

SVME NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics

Volume 6, Number 3

September 2000

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of the first responsibilities of a new president is to thank the individual who preceded you in the position. In this case, a big thank you is extended to Dr. Ron McLaughlin. Ron did an excellent job of leading and carrying out the affairs of the society. He even took on additional responsibilities when the situation demanded it. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the minutes of the 2000 annual meeting that Ron prepared. He made sure that all of SVME records were brought up to date and has kept me informed at every step. I appreciate what he has done and hope that the rest of the members feel the same way. Even though he has retired, you can still thank him and reach him at "McLaughlin, Ronald M." [HYPERLINK
"mailto:McLaughlinR@health.missouri.edu"](mailto:McLaughlinR@health.missouri.edu)
McLaughlinR@health.missouri.edu.

We also owe a big thank you to Dr. Hal Jenkins. Hal has served as our treasurer for a number of years. He has done an excellent job of keeping our financial and membership records in order. Thank you Dr. Jenkins. Dr. Robert Speth completed his term as Past-President. We are indebted to him for his work and that of other committee members on the revisions of the SVME constitution and by-laws. Thank you Dr. Speth. Dr. Larry Carbone completed a term as SVME Historian and we thank him for his services.

This past August, the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics received a gift of \$15,400.81 from the estate of Dr. Robert Shomer. Dr. Shomer was the first president of our society. We are grateful for this gift. A task force, consisting of past presidents, has been formed to develop a plan for an appropriate way to utilize this gift and by so doing recognize Dr. Shomer and promote veterinary ethics. Dr. John Boyce is facilitating this task force.

The ethics program at the AVMA annual meeting in Salt Lake City was quite good. Dr. Bill Folger, our President-elect, presented a stimulating paper on our responsibilities to society as veterinarians. He gave many examples of what he and others are doing in the Houston metropolitan area. Dr. Folger has developed a successful spay-neuter assistance program (SNAP). This program is designed to help control pet population and to assist those who do not have resources for veterinary services. Dr. Larry Hawk, President of the American Society for the Prevention to Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) presented an informative

(Continued on next page)

talk on the goals and functions of ASPCA. The many activities of ASPCA include participation in the poison control center, providing a behavior and animal hotline, offering grief counseling services, assisting with humane law enforcement, providing a pet adoption and pet finding service, and provision of shelter outreach programs. The goals of ASPCA include proper pet population control, ending animal abuse, relieving pain and suffering in animals, humane treatment of animals, and proper veterinary health care. Dr. Hawk also enumerated a number of the conflicts and challenges the ASPCA manages. Dr. Brian Forsgren spoke to the group about his experiences as an animal shelter veterinarian in Cleveland, Ohio. He emphasized the importance of our professional attitudes in our interactions with clients and communities. He demonstrated how shelters and practices can and should be community assets. He pointed out that the veterinary profession in many cases is the ultimate guardian of the human-animal bond. Using a series of cases, Dr. Forsgren illustrated some very practical and economical ways that veterinarians could assist pets and their owners when they do not have funds to pay for services. He stressed the importance of maintaining the family unit, which in many cases includes one or more pets.

The afternoon ethics program at the AVMA meeting was devoted to a discussion of corporate veterinary medicine and associated ethical issues. Dr. Robert Featherstone, a corporate officer with PetsChoice Inc., discussed some of the common misperceptions about corporate practice including professional autonomy, ethics of corporate structures, reputation of corporate management, and performance based compensation. He covered some to the potential conflicts between veterinary and business ethics and emphasized that corporate ethics generally reflect the ethics of the leadership. Dr. Ed Stephenson, a career counselor with Banfield (VetSmart) reviewed some of the ethical issues in a company that employs 600 veterinarians. Issues that Dr. Stephenson presented included veterinarians being the advocate for pets, ethical approaches to quality medicine, guidelines for diagnostics and treatment protocols, making pet health affordable, the human-animal bond, euthana-

sia, pet overpopulation, and the role of the veterinarian in companion animal/pet public health.

Although the content of the ethics program at the AVMA meeting was good, the attendance was very disappointing. The SVME Executive Committee will be exploring ways to improve attendance and participation in society activities. Is the AVMA annual meeting the proper venue for an ethics program? Several members have commented that they would like to attend the annual meeting and program but to do so would require registration for the AVMA meeting. Some SVME members may not be members of the AVMA and would not have any other reason to attend. If any of our members or readers have suggestions about ways to improve the annual ethics program or member services, please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Committee.

The question of who controls admittance to the veterinary profession was posed in the last issue of the SVME Newsletter. This matter is having a major impact on the profession. A recent issue of the JAVMA (Vol. 217, No.4, August 15, 2000) contained an article about a California licensing bill that is receiving a lot of attention. If the bill were to pass, graduates of certain Mexican veterinary colleges would be able to apply for licensure without going through the certification process of the AVMA's Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG). Related to this issue, many members of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards have voted to develop a new certification process. If you are not familiar with these issues, we encourage you to learn more about them. It is clear that there are some very powerful social, political, and economic forces affecting the profession. The importance of ethics to the profession has never been greater.

