

# *gentle* Doctor

Summer 2006 • Volume 20, No. 2

## A BRIGHT FUTURE

ISU's Equine Care

## CVM Q&A

with Dr. Brent Reimer

Remembering  
**ROBERT  
PHILBRICK**



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*Photo/Tracy Raef*

# New Program **Addresses** Veterinarian **Shortage**

By Tom Ligouri

While competition on the football field may keep Iowans and Nebraskans from agreeing on everything, a recently approved agreement between Iowa State University and the University of Nebraska – Lincoln will bring the two states together in addressing the region’s increasing need for veterinarians.

A new cooperative agreement in veterinary medical education between the two universities addresses the nationwide shortage in veterinarians, particularly in the areas of food safety and security, and food animal and public health, and will strengthen the veterinary resources of the region.

The agreement will draw on the resources of the states’ land-grant universities to increase the number of veterinarians with experience in food animal and public health. The two states lead the nation in red meat production, swine and egg production, and hold leadership positions in cattle on feed, and all cattle and calves.

Up to 25 students from Nebraska will enter a four-year study of veterinary medicine and attend the first two years of the program on the UNL campus. They will complete their final two years and receive their doctor of veterinary medicine degree at Iowa State. UNL students will

pay their normal tuition while at Nebraska and Iowa resident tuition while at Iowa State. UNL will pay the difference between resident and nonresident tuition for the final two years.

Prior to the agreement, Nebraska veterinary medical students would attend out of state schools and their tuition dollars would all leave the state. “The program provides revenue advantages to both states, and the students certainly benefit from the combined resources of the two schools,” said Dean John U. Thomson.

the two schools,” said Dean John U. Thomson.

“The program offers a truly regional approach to veterinary medical education,”

said Dean Thomson. “Our extensive food and small animal clinical expertise fits well with UNL’s strong cattle resources. Together we offer students an outstanding opportunity to learn from the best the country’s two leading food animal states have to offer. Our schools will also benefit from new opportunities for collaborative research and program development.”


The first students will enter the program in fall 2007 at UNL and arrive at Iowa State in fall 2009. 

Photo: University of Nebraska Great Plains Veterinary Educational Center



Photo/University of Nebraska



Photo/Tracy Raef

## On the Cover:

Equine veterinarians (clockwise) Eric Reinertson, Scott McClure, David Wong, and Brett Sponseller near the paddocks at Iowa State University’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital. *Learn more about the VTH’s equine medicine and surgery services on page 6.*

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# MESSAGE

## *From the Dean*

### Visions and Visionaries

During April 2005, we celebrated the college's 125th anniversary. Now as we are over halfway through this year, we are preparing to help Iowa State University celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2007.

There is a common thread in both anniversaries: they have been made possible by visionaries, who long ago recognized the important roles that agriculture, science, technology, education and veterinary medicine would play in the lives and well-being of the people of Iowa and its economy. They saw a need and took action to establish the first land-grant institution and the first state-funded college of veterinary medicine in the nation.

I'm sure many of you are like me. Despite the monumental changes that have occurred in just the short time that I have been privileged to be part of this profession, it is remarkable how true the foresight of the early visionaries has proven to be. They knew the importance of our profession then, but they had no way of knowing how vast and varied this profession would become.

During Homecoming this year we will officially break ground for the new Veterinary Teaching Hospital addition, our first major building project in 30 years. Now we are increasing our space by 25 percent with an addition designed to improve client service, patient care, and student learning, and to accommodate changing uses and technology well into the future. We would welcome your attendance on October 21 for the groundbreaking ceremony.

This is a \$51 million undertaking and it is being made possible by today's visionaries who continue to recognize the importance of veterinary medicine.


**4** *gentle* Doctor

The philanthropic generosity of our alumni and friends has made a difference and will be critical for us to successfully grow. A special thanks to people like Dr. Robert Philbrick, a longtime supporter of the college until his death this spring; Dr. Eugene and Linda Lloyd,

who have so generously provided the lead gift for the new Veterinary Teaching Hospital; Dr. Steven Juelsgaard, for his scholarship and building support; Dr. John and Doris Salisbury, who have been leaders with scholarships and providing an endowed chair; Dr. Scott and Nancy Armbrust, who have recently endowed a faculty professorship; the Iowa Pork Producers Association and Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, who have made significant contributions; and the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association continues to be a strong supporter of our efforts. The above are just a few of many college supporters. The list continues to grow.

