



OP News

Volume 14 • No 1 • Winter 2014 • Official newsletter of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria

New Dean for the Faculty of Veterinary Science

Prof Darrell Abernethy takes office as the new Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science on 1 August 2014.

He takes over from his predecessor, Prof Gerry Swan, who was appointed in October 2005. Prof Abernethy was born in 1962 in Kitwe, Zambia, and obtained his BVSc degree at Onderstepoort in 1985. This was followed by an MSc in Social Sciences (Organisation and Manpower) from Queens University in London in 1990, a Postgraduate Diploma in Epidemiology from the London School for Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2002, and a PhD (Epidemiology) from London University in 2002.

His career as a veterinarian includes five years as veterinary officer (animal and public health) with the Department of Agriculture in Northern Ireland, three years in a similar role with the Ministry of Agriculture in Botswana and 17 years with the Department of Agriculture in Northern Ireland as epidemiologist and later Head of the Veterinary Epidemiology Unit. For the past two years, he served as Head of the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD) at the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

Prof Abernethy has published widely in his field and is viewed as an expert in the field of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis. He has served as chair of a multinational



Prof Darrell Abernethy

scientific group with representatives from the United Kingdom, and has taught general epidemiology as well as the epidemiology of several diseases in various international contexts.

Message from Prof Gerry Swan

During the past few weeks I have reflected on the nearly unthinkable that almost nine years have passed since I first took office as Dean of this extraordinary faculty. When time goes by, one tends to try and delay its momentum to do certain things, to maybe accomplish something or to wait for something, but ultimately time does not wait for anyone.

Using time as an effective, functional tool, creates opportunities to change, to plan, to transform and to execute in order to reach one's goals and objectives.

As mentioned in my previous message, I will assess some of the challenges, numerous successful outcomes and new undertakings that I have encountered during my exciting and eventful journey of the past almost nine years. Without being too analytical, I will also indicate the degree to which we have effectively utilised time as a constructive and useful tool in our endeavours to take this faculty to the next level of excellence.



Prof Gerry Swan



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Faculty of Veterinary Science

My first Faculty Plan as new dean included certain goals that were set and groundwork that had to be done to make headway with some identified priorities that were not only crucial for the Faculty, but were also aligned with the future strategic markers of the University of Pretoria. This also meant building on some existing foundations and initiatives that were already in place. The most important priorities included the following:

- Allocation of additional funding by the Department of Education from 2006 onwards towards the cost of the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital (OVAH), Faculty Services Laboratories and the Onderstepoort Teaching Animal Unit (OTAU), relieving to a large extent the pressures of the sustainability of the cost of veterinary training for the University of Pretoria
- Developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to attract, develop and retain excellent staff
- Reviewing the two-degree structure of veterinary training and reinstating the single-degree training programme, revising it to take account of the latest trends in veterinary training
- Increased and improved recruitment, in-care and after-care of students from the designated groups
- Taking measures to increase our research and postgraduate student output, inter alia, by establishing a research ethos, by increasing the number of postgraduate students, increasing the number of academic staff with doctoral degrees and encouraging teaching staff to submit themselves to National Research Foundation (NRF) rating

Throughout my term in office, these were some of the important tasks that stayed on the Faculty's "red list" for the ensuing years to position the Faculty for the future. The Faculty was always faced with the important task, on a continuous basis, to promote access, equity and institutional diversity to achieve a student profile consistent with the requirements for transformation and to meet the diverse needs of the veterinary services in South Africa.

Even prior to my appointment in 2005, a comprehensive, mixed strategic, recruitment and awareness plan had been developed and implemented, which we continued to apply and improve over the years. This involved high-level visits to provinces and targeted institutions, visits to schools throughout the country, publicity through external media and other University publications, focused advertisements, media liaison, the development of appropriate marketing material, promotions at special events, such as the UP Open Day, the I Want to be a Vet initiative, and the strengthening of relations and cooperation with government departments on national and provincial level, as well as with the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC), South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) and Black Veterinary Forum. We also recently appointed a full-time student advisor to recruit students throughout the country. The change in the curriculum was identified as one of the main drivers to increase the intake of black students. This was accompanied by a comprehensive revision of the admission and selection policy.

Over the past number of years, particularly since the introduction of the new single-degree programme, there has been a marked improvement in the number of black veterinary students admitted to the veterinary programme. For the past three years, 50% of students admitted directly from school were black. The total percentage of black students since 2005 has grown from 7.9% to 19.2%. This is predicted to grow to at least 35% by 2016, brought about by the recent increased intake of black students. The objective is to grow beyond 50%, in line with the current demographics of the University. This will be possible if the current intake

is maintained or further increased, particularly in the other admission categories, but also to increase the realisation of black students admitted to the programme, as well as to ensure the throughput of students admitted. Of real concern is the number of students who are not successful in their first year. Actions and strategies have been put in place to address both matters. The percentage of black postgraduate students is currently 46.5%.

The process of reviewing our existing academic programmes and curricula is a continuing process, and the Faculty has made significant progress with the finalisation of the new veterinary curriculum. Changes and developments in the curriculum will empower us to see to it that veterinarians graduating will satisfy the need for primary healthcare and will ensure that the changing specialisation requirements of veterinary services are achieved. This process is aimed at progressive development, optimisation of the degree structure, the introduction of defined veterinary competencies, continued excellence in training, teaching and learning, and, ultimately, the global accreditation of the Faculty.

I am confident that the Faculty produces graduates who meet the requirements of the profession. This was confirmed by a recent successful visitation and evaluation of our training programme by the SAVC in collaboration with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and the Australian Veterinary Boards Council. The high level of experiential training of our students has been commended by our external reviewers, as well as many colleagues in the field.

Against this background, I regard the overall improvement of the performance of the Faculty as our biggest achievement.

We are furthermore excited about the prospects of introducing a new three-year Bachelor in Veterinary Nursing (BVN) degree programme, pending final approval, in 2016. The last intake of students into the existing Veterinary Nursing Diploma will most likely be in 2015, after which it will be phased out as the degree programme is phased in.

Another prioritised objective that was and still is included in the Faculty's mission and strategic plan is the enhancement of high-quality research and relevant postgraduate training.

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 veterinary research worldwide. It is similarly important for the Faculty to focus on attracting more postgraduate students locally and from other countries. Recruiting postgraduate research students is also one of the key objectives of the University of Pretoria, and the Faculty subscribes to the University's notion of attracting, selecting and retaining talented students.

We can be proud of our achievements in this regard over the past nine years. The Faculty's growth and progress are confirmed by the following facts and figures: The number of staff with doctoral degrees increased from 21.1% in 2005 to over 40% in 2014, while the number of staff with NRF ratings increased from nine to 28. There was a growth of 49% in the number of master's and doctoral students, and the Faculty more than doubled its postgraduate output and the number of postdoctoral students. Furthermore, the increase in the Faculty's research publication output increased from 55.3 units in 2005 to 112.1 units in 2013, all in ISI-accredited journals (one unit represents an average of more than 2.5 research articles in the Faculty). During this period, two new research chairs were established in the Faculty.

The turnaround in the financial position of the Faculty over the past nine years has been a remarkable and gratifying achievement. In 2005, the financial position was disastrous and unsustainable for the University. The financial loss to the University was substantial, and had to be cross-

subsidised by income from other faculties. In 2013, the Faculty managed to make a major contribution to the overheads of the University, an amount equivalent to the loss that had previously been experienced, representing a complete turnaround. Although an overall financial deficit still exists, it is only a fraction of the loss shown in 2005. An earmarked grant from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) that is provided on a competitive basis for experiential training is the main contributor to the financial turnaround, but is also supplemented by a marked increase in third-stream income, primarily through research grants.

