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OP NEWS

From the Desk of the Dean

Six years have passed since the amalgamation of the two faculties of Veterinary Science, and this is the first year that the process has not visibly affected the affairs of the Faculty or of its staff. There is now a sense of stability and staff tend to focus primarily on the priorities of the academic programmes.

There is, however, no time for complacency. The stability that exists and the focus on the priorities of the Faculty must be managed so that it remains constant, effective and efficient in order to enable growth in the Faculty's outputs. This will align the Faculty with the University's output targets. There are a number of critical issues that must be addressed to facilitate the sustainability and future growth of the Faculty and its relevance in terms of addressing the needs of the veterinary profession in the future.

Sustainable funding is the first important issue. The current subsidy formula and level of funding of veterinary training is such that the current standards of training will not be sustainable should this matter not be addressed urgently. It is imperative that the University and the relevant stakeholders make a concerted effort to convince Government of the need and the importance of adequate funding for the training of veterinarians and para-veterinary personnel, and of the expected impact on the country should the veterinary profession cease to function optimally.

Appropriate training programmes for veterinarians and para-veterinary professionals that address the needs of the South African community are critical components in forging future veterinary competencies and services.

Another issue is the emphasis that the Faculty places on the different components of its core business. There is a growing need to address the impact and relevance of the Faculty's current endeavours within the context of its limited resources. That which is nice to do, may not necessarily be that which is needed. As a Faculty we must agree on what the core functions and needs are within the context of the needs of society, and not as individual departments or as individuals.

These are the challenges for the future, and I have no doubt that there should be intensive debate about these matters.

Prof Nick Kriek
Dean



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Sabbatical visit by Norwegian academic

Prof Torleiv Løken, from the Norwegian School of Veterinary Medicine, is spending a 3-month sabbatical period in the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVT).

The focus of his research is on malignant catarrhal fever (MCF), more specifically the sheep-associated form of the disease that is of economic importance in Norway. He will be working with Prof Moritz van Vuuren, who is involved in a research programme relating to wildebeest-associated MCF.

Specimens from Norway will be processed in the serology and molecular virology laboratories of the DVT as part of a Norwegian study on the epidemiology of sheep-associated MCF in Norway. Results of the different projects will be compared and used for planning further research on the subject. Prof Løken's visit will also serve the purpose of establishing a framework of activities for post-doctoral fellow, Dr Maria Stokstad from Norway, who will join the DVT later in the year.

DVT strengthens research component

Prof Moritz van Vuuren – Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases

The DVT's postdoctoral fellows and postgraduate students will contribute significantly to research outputs over the next two years.

Dr Marinda Oosthuizen, who obtained her PhD from UP, is currently working in conjunction with Prof Banie Penzhorn on a project dealing with the isolation, characterisation and description of *Eimeria* species of African buffaloes and other indigenous mammals.

Dr Kerstin Junker has obtained a Claude Leon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship to study the composition, seasonal fluctuation and geographical variation of the *helminth* and *acanthocephalan* fauna of helmeted guineafowl *Numida meleagris* in South Africa. This project is being completed in conjunction with Prof Joop Boomker.

Dr Dimitry Apanaskevich from Russia similarly obtained a Claude Leon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship for two years to continue work on the taxonomy of *Amblyomma* and *Haemaphysalis spp.* in conjunction with Dr Ivan Horak.

Dr Maria Stokstad, who recently obtained her PhD from the Norwegian School of Veterinary Science, obtained a Postdoctoral Fellowship from UP for one year to work in conjunction with Prof Moritz van Vuuren on a project focusing on wildebeest-associated malignant catarrhal fever.

A grant to the value of R40 000 000 was recently made available to the Agricultural Research Council by the National Department of Science and Technology for postgraduate studies of promising students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Sixteen of these students will be based at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and will register in the DVT for projects in the fields of infectious and parasitic diseases.