The visionaries of the past may have underestimated our importance to the world, but they equipped us well to handle it. Today's visionaries may have different perspectives, but their appreciation for the importance of

veterinary medical education and the profession hasn't changed.

We appreciate this shared vision and your investment in it. Our goal is to provide an excellent return on this investment, and we intend to continue building on the lasting foundation that the visionaries of the last 150 years provided us. Our challenge is to make the next generation indebted to our contributions. The broad-based support that is provided to our college is gratifying and essential to our future. On behalf of the college, **I thank you!** 

*John U. Thomson*  
Dean

#### Today's Visionaries

##### Iowa State University

A university president and administration that have supported our college as we approach this critical time of development.

##### Students

Entrusting us to prepare them for a fulfilling profession, and rightly expecting valuable return on their investments.

##### Faculty/Researchers

Meeting today's challenges while preparing for a future that includes regionalized veterinary medical education.

##### Legislators

Who have enabled us to move forward with the VTH building and provided line item budget support for the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

##### Clients and Patients

Fee-for-service caseloads continue to grow, and improvement in our value as a resource will continue to increase along with staff and facilities.

##### Alumni and Friends

Whose generosity and support has helped us continue to realize our vision.



Dr. Eldon Uhlenhopp (left), interim associate dean for operations and outreach; and Dr. John U. Thomson (right) look at blueprints for the college's building renovation project with Mr. Brian Adams, building manager. *Photo/Dani Ausen*



a *bright* future  
is forecast for



# equine health care in Iowa

**C**orn, soybeans and pigs – that’s usually what comes to mind when describing Iowa. But, Iowa has a growing and thriving horse industry.



Drs. Linda Thompson (left) and Joan Howard, Veterinary Teaching Hospital's Equine Field Service.

## VITAL STATS: EQUINE CARE

**Average Number of Cases Per Year** 1,500

**Services Available** **Surgery:** Arthroscopy, Laparoscopy, Internal Fixation of Fractures, Laser Surgery, Skin Grafting  
**Intensive Care Unit, Isolation Unit**  
**Diagnostic:** Thermography, Ultrasonography, Scintigraphy, Video Endoscopy, Radiography  
**Reproduction/Therigenology**  
**Ambulatory Field Service**

**Staff** 6 Full-time DVMs  
2 DVM Surgery Residents  
1 DVM Intern

“Iowa has a lot of horses,” said Dr. Eric Reinertson, equine surgeon at Iowa State’s College of Veterinary Medicine. “Unlike Kentucky and other states where the horse population is concentrated in specific areas, Iowa’s horse population is spread across the state. It doesn’t get your attention.” Dr. Reinertson adds that there’s not one predominant breed. Iowa has a variety of breeds ranging from draft horses to thoroughbreds and everything in between. “Iowa has a lot of good horse breeders and producers who often provide good horses to owners in other states,” Dr. Reinertson said.

“There are 199,220 horses in Iowa,” said Peggy Miller, PhD, associate professor of animal science at Iowa State. “And, they are valued at \$1.027 billion. The horse industry in Iowa and the United States is a little-recognized giant.”

Iowa horse owners, like horse owners across the country, want and demand the best care for their animals. The Equine Medicine and Surgery Program at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) provides horse owners with advanced facilities and equipment not always available from private practitioners. “When I was in private practice in Michigan, I often referred patients to the state’s veterinary teaching hospital because of the facilities and number of staff they had to care for complex cases,” said Dr. David Wong, DACVIM,

and head of the equine medicine section at the VTH. “At Iowa State, we have imaging equipment and facilities that I could not afford in private practice. We serve as an adjunct facility for the practitioner.”

“The building *renovation* project *will add* facilities and capabilities that *will benefit* our referring *veterinarians* and *horse owners* in Iowa.”