Against this background, I regard the overall improvement of the performance of the Faculty as our biggest achievement. This was also mentioned by the Principal, Prof Cheryl de la Rey, during a recent presentation. Apart from the things that I have already mentioned, these also include the improvement of the remuneration of veterinarians at the start of my first term, two successful visitations, the highest pass rate of undergraduate students at the University, the leadership, cultural and sport achievements of our students, the introduction of internships in clinical departments, and major infrastructure additions. The Faculty is also very proud of the recent launch of the Open Education Platform (AfriViP), championed by Prof Koos Coetzer. The Faculty has awarded three honorary doctorates and a Chancellor's Medal over the past nine years.

Having said all of this, I want to stress that our progress over the past almost nine years, and the ways in which we handled the challenges we faced, must be seen within the context of a collaborative culture that enabled me to find ways to offer direction to others to realise our vision for this Faculty. What a dean does as an individual is not nearly as important as what a dean enables others to do. However, a dean can also not be a collaborator without the support and commitment of his Faculty. This is a crucial factor in any organisation or company. The tremendous support and collaboration that I received throughout my two terms enabled me to be a facilitator who could show the way and stay informed by a vision of how the Faculty can prosper and serve.

The support and collaboration made it easier for me to maintain my own personal goal: to serve the Faculty and the University to the best of my abilities. It enabled me to focus on what is critically important to improve the Faculty's overall performance, relevancy and status.

Over the past almost nine years I have repeatedly realised that the magnitude and pace of change in the global veterinary health environment demand that faculties such as ours change and continuously develop. While the ultimate goals of veterinary education have not changed, the dynamic nature of the changes taking place all around, and within veterinary education, makes it more critical to be exquisitely attuned to what is really important, and this Faculty can play an ever-increasing leading role to ensure that the academic veterinary community never loses sight of these indicators.

Looking back, I also realised that if an organisation is to be run effectively, there are certain specific managerial roles that must be performed. One of the key roles is the notion of integrating. Dr Ichak Adizes, one of the world's leading management experts on improving the performance of business and government through fundamental change, defines integrating as a process whereby individual strategies are merged into a group strategy, individual risks become group risks, and individual goals are harmonised into group goals. Ultimately, it means that individual entrepreneurship must lead to group entrepreneurship. If this is not fulfilled, the entrepreneur will become a "crisis maker", the administrator a bureaucrat and the producer a "loner".

It means that today's dean (and for that matter any leader) must not only be skilled at collaborative and integrative behaviour, but must mend persuasion with educational statesmanship. He or she must be able to create an environment, and develop and nurture a culture of mutual trust and respect within the system. In doing so, the value of the individual in the organisation has to be realised. The staff members of an organisation are its most important and valuable assets. They are the pillars of any organisation. Employees should, however, also develop a mindset in which they can interpret, understand and appreciate diverse points of view without being taken aback by differences and diversity.

According to *Fortune Magazine*, the biggest problem facing management today is finding skilled, effective managers who can communicate and motivate others. I have no doubt in my mind that the newly appointed Dean of the Faculty, Prof Darrell Abernethy, will be able to do exactly that, and will aim for the evolution of a new level of awareness and understanding among all members of this Faculty.

I congratulate him on his appointment and wish him all of the best for the exciting and challenging journey that lies ahead.

In this Faculty, we have the skills, commitment and diligence to ensure that we are successful in pursuing our goals and to take this Faculty to the next level of excellence. We have to ensure that this institution will be at the forefront of innovation in training and research, and distinction in service delivery. We will need to continue with a well-coordinated effort to strategically position ourselves as the distinguished seat of veterinary excellence that we have envisioned, and as one of the best of its kind in the world. The Faculty will be able to do that with a team effort, a goal that is embraced and personified by everyone in the Faculty.

For me, some endings lead to new beginnings, new life chapters and new challenges. *A viaxe continua* – the journey continues. To say goodbye is never easy, but I am humbled by the support and respect that I have received over the past nine years. Leading in a time of continuous change is always difficult, but I was empowered by the motivation and continuous support of, and collaboration with Faculty staff members, top management of the University of Pretoria, the current Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Cheryl de la Rey, deputy deans and heads of department of this Faculty, and – equally importantly – the support staff in the Faculty and the University. This also applies to my fellow deans in other faculties at the University and further afield across the world.

It was a pleasing experience and privilege to work with our wonderful students and I salute them for their leadership and support. I can also not forget the unconditional support of my family, and especially my wife Lina. All of you made a substantial and essential contribution to my two terms in office, and I can only sincerely thank you for that. It was an honour and privilege to serve this Faculty and the University of Pretoria as Dean.

I wish all of you well with your future endeavors. Let there be no vague and unclear perceptions about our faculty to the outside world. We are not seeking to preserve the status quo and our 'privileged' position in it. We are not a Faculty that exude a sense of entitlement and no service. We want to grow, we want to prosper, and we want to serve. We want to be excellent, locally relevant and internationally competitive. We want to become better than ever.

Prof Gerry Swan
(Outgoing Dean)

Prof Groenewald receives Distinguished Member Award

Prof Herman Groenewald, Head of the Department of Anatomy and Physiology, was recently honoured with the highest award of the Anatomical Society of Southern Africa (ASSA), receiving the prestigious Distinguished Member Award.

The 42nd Annual Conference of the Anatomical Society of Southern Africa was hosted by the University of Stellenbosch from 13 to 16 April 2014. The award was handed to Prof Groenewald by the ASSA President, Prof Graham Louw of the University of Cape Town, at the conference Gala dinner. Prof Louw read the following after announcing the winner:

"Prof Groenewald has had a long and distinguished career in veterinary anatomy, and in this capacity has maintained an intimate and continuing relationship with the ASSA. He entered academia in 1985 when he was appointed as a senior lecturer in the Department of Veterinary Anatomy at the Faculty of Veterinary Science of the Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa). He soon became a regular attendee of the annual meetings of the Society, where he also presented

his work on the myenteric plexus in the intestinal tract of lethal grey karakul lambs.

In 1990, he left Medunsa to take up a post in the Department of Anatomy at the Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Pretoria. Four years later, he was promoted to associate professor in the same department, and in 1999 to full professor and head of department, a position he still holds today. During his tenure, he successfully coordinated the amalgamation of the respective departments of the two universities during the formation of a single Faculty of Veterinary Science. He was also instrumental in merging the departments of Anatomy and Physiology during the consolidation process.

Besides presenting numerous papers at the annual meetings of ASSA, he took over the duties of secretary in 1994. He served in this capacity for almost 10 years. He remains an authoritative source of information on the Constitution of the Society. He also served as Scientific Secretary of the Organising Committee for the International



Prof Groenewald (left) receives the Distinguished Member Award from the President, Prof Graham Louw at the gala dinner of the 42nd Annual Conference of the ASSA.

Symposium for Morphological Sciences held at Sun City in 2001 and was a member of the Bid Committee for the 2009 conference of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFAA) held in Cape Town.

Prof Groenewald has quietly and influentially promoted the image of anatomy in South Africa and beyond its borders, particularly in respect of veterinary anatomy training and curriculum in Africa, having contributed to these topics at workshops/colloquia in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Senegal."

Aardvark and pangolin research collaboration

In February, a group of researchers from a number of organisations, including the University of Pretoria, University of the Free State, Tshwane University of Technology, the National Zoological Gardens, E Oppenheimer and Sons and the African Pangolin Working Group, met at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Onderstepoort, to discuss current and future research related to the pangolin and aardvark. The purpose of the meeting was to establish who is currently involved and what research is being done on these two fascinating animals.

A number of presentations showed the diversity of research currently being done, which includes studies on genetics, disease, demographics, reproduction, ecophysiology and human influences on populations, but also highlighted the dearth of knowledge related to these animals. The main outcome of this meeting was that it put people in contact with each other and a number of collaborations have already been forged where researchers are sharing material and resources, and are working together to optimise on opportunities to improve our understanding of these



continued on page 6



Dr Fafa Malan (left) listens to the speech of the outgoing Dean of the Faculty, Prof Gerry Swan (middle), before being awarded the Chancellor's Medal at the graduation ceremony. On the right is Prof Tyrone Pretorius, UP Vice-Principal.

