Aug. 1, 2005, issue of JAVMA that indicates PRRS costs U.S. swine producers about $560 million annually, and he said that Indiana producers continue enduring substantial losses from the disease.

Dr. John E. Baker, chair of the Board of Animal Health, said PRRS eradication efforts have been increasing nationwide in the past two years, and northern Indiana has experienced an increased incidence of the disease as the industry has added finishing barns for hogs from the Midwest, North Carolina, and Canada.

The board plans for the committee to determine what companies in the swine industry expect of the board, what information the industry could use toward combating the PRRS virus, and how such information would be used. For example, Dr. Marsh said that Indiana could use its database of livestock premises to gather PRRS diagnostic data for farms and map areas with the disease.

He said the state has the authority to impose quarantines, restrict movement, and require livestock testing, but such measures could wreak havoc on the state’s swine industry.

“It’s important as a regulatory agency that we keep in mind our customers, and in this case the swine industry, and make sure we understand their goals and objectives as we look at some long-term solutions for this disease,” Dr. Marsh said.

An announcement from the board states that the swine industry, research, and regulations changed in the years between state meetings on PRRS, and Indiana could provide leadership by re-evaluating efforts to combat the disease. Indiana producers had about 3.65 million hogs and pigs as of December 2010, and the state had the fifth-largest swine inventory in the U.S., according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

USDA proposes catfish inspection

A proposed federal rule would require Department of Agriculture inspections of catfish and catfish products.

The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service announced Feb. 18 that it will, through June 24, accept comments on the proposed regulations. The proposal was published Feb. 24 in the Federal Register.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, also known as the 2008 Farm Bill, amended the Federal Meat Inspection Act to indicate catfish are subject to FSIS inspection.

FSIS officials noted in the Federal Register that the agency hopes to receive comments on how to define which fish are “catfish.” The notice indicates the definition could include any species in the family Ictaluridae, which account for about 46 percent of the value of U.S. aquaculture production, or a broader definition that would include any fish in the 36 families of the order Siluriformes.

The broader definition would involve species that are typically farmed in other countries and imported, such as basa, tra, and swai, USDA information states.

Under the proposal, the FSIS would inspect food products derived from catfish, verify that the products were prepared under sanitary conditions, and inspect imported and exported catfish products. The inspections could include tests for pathogens, drug residues, and chemical residues.

Food and Drug Administration regulations currently require that processors of fish and fishery products develop and implement Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point systems that are intended to maintain sanitary conditions for processing fish products.
Exotic Newcastle kills birds near California

About 10,000 chickens died as a result of exotic Newcastle disease and more than 10,000 others were depopulated during containment efforts following an outbreak in Mexico just south of California.

A report from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) indicates the outbreak was discovered Jan. 26 in the Mexican state of Baja California near the California border. A second outbreak was discovered Jan. 31 in the state of Hidalgo in central Mexico. The infection sources were not immediately determined for the outbreaks, and few details on the second outbreak were available in the weeks following the report.

Exotic Newcastle disease is a frequently fatal viral disease that affects all species of birds and is one of the world’s most infectious poultry diseases, U.S. Department of Agriculture information states. Some birds show no signs of infection prior to death, and others display signs such as sneezing, gasping, nasal discharge, diarrhea, depression, tremors, drooping wings, circling, paralysis, and swelling near the eyes and neck.

The Baja California outbreak involved 21,000 birds at a fattening farm, of which about 10,000 died of the disease, 10,050 were depopulated, and 50 were sent to slaughter, according to the OIE. Information on the remaining 900 birds was not available.

The Hidalgo outbreak involved at least 500 birds at a poultry breeding farm, and OIE information indicates planned control measures included depopulating sick and contaminated animals.

Joelle R. Hayden, a spokeswoman for the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said U.S. poultry have been free of END since 2003, and the department is working with other federal and state authorities to ensure the nation remains free of the disease.

“While there is no known direct threat to U.S. poultry, it is a good time to remind people who raise poultry to always practice good biosecurity and to be vigilant in reporting suspected foreign animal diseases,” Hayden said.