As a referral hospital for the state’s equine practitioners, the Veterinary Teaching Hospital sees about 1,500 horses per year. Most of the horses examined and treated at the VTH are brought by trailer from within a 300- to 400-mile radius, from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, western Illinois and northern Missouri. “The majority of our caseload, though, is from Iowa,” Dr. Reinertson said.

### The Future

“The building renovation project will add facilities and capabilities that will benefit our referring veterinarians and horse owners in Iowa,” Dr. Reinertson said. Site work for the new facilities will begin in September, with an official groundbreaking

during Homecoming in October.

“We’re looking forward to the covered lameness examination area that will be built,” Dr. Reinertson said. “The renovation will also add more space to the complex. We’ve got plenty of stalls, but need more space for our intensive care unit and isolation facilities.”

The additional space will also be available to house new equipment. “Currently, when we need a treadmill to assess a horse’s respiratory or muscular skeleton, we truck the horses across campus to the equine barn in the animal science department. With the renovation, we’ll have room for an equine treadmill.”

Drs. Wong and Reinertson both agree that a new digital radiography system is high on the priority list of new equipment. “Digital radiography delivers sharper images faster. We can see images of bone and soft tissue with one radiograph,” said Dr. Reinertson. “These types of systems also allow us to make digital images for our clients.

“There’s a lot of potential for growth in the ambulatory and theriogenology areas of the equine service at the VTH,” Dr. Reinertson said. “The building project will give us the opportunity to expand so we can do more for our referring veterinarians and horse owners in Iowa.” [ed](#)



## Equine Surgeon

### Continues Pioneering Research On Shock Wave Therapy

Seven years after his initial foray into shock wave therapy for horses, Dr. Scott McClure continues to see value in its use. Dr. McClure, board-certified equine surgeon and chief of the equine surgery section at the College of Veterinary Medicine, first used extracorporeal shock wave treatment after a manufacturer

re-calibrated a shock wave machine originally designed for humans to specifications ideal for horses. Back in 1999, Dr. McClure was only the second equine veterinarian in the United States to use the innovative therapy.

Unlike its name, shock wave therapy actually uses pressure waves to penetrate the soft tissues and stimulate healing in solid tissue and bones. The advantage of using shock wave therapy is the clinician can precisely target the area to be treated, as well as the frequency and pressure level of the

wave. And, most importantly, it's non-invasive.

ESWT can be used to decrease the lameness associated with navicular syndrome in horses. Other conditions that benefit from shock wave treatment include stress fractures and suspensory desmitis.

Photo/Tracy Raef



## Breathing Easier

Worried about their miniature horse's labored breathing, Acey and Kay Haroldson brought seven-year-old Sassy to Iowa State University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The diagnosis was tracheal collapse. Tracheal stents were placed the length of her trachea to keep Sassy's trachea open. "We were able to help Sassy in large part because of the dedication and commitment of Sassy's owners," David Wong said. "The Haroldsons noticed Sassy's respiratory distress early on."

Photo/Dani Aussen



## A Good Fit is Good Medicine

A good shoe is critical to a horse. It's even more critical to encourage healing after surgery and treatment for foot problems. At Iowa State University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital, Dan White is the equine clinician's best ally in helping horses recover from foot diseases such as laminitis and navicular syndrome, fractures and other injuries of the foot or leg.

Mr. White is a certified journeyman farrier, the highest level of certification available. He learned his craft in Kentucky, attending farrier school and working as an apprentice for three years. An Iowa native, Mr. White joined the staff at the college's Veterinary Teaching Hospital in 1999.

His desire to be a farrier began when he owned horses of his own. "The farrier I was using for my own horses was unreliable and inconsistent, so I thought I'd learn to do it myself," Mr. White said. "Initially, I was only taking a 12-week course, but as my interest and experience grew, it turned into a three-year apprenticeship."