Dr Fafa Malan honoured with Chancellor's Medal

On 11 April 2014, during the Faculty's graduation ceremony, Dr Fafa Malan received the Chancellor's Medal from the University of Pretoria. This is the most prestigious award to be given to an individual outside of the academic environment.

Retired veterinarian, Dr Malan was awarded the Chancellor's Medal in recognition of his outstanding contribution as a scientist, corporate manager and communicator in the transfer of scientific information to the lay public, thereby promoting the training and development of agriculturists worldwide.

The major focus of Dr Malan's research was resistance to drugs by various parasites, in particular, developing methods for worm control in sheep. His most important contribution was developing and implementing a novel

new approach to combat drug-resistant wire worm, the most dangerous internal parasite of sheep. He observed that in every flock of affected animals, there were individuals that survived, even in the absence of any treatment. He realised that if these individuals could be identified, it would drastically reduce the use of drugs and the development of resistance. This led to the concept of targeted selective treatment, facilitated in the case of wire worm by a simple, colour-guided card test (named FAMACHA in his honour) to estimate the degree of anaemia, the first sign of infestation.

It is a method whereby only certain sheep or goats in a flock are selected for treatment against the wire worm (*Haemonchus contortus*.) Sheep are selected for treatment based on the degree of anaemia they display in their mucous membranes. The method assists farmers to identify animals in need of treatment and can support a strong genetic breeding programme by identifying chronically infected animals for culling from their groups. In 2001, it was

launched internationally and has become a method of choice in many countries, all confirming its success and reporting significant economic benefits. The concept was acclaimed worldwide as the first practical method of implementing selective treatment on farms.

Dr Malan was also involved in a number of other scientific discoveries, published in 40 scientific publications in refereed journals and reported at various scientific congresses. He has also published numerous popular scientific articles in the lay agricultural press and authored a series of popular scientific books aimed at the farmers of South Africa. As a sought-after speaker, he has arranged a number of parasite workshops throughout South Africa, Namibia and Botswana to train both established and developing farmers.

After his retirement in 2008, he was invited to manage the Livestock Health and Production Group of the SAVA, where he is making a significant contribution to improving animal disease surveillance nationally.

continued from page 4

animals. Another meeting of this group, which will include any other interested parties, will take place later in the year; if you are interested in being involved, contact Prof Darrell Abernethy or Dr Leith Meyer. The objectives of this group, and these meetings, are to strengthen collaborations and facilitate research to better understand these animals in order to make conservation efforts easier in the future.

Photographs courtesy of: N Weyer (aardvark) and D Petersen (pangolin).



Journey for change well underway



Committee members (front from left): Dr Sarah Clift, Prof Mary-Catherine Madekurozwa, Prof Gerry Swan, Mr Philemon Lepotho, Mr Eric Rachuene; (back from left): Ms Lunga Mengu, Mr Abram Komane, Prof Darrell Abernethy, Ms Christa Kitching, Mr Steve Mofokeng and Dr Quixi Sonntag.

Staff and students who were at the Faculty in 2010/11 may wonder what happened to the culture survey that was done at the Faculty at that time. This culture survey, together with the institutional change programme that was initiated in 2012, led to the formation of a Journey for Change Steering Committee.

The members of the Committee were nominated and voted for in September 2012.

The Committee, chaired by Prof Gerry Swan until April 2014 and now by Prof Darrell Abernethy, has been quite busy the past year. Apart from the much talked of Re-a-bua sessions, the Adult Education Training initiative was launched with six computers and 35 participants. There were more participants than anticipated, so the Committee is looking for a bigger venue. Have you ever seen a 63-year-old with shiny eyes because he can read a sentence?

In the academic world, it sounds misplaced, but it is wonderful to see it happening at Onderstepoort.

The session with Dr Kobus Neethling was also very interesting and a couple of the participants now understand themselves, their colleagues and life partners much better. The morning was, however, too short to grasp the full concept of whole brain thinking.

You will definitely hear more of the Committee's work over the next few years. Watch this space

First VetEd Symposium transforms teaching and learning

Dr Melvyn Quan, Susan Marsh, Antoinette Lourens and Lesego Teffu

Effective teaching and learning is not a destination, but a journey. The Faculty took another step on its teaching and learning journey by hosting the very first Veterinary Education (VetEd) Symposium at Onderstepoort on 30 May 2014.



Dr Annett Heise (left) and Dr Kate May conduct a demonstration at the VetEd symposium.



Attendees at the symposium listen while the use of "clickers" is demonstrated.

The symposium was presented by the Faculty's VetEd Committee, which was formed by academics from all the departments in the Faculty. The symposium aimed to make lecturers aware of the latest teaching and learning methods and technological developments.

Ms Kerry de Hart, the open education resource (OER) coordinator at the University of South Africa (Unisa), was one of the guest speakers. She reminded the audience of the importance of creating and sharing OERs, as well as harnessing existing sources. OERs are freely accessible documents and media that can be used for teaching, learning, assessing and research.

Prof George White, Head of the Department of Dental Management Sciences at the University of Pretoria, shared his methods of teaching and assessing vital communication skills.

Two lecturers from the Faculty, Dr Annett Heise and Dr Kate May, showed the audience the exciting developments in the Veterinary Skills Laboratory. Some of the lifelike models in the laboratory even have fake blood. Attendees had the opportunity to put their hands into the abdomen of one of these models.

Other topics covered during the symposium included videotaping lectures and tutorials for self-evaluation, teaching life skills through community engagement and alternative presentation software for Microsoft PowerPoint.

Prof Ken Pettey, an associate professor at the Faculty, talked about how students retain information better when their training includes practical sessions.

In addition to the talks, a student survey was conducted in the Faculty. It covered topics such as the attributes of a good lecturer, teaching approaches, media used in the teaching and learning process, support systems and reasons for attending/not attending class. The survey results were presented and discussed at the symposium. The library staff can use these results to improve students' library training.

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."
– William Arthur Ward

The Faculty's Director: Teaching and Learning, Prof Linda van Ryneveld, said that since the Faculty of Veterinary Science is the only institution of its kind in our country, it is a great opportunity to share our unique teaching and learning manner, as well as our interesting style of research with the world.



Dr Melvyn Quan busy with his presentation at the symposium.



The Director: Teaching and Learning in the Faculty, Prof Linda van Ryneveld, initiated the VetEd Forum and the subsequent symposium.

A first for Onderstepoort and South Africa



The group in front of the Arnold Theiler Building with Dr Elize van Vollenhoven front right

The Faculty of Veterinary Science made history in January 2014, when the first course in canine rehabilitation was held at the Faculty. The University of Tennessee, Schloss-Seminar and the Faculty of Veterinary Science collaborated to ensure that the quality of the course was of an international standard. Schloss- Seminar has been accredited by the University of Tennessee to promote the Certified Canine Rehabilitation Practitioner (CCRP) course in Europe and now in South Africa.

Prof Darryl Millis, a well-known orthopaedic surgeon from the University of Tennessee, presented the course. Prof Millis has received various awards, including awards for research excellence. He is seen as one of the world leaders in canine rehabilitation and was also the main author of the recently published *Canine rehabilitation and physical therapy*.

Dr Beate Egner, an eminent veterinary cardiologist and organiser of the course, ensured that the programme met international standards. The Onderstepoort Animal Rehabilitation Services and Onderstepoort Teaching Animal Unit (OTAU) played a vital role in the practical component of the course. Staff from the Department of Companion Animal Clinical Studies were instrumental in arranging the course.

The CCRP course has been awarded the status of Outstanding Non-Credit Program, by the Association for Continuing Higher Education in the USA.