In closing, we invite members to submit articles, reviews, or other items of interest to the SVME Newsletter. We also welcome your suggestions for making SVME of greater value to its members.

Don

Don D. Draper, DVM
President, SVME

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S MESSAGE

WEBPAGE, LISTSERVER, MEMBERSHIPS AND CONFERENCE

I. *Webpage*

Everyone agrees the webpage needs to be updated with current information. The current officers should be listed. I would also recommend that the Constitution and Bylaws of the SVME be included in the webpage. Finally, the webpage should be linked directly to the Listserver and to the Email address of the Listserver manager.

II. *Listserver*

Since the Listserver is such an important tool of the SVME, I suggest an independent Listserver be established. This will avoid changing it from place to place. If no one objects, I will be glad to investigate the production cost and annual cost for this instrument. The Listserver should be linked to the webpage in a password-protected way. This will allow only SVME members access to the list.

III. *Membership*

I propose a three-year plan to raise SVME membership to 400 members. There are an infinite number of ways to accomplish this. First, update the webpage. Second, promote ourselves in cyberspace: on CompuMed, Veterinary Information Network (VIN), and NOAH. I volunteer to be responsible to post invitations on VIN. Other ideas include placing advertisements in JAVMA, operating a booth at the annual AVMA convention, conducting ethics seminars at veterinary schools, promotion of SVME membership at local VMA meetings, and identifying all veterinary schools with intact and ongoing ethics courses. This should be fertile ground for new members. Finally, we must promote our annual meeting within existing members. There should be at least 40-60 members of the SVME attending the SVME annual conference at the AVMA convention.

IV. *Conference in Boston, 2001*

I have invited Dean W. W. Armistead to speak at the conference in Boston. Dr. Armistead has agreed to speak at the next year meeting. I will now finish scheduling the speakers.

I wish everyone a great fall!

Bill Folger, D.V.M., M.S., A.B.V.P (Feline)
President-Elect, SVME

TREASURER'S REPORT

Since the SVME annual meeting in July, the society has a new treasurer.

Mary D. McCauley, J.D., D.V.M. is now the SVME treasurer. She obtained her J.D. in 1987 from University of Maryland at Baltimore and her D.V.M. in 1993 from University of Illinois. She is predominantly doing small animal practice (some equine, caprine and ovine). She is member of the AVMA, Indiana VMA, Central Indiana VMA, AAFP, and SVME. She has practiced in Illinois, South Carolina and Indiana, and used to operate a feline housecall practice.

Membership renewal for 2000-2001 was due July 1. Included on page 5 of this newsletter is a dues reminder.

We are pleased to be able to keep our dues at the very reasonable amount of \$20 for regular members and \$5 for students. These dues are used exclusively to cover the costs of printing and mailing the newsletter, maintaining the VETETHIC list, and running the annual meeting.

Please send your membership payment to

SVME c/o Mary D. McCauley
541 Quail Valley Drive
Zionsville, IN 46077

For questions or inquiries the treasurer can be contacted at kittydoc@prodigy.net.

Dear President,

You ask for comments on your lead article on the ethical responsibilities of becoming a member of the veterinary profession. First, I agree with much of Don's provocative letter, and it goes without saying that this is an international problem. Universities have rightly become the 'base' for educating many of the caring professions including our own, but that may have come at the price of loss of vocation. Let me pose some questions also. Is there still room for the person who is academically adequate but less able than others and who would make a good veterinarian? (Universities tend to select the academically best based on questionable criteria e.g., memory recall rather than the ability to use information). In addition to who should enter the profession, does the 'overloaded' academic curriculum really address the question of what are the skills of a 'good veterinarian' - is it only academic knowledge (recall?) and manual skills? What other attributes does one want from one's own doctor or veterinarian? I suggest that knowledge and practical skills are only two of them, and that the right attitude (to animals and clients incorporating non-manual skills) also figure, along with integrity, fidelity and so on. So when in the same issue of *SVME* I read from Tracy Norman and the UPENN ethics group that "...there is little room in our formal schedule for more ethics education or expres-

This letter is a reply to the President-elect message "Becoming a Member of the Veterinarian Profession: Ethical Responsibilities" that was written by Don D. Draper and appeared in the May 2000 issue of the SVME Newsletter.

sion...", I am set wondering over two issues. Are we getting our message across to University educators that ethics in its broadest and most practical sense, is as important to produce a good vet as a detailed knowledge of the anatomy of the front leg, or muscle physiology and biochemistry? Secondly, how do we go about selecting students who will become vets with the right knowledge, skills and attitude? Finally, I was surprised that while the best interests of the public was mentioned, no mention was made of the welfare of the animals as being a prime (if not the prime) objective, and one that is critically dependent upon attitude.