Photo/Dani Aussen

At the VTH, Mr. White sees over 700 horses a year. He trims and measures the hooves, then begins the process of fitting them for shoes. For most, the shoes are custom-built to correct foot problems. He may spend 15 minutes with a horse or more than six hours, depending on the condition of the horses' feet. With such a large caseload, no one particular case stands out in Mr. White's mind, but one disease continues to be a challenge. "Laminitis cases in general are the most difficult, challenging and heartbreaking horses to manage," Mr. White said. "The condition is ever-changing day-to-day. And, no two cases are alike."

About his job, Mr. White said, "I enjoy the opportunity I have to work with knowledgeable staff and veterinarians from across the country, as well as contributing to the knowledge of future veterinarians. The challenge that comes with the variety of cases I see, and the reward of the successful cases make each day enjoyable."

### **What makes a good surgeon?**

Huge ego, stunningly good looks, and a full head of beautiful hair. Seriously, a good surgeon has to be completely honest and realistic with what he or she is able to do. I believe the most important aspect of our job revolves around presenting pet owners with treatment options, and expected outcomes with each of those options. A surgeon can't "sugar-coat" things. Contrary to the mantra "a chance to cut is a chance to cure," it is imperative that a surgeon knows when to go for it on 4th down, and know when it is time to punt. There are times when you have to explain to the pet's owner that you are unfortunately not going to be able to do them or their pet any favors by doing surgery, and I would encourage people not to hesitate in garnering a second opinion when major surgery is recommended.

### **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Teaching. It's the reason I'm here. I suspect that many surgeons, myself included, are somewhat adrenaline junkies. I can still remember my very first gastric dilatation-volvulus surgery, and I can never re-live those "firsts" again. But watching students and residents perform a procedure such as GDV correction for the first time, allows me to relive those moments again. I enjoy watching the look on their faces and in their eyes when they understand a surgical concept and understand that they can do surgery, too. That's far and away the best part of my job.

# CVIM

## Dr. S. Brent Reimer

Assistant Professor and Soft-Tissue Surgeon

### **What is the most difficult aspect of being a surgeon?**

It has to be dealing with unhappy outcomes and treatment failures. There are plenty of ghosts in my closet – cases that have bad outcomes. I still remember them to this day. Whether the outcome was within my control or not, they still bother me. I don't forget a loss. But, physical activity helps me to relieve some of the stress associated with the job.

I tell the students that it is healthy to feel regret or sadness toward a patient. Bottom line, we're in this profession because we love animals. If we lose the empathy we have toward the patient or the owner who has to deal with that loss or sad news, then I believe we have lost a significant piece of why we are what we are.

### **What is your favorite surgical procedure?**

I would have to say the laryngeal tie-back procedure for canine laryngeal paralysis. A patient comes in the hospital and has significant difficulty breathing. You can perform a 20-minute procedure and the effect is seen immediately when they recover from anesthesia. There's no waiting for results; it's instant gratification and you have relieved a significant amount of distress from a dog's daily life.

# Q&A



## What is your least-favorite procedure?

One of the most difficult is removing urinary stones from the ureter of a cat. Unfortunately, this is a disease which we are seeing with a staggering increase in frequency within the feline population. In cats, the ureters are four-tenths of a millimeter in diameter. There's zero room for error and they can sustain significant complications.

## What are some of the more uncommon cases that you've seen?

Two different schnauzers that had gastrointestinal obstructions after eating acorns. If I owned a schnauzer, I think I would not move into a neighborhood with oak trees in it.

Over the years, I've removed all sorts of items from animals, including several pairs of underwear. Sometimes you learn more about a client than you would really care to know.

When I was a resident, a Doberman named Lyle was on his fourth bout of having an intestinal obstruction from eating parts of a tennis ball over a three-year time period. The owners had removed every tennis ball from in and outside the house, but Lyle continually astounded them with his knack for finding tennis balls. I found that an amazing feat and cannot understand why he was so obsessed.

## What type of student do you like to teach?

I look at the student's attitude. I don't care what the GPA, IQ, or SAT score is. I most enjoy a student with a good attitude who wants to learn and have fun. I also like to see students who help their classmates during a rotation. If a classmate is swamped with eight cases and another has only two, nothing is better than the one with the lighter load helping the other student without being prompted. I also like students to be enthusiastic about their cases and like to see that they have read up on the patients' conditions.

