Summer 2013

Faculty, Staff and Student News

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Gustavo Aguirre, VMD, PhD, was named to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. He also received the International Canine Health Award from the Kennel Club Charitable Trust & Metro Bank at the Crufts dog show held in Birmingham, England. He also gave a lecture at the Tongji University Medical School in Shanghai, China.

Gary Althouse, DVM, MS, PhD, was reappointed to a five-year term as Chair, Department of Clinical Studies, New Bolton Center.

The Council of the American Association of Immunologists has awarded David Artis, PhD, the 2013 AAI-BD Biosciences Investigator Award for outstanding, early-career research contributions to the field of immunology.

William Beltran, DVM, PhD, received the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology/Merck Innovative Ophthalmology Research Award in the Gene Therapy and Eye Disease category in May at the ARVO Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA. His selection was based on his paper “Gene therapy rescues photoreceptor blindness in dogs and paves the way for treating human X-linked retinitis pigmentosa.”

Darryl Biery, DVM, was awarded Honorary Membership at the 16th International Radiology Association Congress in Bursa, Turkey.

Bernd Driessen, DVM, PhD, was an invited speaker at the World Congress of Veterinary Anesthesia in Cape Town, South Africa in September.

Hannah Galantino-Homer, VMD, PhD, gave a lecture on “Endocrinopathic Laminitis and Equine Metabolic Syndrome” at the California Animal Nutrition Conference in Fresno, CA in May.

in memoriam

Benjamin Wolf, retired professor of microbiology in the Department of Pathobiology, passed away in April 2013 in his beloved Honolulu, Hawaii residence. He is survived by his wife, Sarah, and two sons, Michael and Howard.

Dr. Wolf earned his master’s degree in bacteriology from the University of Michigan in 1949, and his PhD in microbiology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1959. From 1959 to 1962, Dr. Wolf was a Pennsylvania Plan Scholar and an instructor in the School of Veterinary Medicine. He was appointed Assistant Professor in 1962, Associate Professor in 1968, and Professor of Microbiology in 1973. From 1962 to 1972, he was the recipient of a Research Career Development Award from the National Institutes of Health. He was involved with the graduate groups in immunology, parasitology, and microbiology and taught core and elective courses on immunology to veterinary students. Dr. Wolf’s graduate students praised his creative mind, hands-on pursuit of scientific endeavors, and unselfish encouragement as he groomed them to become scientists on their own. Anyone who observed how much Ben enjoyed his work would feel inspired to pursue a career in science. It was clear that he relished his interactions with students at all levels and was a source of encouragement.

Dr. Wolf was one of the few immunologists on the veterinary faculty, and his presence was the impetus for what continues to be an active research group within the school. He enjoyed his adventures in experimental immunology and pursued his immunologic research with fervor and tenacity. He is remembered as an encouraging mentor, an interested teacher, and a dedicated scientist.
Urs Giger, DVM, PD, MS, was an invited speaker and chaired the Committee on Hereditary Diseases at the World Small Animal Veterinary Association in Auckland, New Zealand in March.

Fuyu Guan, PhD, was promoted to Research Associate Professor, Department of Clinical Studies, New Bolton Center, in December 2012.

Kurt Hankenson, DVM, MS, PhD, was appointed as the first incumbent of the Dean W. Richardson Professorship in Equine Disease Research.

Melanie Hezzell, VetMB, PhD, was awarded an American Kennel Club-Canine Health Foundation Clinician-Scientist Award, which provides research and travel funding. She is studying cardiac biomarkers and mitral valve disease.

Christopher Hunter, PhD, was reappointed to a five-year term as Chair, Department of Pathobiology.

Michaela Kristula, DVM, MS, addressed the topic of U.S. dairy heifer export to foreign countries like Turkey by writing an article titled “Heifer exporters should limit disease incidence” for Hoard’s Dairyman: The National Dairy Farm Magazine.

John Lewis, VMD, received the AVDS Research and Education Award, sponsored by Hill’s.

Meryl Littman, VMD, did a radio spot on WOND News Talk 1400’s “A Paws For Your Pet” about “Lyme Disease and Other Tick-Borne Diseases in Our Pets.”

James Lok MS, PhD, spoke at the national meeting of the British Society for Parasitology held in Bristol, UK in April.

Kaitlyn Lutz, VMD, was awarded a Western Veterinary Conference 2013 Food Animal Incentive Award. The award is given annually to five veterinarians engaged in a university or private practice internship or residency (first year) with a focus on food animals.

Nicola Mason, PhD, and Yvonne Paterson, PhD, were named the 2013 recipients of the University of Pennsylvania One Health Award. Mason, assistant professor of pathobiology and clinical studies in Penn’s School of Veterinary Medicine and Paterson, professor of microbiology in the Perelman School of Medicine and associate dean for research and professor of nursing in Penn’s School of Nursing, are collaborating on a project to further develop cancer immunotherapies that are already showing promise in both canine and human patients.