David B. Morton

(President of Animal Welfare Science,
Ethics and Law Veterinary Association, UK).

—NEWS OF INTEREST—

Visiting Scholar

The Department of Population Health and Reproduction at the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine is proud to announce that Dr. Vasyl Kosiy of the veterinary college at the Bila Tserkva State Agrarian University in Bila Tserkva, Ukraine will be joining us as a visiting faculty member this academic year.

Dr. Kosiy is the recipient of a Junior Faculty Development Program fellowship, funded by the U.S. State Department. The JFDP assists junior faculty at universities in countries that were part of the former Soviet Union to develop curricula and teaching skills for their home schools and nations. The JFDP funds young teachers in the humanities and social sciences. Dr. Kosiy is the first person in the JFDP to be coming to the United States to study and develop a curriculum in veterinary ethics. Indeed, he may be the first person ever to have a fully funded post-doctoral fellowship in veterinary ethics.

At UCD, Dr. Kosiy will be auditing our three required core courses for veterinary students in veterinary ethics and law, our upper level undergraduate course in animal ethics, our courses in client relations and practice management, and courses given by affiliated departments in animal welfare and bioethics. In addition to developing curricula in ethics and professionalism for his school, he is also interested in working on a proposed ethics code for veterinarians in Ukraine, and in statutory and regulatory issues pertaining to licensure of Ukrainian veterinarians. I will be working closely with him on these and other matters.

I shall urge Dr. Kosiy to join SVME and hope that many of you will have the opportunity to converse with him electronically or the old-fashioned way so that he can take as much as possible from his year in this country back to his school, nation, and profession.

Jerry Tannenbaum

(Sent by J.T. on the VETETHIC List 8-4-00)

SVME DUES NOTICE

Donald D. Draper, DVM, Ph.D., President
William Folger, DVM, President-Elect
Ronald L. McLaughlin, DVM, Past-President
Ione L. Smith DVM, Secretary
Mary D. McCauley, JD, DVM., Treasurer
Albert S. Dorn, DVM, Parliamentarian
Jerry Tannenbaum, MA, JD, Historian

September 15, 2000

DUES NOTICE

Dues for 2000-2001 are now payable. We appreciate your past support and look forward to a new and even better year for the Society. The dues payment of \$20.00 (\$5.00 for students) is payable to: ***Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics or SVME.*** Membership will be in force from July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2001.

Send checks to: SVME c/o Mary D. McCauley,
541 Quail Valley Drive,
Zionsville, IN 46077

Payment Date: _____ Check Number: _____

Please return this section of the form with your dues payment (see amounts above) to help us keep our records up to date.

NAME and ADDRESS CORRECTION IF NECESSARY:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (_____) _____

FAX NUMBER: (_____) _____

ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Check this box if you are not on VETETHIC and would like to be.

(Email address is required)

—Minutes of the Annual Meeting—
of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM on July 22, 2000 by President Ron McLaughlin in Room 250D of the Salt Palace Convention Center. Members present were Don Draper, Bill Folger, and James Harris.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The Treasurer's report provided by Hal Jenkins noted a balance of \$9,996.86 prior to payment of \$750 speaker's honoraria for the annual meeting and \$146.10 printing costs. Dr. Jenkins noted that 80 responses were received to the personal mailing, bringing the total dues paid membership to 161 to date. Dr. Jenkins noted that the personal mailing appears to be the most effective method for getting dues payments.

There was no old business.

New Business

1. Hal Jenkins forwarded a letter from a person requesting dues free membership and subscription in VETETHIC discussion list in return for providing SVME with the newsletter of a another organization related to veterinary medical ethics. It was moved, seconded and passed to deny this request. Ron McLaughlin is to notify the person of this result with an appropriate explanation.
2. The changes recommended by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee and circulated to members were approved unanimously.
3. The SVME policies on a) student SVME chapters and b) student memberships were discussed. It was agreed that the policies should be expanded and clarified. The SVME should provide greater assistance to incipient student chapters in getting established. In 1999 the SVME agreed to provide up to \$60 per semester to subsidize nonalcoholic refreshments for veterinary student groups meeting to discuss veterinary medical ethics. Providing a draft constitution and bylaws and ethics scenarios for discussion for student chapters was suggested.
4. The publication of the SVME Newsletter and maintenance of the veterinary medical discussion list were discussed. Don Draper is to attempt to contact Ione Smith to work out arrangements that may be needed to keep these functions on track and on time.
5. SVME speakers Forsgren and Folger declined the \$150 honorarium that was approved and both asked that it be applied to their future membership dues. Therefore, in consideration of principle and interest, their SVME dues are paid up for 8 years, though 2008.
6. Hal Jenkins provided updates for the membership list. Ron McLaughlin will update the data base and forward it to the new treasurer.

Nominations Committee Report

The slate nominated by the Nominations Committee is:

President Elect—William Folger
Treasurer—Mary D. McCauley
Secretary—Ione Smith

Parliamentarian—Al Dorn
Historian—Jerry Tannenbaum

The slate was approved unanimously.

