Dear Colleagues

Sadly this will be my final Q News report before handing over the reins to our incoming president, Dr Tess Guilfoyle. At this time, I think it important to bring you up to date with AVA Qld activities and to focus on the issues for the year ahead.

Membership

I often hear from non-AVA members that the subscriptions are too expensive and ‘we don’t do anything’; those of us on the inside, dealing with issues that affect the livelihood of veterinarians and the welfare of animals on a weekly basis – nothing could be further from the truth. AVA membership is a personal decision, but the fact remains that the AVA is the only body that represents the interests of all veterinarians. So if you are working with colleagues who are not members, be sure to put in a good word for your professional association when the occasion arises and if you would like the personal satisfaction of being involved in the running of the association at any level – the door is always open!

One of the big changes to the AVA in the past three years is the extension of AVA membership to the students of our veterinary schools. AVA Qld has an active program to connect with our veterinary students on a regular basis. We support many of their on-campus activities and contact is maintained after graduation with the AVA Qld Graduate Support Scheme and the Recent Grad Event. We have the majority of Queensland veterinary students join the AVA and in the year ahead we are planning to continue our involvement with UQ and JCU student activities with the view to building for the future. For any of you who see students during the year, please make them feel welcome and take the opportunity to extol the benefits of being an AVA member.

Veterinary Surgeons Board

An initiative by the Vet Surgeons Board (VSB) this year to get out and ‘meet the people’ has been soundly endorsed by AVA Qld to the point that we are attempting to co-ordinate VSB visits with AVA branch functions. We look forward to closer liaison between our two groups in the future, particularly with the imminent review of the Vet Surgeons Act.

Unwanted pets

An initiative has been taken by the Queensland Division to engage with welfare agencies and local government in order to find a workable formula to reduce the unwanted pet issue in local pounds and at the same time, have the AVA regain the initiative in the debate. In 2012 discussions with the major stakeholders will commence.
Hendra
2011 was a big year for Hendra virus outbreaks and just to remind us that is an all year round problem, we have already had a case in January this year. On a positive note, there were no human victims, in part due to an increased awareness by veterinarians and horse owners on the risks and preventative measures required to maintain personal safety. AVA Qld and the EVA have now secured good communication channels with Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) as well as Qld Health and QWH&S so we are now better informed and better placed to respond on behalf of veterinarians as each outbreak occurs. We know there will be more Hendra cases in the months to come but we feel that we are now better equipped to respond to the welfare of veterinarians and to livestock when needed.

Live exports
All veterinarians were moved by the welfare issues surrounding the slaughter of Australian cattle in Indonesian abattoirs during the past year. We have a live export industry in Queensland and some of our colleagues are involved so it is fitting for all of us to stay informed and where possible, to contribute to the ongoing debate surrounding this controversial issue. AVA National has been at the forefront in advising legislators on the welfare requirements for the live export industry but the battle is far from over so we need to keep the issue on our agenda.

Puppy farms
As a result of a couple of high profile ‘dog busts’ in the last year which have cost the RSPCA and the State Government an enormous amount of resources in the rehabilitation of hundreds of animals, the State Government has decided to revise the rules required of dog breeders and to enact legislation that will help to stamp out puppy farms as they now exist. AVA Qld has been invited to comment on the animal welfare issues and minimum standards surrounding the breeding of dogs as well as a registration of dog breeders and identification of all animals placed for sale. Consultations are ongoing at this point with the view to legislation being enacted in the forthcoming year.

Dangerous dogs
In the wake of a child fatality in Victoria at the hands of a savage dog last year, Queensland Division has assisted Department of Infrastructure and Planning in Queensland in formulating legislation directed toward the dog owner and not at the breed of dog in order to curtail irresponsible owners from avoiding their responsibilities with dog ownership. AVA Qld will be assisting further with advice on minimum requirements for the responsible pet ownership of dogs which will then be fed into the judicial system for when penalties are considered for the owners of dogs involved in future attacks on people.

Veterinary Surgeons Act Review
Of all the issues that will affect Queensland veterinarians in the future, it is the redrafting of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936 that is most important. There are many facets to the Act which govern the way we practice veterinary science - who can practice and what are considered acts of veterinary science. It is important that all members become involved and respond to any issues in the coming year that are brought forward by the AVA Qld Division Committee. All registered Queensland veterinarians will be given an opportunity to comment on any aspect of the current Act that needs changing, however AVA Qld will provide input from our members.

Farewell and thank you
As this is my final President’s report for my year in office, I would like to take this opportunity to thank AVA Qld members for giving me the honour and the opportunity to serve the profession here in Queensland. I feel I can hand on the baton to my successor, Dr Tess Guilfoyle knowing that we have moved the cause of veterinarians in our state forward a little. As you can see by the issues covered in this report there are still many challenges ahead for the AVA Qld Committee. While feeling somewhat satisfied with our achievements in the past year, our Qld Division Committee works as a team and to that end I thank all Committee members for their hard work and sacrifice in getting the job done. Last but not least, I thank, on your behalf, our wonderful team in the office for supporting our Committee and for keeping the Queensland Division running.

AVA MISSION
To drive the success of the veterinary profession to benefit animals, the environment, the community and our members
Letter to the editor

Re: Article regarding mental telepathy with animals,
Queensland News September 2011

Dr Tamara Dann, AVA member and UQ graduate (2000).

I usually enjoy reading the QLD Division News and am generally happy with my AVA membership. I was however bemused and concerned regarding an article written by Isobel Johnstone published in the latest edition of the QLD Division News.

The article was entitled Communicating with Animals and discussed mental telepathy with animals. I am concerned that a magazine coming from the stable of the AVA, our peak representative body would publish an article with completely unsubstantiated unscientific writings within it. As far as I am aware there are no robust scientific studies in existence that prove the case for mental telepathy between humans and animals and therefore the AVA should not be publishing material upholding and recommending it as a valid mechanism for communication with animals.

