

Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine

# Healing Hands

**K-State recruits the world's most comprehensive team of beef cattle experts**



Volume 2 Issue 2  
Summer 2006

Also in this issue:

**Biosecurity Institute To  
Provide New Capabilities**

**CVM Researchers Take On  
Deadly Swine Outbreak**



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**About the cover:** the College of Veterinary Medicine's newly assembled food animal veterinarians at the K-State Beef Cattle Research Center. Dr. Matt Miesner is not pictured as he had not arrived at K-State yet when the photo was taken.  
Cover photography by Dave Adams.

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Dean Richardson pictured in the College of Veterinary Medicine's new Centennial Plaza, an outdoor area where alumni, students, faculty and friends of the college have been honored with personalized granite bricks and plaques.



PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE

## Message from the Dean

Dear Friends of the College,

This is a time of great opportunity for the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University. In fact, I cannot imagine a more exciting time for our profession!

In August, we became an integral player in the formation of the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor initiative. This is an organization dedicated to increasing collaboration between area veterinary schools, animal health and nutrition companies, and research institutions in the area bounded by Manhattan, Kan., St. Joseph, Mo., and Columbia, Mo. This region contains the highest concentration of animal health and nutrition companies in the world. Collectively, these companies provide one third of the global animal health and nutrition needs. As a university and a veterinary school, we are thinking beyond our own walls and partnering with these companies and other institutions to harness the amazing potential that is around us.

K-State will have more than a collaborative relationship with companies and research institutes in the Animal Health Corridor. Thanks to the Kansas Biosciences Authority and the City of Olathe, our university will soon occupy 40 acres of land where we hope to strengthen our college's programs such as public health, comparative medicine, animal health, and food safety and security.

A key component for our future success is our new Biosecurity Research Institute. Terms like biosecurity inherently involve the animals that make up the country's food supply. We have recently assembled what may be the most renowned group of faculty related to food animal medicine, particularly beef production. They have come from academe and industry and have relevance to the "real world." They are an invaluable resource as consultants to our alumni and teachers to our students. Also to that end, the Kansas Legislature

this year passed a bill rescinding debt for K-State veterinary students who practice in rural Kansas. Five entering students each year will receive up to \$80,000 of educational loans with \$20,000 being forgiven for each year spent supporting farmers and ranchers in Kansas counties with populations of 35,000 or less. Collectively, these programs give us great strength and opportunities for growth.

In another strategic and important move, we opened our satellite teaching hospital called MidWest-VET in Omaha, Neb. That site assures access to teaching cases for our students while offering more convenient specialty care for our referring veterinarians, clients and small animal patients in Nebraska. Students will have access to an exemplary specialty practice, a world class humane society, a busy emergency clinic, and many other opportunities provided in a metropolitan setting.

Simply put, the future has never been brighter for veterinary medicine in general, and Kansas State University in particular. From clinical practice to public health, from food safety and security to comparative medicine, from rural America to large cities, and from teaching to research and outreach, the opportunities have never been greater.

I invite each person who cares about K-State and the profession of veterinary medicine to remain engaged and help us grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ralph C. Richardson, DVM'.

Ralph C. Richardson, DVM  
Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine



# Taking Research to the Next Level



PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE

## Researchers from the College of Veterinary Medicine to play crucial role in K-State's new Level Three Biosafety Research Center

**K**ansas State University is home to a new Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) located immediately north of the College of Veterinary Medicine campus. This biosafety level three facility will provide K-State scientists a secure location to study pathogens that threaten animal and plant-based agricultural systems, and to develop intervention strategies to minimize impacts on the nation's food supply.

It will be the only biocontainment facility in the United States to integrate plant pathology, food safety, entomology, veterinary medicine and molecular biology. The center will also allow for the development of rapid and accurate diagnostic tools to successfully manage and prevent disease outbreaks. Researchers from veterinary medicine will play an integral role in the research conducted in the BRI.

Organizationally, the BRI falls under the umbrella of K-State's National Agricultural Biosecurity Center (NABC), an institution created in 2002 dedicated to protecting the nation's agricultural infrastructure through programs that plan for natural or intentional threats. The NABC reports directly to the office of K-State's research vice provost.

Construction on the \$54 million BRI facility began in the

fall of 2004 and was completed this summer. The building, which consists of 113,000 square feet, is scheduled to be operational by January 2007.

"This facility will give us an opportunity to work with infectious agents that we have not been able to work on in the past," explained Dr. David Franz, director of the NABC. "It will allow us to work with these agents in plants or animals and study the introduction of those agents and develop ways to reduce the likelihood of them coming out in food products."

Dr. Ron Trewyn, research vice provost, said the BRI will be a place where scientists with different skills can collaborate on diseases that cross over between humans, animals and plants. "There is a lot of concern now because so many of the animal diseases are zoonotic, meaning they can spread to people. This requires inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches where you have teams of scientists with a variety of expertise involved," Dr. Trewyn said. "Having a research facility where all those types of things can be worked on will allow our faculty to broaden their research activities and programs substantially."

Biosafety refers to the precautions necessary to ensure that



PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE





PHOTOS BY DAVE ADAMS

agents of concern remain within the containment space and those handling the agents are safe. Biosafety measures that will be incorporated into the building involve three important components: facilities (suites and special air-handling capabilities); equipment (biosafety cabinets and other protective technologies within the laboratory suites); and procedures (the way research is done inside the suites).

According to Dr. Franz, viruses which require more caution can be researched within the biosecurity center. "We can work with many bacterial diseases right now, but it's the viral diseases that in many cases require a biosafety level three containment facility," Dr. Franz said. "In the context of viral diseases of animals, I would also expect we'll draw some top-notch scientists because of this facility."

The building will have special air handling systems that filter the air, preventing release of materials from the research space. All waste will be processed to destroy even the strongest microorganisms. Researchers will be required to complete training programs to work in the facility. They must also wear personal protective equipment and follow research protocols which minimize the potential for exposure. The range of research diseases could include avian influenza, brucellosis, soybean rust, salmonella and E. coli.

The BRI will be staffed with a core group of technicians, but scientists with appointments in departments across campus will work there and still keep their offices and labs

at their respective colleges.

K-State has a record of national leadership in the areas of food safety and security. The establishment of the NABC in 2002, as a response in part to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, is a statement of the university's commitment to maintain that leadership.

Dr. Trewyn said the need for a biocontainment facility on campus was identified by administrators in the late 1990s, long before the nation became concerned about such issues on 9/11. "We were able to identify more than 130 faculty members on campus that had research programs related to food animals, food crops and food safety," he said. In 1999, K-State launched a Homeland Defense Food Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Program. Also that year, K-State President Jon Wefald presented testimony to the U.S. Senate's Emerging Threats Subcommittee on the agricultural biological weapons threat.

It is anticipated that the BRI will provide laboratory surge capacity needs for federal and state agencies in the event of an agroterrorism attack in the U.S. or the unintentional introduction of foreign plant or animal diseases.

The facility was funded through a variety of sources including \$38.5 million in revenue bonds (with the State of Kansas making payments for the first five years), \$14.2 million from the federal government, \$300,000 from the City of Manhattan and about \$500,000 from private funds.





# The Weight of Responsibility

*Veterinary students Michael and Miranda Thomassen juggle marriage and a baby while taking on their fourth year of veterinary school*

By Sarah Erskine

PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE

**M**ost veterinarians know veterinary school is one of the most stressful times in a person's life, emotionally, mentally and financially. Add in planning a wedding and starting a family during that time, and the stress is unimaginable for most.

Michael and Miranda Thomassen are two unique students who have done just that. Married a year ago, the couple are starting their fourth year in veterinary school with a newborn baby.

Many of their classmates barely have time for a social life, let alone starting a family. The Thomassens are going through the same stresses, but they also now have to worry about diapers, bottles and daycare. Late nights of studying are now combined with late night feedings.

## **A Chance Meeting**

Though both are from Nebraska, the Thomassens had not met until they started veterinary school at K-State.

Michael caught Miranda's eye during the second day of orientation for first-year veterinary students. That evening, the classmates met for a social gathering organized for the new students to get acquainted. Miranda's roommate and Michael's roommate struck up a conversation, leaving Michael and Miranda to start their own. "I'm not the type to go up and talk to girls, I'm a pretty shy guy," Michael said. "She was so easy to talk to, and we just clicked."

This initial meeting led to late nights of studying together. Their first date was in October 2003. They credit the success of their relationship to togeth-

ness – they saw each other every day, attended the same classes and studied for the same tests. "We could really relate to what each other was going through," Michael said. "Studying can get pretty discouraging and frustrating because you feel like you are getting nowhere sometimes. It's easy to just give up, but we help each other get through another half hour or hour."

"It really helped us bond in the beginning," added Miranda. "We were never in competition with each other, we work well together. We just helped each other push through those tough times."

## **Wedding Bells**

Michael proposed to Miranda after dating only seven months. "People



always say, "When you meet the right person, you know it," Michael said. "We come from similar families and faiths, and it just felt right." He asked permission from Miranda's parents and proposed in May at the end of their first year of veterinary school.