New officers were installed. The new President is Don Draper

*Ethics Program:
conducted
Saturday
July 22, 2000
AVMA Annual
Meeting
Salt Lake City, UT
Salt Palace,
Room 250D*

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald M. McLaughlin, DVM,
President Society of Veterinary Medical ethics

An Introduction to Veterinary Medical Ethics: Theory and Cases

BOOK REVIEW:

Dr. Rollin has written another excellent book of the quality and clarity characteristic of what his audiences have come to expect of him. His latest text, *An Introduction to Veterinary Medical Ethics: Theory and Cases*, is written specifically for the veterinary profession. The book contains two parts as suggested in the title. The first part of the book is devoted to ethical theory while the second and major portion of the book consists of a series of actual ethical cases experienced by veterinarians.

The theory portion of the book is very concise and written in a unique, creative, and entertaining style. Dr. Rollin covers the origins of professional ethics and outlines the various ethical vectors affecting veterinarians. He describes an ethics1 and an ethics2. Ethics1 refers to the set of principles that govern our personal views of what is right and wrong, good and bad, fair and unfair, and just and unjust. Ethics1 includes one's personal ethics, social consensus ethics and professional ethics. The term Ethics2 refers more to a branch of philosophy in which one examines and studies ethics1. Dr. Rollin provides the reader with concrete ways in which to resolve ethical issues in veterinary medicine through the use of deontological and utilitarian ethical principles of analysis. He has taken a difficult subject and made it interesting and entertaining. The logic and the examples he shares are exceptional and add to the enjoyment of reading the material.

One of the major premises of the book is that there is an evolving social ethic with respect to animals and that this new ethic will continue to have a major impact on the veterinary profession. Dr. Rollin demonstrates that it is possible to create changes in both personal and social ethics that have been unaltered for many generations. He does this by using real life cases to clarify and put into perspective the factual information of an ethical situation. He provides a conceptual ethical map that can help individuals to act and behave in an ethical manner. He emphasizes the point that because veterinarians are well educated in animal health and well-being, they have an obligation to play an integral role in animal-

*By Bernard E. Rollin
Iowa State University Press,
1999, 417 pages
Retail Price \$39.95
ISBN: 0-8138-1659-9*

welfare issues by educating the public on all aspects of food and fiber and companion animals.

The case studies part of the book contains a broad range of real world ethical issues of interest to veterinarians and others concerned about the well-being of animals. Not only do the cases expose the reader to many issues they may not have thought of before; they also provide the opportunity to practice one's ethical reasoning skills. For each case, Dr. Rollin provides background information and a thorough explanation of how the case could have been resolved. It would have been meaningful to know how the veterinarians involved in the cases responded to the issues. It is always easier to suggest what a person should say and do in a given ethical situation than when actually involved with the case. That aside, the cases are very useful and helpful in resolving veterinary ethical issues.

The book is very well written, clearly organized and easy to follow. It is a good addition to the veterinary literature. The book should be helpful to veterinary students enrolled in ethics courses. Equally important, the book is an excellent resource for practicing veterinarians. It provides both theoretical and applied information on how to resolve the many ethical issues that veterinarians encounter.

D.D. Draper

I encourage any member who would like to review any other books that could be of interest to the members for future issues to let me know.

*Sylvie Cloutier, PhD
Editor, SVME*

Rattling the Cage — Toward Legal Rights for Animals

BY STEVEN M. WISE
AUTHOR OF *RATTLING THE CAGE:*
TOWARD LEGAL RIGHTS FOR
ANIMALS

Following is a reply to a review written by Robert C. Speth on the above-named book. Dr. Speth's original review appeared in the May 2000 issue of the SVME Newsletter.

August 18, 2000

I reply to Dr. Robert Speth's recent review of my *Rattling the Cage - Toward Legal Rights for Animals* book. A recent editorial in *Nature-Neuroscience* said that *Rattling* "deserves careful attention from biomedical researchers, because they will need to refute his arguments if they are to withstand the legal challenges that appear to be on the horizon." I was pleased when I learned that Dr. Robert Speth had reviewed my book for the Society's newsletter. *Rattling the Cage* is a work of law, philosophy, history, and science. As Dr. Speth is a scientist and I was trained as an undergraduate scientist, I hoped that he might attempt to refute my scientific arguments.

I was disappointed. Here are the review's highlights: "animal rights propaganda," "flies in the face of simple logic and common sense," "denigrates the dignity of his own children," "religion is wrong," "humans who reject the animal rights philosophy are autistic," "characterizes the work of Roger Fouts ... as being genocide," "sophomoric," "abuse of the theory of evolution," "absurd analogies," "defamatory of biomedical research," "attacks religion," "270 pages of spurious argument."