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UP collaborates with Swedish Institute

Prof Mortiz van Vuuren - Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases

Prof Moritz van Vuuren and Dr Jackie Picard from the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases, undertook a visit to Sweden during February 2005 to further the research collaboration established with the Department of Antibiotics from the National Veterinary Institute in Uppsala, Sweden.



Prof Christo Botha recently received an Education Innovation Certificate from Prof Calie Pistorius for the CD-Rom entitled Plants Poisonous to Livestock.

They were accompanied by postgraduate student Dr Hayley Napier-Bax. The collaboration developed from a grant provided jointly to Prof Van Vuuren and Prof Anders Franklin from Sweden under the umbrella of the Science and Technology Agreement between South Africa and Sweden. The grant is provided jointly by the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The main objective of the bilateral South Africa – Sweden Research Partnership Programme is to encourage research co-operation between researchers in South Africa and Sweden.

Front, from left: Prof Anders Franklin and Prof Moritz van Vuuren. Second row, from left: Dr Jackie Picard, Dr Christina Greko and Dr Hayley Napier-Bax. Back row, from left: Dr Bjorn Bengtsson, Dr Stina Englund and Dr Marit Pringle.

The Swedish visit by collaborators from South Africa was organised to allow the participants in the programme to report back on achievements during 2004, and to plan activities for 2005. The pivotal activity within the collaboration is the establishment of national surveillance and monitoring programmes in South Africa for bacterial resistance to antimicrobial drugs, quantities of antimicrobial drugs used, and consumption of antimicrobial drugs in the animal industry. These activities are now far advanced and the surveillance programme will be launched during the first semester of 2005.

Prof Van Vuuren and Dr Picard were also afforded the opportunity to visit and view the facilities of the National Veterinary Institute and the Veterinary School of the Swedish Agricultural University in Uppsala, and to discuss activities of mutual interest with various scientists. During farm visits organised by the hosts, opportunities were created to view several examples of modern Swedish swine farms and a dairy farm where robots have been installed for the milking of cows.

Dr Napier-Bax presented the research protocol for her MMedVet project at the National Veterinary Institute in Uppsala at a meeting attended by several interested researchers. This interesting development was the result of an invitation by her promoter, Prof Gerry Swan, to Swedish bacteriologist, Dr Christina Greko, to act as co-promoter for the study.



The fellowship aspects of research collaboration were not neglected, and the hosts in Sweden made sure that the cold, snow-filled Swedish evenings were spent in delightful surroundings where the collaborators could discuss mutual interests around the dinner table.



Class of 1927 breaks tradition

RD Bigalke – Veterinary History Committee of the SAVA

The class of 1927 broke the tradition of male student domination at the Onderstepoort Faculty by having a member of the fairer sex, in the person of Joan Morice, in its midst. Almost 20 years were to elapse before a second woman, Maud Bales, was prepared to follow in her footsteps.

Most unusual about this class, is the fact that the only available photograph of them was not taken with the students garbed in their grand graduation regalia as in previous years, but with their customary white lab coats on. Also of interest in the photograph (right), is the dog, which is being held by René du Toit. This dog was obviously the predecessor of the many hostel mascots that followed in the years to come. No dean or any other lecturer, however, is anywhere in sight!

Joan Morice made history when she enrolled for the veterinary course at Onderstepoort. Although she qualified in 1927, she apparently only took up her first appointment in September 1928 as a temporary veterinary officer in the Allerton Laboratory. She only worked at the laboratory for a few months. Her services were terminated, most probably by herself, on 31 December of the same year. She immediately started a practice in Johannesburg, and after her marriage in 1930 to Maurice Robinson who qualified in 1928, she and her husband practised together. Joan discontinued her involvement in their private practice in 1935, doing charitable work for the SPCA and the so-called Bantu Animal Welfare Association in Johannesburg instead. Sadly, Joan died from lung cancer at an early age in 1944.