Editor's reply

Thank you for your email in October objecting to Queensland News publishing Isobel Johnstone's article on communicating with animals.

My personal view is that the newsletter is there for Members to use, and Isobel is one, as are you. I realize that there is a sentiment in the AVA against non-evidence-based comment. Isobel is researching the area and who knows? She did visit Coochiemudlo Island, where I live, and in my opinion communicated with a number of animals. Of course interpretation is a rather slippery thing.

The newsletter does not state AVA policy, but I would hope that AVA policy is to allow some speculation. To me the newsletter is where kites can be flown which would not happen in the AVJ. The fact is that we have trouble getting contributions or even feed-back from the Members. For that reason I am chuffed that you enjoy reading Queensland News and that you commented.

(Slight editorial changes were made in both letters.)

Editor's note - Dr David Paxton

Since Equine Influenza and Hendra Virus the Division has emphasised the importance of infection control and personal protective equipment.

It is hard to realise how far we’ve come in this regard and yet how far we still must go, if there is enough time. So, I thought the article by Professor Steve Jones, a popular writer in science, would be a light-hearted yet instructive comment on the situation. As he says, science moves in the only direction it knows: forwards. He could have added, ‘and pretty quickly too’. But often I have thought that my colleagues, like other walkers-in-life and myself if it comes to that, tend to martyr themselves in the cause, through exposure to the tools or products of their calling. A friend died last year of lung disease. He was not a veterinarian but had been the manager of a cement factory. Like many of us he would have thought it unseemly to put his welfare ahead of the company’s or the clients’. This is to think like ancient miners of tin or lead, or modern miners of asbestos. The good news is that, so far as I am aware, both Steve Jones and Oliver Sacks are quite well.

Dr Matt Landos has made it his mission to spotlight the inadequate regulation of toxic chemicals in the environment, and has another short article in this issue, with useful links. Dr Landos has been an active contributor to Queensland News and has drawn to our attention a wide range of information on environmental contaminants which we should all know. It is noted with regret that he has decided to leave the Association, which he considers has not supported him and the profession enough.
Because it takes more than luck....

Our on-going involvement with the AVA as national Gold Education Sponsors is just another way that Provet shows our commitment to your business and our industry.

Let us show you how we can help you take your business and your career where you want to be......
The notebooks used by Pierre and Marie Curie are still kept in lead lined boxes because they are so radioactive, and in the 1940s it was possible for a schoolboy to buy from his local science shop ‘Volatile Plum Pudding ... it leaves its dish and rises to the ceiling’. These are just two of the many eccentric facts to be gleaned from Oliver Sacks’ much-praised memoir of his youth, *Uncle Tungsten: Memoirs of a Clinical Boyhood*.

My own upbringing was more conventional than his (no eccentric Jewish millionaires) and my father, rather than my uncle, was a chemist (and of soap-bubbles rather than tungsten); but Sacks’ remarkable book struck some real chords. Not, alas, of a boyhood spent in the Science Museum or of a deep understanding of the periodic table (which I coped with by chanting ‘Here Little Beggar Boys Catch Newts Or Fish’ – helium, lithium, beryllium, boron, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, fluorine and the rest – rather than with the infant Sacks’ claimed insight into the structure of atoms), but of a wild disregard of common sense.

I cannot match his anecdotes for visiting the local emporium for cyanide, thallium and hydrofluoric acid (sold in a rubber, rather than a glass, bottle because it was so powerful) but we took plenty of risks. My father – deaf in one ear and with a face scarred by a lab explosion – sometimes brought home strips of magnesium which he would ignite in the kitchen and pour on water to show how the flames shot up from the bubbling hydrogen (the melamine table was never the same afterwards). At school the chemistry lab could be smelled fifty yards away and, although there must have been others, the sole safety instruction I can recall was the ditty: ‘Here lies a schoolboy’s body, Alas he is no more, For he poured his \( \text{H}_2\text{O} \) into his \( \text{H}_2\text{SO}_4 \)’ (a reminder that a test-tube of water added to a flask of concentrated sulphuric acid – rather than vice versa – boils and sprays vitriol into the experimenter’s face).

The stench came from a leaky Kipps apparatus that made hydrogen sulphide, a gas capable of inducing a headache even greater than A-level chemistry itself. Today’s texts point out that ‘chronic exposure leads to memory loss, paralysis of facial muscles and blindness’, all of which we identified in our teacher (Dippy by nickname and – it must be said – by nature) with no thought of quite why he behaved in such an odd way or of why we felt so ill at the end of each class.

To settle their stomachs after the daily gassing the youth of the sixties could always sample a mouthful of some random poison by sucking too hard at a pipette. The frivolous tried it with mercury (which was too heavy to draw into the tube) and then threw the lethal liquid at their friends to watch it splatter. When that pastime paled, it was time to drop concentrated nitric acid into a neighbour’s pocket to sample the joys of a dissolving jacket. For biologists the rite of passage involved choking over a dogfish pickled in toxic formalin. Such fine disregard for safety went on after school and my first job was in a power station, where I was set to stripping asbestos off pipes without benefit of mask. Later, in a biochemistry lab, I splashed gloveless in acrylamide solution with no thought of nerve damage.

Such memories are amusing enough, but plenty of scientists have paid the price for rash behaviour. Today’s rules are irksome, but necessary. In schools, Kipps is dead (or locked in a fume cupboard), formalin is out and a worldwide move to get rid of mercury altogether is well under way. Asbestos has been banned and biology students spend their time watching videos rather than – heaven forbid – cutting up corpses.

All this may be inevitable, but the obsession with security can go too far. Nature has its own risks: hydrogen sulphide seeps from sewers and acrylamide is found in fried food (although hamburgers kill by clogging arteries rather than by poisoning nerves). Real worriers should avoid organic vegetables as the fungi found on unsprayed produce can cause cancer, and should lay off tea and coffee for the same reason.