## If you could, what would you change about teaching surgery?

Iowa State has a strong curriculum in teaching surgery. We should be proud of that. I'm proud of it, and I have personally benefited from the curriculum. Before going through the surgery portion of the curriculum when I was a student, I wanted to be a mixed animal practitioner back home in Dubuque, Iowa. But, when I started taking the surgery courses, a spark turned into a fire, and that fire became my future. If you look at the surgeons across the United States, there are a

*Iowa State* has a strong curriculum in *teaching surgery*.

We should be proud of that.

I'm proud of it!

lot of them that come from Iowa State. We turn out more than our fair share of surgeons, and that's a direct reflection on the college's commitment to teaching surgery. Is my goal to turn every student into a surgeon? No, but my goal is to give them the opportunity to see if surgery is a good fit for them.

A change I'd like to see is that every student have the optimal number of cases that maximizes their experience but doesn't compromise their learning because they are too busy. This is essentially impossible due to the unpredictability of the schedule of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. One of our constraints in teaching is the types and numbers of cases that come into small animal hospital. To facilitate learning, however, we ask the students to scrub up for another student's surgery so everyone can observe and learn from many of the procedures.

## Do you ever get nervous about a surgery?

Definitely. There are certainly patients and owners that you just plain connect with, and with whom you develop a really good relationship. When that happens, I find myself becoming personally involved and inwardly rooting for the patient intensely and wanting the best outcome, possibly against all odds. It is in these situations that

I find that I can become most nervous. I'd be shocked if I lost that baseline of respect and fear that something bad can happen whenever performing surgery.

As a teacher, I find it easier to instill confidence into a student who is possibly not confident enough, than to teach someone who's overly confident to back that confidence level down a notch or two. Persons who are overconfident may not realize that they are in a situation that is over their heads. They may go through life encumbering problems that could have been prevented had they asked for advice or help.

## Do you work on your own pets?

I have three morbidly obese cats. I could work on them in an emergency, but given a choice, I prefer not to. I wouldn't be objective enough.

## Any pet peeves?

When patients are referred to by their afflictions. The "gall bladder dog" or the "hip dog." I always make an effort to refer to patients by their names. It's a sign of respect and it's important to me that I do that.

## Are good surgeons born or can they be made?

When I was a resident, a mentor once told me that "Brent, you can train a monkey to be a surgeon, you just have to be able to get along with the monkey for three years." I believe a good surgeon can be made. Being a surgeon requires a strong work ethic and a baseline of manual dexterity and hand/eye coordination. A student can learn the surgical maneuvers and movements with time. I'm still learning and will continue learning. I still hope I'm learning when I'm 70 years old; otherwise, life would become boring. *ed*

## About Dr. Reimer:

Dr. Reimer received his veterinary degree from Iowa State University in 1999 and completed his residency at the University of California, Davis. He is board-certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons.

# COLLEGE NEWS



All Photos courtesy of Jolesch Photography

## *Congratulations* Class of 2006

**One** hundred and six veterinary students were conferred the title Doctor of Veterinary Medicine at the 2006 Commencement Ceremony on May 6. Dr. Darrell Neuberger ('77), president of the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association, led the graduates in

the time-honored recitation of the Veterinarian's Oath, signaling their admission into the veterinary profession. To date, the college has educated and trained more than 6,000 veterinarians who have represented all segments of the profession across the country and around the world. [ed](#)

# Former Plum Island Director Delivers 2006 Commencement Address

“Veterinary medicine has dramatically evolved from its original focus on the horse,” said Dr. Beth Lautner, former director of the Department of Homeland Security’s Plum Island Animal Disease Center and newly appointed director of the USDA’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa. “The more than 6,000 graduates of Iowa State’s College of Veterinary Medicine have been an integral part of creating the veterinary profession that exists for you today. It is your responsibility after you cross this stage today to be part of creating new opportunities for those that follow you.”

Sharing her thoughts on what it means to be a professional, Dr. Lautner (MSU ’78) described the four essential attributes of a professional, first described by former AVMA president Dr. Mary Beth Leininger.