Max Sterne gained undying recognition for the development of his famous anthrax spore vaccine. After qualifying at Onderstepoort he spent two years in the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) managing a cattle ranch. Back in South Africa, he joined the government service and was posted to the Allerton Laboratory in Natal to assist with the East Coast fever eradication campaign. In 1934 he was transferred to Onderstepoort where he worked as assistant to Prof EM Robinson as a veterinary researcher in bacteriology, and developed the above-mentioned live vaccine against anthrax, which is still internationally used and acclaimed today, sixty-one years after its discovery. He served as editor of the *Journal of the South African Veterinary Association* from 1937 to 1942. In 1947 Sterne obtained the highly rated Diploma in Bacteriology at the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and left South Africa in 1951 to join the Wellcome Research Laboratories in London. He died in 1997 in Hampshire, England at the ripe old age of 92.

Heinrich (Heinie) Franz was appointed as state veterinarian for Pretoria early in 1928, but was transferred to the Allerton Laboratory in Pietermaritzburg shortly afterwards and then in quick succession to Umtata, Rustenburg and Estcourt. From 1930 to 1944 he was state veterinarian for southern Zululand and was stationed at Eshowe. From there he was transferred to Greytown. Sadly in 1947, at the age of 43, he died due to sunstroke suffered while completing field work. After his death his widow worked for many years as a smear examiner for the Division of Veterinary Services in Greytown and Pietermaritzburg.

Leslie (Pat) Stonier's entire career was spent as a state veterinarian, first at Vryburg from 1928, then at Allerton Laboratory from 1933 to 1935, and finally at Kimberley where he remained until he retired in 1964. Pat served in the South African Defence Force during World War II. After retirement he was re-appointed on a temporary basis for a year. Thereafter he worked for the Kimberley City Council doing meat hygiene control. He was one of the first veterinarians to contract Rift Valley fever, presumably during the first epidemic that occurred in South Africa from 1950 to 1951. This permanently impaired his vision due to retinal detachment. He died as a result of a coronary thrombosis in 1970, a week before his 69th birthday.

Wilhelmus Rijksen served as a state veterinarian for 20 years at various posts, including Umtata, Potgietersrus (now Makopane), the Allerton Laboratory, Beaufort West, Windhoek and Bethlehem. In 1951 Dr Rijkse established a very successful private practice in Bethlehem. He served as Secretary of the South African Veterinary Medical Association and as editor of its Journal in 1966 and 1967, but left for personal reasons at the end of that year. In 1972 he finally returned to

Bloemfontein to start a practice in the city where he had matriculated. Dr Rijkssen received a special award from the South African Veterinary Association in 1986 for his dedicated services to the veterinary profession. He died in Bloemfontein in 1994 at the ripe old age of 91.

Back row:

Heinrich Franz, Leslie

Stonier,

Joan Morice,

Max Sterne,

Wilhelmus Rijkssen.

Front: John Thorburn,

Neil Reid, Rene du Toit.

John (Jack) Thorburn was apparently a 'super' who had to repeat his final year. Although he was a member of the class of 1927 he qualified in 1928 and his first appointment in the Division of Veterinary Services as state veterinarian dates from January 1929. After initially being stationed at Onderstepoort, he was transferred to the field and served in the Northern Cape, Zululand, Transkei (Peddie), Grahamstown and East London, the latter from 1942 to 1945. Jack played a major role in the East Coast fever eradication campaign in the Peddie area. In 1945 he resigned from the government service to join the well known company Cooper & Nephews, probably the first Onderstepoort graduate to enter the pharmaceutical field. He formed the Coopers' veterinary research team in East London and guided its early years. In 1949 he moved to Johannesburg and took up the position of veterinary adviser to the company with specific responsibilities for the Rhodesias, Congo and East Africa. In 1963 he was appointed as technical director of Cooper, McDougall & Robertson Central Africa. He retired in 1968 but was re-appointed as research scientist at Cooper's research station in East London where he served until shortly before his death in 1971, aged 68.