In his review of *Rattling the Cage* for <IntellectualCapital.com>, law Professor Frank Wu wrote: "(t)he signal accomplishment of Wise's analysis is the perfect reversal of roles. It turns out that proponents of animal rights have the latest science and data on their side. Opponents of animal rights are the sentimentalists or those motivated by religious convictions."

Perhaps he was thinking of Dr. Speth's review.

How could Dr. Speth have so misunderstood my book? And why was he so strident? Then I learned that he sat on the board of something called the *National Animal Interest Alliance*. What was that? I learned that it was an umbrella organization of groups who exploit nonhuman animals for recreation or profit. Then I understood why I had offended him. In law, there is a saying: "when the facts are against you, pound the law. When the law is against you, pound the facts. When both the facts and law are against you, pound the table." I consider the table pounded.

The closest thing to argument was Dr. Speth's statement that I could not "reverse the simple, fundamental fact that the apes are not humans." So what? Then Dr. Speth sent me a journal published by his group, the *National Animal Interest Alliance*. In its pages he wrote that "let us never forget that humanity is our species and that our primary obligation is to ourselves." Again I understood. Dr. Speth's statement was not so stark as the South Carolina Senator William Harper's ante-bellum claim that slavery "is the defence of human civilization." But I recognized the genre.

If you haven't read *Rattling the Cage*, here's a sample of what those with no connection to animal rights (to my knowledge) are saying in the US, the UK, and Canada. *Rattling the Cage* is "an admirably clear exposition (*Nature-Neuroscience*), "worth reading for its splendid historical outline of past relationships between animals and the law (*The Guardian*); "an immensely valuable statement of a case that can now reasonably be made" (*London Sunday Times*); "reasoned arguments that the law as it stands is not enough: it should be expanded ... to recognize that (animals), like human beings, have fundamental

Continued, next page

AUTHOR'S REPLY (CONTINUED)

rights" (*Dallas Morning News*); "a closely argued case" (*Sunday Express Magazine*); "handily - and surprisingly - makes his case, using logic as well as history" (*Toronto Sun*); "is no animal rights fanatic uses common sense as he presents his case carefully and methodically" (*January Magazine*); "a detailed grasp of both science and law" (*The Sunday Review*); "(e)ven those of us who worry about 'rights-based' solutions to moral problems will find Wise's arguments for considering some animals persons troubling and worthy of considerable thought read this stunning book" (Tikkun); "(t)his is one of those rare books that are deeply troubling in the best sense of that word, intellectually and ethically" (Professor Edward O. Wilson); "(t)he highest compliment a reviewer can

pay an author is not that a book has changed his mind but rather that it has opened his mind Wise deserves that praise" (Intellectualcapitol.com); "(w)hether you agree with him or not, one has to admit that Wise has done his homework" (*ABA Journal*); "(i)t is by turns eloquent, funny, and pedantically legalistic" (*Time*).

Allow me to insert a final word from the editors of *Nature-Neuroscience*: "(i)t would be unproductive to deny that the arguments raised in Wise's book have some force. Instead the research community will need to confront them head-on, and be prepared with good counter-arguments." I am waiting.

Steven M. Wise

REBUTTAL TO AUTHOR'S REPLY

Presented by Robert C. Speth

It was regrettable enough that Mr. Wise denigrates his children to advocate personhood for apes. Now, rather than rebut my criticisms of his book, he rails that my empathy for the plight of a girl with fetal alcohol syndrome ("The Little Girl that Stumbled," *NAIA Newsletter*, July, 2000) is the genre of those who advocate slavery.

Wise correctly assumes that he has offended me, but not for the reasons he suggests. It is not because I am a scientist, religious, or a member of NAIA. It is because I *am* human. Consider me a 21st century Holden Caulfield who sees obscenities written on sidewalks and tries to protect children from their influence.

My comparison of Wise's book to the treatise of Marx and Engels is not an exaggeration; if anything, it underestimates the chaos that would result from the untenable social structure Wise proposes. This irrational philosophy endangers both humans and the animals that depend upon our judicious consideration of their welfare.

Wise's comments are prototypical of falsehoods inherent with the animal rights

movement. First, he quotes but a single sentence from my essay, removing it from the context of the essay to alter its meaning. The entire paragraph is:

"Yes we should, and we do, care for and respect animals as our traveling companions on spaceship Earth. But let us never forget that humanity is our species and that our first and primary obligation is to ourselves. We have enacted laws that prescribe how we should interact with and treat animals. Inherent in those laws are a respect for the sentience of animals. But we should never let that concern compromise our primary responsibility to our fellow humans."

This is not the only out-of-context technique Wise uses. In citing the *Nature-Neuroscience* editorial that refers to his book, he omits the criticism of his inability to define a boundary within the animal kingdom as to which animals will be persons and which won't. How many other snippets of his favorable comments are from similarly negative reviews?