“The first attribute of a professional is that you consider your career choice to be a calling,” Dr. Lautner said. “Companion animal practitioners through caring for family pets make a significant contribution to the emotional health of children and adults. I know that my 100-year-old, blind aunt has her quality of life enhanced by the cat that strolls in her nursing home room and jumps in her lap.

“Those with a calling to food-supply veterinary medicine are an integral part of assuring a safe, wholesome, secure food supply. In both mixed and swine practice, I never forgot that while I was focused on care for the individual animal or herd, I was also part of the food production system and my prevention and treatment plans must always acknowledge that.”

Dr. Lautner highlighted the second attribute of a professional – lifelong learning. “I started college with a slide rule and a manual typewriter. Computers were mainframes that required large boxes of punch cards to run simple programs. As we look ahead to nanotechnology and nanomedicine, remote sensing, genomic medicine, ecosystem management, and beyond, you will have your own slide rule, typewriter and notes to cast aside and more to learn.



Photo/Jolesch Photography

“The third attribute of a professional is the common culture and values that link you with your colleagues. For ten years, I was part of a group of eight veterinarians in Canada and the United States that visited each other’s practices and constructively critiqued the health programs in place. Not only did we learn from each other, but we provided a network of support as we addressed common issues and challenges in our practices and careers.

“The fourth attribute of a professional is adherence to a code of ethics,” Dr. Lautner said. “Your actions now impact how others may judge or view not just you, but the entire veterinary profession.”

Dr. Lautner described the fifth attribute that she would add to the list of four – “Pay it forward,” the title of a movie produced in 2000. “You today have many opportunities and career paths as a veterinarian because the veterinarians that have gone before you improved upon what was and created what was not yet.”

She encouraged graduates to be leaders in whatever aspect of veterinary medicine they are in. “Explore new ways that veterinarians can contribute to meeting society’s needs.” [ga](#)

# ISU Dermatology

## Expands Consultation Services

*The* Dermatology Service of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital is expanding its consultation services to provide more efficient and effective consultations for practitioners. The new service encourages practitioners to e-mail consultations to a specific service e-mail address. These will be reviewed daily by the dermatologist on duty and a response will be sent out that day. The veterinarians in the dermatology section welcome (and really appreciate) attachments of a few images when consultation concerns a specific patient or disease.

The dermatology consultation address is: [dermconsult@iastate.edu](mailto:dermconsult@iastate.edu).

“One of our goals is to provide accurate, concise information to our Iowa practitioners and alumni of the college to help them improve the quality of their practice,” said Dr. Jim Noxon, professor and board-certified veterinary internist. “We believe we can speed up the response time for consultations and improve our ability to help Iowa veterinarians with this service.” The service will be available at no cost to veterinarians/practices that refer cases to the Dermatology Service of the VTH and to Iowa State alumni outside of Iowa.

The Dermatology Service has expanded in numbers and expertise in the past two years, with the addition of Dr. Elizabeth May, diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Dermatology. “The practice of dermatology is such a visual experience, thus this consultation service will most definitely enhance our ability to communicate effectively with practitioners,” Dr. May said. “While we still enjoy interacting on a personal basis over the telephone, the ability to exchange ideas using digital images and other such materials clarifies and provides reference for the recommendations.”

The service remains a national resource for dermatologic problems of companion animals, with an emphasis on ear disease, allergies, and bacterial diseases. “Our resources include the latest, up-to-date equipment, including laser and the latest video otoscopes, spiral computed tomography for accurate evaluations of the middle and inner ear, and a plethora of specialists to consult on neurologic, medical, ophthalmologic, or surgical complications of skin and ear disease,” Dr. Noxon said. [ga](#)



Drs. Jim Noxon and Elizabeth May examine Buffy, a VTH patient.

# Homecoming 2006

The College of Veterinary Medicine and the Veterinary Medicine Alumni Association at Iowa State University invite you to Ames for the annual Homecoming festivities!