Today’s researchers face a more subtle danger, for repetitive strain injury from filling in hazard reports is a real peril. Oliver Sacks’ editor is at particular risk, for the most extraordinary fact in his extraordinary book is hidden away in the acknowledgments. The manuscript was, they say, reduced from two million words – twenty solid paperbacks’ worth – to its present modest length. Its author may feel safe enough from the typist’s curse, for he claims to do his writing in the traditional way, but he should remember that the aniline dyes used in ballpoints may be poisonous when taken in excess. Sacks: stop sucking that pen!
1. Office staff and name changes

The Historian is delighted to document that EO Ms Amanda Pollard became Mrs Amanda Anstiss in early October 2011. Congratulations Amanda.

Amanda is ably assisted in the office by Gill Arnold, whom the Historian should have acknowledged in previous reports and by part-time administration assistant Sam Cushing (shared role between AVA and PetPEP).

The PetPEP team in 2011 has been as follows:

- Education Officer: Jana Pini
- Bookings and Administration Officer: Sam Cushing and
- Admin Assistant Camilla Broughton

Rachel Parker has assisted with administrative duties in the AVA PetPEP office on a casual basis.

Unfortunately, Jana resigned as Education Officer in February 2012.

Executive Committee 2011-2012

Dr Tony Thelander became President at the Divisional Conference in Townsville in March 2011 and succeeded Jodie Wilson. President-elect, Dr Tessia Guilfoyle, will assume the mantle of President at the Annual Meeting on the Gold Coast on 24 March 2012. The current Executive is as follows: Drs Bob Rees (Treasurer), Michael O’Donoghue (Hon Secretary) and committee members Bruce Pott, Andrew Easton, Patricia Clarke, Robert Hedlefs, Nigel Thomas and Carmel Kerwick. (Historian’s comment: my apologies to Carmel for leaving her off the list of Executive members last year).

The role of Honorary Newsletter Editor has again been more than capably filled by Dr David Paxton.

The Executive also held a Strategic Planning weekend at Coolangatta from 17-19 September 2011. It was a pleasure to have Professor Wayne Hein, new Dean of the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences at James Cook University present at the Meeting.

3. Flash back

- It seems like things veterinary in Queensland are prone to relocation: witness the veterinary school being relocated to Gatton, DPI/DEEDI from Yeerongpilly to Coopers Plains and Boggo Road, while the AVA Division move to Eight Mile Plains has already been commented on. At a recent visit to the Office Park at Eight Mile Plains, the Historian was amazed to see how the Office Park has filled up and is now undergoing extensions. Good move, Ex-President Jo Toia!

- The Gary Wilson/ Jodie Wilson dynasty, mark II.: I should have mentioned that while Jodie was Divisional President last year, she was also President of the BVP Branch, plus authored a document for the Division, under the banner of health and wellbeing, entitled ‘Suicide Prevention Training’. In relation to Jodie’s efforts, the word supererogatory springs to mind! Meanwhile father Gary headed up the AVA Emergency Response Taskforce that followed the Queensland floods in January 2011. Watch this space!

4. The University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science

UQ Veterinary School is now well established at Gatton and has completed two years of teaching at that campus. Professor Jonathan Hill stood down at the end of 2011 after four years as Head of School during which time he oversaw the move of the School from St Lucia to Gatton plus initiation of the American Veterinary Medical Association accreditation process. Professor Hill is to be congratulated for his leadership during this challenging period for the School. Associate Professor Glen Coleman has been appointed Acting Head of School until the position of permanent head has been advertised and filled.

It is also with some regret that the Historian notes the closing of the Goondiwindi Pastoral Veterinary Centre (PVC) at the end of 2011. The PVC was established by Dr George Osborne in 1965 and served the UQ Veterinary School as a teaching and research centre with distinction for a period of over 45 years. Its teaching role will now be assumed by an expanded dairy herd on the Gatton campus, beef properties in the surrounding area and also by students seeing mixed practice at the UQ Dayboro Veterinary Surgery.

On 21 October 2011, more than 170 alumni, industry collaborators and friends of the School gathered at Gallery of Modern Art to celebrate the School’s 75th anniversary.

Honorary UQ Professor John MacKenzie delivered the keynote address on the topical issue of emerging zoonotic diseases and viruses. Professor MacKenzie has recently chaired the WHO International Health Regulations Emergency Committee.

The AVA Dux of the School award for 2011, presented at the Graduation Dinner held on 7 December at Indooroopilly Golf

The year that was....... Honorary Historian’s report for 2011 - Dr Malcolm McLennan
Club, was awarded to Michelle Williams.

5. School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville

The James Cook University (JCU) program in veterinary science was awarded two full years’ accreditation by the AVBC in November 2011 and a review committee will return to the School in the first half of 2013.

Professor Wayne Hein (UQ 1976) commenced a 5 year term as Head of the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences and Dean of Veterinary Science in January 2011, succeeding Professor Lee Fitzpatrick who, as the inaugural Dean of Veterinary Science, had overseen the successful establishment of an undergraduate veterinary science course at JCU.

Undergraduate courses taught at the School include Bachelor of Biomedical Science, Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science and Bachelor of Veterinary Science. The School has just under 500 undergraduate students across all courses, with about 350 in the veterinary program and another 50 postgraduate student pursuing a variety of higher degrees by either coursework or research.