The course was attended by 27 keen participants from all over the world (including Finland, Namibia and South Africa). The course can only be attended by professionals, including veterinarians, physiotherapists and veterinary nurses.

Dr Elize van Vollenhoven passed the exam and became a certified canine rehabilitation practitioner. Onderstepoort Animal Rehabilitation Services (OARS) now have two staff members who are certified canine



Prof Darryl Millis and Dr Beate Egner at the CCRP course for 2014.

rehabilitation practitioners. Sr Theresa Frias received her certificate in 2009.

Schloss-Seminar donated much-needed equipment to the OARS and also donated toys to the beagles at the OTAU.

All role-players committed themselves to ensure that the course will take place at Onderstepoort again. Information on the course is available at www.u-tenn.com.

OP flaunts its exciting new building projects

Some of the exiting new building projects on the Onderstepoort Campus are nearing completion. Soon, there will be three new establishments aimed at improving learning and students' experience of the Faculty's Campus.

These establishments comprise a new multi-disciplinary laboratory for teaching students a variety of laboratory skills, a new Skills Laboratory for teaching students on various models and haptic models, and offices for student administration and the Client Service Centre. The two new buildings have been constructed between the Sir Arnold Theiler Building and the OVAH and the new facilities will be available for use from July 2014.

The building plans make provision for a third building to host a student centre where students can work in groups, conduct discussions and have something to eat or drink. Although the initial allocation of funds from the Skills Development Fund did not allow for this building to be built, a submission was made for additional funding, and this was recently approved. Work on the third building started during June 2014 for completion towards the end of the year. This will be followed by renovations to the Sir Arnold Theiler Building, where the current cafeteria will be converted into computer laboratory space.

As part of the project, some changes are being made to the hospital building as well. Laboratory space is being created for the Section of Reproduction, while the old "phantom" room and adjacent laboratories will be converted into a wet skills laboratory where students will be able to practise their skills on cadavers. The cloak rooms adjacent to this area will be renovated at the same time.

In the meantime, some of the models to be used in the new Skills Laboratory have already been ordered. The first of these models, two "Breed'N Betsies" and one "Breed'N Bonny", have been flown in from Australia and were recently delivered to Onderstepoort. These models will be used to teach students rectal examination skills. Staff of the Section of Reproduction will start using these models for teaching before the new building is even completed.



The first two buildings were completed in July.



Above, the area where the third building will be constructed. Below, the models for the new Skills Laboratory are being delivered.

To top it all, work has also started on the development of additional student residences, where another 96 beds will be added. This will make Huis Onderstepoort the biggest student residence of the University of Pretoria. Construction should be completed towards the end of 2014, with occupation of the additional rooms starting in 2015.



OP NEWS

Publication information

OP News is issued by:

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Printing:

BusinessPrint

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Paraclinical Sciences hosts Microcystin ELISA Workshop



Dr Ingunn Samdal and Ms Kjersti Lovberg (back) training Dr Dacia Correia and Ms Alu Singo in the laboratory during the Microcystin ELISA Workshop.

A practical Microcystin ELISA Workshop was hosted by the Department of Paraclinical Sciences from 3 to 7 February 2014 as part of a collaborative research initiative between the Department, the Norwegian Veterinary Institute in Oslo and the Veterinary Faculty of the Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique. The aim of the workshop was to provide technical training in the execution of the Norwegian-developed microcystin screening technique to the African partners.

Microcystin is a toxin released by blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) into water resources. The major concern of the cyanobacterial toxins is in the agricultural and environmental sectors, as many cases of livestock, wildlife and bird mortalities have been reported

internationally and nationally. Acute poisonings of humans have been reported, but they are more at risk of chronic exposure to these toxins in drinking water supplies, causing skin rashes, eye irritation, vomiting, fever, pains in muscles and joints, liver damage, as well as liver and colon cancer.

The Norwegian ELISA will be evaluated locally as a rapid screening test for the presence of microcystin in water bodies. The hypertrophic Hartbeespoort Dam, where severe cyanobacterial blooms have been present for years, will be one of the test sites. A visit to Mozambique is also planned for later this year by staff members from the Department of Paraclinical Sciences to promote knowledge transfer between the African partners.

Production Animal Studies staff admitted to the European College of Small Ruminant Health Management

Two more staff members of the Department of Production Animal Studies have been admitted as *de facto* diplomates to the European College of Small Ruminant Health Management (ECSRHM). Prof Ken Pettey and Dr

Rhoda Leask received notification of the ECSRHM Board's decision in January 2014.

Prof Gareth Bath (Emmeritus Professor) was admitted as *de facto* diplomate to the ECSRHM in June 2009. It is hoped that,

with a strong contingent of South African diplomats in the ECSRHM, significant input can be made with regard to the development of the College and that South Africa can contribute to the training of future diplomates.

MSD Feedlot Pathology Day

– 22 May 2014



MSD Animal Health, as a leading partner of the South African feedlot industry, held a magnificent Pathology Information Day during May 2014 at the Onderstepoort Campus of the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

The day was well attended, with almost 60 feedlots represented from across South Africa. Many of the feedlot veterinary consultants were also present at the day, showing their support to MSD Animal Health and its clients.

MSD Animal Health saw a need in the feedlot industry for more information on certain aspects of animal health. The aim of the information day was to support the South African feedlot industry in its daily operations, with special reference to two of the biggest problems seen in South African feedlots: the clostridial disease complex and the bovine respiratory disease complex.

The day started off with practical sessions at the Pathology Section lead by the Section Head, Prof Leon Prozesky. The first part of the practical session focused on post-mortem techniques, correct sample taking and how to send samples to diagnostic laboratories. Examples of bacterial cultures and culture mediums were shown and discussed by Johan Gouws of the Bacteriology Laboratory at Onderstepoort. Delegates were shown around the Pathology Hall, where final-year students demonstrated various lesions in carcasses, as well as post-mortem techniques. The second part of the practical session was held in the Histopathology Laboratory of the Pathology Section. Sample handling, processing and staining in order to produce the final histopathology slide for examination was demonstrated in the laboratory. The third practical session took place at the multi-head microscopes where postgraduate Pathology students demonstrated how to interpret these slides microscopically.

The theoretical session followed and talks were given by specialists in the fields of bacteriology and virology: Dr Maryke Henton, a leading veterinary bacteriologist with extensive experience and knowledge in her field, presented bacteriological profile data on trans-tracheal aspirate samples taken in feedlots across South Africa. She also spoke about resistance profiles of various antibiotics used and trends to expect in the future. The second speaker was Dr Karen Nel, co-founder



Part 1 of the practical session: post-mortem lesions and techniques.



Part 3 of the practical session: microscopic evaluation.

of Design Biologix, a leading vaccine-producing company. Dr Nel presented virus profiles related to the bovine respiratory disease complex in South Africa. She also spoke about vaccine handling, which is a very important aspect in feedlots as most of the vaccines used are live.

Prof Prozesky ended the day with a very important message on resilience.

He emphasised the importance of holistic management and preventative medicine.

MSD Animal Health South Africa was proud to sponsor this day as one of its very important objectives is to support the South African feedlot industry, not only by providing excellent products, but also supporting it through constant education and assistance.

Meeting of the WRSA crocodile interest group at Onderstepoort

Dr Silke Pfitzer

On 11 July 2014, the Crocodile Interest Group of Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) held its meeting at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Onderstepoort. The attendance was better than expected and approximately 50 farmers and researchers were present at the meeting.

The main commercial activity linked to crocodile farming in South Africa is the rearing of crocodiles for slaughter, with belly skins being exported for the production of exclusive leather products. The sale of live crocodiles, and the sale of crocodile meat and tourism are also important sources of revenue for this industry. South Africa is a world leader in the captive breeding of crocodiles, with large banks of breeding crocodiles kept for the production of hatchlings. This is in contrast to the rest of the world, where egg collection in the wild is practised. South Africa's Nile crocodile skins are classified as one of the five classic skins that are demanded by the luxury market and are mostly exported at this stage,

Mr Robert Reader, Chair of the Crocodile Interest Group of WRSA, opened the meeting. Dr Peter Oberem, President of WRSA gave an introduction during which he briefly pointed out that most land under conservation, totalling approximately 20.5 million hectares, is privately owned, compared to 7.5 million hectares of government protected areas. Wildlife ranching has become a very important part of agriculture, with hunting and live game sales currently contributing R10 billion annually to GDP.