## Friday, October 20

**7:00 AM** Stange Award Breakfast – Gateway Hotel  
RSVP necessary!

## Saturday, October 21

**9:00 AM** Doors open for registration  
**TBA** Official Groundbreaking Ceremony for VTH

**9:30 AM to 12:30 PM** Tours of the Vet Med Complex

**11:00 AM to 12:30 PM** Homecoming BBQ

**1:00 PM** ISU vs. Texas Tech  
(Kick-off time subject to change)

For a reservation form, visit the college's Web site at  
<http://www.vetmed.iastate.edu>.





## West

### named to Armbrust Professorship

**Dr.** James West was named the first Scott and Nancy Armbrust Professor of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University. He received his appointment during a ceremony at the Knoll on May 15, 2006.

A noted expert in bovine reproduction and embryo transplant, Dr. West's work has significantly improved the productivity and quality of dairy herds worldwide. He achieved international recognition for his innovation and expertise in bovine embryo transfer. He and his wife, Mary, established and operated Westwood Embryo Services in Waverly, Iowa. The company provides embryo transfer and dairy herd health services in Iowa and Minnesota and exports frozen embryos to more than 15 countries on four continents.

Dr. West joined the faculty at Iowa State University in 2005 as a clinician in the department of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine. Since joining the college, Dr. West has established an embryo transfer service that provides veterinary students and practitioners with training in reproductive diagnosis, surgical procedures and embryo transfer, areas that are significantly important to the productivity and profitability of today's purebred beef and dairy industries.

"Dr. Armbrust is an outstanding bovine veterinarian and is recognized as a true leader in the development of the international marketing of bovine embryos," Dr. West said. "In addition, Scott has bred and developed several of the greatest Holstein cows of the past 20 years. Scott and Nancy's generous gift will

**This page, from the top:** Iowa State University President Gregory Geoffroy presents Dr. James West with the professorship medallion; The West family, from left: daughter Anne Burmeister and her son Benjamin, Dr. James West, his wife Mary, daughter Heather Greenlee, PhD, and son-in-law Dr. Justin Greenlee; Dr. West's colleagues from the college's department of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine at the medallion ceremony and reception; **Opposite page:** Iowa State President Gregory Geoffroy presents Dr. Scott and Nancy Armbrust with the medallion reserved for professorship sponsors. *Photos/Bob Elbert*



support Iowa State's commitment to educating and training well-prepared food animal veterinarians."

Prior to founding Westwood Embryo Services in 1979, Dr. West was a partner in the Waverly Veterinary Clinic for three years, providing bovine and equine reproduction and herd health services. After graduating from Iowa State University with a veterinary degree in 1971, he served in the U.S. Army, reaching the rank of captain.

Dr. West is an international lecturer on embryo transfer. He has also trained veterinarians from Italy, Germany, Holland, China, Mexico, India, Brazil and Russia on the techniques of bovine embryo collection, transfer, freezing and export.

He is an active member of the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association, the American Association of Bovine Practitioners and the American Veterinary Medical Association. [ga](#)

## THE **SCOTT** AND **NANCY ARMBRUST** PROFESSORSHIP

*The* newest endowed professorship at the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Scott and Nancy Armbrust Professorship, was established by the Armbrusts in 2006 to advance the field of bovine production medicine and/or bovine reproduction.

"The field of embryo transfer and genetics is increasingly important to cattle breeders and dairy producers," said Dr. John U. Thomson, dean of veterinary medicine at Iowa State. "We are very appreciative of the Armbrust's generosity in endowing this professorship. This endowment will deeply enrich our research efforts and enable a deserving faculty member to excel in this field."

"The endless support and encouragement of the veterinary medicine faculty at Iowa State have been instrumental in leading me to a unique career path," said Dr. Scott Armbrust. "Providing this endowed professorship is small repayment for the impact Iowa State University and the College of Veterinary Medicine have had on our lives." Dr. Armbrust decided to endow a professorship after hearing Dr. Thomson's comments on faculty support during the college's 125th anniversary gala in April 2005.

Dr. Armbrust knew he wanted a career as a veterinarian as a young boy growing up on his family's registered Holstein farm in Nebraska. His

parents, Willis and Dolores, provided him with the direction and support to attend Iowa State University where he received his veterinary degree in 1975.