Several high-calibre academic staff were recruited to the veterinary program during the year, including Associate Professor Linda Johnson, who became head of the anatomy and pathology discipline, while new appointments were made in veterinary surgery, cattle medicine, animal health and production, clinical pathology and radiography. Fifty-one new veterinarians graduated from the School on 17 December 2011. Among 15 prizes awarded to the new graduates for academic achievement, 3 were sponsored by various AVA bodies as follows:

- AVA Prize for undergraduates in veterinary pathology - awarded to Cassandra Jayne McLucas
- North Queensland AVA Citizenship award - awarded to Kylie Jane Francis
- Dux of the School – awarded jointly to Kylie Jane Francis and Madeleine Dawn-Hilde Kelso (note that the Queensland AVA Division provided two awards for this prize)

6. Bachelor of Applied Science (Veterinary Technology), UQ, Gatton

There were 28 graduates from this program at the end of 2011 with the graduation dinner also being held at the Indooroopilly Golf Club. The Dux of the school was Ms Hayley Ogden, a veterinary nurse, now employed by the Animal Emergency Service at Underwood.

The Veterinary Technology program underwent a major curriculum review in 2011, resulting in the development of a new 3 year B Applied Science (Veterinary Technology) degree and a four year B Veterinary Technology and Nursing degree. This aligns the program with developments in the UK and North America.

Student numbers have swelled with 50 students entering Year 3 in 2012. Historian’s comment: Well done AVA Qld Exec member Trish Clarke!

7. AVA PetPEP

AVA PetPEP has now been operating for 21 years in Queensland and appears to be going stronger than ever.

Staffing: The Division notes with regret Jana Pini’s decision to resign and seek employment in the child care profession.

School activity: In 2011, AVA PetPEP coordinated a total of 403 school visits throughout Queensland reaching over 25,000 primary school students and teaching them the key messages of responsible pet ownership and how to stay safe around pets.

Supporter involvement: AVA PetPEP has continued to be actively and financially supported by individual veterinary practices, 16 local Councils, RSPCA Qld, and DEEDI. Throughout Queensland a variety of other animal care professionals, including Wildlife Groups, Assistance Dogs and local Dog Obedience Clubs support AVA PetPEP by volunteering their time to attend school visits.

Sponsorship: AVA PetPEP continued to receive financial support from both DEEDI and RSPCA Queensland in 2011 and is indebted to both organizations for their continuing financial support of PetPEP activities.

Other activities: AVA PetPEP was also promoted during the year at the following:

- 2011 Queensland Education Resource Expo held at Brisbane Convention Centre in August
- AVA Queensland Strategic Planning weekend at Coolangatta in September 2011
- UQ Trade Day, UQ Vet Tech presentation and both NSW and Queensland Divisional Conferences.
8. Branch Meetings and Conferences

Southeast Queensland Branch

The Southeast Qld Branch held two meetings during the year with contributions from Dr David Paxton in June and Dr Nina Kung in December 2011. Dr Kung spoke about the Hendra virus outbreaks that had occurred in both Queensland and NSW during 2011.

The above meetings were held at Biosecurity headquarters in Oxley.

We also said goodbye to Dr Sandy MacKenzie at the December meeting and thanked him for his untiring contributions as Honorary Secretary/Treasurer of the Branch over at least a 15 year period.

His place as secretary/ treasurer has been taken by Dr Phil Carter from the Tick Fever Research Centre at Wacol.

The Branch plans to hold 2 or 3 meetings during 2012 at a venue still to be decided, possibly AVA House at Eight Mile Plains.

Sunshine Coast Branch

The Sunshine Coast Branch held two dinner meetings during the year on 4 April and 8 July at Woombye with speakers Drs Geoff Robins and Tony Thelander respectively.

The 16th annual golf day was held on 5 August and attracted 75 golfers and a similar number attended the barbecue afterwards.

Dr Kim Evans completed a three year term as President and stood down at the Annual Meeting held in October 2011.

Central Queensland Branch

The Central Queensland Branch held its annual Conference at the Sandcastles Resort, Agnes Waters from 14-16 October 2011 and speakers included Drs Anne Thompson, Philip Moses, Kathleen O’Connell and Delissa Appleton.

Darling Downs and Southwest Queensland Branch

The Branch hosted a conference at UQ Gatton on 5 June 2011 with the theme of anaesthesia and analgesia for animals, small and large. This conference attracted 37 attendees.

The Branch also hosted a successful Roma Roundup on 25-26 August with 51 people attending.

North Queensland Branch

At the North Queensland Branch AM on 28 November, Dr Rod Gilbert succeeded Dr Dallas McMillan as Branch President. Previously, the Branch hosted a meeting on 10 October entitled Atopy and practice profitability.

At the AM and Conference David Lovell, representing the Veterinary Surgeons’ Board of Queensland (VSB), spoke about the goals and expectations of the VSB and answered questions directed to VSB matters.

Also at the AM, members expressed concerns about the quality and focus of veterinary nurse educational programs.

Brisbane Veterinary Practitioners Branch

This Branch continues to be the most social Branch and hosted a number of activities during the year including the President’s drinks held on 19 August at Teneriffe and the annual BVP race day on 3rd September at Eagle Farm race course in Brisbane*

The Branch held its annual conference from the 4-6 November in Hobart in association with the Tasmanian Division of the AVA.

*The historian recalls being present at Eagle Farm racecourse around the same time in 1994 in his capacity as swabbing veterinarian when a disease outbreak occurred which was subsequently to be known as Hendra Virus!

Student Branch (UQ and JCU)

Senior and Junior student reps at UQ were Ayrial Mammino (2011) with Tracey Gowen assuming the role in 2012.

Senior and Junior student reps at JCU were Callan Solari (2011) and Lachlan Strohfeldt assuming the role in 2012.

University of Queensland student activities

The historian suspects that UQ students at Gatton have had a full social life in 2011 with activities at pubs and the local bowls club featuring strongly on the social calendar.

During the year, AVA Qld sponsored several activities at Gatton including a year-long program known as the Equine
Seminar series held at the Equine Hospital at Gatton. The seminar series involved guest lecturers plus practising equine veterinarians visiting UQ Gatton every second Wednesday.