Prof Gerry Swan, Dean of the Faculty, together with Mr Stefan van As, introduced the crocodile farmers to the National Exotic Leather Cluster (NLEC). The Department of Trade

and Industry (the dti), exotic leather stakeholders and the University of Pretoria are the three main partners in this initiative of R150 million (over the next five years).

The main objectives are the development and promotion of ethical, sustainable and transparent sources of exotic skins, including both ostrich and crocodile, to so improve and expand exotic leather production in South Africa. The funding will be accessed from the Competitive Improvement Programme (CIP), administered by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) under the dti. This initiative is very promising and will hopefully lead to the establishment of a world-leading crocodile research centre in South Africa.



This initiative will hopefully lead to the establishment of a world-leading crocodile research centre in South Africa.

Mr Jimmyson Kazangarare, the Chairman of the Zimbabwe Crocodile Farmers' Association, gave an account on the regulation of the crocodile industry in Zimbabwe, with emphasis on how animal welfare plays an important role in this industry. We hope that in future Zimbabwe and South African farmers can work closer together on important farming issues.

Dr Silke Pfitzer gave a report on the 2014 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG) meeting, which she attended in Louisiana and which, with about 400 guests from all over the world, turned out to be the biggest CSG meeting ever. There were five days

filled with scientific contributions on crocodilians all over the world and in any kind of situation.

Exciting news is that South Africa has won the bid to host the CSG meeting in 2016, probably at Skukuza. This represents a major opportunity for South Africa and the subregion to position itself internationally with regard to crocodile research and farming. At the same time, it creates opportunities to establish business connections and friendships with people from all over the world. The meeting will be held in May 2016 and will be planned around the theme of connecting crocodiles to society.

This WRSA Crocodile Interest Group

meeting was sponsored by Chrisal Probiotics, a company specialising in microbe-based cleaning and hygiene products. A very informative presentation was given on this subject, especially with regard to developing resistance by microbes. The meeting was also sponsored by Polymer Pavements, a company that produces a cost-effective spray-on dam liner for earth and cement dams.

An excellent lunch was served in the cafeteria after this meeting. The WRSA Crocodile Interest Group would like to thank these sponsors, everybody who helped with the organisation, as well as the University of Pretoria for making the facilities available for this meeting.



Training is serious business, but fun if you get a treat!

Onderstepoort prompts student interest in animal behaviour

The Faculty of Veterinary Science is very serious about the study and understanding of animal behaviour. Not only is the study of animal behaviour a vital part of the Faculty's curriculum, but an understanding thereof is also an essential practical skill that students must develop.

In support of this, Onderstepoort students have established the Beagle Interest Group (BIG) – a voluntary group interested in dog behaviour.

Onderstepoort BIG aims to improve the welfare of the beagles housed on the campus by providing them with proper training, human interaction, stimulation and environmental enrichment.

Members of this group allow Onderstepoort students to interact with the dogs in order to learn valuable skills in animal training and handling. These skills are sure to prove very useful for future veterinarians and veterinary nurses.

BIG members assist with the training of beagles for practical sessions by desensitising the dogs to various procedures and hospital environments, while promoting animal welfare. They are involved in the beagles' day-to-day activities, which includes training both the puppies and the more mature dogs, walking them on a regular basis and playing with them to provide much-needed relaxation and stimulation. In addition, the group actively pursues donations to improve the beagles' well-being.

This year, BIG is planning a fun-filled beagle washday, along with a mass walk event aimed at contributing to the dogs' welfare and socialisation. BIG is supported by Onderstepoort staff members Dr Elize van Vollenhoven, Sr Carla van der Merwe and Sr Anette van Veenhuizen, who all play an active role in training the beagles and implementing behaviour modification techniques where needed. In this way, the BIG not only helps facilitate the management of the Onderstepoort Teaching Animal Unit (OTAU) beagles, but also provides a platform for students to interact with these animals and experience different training methods. Onderstepoort students who are interested in animal behaviour can interact with people with the same interests and can learn from one another.



Students and beagles playing with toys donated by Schloss-Seminar.

Continuing professional development course for Zimbabwean state veterinarians

The Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD) hosted a course on high-impact diseases and an epidemiology refresher course for Zimbabwean state veterinarians in Harare, Zimbabwe. The course was spread over four days and was presented in the pleasant surroundings of the Brönte Hotel in Harare.



A group of 22 Zimbabwean state veterinarians from all over the country were delegated by the Chief Veterinary Officer to attend a four-day refresher course in Harare hosted by the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases.

It included two days of lectures on high-impact infectious diseases and two days of interactive lectures and discussions on epidemiological investigations. During the first two days, a dozen of the world's most important high-impact diseases were dissected in detail, and the subsequent two days were spent dealing with items such as measures of health and disease, types of epidemiological studies, surveillance and sampling, and outbreak investigation and risk analysis. The team of lecturers who travelled to Zimbabwe to present the course included Prof Darrell Abernethy (Head of Department), Prof Moritz van Vuuren, Prof Darryn Knobel and Prof Peter Thompson from the Department of Production Animal Clinical Studies.

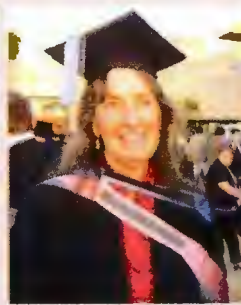
The course was part of a concerted effort to reach out to the veterinary profession in neighbouring countries.

The course was made possible through funding provided by the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) in Antwerpen in Belgium. That, in turn, was an outflow of the long-standing collaboration and partnership in many activities between the ITM and the DVTD. The course was part of a concerted effort to reach out to the veterinary profession in neighbouring countries and was not just seen as an ideal way to interact with veterinarians in Zimbabwe, but also to re-establish networks with colleagues from various domains of the veterinary profession. To this effect, fruitful discussions were held during separate pre-arranged meetings in the evenings with colleagues from the regulatory veterinary services, academia and other researchers from foreign countries.

Congratulations June, Lieza and Leith

Two female members of the Department of Paraclinical Sciences, Dr June Williams and Dr Lieza Odendaal, received their master's degrees at the recent autumn graduation ceremony of the University of Pretoria.

Dr Williams graduated from the Faculty of Health Sciences and Dr Odendaal from the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Both colleagues were awarded their



degrees cum laude. Dr Leith Meyer received a certificate for his NRF Y2-rating from the Chief

Executive Officer of the National Research Foundation, Dr Albert van Jaarsveld, at the

University of Pretoria's Academic Achiever Awards dinner hosted by the University's Principal in May.

PhD defense by Peter Coetzee at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Three members of the Faculty of Veterinary Science recently travelled to Norway for the defense of the PhD thesis of student Peter Coetzee.

The research that Peter completed was conceptualised as part of the collaboration between the Norwegian School of Veterinary Medicine (NVH) and Onderstepoort, which has been continuing for the past decade. The title of the project was "Bluetongue virus: experimental studies on viral phenotype, genetic reassortment and transplacental transmission". The NVH provided a scholarship for a South African PhD student under the supervision of Prof Maria Stokstad. Co-supervisors were appointed at Onderstepoort in the persons of Prof Estelle Venter and Prof Moritz van Vuuren of the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases. The major part of the funding was provided by Norwegian funding agencies and the rest was obtained from South African sources. As a result, Peter was registered as a postgraduate student at the NVH. During the course of the research project, the NVH amalgamated with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and the project was managed from within the new university's Department of Production Animal Clinical Sciences.