Dr. Annette M. Whiteford, California state veterinarian, said her state is particularly sensitive to the risk posed by END because of an outbreak that affected commercial poultry flocks and backyard chickens in 2002 and 2003. The California Department of Food and Agriculture is working with the USDA, which has also encouraged federal customs and border control officials to increase attention to poultry moved across the border.

The spread of END to commercial and private flocks after its discovery in California backyard flocks in October 2002 led to quarantines in parts of California, Nevada, Arizona, and Texas.

California agriculture officials have contacts in feed stores, 4-H Clubs, livestock auctions, and flea markets where chickens are sold, and they have been distributing information on signs of END and where to report a suspected problem, Dr. Whiteford said. The state has also contacted commercial producers and reminded them to talk with employees about looking for signs of the disease.

The California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System also sent clients notices to watch for signs of infection, and laboratory officials conduct free diagnostic work for backyard or hobby bird keepers who suspect Newcastle infections, Dr. Whiteford said. She also encouraged veterinarians in private practice to watch for the disease among patients brought in by owners of small flocks.
From the racetrack to retirement

The American Association of Equine Practitioners has developed guidelines to help veterinarians and adoption groups successfully transition retired racehorses to new homes and new careers. “Transitioning the Retired Racehorse: Guidelines for Equine Practitioners, Adoption Organizations, and Horse Owners” provides an overview of the common physical challenges affecting former racehorses and helps establish expectations for a horse’s future capabilities.

“The guidelines will outline the common health issues encountered and offer opinions based on the committee’s collective expertise.”

The typical ailments listed include fetlock lameness, tendon and ligamentous injury, upper airway conditions such as laryngeal hemiplegia or “roaring,” and gastric ulcers.

In their post-racing careers, these horses can range from unridden companion animals to athletic sport horses. The document recommends that veterinarians be familiar with the demands and health requirements of each career and suggests that a conservative prognosis for athletic ability of any specific horse be given to avoid failed owners’ expectations, resulting in the horse becoming unwanted.

Admittedly, the cost of housing, retraining, and re-homing retired racehorses can be considerable; yet, little national data exist on the actual costs of veterinary care for these animals. Much of the guidelines’ data came from the Communication Alliance to Network Thoroughbred Ex-Racehorses, or CANTER, which shared its information on the costs of caring for the thousands of animals it housed and transitioned from 1997-2009.

The approximate cost to CANTER for horses not needing veterinary intervention—those deemed sound—and kept an average of four months was $1,200. For horses kept an average of eight months and needing surgical intervention, the approximate cost to CANTER, not including surgical costs, was $3,200.

“As more horses are transitioned from racing to other uses, the role of the equine practitioner and the rescue/rehoming organizations will be of increasing importance,” according to the document.

“The guidelines outlined in this document are designed to enhance this transition and to establish reasonable expectations for use of these animals. It is the goal of this committee that the well being of the horse be paramount in the decision for future use and that the rehoming groups apply sound financial decisions in their care and management programs.”

Developed by the six-member Transitioning Subcommittee of the AAEP Racing Committee, the guidelines grew from a need expressed by rescue and retirement organizations at the 2010 Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit. The guidelines were approved Jan. 23 by the AAEP board of directors. To see the full document, go to www.aape.org and select the “Transitioning Retired Racehorses” link under the “Guidelines” heading.
Research, recognition, and relationships

Studies discussed, partnerships solidified at NAVC

Members of the 2011 NAVC board of directors: Front row: Dr. Charlotte Lacroix, director; Dr. David Senior, conference coordinator; Dr. Earl Rippie, secretary-treasurer; Lynne Johnson-Harris, 1st vice president; and Dr. Melinda Merck, director. Back row: Dr. Mark Smith, director; Colin Burrows, executive director; Earl Gaughan, director; Richard LeCouture, director; Doug Mader, immediate past president; Laurel Kaddatz, president; Mark Crootof, director; Christine Navarre, director; and Gatz Riddell, president-elect.

The launch of a major study of cancer in Golden Retrievers was just one of the highlights from this year’s North American Veterinary Conference Jan. 15-19 in Orlando, Fla.

