

Swine veterinarians head to the heartland

It wasn't San Diego, Dallas, or Orlando, but swine veterinarians were greeted with warm Midwest hospitality, moderate temperatures, and no snow during the 41st annual meeting of the AASV held at the Hilton Omaha and Qwest Center. For many veterinarians, it was a welcome relief from record-setting snowfall and below-normal temperatures.

A total of 917 registrants from 20 countries gathered in the Cornhusker State where they could attend over 20 educational sessions, including pre-conference workshops, two general sessions, three break-out sessions, research topics, industrial partner session, and student seminars and poster sessions. Student attendance at the meeting was 127, representing 19 veterinary colleges and four countries.

"Our business meeting occurred on the 1-year anniversary of the Dow hitting its lowest level in 12 years," said Dr Tom Burkgren, executive director. "Our strong meeting attendance last year and this year during this period of economic turmoil, low hog prices, and staggering losses demonstrates our members' commitment to high-quality continuing education and professional development. As always, our planning committee developed a program that reflects the times that we are in and solutions to managing those times."

This year's theme, "Implementing knowledge" was designed to encourage discussion and debate among attendees. "I believe the passion and purpose of our keynote speakers served as a challenge to our membership – really a call to action that we live out our story of stewardship to the pig and then communicate this to the public," said Dr Paul Ruen, incoming president and program chair. "The theme of implementing knowledge resonated with attendees. We are truly in a unique position as swine veterinarians to lead change of thought and deed on pig farms, but also to influence how communities understand our business. For the first time ever, we devoted an entire day's session to pig well-being, and throughout the meeting our program committee worked diligently to connect science with real case studies, creating opportuni-

ties for discussion and debate. The goal isn't to just get smarter, it is to ask the right questions and then implement solutions. The opportunities are all around us to make a difference!"

Dr Jim Lowe delivered the Howard Dunne Memorial Lecture, "People, processes and pigs: Are we fixing what is really broken?" His presentation explored what veterinarians can do to improve the implementation of their programs. Dr Lowe emphasized that getting things done can be systematically approached by applying four principles. First, understand the business by understanding the key drivers of profit and how improvements in the system are measured. Second, understand the biology of the problem and design solutions that are based on our best understanding of the biology. Third, make our solutions simple. Fourth, commit the time to work with people who will implement the processes that we design.

The Alex Hogg Memorial Lecture presented by Dr Peter Davies was a view of the pork industry from the perspective of the public. He told attendees that the industry "cannot afford to be a mystery or a blank slate." The only way to achieve that is through transparency. "The image of our industry is largely dehumanized, and we need to find ways to convey the humanity and general good intent of pork producers."

Swine Practitioner of the Year Award

Dr Tom Gillespie, Rensselaer, Indiana, was named 2010 Swine Practitioner of the Year. The award is given to the swine practitioner who has demonstrated an unusual degree of proficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of veterinary service to clients.

Dr Gillespie is the owner and founder of Rensselaer Swine Services, PC, and Jasper Swine Pharm, Inc, in Rensselaer, Indiana. He is a 1979 graduate of the Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine and initially practiced in Illinois. In 1981, he moved to Indiana to practice mixed-animal medicine. In 1991, Dr Gillespie established Rensselaer Swine Services.

Dr Gillespie believes that it is his job as a



Dr Tom Gillespie, recipient of the Swine Practitioner of the Year Award

swine veterinarian to promote profitable swine production and to reduce the risk of economic loss for his clients by working with and educating everyone involved in each individual swine unit.

Dr Gillespie has been an active member of the AASV since 1979. He has served in many leadership positions, including as a member of the board of directors and as the foundation secretary, and president in 2005. Dr Gillespie has chaired the Membership Committee and served on the Pseudorabies Committee and Pharmaceutical Issues Committee. He was chair of the PCVAD ad hoc committee from 2006 to 2009.

Dr Gillespie's involvement in the veterinary profession is extensive and includes serving on several committees of the Indiana Veterinary Medical Association. He served on the American Veterinary Medical Association's National Board Examination Committee from 1990-1992.

Dr Gillespie was a member of the Indiana Board of Animal Health, serving as its chair from 1994-2000.

