



OP News

Volume 12 • No 2 • Summer 2012 • Official newsletter of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria

Dr Leith Meyer instrumental in new Aardvark research project



An anaesthetised aardvark undergoing the surgical implantation of data loggers and a tracking device.



Dr Meyer with a chemically immobilised aardvark.

Little is known about the biology and physiology of aardvark because of their cryptic behaviour. Through a collaborative study with the University of the Witwatersrand's Brain Function Research Group and the University of Pretoria's Mammal Research Institute, Dr Leith Meyer of the Department of Paraclinical Sciences started an ongoing study to investigate certain aspects of an aardvark's ecophysiology.

The primary aim of the study is to determine how the thermal physiology and biology of aardvark are related to environmental variables and their behaviour, activity and feeding patterns. In addition to this aim, the study will also look at certain aspects of their reproductive cycle, as well as social interactions and evolutionary adaptations, which allow aardvark to co-exist with other prey-competing species like aardwolf and bat-eared foxes.

the research team needed to capture aardvark and surgically implant temperature-sensitive data loggers, activity loggers and tracking devices. Dr Meyer was instrumental in developing a new technique and immobilising protocol to capture these animals for the surgical implantation of these specialised devices. Seven aardvark were immobilised and the devices were implanted in July 2012. Data collection from these animals will continue over the next year.

To achieve the aims of the study,

The study is taking place at Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve in the Northern Cape (www.tswalu.com) and is generously supported by Oppenheimer and Sons, and the National Research Foundation (NRF).



Prof Kobus Eloff honoured with another gold medal. Read more on page 4.



From the Desk of the Dean

At the end of another eventful and busy year, it is indeed appropriate and relevant to state that the Faculty faces an exciting next five years, full of challenging opportunities and prospects. The crucial role this Faculty has to play stretches across other faculties, into the African continent and beyond international boundaries.



It is a role that will have to be supported by key driving forces, which are clear and specific moving forward. Central to this is the Faculty Plan for 2013 to 2017 that is fully aligned to and in support of the new institutional Strategic Plan of the University of Pretoria.

However, we can't simply look at the future without taking the past and especially the past year into perspective. It was Mahatma Gandhi who said: "The future depends on what you do today." What have we thus accomplished this year that bodes well for the future? If we were to take stock, do we see a progressing upward trajectory on the Faculty's graph?

The Faculty aims to be widely recognised for the quality and scope of its training, and therefore also the quality of its staff and graduates, through unique postgraduate opportunities and cutting-edge research. It also wants to strengthen its partnerships and collaboration. The Faculty has a responsibility to ensure that it serves all communities and all geographical areas in the country as there is a shortage of veterinary professionals in South Africa, especially in rural areas.

With this in mind, a process has been put in motion to increase our intake for the BVSc degree by more than a third as early as 2013. The increase in admissions and applications from designated population groups remains a key priority. This increase will require further infrastructure development since the capacity of teaching laboratories, among other things, will have to be expanded.

I am pleased to report that both the increase in numbers and the further infrastructure development on the campus were recently endorsed by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

This will mean an intake of about 160 students in 2013 and an annual increase of 50 students. Consistent with that will be exciting new developments on our campus. Among other things, this will involve the addition of new facilities, including a skills laboratory and multidisciplinary laboratory in the area between the Arnold Theiler Building and the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital (OVAH), eventually also linking the two buildings. This will commence as soon as possible. In the long term, it will also entail the relocation of the computer lab to the current cafeteria area and the addition of a new cafeteria.

Good progress has also been made with the development of the new BVSc curriculum. The third year meso- and micro-curriculum have now been completed, as have the meso-curriculum of both the fourth and fifth years. The Curriculum Working Group has also clarified the elective programmes to a great extent and suggested that research should be embedded throughout the programme in order to stimulate interest and curiosity among students. The following electives were proposed: Small Animals and Exotics, Equines, Production Animals and Wildlife, Intensive Animal Production and Health, and State Veterinary Practice and Veterinary Public Health. It was further suggested that approximately 30% of the time in the experiential part of the elective should be left to the discretion of the student to decide what he or she would like to do in addition to the main elective.

A significant development is the Faculty's involvement with the Tshwane Animal Health Bio-cluster. This is an exciting new programme and funding opportunity launched by the Technology and Innovation Agency (TIA) in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP), Council for Scientific Industrial Research (CSIR)

Publication information

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Printing:
BusinessPrint

Contributions to OP News are welcomed. Please submit any material electronically to the editor in MS Word.



and the University of Pretoria on 3 October 2012. It aims to generate an enabling environment for the development of commercially viable tools and technologies through R100 million of funding for the control of some of South Africa's most important diseases. The University of Pretoria is in a unique position to assemble a very strong consortium on animal health and production across faculties to meet this challenge. A core group of these researchers are based in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Together with related faculties, the University has the expertise and infrastructure to address the full spectrum of components that is essential to successful disease intervention.

Livestock diseases are intimately tied into wildlife and human diseases, as they cannot be effectively addressed in isolation. The UP "One Health" initiative recognises this relationship, which necessitates multifaceted and interdisciplinary networking and collaboration between experts in the professions of veterinary, human health, environmental, ecological, agricultural, and conservation sciences across continents and boundaries. The Faculty is engaged in various initiatives and discussions with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht, the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California, the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, and the Institute of Veterinary Tropical Diseases, Antwerpen, to enhance high-quality research and relevant postgraduate training.

The newly formed Institutional Research Themes (IRTs) identified in the University of Pretoria's Academic Plan for 2012 to 2025 makes the "One Health" approach so much more relevant. The Faculty will be actively involved with the development and implementation of three of these IRTs: Biotechnology and the Management of Animal and Zoonotic Diseases, Food, Nutrition and Wellbeing, and Genomics.