Continued, next page

REBUTTAL (CONTINUED)

Secondly, he tells us that the reviews he cites in his rebuttal are from people with no connection to animal rights (to his knowledge). Yet the first review that I researched, from <www.Intellectualcapital.com> was written by an individual who earlier wrote “The Rights of Animals” for the same site. The earlier article advocates that animals have as much right to own humans as humans have to own animals and states “The brutalities of a slaughterhouse yield to free-range livestock.”

Thirdly, Wise’s use of the slavery argument to justify animal rightism is only slightly camouflaged racism. The essence of this argument is, since we give equal rights to blacks, then we must give equal rights to apes. When Elliot Katz, from the animal rights group “In Defense of Animals” used this argument on the *Willie Brown Show*, Mr. Brown simply stated: “Don’t compare the plight of my people with animals!”

Fourthly, Wise considers groups that work with animals, in this case NAIA, to be exploiters of animals. His condemnation of this “umbrella organization of groups who exploit nonhuman animals for recreation or profit,” whose immediate past-president is a veterinarian, underscores the animal rights movement’s inclusion of the veterinary profession, and those it serves, to be ‘exploiters.’ Patti Strand, Executive Director of NAIA, founded this organization “To promote the humane and responsible use of animals.” This is reminiscent of the Veterinarian’s Oath:

I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of

society through the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, the conservation of livestock resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.

Let no one in the veterinary profession be so unenlightened as to not recognize that the animal rights movement, in attacking their clientele, poses the greatest threat to the ability of the profession to care for animals.

Finally, Wise’s perspective is enclosed within the animal rights community. He insulates himself from facts that refute his thesis (such as his failure to address my primary criticisms of his book). It is interesting that the *Nature-Neuroscience* editorial also called Wise to task for embarking on his Darwinian continuum without the foggiest notion of how far down that slippery slope he would drag us. It doesn’t surprise me that Wise also fails to cite the review of his book by Roger Banks (<http://www.spintechmag.com/0005/rb0500.htm>), which offers a legal scholar’s perspective of the “kangaroo court” that would ensue in Wise’s *Brave New World*.

If Mr. Wise is determined to remain in the darkness, denying the validity of counter-arguments against his treatise, so be it. Let us linger with him no longer nor allow him to jeopardize our symbiotic relationships with animals.

Robert C. Speth, Ph.D.

EDITOR’S NOTE

All SVME members who are considering contributing to the Newsletter can contact me at <scloutie@vetmed.wsu.edu> or c/o Department of VCAPP, College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University, PO Box 646520, Pullman, WA, 99164-6520.

Please note that the deadline to submit a text for the next *SVME newsletter* will be December 15, 2000.

Sylvie Cloutier, PhD
Editor, SVME

IDA ANIMAL ABUSE ACCUSATIONS REFUTED

On Monday, August 28, 2000, In Defense of Animals, a California-based animal rights organization announced a press conference in a downtown Portland hotel. At that press conference allegations of animal abuse at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center were made by Matt Rossell, who had worked in the Division of Animal Resources at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center.

The following was relayed to Bob Speth from James Parker, Ph.D., who is the Public Information Officer at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center in Beaverton, OR and Ed Walsh, Ph.D., who is a researcher at Boystown in Omaha, Nebraska. It is reprinted in the *SVME Newsletter* with permission of Drs. Parker and Walsh.

After Matt Rossell's graduation from the University of Nebraska with a B.A. in the field of early childhood development, he worked in Kansas for a veterinarian named Jean Greek. Mr. Rossell listed this job on his Primate Center application in March of 1998. We now know that Jean Greek is a veterinarian married to Ray Greek, M.D., the physician featured at the Monday press conference of In Defense of Animals (IDA). Dr. Ray Greek, who taught anesthesiology at the University of Wisconsin, is now a national spokesman for animal rightists, criss-crossing the country, inviting debates and making the argument that animal research leads to no good. He and his wife have published a book entitled *Sacred Cows and Golden Geese: The Human Cost of Animal Research*.

In February 1995, Mr. Rossell went to work as a security guard at the Boys' Town National Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. Just after the IDA press conference we learned why Mr. Rossell made the unusual career change from childhood development to security. In a January 3, 1999 *Washington Post* article, we read that Rossell worked as "a PETA spy (who). . . . landed a job as a security guard (at Boys' Town) and began secretly videotaping kittens that had undergone neurological surgery." Mr. Rossell's videotapes were used by PETA to make allegations of animal abuse against Dr. Walsh.

Dr. Edward Walsh's research program at Boys' Town studies the reason for congenital deafness, why

The following information is reorted in the *SVME Newsletter* with the knowledge and permission of Drs. James Parker and Edward Walsh.

some babies are born deaf. The NIH and USDA investigated Rossell's claims of animal abuse and found Rossell's allegations to be without merit.

