

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CHANGES IN THE AAAP OVER THE PAST TWENTY YEARS

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The American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) has undergone many changes over the past twenty years. Some of the major changes have been the establishment of the AAAP FOUNDATION, the AAAP leadership in the founding of the College of Poultry Veterinarians, the modernization of the business office, the expansion of efforts to promote poultry veterinary medicine with additional educational materials, a programmed financial reserve through increased income, an increased role in the AVMA, and changes in AAAP membership qualifications and categories.

The need for the establishment of a charitable foundation within the AAAP came with the gifts to the organization by members and companies recognizing outstanding members. In the late 1980's, with the help of a Philadelphia lawyer, the AAAP FOUNDATION was formed. It began with the gift by Dr. Reed Rumsey, shortly before his death, to establish a student award for advancement of Avian Medicine, followed shortly by a gift from Dr. Hiram Lasher to honor Dr. Cab Bottorff. The next generous gift was given by Dr. Kenny Eskelund to establish funds to support veterinary students in Preceptorship Programs. The idea was proposed by Dr. Mike Rosenstein, a AAAP Member, who like Reed Rumsey, died at an early age of cancer. The Bayer-Snoeyenbos New Investigator Award was established to recognize a member who has made meritorious research contributions to the avian field. This award was renamed in 1994 in memory of Dr. Glenn Snoeyenbos and then, in 1996, renamed a second time in recognition of a generous gift by the Bayer Poultry Business Unit. In 2002, two additional gifts were received and awards established for students. The first, with a generous bequest by his family following his untimely death, was the Richard B. Rimler Memorial Paper Award recognizing a graduate student whose study and research clearly involves some aspect of poultry health or disease and provides funds for travel to present their research at the annual meeting. The L. Dwight Schwartz Travel Scholarship Award was also established by his family and is designed to introduce veterinary students to poultry medicine and to facilitate an interaction with AAAP members by attendance at the annual meeting of the AAAP. The most recent award was established with a gift from Dr. Bruce Calnek. The Bruce W. Calnek Applied Poultry Research Achievement award is given to a member of AAAP who has made outstanding research contributions resulting directly or indirectly in a measurable, practical impact on the control of one or more important diseases of poultry. One can imagine how much work is now required by the AAAP awards committee in selecting these winners. The foundation also receives substantial

contributions from members for use for many other programs, including the distribution of educational material to underdeveloped countries.

The American College of Poultry Veterinarians (ACPV) was founded by leaders of the AAAP in 1991. Although it is a separate organization, it is considered to be a sister organization to AAAP. ACPV is recognized through the auspices of the AVMA and offers certification of professional competence for poultry veterinarians.

The modernization of the AAAP business office has occurred gradually over the years and continues today. A major step toward modernization was the movement into the electronic world. In 1982, mailing labels were produced with an address-o-graph. This “monster machine”, which required five strong men to move and shook the floor when operated, was used to produce metal plates with the mailing label information. Drawer after drawer of these metal plates had to be stacked into a machine that printed the envelopes or labels. Every new member or change of address required a new plate and dropping a drawer of plates resulted in a lengthy process of putting them back into zip code order. The migration from paper records and metal plates to a computer database for membership files allowed for greater accuracy and more efficient publication and distribution of the membership directory, newsletters and other correspondence. The creation of this database also made e-mail correspondence possible resulting in more rapid and less costly communication to the membership. Also during this time, the use of mimeograph printing was discarded for professional printing by outside vendors. The bookkeeping system was computerized to more efficiently meet the record keeping requirements and prepare for the professional audits now required for charitable organizations. AAAP began accepting credit cards for the purchase of the ever increasing number of educational materials making transactions quick and easy. AAAP established a website and a list server for the membership.

One of AAAP’S primary objectives is to promote poultry veterinary medicine and the organization has been able to expand publication of educational materials. In addition to continuing to revise the existing manuals, books, and slide study sets, members have developed eleven new slide study sets and made all of the slide sets available on CD at a reasonable price. AAAP also began financially supporting regional meetings and symposiums, and occasionally, published proceedings from these special programs.

AAAP requires substantial funds each year to continue to operate and the need for financial reserves has always been a potential threat to the stability of the organization. Investments, increased income from the sale of educational materials, and adjustments to the fees charged for dues and subscriptions to Avian Diseases has led to a reserve that should prevent financial catastrophe.

The AAAP was formed at the Meeting of the AVMA in 1957 and has elected to continue holding the annual meeting with the AVMA ever since. For many years, the main tie with AVMA was the annual meeting where AAAP had control of the avian medicine section of the scientific program. With an ever increasing request by members to present papers at the meeting, Dr. Dick Witter and I, as AVMA co-program chairs, introduced the expanded use of “poster papers”. In the early days of this effort to allow for program expansion, some scientists assigned a poster paper felt that they were given second class status. Even AVMA, at one point, proposed not giving poster paper presenters the same financial support given to platform presenters. Now, most AAAP members feel that the use of poster papers is very good for the organization and gives AAAP the opportunity to provide the best poultry disease meeting in the world. Over the years, the relationship with AVMA has been stormy as they gradually changed the program committee and support for our meeting, and in general, tried to make the AAAP program similar to the other species programs. On several occasions, last minute decisions were made that affected our proposed program in a significant way and at one point we considered meeting separately from AVMA. Fortunately, we were able to resolve these differences and today our relations with AVMA go way beyond the annual meeting. AAAP members are now appointed to many of the AVMA committees representing Poultry Medicine and AAAP fully recognizes the need to have AVMA national programs that can consider poultry veterinary medicine.

Over the past twenty years, changes to the application process and membership categories have occurred. The constitution was changed so that sponsorship was no longer required to become a AAAP member and existing members no longer had to evaluate the “moral standards” of new members. An international associate membership category was added and student chapters of AAAP were established at veterinary schools. And, for those of us who have been long term members, we now recognize many female members in our organization and in leadership roles.