AVA QLD also sponsored several Bovine Group activities throughout the year including a cosmetic dehorning workshop in May and a hoof trimming workshop held in September. Other cattle events included a foetal ageing and pregnancy diagnosis day held in August followed by a foetal programming talk presented in September plus an evening program on dairy cattle welfare.

The Division also sponsored a SIG workshop week in early August which included seminars on companion animal topics.

Finally, the AVA sponsored the annual UQVSA ball held in Brisbane on Saturday 24 September.

James Cook University (JCU) student activities

The following notes were provided by Callan Solari:  JCU students participated in the Queensland Division Conference in Townsville in March 2011 and were invited to attend a lecture by the international guest speaker, Professor David Bennett from the University of Glasgow. Professor Bennett subsequently gave a lecture to JCU students entitled Introduction to Osteoarthritis which was very enthusiastically received by the students.

The students particularly enjoyed a happy hour which followed Professor Bennett’s lecture.

The following notes were provided by Lachlan Strohfeldt: AVA Queensland funded the third annual Rural Practitioners Weekend (RPW), attended by 60 eager students in September.

Lachlan and junior AVA representative, Regan Lynch are concerned about the variable AVA membership across each year at JCU and plan to conduct a membership drive early in 2012.

9. Hendra virus

All veterinarians in Queensland would be aware that a number of Hendra virus outbreaks in horses occurred in both Queensland and New South Wales in 2011 and in one of these cases near Brisbane a dog was found to be positive for Hendra virus antibodies. One further case of Hendra virus infection in a horse occurred in north Queensland in January 2012.

The Guidelines for veterinarians handling potential Hendra virus infection in horses, Version 4 were released by Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) in May 2010. AVA Queensland Division is now represented by Dr Tess Guilfoyle on the Interagency Group (BQ, WH&S, QH and EVA) charged with reviewing this document.

AVA Queensland, via Dr Tess Guilfoyle and Amanda Anstiss, is due to meet with BQ and EVA (Christine Smith) in a quarterly meeting scheduled for 22 March 2012 to review these guidelines.

10. Mentorship

It is pleasing to note that Hills Pet Nutrition and Cenvet have recently agreed to sponsor the Mentorship program during 2012. It is now to be called the AVA Queensland Graduate Support Scheme.

Mentors were invited to attend the Transition to Practice workshop held at UQ Gatton on 17th February and will also be invited to meet and great with mentees on Friday 23 March at the Gold Coast Conference.

11. Sponsorship

Provet became a Gold Education supporter of AVA Queensland in 2011 and their logo has been placed on the Grapevine and is on the Queensland Division homepage online. Provet agreed to sponsor one event for each Branch (SEQ Branch excluded) during the year and they were major sponsors for the Vet 2011 Casino Royale event held on 16 July 2011.

Minor sponsors for the Vet 2011 event included Investec and Boehringer.

12. Veterinary Surgeons’ Board (VSB) of Queensland

During 2011, AVA Qld met with representatives of the VSB on two occasions.

Division expressed concern about provision of contact details of emergency details for all registered veterinarians in Queensland.

Dr David Lovell attended the North Queensland Divisional Conference in 2011 as a VSB member and the VSB has requested that one of their members attend a meeting of each Branch during 2012 to present on VSB issues.

Professor Wayne Hein informed the Executive that a representative of the VSB attends the JCU campus at the beginning of the academic year to speak to incoming students.
13. Newsletter
A decision was made at the Divisional Strategic Planning Weekend at Coolangatta that the Newsletter (Queensland News) be provided to members digitally rather than as a hard copy. This will happen with the first edition of Queensland News in 2012.

14. Awards
The following awards were made at the AVA Annual Conference in Adelaide in May 2011:

- Fellow of the AVA: Robert Hedlefs
- AVA Meritorious Service Award (MSA): Dr Gaille Perry, AVA Qld Division President from 2002-2004 and Ms Patricia Coward, Principal Adviser (Occupational Health), WH&S Queensland.

15. Deaths
Queensland Division notes with great sorrow the following deaths during 2011:

- Keith Entwistle AM, died in May 2011 aged 72 years. Keith was the recipient of the Gilruth Prize, UQ Gatton’s Gold Medal and an Order of Australia award
- Karlene Bradley, died tragically in February 2011
- Louise Margaret Hedlefs, daughter of Robert and Debra, from cancer in March 2011
- Zoe Irwin, daughter of former Division President Sue Fowkes, from silent heart disease, in May 2011
- Grant Frazer, Director of clinical and diagnostic services at UQ Gatton, died tragically in July 2011.

16 Historian’s finale
Queensland Reds to win the Super 15 rugby competition for the second time in 2012, Queensland to win its seventh straight State of Origin series against NSW in 2012 and the Broncos and North Queensland Cowboys to fight it out in the NRL grand final!
The Committee members for 2011/2012 were Drs Trish Clarke, Sue Fowkes, Sandra De Cat, and Michael O'Donoghue, and student member Lachlan Strofeldt.

The Standing Committee on Veterinary Education held one committee meeting this year, on 7 February. The main foci of this committee are The University of Queensland Veterinary School, James Cook University (JCU), Continuing Education and Animal Care and Management Courses.

Lachlan Strohfeldt, JCU Senior AVA Student Representative: 2011 has been a fairly full-on year with a number of events taking place and strengthening the relationship between the AVA and the JCU veterinary student body. The year started with the AVA hosting a welcome barbeque and drinks for the new students in the first week of classes. This event was well attended by many hungry students, and also by several staff, local practitioners and Queensland Division EO Amanda Anstiss. With Townsville hosting the Queensland Division conference in March, JCU students were given the opportunity to attend a special guest lecture and also to stay on for happy hour, which provided a great opportunity to network and build up contacts. Several students also offered assistance in running the conference.