Before they were married, Michael and Miranda spent summers in Nebraska, but in different cities. Michael worked at a local ranch in Atkinson, and Miranda worked at a veterinary clinic in Omaha. Both said it was tough being apart after spending time together, studying daily. "It may look like I have this rough exterior, but I don't," Michael said. "If it wasn't for free night and weekend minutes on our cell phones, it would have been much harder."

They set the date of July 30, 2005, for their wedding. This allowed them a year to plan most of the wedding during breaks and finish preparations at the beginning of the summer. "There was never going to be a convenient time for us to plan, so we just went for it," Miranda said. "I utilized my breaks and had help from family to get it all done."

The wedding was held in Omaha with approximately 250 guests in attendance. Afterward, Michael and Miranda honeymooned in Chicago.

### **An Unexpected Surprise**

Once the wedding and honeymoon were over, they settled into their third year of veterinary school. However, around Thanksgiving they received unexpected news. Miranda learned she was pregnant. Initially,



Miranda and Michael on their wedding day, July 30, 2005.

they worried about finances, time and the logistics of taking care of a child while both trying to finish school. After reassuring phone calls from their families, they made some adjustments to

their rotation schedules for their upcoming fourth year and started planning again. The baby was due mid-July.

"We lucked out," Miranda said. "We had already set up our schedules so we had three weeks off together in August that we planned to use to take a vacation. I just moved another rotation around so I would have six total weeks off when the baby was born."

Fourth-year students are required to complete 14 rotations. Eleven of those are core rotations and three are electives. Some of the core rotations are small animal surgery, anesthesiology, radiology and food animal medicine. Miranda and Michael shared the same supplemental equine rotation during the summer.

"It also worked out that once the baby was born we were on alternate vacation rotations, so we didn't have to worry about finding daycare until October," Michael explained.

Miranda was in her supplemental



Michael performs a vulva suture on a mare during the equine field service rotation. The Thomassens completed the rotation together, just weeks before their baby was born.



equine and food animal rotations at the end of her pregnancy. She refused to use it as an excuse not to participate and remained as involved as she could while she was pregnant.

“I don’t know how she did it,” Michael said. “I came home and my feet hurt. I was exhausted, and I wasn’t carrying a baby. Miranda is a very strong person.”

### It’s A Boy

Miranda was induced on the morning of July 19, 2006. Conner Patrick Thomassen was born almost 24 hours later at 11:10 p.m., weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces. He was a healthy 21 inches long.

The Thomassens did not know the gender of the baby before it was born. “All we really wanted to know was that the baby was healthy and there were no complications,” Michael said.

He immediately got a taste of what was to come shortly after Conner was born. “I had to finish up the last week

of a rotation,” he said. “I saw a dramatic change in one week. It was no longer getting home to prepare for the next day, it was getting home to spend time with Conner and Miranda and prepare for the next day.”

Michael and Miranda went back to school on Aug. 21 for three weeks and

***“Now that Connor is here, it feels like there isn’t anything we can’t handle.”***

***- Miranda Thomassen***

then began their alternating schedules. Friends and family came into town to babysit while the Thomassens were at school for those three weeks.

### Together, We Can

Since Conner was born, the concerns have changed somewhat. “Seeing that we can really do this has helped calm some of our initial worries,” Michael said. “Now our main concern is spending time as a family.”

Miranda added, “Now that Conner is here, it feels like there isn’t anything we can’t handle. We’ll take it slow, and make it work.”

The Thomassens are both excited to be new parents, but they still have a goal to graduate on time in 2007. “This has been a major goal in both of our lives for so long,” Miranda said. “We’re looking forward to completing our rotations and receiving our degrees in May.”

There are other veterinary students who have started families, but generally, it is a rare occurrence.

“The Thomassens’ situation is very unique,” said Dr. Ronnie Elmore, associate dean for academic affairs. “It demonstrates that our students are truly remarkable in what they are able to accomplish. Balancing life and family illustrates that Michael and Miranda will be able to continue that balance when they begin their careers.”



PHOTO BY SARAH ERSKINE

Michael and Miranda check the vital signs of a horse at a farm near Manhattan. Miranda completed rotations in food animal medicine and equine field service during her eighth month of pregnancy.



# Students Receive Incentive to Practice in Rural Kansas

The Kansas State Legislature recently passed a bill that will benefit veterinary students and rural Kansas communities. The bill, signed into law by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius on May 10, establishes the "Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas" at the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

This program will provide opportunities and incentives for students pursuing a DVM at K-State to practice veterinary medicine in rural Kansas communities and serve the livestock industry.

A maximum of five students can be enrolled in the program each year, starting in their first year of veterinary college. Each student will receive \$20,000 a year for up to four years to cover tuition and training expenses. In turn, the students will practice veterinary medicine full time in a county in Kansas that has a population of 35,000 or less. A student must practice one year in the rural community

for each \$20,000 in debt forgiveness.

"Other states have passed legislation for a debt forgiveness program, but to my knowledge, Kansas is the first state to pass legislation and appropriate funds for this sort of program," said Ralph Richardson, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. David Andrus, a professor of marketing in the College of Business Administration, recently published an in-depth study on the shortage of food supply veterinarians. Andrus identifies 18 possible solutions to the problem based on panel surveys conducted. The first solution in Dr. Andrus' report involves debt repayment and scholarship programs for students going into food animal medicine.

"We are dedicated to supporting the livestock industry," Dean Richardson said. "This legislative act removes educational debt as a stumbling block for those who wish to make their homes in rural Kansas."

## New Intensive Care Unit Opens in VMTH



PHOTOS BY BRENNAN ENGLE

The new Small Animal Intensive Care Unit at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (VMTH) is open and fully functional.

The new ICU is three times larger than the former. The 1,600-square-foot facility boasts a bank of stainless steel cages for small and medium-size animals, four runs for large breed dogs, cabinetry along the back wall and a nurse's station in the center of the ICU. And, the facility has the latest technology and patient monitoring equipment.

The ICU's open floor plan emerged after site visits to other veterinary hospitals and receiving input from the VMTH faculty and staff. Dr. Rose McMurphy, anesthesiology section head, spearheaded the project. She said every inch of space was scrutinized to determine how it could best accommo-

date the needs of clinicians, house officers and students who treat critically ill patients.

The goal of functionality led to K-State creativity and ingenuity. Dr. Dave Hodgson, a VMTH anesthesiologist, designed a recessed water spigot that's tucked in the walls dividing the dog runs. Between the wall cages, three narrow columns of wall space were added for access to pipes. These pipes feed into the hospital's main supplies of oxygen and compressed air and its central medical vacuum system.

Behind the nurse's station are two emergency treatment areas each complete with a 5-foot-long treatment table and drop-down medical column. The treatment tables can easily accommodate a dog the size of a mastiff and are open on three sides.

"This is so important because with this added space, more students can be directly involved when a critically ill patient is being treated," Dr. McMurphy said.

Another major improvement for the ICU is its location. The isolation unit is adjacent to the new ICU so the ICU staff can monitor patients in both areas simultaneously. A large barrier window and pass through were added between the units. The change in location also allowed for installation of a separate heating and cooling system.

"Convenience, accessibility and organization are essential when treating critically ill patients," said Dr. Roger Fingland, VMTH director. "Drs. Hodgson and McMurphy have designed the most user-friendly and efficient facility I have seen."



# Teaming A Deadly

## K-State researchers investigate how a n for an emerging out

penetrated these operations remains a mystery. “We have many layers of methods to keep diseases out of these farms,” Dr. Henry said. “It’s very strange for this one to appear in herds where we can find no animal movement or biosecurity breaks that would have allowed it to come in.”

Initially, Dr. Henry enlisted the help of two faculty members from the Department of Diagnostic Medicine and Pathobiology at the CVM: Dr. Bob Rowland, a nationally recognized molecular virologist, and Dr. Jerome Nietfeld, a pathologist. “K-State has some unique researchers who have the skills to research this disease,” Dr. Henry said.

To help swine producers come up with an answer for this problem, the researchers need to understand exactly what kind of “bug” they are dealing with, something more complex than it may sound.

### A Cofactor Effect

The strain of PCV2 in question, called PCV2 321, seems to have originated in Europe in the late 1990s. It then showed up in Canada in 2004. Since last year, it has occurred in most of the swine producing states in the U.S., stretching from North Carolina to Arizona. There is a slightly different strain of circovirus, called PCV2 422, that has been around for many years, is present in most swine herds and by itself does not cause disease.

Exactly how the PCV2 321 genotype

Dr. Bob Rowland sets up swine cells for the culturing of PCV2.

By Brennan Engle

A team of researchers from the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), in conjunction with a private practitioner, are tackling a puzzling and deadly disease that has struck swine herds in northeast Kansas. The illness, known as porcine circovirus associated disease, appeared in Kansas in November 2005.