Dr. Walsh, speaking to the National Association for Biomedical Research on June 2, 1997, had this to say about Mr. Rossell: "This fellow worked the night shift and weekends, predominantly, securing the friendship and trust of honest employees working overlapping or parallel shifts. He was the prototypical spy, so successfully achieving fraternity with his enemy that an employee of the animal care facility actually baked him a cake to celebrate their friendship just before he appeared on a local evening news program denouncing her, indirect as his condemnation may have been. . . . In buffoon-like attempts to sensationalize otherwise innocuous findings, this PETA employee, now posing as a security guard, repeatedly videotaped himself callously violating basic, common sense animal handling rules."

Mr. Rossell took a job in Portland with the Guardsmark security firm before applying for work at the Center in late March of 1998. His application form did not list his college education. Moreover, it omitted his employment at Boys' Town.

While on the staff of the Division of Animal Resources (DAR), Mr. Rossell applied for a position that had opened up in the Center's psychological well-being program. At that time it apparently became convenient for him to remember his education in order to prove his preparedness for that special work, and so he added new information to the previously incomplete application. (There is little that any Human Resources department could ever do to detect problems with such an application, short of possessing a database of animal rights sympathizers around the country. No one here knew who Jean Greek was in 1998, and there was no way to know that information was missing. Mr. Rossell signed a statement that "the facts set forth in this employment application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge." In

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Opinion: The other side of the story... (continued)

addition, part of the process of hiring is to ask the applicant if he or she belongs to animal rights organizations or supports their work. Mr. Rossell was asked those question, but we were unable to determine that his answers were not truthful.)

In May of this year, Mr. Rossell wrote a letter to the IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee), alleging that inadequate staffing was damaging morale in the DAR and the effectiveness of the psychological well-being program. He stated that this problem had led him to resign his position.

The IACUC takes its legal and moral responsibility for the welfare of research animals very seriously. IACUC Chairman Dr. David Hess asked a subcommittee composed of himself, Ms. Cyndi Jones (Manager of Environmental Health and Safety) and Dr. James Parker (Public Information Officer) to hear Mr. Rossell out. He presented several criticisms of DAR staffing and of the psychological well-being program. The subcommittee asked if he had witnessed any instances of animal abuse at the Center. He said no. It asked him if he knew of any items of non-compliance with USDA regulations. Again, he said no. His remarks, he asserted, pertained only to staff management and psychological well-being issues.

The subcommittee made its report to the full IACUC, and the IACUC drafted a letter to the Director of the Primate Center, Dr. Smith, directing her to conduct a complete review of the management of the animal care program lest management problems compromise its effectiveness. The IACUC also directed Dr. Smith to invite outside expertise to evaluate the psychological well-being program.

In subsequent weeks, Drs. Art Hall and Gwen Maginnis began the first review, conducting extensive interviews with the entire staff of DAR. In none of these interviews, did they uncover any examples of animal abuse or noncompliance with regulations. From these meetings recommendations for staffing changes were made and began to be implemented. The evaluation of the psychological well-being program will begin in September with the visits of two well-known primatologists, Carol Shiveley, Ph.D., and Melinda Novak, Ph.D.

That brings us to Monday, August 28. The California-based animal rights organization called In Defense of Animals announced a press conference in a downtown Portland hotel, but excluded OHSU media representatives from the event. When Center

officials learned of the press conference, they checked the internet and found an elaborate web site (<<http://www.vivisectioninfo.org/ohsu/>>;) with a video clip, still images of monkeys, pages of accusations from Dr. Sheri Speede, local head of In Defense of Animals, former USDA inspector Dr. Isis Johnson-Brown, the already-mentioned Dr. Greek and Mr. Rossell. On the basis of what was on the web site, the Center sent out a media release that said, in part:

“**H**aving failed in their attempts to discredit the research and vilify researchers at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center, IDA is now conducting a campaign charging that the Center practices animal abuse. The United States Department of Agriculture, which has legal responsibility for monitoring the well-being of laboratory animals, declared in its most recent inspection report, that the Center is involved in no items of non-compliance. The Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC), the professional organization overseeing research institutions, commended the Center for providing an excellent program for the care and use of research animals.

The pictures and videos released by on the web site do not present evidence of animal abuse to the eyes of professional veterinarians who do not share

the animal rights agenda of Dr. Speede and Mr. Rossell. Nor would they to the majority of American citizens who share our commitment both to improving human health and providing for the humane care of our research animals.”

Still, Center officials did not see the

whole videotape presented at the press conference 2:30 p.m. Monday, when KGW-TV brought it to the Center and filmed OHSU's Head of Comparative Medicine, Dr. Art Hall, and the Center's Head Veterinarian, Dr. Gwen Maginnis as they watched it. KGW, KOIN-TV and several radio stations were present at that time and asked them for their immediate reactions. In general, Dr. Hall said that he had the feeling that pictures were contrived to fit an animal rights story line, and that posting images of injured monkeys

“He was the prototypical spy, so successfully achieving fraternity with his enemy that an employee of the animal care facility actually baked him a cake to celebrate their friendship just before he appeared on a local evening news program denouncing her...”