This year, with the funding allocated to the university by the AVA, we chose to invest into the Rural Practitioners Weekend (RPW), which was run for the third time. This September event was well attended, with a number of practical stations set up including eye ablation techniques for cattle, introductory equine dentistry, a small animal and exotic station specialising in wildlife care, and a station to test surgical skills and coordination with a series of basic but highly competitive challenges! We enjoyed a dinner and some tipsy tips, as well as the exchange of a few gifts. Sunday workshops included equine therapy and financial planning and small business management. The weekend was considered to be our best yet, with valuable learning experiences. I would like to sincerely thank the practitioners who gave their time, the organising committee members for their hard work, and the AVA for support and financial contribution. We look forward to expanding the RPW in 2012 so more students can participate.

One of the objectives of the outgoing senior AVA student representatives has been to boost the numbers of student members within the school, as we are aware that our membership level is below the national average. We found that many of the first year students were willing to become free online members, with some financial memberships received. For the other years, we have set out to promote the benefits of the AVA to students, however the response has been varied. I look forward to working with incoming junior rep Regan Lynch to conduct a membership drive early in 2012. It is shaping up to be yet another busy year.

Dr Sandra De Cat: Report from the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville: The James Cook University (JCU) Bachelor of Veterinary Science program was awarded two years full accreditation by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) in November 2011. The review committee is due to return to James Cook University in the first half of 2013.

At the start of the year we welcomed Professor Wayne Hein, the newly appointed Head of School and Dean of Veterinary Science. He has a strong background in research of nationally relevant animal diseases, having worked for AgResearch over the previous 12 years, most recently as the Director of the Hopkirk Research Institute.

New appointments at lecturer or senior lecturer level were made in veterinary surgery, cattle medicine, animal health and production, clinical pathology; anatomical pathology and radiography. Associate Professor Linda Johnson has been appointed as the new Head of Discipline of Veterinary Anatomy and Pathology. Several new general and technical staff were also recruited during the year.

The School farewelled the second cohort of Veterinary Science graduates in December 2011. Among the 51 graduates, 15 prizes were awarded for academic excellence and practical skill.

Many graduates have secured jobs in rural Queensland, with others scattered throughout the remaining states of Australia.

To further enhance the school’s precinct, a $10-million development program is currently underway. This includes a new state-of-the-art veterinary pathology suite and biomedical science teaching laboratory, new pig accommodation, an 80+ seat flexible teaching space as well as refurbishments to office space in an existing building. The redevelopment is to be completed by the second half of 2012.
Dr Patricia Clarke: B Applied Science (Veterinary Technology): There were twenty eight graduates from the B Applied Science (Veterinary Technology), The University of Queensland (UQ), in 2011. One hundred and forty guests celebrated the occasion at a graduation dinner held at the Indooroopilly Golf Club. Guests included Dr Tony Thelander, Jodi Mackinnon from the Veterinary Nurses Council of Australia, and Jo Culican, Director of The University of Queensland Biological Resources, as well as UQ staff, graduate family, and friends. The Dux of 2011 was Hayley Ogden, a veterinary nurse who has been employed by Animal Emergency Service, Underwood. Graduate employability has been very good to date with veterinary nursing being the most common employment destination. Previous graduates have also been employed by animal welfare agencies, animal research facilities, veterinary nutrition and pharmaceutical companies, or have established careers fields such as veterinary practice management, or veterinary nursing education. Several graduates are currently enrolled in postgraduate studies at Masters or PhD level at UQ.

Additionally, the Veterinary Technology program underwent a major curriculum review in 2011 with input sought from the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, as well as from the veterinary industry. This resulted in the development of a new three year B Applied Science (Veterinary Technology) degree and a four year B Veterinary Technology and Nursing degree. The four year bachelor degree with honours follows the lead of program in the UK and North America. All graduates from the four year degree will concurrently complete a Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing. Student numbers are on the increase with fifty students entering Year 3 in 2012.

Tracey Gowen, compiled with the assistance of 2011 AVA representative, Ayrial Mammino: UQ 2011: 2011 was a busy year at the UQ Veterinary School. Students were organising and attending extra-curricular activities left, right and centre and the AVA was not shy to help fund such events.

The AVA was involved in funding a year-long program known as the Equine Seminar Series held at the Equine Hospital at Gatton. The series involved guest lecturers and veterinarians from the field visiting the university every second Wednesday to teach and tutor the students in different areas of equine medicine. Such seminars included: neonatal diarrhoea, orthopaedic surgery, dermatology, shoeing and ophthalmology.

The AVA also funded several Bovine Appreciation Group events throughout the year. The first was the cosmetic dehorning workshop, held in May. This event was such a hit that another workshop was run in September which also involved hoof trimming exercises. Another extremely well received event was the foetal ageing and pregnancy diagnosis day held in August. This was shortly followed by a Bovine Foetal Programming talk in September as well as an evening seminar on dairy cattle welfare.

Small animal activities were also well catered for by the AVA, such as the SIG (special interest group) workshop week held early in semester two.

To wrap up the year and keep the students in good stead the AVA donated money towards the infamous UQ Vet Ball − one of the largest and best social events in the UQ Veterinary Student Association’s calendar.

In 2012 the first activity for the AVA at UQ will be the orientation day for the new students. This is a chance to introduce the students to the AVA and to the benefits of being a member of the organisation.

The students of the UQVSA and the SIGs at UQ are very appreciative of the support the AVA gives for these workshops, and welcome the support the AVA is offering for 2012 – sure to be an even better year than the last!

Dr Sue Fowkes: Report from Tafe: Below is a summary of last year’s Certificate IV veterinary nurse students:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number started</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number graduated</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed as veterinary nurses</td>
<td>17 One in London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in Vocational Placement clinics</td>
<td>10 All clinics very happy with student placement and will take more this year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed other</td>
<td>1 Went back to office job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not yet employed</td>
<td>1 Volunteering at RSPCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to track</td>
<td>2 Still working on this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled this year (2012)</td>
<td>25 To date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have spoken with all of the practices which took students last year and they were all happy.
Dr Carmel Kerwick has provided a link to a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for euthanasia of cane toads (*Bufo marinus*). Concerned readers should click here for the latest recommendations for this procedure.