Joseph McGrane celebrated his 50th year at Penn Vet. He was employed by Dr. Jack McGrath at age 17.

Kathy Michel, DVM, MS, has been invited by the American Animal Hospital Association to serve on a task force charged with writing weight management guidelines for dogs and cats.

Adrian Morrison DVM, MS, PhD, has published a book, Brandywine Boy, about growing up on a small farm in the Brandywine Valley in the mid-twentieth century. In addition, the Center for Sleep and Circadian Neurobiology has established an annual Adrian Morrison Lectureship.

Cynthia Otto, DVM, PhD, was chair of the 2013 Penn Vet Working Dog Conference, “The Art & Science of Training: Dog & Handler,” held in April at the Purina Event Center in St. Louis, MO.

With support from Ahold USA, Thomas Parsons, VMD, PhD, participated in an organizational meeting for the Temple Grandin Foundation at the AVMA headquarters in Chicago, IL in May.

Virginia Reef, DVM, recently received the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine’s Robert W. Kirk Award for Professional Excellence. The award recognizes

A complete list of faculty and staff news, as well as a list of recent publications submitted by our faculty, will appear in the upcoming online version of Bellwether.
outstanding achievements and dedicated service to the veterinary profession by ACVIM Diplomates.

Erica Reineke, VMD, spoke at Western Veterinary Conference in February, as well as the VECCS Spring Clinic in Cancun.

As part of invited faculty of AOVET North America, Alexander Reiter, Dr. med. vet., and John Lewis, VMD, gave several lectures and provided laboratory instruction during a three-day course on the Operative Treatment of Veterinary CranioMaxillofacial Trauma and Reconstruction in Las Vegas, NV.

Alexander Reiter, Dr. med. vet., was appointed to the faculty of AO North America. Dr. Reiter is the organizer of a new course on comparative dentistry and oral surgery at Penn’s School of Dental Medicine.

Carlo Siracusa, DVM, MSc, PhD, participated in the Ceva Animal Health Keep the L.O.V.E. Alive Behavior Express Tour in Baltimore, MD in April.

Matthew Stock, VMD, published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association with a “What is Your Diagnosis?” case. Also contributing to the case report from Field Service were Billy Smith, DVM, and Jonathan Garber, VMD.

Penn Vet Launches New Website

Visit often to see how Penn Vet Leads

Projected launch: June 2013
Same URL: www.vet.upenn.edu
Leon Paul Weiss, 87, of Merion, PA, former chairman of the department of animal biology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, was a medical doctor who spent his career in research, teaching, and writing, focusing his work on cells and tissues of the immune system and the hematopoietic organs.

I was one of those kids who always wanted to be a vet. Most of you reading this know what I am talking about. Then when I was 18, my dad decided to make a career move from Johns Hopkins Medical School to the faculty of the veterinary and medical schools of the University of Pennsylvania. To me, this move was better than a pot of endless money. It meant that I got to work in the Veterinary School as a college student and that, as a potential ‘faculty brat,’ I had a better chance of getting into Vet School.

And then I did get into Vet School. I felt like my dad engineered my career happiness.

I have heard from so many of you in letters and emails about how my dad mentored you and helped in your careers. He never saw roadblocks to inspirations. He supported all of his kid’s dreams, and clearly from many of your emails, he supported others in their career goals.

I think he was a great teacher. Many of you reminded me about what he called the “cilia wiggling in the gut” or of how he described ribosomes as a “beaded necklace.” I saw him create Aquavet so he could work on the Cape in the summers. Marine mammal medicine and even more so, fish medicine, was crazy-talk back then. His thoughts of using animals as caregivers for people were also odd. But he helped make it happen. I remember him after he used colored chalk on the chalkboard, and he would turn around to face the class all purple, yellow, and blue from his chalkboard pictures. I got to see his enthusiasm over the spleen, the lymph, and the red blood cells. He made the pieces of the hematopoietic system into visual characters each with their own story. I feel very lucky to have memories of him as a teacher as well as my dad.

—Alice Weiss, V’84, daughter of Leon Weiss

Eric Deeble, V’13, received an AVMA Congressional Fellowship to represent the veterinary profession in the legislative branch of government.

Jeffrey Carey, V’14, received the Ed Hiestand Memorial Veterinary Student Scholarship from the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association. He also presented a lecture in March, “Etiologies of Nodular Skin Lesions in Passerines,” at the NWRA Symposium in Portland, OR.

Marc Meyers, V’15, was awarded first place in the VMD oral presentations at the Phi Zeta Student Research Day in March. He spoke about his project, “Thrombospondin-2 influences revascularization and bone volume in ischemic fracture,” in which he used a mouse model to demonstrate that TSP-2 enhances healing dynamics in ischemic fractures.

Anne Staudenmaier, V’15, was awarded the Morris Animal Foundation Veterinary Student Scholar Program Award for the summer on the topic “Immune response in the common raccoon, Procyon lotor, to modified live canine distemper and feline panleukopenia vaccines.”