It affects finishing pigs between 10 and 16 weeks of age, causing a variety of symptoms associated with a type 2 porcine circovirus (PCV2). The most common clinical signs of this condition are extreme weight loss, rapid and labored breathing, jaundice and diarrhea. In severe cases, there can be dark skin lesions, immune suppression, neurologic deterioration and death.

### The “Kansas Cluster”

Dr. Steve Henry, CVM ’72, a swine expert from Abilene, Kan., who works with swine producers across the country, and adjunct professor at the CVM, was one of the first to see the problem occur on four commercial farms known as the “Kansas cluster.” Since then, six other area operations have experienced the disease, raising its prevalence to an outbreak status.

Dr. Henry said the producers are losing as much as 20 to 40 percent of their finishing pigs, resulting in an enormous economical loss.

Because of his work with producers, Dr. Henry knows the history and movement of pigs on most of the farms involved, but he admits how the disease



# Up Against Viral Disease

Join an area veterinarian to see how a new virus may be responsible for a disease break in Kansas swine herds

causes disease, if in fact it does, is not well understood. All that is certain is that it tends to appear in combination with other symptoms and syndromes. A few of these cofactors that can be present include porcine reproductive respiratory virus (PRRS), porcine parvovirus (PPV), postweaning multisystemic wasting syndrome (PMWS), and porcine dermatitis and nephropathy syndrome (PDNS).

Earlier this year, the K-State group secured a \$48,000 grant from the National Pork Board to study the porcine circovirus associated disease.

“What we are trying to do is to get a clear picture that will help us understand who the infectious disease players are in this disease complex,” Dr. Rowland said, adding that many swine pathogens do not always manifest with clinical signs. “There are some agents that are always going to be around, and they don’t cause problems on their own.

The problem is that we’ve got a stew of all these different infectious disease agents.”

These coinfections can vary in different regions of the country. All of the PCV2 321-affected pigs in Kansas also have severe cases of PMWS and PDNS. PDNS is a syndrome characterized by dime-sized, ulcerative, raised lesions on the skin, most frequently on the flank, rear legs and belly.

### Assessing the Damage

Dr. Nietfeld, who studies the pathogenesis of the disease upon post-mortem examination, says the skin lesions start out red (from hemorrhage) and become black and necrotic within a matter of days. He said other internal organs are damaged from bleeding,

including the spleen and kidneys. “The kidneys become enlarged with little hemorrhages all throughout. There’s damage to those blood vessels which means the animal develops renal failure,” Dr. Nietfeld said. He also sees enlargement and failure of the lymph nodes, a classic symptom of a wasting syndrome. “There’s replacement of lymphocytes by macrophages (white blood cells). Because the lymph nodes are so badly disrupted, it compromises the animal’s immune system.”

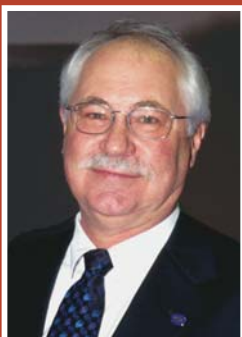
The K-State team is attempting to

PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE



Dr. Kyle Horlen looks over a swine herd for signs of circovirus associated disease.

## The PCV2 Research Team



Dr. Steve Henry



Dr. Bob Rowland



Dr. Jerome Nietfeld



Dr. Dick Hesse



Dr. Kyle Horlen



separate the layers of disease agents to find out how they interact. The big questions facing them are: Does PCV2 321 by itself cause disease? Does it simply suppress the immune system, letting other common diseases wreak havoc, or does it need a cofactor to become virulent? If so, why does the cofactor create a condition that allows the virus to become deadly?

Dr. Dick Hesse, a virologist new to the college in Diagnostic Medicine and Pathobiology, previously worked for a company where he developed an effective vaccine for the common strain of PCV2. He has experience with these outbreaks on a national level. Dr. Hesse predicts that understanding more about the interaction of cofactors will provide some useful information. "In virtually every case there was finishing pig mortality we found circovirus 321 and one other virus, and sometimes two others," Dr. Hesse said. "I totally believe there's a cofactor effect because the virus replication is tied directly to the replication cycle of the cell."

The CVM also hired recent veterinary school graduate Dr. Kyle Horlen to work on the project full time. He goes to farms with Dr. Henry to collect samples and data from the herds, and he's also helping write the team's first scientific paper on their findings. Dr. Horlen reports that the herds he has seen are experiencing a significant mortality in finishing pigs. "We're going into barns and seeing 20 percent of the herd that is very sick. Once they develop skin lesions and PDNS, they usually die within three days."

### A Mysterious Migration

Dr. Horlen said the PCV2 tests show that the 321 isolate is identical to the one that spread from Europe to Canada, indicating that it is spreading across the United States, although no direct route can be determined. "We don't believe this strain has existed in these herds over time, then suddenly mutated and is now presenting itself as a problem."

Dr. Rowland said, unfortunately, attempts to find a source of the disease,



Dr. Jerome Nietfeld, a CVM pathologist, analyzes PCV2 tissue in his laboratory.

such as a boar stud or a particular farm from which it may have originated, have turned up nothing. The random pattern in which it has occurred has the experts baffled. "These infectious agents have a way of staying under the radar before they become virulent," Dr.

to have results in December when the trial concludes.

### Full Speed Ahead

Dr. Henry has tremendous faith in the group working on this emerging disease and believes K-State has the unique tools to help peel away the layers of a complex problem. "We've been phenomenally well-supported by the research community at K-State. We are working very hard to know as much as we can as fast as we can. The team is working at full throttle, and it looks like we will have to stay at full throttle for a while," Dr. Henry noted.

For producers experiencing porcine circovirus associated disease, the National Pork Board recommends adhering to these strict biosecurity protocols and sanitation measures: all in/all out pig flow, removal or separation of pigs that don't respond to treatment, use of farm specific boots and clothes, tight control of visitors and vehicles, cleaning and disinfecting pens, buildings and transport vehicles.

Environmental stressors that can exacerbate the disease include mixing/sorting of pigs, high stocking density and suboptimal temperatures or ventilation.

Producers who suspect their herds may be experiencing a PCV2 321 associated disease should call their veterinarian for a diagnostic work-up.



A diseased porcine kidney red from hemorrhage and enlarged (top) compared to a normal kidney (bottom).

Rowland explained. "It makes control strategies like quarantine practically irrelevant. This is not like a classic outbreak where you see the initial break in one place and then others spread out from there."

The researchers are moving fast to find answers. They have developed some new diagnostic assays that detect the presence of virus, virus load and identify the strain. They have also started a vaccine trial to test the vaccine that Dr. Hesse developed. The team expects





## K-State Brings Specialty Services to Nebraska

Patient care and enhanced clinical training are at the heart of the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital's initiative to open a satellite specialty hospital in Omaha, Neb., called MidWest Veterinary Specialty Hospital. MidWestVET opened on Aug. 21.

This 10,400-square-foot specialty hospital, adjacent to the Animal Emergency Clinic (AEC), is designed to meet the needs of clients and patients in Nebraska.

The concept for the referral-only, satellite specialty hospital was borne out of the K-State's quest to better serve referring veterinarians, clients and patients. "We have a tremendous amount of support from our referring veterinarians in Nebraska," said Dr. Roger Fingland, MidWestVET hospital director. "They wanted a specialty hospital closer to their clinics and now their patients and clients will benefit from our combined efforts."

The facility features seven exam rooms, three surgery suites, an intensive care unit, treatment area, CT, computed radiology, ultrasound, physical rehabilitation and dispensary.

Senior veterinary students can enroll in a two-week elective rotation at MidWestVET, with one week at the hospital and a one-week at AEC.

"The vast majority of our graduates will go into private practice," Dr. Fingland said. "This rotation will offer students the unique opportunity to experience firsthand the rigors of private practice while working alongside board certified specialists."

Dr. Nels Backlund, director of AEC, said MidWestVET elevates the education students receive in veterinary school. "For students, this will be invaluable," Dr. Backlund said. "The more cases students can see and the more feedback students receive from instructors, the better their education, which ultimately improves the profession of veterinary medicine."

Dr. Mike Thoesen is the small animal surgeon on staff. Originally from Hastings, Neb., Dr. Thoesen recently completed a residency in small animal orthopedic, general and neurosurgery at Cornell University. Recruitment efforts are underway for an internal medicine specialist.

"MidWestVET will be a high-quality referral practice that is state-of-the-art and conveniently located for clients in Nebraska, Iowa and Kansas," Dr. Thoesen said. "I am happy to be part of something that will bring so many people together, because as veterinarians and veterinary trainees, we share a common professional interest: helping animals."

**Top:** Dr. Nels Backlund, director of the Animal Emergency Clinic and Dr. Roger Fingland, MidWestVET hospital director, at the opening of MidWestVET. **Middle:** views showing the waiting room, treatment area and intensive care unit. **Bottom:** Dr. Mike Thoesen and student Jill Kester interpret radiographs in the treatment area.