Candidates who must defend their PhD theses at the NVH start their day by presenting an open lecture on a chosen topic given to the candidate to prepare one week in advance. This is followed by a second presentation that describes the research work included in the dissertation.



Supervisor and co-supervisors with the PhD candidate at the celebratory dinner on a late Norwegian summer's evening. From left: Prof Torleiv Løken, Dr. Mette Myrnel, Prof Maria Stokstad (supervisor), Peter Coetzee, Prof Estelle Venter and Prof Moritz van Vuuren.

Finally, the candidate must once again face questioning in an open forum by two international experts (opponents) on the theme of the thesis. Peter's opponents were Dr Karen Darpel from the Pirbright Institute in England and Dr Jean-Francois Valacher from the National Veterinary Institute in Sweden. This session of questioning and debate may last from two to three hours, depending on the nature of the research. At the end of what most candidates describe as a gruelling experience, the Dean formally announces the process as concluded by banging his baton on the desk in front of him. The day ends with a dinner hosted by the PhD candidate, to which he may invite family, friends and co-workers.



The Norwegian flag is hoisted for the duration of the specific day that a PhD candidate's defense is concluded.

Peter's PhD project strengthened collaboration meaningfully with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and was a very productive time that produced a total of six peer-reviewed publications.

Peter has now taken up a postdoctoral position in the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases.

Veterinary outreach sees great success in the Mountain Kingdom!

Dr Nicolle Gray – Park Veterinary Hospital, Boksburg
Veterinary Portfolio –Semonkong Hospital Project

Recently, a group of veterinarians and Onderstepoort veterinary students made their way to the Maluti Mountains of Lesotho, for the Semonkong Hospital Project's annual veterinary outreach.

After seven consecutive years of reaching out to the impoverished community of Semonkong, the locals welcomed the team with open arms and literally thousands of animals. The outreach focuses on primary healthcare, preventative medicine, as well as education, all delivered with a Christian attitude.

Three separate clinics were run over a five-day period. The Equine Clinic was headed up by Dr Hildegard Setzkorn and Dawn Mansfield. Horses are an important mode of transport in Lesotho and their health and welfare are therefore of utmost importance. Hundreds of horses were dewormed and vaccinated against tetanus and rabies. Poorly fitted bridles, halters and saddles were fixed or replaced to reduce the large numbers of mouth and saddle sores. Approximately 600 horses and donkeys were treated.

Over 5 000 cattle and sheep moved through the Production Animal Clinic. Students assisted Dr Leonard de Freitas to vaccinate sheep against pulpy kidney, and to treat both sheep and cattle for external and internal parasites. A massive rabies vaccination campaign was overseen by Dr Nicolle Gray. Dogs and cats were dewormed and treated against external parasites. Numerous dogs were sterilised. Over 300 dogs and cats were treated.

The outreach was a huge success, with approximately 6 000 animals treated! Over the years, we have seen many of the same herdsmen pass through our clinics. The improvement in the condition of the animals is remarkable and bears testimony to the success of our campaign.

This project would not have been possible without God's grace and some amazing sponsors. Special thanks are due to Park Veterinary Hospital, Merial, Zoetis, MSD, Ciplavet and Kyron. For more information about this project or if you would like to get involved or make a donation, please email us at nicollegray@gmail.com. To view our reportback video, please visit www.parkveterinaryhospital.co.za/outreach.



The locals welcomed the team with open arms



Over 300 dogs and cats were treated



About 600 horses and donkeys were treated



Over 5000 cattle and sheep moved through the Production Animal Clinic

UP vets fight poaching in a unique way

Louise de Bruin



Dr Johan Marais (left) and Dr Gerhard Steenkamp with one of the injured rhinos they treated

Rhino poaching has evolved into a worldwide organised crime activity, threatening the existence of a significant component of South African heritage. In South Africa, rhino poaching currently claims three rhino per day. At this rate, there will be no more wild rhinos left in the country by 2020.

While many organisations are doing their best to combat rhino poaching, two veterinarians from the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Science are taking a different approach to the problem.

In 2012, Dr Gerhard Steenkamp and Dr Johan Marais initiated a project called Saving the Survivors to advocate the importance of treating rhino that have survived poaching attacks. The project supports research with regard to the anatomy of these animals, their response to medication and even what equipment and instruments are to be used when treating them. The idea developed after Dr Steenkamp and Dr Marais were called to treat a rhino, Thandi, that had survived a brutal poaching attack. After recovering, Thandi has been in safe hands and is now pregnant.

The Saving the Survivors project focuses on getting to know the species while working with animals that have survived poaching attacks. Because Dr Steenkamp and Dr Marais work at Onderstepoort, they are in the fortunate position to be able to do more research than veterinarians in private practice. Dr Steenkamp specialises in maxillofacial surgery and Dr Marais specialises in equine surgery.

Although these two doctors are the only two veterinarians in the country currently able to perform a number of procedures on rhino that have survived attacks and other injuries, they consider it very important to train others so that there are more hands to treat this very big problem. Their work is clinically driven and a lot of their research is guided by the questions that other veterinarians are asking them.

Through the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA), an annual rhino workshop is held in all the provinces of the country. This is an opportunity for veterinarians working on rhino to come together to share their experiences and expertise.

The project has treated some 60 rhinos since its inception, with most of the cases resulting from gunshot wounds, snare wounds and facial trauma. The veterinarians explain that it is very important to treat the patients as soon

as possible after they have been injured to prevent infection and other complications, and to develop effective standard procedures to be taught to other veterinarians. For example, after having successfully treated seven rhino for facial trauma, they now have a protocol that works.

The treatment for a typical facial wound where the horn has been removed consists of cleaning the wound and applying wound material. A fibreglass-based dressing is screwed into place so that the rhino is not able to remove the cover against the nearest tree. Because it is impossible to treat a wounded rhino daily, the ideal wound material would only need to be changed every six weeks. While rhino tissue heals incredibly well, large gaping wounds take a very long time to heal. The vets sometimes have to make the difficult choice of euthanising a rhino that suffers severely from injuries that cannot be treated.

Dr Marais explains that one of the biggest challenges facing South Africa's conservation efforts is a lack of money and time. Significant funds need to be allocated to research, treatment methods, equipment and education. Every cent donated to the Saving the Survivors project goes directly to efforts to treat and attend to rhino left behind after poaching attacks. SAVA and UP cover all other administrative costs involved in the project.



The OP Go Getters team

OP “Go Getters”

participate in the Kaya FM 67 km relay for Mandela Day 2014

The OP Go Getters symbolically honoured the Mandela Day message and paid tribute to the 67 years Nelson Mandela dedicated to the emancipation of South Africa by participating in the Kaya 67 km relay for this year’s Mandela Day on 13 July. The event took place at the Waterfall Estates Polo Fields in Sunninghill, Johannesburg.

As each team member ran their 6.7 km relay leg, they were paying tribute to the humanitarian work Madiba undertook across the globe, and as each runner passed on the baton to the next, they were symbolically heeding his call to action – “It’s in your hands now to make a difference”.

But participation was more than just symbolic – all proceeds raised from the Kaya FM relay for Mandela Day will be used in public education programmes and literacy initiatives designed to help grow learning among South Africa’s youth, a core mandate of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

“Take action, inspire change, make every day a Mandela Day.”

Small animal interns 2014

Dr Vanessa McClure (Small Animal Intern Coordinator)

January 2014 saw the start of a new batch of Small Animal interns. This programme was started in 2012 by Prof Eran Divr and Dr Bobbi Conner and had an intake of three interns. Since then, the programme has grown in leaps and bounds and we now have six new Small Animal interns. The Intern Programme is a 12-month programme and new graduates are encouraged to apply. The internship provides the individual with intensive training and exposure to all aspects of clinical small animal veterinary science. They rotate through Outpatients/ICU, small animal medicine, small animal surgery, anaesthesiology, diagnostic imaging, reproduction, the community small

animal veterinary clinic and dentistry, where they are granted primary responsibility over cases with supervision and guidance from senior clinicians. The interns receive a certificate of completion upon fulfillment of the programme requirement. This year, Hill’s pet food kindly sponsored the interns with doctors’ jackets and scrub tops, as well as a weekend away at the beginning of the year for some team building!