Research groups at the University have already embarked on and completed significant research projects in support of the recently launched Genomics IRT, including projects on viral, bacterial, fungal and plant genomes. It is anticipated that it will develop into a recognised centre of excellence that will make an important contribution to veterinary science, health sciences and other life sciences. Specifically relevant to the Faculty's contribution will be molecular studies utilising biotechnology for the development of improved diagnostic techniques and vaccines for animal diseases and for the study of their pathogenesis, including vaccine development.

It is of crucial importance that the Faculty will continue to increase its research outputs and ensure that these are locally relevant and keep pace with research worldwide. The annual Faculty Day that was held in September was not only successful, but emphasised an increase in the quality and scope of research and produced many highlights.

As the focal point of the Faculty's academic year, Faculty Day 2012 produced no less than 26 oral presentations and 27 poster presentations, all of which were generally regarded as being of high standard and particularly relevant to the University's mission of becoming a research-intensive University. They proved that our staff members are up to the task of ensuring an increase in the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings in the Faculty.

Prof Jim MacLachlan from the University of California Davis presented the Arnold Theiler Memorial lecture in recognition to his contribution to veterinary science. He delivered a very popular and thought-provoking lecture entitled *Emerging viral diseases, the example of bluetongue, from Theiler to climate change*. The focus of his lecture was on what the global community might expect in the future in terms of the emergence of vector-borne diseases driven by climate change, with specific reference to dramatic recent changes in the global distribution of bluetongue.

As is also customary, various teaching and research awards were made to Faculty members for their outstanding contributions to teaching and research. Congratulations to each winner on his or her achievement, dedication and hard work. A special word of gratitude must also go to the organising committee for a successful day.

A similar successful event in 2012, highlighting the importance of research and cooperation, was the second Postgraduate Student Symposium hosted in September in collaboration with the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium. The symposium was attended by 92 delegates from 16 countries. Topics related to "One Health" were addressed and postgraduate students from the SADC region presented their research to their peers, supervisors and invited scientists with international standing.

The objectives of the symposium were to facilitate cross-pollination of ideas, encourage networking for professional development, strengthen existing partnerships and establish active research teams among young scientists in the region. This was a very successful symposium and the Faculty looks forward to hosting this exciting event on an annual basis.

In my previous message I referred to the aspect of transformation that continually deserves our attention for the next five years and beyond. Against the background of the culture survey completed in 2011 and the UP *Journey of Change*, the framework of an implementation plan for change was drafted together with the process of drafting a constitution for the Steering Committee for Change, which will serve as the champion of change within the Faculty. This committee, comprising 14 members, will be required to appoint working groups for one or more of the identified themes within the framework, to consider recommendations made by the working groups, to develop action plans for appropriate interventions in consultation with the working groups, and to develop mechanisms to monitor and review the progress made in achieving these objectives. Recently the nomination process for the constitution of a Steering Committee was concluded and staff members cast their votes to elect a Steering Committee. The results of the election will be made known shortly.

In reference to my question at the beginning of this message, I am confident that the Faculty has made a lot of progress in 2012 and that we are moving in the right direction. Exciting times and opportunities are ahead of us, but it is also clear that we will be faced with wide-ranging new challenges and new mindsets with regard to, among others, veterinary education, research initiatives and the relevancy of such initiatives, a changing veterinary environment and the emergence of new diseases.

In order to be a leading and renowned veterinary institution of excellence we must create our own perfect graph in polynomial time, which is, in fact, a beautiful synonym for "tractable", "feasible", "efficient" or "fast". We have to creatively and innovatively draw our own chart for mapping out the future and giving effect to our chosen and given role. And how appropriate is not this quote by Mother Teresa: "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin".

Nearing the end of the year, it is also a time to start thinking about the festive season and to be with family, go on vacation or just take a break at home. I want to sincerely thank every staff member of this Faculty for his or her contribution to the successful functioning of this institution in 2012. Lina and I wish each member of this Faculty a peaceful and blessed festive season and a prosperous 2013. God bless!

Prof Gerry Swan

Dean

Prof Kobus Eloff honoured

with another gold medal



Prof Kobus Eloff receives his gold medal from Prof Mohammed Hassan, Co-chair of the Global Network of Science Academies and Foreign Associate member of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

The Manager of the Phytomedicine Programme, Prof Kobus Eloff, was once again honoured when he was awarded the 2012 Science for Society Gold Medal by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) for excellence in the application of outstanding scientific thinking in the service of society.

Prof Eloff is the first person in South Africa to receive a gold medal from both the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns and the Academy of Science of South Africa.

Congratulating Prof Eloff with the prestigious award, the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Gerry

Swan said that this was a major achievement and that it is a privilege to have Prof Eloff as a member of this Faculty. "We are honoured by his achievements. He serves as an inspiration to us all," Prof Swan said.

Prof Eloff has made significant contributions in several areas that are important to society. These include areas such as soil fertility, toxic plant and cyanobacteria metabolism and ecology, as well as the use of compounds from plants as medicines and biopesticides.

He was appointed as the Executive Director of the eight national botanical gardens with the Head Office at Kirstenbosch. He changed the research culture of the organisation and established a new focus area of indigenous plant utilisation. He succeeded in combining the National Botanical Gardens, a statutory

body, with the Botanical Research Institute, a government entity, to form the National Botanical Institute (NBI) and was appointed Director of Research of the NBI. After retiring he was appointed at the University of Pretoria where he started working on using compounds in plants to increase the quality of life of people in South Africa in the Phytomedicine Programme.

A major contribution to society was the training of previously disadvantaged students. Coming from a very large and relatively poor family and being the first family member ever to attend a university, he has empathy with struggling students, especially black students. His life motto – "Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est" (Where there is caring and love, God is present) – plays an important role in his work with students.