## Dr. David Anderson

Medicine and Surgery



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

FACULTY, THE OHIO STATE, '95-'06  
MS, K-STATE, '94  
RESIDENT, K-STATE, '91-'94  
INTERN, UNIV. OF GEORGIA, '90-'91  
DVM, NORTH CAROLINA STATE, '90

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** BOVINE LAMENESS, LARGE ANIMAL SURGERY AND MEDICINE, CAMELID

## Dr. Matt Miesner

Medicine and Surgery



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

FACULTY, THE OHIO STATE, '04-'06  
MS, THE OHIO STATE, '03  
RESIDENT, THE OHIO STATE, '00-'03  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, WASHINGTON, '99-'00  
DVM, WASHINGTON STATE, '99

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** BOVINE INTERNAL MEDICINE, PRESSURE PLATE ANALYSIS, THERMOGRAPHY

## Dr. Shelie Laflin

Ambulatory and Field Service



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

INTERNSHIP, COLORADO STATE, '00-'01  
DVM, K-STATE, '00

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** SMALL RUMINANT AND BEEF CATTLE PRODUCTION, BEEF CARCASS ULTRASOUNDING

## Dr. Meredyth Jones

Ambulatory and Field Service



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

MS, OKLAHOMA STATE, '06  
RESIDENT, OKLAHOMA STATE, '03-'06  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, KENTUCKY, '02-'03  
DVM, OKLAHOMA STATE, '02

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** BEEF CATTLE MEDICINE, SMALL RUMINANT UROLITHIASIS, CAMELID

# A Renewed Commitment to Agriculture

By Brennan Engle

Building upon a strong heritage, the College of Veterinary Medicine at K-State recently enhanced its agricultural practices section (food animal program) to benefit students, veterinarians and livestock in the state of Kansas.

The college has assembled the most comprehensive team of internationally known food animal veterinarians focused on beef cattle. Eight of them were recruited in just the past year.

Their combined focus areas cover teaching, research and service across the spectrum of beef cattle from surgery and local practice field service to clinical pharmacology and production medicine.

"It's a great opportunity to have a convergence of people who understand the livestock industry at our college to be able to teach our students, create new knowledge and conduct research," Dean Ralph Richardson said. "It's a very special time for us."

### CLINICAL

**Dr. David Anderson** was a high-profile hire for K-State, as one of only three people in the United States board certified in food animal surgery. He joined

the faculty this summer, returning to K-State 11 years after completing his residency in food animal surgery in the early 1990s. Dr. Anderson says coming back to a place that feels like home, and to be part of a world-class beef team, was an exciting opportunity.

"What is going on in agricultural practices at Kansas State University is unparalleled in the history of veterinary medicine," he said. "We now have a collation of all the aspects needed for a premier beef program. While most veterinary schools are moving away from agriculture, K-State is embracing agriculture and the mission of service to the community."

Dr. Anderson is skilled in performing minimally invasive arthroscopic, orthopedic, fracture and implant surgeries. He pioneered a cutting edge procedure called thelioscopy, which involves a tiny camera and instrument for precise teat and udder surgeries.

**Dr. Matt Miesner**, the newest mem-

*"What is going on in agricultural practices at Kansas State University is unparalleled in the history of veterinary medicine." - Dr. D*

## Dr. Bob Larson

Production Medicine



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

FACULTY, UNIV. OF MISSOURI, '96-'06  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, ILLINOIS AND KANSAS, '92-'96  
PHD K-STATE, '92  
RESEARCH ASSISTANT, K-STATE, '88-'90  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, KANSAS, '87-'88  
DVM, K-STATE, '87

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** ECONOMIC, PRODUCTIVITY, AND HEALTH ASPECTS OF BEEF PRODUCTION

## Dr. Mike S

Production



PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:  
MS, V  
PRIVA  
COL  
DVM

INTEREST/SPECIALTY:  
TION,



# Commitment al Practices

ber of the group, joined Dr. Anderson in surgery and medicine on Sept. 1. He came from The Ohio State University where he was an assistant professor of large animal internal medicine. Dr. Miesner is board certified in food animal internal medicine and has expertise in pressure plate and thermography technologies.

Dr. Shelie Laflin has been at the CVM since 2001 and has shouldered most of the clinical teaching responsibility before the agricultural practices section was fully staffed. Dr. Laflin teaches food animal rotations involving

*in agricultural field service calls to clients in the area for procedures such as palpation, ultra-*  
*State University is in the area for procedures such as palpation, ultra-*  
*history of veterinary such as palpation, ultra-*  
*David Anderson sounding for*

pregnancy, cesarean sections, castration, dehorning and vaccinations. Dr. Laflin also teaches small ruminant production and food animal medicine and surgery. She is certified in central ultrasounding processing (CUP).

Dr. Meredyth Jones joined Dr. Laflin in August teaching food animal medicine rotations. Dr. Jones recently fin-

ished her residency in large animal medicine at Oklahoma State University while obtaining a master's degree in veterinary biomedical science. She also teaches classes in large animal neurology, neonatology and hepatobiliary health.

## PRODUCTION MEDICINE

The production medicine unit is comprised of a diverse group of faculty from different regions who bring an array of experience in the livestock industry, academia and private practice.

Dr. Bob Larson, a K-State alumnus, is the section's Coleman Chair in Food Animal Production Medicine. He was most recently a professor in commercial agriculture and director of Veterinary Continuing Education and Extension at the University of Missouri.

Dr. Larson has worked in private practice in Abilene Kan., where he performed consulting services for cow-calf producers, stocker operations and farmer-feeders. He is board certified in theriogenology, animal nutrition and veterinary preventive medicine. Dr. Larson interfaces with veterinary associations and producer groups to discuss issues facing the beef industry.

## Dr. Ronette Gehring

Clinical Pharmacology



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

RESEARCHER, N.C. STATE, '02-'05  
MS, UNIV. OF PRETORIA, '01  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, SOUTH AFRICA  
AND UNITED KINGDOM '96-'98  
DVM, UNIV. OF PRETORIA, '96

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** PHARMACOKINETIC AND PHARMACODYNAMIC MODELING

## Dr. Hans Coetzee

Clinical Pharmacology



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

UNIV. VETERINARIAN, IOWA STATE, '02-'06  
PHD, IOWA STATE, '05  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, N. IRELAND, '96-'00  
DVM, UNIV. OF PRETORIA, '96

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** DAIRY PRODUCTION MEDICINE, FOOD ANIMAL CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY

## Dr. Mike Apley

Production Medicine/Clinical Pharmacology



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

FACULTY, IOWA STATE, '96-'05  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, COLORADO, '92-'96  
PHD, K-STATE, '92  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, KANSAS '87-'89  
DVM, K-STATE, '87

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** FOOD ANIMAL THERAPEUTICS, FEEDLOT PRODUCTION MEDICINE

## Dr. Brad White

Production Medicine



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

MS, MISSISSIPPI STATE, '05  
FACULTY, MISSISSIPPI STATE, '03-'05  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, MISSOURI, '97-'03  
DVM, UNIV. OF MISSOURI, '97

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** COW-CALF/STOCKER HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT

## Anderson

in Medicine

### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

WASHINGTON STATE, '95  
PRIVATE PRACTICE, WYOMING AND  
COLORADO, '88-'93  
DVM, COLORADO STATE, '88

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** BEEF PRODUCTION, EPIDEMIOLOGY, RISK ANALYSIS

## Dr. Dan Thomson

Production Medicine



### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

PRIVATE PRACTICE, COLORADO AND  
TEXAS, '00-'04  
DVM, IOWA STATE, '00  
PHD, TEXAS TECH, '96  
MS, SOUTH DAKOTA STATE, '93

**INTEREST/SPECIALTY:** FEEDLOT, STOCKER, MANAGEMENT, NUTRITION, HEALTH





Dr. David Anderson, right, surgically removes an abscess from the leg of a dairy cow.

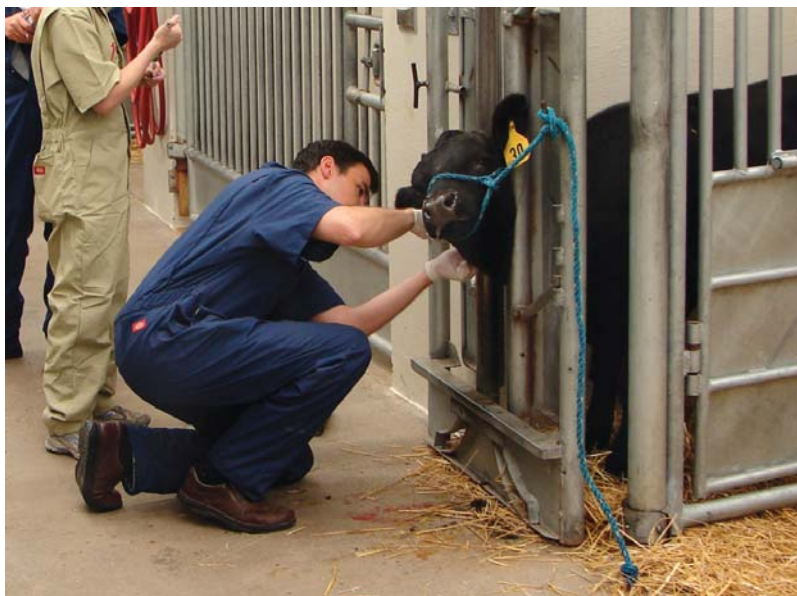
**Dr. Mike Sanderson** has been a professor at K-State since 1995, specializing in the cow-calf stocker area of production medicine. Dr. Sanderson is involved in risk assessment and mitigation of biosecurity issues in feedlots. He studies the application of analytical epidemiology and simulation modeling to beef management and production data to facilitate economic decision-making.