The document was developed by the Vertebrate Pest Research Unit of the NSW Department of Primary Industry. The following are conditionally approved:

- Stunning followed immediately by decapitation
- Carbon dioxide gassing for large scale operations, 90+ per cent concentration for 4+ hours
- Hopstop, two sprays on the back of the cane toad. This proprietary aerosol spray contains 4 per cent chloroxylenol (found in Dettol) as the lethal principle and 67 per cent ethanol as an anaesthetic. The anaesthetic takes two minutes to become effective, hence the conditional approval. Cane toads should be confirmed dead before disposal.

Procedures/agents not approved include:

- Slow or rapid freezing
- Benzocaine
- Clove oil
- Dettol alone causes extreme distress
- Aqui-S, a common anaesthetic for fish.

**Editor’s Note**

There is the question of why people want to kill cane toads. In my (limited) experience it is simply because they like doing it. It never seems to affect toad numbers. A fellow student of mine eked out his cadetship by exporting toads to Melbourne, where they were (sadly) used in biology classes. In the epicentre of cane toad mania, the Northern Territory, a University of Sydney research centre is now marketed as a tourist attraction. Visit [www.canetoadsinoz.com](http://www.canetoadsinoz.com) to contact TEAM BUFO on how to holiday and learn some surprising facts. You’llnevanevaknowifyounevanevavisit.

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**Scratching the surface of insecticides - Dr Matt Landos, Director, Future Fisheries Veterinary Service Pty Ltd**

Dr Matt Landos has brought to the attention of *Queensland News* an article that suggests that imidocloprid, the synthetic nicotine insecticide which is used in some spot-on flea treatments for dogs and cats, as well as in broader contexts, has been shown to cause immune suppression in bees.

He is concerned that imidocloprid might be mechanically transferred to people, particularly children fondling treated dogs and cats.

Dr Landos recommends that readers consult an article by Frederick vom Saal calling for a ban in USA on endocrine disruptors. [Click here to view the article.](http://example.com)

Dr Landos is concerned that regulators are not addressing the immune-suppressive aspects of this chemical and backs Frederick vom Saal’s call for a paradigm shift in thinking for US federal regulators, who have not followed leads by States.

A search of the internet suggest that imidocloprid is safe because its neurotoxic effects in insects are blocked by the blood brain barrier in vertebrates. However, immune-suppression is a different matter.
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- Coorooa Vet Clinic, Sunshine Coast
  Dr Ben Poole
- Pacific Vetcare, Coffs Harbour
  Dr Stephen Deist & Dr Allan Hudson
- Moree Veterinary Hospital, Moree
  Dr Charles Bunce & Dr David Hunter
- Northern Beaches Veterinary Hospital, Mackay
  Dr Judy Lemmon

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Dr Mike Woodham,
Owner & Veterinary Surgeon
Sugarland Veterinary Clinic

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AVA member, Dr Allan McKinnon sent us the following twenty hints for being happy from the Dalai Lama.

- Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
- When you lose, don’t lose the lesson.
- Follow the three R’s:
  - Respect for self,
  - Respect for others and
  - Responsibility for all your actions.
- Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.
- Learn the rules so you know how to break them properly.
- Don’t let a little dispute injure a great relationship.
- When you realize you’ve made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
- Spend some time alone every day.
- Open your arms to change, but don’t let go of your values.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Live a good, honourable life. Then when you get older and think back, you’ll be able to enjoy it a second time.
- A loving atmosphere in your home is the foundation for your life.
- In disagreements with loved ones, deal only with the current situation. Don’t bring up the past.
- Share your knowledge. It is a way to achieve immortality.
- Be gentle with the earth.
- Once a year, go someplace you’ve never been before.
- Remember that the best relationship is one in which your love for each other exceeds your need for each other.
- Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
- If you want others to be happy, practice compassion.
- If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

I have always been impressed by the Dalai Lama’s infectious happiness under what seem unhappy circumstances. For those of you who, like me, have already swept your New Year’s resolutions under the carpet like so much Christmas glitter, the Dalai Lama’s hints show you can make them all over again.

In 1968 John Calhoun gave a “Frontiers of Science” lecture to the American Association for the Advancement of Science entitled “Space and the strategy of life”. In it he considered that human civilization has moved through various stages in order to manage the space in which we live, beginning with the birth of traditions some 40,000 years ago in the tradition-sapient stage. “The experience of things becomes transformed into concepts about them until evolution produces a conceptual space in which values are related to relationships between abstract ideas rather than to ways of behaving in relation to physical situations”. The ability to conceptualise space, as with a flower in a vase on a window-ledge, or keeping a companion animal, keeps us sane.

John Calhoun argued that we had left the scientific-exploitive stage and were then in the communication-electronic stage, and will need to move to a compassionate-systems stage by about 2018, when he predicted world human population would plateau at nine billion. Only with compassion will we be able to appreciate and understand complexity. Obviously, John Calhoun and the Dalai Lama would have been kindred souls and got on like the proverbial houses on fire, but it is currently hard to see much reciprocation at the global level.


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**Emergency animal diseases**

Want to know more about emergency animal diseases?

A one day private veterinary practitioner workshop on this topic will be held in Toowoomba on 28 April 2012.

Guest speakers from Biosecurity Queensland and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) will update participants on topical emergency animal diseases and surveillance programs. A wet lab will also be conducted. The workshop provides one unit of CVE/CPD structured training for each hour of participation (approximately six-seven units in total).