Dr Lyndy McGaw inaugurated into

South African Young Academy of Science



Dr Lyndy McGaw receives her inaugural certificate from Prof Himla Soodyall of ASSAf.

On 16 October 2012, Dr Lyndy McGaw of the Phytomedicine Programme in the Department of Paraclinical Sciences was inaugurated into the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS).

The keynote speaker at the event was Dr Khotso Mokhele, past Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and National Research Foundation (NRF) President. An integral part of the ceremony was the signing of a formal memorandum of understanding between ASSAf and the SAYAS, concretising the relationship between the two academies.

SAYAS is an organisation constituted in September 2011 with the aim of providing a forum for young scientists to make contributions to national and international issues, to build science capacity and to influence policy decisions. SAYAS aims to become one of the key advisory bodies to government in terms of science policy, in a similar way to the contribution made by ASSAf. Both ASSAf and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) have been strong supporters and facilitators of the formation of SAYAS, and recognise the importance of this platform.

The inauguration ceremony was followed the next day by a General Assembly of SAYAS at which relevant issues were debated. Feedback was given by the various working

groups constituted by the existing members of SAYAS, and discussions were held on ways in which the members – existing and new – could contribute to the vision of the organisation according to their individual strengths and experience.

In its founding year last year, 20 top young scientists were inaugurated into SAYAS, and each year 10 new members will be elected until a total of 50 members is reached. Following five years of service, which involves actively working towards achieving the goals of the Academy, members will become alumni and will be replaced by new members. To become a member of SAYAS, a candidate should be in possession of a PhD (in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, medical sciences or engineering), below the age of 40, and should display evidence of scientific excellence in terms of an exceptional publication record and receipt of honours and awards among other criteria. A rigorous selection procedure follows the annual call for nominations from institutions around the country. More information on the Academy can be found at www.assaf.co.za/sayas-south-african-young-academy-of-sciences/.



SAYAS members at the General Assembly held at ASSAf's offices in Pretoria.

DVTD hosts another successful postgraduate symposium

In 2009, the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD) of the Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Pretoria hosted the first Southern African Postgraduate Student Symposium with specific focus on veterinary tropical diseases. As a result of the success of this symposium, the organisers decided to present a second student symposium, which was hosted in collaboration with the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium from 16 to 18 September 2012.



Delegates at the second Southern African Postgraduate Student Symposium.

The symposium was attended by 92 delegates from 16 countries. Topics related to One Health were addressed during this symposium. Postgraduate students from the SADC region presented their research to their peers, supervisors and invited scientists with an international standing. Prof Patricia Conrad from the University of California, Davis, USA, was the keynote speaker.

The objectives of the symposium were to facilitate cross-pollination of ideas, encourage networking for professional development, strengthen existing partnerships and establish active research teams among young scientists in the region. This was a very successful symposium and the department looks forward to hosting it on an annual basis.

Faculty rubs shoulders

with world andrology experts

Prof Pete Irons, Prof John Soley and Lizette du Plessis from the departments of Production Animal Studies, and Anatomy and Physiology presented their research findings at the eighth Biennial Conference for the Association of Applied Animal Andrology in Vancouver, Canada, during July 2012. The theme of this year's conference was Quality Assurance and Biosecurity in the Globalised Andrology Laboratory. The conference was one of the satellite meetings for the International Conference on Animal Reproduction, and was attended by approximately 100 people from 22 countries.

Prof Irons gave an oral presentation entitled *Lumpy skin disease virus can be experimentally transmitted by infected semen in cattle*, with Prof Estelle Venter, Dr Henry Annandale and Dr Dietmar Holm as co-authors. This is the latest in a series of outputs on the theme, which has generated six journal articles and contributed to five postgraduate degrees over the last decade, in addition to several congress presentations.

The contributions of the Department of Anatomy and Physiology were on the theme of ratite spermatozoa, which has also been a productive research programme. The oral presentation by Ms du Plessis, entitled *A novel structure with phylogenetic implications found in ratite spermatids*, forms part of her PhD work, to be submitted at the end of October 2012. Prof Soley displayed a poster entitled *The role of the centriolar complex in the formation of sperm defects in the emu, Dromaius novaehollandiae*.



Prof John Soley (left) and Ms Lizette du Plessis from the Department of Anatomy and Physiology, and Prof Pete Irons, Head of the Department of Production Animal Studies, at the conference.

In the news

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PHOTO: TRENT ALEXANDER

The winning picture submitted to the SANParks' Facebook page by veterinary science student Trent Alexander.

SANPARKS: PHOTO OF CUB WITH CIVET CHOSEN AS WINNING SHOT

SEUGNET ESTERHUYSE

A VETERINARY science student's photo of a leopard cub that caught a civet cat has been chosen as the winning photo on SANParks' Facebook page.

Trent Alexander's "prize" is to have the photo featured as the main picture on SANParks' website for a month.

Alexander (19), who is studying at the University of Pretoria and is an amateur photographer, took the picture last year during a visit to the Kruger Park, but only recently submitted it.

His family had gone out for an early morning drive from Skukuza to Lower Sabie. About two kilometres from Lower Sabie they saw a leopard and her cub sitting in a small tree, scarcely big enough to take their weight.

After they'd watched for a while, the cub jumped out of the tree, with a civet cat in its jaws.

"It was at this magical moment that I captured the beautiful image of the leopard cub as it ran across a short patch of open ground before leaping into a large jackalberry. We sat for another half-an-hour watching the cub drag and toss the kill around with the mother leopard keeping a close eye on her cub," Alexander wrote on Facebook.