Dr. Sanderson also researches the epidemiology and ecology of *E. coli* O157:H7 in cattle.

**Dr. Dan Thomson** came to the college in the fall of 2004. Dr. Thomson was the director of Animal Health and Well Being for Cactus Feeders in Amarillo, Texas, where he supervised animal health and well-being at 10 commercial feedlots and animal health research at a

10,000-head research facility.

He was also an associate veterinarian for Veterinary Research Consulting Services in Greeley, Colo. Currently, he researches the impact of management and nutrition on the health and performance of feeder cattle.



Dr. Hans Coetzee looks over a calf during a research project.

**Dr. Brad White** comes from the Mississippi State University where he taught courses in production medicine, food animal local practice, feedlot production medicine and advanced cow-calf production medicine. Prior to that, he spent six years in a private mixed animal practice in southeast Missouri.

Dr. White's research focus is on beef production and management with emphasis on calf health management. He also studies marketing programs and the utilization of performance statistics.

**Dr. Mike Apley** came to K-State from Iowa State University where he spent 10 years teaching beef production medicine and antimicrobial clinical pharmacology. Dr. Apley earned his DVM from K-State in 1987 and spent two years in a central Kansas practice before returning to K-State to pursue his PhD in pharmacology. Dr. Apley teaches beef production medicine, large animal medicine and pharmacology courses.

Production medicine classes go beyond the individual animal to involve students in how the animal interacts in the production environment. "What we're trying to do is give the students an interaction with individual animal medicine, production systems and an understanding of the market systems they function in," Dr. Apley said.

During their senior year, students have the choice of taking two optional advanced rotations: one in feedlot production medicine and in cow-calf production medicine. These rotations involve visiting feedlots and cattle operations for practical learning about evidence-based medicine and non-medicine topics. Students are also introduced to economics, risk management, cattle marketing and how commodities impact profitability.

An important aspect of these advanced rotations is that students are given problem scenarios in a production setting and then required to research, gather data, and conduct field investigations to come up with recommendations they would give a producer.

Dr. White, who coordinates the cow-



calf elective with Dr. Sanderson, explained the importance of giving students an understanding of real situations they will face. “The goal of this advanced elective is for the students to use knowledge from school and apply it in a practical setting,” Dr. White explained. “We’re trying to stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving skills to produce new graduates who are more prepared for practice.”

In a progressive move, the cow-calf and feedlot production medicine electives are being offered to students and recent graduates from other veterinary schools during a six-week rotation in the summer

## PHARMACOLOGY

The CVM now has the highest concentration of board certified clinical pharmacologists of any veterinary school. These pharmacologists will provide comprehensive diagnostic and analytical services with capabilities in all species, but with a particular emphasis on cattle.

As a pharmacologist, Dr. Apley is director of the Veterinary Antimicrobial Decision Support System project, a Web-based system to support rational antimicrobial use by food animal veterinarians. His research interests



Production medicine faculty discuss the finer points of starting high risk calves on feed with Matt Quinn, second from left, manager of the K-State Beef Cattle Research Center.

include food animal therapeutics, antimicrobial resistance, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics.

**Dr. Hans Coetzee** came to K-State last fall from Iowa State University where he earned his PhD in veterinary microbiology while serving as an adjunct professor and veterinarian. Dr. Coetzee has also worked for Norbrook Laboratories, conducting pharmaceutical trials in accordance with the principles of Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) for submission to both European

disease and applications of drugs in food animals.

**Dr. Ronette Gehring** came to K-State from North Carolina State University where she was a researcher involved in the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank. Previously, Dr. Gehring taught pharmacology classes at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. She has also worked in mixed animal practices in South Africa and the United Kingdom. Dr. Gehring’s research focuses on the study of the pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic modeling of drugs used to treat food animals.

Although there are distinct entities within the Agricultural Practices section, all of the faculty are dedicated to seamlessly supporting each other. “We’re all in this together,” Dr. Thomson said. “We are a cohesive group of hard-working people who have mutual respect for each other, understand the industry and have a passion for students and the practitioners on the frontlines.”

Dr. Apley said the faculty members want to stress that their service mission is to be a resource for food animal practitioners in Kansas. “We have every intention of supporting the veterinarians in Kansas to be the best consultants we can be for them to assist their beef production clients.”

and American regulatory authorities. He also spent four years in a mixed animal practice in Northern Ireland. Dr. Coetzee’s current research is on pain management, infectious

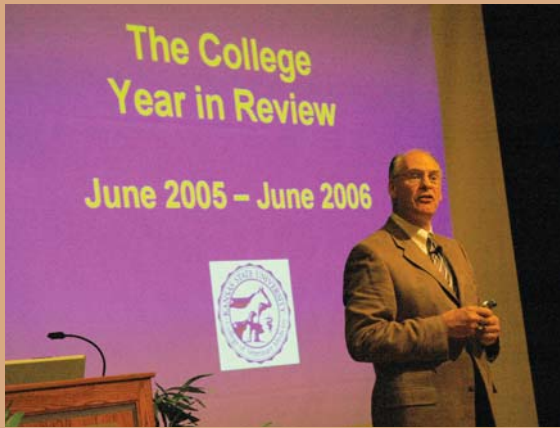


Dr. Mike Apley demonstrates how to collect samples from a feedlot processing area during an investigation into a lameness outbreak.



# The 68th Annual Conference

## June 4 -



The 68th Annual Conference for Veterinarians was held June 4-7, 2006 at the K-State Student Union. Practitioners, speakers, faculty, staff and students comprised the 543 participants representing 26 states.

In addition to CVM faculty and practitioners, speakers included Drs. Kevin Fitzgerald, Helen Power, Ronald Schultz, Sophia Yin, Don Evans, Barry Pittman, Karen Clark, Lloyd Fox and Mike Whitehair.

The conference began Sunday morning with the conference/alumni brunch enjoyed by conference attendees and alumni classes celebrating their five-year reunions.

To open the conference, Dean Ralph Richardson presented the State of the

College of Veterinary Medicine address including a virtual tour of the updates at the college.

Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, from the Animal Planet's "Emergency Vets," gave the keynote address entitled "Who Needs to Laugh More Than Us?"

The afternoon was filled with concurrent educational sessions and tours of the K-State campus and the CVM, including the newly unveiled Centennial Plaza and Whispering Garden.

Sunday evening activities included a country harvest buffet and dinner music provided by the band Bluegrass Prairie. Following dinner, guests were entertained by the songs and antics of comedian Jolly Demis, "The Complete Entertainer."

Monday morning brought the official opening of the 2006 KVMA Veterinary Trade Show. Dean Richardson and Dr. Steve Joseph, Kansas Veterinary Medical Association (KVMA) President, presented opening remarks and symbolically placed the CVM and KVMA replica plaques in a representation of the Centennial Plaza. Concurrent educational sessions were held throughout the morning.

The 12th Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament, sponsored by Hills Pet Nutrition, was also held Monday morning at the Colbert Hills Golf Course. The Class of 2008 helped organize the event that raised nearly \$6,000 for scholarships.

More than 200 people attended the



# Conference for Veterinarians

7, 2006



PHOTOS BY DAVE ADAMS & BRENNAN ENGLE

Monday luncheon to hear a presentation by K-State men's basketball coach Bob Huggins. Coach Huggins' dynamic presentation was followed by the KVMA semi-annual business meeting. Concurrent educational sessions and visits to the trade show continued throughout the afternoon.

The Heritage Evening reception and dinner was held Monday evening, June 5th. More than 150 people enjoyed socializing with classmates, friends and fellow practitioners. The dinner program featured the presentation of the Dr. E.R. Frank Award to the CVM's Dr. Howard Erickson and the Distinguished Alumnus Award to Dr. Bob Smith of Stillwater, Okla.

Tuesday sessions began bright and

early with a continental breakfast in the vendor trade show, followed by concurrent educational sessions throughout the day. A pizza luncheon honored referring veterinarians of the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital.

Tuesday was also the final day of bidding for the KVMA Auxiliary silent auction, in which competition was tough as bidders vied for many items including a basketball autographed by Coach Huggins and a football signed by K-State football coach Ron Prince. Auction winners were announced at the evening sandwich and ice cream social.

Practice Tips sessions held Tuesday evening were popular as practitioners shared time-saving practical tips.

Conference sponsors included Bayer,

Merial, Novartis, Iams, Pfizer Animal Health, Royal Canin Veterinary Diet, Payne Financial Services, Intervet, IDEXX, Hill's Pet Nutrition, ProCopy, MyVetsMeds, Campbell Pet Company and AllTel.