Neil Reid obtained his BVSc degree and then proceeded to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in London where he was admitted to the MRCVS. It is not clear when exactly he joined the Colonial Veterinary Service. We do know, from the publications by Thomas & Reid and Kolbe's unpublished mimeograph on the activities of the Zoological Survey, that Reid was already in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in 1941 where he is identified as a local state veterinarian. We also know that he was Director of Veterinary Services of Tanganyika from about 1946 to 1953 and that he was very much involved in the control of rinderpest and, to a lesser extent, bovine pleuropneumonia. He was awarded the MBE on his resignation from the British Colonial Service. In 1953 Reid entered the service of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations in

Rome where he became intensely involved in the development of field programmes to increase animal production in developing countries in Africa and the Near East. He retired from the FAO in 1963 but returned as a consultant 10 years later. Reid died in Reading, Berkshire on 19 December 1994.

René du Toit will always be associated with the successful anti-tsetse fly campaign in Zululand, of which he was the chief architect. After qualifying he immediately joined the government service and was posted at the Allerton Laboratory as a veterinary research officer. In 1929 he was transferred to the Section of Entomology. He remained at Onderstepoort as a veterinary entomologist for most of his career, temporarily being transferred to the experimental farm Armoedsvlakte close to Vryburg, as officer in charge from 1930 to 1931, and studying at the University of Minnesota as a Commonwealth Foundation Fellow in 1936 and 1937. While at Onderstepoort, Du Toit completed pioneering research on the use of DDT for the control of various ectoparasites from 1939 to 1945. During this period he planned the successful application of DDT, which was administered mainly by aerial spraying, to rid an area of more than 18 000 square km of bushveld expanse in Zululand, an area about as big as the Kruger National Park, from the most important species of tsetse fly, *Glossina pallidipes*, occurring in that portion of Natal. Du Toit was awarded a DVSc degree by the University of Pretoria in 1953 for a thesis based on his research on the control of tsetse flies. He also made a pioneering discovery in 1944 that African horse sickness and bluetongue of sheep were transmitted biologically and that cattle may serve as reservoirs of bluetongue virus. Du Toit filled the positions of Sub-Director of the Veterinary Research Institute, part-time Professor of Parasitology at the Onderstepoort Faculty and full-time Professor of Parasitology at the Faculty during his career. He also served as Dean of the Onderstepoort Faculty from 1960 to 1963. He died in Cape Town in 1988, aged 84 years.

The name of the dog in the photograph could not be traced!



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Emotional Intelligence (EQ) – Determining future success?

Dr Guy Fyvie, from Hill's, recently attended a lecture given by Prof Rick DeBowes from Washington State University (WSU) on a new initiative that is being undertaken by the University.

The programme uses experiential learning (two days of activities) to help students understand the competencies needed in their chosen career and how to develop them. The idea is that Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is as important in future professional and personal success as is the knowledge that we obtain at university.

This idea is fast taking hold in many veterinary schools. In fact 25 of 27 US schools will be sending delegates (students and staff) to the Hill's-sponsored *Veterinary Leadership Experience (VLE) 2005*. Here they will learn the techniques to help their own schools implement EQ teaching.

One aspect of the course involves looking at personality traits of people (Meyers-Briggs) in order to learn how to respond to them (clients/colleagues/lecturers, etc) to improve communication. Another aspect that is explored is the concept of servant-leadership, which is explained as "The desire (choice) to serve drives the aspiration to lead. The test of leadership is the effect on those served". Veterinarians, by nature of what they do, are servant-leaders.

"It was fantastic to see how important this programme has become in the two years it has been running at WSU and the interest that is being shown by other veterinary schools. The reason I was so happy was that the very same thing has been happening at OP for the last five years! The Management and Leadership Skills Awareness Workshop presented to the fourth-year veterinary students and first-year nursing students by Louis Odendall encompasses all that was spoken about in glowing terms by Prof DeBowes," says Dr Fyvie.

Hill's is very proud to sponsor this course together with Merial and UP.