Hencke Masals of Tswane nature conservation specialist services said it was uncommon, but not unknown, for a cat to catch another cat.

Marie van Rensburg retires after 40 years at Onderstepoort

Marie van Rensburg (née Smit), who has been the technologist in the Immunohistochemistry Laboratory in the Section of Pathology since its inception, has retired after 40 years' service. Together with her husband, Prof Sakkie van Rensburg, she is moving lock, stock and barrel to Bloubergstrand. Marie was always polite, cheerful and helpful. Prof Sakkie retired several years ago, but was reappointed and remunerated from external funds during the last two years to assist with project management duties. He was an enormous help and was always a pleasure to have around, quickly settling back into the routine of being a pathologist and histopathologist. The students also appreciated Prof Sakkie's tutoring and assistance provided during necropsy examinations. The staff at Onderstepoort will miss them both, but wish them a very happy retirement.



Prof Leon Prozesky (right) and Elma Vorster (left) presenting Marie and Prof Sakkie with gifts at their official farewell on 28 August 2012.

Pathology Section represented

at Zimbabwe Veterinary Congress from 5 to 8 September 2012



The congress delegates on the steps of the Wild Geese Lodge.

Dr Johan Steyl and Dr June Williams presented papers at the Zimbabwe Veterinary Congress. The resurrection of this event, along with the Zimbabwe Veterinary Association, is an indication that the Zimbabwean veterinarians are getting out of the severe economical slump they have been going through and are now moving forwards. Johan presented the results of his MSc thesis on theileriosis in roan antelope, and June presented the results of her research on

were Dr Pamela Woods, who used to work in the Veterinary Public Health section, Prof John Lawrence, who is retired and living in Harare, Dr Gerhard Steenkamp, who gave excellent lectures on dentistry, and Rhoda Leask from the Department of Production Animal Studies. Prof Lawrence is an Extraordinary Professor in the Department of Paraclinical Sciences and periodically returns to the Faculty where he is still supervising postgraduate students enrolled

the pathology of the various neurotropic arboviruses that have been identified in horses and game species since Prof Marietjie Venter of UP's Medical Virology Zoonosis Research Unit started looking for West Nile virus in horses in 2007 and 2008.

Also at the congress

in the department. John, a pathologist, started the Veterinary Faculty in Harare and was its first Dean. He also gave a very entertaining talk on laminitis in one of his donkeys that still lives on his big property in Harare

The congress was held at the Wild Geese Lodge on the outskirts of Harare. The cottages were surrounded by lovely tall indigenous trees and at night the delegates could hear owls. The Zimbabweans were very interested in the talks of their colleagues from South Africa. Valuable new contacts and offers of assistance and collaboration were made in Zimbabwe. The South African representatives also met old OP graduates, as well as a small contingent of Australian vets who presented very interesting talks. They trust that the Zimbabwe Veterinary Association will continue to flourish and that there will be future collaboration on various projects. Diseases do not follow political or boundaries and it would be beneficial to obtain broader knowledge and control of the important diseases that affect both countries.

The Jotello F Soga Library celebrates

the Centenary of the University's Department of Library Services

The Merensky Library had its humble beginnings as a small collection in Kya Rosa in 1908. The collection was then transferred to the State Gymnasium in Proes Street in 1909 and finally to its first permanent home in the Old Arts Building in September 1911. At that time it had a collection of more than 4 000 books.

On 11 October 1937 the foundation stone of the Merensky Library Building was laid by General Smuts and the official opening took place on 15 April 1938. At that time the library collection consisted of more than 82 000 volumes. Space seemed to be a continuous problem and a new library building was inaugurated on 26 March 1976 by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof EM Hamman.

Part of the history of the Department of Library Services was the establishment of branch or faculty libraries that could address the needs of individual faculties. The Jotello F Soga library is proud to be one of these. The history of the library at Onderstepoort spans almost 40 years. It started in 1974 when a Veterinary Science Library was established on the Onderstepoort Campus in the building that today houses the Department of Production Animal Studies. Staff in the original library comprised the librarian, a library assistant and a messenger, Johannes Moropotli, who is currently the longest serving member of the campus's library staff.

From 1920 when the Faculty of Veterinary Science was established, until 1973, staff and students used the library of the Onderstepoort



Veterinary Institute. In 1959, a collection of subject and leisure material was made available by the Merensky Library for students in the Onderstepoort student residence.

Due to a lack of space the library was moved to the Sir Arnold Theiler Building

A veterinary science library was established on the Onderstepoort Campus in 1974.

in 1987. During the mid-1970s and 1980s emphasis was placed on the implementation of in-house computerised systems and external information services. Computerised literature searches became available in the 1980s and veterinary library staff had to travel to the Medical Library at the former HF Verwoerd Hospital to do searches.

Today, a vast array of electronic information and services are available to library clients via the library's website, which can be accessed from anywhere in the world on a 24/7 basis.

The library can be regarded as being on par with the latest trends in international academic librarianship and space for the library's physical collection is no longer such a pressing problem.

On 5 May 2009, the Veterinary Science Library was officially named the Jotello F Soga Library in honour of Dr Jotello Festiri Soga, the first South African to qualify as a veterinarian in 1886 at the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. The library has since continued its focus of being an important role-player in veterinary teaching, learning and research in South Africa and is looking forward to a second century of success.

Veterinary Science's Faculty Day

highlights quality of research

The Faculty of Veterinary Science hosted its annual Faculty Day on Friday, 6 September 2012. Despite power interruptions caused by the weather, the successful day emphasised an increase in the quality and scope of research and produced many highlights.



Prof N James MacLachlan presented the Arnold Theiler Memorial Lecture at Faculty Day 2012.