The conference adjourned after concurrent sessions ended Wednesday morning.

Dean Richardson said it was one of the best conferences to date.

"Great planning by the Continuing Education Committee, partnering with the KVMA for a fantastic trade show and linking with the alumni reunions made this a highlight for the college," Dean Richardson said. "I'm so thankful for the hard work that everyone puts in to make this event so successful."



# No Such Word as ‘Can’t’

## ALUMNI PROFILE

Perseverance and a passion for practicing veterinary medicine serve Dr. Joe Fakler well



PHOTO BY BRENNAN ENGLE

By Brennan Engle

**D**r. Joe Fakler is an accomplished veterinarian and a well-respected member of the central Kansas community of Concordia. He treats patients and performs surgeries on a schedule that would exhaust a man half his age. And, he does it all from a wheelchair.

What may seem like a disability to some has never deterred the 59-year-old from doing everything he wanted to do in life.

### A Rough Start

Dr. Fakler wasn't always a paraplegic. Ironically, the tragic experience that left him partially paralyzed occurred during his first few weeks as a veterinarian.

In the summer of 1971, Dr. Fakler had just graduated from Kansas State University and had taken a temporary job at a Junction City, Kan.,-veterinary clinic before entering the Army Veterinary Corps. The day before he was to

leave, three men, high on cocaine, walked into the clinic brandishing guns. Dr. Fakler, who was in a room down a hallway, stepped out to see what the commotion was about. "I looked down the hall and there was a guy holding a gun," he recalled. "Instead of freezing, I whirled around to get out of the way, but the man just up and shot me right then."

The bullet entered Dr. Fakler's back, bounced off of his T12 vertebrae, pierced through his liver and lodged under his diaphragm, just missing his right lung.

"I laid there motionless for a while, which was a good thing, or the guy would probably have emptied his gun on my back."

Hearing the gunshots, the other veterinarian in the clinic, Dr. John Deam, CVM '56, who was in another room, laid on the floor and braced the door shut with his legs. The shooter fired

through the door several times, a bullet grazed Dr. Deam's head.

The men who had just terrorized the veterinary clinic fled the scene, without taking a thing. "They were probably after drugs or money," Dr. Fakler surmised. "But it was a senseless robbery in that they didn't take anything when it was all said and done."

Subsequently, all the men were apprehended and brought to justice, but the damage Dr. Fakler had endured was permanent. "That was a rough start to my career," he said.

### A Thriving Practice

Dr. Fakler's practice, the Concordia Small Animal Clinic, is located on a slightly wooded five-acre property on the very west edge of town. It's a place that has not only been his home, but also the site of his thriving veterinary practice for 32 years. His clinic is a white brick "L" shaped building that



proudly displays a K-State power cat near the door. His house is on the property as well, situated just a few feet away from the clinic. The close proximity makes going back and forth convenient, especially in emergency situations. "If somebody calls and needs something in the middle of the night, I can usually be at the clinic before they get there. All I have to do is get out of bed, put on my clothes, roll across the yard, and I'm ready to go to work."

Practicing small animal veterinary medicine from a wheelchair has required some modifications to his clinic, but Dr. Fakler is an inventive man. One of the first things he built more than 30 years ago, was a low exam table that he can roll his chair under, much like a desk. He believes the lower table is advantageous for several reasons. "Most of my clients come in, sit their animal on the table and have a seat themselves," he explained. "I also feel most animals are more at ease when you're on their level instead of towering over the top of them."

Dr. Fakler is a very experienced surgeon. In fact, many small town veteri-



Dr. Fakler around the time of his graduation in 1971, just before a bullet left him partially paralyzed.

narians in the Concordia area send difficult surgery cases to him without hesitation. During a two-day period in June, he had two unusual emergency surgery cases. He operated on a German Shepherd who had all of his toes on one paw, and two on another, cut off by a farm implement. The day before, he operated on a large dog that had swallowed two diapers and a corn cob.

To perform surgeries, Dr. Fakler sits on an adjustable chair and uses a special

wooden box he constructed to support his feet. "For a small town practice I do a lot of surgery," he said. "I enjoy the challenge. I even do knee and elbow surgeries, which a lot of veterinarians don't."

### With a Little Help

After the shooting, recovery was painstaking. Dr. Fakler was completely paralyzed for a month and spent five months at the KU Medical Center, making it home in time for Thanksgiving. He only regained 25 percent of the use of his left leg and no movement in his right leg. He was unable to sit up for more than 30 minutes at a time.

By January 1972, Dr. Fakler was ready to go back to work. As fate would have it, a job opened up for him when his classmate, who was to take a job in Chanute, Kan., working in the practice of Dr. Billy LaRue, CVM '56, had to leave for the Air Force. The classmate suggested Joe take the job instead, and that's what happened.

Dr. LaRue hired Dr. Fakler, thinking he would only be able to work a few hours each day. "Within a few months

he was working full eight-hour days and even longer some days," Dr. LaRue remembered. "Joe has got a lot of guts."

Dr. Fakler said the job helped him get started, emphasizing that not going back to work never crossed his mind. "The guys I worked for were excellent. Bill helped me so much. He taught me a lot and helped me do the things that got me going."

Dr. LaRue believes it was his young colleague's determination and fighting spirit that pulled him through the tough time. "I think we may have given him a good start, but he took the bull by the horns and carried on, and he didn't ask for any pity."

Dr. Fakler's wife, Ruth, also played a vital role in his

PHOTO BY DAVE ADAMS



Dr. Fakler demonstrates how to adapt vice grips to act as clamps for canine elbow surgeries during a lecture at the CVM's 68th Annual Conference for Veterinarians in June 2006.





Dr. Fakler rebandages the front paw of a German Shepherd puppy named "Rudy" whose toes were cut off by a farm implement.

recovery. "Joe has a dandy wife who supports him," Dr. LaRue professed. "I don't think you can talk too much about Joe without mentioning Ruth. She's a good 50 percent of the package."

Ruth Fakler, Dr. Fakler's wife of 37 years, was originally from the Concordia area. She still works by her husband's side, running the office in his clinic. "My wife is excellent," Dr. Fakler said. "She made sure I had what I needed to be able to do everything I needed to do."

### Beyond Veterinary Medicine

The Faklers moved to Concordia in 1974 where they set up their practice. They had two sons, Jeffrey, now 29, and David, 27.

Dr. Fakler has always had a love for baseball and when his sons were growing up, he built a PeeWee regulation size baseball diamond on his property where he coached their teams and younger teams that followed. He was also a Boy Scout leader for many years and is responsible for 27 boys earning their Eagle Scout Awards.

Remodeling older homes is another of Dr. Fakler's many interests. About 15 years ago, he began refurbishing and renting out one house a year. "I got real good with a router, and I can build cabinets, new countertops and bathrooms."

He also has a cabin on the Republican

River with solar powered electricity where he goes when he needs some relaxation.

Obviously, Dr. Fakler is an inspiration to anyone who has suffered a setback in life and has overcome extreme odds to be successful and lead a rewarding career. He also keeps a keen sense of humor about life. "I always tell the girls who work here not to break their leg because they won't get any time off. I'll just give them a chair and they can keep

right on working," he joked.

Dr. Fakler gives seminars to veterinarians at the College of Veterinary Medicine's Annual Conference for Veterinarians during the summer. He gives tips about ways he has discovered to make procedures more accommodating. Some of them have evolved out of necessity as a result of working from a wheelchair, but can be used by anyone.

### Imparting Life Lessons

Dr. Fakler says he gets phone calls each year from veterinarians who have suffered spinal cord injuries or have had amputations. His advice, as could be expected, is always encouraging. "People call me who have heard that I've figured out how to practice from a wheelchair," he explained. "The first thing I tell them is that if there's any way possible to continue to work, don't take disability, because it's rewarding to do what you were trained to do."

Dr. Fakler's feelings on his situation can be summed up best when he says frankly, "Being partially paralyzed is no reason to write off veterinary medicine." It is a philosophy he has lived by, and one that will continue to inspire all who know him and benefit the profession he has dedicated his life to.



Ruth Fakler, left, is Dr. Fakler's wife and office manager. He credits much of his recovery to her.





by Carol Elmore

Personal health is of great concern to most of us. We are living longer and paying more attention to diagnostic tests and preventive measures performed to keep us in good health.

Consumer health is the term used to indicate interest in and information about personal health. Many people are researching their own illnesses and health concerns, and the Internet seems to be a very popular tool for locating consumer health information.

Using an Internet search engine like Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) to research health issues can produce literally thousands of entries, many of them not reliable or accurate.

The National Library of Medicine has a consumer health Web site called Medline Plus ([www.Medlineplus.gov](http://www.Medlineplus.gov)) that contains accurate information from the National Institutes of Health and other government agencies and health organizations. The Web site includes health articles, drug information, a medical encyclopedia and dictionary, as well as links to hospitals and physicians. The site is updated daily and has a listing of current health news on the opening page of the site.