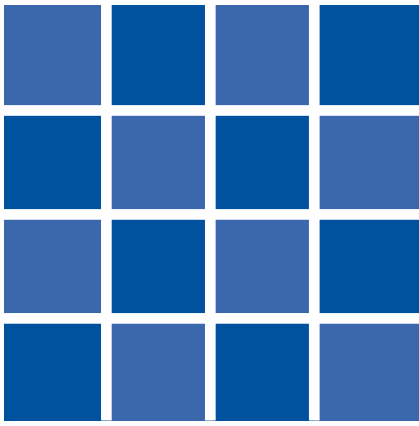
Hill's dictionary: Nutrogenomics

Definition: The study of manipulating gene expression in the body through feeding specific nutrients.

This is a new sphere of research that is already bearing fruit for our pets. This research has shown that the N3 fatty acid Eicosapentanoic Acid (EPA) blocks the expression of the gene that produces cartilage degenerative enzymes in the joint. Research also showed that adding higher levels of EPA to dog food increased the levels of EPA in the joints. Hill's has added this technology to a new diet for dogs with osteoarthritis.

New Hill's Prescription Diet j/d (joint diet) contains large amounts of N3 fatty acids to decrease inflammation (and therefore pain), but more specifically EPA to slow down cartilage degeneration.

Who knows where this type of research can take us!



Hill's is very proud to have been in South Africa for over 10 years and to have been involved in support and education at Onderstepoort for that time. Hill's Pet Nutrition is a global company that owes its humble beginnings to Dr Mark Morris, who in 1948 formulated the world's first Prescription Diet (k/d).

Hill's has a proud history of innovation, the best quality products and strong ties with veterinarians around the world. It is committed to education, not only about clinical nutrition, but all skills needed by future colleagues in the veterinary faculty.

Please contact Dr Guy Fyvie at guy@hillspet.co.za for further information or advice.



Specialist training gathers international momentum

Dr Pete Irons – Section of Reproduction

The Section of Reproduction's specialist training programme is going from strength to strength.

Dr Frans Jooste passed his MMedVet exam in October last year and promptly went over to Belgium and passed the European College of Animal Reproduction certifying examination. Dr Henry Annandale is nearing the completion of his MMedVet programme. Henry's candidature for the American College of Theriogenologists has been accepted and he will do the certifying examination in August 2005.

Two international veterinarians are also progressing: Dr Annett Heise has been with the Faculty for over a year now and is progressing well with her MSc project on the effects of seminal plasma on the fertility of epididymal stallion semen. Dr Daniella Steckler is close behind Dr Heise in her programme. Dr Heise and Dr Steckler hold the distinction of scoring number 1 and 2 in the South African Veterinary Council examinations for foreign graduates during 2004.

The section has managed to create another post by means of an innovative post-sharing agreement involving Prof David Gerber and Dr Pete Irons. This agreement will enable the Department to retain the services of these two staff members while also appointing a new permanent full-time lecturer. Now that's what is meant by locally relevant and internationally competitive!



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Onderstepoort Rag 2005

Dedication, hard work, fun and games marked the 2005 Rag Committee's fundraising attempts.

- Members of the Rag Committee went all out for entertainment with the *Hill's Potjie and Punch day*. They arranged a competition for the best potjie and punch and for a boeresport competition. To top it all, they managed to hire a 10 metre-high inflatable water slide. This proved to be a hit and the ever faithful students came in their droves to enjoy a day in the sun. Hill's Boeresport Team won the competition.
- The ABSA-Hill's-Novartis Wine Tasting was well supported by the students. Not only was it an enjoyable social event but also an opportunity for the female (and male) students to strut their stuff in beautiful eveningwear.
- The Bacardi Taverns and the SAB Beerfest were enjoyed in the usual OP spirit!
- *Hill's Matters of the Mind Quiz Evening* was a new event in Rag week, and proved to be a huge success thanks to the sponsorship from Hill's. Quizmaster, Dr Guy Fyvie from Hill's, kept the crowds entertained while the contestants racked their brains for any possibilities to write on their answer cards. After eight rounds of ten questions, much hair pulling and name calling, the final answer cards were handed in, and the markers tallied up the final results. Those teams that placed first through to fifth all received prizes and various spot prizes were also handed out during the evening, kindly sponsored by Hill's. All in all, the evening was a huge success, much fun was had by all and everyone could finally determine which of the OP vet students are truly the brightest of the bunch.