The Morris Animal Foundation announced the start of the Canine Lifetime Health Project, a 13-year longitudinal study intended to examine cancer in Golden Retrievers.

The foundation created the project to learn how to prevent cancer and other diseases in dogs by determining genetic, nutritional, and environmental risk factors.

The goal is to enroll about 2,500 Golden Retrievers ages 2 to 7. The project has already received support from animal health companies such as Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Pfizer Animal Health, and Merial.

For more information visit www.morrisanimalfoundation.org and click on the “Major Health Campaigns” link under the “Our Research” tab.

This year’s conference also featured enhanced collaboration with veterinary technicians and physicians.

The NAVC and the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America joined forces in a new partnership so that NAVTA’s scientific meeting would be held at the conference. This was in addition to NAVTA’s annual membership meeting, which has long been held in conjunction with the NAVC. This year’s membership meeting was a luncheon Jan. 17.

“We believe that the new partnership will build on the strengths of each group. NAVTA will host a professional development conference this November, but has never wanted to duplicate the efforts of amazing scientific programs already in place,” said NAVTA president, Denise Mikita, in a press release.

The American Medical Association was represented by its president, Cecil B. Wilson, MD. He talked to attendees Jan. 17 about the importance of unifying the health professions during the conference’s One Health program, crafted to help bridge the divide between the health professions.

The daylong session at the NAVC covered field investigations of diseases, the relationships between infectious diseases and domestic and wild animals, international surveillance to detect zoonoses emerging in wildlife to prevent human pandemics, and equipping private practitioners—veterinarians and family practitioners—and public health officials with the information they need to act as sentinels against disease.

In an evening session, presentations were given by other one-health advocates, such as Dr. Lisa A. Conti, director of the Florida Department of Health’s Environmental Health Division; Dr. Carina Blackmore, Florida state public health veterinarian; and Kevin M. Sherin, MD, director of the Orange County (Florida) Health Department.

During the Bayer Cutting Edge Symposium Jan. 19, Dr. Byron L. Blagburn presented findings from his study “Comparative efficacy of four commercially available heartworm preventive products against the MP3 laboratory strain of Dirofilaria immitis.”

In this laboratory study, Advantage Multi for Dogs was the only product tested that was 100 percent effective against the D immitis strain.

The American Heartworm Society pointed out in its response to Dr. Blagburn’s presentation that this study followed an earlier study that, using a different design, examined the single-dose efficacy of two heartworm preventives against the same laboratory strain of heartworms.

“Even though there were differences in the efficacy of the macrocyclic lactones, correlations between the behavior of the study strain and other field strains cannot be extrapolated. Additional research is needed to allow for full understanding and interpretation of the findings in these two studies,” according to the response.

The Bayer study was published Jan. 11 online in the journal Veterinary Parasitology.

In other conference happenings, Dr. Stephen J. Ettinger was honored with the 2011 Mark L. Morris Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions in advancing veterinary care.
A diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, he authored the Textbook of Veterinary Internal Medicine, which remains the gold standard among veterinary internal medicine resources, said Dr. Janet D. Donlin, chief veterinary officer at Hill’s Pet Nutrition.

His career has included positions as staff cardiologist and assistant head of medicine at The Animal Medical Center in New York City; hospital administrator and internal medicine and cardiology team member at Berkeley Veterinary Medical Group in Berkeley, Calif.; and consultant to animal industry organizations.

Paid attendance at the 2011 NAVC hit a three-year high, with a 1.5 percent increase over 2010. Attendees hailed from 71 countries. In all, 14,026 registrants checked in, including 5,514 veterinarians, 1,365 veterinary technicians and 40 for veterinary technicians and 754 veterinary students. Twelve “master classes” for veterinarians, and 40 for veterinarians were offered as were more than 1,600 attendees and offered 150 hours of continuing education.

Attendees and 1,300 hours of continuing education offered.

MALINDA LARKIN

Visit the AVMA journals website at http://avmajournals.avma.org.