Faculty Day is the focal point of the Faculty's academic year and produced no less than 26 oral presentations and 27 poster presentations, all of which were generally regarded as of high standard in quality and particularly relevant in support of the University of Pretoria's mission to become a research-intensive university. The day, which annually serves as an event to showcase the research activities in the Faculty to colleagues and peers, was well attended by staff members, visitors and sponsor companies alike. A parallel student programme was also part of the proceedings.

One of the highlights of Faculty Day 2012 was the presentation of the Sir Arnold Theiler Memorial Lecture by Prof N James MacLachlan, Distinguished Professor in the Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology in the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of California and Extraordinary Professor in the Faculty's own department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases. Prof MacLachlan delivered a very thought-provoking lecture entitled *Emerging viral diseases, the example of bluetongue, from Theiler to climate change*. He focused on

what we, as a global community, might expect in the future in terms of the emergence of vector-borne diseases driven by climate change, with specific reference to dramatic recent changes in the global distribution of bluetongue, an insect-transmitted disease of livestock first described in South Africa over a century ago.

As is also customary on Faculty Day, various teaching and research awards were made to Faculty members for their outstanding contributions to teaching and research. This year, the Bayer Researcher of the Year 2012 Award went to Prof Moritz van Vuuren of the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases, while Ms Lizette du Plessis of the Department of Anatomy and Physiology was honoured with the OBP Young Researcher of the Year 2012 Award. The best paper at Faculty Day (sponsored by Bayer) was judged to be that of Dr CK Lim for his presentation *A comparison of transthoracic echocardiographic measurements to allometric scaling derived values in clinically normal adult dachshunds*. The best poster award for 2012, also sponsored by Bayer, went to Dr Elrien Scheepers for her research poster entitled

Evaluation of serum amyloid A, haptoglobin, nucleated cell count, total protein and haemolysis in peritoneal fluid for differentiation of medical and surgical colic in horses.

The other prize winners were as follows:

- Pfizer Lecturer of the Year 2012: Prof Leon Prozesky
- Instavet Young Lecturer of the Year 2012: Dr Catriona Lyle
- Pfizer Veterinary Nursing Lecturer of the Year 2012: Dr Elrien Scheepers

A special Theiler Memorial Trust Medal was awarded to Dr Roy Bengis

At the evening's cocktail function, the organising committee of the 2012 inaugural and very successful Run 4 Rhinos student initiative handed a cheque for R65 000 to Dr Cindy Harper, Manager of the Veterinary Genetics Laboratory (VGL) in support of the RhODIS project that is managed by the VGL. This project collects DNA samples of rhinos across the country to create a database using the unique DNA profile of individual rhinos.

Prof Leon Prozesky (right) was elected Pfizer Lecturer of the Year 2012. He received the award from Mr Llewellyn Sinclair of Pfizer.



Prof Moritz van Vuuren (left) of the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases received the Bayer Researcher of the Year 2012 Award from Dr Clint Austin, representing Bayer Animal Health.



Dr Elrien Scheepers received the Pfizer Veterinary Nursing Lecturer of the Year Award for 2012 from the Pfizer representative.



Dr Catriona Lyle received the Young Lecturer of the Year Award from the representative from Instavet, Mr H Croucamp.



Ms Lizette du Plessis received the OBP Young Researcher of the Year Award from Dr Steven Cornelius, CEO of Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP).

2012 LINQED educational network in Ecuador

Faculty will host 2013 workshop

LINQED is an international network of educational institutions and government-related partners that provides training in human and animal tropical medicine and public health. The aim of this network is to strengthen postgraduate training capacity in developing countries in clinical, public and international health.

The Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD) in the Faculty of Veterinary Science is part of this network and was represented by Prof Johan Schoeman and Dr El-Marie Mostert at the fourth LINQED workshop that was held from 16 to 19 May 2012 in Quito, Ecuador.

The LINQED educational network is funded within the 3rd Framework Agreement between the Prince Leopold Institute for Tropical Medicine (ITM) and the Belgian Directorate General Development Cooperation (DGDC). It consists of partner institutions from all over the globe and includes members from Peru, Ecuador, Morocco, India, Cuba, DRC, Uganda, Thailand and South Africa.

The network has two parallel goals, namely “learning to network” and “networking to learn” and the main theme of this workshop was *Quality in Education*. There were three central themes: quality assurance of student assessment, e-learning and exchange projects.

One of the main focus areas of the 2012 workshop was the thesis supervision process in different institutions. Ideas were exchanged regarding different methodologies in planning and implementing an institution's thesis supervision processes. Prof Schoeman and Dr Mostert had conducted an institutional survey and reported on it at the workshop.

The aim of the survey was to obtain information regarding the different strategies of each member's institution and delegates were made aware of the diverse methods, as well as the advantages and challenges of each. Discussions among the delegates served to broaden views on how processes can be improved – both at management level and with regard to pedagogical principles. A Quality Measure of Competence Assessment Programmes (CAPs) tool for self-evaluation was also administered by Prof Schoeman and Dr Mostert in the Faculty with a small sample group of lecturers and students. They also reported these findings at the workshop.

With regard to the e-learning theme, feedback was given on the LINQED introductory online courses that were implemented in 2011. Plans on how to present these courses to other LINQED member institutions were also discussed. Ms Venter and Dr Mostert were involved in the online course on the tutoring of virtual learning communities.

The fifth workshop is planned to take place in May 2013 and will be hosted by the Faculty of Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort. Dr Mostert was elected to the Executive Committee, which consists of representatives of the different member organisations, responsible for the planning and execution of the 2013 workshop.



Sr Ester Botha

rewarded for innovative teaching



In order to qualify for the prestigious Certificate in Education Innovation, nominees should be responsible for an innovative development that has resulted in improvements in the quality of the student learning environment.

