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President's Message - Tim Baszler



Greetings from the President! It has been a very busy first quarter of the year for the AAVLD Executive Committee / Executive Board and as unpredictable as an eastern Washington spring. I thought I would give you all a brief progress report of the AAVLD priorities set out in the December Newsletter (to show you are getting your money's worth out of the elected AAVLD leadership!).

Hiring an AAVLD Executive Director: The Executive Board has been busy in the hiring process for a new AAVLD Executive Director. The search committee is composed of the AAVLD Executive Committee, which consists of Craig Carter (Past President), Tom McKenna (President-elect), Cat Barr (Vice-President), John Adaska (Secretary-Treasurer), and myself as sitting President, PLUS Ben Richey, the Executive Director of our "sister organization" the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA).

A fully vetted advertisement, job description, applicant review process, and advertising plan have been finalized. The advertisement will be posted from mid-April to June 1, 2012 on our AAVLD website plus various other veterinary, agriculture, animal health, and professional executive director organizational websites. If you have someone in mind you think would be good for the job, please pass along the advertisement and job description from the AAVLD website.

Applications will be reviewed in June and July with "face-to-face" interviews of top applicants (the "Final Four" as South Central Executive Board member Bill Johnson puts it) will be conducted by the entire Executive Board at our summer meetings in San Diego in early August. We are asking a lot from our incoming Executive Director so want to "leave no stone unturned" in our search and review process. If all goes as planned we should be introducing the new Executive Director to all of you this fall.

[Click here](#) to read more in the President's message about:

- Strengthening federal funding for the NAHLN
- Increasing outreach to veterinary diagnostic laboratory technicians
- Laboratory quality assurance presented to the National Beef Cattlemen's association by Dr. Bill Johnson, Oklahoma

What's New on the Web (colored text below are hot links)

- **February Executive board minutes** include a 9 page NVSL report attachment with a number of NVSL activities, upcoming check tests and surveillance activities.
- **Annual meeting material:** Program (meetings) schedule, call for papers, call for diagnostic pathology slide cases, travel, presentation/poster and AAVLD/ACVP awards information and NAHLN-Accreditation committee sponsored QA symposium. New items will be posted as they become available.
- **Deadline for abstracts, travel and AAVLD/ACVP application June 1st.**
- **Deadline for NAHLN-AAVLD QA symposium - September 20.**
- **Deadline for meeting registration September 9.**
- **Deadline for Diagnostic pathology slide submission – July 30**
- Just a reminder AAVLD, is looking for **news items of interest** to our members to post on a short term basis on our home page. Send items to the **secretary-treasurer@aavld.org** or contact our web editor Dave Steffen (**dsteffen@unlnotes.unl.edu**).

AAVLD Announces New JVDI Associate Editor

Please join me in welcoming our new JVDI Associate Editor, Dr. Francisco Uzal from

USAHA Resolutions Website

5th Ed BMBL Manual

CAST

AAVLD Foundation

Foundation Donors

Make a tax-deductible donation to the AAVLD Foundation and find out about upcoming events.

Job Board

Announcements of open positions in the field of veterinary diagnostics by discipline (15 currently)

Meeting

Announcements

Announcements of upcoming veterinary/animal health meetings

Membership Directory

Find the most current listing of AAVLD members. Check here for members that have joined since the hard copy directory was printed.

Contact Us

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the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System. Dr. Uzal will serve as JVDI Associate Editor for pathology manuscripts and brings extensive experience, expertise, and energy to the position. Many thanks to JVDI editor-in-chief Jerry Saliki for completing such a successful search. On the same note, please join me in thanking Dr. Ken Latimer, who is retiring from the JVDI Associate Editor after many years of outstanding service in that position (Paco, you have some tough shoes to fill!). We sincerely thank Ken and wish him all the best in his retirement years (although slowing down may not be in his genes). – Tim Baszler, President

NAHLN Coordinating Council AAVLD representatives

Please welcome the new veterinary diagnostic laboratory representatives to the NAHLN Coordinating Council. Individuals were nominated by the AAVLD membership and Executive Board, and selected by USDA-APHIS and USDA-NIFA administrators of the NAHLN. The new members include Rich Breitmeyer (CA), Craig Carter (KY), Steve Hooser (IN), and Gene Niles (IL). Thank you all for agreeing to serve AAVLD in this important function of providing vital state laboratory input to the NAHLN. - Tim Baszler, President.

AAVLD Foundation funded trainee awards 2012

The **AAVLD Foundation** is again putting your generous donations to work providing travel awards to graduate students and DVM students to attend the 2012 Annual Meeting in Greensboro. Craig Carter is this year's Awards Committee Chair and will be leading solicitation and evaluation of the graduate student trainee travel awards. Application for the \$1,000 **travel awards** is through the abstract submission site, similar to last year. We encourage all of you to get graduate trainees at your institutions/laboratories to submit abstracts to the Annual Meeting and apply for these travel awards. AAVLD also renewed funding to the Center for Public and Corporate Veterinary Medicine (CPCVM) to organize travel assistance for DVM students from across the USA to attend the AAVLD/USAHA Annual Meeting. Valerie Ragan brought 7 or 8 fresh faced, excited DVM student's to last year's Annual Meeting in Buffalo and we look forward to welcoming students again in Greensboro.- Tim Baszler, President

Also please encourage trainees to sign up during abstract submission for consideration for the **best trainee presentation and poster award**; Walker and Oaks awards for best paper/poster in bacteriology/mycology and molecular microbiology respectively; and the **AAVLD/ACVP best pathology presentation**.