These Rag festivities raised an amount of R 34 159.20. The Rag Committee decided to donate these proceedings to SAVA Tshwane CVC. By supporting the clinic, they enable the community to better care for their companion animals by sterilising, vaccinating, deworming and dipping their dogs. The SAVA Tshwane CVC is incredibly grateful for this generous donation. A portion of the funds will be utilised to purchase a dog trailer to assist with the transportation of dogs to and from the private veterinarians in Pretoria who assist with the sterilisations. The remainder of the funds will be used to extend service delivery and education.

On 18 April 2005, the Rag Committee experienced hands-on veterinary work when they attended the Winterveld CVC day and handed over one ton of dog food that was generously donated by Vets Choice/Royal Canin. The donated food was distributed and the grateful, smiling faces of the pet owners warmed the hearts of all.

Without the support from both the veterinary retail industry and the corporate world, Onderstepoort Rag 2005 would not have been a success. ABSA Bank made a donation towards the fundraising events, which enabled the committee to cover many of their initial costs. Hill's Pet Nutrition also supported the committee financially and donated prizes. Vets Choice/Royal Canin made a considerable contribution towards Rag and Novartis, Woolworths and Bacardi also contributed to making the week a success.



Water slide fun!

Vet library to host conference

The 5th International Conference of Animal Health Information Specialists will take place at the Faculty of Veterinary Science from 4 to 7 July 2005.

No less than 31 veterinary or animal health libraries worldwide will be represented at the Conference.

Pre-conference workshops will be held from 29 June until 2 July on CABI animal health databases and NISC's Wildlife worldwide database, as well as other relevant ones.

Each day of the conference will consist of presentations and visits to other libraries or places of interest including the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and the Production Animal Institute at Irene. For more information visit www.ais.up.ac.za/vet/icahis/.

Book launch

In order to make a contribution towards a better understanding and control of infectious diseases of cattle, sheep, goats and horses, Prof Koos Coetzer and Prof Roy Tustin have produced a definitive textbook on the subject.

The first edition of *Infectious Diseases of Livestock with special reference to Southern Africa* was published in 1994. It has been said that it is the best book of its kind in the world and, because of this, the editors decided to produce this new edition, which has been fully revised and considerably expanded.

This is an essential textbook and reference work for veterinarians, those concerned with animal husbandry, research institutes and laboratories, students, veterinary and agricultural libraries, and stock breeders and owners. For more information visit the website at www.oup.com/za.



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- Mr Chris Neetling (Feed Store)	8004	8004 (roving phone)
- Prof Ken Pettey (Ethology/Physiology)	8449	082 882 7356
- Mrs Daléne Meyer (Anatomy/Physiology)	8212	082 374 1583
- Psychologist at OP (Wednesday), Voula Samouris	8243	083 754 5427
- Psychologist - main campus, Rina Buys	6126/6151	082 908 3688

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

Cultural evening a success

Johan Kotze

The third annual Dean's Cultural Evening was held on Friday 22 April at the Groenkloof campus. Guests were once again stunned by the standard of performance shown by OP students and lecturers alike.

Items ranged from the brilliant tenor voice of Charles Vermeulen, through the vibrant, sexy moves of Kerushini Govender's dance to the catchy tunes of the Rat-Toothed-Forceps' band. This array of events is also a reflection (and celebration) of cultural integration at Onderstepoort.

The evening was unfortunately not well attended, even at the low cost of R25 a ticket. However, I'm sure that this event will be advertised by word of mouth and that it will become a prominent date on the OP calendar in the future.



The entertainment at the Dean's Cultural Evening was of an exceptionally high quality.