Topics on animal health as well as pets and pet health make the Web site very relevant for veterinarians. An excellent article on evaluating consumer health information has been written by medical librarian Cathy Rhodes, and can be found at <http://nmlm.gov/outreach/consumer/chweb/html>, for those who want to search other Web sites on consumer health. We can truly become advocates of our own health by keeping updated on the many new techniques, procedures and drugs available in medicine today.

Did you know that you can request searches and articles at <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/library/research.services.htm>?

VETERINARY MEDICAL LIBRARY  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
408 TROTTER HALL

# Alumni Class News

**1947**

Dr. Cecil W. Ingmire, Joliet, Ill., received the J.D. Ross Extraordinary Service Award for his outstanding service to the Joliet community.

**1953**

Dr. Marion Hammarlund, Riverside, Calif., received the 55th Western Poultry Disease Conference Special Recognition Award at the 2006 conference.

**1959**

Dr. John "Hoot" Gibson, Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Ohio Greyhounds won the gold medal in the 75-and-over Men's Division Basketball game in the 2005 Summer Senior Games in Pittsburgh, Penn. His team won 44-11.

**1965**

Dr. Steven Swain, Auburn, Ala., was

interviewed for a feature in Veterinary Medicine magazine's January 2006 issue.

**1970**

Dr. David Browder, Ulysses, Kan., recently published a new book entitled "I Should've Said Something." It can be found at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

**1973**

Dr. Charles W. Hickey, Jr., Arvon, Va., was elected to the board of directors of the American Animal Hospital Association on March 22, 2006. He will serve a two-year term.

**1999**

Dr. Jake Sherwood, Beaumont, Texas, helped save many animals left abandoned in the aftermath of last summer's hurricanes.

## *In Memoriam*

**William P. Johnson Sr.**, DVM 1942, Manhattan, Kan., died May 1, 2006

**Melvin J. Swenson**, DVM 1943, Des Moines, Iowa, died Nov. 7, 2005

**Duane R. Peterson**, DVM 1945, Stillwater, Okla., died May 31, 2006

**Alfred Poindexter**, DVM 1945, Prairie View, Texas, died Aug. 19, 2006

**Dean K. Weckman**, DVM 1946, Holton, Kan., died Apr. 30, 2006

**Eugene C. Aldrich**, DVM 1947, Hartford, S.D., died April 5, 2006

**Howard W. Ronk**, DVM 1947, Twin Falls, Idaho, died July 6, 2006

**James R. Olin**, DVM 1950, Saint Paul, Minn., died April 15, 2006

**Alex Hogg**, DVM 1950, Fort Calhoun, Neb., died July 17, 2006

**Judd A. Chesnut**, DVM 1951, Lamar, Mo., died Jan. 24, 2006

**Leslie G. Billingsley**, DVM 1951, Fair Oaks, Calif., died Feb. 14, 2006

**Jordon J. Rexroat**, DVM 1951, Poplar Bluff, Mo., died Mar. 18, 2006

**Emil O. Gast**, DVM 1952, Jerseyville, Ill., died May 24, 2006

**Albert C. Strafuss**, DVM 1954, Lawrence, Kan., died May 28, 2006

**Ralph G. Buckner**, DVM 1956, Stillwater, Okla., died Dec. 29, 2005.

**Ronald M. Wesner**, DVM 1961, St. Louis, Mo., died Feb. 21, 2006

**William J. Machart**, DVM 1966, Clearwater, Kan., died Dec. 13, 2005

**Kenneth L. Carlson**, DVM 1971, Madill, Okla., died Feb. 19, 2006

**John H. Anderson**, DVM 1975, Simi Valley, Calif., died May 16, 2006

**Mary Kay Brownlee**, DVM 1989, Greeley, Colo., died May 19, 2006



# 2006 Alumni Recognition Awards

**Dr. Howard Erickson ('59)** received the Dr. E.R. Frank Award from the College of Veterinary Medicine and its Veterinary Medical Alumni Association. This award was presented to Dr. Erickson at the 68th Annual Conference for Veterinarians in June.

A native of Wahoo, Neb., Dr. Erickson found a passion for veterinary medicine growing up on the family farm. After high school, he attended Luther College in Wahoo. A year later he trans-

ferred to K-State to pursue a degree in veterinary medicine. He was a student of Dr. Frank during his time at K-State.

Dr. Erickson received his bachelor's degree and DVM from K-State in 1959. He went into the U.S. Air Force as a commissioned officer. While with the Air Force, he received a PhD from Iowa



State University in 1966. Soon after, he joined the faculty at the Air Force's School of Aerospace Medicine in Texas. After nine years as a research scientist at the school, he was assigned to the Directorate of Research and Development in the Aerospace Medical Division in 1976.

Dr. Erickson retired from the Air Force as a colonel in 1981 and returned to K-State where he continues to teach anatomy and physiology.

**Dr. Bob Smith ('76)** received the Distinguished Alumnus award at the Heritage Evening Banquet during the 68th Annual June Conference for Veterinarians.

Dr. Smith received his bachelor's degree in 1968 and his master's degree in 1970, both from K-State. As a ROTC graduate, he became a commissioned officer and spent two years on active duty. After leaving the Army, he earned his DVM from K-State in 1976.

To help him decide what area of veterinary practice to pursue, Dr. Smith completed a large animal rotating internship at Oklahoma State University.

After the internship, he stayed at Oklahoma State as a field services clinician until 1990. He then went to work at Palo Duro Veterinary Services in



Canyon, Texas, for almost two years until he was asked to return to Oklahoma State to become the McCasland Chair in Beef Health and Production. Dr. Smith spent 11 years in that position and was involved in beef extension, research and industry services.

Dr. Smith is currently a veterinarian with Veterinary Research and Consulting Services, a beef cattle practice with offices in Colorado, Wyoming, Iowa and Oklahoma.

**Dr. Marion Hammarlund ('53)** received an Alumni Recognition Award at the Western Veterinary Conference in Las Vegas, Nev., on Feb. 20.

After receiving his DVM, Dr. Hammarlund opened a food animal practice in Colorado where he practiced for two years. He did his graduate studies in animal pathology with an emphasis in poultry at Colorado State University.

In 1957, Dr. Hammarlund began working for Ralston Purina Co. as a vet-

erinary pathologist, providing technical service for customers around the country.

Dr. Hammarlund moved to Riverside, Calif., in 1966 to work in poultry disease management for Arlington Veterinary Laboratories. There, he developed vaccinations for poultry diseases such as bronchitis and



Newcastle disease. Seven years later, he opened his own small animal practice.

After selling his clinic in 1984, Dr. Hammarlund worked for the San Bernardino County Health Department inspecting livestock and pet facilities.

Today he works as a laboratory animal care consultant and as a consultant for poultry production farms.

Dr. Hammarlund also fills in as a substitute veterinarian at veterinary hospitals.

**Dr. Terry McElwain ('80)**, was presented an Alumni Recognition Award at the Western Veterinary Conference in Las Vegas, Nev., on Feb. 20.

After graduating from K-State, he worked in the Crestview Animal Clinic in New London, Penn. He worked mainly with small family dairies of the Amish and Mennonite populations. A year later he decided to pursue specialty training and a research degree.

Dr. McElwain received his PhD from

Washington State University in 1986 and became a faculty member at the University of Florida. He worked in research and as a consultant for the United States Agency for International Development in Zimbabwe, Mali and Kenya.

In 1989, he returned to Washington State where he continues to teach today.



He is a professor of pathology in the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Pathology.

Dr. McElwain is also the executive director of the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, a state and regional diagnostic facility for animal and zoonotic diseases.

Dr. McElwain is the co-inventor of 12 patents and licensing agreements for techniques used for the development of diagnostic assays and vaccines.



## Dr. Marcus Named University Distinguished Professor

Dr. Daniel Marcus, professor in the Department of Anatomy and Physiology, was recently named University Distinguished Professor, a lifetime title that represents the highest honor K-State can bestow on a faculty member.

Dr. Marcus has secured more than \$7 million in research support from the National Institutes of Health and is principal investigator of an \$11 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health's Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence program (COBRE).

The COBRE grant created the Center for Epithelial Cell Function at K-State, of which Dr. Marcus is director. This center, in conjunction with University of Kansas and KU



Medical Center, focuses on epithelial cell physiology or pathophysiology and provides a strong foundation for transitional research. Dr. Marcus is internationally known for his research on the physiology of inner ear epithelial cells. Functions of these cells are essential for hearing and balance.

Dr. Marcus joined the K-State faculty in 1998. Previously, he had professional experience at Creighton University, Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., and Boys Town National Research Hospital. He and Drs. Frank Blecha and M.M. Chengappa comprise a total of three CVM faculty members who have received the honor of Distinguished Professor. They are among 37 total honorees at Kansas State University.

## Norden Award Goes to Dr. Schermerhorn

**Dr. Thomas Schermerhorn**, assistant professor of small animal internal medicine, was chosen by K-State veterinary students to receive the CVM's 2006 Carl J. Norden Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Schermerhorn's teaching duties include a clinical appointment working with senior veterinary students on internal medicine rotations at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital.