It was the late Steve Jobs who once remarked that “innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower”. The aim of the University of Pretoria’s Education Innovation awards is to acknowledge exceptional contributions to education innovation by staff members. Sister Ester Botha of the Department of Production Animal Studies was one of only 14 recipients of this prestigious award. The awards were made at a function held on 18 October 2012.

To receive this significant and prestigious award, nominees should be responsible for an innovative development that has resulted in improvements to the quality of the student learning environment. “Innovation” can include the development of new practices or products and/or modification or the adoption of existing practices or products within a discipline or across faculties at the University, or in the community. Standard expected good teaching practice should convincingly be exceeded and evidence of sustainability, positive impact and acceptance should be provided in the form of student feedback or appraisal by peers.

Sr Botha has done just that with regard to the Veterinary Nursing field. The Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (DipVetNurs) is a two-year programme offered by the Faculty of Veterinary Science to equip veterinary nursing

Sr Ester Botha receives her Certificate in Education Innovation from Prof Johann Engelbrecht, Acting Vice-Principal responsible for Teaching and Learning and Student Affairs at the University of Pretoria.

students with theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Restrictions on resources, such as assessors, equipment, venues and teaching animals to accommodate the evaluation of veterinary nursing procedures individually, have forced Sr Botha to investigate assessment practices that will minimise the use of resources and also develop an intervention for learning to improve student engagement.

Sr Botha addressed these challenges by setting an assignment in which students prepare a video demonstration of a procedure or task. Besides the benefits of providing students with a novel and engaging learning activity, the project lends itself to meaningful assessment, including peer evaluation

The external evaluator, Dr Elisabeth Brenner of the University of the Witwatersrand, commended Sr Botha on various aspects of the project, especially the sustainability and improvements that had been made in response to experience gained during earlier years.

Sr Botha is the second member of Production Animals to receive an Education Innovation Award in recent years. Dr Dietmar Holm received a Laureate Award in 2008.

Animal lovers are a special breed of humans, generous of spirit, full of empathy, perhaps a little prone to sentimentality, and with hearts as big as a cloudless sky. – John Grogan

The story of Thandiswa

– a will to survive

Lesego Teffu

The African rhino is under serious threat from poachers who have deployed advanced technologies, ranging from night vision scopes, silenced weapons, darting equipment and helicopters, to carry out their mission. These poachers have intensified their devious searches for the rhino horn since 2007, influenced by the growing market demands in Asia, where this horn is used for various pharmaceutical purposes.

Thandiswa is a special name given to a white rhino that was brutally attacked on a game farm in the Eastern Cape on 20 March 2012. This was such a painful irony, since this name actually means 'love' in Xhosa, the exact opposite to what Thandiswa experienced from the stone-hearted poachers on that particular day.

Dr Gerhard Steenkamp, a veterinary surgeon from the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital (OVAH) with a special interest in veterinary dentistry, together with other specialists, did an incredible job, pulling out all stops to save Thandiswa's life. The horrific attack left Thandiswa with a fatal wound 38 cm in length and 16 cm in width that also damaged her anatomy. It took the team approximately 24 days to operate on Thandiswa and almost 164 days for her to heal as she would sometimes hide after surgery was performed.

Providing these facts during a recent presentation on Thandiswa, Dr Steenkamp pointed out that these types of surgeries can be quite emotional for the veterinarians in charge because the patient does not always survive. The surgeons cannot always operate on the patient but must leave it to recover on its own in order for the patient to heal independently from the wounds incurred.

Up to 18 rhinos are poached in South Africa every day. The very same weekend that Thandiswa was attacked, 11 more rhinos were brutally killed. In 2012 alone, about 400 rhinos have already been lost.

It is vitally important to publish and distribute the story of Thandiswa in order for people to realise the deep trauma that these poor creatures are going through. It is time people take a firm stand against rhino poaching by taking steps such as not purchasing products of any sort that are made from rhino horn, and making contributions to any organisation that helps to track down and arrest poachers. People can donate merchandise such as night vision gear, bullet-proof armour, radios and binoculars.

The rhino poaching trend is extremely worrying and affects each individual in our country. If it is not stopped, the world could lose African rhinos and that is a tragedy we do not want to contemplate.



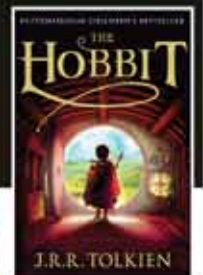
Thandiswa on the road to recovery.



Thandiswa shortly after her traumatic ordeal.



Join Bilbo Baggins and a band of dwarves on their quest through the Black Forest of Mirkwood to retrieve stolen treasure in *The Hobbit*, one of the 12 best-selling books on our 2012 Wish List.



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External culture at OP

Francois Olivier: External Culture HK

It is a well-known fact that balance is very important in the life of a student, and participation in extracurricular activities plays a big role in developing a student to become a person who is successful in all aspects of life. Students at Onderstepoort are fortunate to have a lot of opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, ranging from sport to various cultural activities. Two of the main cultural events of the year are the annual Serrie and Serenade competitions.

Serrie is an annual competition between the residences of Tuks that involves singing and dancing. Each residence chooses a specific theme, for example, "hippies" or "circus", and then spends months preparing a show in which the students sing and dance to songs that relate to this theme.

The number of students participating in each residence's Serrie can range from 40 to more than 100. There are two performance nights. On the first night, each ladies' residence performs their Serrie to each men's residence, and vice versa on the second night. The best residences qualify for the finals, which is hosted in the Amphitheatre, after which the winning men's and ladies' residence is crowned. House Onderstepoort entered a ladies' Serrie for the first time in 2010 under the leadership of Michaela Randall. Since then, it has participated in the ladies' Serrie every year.