He is an international lecturer and consultant. He is or has been an advisor to several

global animal-health companies. Dr Gillespie is the author of numerous articles on swine diseases.

Dr Gillespie is board certified by the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners, with a specialization in swine health management. He is a 2009 graduate of the Executive Veterinary Program in Swine Health Management.

Dr Gillespie and his wife, Denise, have three children: Kevin, and his wife Bonnie; Matthew, and his wife Erin; and Kendra.

Howard Dunne Memorial Award

Dr Bob Morrison received the 2010 Howard Dunne Memorial Award, recognizing an AASV member who has made important contributions and provided outstanding service to the association and the swine industry.

Dr Morrison is a professor in the Department of Population Medicine at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, where he teaches epidemiology and applied statistics to veterinary and graduate students. He was instrumental in developing one of the first masters programs for practitioners. A recognized researcher, Dr Morrison is the author of numerous scientific papers in the field of



Dr Bob Morrison, recipient of the Howard Dunne Memorial Award

epidemiology and records analysis. He has been a leader in the science of disease control and played a critical role in the control and eradication of pseudorabies in the upper Midwest. Currently, Dr Morrison is developing new approaches to regional control and elimination of PRRS in Minnesota.

Dr Morrison is a past president of the AASV and has served on several committees. He was the first executive editor of the association's journal, *Swine Health and Production*. In 1994, Dr Morrison was selected to deliver the Howard Dunne Memorial Lecture, which is the keynote address during the association's annual meeting. His service to the association was recognized in 1995 when he received the AASV Meritorious Service Award.

A native of Canada, Dr Morrison received his DVM (1979) from the University of Saskatchewan's Western College of Veterinary Medicine, and his PhD and MBA from the University of Minnesota.

Dr Morrison and his wife, Jeanie, have three children.

Meritorious Service Award

Dr Jerome Geiger received the Meritorious Service Award in recognition of his outstanding service to the association.

For 30 years, Dr Geiger has been an active member of the AASV, particularly in the area of swine welfare. He is currently serving as chair of the AASV Pig Welfare Committee. He is the alternate AASV representative to the American Veterinary Medical Association's Animal Welfare Committee. He was also chair of the Audit Committee. From 1997 to 2003, Dr Geiger was a district director, representing the western United States. He was a member of the planning committees for the 1996, 2002, and 2007 AASV annual meetings.

Dr Geiger is also a member of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, where he serves as the chair of the Animal Care Committee. He is also a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Dr Geiger is the Technical Service Manager for Health Assurance at Pig Improvement Company, where he supports customers around the world. He is the author of numerous scientific papers and has given presentations internationally on behalf of the swine industry.



Dr Jerome Geiger, recipient of the Meritorious Service Award

Dr Geiger received his DVM degree (1980) and MS (1990) from the University of Illinois. He is a former private practitioner and teaching associate at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Illinois.

Young Swine Veterinarian of the Year

Dr Michelle Sprague was honored as the Young Swine Veterinarian of the Year. The award recognizes an AASV member 5 or fewer years post graduation who has demonstrated the ideals of exemplary service and proficiency early in his or her career.

Dr Sprague is a partner and director of sow health at the Audubon-Manning Veterinary Clinic in Audubon, Iowa, where she delivers high-quality herd health and production care to swine producers in Iowa and the region.

Active in AASV since 2002 as a student member, Dr Sprague serves as a member of the Pig Welfare Committee. She is also working with the AASV Production Animal Disease Risk Assessment Program. In 2008, she presented at the AASV annual meeting, delivering a practice tip on GPS mapping of swine sites. In 2007, she chaired a pre-conference seminar and spoke at the annual meeting. She also participated in the Public Policy Leadership Institute program a few years ago, representing NPPC in Washington, DC.

Dr Sprague is also an active member of the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Active in the First United Methodist Church in Audubon, Iowa, Dr Sprague serves on the church council.

Dr Sprague is a 2005 graduate of Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. She and her husband, Steve, reside in Audubon, Iowa.

Technical Services/Allied Industry Veterinarian of the Year

Dr Reid Philips was honored as the Technical Services/Allied Industry Veterinarian of the Year. The award recognizes swine industry veterinarians who have demonstrated an unusual degree of proficiency and effectiveness in delivery of veterinary service to their companies and their clients, as well as given tirelessly in service to the AASV and the swine industry.