Your **contributions to the AAVLD Foundation** help us fund these awards that encourage the future generation of diagnosticians to attend our meeting. Please become a 2012 donor to this worthwhile effort to recognize excellence and bring the next generation of diagnosticians to our meeting. Donor form **click here**.

2012 Annual Meeting in Greensboro N.C. in October

Planning for the **2012 Annual Meeting in Greensboro** is coming along nicely under the leadership of Tom McKenna (Program Chair) and Cat Barr (Co-Program Chair). The call for abstracts went out in March. We had much positive feedback using the ScholarOne Abstract management system last year so will be using the same system for the 2012 Annual Meeting. Please consider submitting an abstract to the annual meeting. The meeting is only as good as the quality and variety of abstracts submitted from all of you. Details about the AAVLD Plenary Session and AAVLD/USAHA Joint Plenary Session will be posted late spring and early summer. I am looking forward to another great annual meeting in Greensboro! –Tim Bazler, President

AAVLD-NAHLN sponsored QA symposium- October 18

This year at the annual meeting, the full day program will feature Mr. Darren Richardson, one the founding members of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA). Currently he manages and is also an instructor for their national auditor training program. The focus of this program will be:

- **Conducting Internal Audits**
- **Creating Corrective Action Reports**
- **Completing Effective Root Cause Analyses**

In addition, the Accreditation Committee will provide a brief review on **Preparing a Site Visit Response**.

This symposium is recommended for all Laboratory Directors, Supervisors, Quality Managers and persons interested in the efficient implementation of a Quality System.

There will be no registration fee but pre-registration is required. Course materials, a continental breakfast and a box lunch will be provided by the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and the AAVLD Accreditation Committee. Spaces will fill quickly so register early. For registration form **[click here](#)**.

News for AAVLD

***Mycoplasma* outbreaks in bison** (**[click here](#)**) has become a major cause of morbidity and mortality in bison resulting in increased efforts to obtain diagnostic materials in both Canada and USA. The link above provides information on submission of diagnostic material from suspect cases.

Guidelines for Safe Work Practices in Human and Animal Medical Diagnostic Laboratories: Recommendations of a CDC-convened, Biosafety Blue Ribbon Panel document and erratum is available as a PDF download at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/ind2012_su.html

The newest addition of **Kirkbride's Diagnosis of Abortion and Neonatal Loss in Animals** 4th edition, (Bradley L. Njaa editor) is now available. AAVLD members get a discount. When you purchase the book you need to add 'AAVLD' code during the check-out process in order to receive the discount. **Web address for purchase:** <http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470958529.html>

USDA has posted case definition, fact sheet and laboratory guidance document for submissions to NVSL (**[click here](#)**) on this emerging disease in Europe. USDA is requesting samples be sent to NVSL for PCR or serology as part of a national surveillance effort for **Schmallenberg virus** in herds with increased premature birth, stillbirths, fetal/newborn musculoskeletal and neurologic deformities among ruminants. Initial entry of the virus into a herd may cause diarrhea, fever and decreased milk production with fetal problems occurring months later.

In remembrance

AAVLD members were saddened to hear of the passing of Drs. Anthony Gallina on April 1, 2012 and Dr. James Kennedy on December 31, 2011. For obituaries visit "In remembrance" on the AAVLD web page (**[click here](#)**).

AAVLD President's Message
April 2012

Greetings from the President! It has been a very busy first quarter of the year for the AAVLD Executive Committee / Executive Board and as unpredictable as an eastern Washington spring. I thought I would give you all a brief progress report of the AAVLD priorities set out in the December Newsletter (to show you are getting your money's worth out of the elected AAVLD leadership!).

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Strengthening federal funding for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN): The AAVLD Executive Committee and several Government Relations Committee members put the issue of federal funding of the NAHLN as a consistent top priority in our annual Government Relations Meeting in Washington, DC March 13-15, 2012. Every government agency that met with us over 2 whole days of meetings got a clear signal that strengthened NAHLN funding is a high priority of AAVLD. Our issues were both long term and short term. In the short term, we advocated for re-instatement of current NAHLN infrastructure funding received through USDA-NIFA, which was reduced 39% in FY2011, be restored to FY 2010 funding levels. In the long term we advocated for inclusion of a \$30 million dollar line item for the NAHLN in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Our efforts were much more than "talking the talk", we also "walked the walk" to Capitol Hill. Working with strategic guidance from Brad Mollett (through our AAVLD contract with the lobbying firm Capital Partners Inc.) 9 members from AAVLD and USAHA visited