Members of
House Onderstepoort
participated in the annual
Serrie and Serenade
competitions

Serenade is a more exclusive event in which students that are more musically orientated (especially vocally) can participate. Serenade is an annual national acappella singing competition in which selected universities in South Africa participate. Each university has its own qualifying competition, in which singing groups from each residence and day house compete for the privilege of representing their university at the national serenade competition, which is hosted by a different university each year.

After a few years of not participating in this competition, House Onderstepoort entered a ladies' group in 2010 and both a ladies' and a men's group in 2011 and 2012. Despite humble beginnings, both the men's and ladies' serenades of House Onderstepoort have improved dramatically. The ladies' serenade improved from 13th place (out of 14 residences) in 2011 to 7th place in 2012, and the scores from the judges were much higher in 2012 than in 2011. Despite a few challenges that they have had to face in the last two years, the men's serenade is also improving steadily, and there was a big improvement in the judges' scores from 2011 to 2012.

Onderstepoort culture is continuously growing from strength to strength and we are looking forward to taking it to new heights in 2013.

Happy Feet

Carrie Milton: OP Dance Coordinator

OP Dance is an informal club that offers Onderstepoort staff and students, and indeed anyone in the area, an opportunity to express themselves through dancing. This year we focused on ballroom, Latin-American and the salsa.

The salsa instructor was Whitney Smit, a former lead instructor of Salsa Republic SA. Whitney is also a talented musician and sound engineer. The classes were on a Monday night and were thoroughly enjoyed by all. The rhythm and energy of salsa is wonderfully addictive, and the members were disappointed to have to stop their classes when Whitney moved to Cape Town.

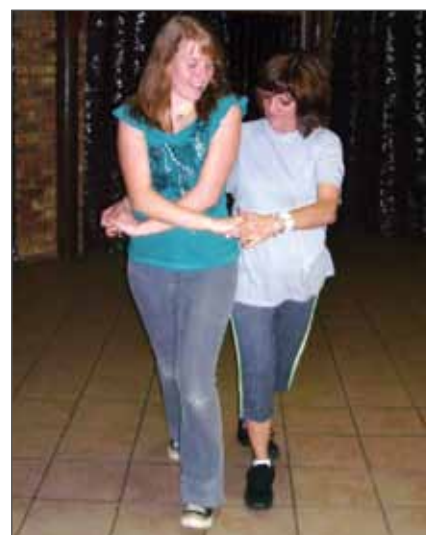
“After all, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels.” – Ann Richards

Ballroom and Latin-American classes were held in the Onderstepoort Clubhouse every Wednesday night. The instructor, Sandy Hayes from Johan and Sandy Hayes International Dance Studio in Equestria, has 45 years of dancing experience, both dancing competitively herself and teaching ballroom, Latin-American, freestyle, and social dancing. She is a former Gauteng ballroom champion.



Sandy with one of the beginners.

The group was split into two classes: one for beginners and one for intermediates. The beginners learnt the basics of social waltz, rhythm foxtrot, cha cha, rumba, social tango and boogie, while the intermediates tackled slow waltz, quickstep, tango, cha cha, rumba and jive. Two intermediate couples performed a jive at the Dean's Cultural Evening this year.



One of the intermediate couples.

Although this all makes the ballroom and Latin-American classes sound very formal, the students probably laughed as much as they danced this year.

The Wednesday night's class was certainly the highlight of every student's week.



On 3 January 2013, 98 international veterinary students will be descending on the Faculty to take part in the eight-day 61st International Veterinary Student Association Symposium.

After winning the bid in South Korea in July 2011 against IVSA Alfort, France to host the symposium, the Organising Committee, comprising a few BV1s and BV2s have been hard at work for the last

IVSA Symposium 2013 promises to be one of the best

year and a half, planning and raising funds for this event. They have a fantastic line-up of lectures, workshops and cultural tours for the delegates. Lecturers include Prof Alan Guthrie, Prof Johan Schoeman, Prof Leon Prozesky, Dr Catriona Lyle, Dr Cindy Harper, Dr Gerhard Steenkamp and even a lecturer from Cape Town who will be discussing greening with delegates.

The lecturers will be discussing pertinent issues with the delegates, such as African Horse Sickness (AHS), rhino poaching, water pollution, phytomedicine, the use of modern

technology in veterinary education and the importance of community engagement.

Hopefully with all the guidance and help they have received from the Dean, Prof Gerry Swan, Dr Paul van Dam and SAVETCON, as well as the financial support from the generous sponsors Novartis, Hill's and Dischem, the students will pull off the best IVSA Symposium in 61 years. If anyone would like to get involved, please contact the organisers at ivsasymp2013@gmail.com

We hope to make OP and South Africa proud!

The Theiler Vocal Ensemble

Carrie Milton: Theiler Vocal Ensemble Manager

For the third year running, a group of staff and students from Onderstepoort has been meeting on a weekly basis for a welcome musical escape from academics. Previously known as the OP Choir, the Theiler Vocal Ensemble was again privileged enough to be sponsored by the UP Arts Department and even luckier to be conducted by the animated Pieter Bezuidenhout for a second year.



The Theiler Vocal Ensemble before their performance at the Dean's Cultural Evening.

Pieter is well-known for his many musical contributions to the Tuks Serenade competition, various choirs around Pretoria, and his achievements as a violist in the UP Symphony Orchestra and as a pianist. There is never a dull moment when he is in charge, and the choir members all thoroughly enjoyed and greatly benefited from his instruction. He will be with the ensemble again next year.

This year, the Theiler Vocal Ensemble performed at the Dean's Cultural Evening in June, at an informal tea-time concert in the

Arnold Theiler Building in August, and at the Onderstepoort Christian Fellowship's career dedication lunch for final year students. Their repertoire includes Robbie Williams's *Angels*, *Adiemus*, jazzy numbers like *When sunny gets blue* and *Fever*, and Adele's *Turning tables*. They are currently working on Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* to be performed in 2013.