Dr Philips is the technical manager for porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) for Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc (BIVI). In his position, Dr Philips provides training and technical oversight on PRRS to new technical- and sales-team members. He also directs the PRRS research-grants awards, which he implemented 6 years ago. Committed to solving PRRS in the field, Dr Philips is always available for consultation to help customers. Dr Philips also coordinates BIVI's veterinary liaison team of seven AASV industry leaders and colleagues from Canada and Mexico, hosting biweekly conference calls and biannual technical meetings. Dr Philips joined the technical team at BIVI in 1997 when BIVI acquired NOBL Laboratories, where he had worked since 1994.

After graduating with his DVM from Iowa State University in 1981, Dr Philips practiced at the Audubon Veterinary Clinic in Audubon, Iowa. In 1985 he moved to Columbus, Nebraska, where he practiced until 1994.

Student Seminar and Scholarships

During the annual meeting, the American Association of Swine Veterinarians Foundation awarded scholarships totaling \$25,000 to 15 veterinary students.

Brent Carmichael received the \$5000 scholarship for top student presentation. Brent is a third-year veterinary student at Iowa State University. His presentation was titled "The impact of pooling piglet serum samples on PRRSv PCR performance in sow herds being monitored for time-to-negative interval." Alpharma Animal Health provided the financial support for the Top Student Presenter award.

Additional scholarships totaling \$20,000 were provided by Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, on behalf of Elanco Animal Health.

Four veterinary student presenters received \$2500 scholarships: Shamus Brown, Iowa State University; Amber Hazel, University of Minnesota; Melissa Hensch, Iowa State University; Michael Peace, North Carolina State University.

Five veterinary student presenters received \$1500 scholarships: Kate Dion, Iowa State University; Andrea Pitkin, University of Minnesota; Cassandra Roe, Iowa State University; Trevor Schwartz, Iowa State University; Paul Thomas, Iowa State University.

Student presenters receiving \$500 scholarships were Abbey Canon, Iowa State University; Jenna Cherry, Iowa State University; Nicolas Crossland, Kansas State University; Rachael Gately, Texas A&M University; Micah Taylor, University of Illinois.

Forty-four veterinary students representing 11 universities submitted abstracts for consideration. From those submissions, 15 students were selected to present during the annual meeting. Judges representing private practice, academia, and industry selected the recipients on the basis of communications skills in the writing of the abstract and the presentation of the paper, and on applicability of the research to swine medicine.

Annual Business Breakfast

Dr Butch Baker reported on the association's membership and activities. He stated that there are 1678 members, including 294 student members. Dr Baker thanked outgoing directors Drs Tom Fangman (District 3) and Ron Brodersen (District 8), and Jess Waddell, student delegate to the board, for their service. He congratulated re-elected board member Dr Kent Schwartz (District 6) and incoming



Dr Michelle Sprague, recipient of the Young Swine Veterinarian of the Year Award



Dr Reid Philips, recipient of the Technical Services/Allied Industry Veterinarian of the Year Award



Recipient of the \$5000 Scholarship for Best Student Presenter during AASV's Student Seminar: Brent Carmichael, Iowa State University. Pictured with Brent is Dr Rodger Schneck of Alpharma Animal Health, sponsor of the Student Seminar and Best Student Presenter Award.



Dr Meghann Pierdon (left) on behalf of Elanco Animal Health presented scholarships provided by Eli Lilly and Company Foundation. Recipients of the \$2500 AASV Foundation scholarships were (from left) Shamus Brown, Iowa State University; Amber Hazel, University of Minnesota; Melissa Hensch, Iowa State University; and Michael Peace, North Carolina State University.

directors Dr Bill Starke (District 3) and Dr Brian Schantz (District 8), and alternate student delegate Jessica Hendrickson.

New officers

Dr Paul Ruen, Fairmont, Minnesota, was installed as the president of the AASV during the Business Breakfast on March 9. He succeeds Dr Butch Baker, Ames, Iowa, who is now immediate past president. Dr Randy Jones has ascended to president-elect. The newly elected vice president is Dr Tara Donovan, Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Save the dates

The 2011 annual meeting is scheduled for March 5-8, 2011, in Phoenix, Arizona.

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