Dr Amy Street, Dr Justin Dancer, Dr Matt Kopke, Dr Darryn Randell, Dr Lizemarie Stofberg, Dr Wilco Botha, Sr Dalene Jansen van Vuuren (Hill’s) and Dr Guy Fyvie (Hill’s).

• PGSA annual gala dinner •

The Postgraduate Student Association (PGSA) of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, under the leadership of its recently elected officials, held its annual gala dinner on 23 April 2014 at the Onderstepoort Lapa of the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (OVI).

Jointly sponsored by the offices of the Dean and the Deputy Dean (Research, Postgraduate Studies and Internationalisation), the dinner provided the opportunity for the postgraduate students, their supervisors, other staff and the Faculty's management team to interact and share ideas, socialise and build friendships across social and structural divides, and relax away from the routines of academic/laboratory work. In addition, the new postgraduate students were formally welcomed to the Faculty. The well-attended dinner had the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Gerry Swan, and Prof Pete Irons, Head of the Department of Production Animal Studies, as special guests.

In his address, the Chairperson of the Onderstepoort PGSA, Dr Dauda Bwala, stated that the Onderstepoort PGSA is a dependant, volunteer, non-profit student body established in 2007 to serve as official representative of the postgraduate students of the Faculty. It also serves as a forum through which postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows can unite and interrelate, irrespective of tribe, nationality and race. It also provides an excellent environment and opportunity for the exchange



The gala dinner was well attended

and cross-fertilisation of ideas (scientific, cultural and social) for the overall progress and development of the students and the Faculty. The Chairperson also stated that the PGSA has lined up a number of social and academic programmes for 2014. These programmes were designed with one motive in mind: "to bridge relationships among postgraduate students and other members/residents of the Onderstepoort Campus" so that the "whole" can work as a "unit" for the translation and achievement of the vision and mission of the Faculty and the University of Pretoria at large. The Chairperson therefore solicits the unalloyed support of all stakeholders and their increased participation and attendance of its programmes towards the achievement of these goals.

While welcoming the new postgraduate students to the Faculty, Prof Swan highlighted

the vision and focus that has been pursued by the Faculty over the years. This he said, has resulted in the marked achievement recorded by the Faculty in terms of research output, growth, student enrolment and the internationalisation of the Faculty. Despite these modest achievements, he indicated that the Faculty and the University at large is not resting on its laurels in ensuring that the Faculty is considered among the best in the world.

Prof Irons encouraged the students to maximise the diversity within the postgraduate community and the multidisciplinary research being pursued in the Faculty so as to establish networks across national divides for future research collaborations. He also emphasised the need for postgraduate students to realign themselves with the vision of the Faculty and that of the University so as to move the Faculty forward.



The Dean, Prof Gerry Swan (left), with some of the new postgraduate students.

Names of the new PGSA officials and their portfolios

Dr Dauda Bwala	Chairperson
Dr Mohamed Sirdar	Secretary General
Dr Patience Ndawana	Treasurer
Dr Alexander Jambalang	Public Relations Officer
Ms Abigail Ngoepe	Community Engagement Officer
Ms Stephanie de Lange	Postgraduate Residence Coordinator
Dr Okey Ndumnego	Ex officio

The Jotello F Soga Library bids farewell to **Johannes Moropotli**

Johannes Moropotli retired at the end of April 2014 after 33 years and one month's service at the Jotello F Soga Library. Johannes started working as a messenger at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (OVI) of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) as early as 1970. He joined the Veterinary Library in April 1981 when it was still housed in the old Main Faculty Building.

At his farewell function, attended by colleagues, family and friends on 16 April, we took a trip down memory lane, reminiscing highlights of Johannes's time at Onderstepoort. Erica van der Westhuizen, Head of the Library until August 2009, had the following to say:

"Johannes and I come a long way. In fact, he was part of my 28 years of life at Onderstepoort from the beginning. When I started here in November 1981 as Head of the Faculty Library, he was already there, an essential part of the three-person library team. Johannes's position in those early years was as a library messenger. He was a well-known fixture in the Onderstepoort environment.

In those pre-computer and pre-internet days, lecturers and researchers got their information in paper format. As library messenger, it was

Johannes who delivered all their articles in brown cardboard files on his bicycle. Prof Le Roux was the Dean in the early 1980s, and he would complain if his file looked a bit shabby!

As a Comrades Marathon runner, Johannes made us all proud. There wasn't another faculty library that could boast of such an achievement! In fact, when a book was published to celebrate UP's centenary, the Veterinary Library was mentioned in particular for its Comrades runner.

In the computer age, the role of the internet in information provision expanded and Johannes's role took on extra dimensions, from messenger to electronic information provider to information creator in the e-environment. Today, Johannes can look back on his important contribution in providing an effective information service, from the electronic distribution of publications to

faculty members and students, including external users (some even beyond South Africa's borders) to the digitisation of the first research accounts on animal diseases in Africa as published in the early South African veterinary journals. It is Johannes' assistance in digitising the *Journal of Veterinary Research* that has made this important early research accessible worldwide."

Deputy Director of Client Services in the Veterinary Library, Lindiwe Soyizwapi, confirmed that Johannes was almost irreplaceable. He had set a high standard that would need to be met to fill his position. All his colleagues agreed that Johannes's personality made him a pleasant person to work with and that his smile and positive attitude will always be treasured.

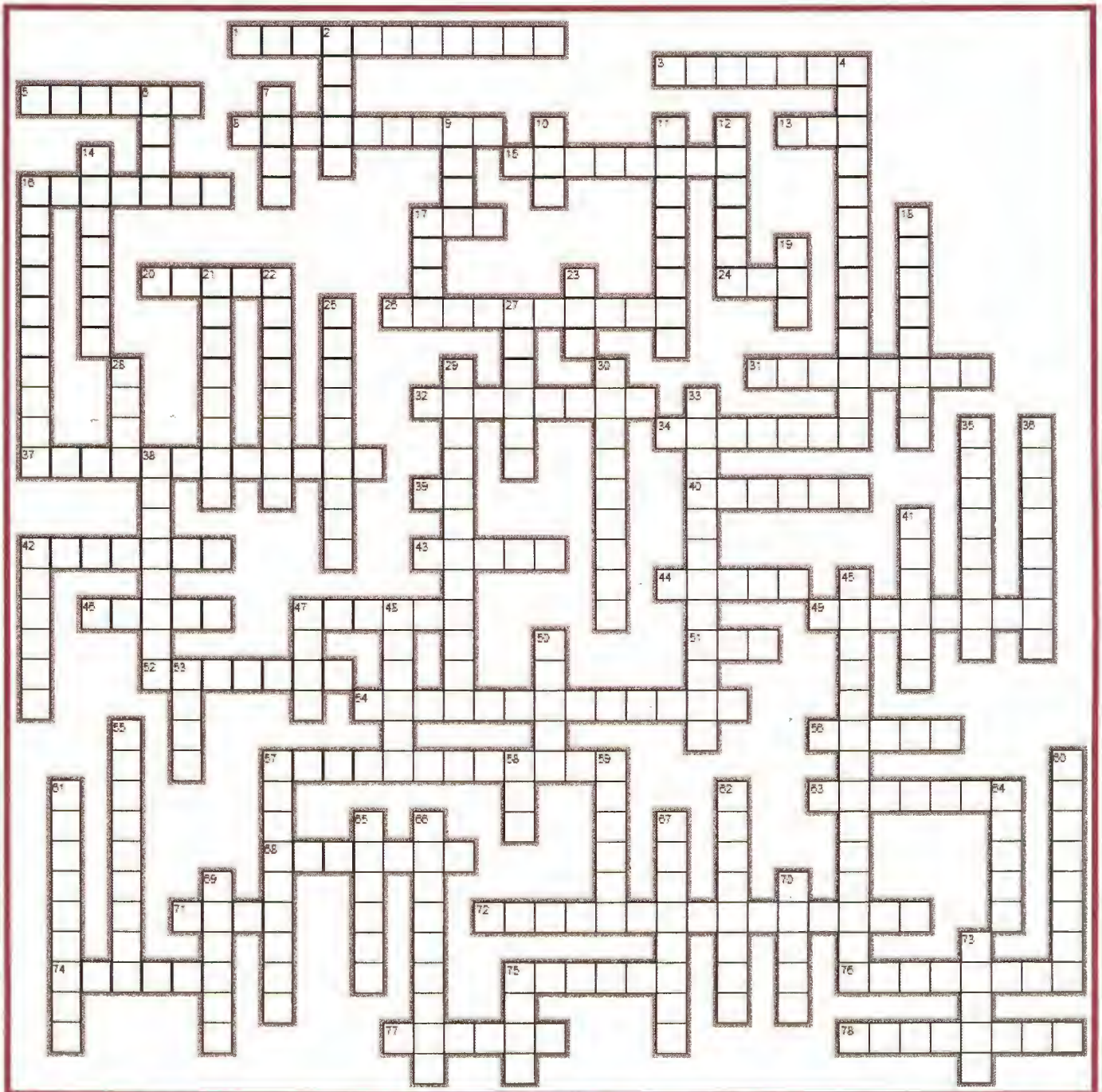
Johannes is wished all the best with his future endeavours.