"Dr. Schermerhorn is a very caring clinician, not only to the owners and their pets, but to the students as well," said student Ashley Feinberg. "He makes



Dean Richardson, left, presents the Norden Distinguished Teaching Award to Dr. Schermerhorn and his wife, Jennifer.

you come up with diagnoses on your own in a way that make you respect him."

Dr. Schermerhorn earned his DVM from the University of Pennsylvania in 1990. He completed an internship in small animal medicine and surgery in Weymouth, Mass., and a residency in small animal internal medicine at Cornell University. From 1994 to 2001, he pursued research training at Cornell.

His research at K-State involves the metabolism of glucose in cats and insulin secretion in dogs and cats.

## Dr. Schultz Receives Pfizer Research Award

**Dr. Bruce Schultz**, associate professor of physiology, was awarded the 2006 Pfizer Animal Health Award for Research Excellence.

This award is given to a faculty member who advances veterinary medicine through exemplary research.

Dr. Schultz has been a professor at the CVM since 1997 and divides his time between teaching and research.

Dr. Schultz's major research focus is on cystic fibrosis, a disease of salt transport. In an effort to help treat symptoms of the disease, he looks for ways to manipulate or

replace a peptide that malfunctions in cystic fibrosis patients. He also researches salt transport in cells, and across mammary tissue to understand and treat mastitis.

Dr. Schultz has a master's degree in veterinary physiology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He received his PhD in pharmacology from Cornell University in 1991. Dr. Schultz pursued post-doctorate work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and worked at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School before coming to K-State.



Associate Dean Lisa Freeman, left, presents the Pfizer Animal Health Award for Research Excellence to Dr. Bruce Schultz.



# New Faces in Development & Alumni Office



**Marty Kramer**  
Assistant Director  
of Development

By Chris Gruber

I have had the opportunity to meet many of you since joining the development and alumni office in December 2004 as the development officer. In March of this year, Dean Richardson presented me with the opportunity to lead the development office as director.

Let me start by saying thank you to the former director Tim Chapman, who was promoted to senior director of major gifts at the K-State Foundation. Without Tim's vision and hard work over the past seven years, many of the initiatives at the college would not have come to fruition.

While there has been a change in leadership, we have also assembled a new team of individuals, most of them new within the past year-and-a-half.

Sharon Greene is our Pet Trust Coordinator. She handles the day-to-day operations of the Pet Trust and also assists with the Perpetual Pet Care Program. The Pet Trust is a memorial program that honors the human-animal bond.

Michelle Conrad is our development associate. Michelle previously worked for Farm Bureau. She is a friendly face and voice for our office. She has tremendous organizational skills and has a big job tracking three development personnel.

Marty Kramer recently accepted the position of assistant director of development. Prior to coming to K-State, Marty worked as an independent financial broker for OFG Financial Services in Salina. His experience is a great asset to our development efforts.

Our anchor of the office is Cheri



**Chris Gruber**  
Director of  
Development

Ubel, our alumni coordinator. Cheri works with the executive board of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Association and organizes all alumni receptions, reunions, award selections and class initiatives. Cheri has dedicated 17 years to building strong relationships with our alumni.

Patrice Scott and Brennan Engle are responsible for producing all communications and publications for the college, including two dynamic semi-annual magazines that feature all of the current activities. Patrice is the editor of *AnimaLife* and she handles marketing and development for the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. Brennan is the editor of this fantastic publication, *Healing Hands*.

This is one of the finest groups of people I've had the opportunity to work with, and I am optimistic about what we are going to accomplish. Of course our success is dependent on you, the alumni, grateful clients and friends of the college. This support was punctuated with a recent milestone. K-State is currently involved in a \$500 million fundraising effort, the "Changing Lives Campaign, and the CVM's goal within the campaign is \$35 million. We are thrilled to announce that we have reached our goal. Thanks to all of you for making this possible. With your support, we continue the tradition of the CVM: exceeding expectation.

We want to engage you and be your connection to the college. Our doors are always open, and we invite you to stop by the development and alumni office when you're visiting, or drop us a line and let us know your suggestions on how to improve our programs.



**Patrice Scott**  
Marketing/  
Development  
Officer, VMTH



**Michelle Conrad**  
Development  
Associate



**Cheri Ubel**  
Alumni Affairs  
Coordinator



**Brennan Engle**  
Communications  
Coordinator



**Sharon Greene**  
Pet Trust  
Coordinator

## Visit us on the web

**Development:** <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/development/index.htm>  
**Pet Trust:** <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/development/PetTrust/index.htm>  
**Alumni Affairs:** <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/alumni/index.htm>



# Message from VMAA President Dr. Mohney



Dear Alumni,

It is my privilege to greet you on behalf of the College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Medical Alumni Association. Your board and I will be working on your behalf to further the goals of the association, as well as the college, and to continue the tradition of excellence which has endured for the past 100 years.

All of us can take pride in the contributions and recognition our college has enjoyed over its history, especially in recent years. Students, faculty and alumni have distinguished themselves both regionally and nationally as leaders in veterinary medicine and research. Each of us is a beneficiary of that proud tradition.

In order to maintain this legacy of excellence, however, each of us must play a part. The strength of our institution and our association resides in the commitment and support of each individual. You can be a participant in the legacy and further growth by becoming an active member of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Association. A lifetime membership demonstrates your pride and appreciation for your college and supports its vision for the future. Think of all that could be accomplished if 100 percent of our alumni participated! Special thanks to those who have already made that commitment and contribution. Won't you join them in embracing the tradition?

As well, your board welcomes your involvement and input as we strive to strengthen the association and support the college. Please feel free to communicate with any of us to share your ideas and concerns. We want to serve you by being open and responsive to your issues. I look forward to the coming year and the opportunity to represent you, the alumni of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

- Dr. Richard Mohney DVM '74  
Veterinary Medical Alumni Association President

In fiscal year 2006, there were 967 alumni who chose to be dues-paying members of the College of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Medical Alumni Association. This number is from approximately 4,500 living alumni (see chart below).

To date, the balance in the VMAA Endowment to support alumni activities is \$183,598. We hope active membership in the association continues to grow.

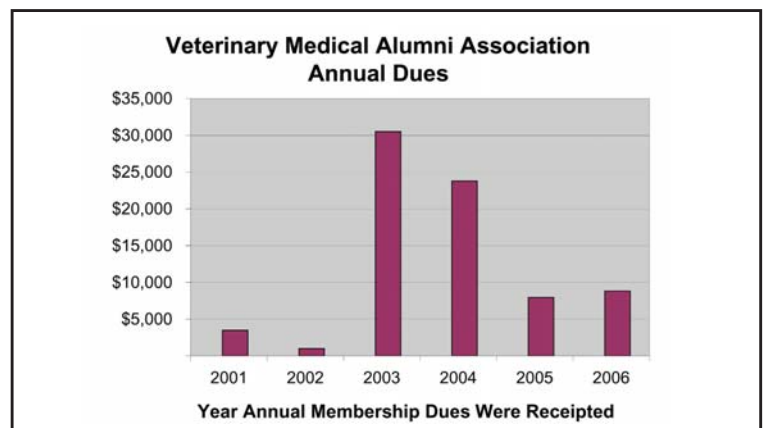
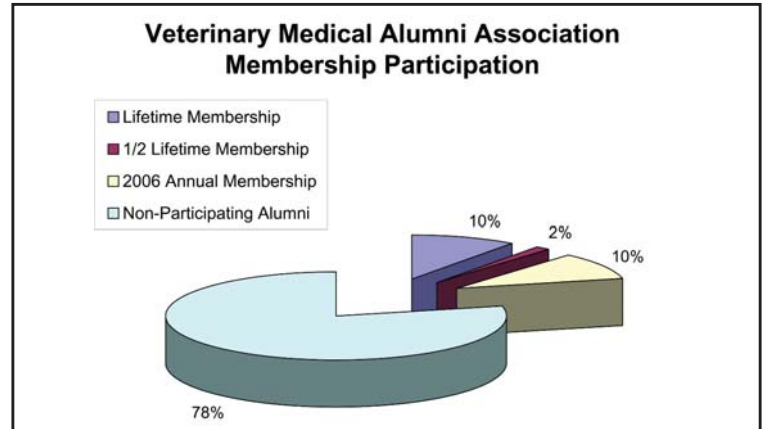



PHOTO BY DAVE ADAMS

Congratulations to the Class of 1946 for winning the Class Initiative for 2006. Forty-five percent of their class was involved in some type of monetary giving to the CVM during the past fiscal year. Drs. John Noordsy and Russell Hardin accepted a plaque on behalf of their class at the annual Conference for Veterinarians. For more information about the class initiatives program, visit [http://www.vet.ksu.edu/depts/alumni/pdf/Class\\_Initiative\\_Program05.pdf](http://www.vet.ksu.edu/depts/alumni/pdf/Class_Initiative_Program05.pdf)





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A world leader in research, teaching and patient care.



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