If you require any further information or would like to register, please contact Dr Mark Cozens on telephone 07 5453 5975 (mob: 0417 747 148) or email mark.cozens@deedi.qld.gov.au
The newly appointed Education Officer, Trevor Morrison, christened his role with a “dive-in-at-the-deep-end” approach by recently completing a five-day work trip to Central Queensland. Trevor visited key supporters in the Fraser Coast, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Biloela and Rockhampton Regions. This proved to be a fantastic opportunity for both Trevor and AVA PetPEP supporters to discuss the program and gather resources while allowing vets to discuss any issues relevant to their local community. Further trips are planned over the coming months including North Queensland, Kingaroy, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Greater Brisbane providing further opportunities to meet with both urban and rural-based stakeholders. Feedback from our vets in the program continues to confirm the importance of the program.

AVA PetPEP Growth
Term One proved to be a positive start to 2012 for AVA PetPEP with more than 90 School Visits held across Queensland whilst bookings for Term Two also look promising. The AVA PetPEP team has their eyes set on a target of educating 450 schools and 30 000 students for the year and are currently busy promoting the program to areas across the state.

AVA PetPEP will be active during the 2012 AVA Qld Division State Conference (Gold Coast) with a presentation on “Marketing Your Practice to the Community Using AVA PetPEP”. We wish everyone a rewarding conference and look forward to seeing you there.

Vale

Dr Keith John Dreghorn Astill in February 2012 at Bribie Island, aged 88 years, Fellow of AVA 1970, President Queensland Division 1961, long and distinguished service to the veterinary chemical industry.
Horse deaths puzzle

In October 2011, 22 horses died within days of each other at a property near Kooralbyn in south-east Queensland.

Agricultural scientist Kerry Marsh says tests in the United States on hair samples from two surviving horses led her to conclude that Johnson grass, and the cyanide it can produce, was to blame.

But Biosecurity Queensland, the government agency charged with investigating the deaths, is standing by its original diagnosis that tick paralysis or botulism was the cause.

Spokesman Jim Thompson says Johnson grass was considered by investigators but laboratory test results didn't show the presence of cyanide in the horse tissues which would be expected in cases of Johnson grass poisoning.

Please visit the site below to hear the interview on the ABC Country Hour 16 March 2012
http://www.abc.net.au/rural/qld/content/2012/03/s3455277

Schmallenberg Virus in Europe

A RNA Bunya virus, named Schmallenberg virus in November 2011, related to Shamonda, Akabane and Aino viruses, has recently caused congenital abnormalities (in some cases, high incidence) and diarrhoea in cattle, sheep, goats and bison in Europe.

It appears this virus is insect borne and transmitted in utero. Please visit www.oie.int/wahis for further information or the daff.gov.au webpage.

From the Executive Officer’s desk—Amanda Anstiss

As this Q News is being distributed, we are in final stages of preparation for our AVA Queensland Division Conference being held in conjunction with our Brisbane Veterinary Practitioners Branch on the Gold Coast this weekend 23-25 March. This is a great chance to be involved in a conference with a fabulous scientific program, catch up with friends and earn up to 15 CE points for the weekend. We thank our many conference sponsors for their great support – your support makes these events possible. We would particularly like to thank our platinum sponsor Hill’s who are sponsoring our international speaker Dr Sheri Ross. Dr Ross will be conducting the first of her sessions for all conference delegates on Saturday 8.00am - 8.30am titled “Future Directions in Veterinary Science—An Introduction to Haemodialysis”. There are still places available to attend this conference. Click here to register today.

Orientation Week has taken place recently at UQ and JCU. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to speak to the first year students at UQ and AVA representatives Dr Bruce Pott and Dr Robert Hedlefs, were involved in the events at JCU. These events provided a great opportunity to outline the role of the AVA and the benefits of being involved. Most of the students were very keen to join up and we welcome them to the AVA!

We have also attended a Transition to Practice event for fifth year students at the University of Queensland recently. A Mentor ‘Meet and Greet’ was held in conjunction with this event and final year students not already involved were encouraged to join in the AVA Qld Graduate Support Scheme (Mentor Program). We are very pleased to announce that in 2012, the AVA Graduate Support Scheme is being sponsored by Hill’s and Cenvet. A Mentor event will be held this Friday, 23 March in conjunction with our upcoming Conference. If you are already a mentor or are interested in becoming involved in the program and are coming along to the Conference, please join us at this event on Friday at 6pm.

The State Government has released a Discussion Paper on Management of dangerous and potentially dangerous dogs in Queensland. Click here for a copy of the discussion paper. AVA Qld has been invited to make a submission on this discussion paper. If you would like to provide input, please email comments to us at avaqld@ava.com.au by Friday 30 March, 2012.

We have recently welcomed a new staff member to the AVA Queensland Division team. Trevor Morrison has joined the AVA PetPEP Team as Education Officer. Some of our Central Queensland members may have already met Trevor as he has already been out and about meeting our AVA PetPEP supporters. Welcome Trevor!

I look forward to catching up with many of you at the Conference on the Gold Coast this weekend.
Canines really are man’s best friend - A research article forwarded by Dr Matt Landos, Director, Future Fishers Veterinary Service Pty Ltd

The potential dangers of household chemicals to pets may make a good model for studying diseases in humans according to a recently published article. Click on the link below to take you to the article.

**Household chemical exposures and the risk of canine malignant lymphoma, a model for human non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma**

Original Research Article
*Environmental Research*
Available online 4 January 2012

**Highlights**
- Case–control study of household environmental chemicals and risk of canine lymphoma.
- Two types of household environmental chemicals: flea/tick control and lawn care.
- Professionally applied pesticide significantly increased Canine Malignant Lymphoma (CML) risk.
- Use of owner applied insect growth regulators significantly increased CML risk.
- Certain lawn care chemicals may increase risk of CML and potentially human Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma.

**What’s On!**
Check out the AVA Events calendar providing you with an up-to-date list of upcoming events online

Go to the AVA website and click on the events tab!

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