Colleagues bid farewell to Johannes Moropotli.

OP News Crossword Puzzle

Think you have what it takes? Give it a go then!



Compiled by Coleen Cahill

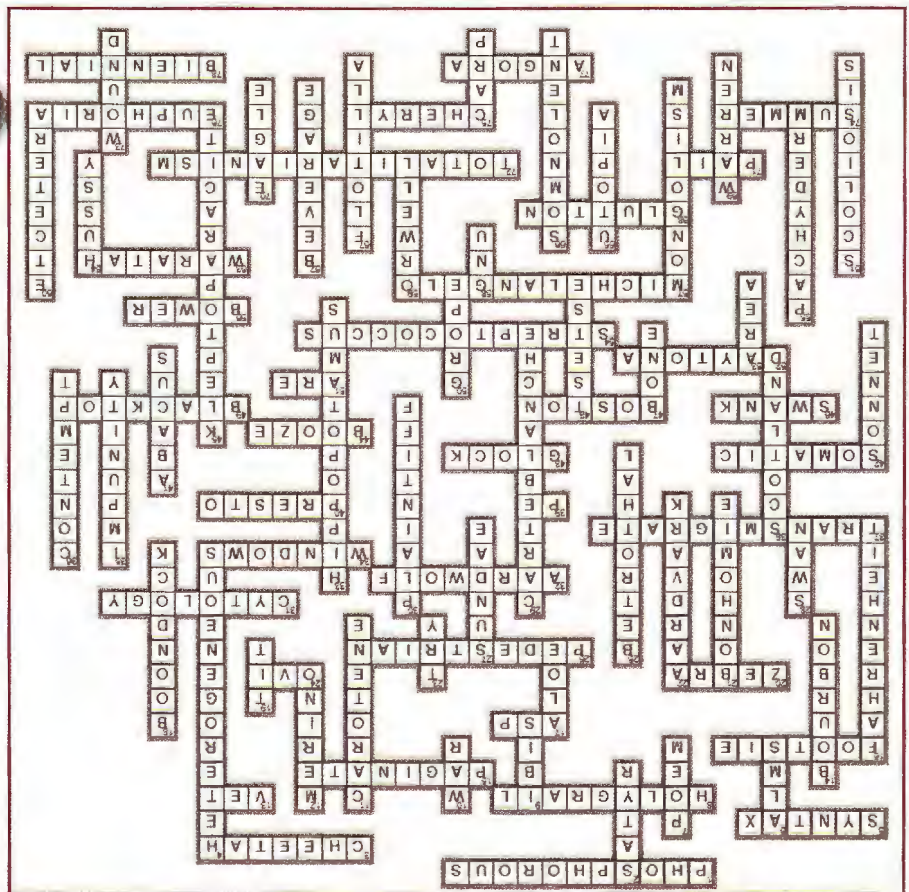


Across

1. yellow non-metallic element
3. *Acinonyx jubatus*
5. sentence construction
8. Last Supper cup or plate
13. veterinarian
15. page
16. amorous play with feet (inf)
17. viper
20. striped African quadruped
24. Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute
26. dull
31. study of cells
32. member of hyaena family
34. operating system
37. pass through a country on your way to another
39. South African city
40. quick
42. physical, corporeal
43. Austrian handgun
44. alcohol (inf)
46. swagger
47. type of terrier
49. tar road (American)
51. be
52. American car race
54. bacterium
56. bird of paradise
57. Sistine Chapel painter
63. crimson-flowered Australian shrub/rugby team
68. excessive eater
71. bucket
72. absolute state control
74. warm season
75. Principal's name
76. over-optimism
77. fabric from goat
78. every two years

Down

2. woodland deity
4. diverse in character
6. charitable donation
7. metrical composition
9. wading bird
10. strife
11. orange substance in carrots
12. type of sheep
14. whisky
16. water boils at 212 degrees ...
17. plant with bitter juice
18. isolated area (inf)
19. small bird
21. geniality
22. termite-eating nocturnal mammal
23. five points in rugby
25. promise to marry
27. ice-cream confection
28. large waterbird
29. full discretionary power
30. not defendant
33. large animal inhabiting rivers
35. exempted from punishment or consequence (with ...)
36. scorn
38. ...Yard
41. calculating frame
42. Shakespearean poem
45. thieving freeloader
47. hard tissue
48. causing sleeping sickness
50. feel around in the dark
53. region
55. elephant
57. mental deficiency
58. antelope
59. 1984 writer
60. and so on (L)
61. curvature of spine
62. liquid to drink
64. slut (inf)
65. perfect world
66. sleepy
67. fleet of small ships
69. where rabbits are found
70. bird of prey
73. injury
75. freshwater fish



OP Postgraduate Sports Day

The sound of the crowd's cheering broke the quiet of the morning air, followed by the cracking shot of a soccer ball into the goalpost of an opponent. This was the day the postgraduate students at Onderstepoort had set aside for a sports day.

The programme, which was organised by the Office of the Postgraduate Residence Coordinator, was held at the Onderstepoort Sportsgrounds on 10 May 2014. Postgraduate students both in and outside the Onderstepoort Postgraduate Residence gathered for a fun-filled day of outdoor and indoor activities away from their busy schedule of laboratory work.

Team A (postgraduate students on the second and third floor of Block N) and Team B (postgraduate students from Block M, the ground floor of Block N and House 5) competed against

each other in soccer, volleyball, snooker and table tennis.

The soccer and volleyball matches were played on the Onderstepoort Sportsground, while the snooker and table tennis matches were conducted in the games room of the Onderstepoort Postgraduate Centre. The two teams battled it out, each trying to outweigh the other, but in the end, the youthful and more experienced members of Team A outdid Team B to win all the matches.

The sports day was not all about games. In between the activity, there were relaxing sessions of drinks and pizza in the Postgraduate Centre. The members of the winning team received the grand prize of four six-packs of Coke and a giant pizza.

The day was a very exhilarating one with some of the "old and tired legs" resorting to the use of painkillers and hot-bath massages after the games to overcome the fatigue and build-up of lactic acid.

Prof Gerry Swan

Dean: 2005–2014