**Michigan Veterinary Conference**

**Event:** Annual conference, Jan. 28-30, Lansing

**Program:** The conference, held jointly by the Michigan VMA and Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, drew more than 1,600 attendees and offered 150 hours of continuing education.

**Awards:**
- **W. Kenneth McKersie Service Award:** Dr. Stephen C. Steep, Rochester Hills, for cumulative services and accomplishments benefiting the veterinary profession, the community, and the Michigan VMA. A 1977 graduate of Michigan State University, Dr. Steep owns Oxford Veterinary Hospital in Oxford. He is a past president of the MVMA and past chair of the MVMA Veterinary Informatics, Emergency Preparedness, and Legislative Advisory committees. Dr. Steep helped establish the Michigan State Animal Response Team and recently assisted with the Kalamazoo oil spill.

**Officials:**
- Drs. Frank Carmona, Troy, president; Susan Sayles, Jackson, president-elect; Ralph Huff, North Branch, 1st vice president; Therese Burns, Alto, 2nd vice president; and Jim Lloyd, Okemos, immediate past president.

**Leonard J. Abell**

Dr. Abell (UP ’39), 97, Pfafftown, N.C., died Jan. 29, 2011. Prior to retirement in 1979, he practiced primarily large animal medicine for 35 years throughout northeast Pennsylvania and the southern tier of New York state. Earlier in his career, Dr. Abell taught at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and served in the Army Veterinary Corps during World War II. He was a member of the American Legion and the World War II Last Man’s Club. Dr. Abell’s wife, Ruth; a son; and two daughters survive him. Memorials in his name may be made to Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church, 4565 Wenlock Lane, Pfafftown, NC 27040; or Hospice of the Piedmont, 1801 Westchester Drive, High Point, NC 27262.

**Arthur L. Aronson**

Dr. Aronson (MIN ’57), 77, Raleigh, N.C., died Sept. 22, 2010. A charter diplomate and past president of the American College of Veterinary Clinical Pharmacology, he was professor and head of the Department of Anatomy, Physiological Sciences, and Radiology at the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine prior to retirement in 1998. Earlier in his career, Dr. Aronson was a member of the faculty at Cornell University, where he taught and conducted research. A past president of the American Academy of Veterinary Pharmacology and Therapeutics and the North Carolina chapter of the Society of Toxicology, he served on the AVMA Council on Biologic and Therapeutic Agents from 1981-1987. Dr. Aronson chaired a National Academy of Sciences committee to produce the handbook “Recognition and Alleviation of Pain and Distress in Laboratory Animals” and was past editor of the Journal of Veterinary Pharmacology and Therapeutics. He received several honors, including the NCSU-CVM Ruth and Ned Huffman
Leadership Award in 1989 and the AAVPT Lloyd E. Davis Award for outstanding contributions to veterinary pharmacology in 1994.

Active in civic life, Dr. Aronson was a past president of the Wake County Literary Council. He also served as a tutor and mentor with the Wake County Communities in School and was recognized for his 15 years of service with The Most Valuable CIS Tutor/Mentor Award. Dr. Aronson is survived by his wife, Marilyn; two daughters; and a son.

George E. Boyle
Dr. Boyle (IP ’57), 77 Ticonderoga, N.Y., died Dec. 17, 2010. A small animal practitioner, he retired as a partner in 1999 from Ticehurst Animal Hospital in Middletown, N.J. Active in organized veterinary medicine, Dr. Boyle was a past president of the New Jersey Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and a past executive secretary of the New Jersey VMA. He is survived by his wife, Patricia; three daughters; and a son. Memorials may be made to St. Mary’s School, 64 Amherst Ave., Ticonderoga, NY 12883.

Jack H. Fries
Dr. Fries (MSU ’42), 90, Durand, Mich., died Nov. 24, 2010. A mixed animal practitioner with a special interest in Standardbred horses, he owned Fries Veterinary Clinic in Durand prior to retirement in 2001. Early in his career, Dr. Fries practiced in Merrill, Mich. He was a life member of the Michigan VMA and the American Association of Equine Practitioners. Dr. Fries’ wife, Josephine; a son; and two daughters survive him. His grandson, Dr. W.A. Foster (MSU ’94), and granddaughter-in-law, Dr. J.L. Foster (MSU ’94), now co-own Fries Veterinary Clinic.