Dr. Ed Walsh

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as proof of animal cruelty is on par with posting pictures of emergency room patients waiting for treatment and claiming shoddy medical practice.

On Tuesday morning, Dr. Maginnis conducted a tour of all places where Mr. Rossell took his pictures and made clinical rounds of all the animals identified. By mid-morning it was clear that Mr. Rossell must have provoked animals, appeared before the early morning cleaning of colony runs, misrepresented the conditions of animals and distorted the purposes of research projects. As Dr. Hall said to a KOIN reporter doing a follow-up story, he had gotten the whole picture upside-down.

It was also on Tuesday that Center officials learned about Mr. Rossell's former work at Boys' Town, and a media advisory was sent out on that information in the afternoon.

IDA demands that a volunteer panel composed of primate experts, animal advocates and the media, appointed by an agent, such as the governor, who is not affiliated with OHSU in any way, be given continuing access to all aspects of the ORPRC facility. Even though the Center has been found in compliance by USDA and has a record of laudatory inspection reports from AAALAC, it would welcome another inspection by public officials, disinterested professionals and animal welfare advocates if another layer of oversight is deemed appropriate. There would be no point in including persons from animal rights organizations with stated goals of ending animal research.

IDA also demands that certain monkeys be transferred to "sanctuaries."

Center veterinarians are convinced that all animals at the Center are well cared for in the Center's own excellent program, which has been commended by AAALAC.

Finally, in response to IDA's third demand, we know that decisions about the funding of animal research belong to the National Institutes of Health operating through committees of scientists around the country. Scientists around the world, included almost 100 Nobel prizewinners, are unanimous in the conviction that animal research is essential to the progress of medical knowledge. All employ the methods of cell

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culture, statistical analysis and computer modeling so often mentioned by animal rightists as "alternatives" to animal. These and many other methods and procedures are valuable auxiliary tools, but they will never replace the need for whole, complex, living animals — always humanely cared for — if we are to improve for our grandchildren the legacy of health given to all of us by prior generations of biomedical researchers.

On Friday, September 1, Mr. Rossell appeared at the Center gate driving a car immediately behind a van from KOIN-TV. The van was parked and the TV personnel were setting up to film whatever might take place between Matt and Center security. The head of Center security refused Matt entrance to the campus. The KOIN later reporter told us that Matt had volunteered his services as a guide for the tour that the Center was to give the TV crew.

Statement of Edward J. Walsh, Ph.D. in Omaha

The damage inflicted on scientists and physicians, not to mention their families, and the consequent suffering of countless unknown, and unknowing, victims of disease at the hands of animal rights activists is inestimable.

It is clear that at least one faction of the movement would rather deceive than debate, rather hide in the dark of the night than operate in the open court of human opinion. Too often, animal rights activists choose theatrics and counterfeit 'expert' opinions to confuse and ultimately terrify their self-declared adversaries, who are, in the end, the whole of us, civilization as we know it.

I know this to be true because I have been there. I have experienced their cruelty and dishonesty personally. While I do not know the details of their accusations against my colleagues in Portland, I do know that the maintenance and management of animal care facilities in this country are tightly regulated, frequently inspected, and managed by thoughtful caregivers, making it, thankfully, virtually impossible to carry on cruel and inhumane practices. The American public knows that the scientific community will not tolerate inhumane animal use - that scientists and animal care providers are compassionate people who

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recognize the need to study animals to save people from the ravage of disease. The American people recognize that the humane use of animals in biomedical research is an obligation in our culture, that suffering people the world over, not to mention other animals, deserve nothing less than our unrelenting search for better treatments and, ultimately, curatives for those afflictions that diminish the lives of so many.

That Matt Rossell is a dedicated soldier in the animal rights war on biomedicine appears, at least on the surface, unambiguous and I can only wonder about how many more of my colleagues around the country will become the victims of his hostility. His time in Omaha led to extraordinary suffering for my family, including the theft of a significant part of life as a 5-year-old in the case of our son. I only hope that Rossell is less successful in Portland; that he fails to diminish the lives of dedicated scientists who are his targets there, whose compassionate use of animals in the struggle to develop medicine and understand ourselves and our biology gives so much hope to so many.

Addendum to the above:

Having recently spent one year on sabbatical leave at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center, I believe that Mr. Rossell's allegations of abuse are inaccurate and misrepresentative of the excellent care afforded to the research animals at the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center. That it would take 2 years for him to gather the documents upon which he makes his allegations suggests that the examples of purported abuse were at best rare events.

This example should serve as a reminder to all of us how vulnerable we are to the efforts of the animal rights movement to sabotage all legitimate uses of animals; be it in biomedical research, entertainment, the practice of *veterinary medicine*, or companion animal ownership. If we do not sound the warning among ourselves and to society at large of the threat the animal rights movement poses to the symbiotic relationship between humans and animals, we and the animals who depend upon us will suffer.

Bob Speth, Ph.D.

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