32 legislators from 11 different states in the US Senate and US House Agriculture and Appropriations Committees advocating our long term and short term issues for strengthening NAHLN funding. Although it is a difficult battle to get increased funding in the current election year political climate in Washington, D.C., our group made tremendous “traction” educating and exchanging views with legislators and staffers concerning the vital role for the NAHLN as an early warning system guarding against emerging and foreign animal diseases in order to ensure a safe and stable national food supply. The encouraging part was we talked, they listened, and the vast majority of legislators were very supportive and knowledgeable of the NAHLN. With Brad’s assistance we are implementing tangible actions from those productive legislative visits in the Senate and House in the hopes of getting NAHLN line item language in the 2012 Farm Bill and returning current NAHLN funding to FY 2010 levels. Below is the list of persons who volunteered their valuable time and expertise to AAVLD in order to make these visits on your behalf. Please give them a big thank you when the opportunity arises!

John Adaska, CA
Bruce Akey, NY
Cat Barr, TX
Tim Baszler, WA
Craig Carter, KY
David Marshall, NC
Tom McKenna, WI
Barb Powers, CO
Dave Zeman, SD

Increasing outreach to veterinary diagnostic laboratory technicians: A first step toward providing training outreach to AAVLD technical staff is being made with web-based Quality System training, a topical need for all AAVLD accredited laboratories, large or small. Multiple completed “beta” version internet accessible Quality Management System Training modules were demonstrated at the AAVLD Executive Board winter meetings in Las Vegas in February. The on-line training modules were developed through funding from USDA-APHIS-NAHLN, and built by distance-learning experts at Washington State University with integral assistance from several AAVLD Accreditation Committee members (Dave Korcal - Michigan State University, Pat Lukens and Terry McElwain - Washington State University, and Barb Martin - USDA/NAHLN) as well as others at the USDA/APHIS/VS-National Veterinary Services Laboratory. A big thank you to all of these folks for pushing this important training tool forward. The QMS training course is based upon the AAVLD Requirements for Accreditation standards and is a self-directed course for laboratory quality assurance and testing professionals in veterinary diagnostic laboratories. The courses are short, interactive videos and practice exercises to teach basic requirements of a quality system, ways to implement specific components, and uses of quality system tools. Each topic can be completed as schedules allow and certificates of training are provided to trainees successfully passing each topic. Keep your eyes on the AAVLD website for

future developments. It is hoped that some training modules can be implemented and available to AAVLD laboratorians in late 2012 or early 2013.

Potpourri:

- Please join me in welcoming our **new JVDI Associate Editor**, Dr. Francisco Uzal from the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System. Dr. Uzal will serve as JVDI Associate Editor for pathology manuscripts and brings extensive experience, expertise, and energy to the position. Many thanks to JVDI editor-in-chief Jerry Saliki for completing such a successful search. On the same note, please join me in thanking Dr. Ken Latimer, who is retiring from the JVDI Associate Editor after many years of outstanding service in that position (Paco, you have some tough shoes to fill!). We sincerely thank Ken and wish him all the best in his retirement years (although slowing down may not be in his genes).
- Welcome to the new **veterinary diagnostic laboratory representatives to the NAHLN Coordinating Council**, nominated by the AAVLD membership and Executive Board, and selected by USDA-APHIS and USDA-NIFA administrators of the NAHLN. The new members include Rich Breitmeyer (CA), Craig Carter (KY), Steve Hooser (IN), and Gene Niles (IL). Thank you all for agreeing to serve AAVLD in this important function of providing vital state laboratory input to the NAHLN.
- Thank you to Dr. Bill Johnson, Director of the diagnostic laboratory at Oklahoma State University and AAVLD Accreditation Committee member. The **National Beef Cattlemen's Association** reached out to AAVLD to request a presentation on laboratory quality assurance at their annual meeting in Nashville in February 2012. BJ readily volunteered and from the feedback I got did a tremendous job representing AAVLD and the importance of laboratory quality assurance / quality control. Providing accurate, consistent and reliable laboratory test results is not just an issue for laboratorians but is vital for our clients. BJ relayed a comment from one cattlemen who summarized in a lot less words than I could the importance of laboratory quality by simply stating "the lack of quality costs".
- Planning for the **2012 Annual Meeting in Greensboro** is coming along nicely under the leadership of Tom McKenna (Program Chair) and Cat Barr (Co-Program Chair). The call for abstracts went out in March. We had much positive feedback using the ScholarOne Abstract management system last year so will be using the same system for the 2012 Annual Meeting. Please consider submitting an abstract to the annual meeting. The meeting is only as good as the quality and variety of abstracts submitted from all of you. Details about the AAVLD Plenary Session and AAVLD/USAHA Joint Plenary Session will be posted late spring and early summer. I am looking forward to another great annual meeting in Greensboro!

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Wishing you all a revitalizing spring!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Baszler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "B".

Tim Baszler, AAVLD President