Choir practice has been the perfect release for creative tendencies, the most relaxing study break one could ask for, and the best way to balance a busy academically-orientated life.

The ensemble is open to any and all members of the Onderstepoort family. Auditions will be held early in the new year.

Dr Phil Scott presents books to JF Soga Library

Dr Phil Scott from Edinburgh University giving two books that he authored to Ms Susan Marsh, manager of the Jotello F Soga Library. The one deals with sheep medicine and the other with cattle medicine. Dr Scott has also published a series of interactive CDs dealing with case studies in production animals. He visited Onderstepoort while on a visit to South Africa to attend an international congress on tuberculosis in the Kruger National Park.



Vet Books for Africa

– Enriching the mind of man to save animals



Vet Books for Africa is a non-profit organisation that started in 1993 and presents a biannual charity event. The Vet Books for Africa team consists of eight Onderstepoort students, who dedicate themselves to delivering veterinary books, as well as educational tools and equipment to remote veterinary faculties in Africa that offer education, treatment and valuable advice to local communities. Volunteers on the team also deliver donations and supplies to sanctuaries, animal rehabilitation centres and community vet clinics en route.

The team for 2012 set clear goals for themselves and aims to promote the veterinary profession in Africa by engaging with and assisting communities and their animals through the distribution of educational media. By doing so, they wish to promote veterinary

education across central and southern Africa in order to uphold the international regard of African veterinary faculties.

Faculties that are most in need receive personal deliveries, which include veterinary journals, textbooks and multimedia donations made by generous sponsors. The team also personally assists at various community veterinary clinics, animal rehabilitation centres and sanctuaries, and delivers medication, vaccinations, equipment and donations.

The books and journals that are distributed in the communities serve to enrich the veterinary field in the more rural parts of Africa, benefiting both man and animal.

The Vet Books for Africa Committee left Onderstepoort on 29 October and will tour through Africa during November and December. In addition to visiting the veterinary libraries during the outreach, the team will also be stopping at a number of charities, donating their time, as well as various much-needed items.

They plan to visit the following charities during the outreach:

- Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals
- Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust
- Wildlife Action Group
- Lilongwe Society for the Protection and Care of Animals
- Mamoli Mission Mozambique
- Animal and Wildlife Area Research and Rehabilitation (AWARE)
- Tanzania Animal Welfare Society

The team relies on two vehicles, sponsored by Isuzu, to take them on their 40-day journey into Africa. During these 40 days, the organisation relies on the help of companies, institutions and individuals to make the trip a success and to ensure that the outreach runs smoothly. The success of the project also depends on the team's acquisition of a sufficient number of books, learning multimedia, medication and equipment to supply to African universities in need. This also requires constant communication with and sufficient feedback from all the beneficiaries and charities involved.

Sport @ OP goes from strength to strength in 2012

Ashleigh Lord

Three sports teams from Onderstepoort reach the Residence League finals



Onderstepoort offers a variety of sports, among which are rugby, men's and ladies soccer, men's and ladies hockey, netball and cricket. A lot of time and effort goes into preparing for the sports matches. This is clearly reflected in the outstanding results achieved by the various teams.

Sports teams from the Campus did the Faculty extremely proud in 2012. Three of them reached the finals in their respective residence leagues. This resulted in the men's hockey team ending up as champions by winning the 2012 residence league after an exciting season, while the

OP rugby team, which reached the finals yet again, narrowly lost to Mopanie after a very tense game. The ladies' soccer team managed to reach the finals for a second year in a row. The girls who played gave it their all and were clearly the stronger team with Zinnia only managing to score off an unfortunate penalty. At full time, the scores were at a 1 all tie. This led to penalties, where OP just could not manage to get the ball in the box. The netball girls once again did the Faculty proud by making it to the quarter finals. The first netball side finished fourth in the residence league. The ladies' hockey team also did really well this year. They ended up fifth in the residence league, although they were unbeaten for the season. Although the men's soccer team didn't manage to make it through to the quarter finals, they thoroughly enjoyed their season.

An afternoon of sport is a welcome break from the books, and at around 16:00 every afternoon the sportsfields come alive with the busy sound of a multitude of activities, all creating a vibrant atmosphere. It is definitely a fantastic way for students to take a break and to release some of the stress that comes from studying such an intense, but rewarding course. This is a good indication of the balanced lifestyle a student can lead at Onderstepoort.

Just in case • emergency numbers

• Security Services (main campus)	6911	012 420 2310
• Flying Squad	6022	10111
• Police Pretoria North	6022	10111
• Ambulance: - Rosslyn	6003	012 541 3421/6
- Pretoria	6002	012 326 0111
• Fire Brigade (Wonderboom)	6024	012 543 0335
• Tygerberg Poison Centre	6179	021 931 6129
• Emergency Medical Help: OP		
- Sr Amanda Hamman (OVAH)	8064	083 269 8874
- Prof Frik Stegman (OVAH)	8279	8148 (operating theatre)
- Mr Chris Neetling (Feed Store)	8004	8004 (roving phone)
- Prof Ken Pettey (Ethology/Physiology)	8449	082 882 7356
- Psychologist at OP (Wednesday), Voula Samouris	8243	083 754 5427
- Psychologist - Main Campus, Rina Buys	6127/6151	082 908 3688
• 24-hour University crisis line		0800 00 64 28
• Head of OP Residence:		
- Dr Jan Myburgh	8350	082 392 2534
- Ms Susan Myburgh		083 235 6778

In case of an emergency, just dial the four-digit number given above.