Vernie M. Graves Jr.
Dr. Graves (UP ’49), 90, Williamsburg, Va., died Dec. 18, 2010. Retired for the past 20 years, he was the co-founder of Culpeper Animal Hospital, a mixed animal practice in Culpeper, Va. Dr. Graves was a veteran of the Army. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn, and four daughters.

Thomas J. Gunhouse
Dr. Gunhouse (IL ’54), 81, Indianapolis, died Jan. 15, 2011. A mixed animal practitioner, he owned Frankfort Veterinary Clinic in Frankfort, Ill., for 35 years, retiring in 1989. Dr. Gunhouse was a life member of the Illinois State VMA. His wife, Betty; a son; and two daughters survive him. Memorials toward the Endowment Fund may be made to the University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine, 3505 VMBSB, 2001 S. Lincoln Ave., Urbana, IL 61802.

James E. Hoban
Dr. Hoban (TEX ’50), 86, Corpus Christi, Texas, died Sept. 21, 2010. A small animal practitioner, he established Hoban Veterinary Hospital in Corpus Christi in 1950, retiring after 43 years of practice. Dr. Hoban served as a fighter pilot in the Air Force during World War II. His wife, Dorothy Ellen; three daughters; and a son survive him. Dr. Hoban’s grandson, Dr. Garrett Hoban Montgomery (TEX ’10), practices mixed animal medicine in Edna, Texas.

Archie L. Kassirer
Dr. Kassirer (ONT ’48), 93, Ottawa, Ontario, died Oct. 31, 2010. From 1948 until retirement in the early 1980s, he practiced primarily small animal medicine in Ottawa. In retirement, Dr. Kassirer had a house call practice. Active in civic life, he was a longtime member of the Rotary Club. Dr. Kassirer is survived by two sons and a daughter. Memorials may be made to the Kassirer Fund, Hillel Lodge, 10 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2A 4G7.

John R. Leahy
Dr. Leahy (COR ’47), 94, West Oneonta, N.Y., died Jan. 19, 2011. A mixed animal practitioner, he owned a practice in Oneonta until 1992. Dr. Leahy also raised and raced Standardbred horses. He served multiple terms on the New York State Board of Veterinary Medicine and authored the book “Restraint of Animals.” Active in civic life, Dr. Leahy helped establish the West Oneonta Fire Department and served as a fire commissioner for several years. He also served on the Oneonta City Schools Board of Education and was a member of the Otego Rotary Club. Dr. Leahy’s three sons and three daughters survive him. Memorials may be made to the Cooperstown Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 4841 State Highway 28, Cooperstown, NY 13326; Otego Fire Department, 5 River St., Otego, NY 13825; or West Oneonta Fire District, 2865 County Highway 8, West Oneonta, NY 13861.

John O. Regnier
Dr. Regnier (OKL ’72), 66, Balko, Okla., died Oct. 25, 2010. He practiced large animal medicine at Ranch Veterinary Service in Balko since 1982. Earlier in his career, Dr. Regnier worked at La Junta Veterinary Clinic in La Junta, Colo., and practiced at Regnier and Baker Equine Practice in Arkadelphia, Ark. He is survived by his wife, Retha, and three daughters. Memorials may be made to Baptist Medical and Dental Missions International, 11 Plaza Drive, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

Dale H. Tracy
Dr. Tracy (KSU ’52), 85, Scottsbluff, Neb., died Jan. 8, 2011. Prior to retirement in 1983, he owned a large animal practice in Ponca, Neb. Earlier in his career, Dr. Tracy practiced in Spring Hill, Kan., and Spalding, Neb. He was a veteran of the Navy. Dr. Tracy is survived by his wife, Doris; two daughters; and a son. His son-in-law, Dr. Owen L. Henderson (MO ’81), works for the Veterinary Services program of the Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Memorials may be made to Heifer International, 1 World Ave., Little Rock, AR 72202; or Habitat for Humanity International, 121 Habitat St., Americus, GA 31709.