After graduating from veterinary college, Dr. Armbrust was a dairy practitioner for seven years in Wisconsin. When he started practicing, the technology of bovine embryo transfer was in its infancy. He was one of the first veterinarians in Wisconsin to practice embryo transfer exclusively. Dr. Armbrust was a pioneer in establishing the European bovine embryo market and he is internationally recognized for his expertise in bovine genetics and embryo transfer. Since 1982, Dr. Armbrust has owned and

operated Paradocs Embryo Transfer, Inc., located in Green Bay, Wisc.

Dr. Armbrust met his wife Nancy at Iowa State University. Mrs. Armbrust graduated in 1973 with a degree in food science. Her first job after graduation was with the Pillsbury Company. She later joined the University of Wisconsin Extension 4-H staff as a youth agent. Mrs. Armbrust is currently a human resources executive for Schreiber Foods. She has been recognized for her contributions to the Green Bay community.

The Armbrusts have two sons, Matthew (UW-Milwaukee '04) and Kurt (Brown University '07). [ga](#)



# Teaching the Teachers

**“In** higher education, recent graduate students and residents often find themselves in a faculty position unprepared for all the duties that they face,” says Jared Danielson, PhD, interim director of curricular and student assessment at Iowa State’s College of Veterinary Medicine. “One of the duties that they are least prepared for is teaching. They are usually brilliant people but often they have no formal training in how to teach and how to make learning happen.”

To help teach the teachers, Dr. Danielson has developed an experimental course on teaching and learning in veterinary medical education. The course, to be offered this fall, will help graduate students become better teachers. “I’m not going to be able to give the students a master’s level understanding of teaching nor a certificate level of understanding such as might be associated with certifying K-12 teachers,” Dr. Danielson said. “I do hope to provide them with a good understanding of how students learn – how it happens and how to facilitate it.”

One of the first lessons the students in Dr. Danielson’s class will learn is that they need to figure out what they want to teach, then teach it, and test it. “A frustration for students comes from teachers who lecture about one thing, but the test never covers that. For example, if I tell my students that the learning goals for the class are X, Y, and Z, but I teach A, B, and C in the class, it doesn’t promote learning.”


Another important aspect in teaching is getting the student involved in a relevant

application of the information learned. “That’s easier to do in the clinics, for example, where the student is doing a physical examination of an animal and diagnosing it,” Dr. Danielson said. “It’s more difficult to do earlier in the veterinary curriculum because everything is theoretical. It takes a lot of creativity. The more teachers can come up with specific ways for students to apply what they are learning, the more students will be able to remember the information long-term.”

When is the best time for the student to apply the information they learned? Right in the classroom. “One way is by having the students read assigned material before the class and come to class prepared to take a quiz on the material,” Dr. Danielson said. “After the quiz, they immediately begin some sort of activity to apply the newly acquired knowledge.”

At the College of Veterinary Medicine, a few faculty members are already using this type of learning process. “Dr. Danielson is a gifted teacher, instructional designer, educational researcher and evaluator,” said Dr. Holly Bender, associate professor of veterinary pathology at the college. “We have been collaborating for eight years and finding creative solutions for knotty instructional challenges. He has helped me find effective solutions through team-based learning and other strategies in the classroom. These strategies are consistently student-centered and promote active learning.”

In some higher education settings, such as community colleges, the product sold is teaching and learning. In the case of community colleges, the instructors have to help students who may not be the top students get up to speed on a subject. So the instructors have to be able to teach, explains Dr. Danielson. “In contrast, universities that can be extremely selective in their admissions processes can recruit faculty based on research ability or some other factor besides teaching, because the students they admit are more likely to succeed no matter what. As a result, good teaching can sometimes be de-emphasized in such settings. All students, however, no matter how well-prepared they are, will always benefit when their instructors make the effort to learn how to teach well.

“A PhD is a credential that you have extensive knowledge in your discipline,” said Dr. Danielson. “It’s a critical requirement to teaching, but having that information doesn’t mean that the instructor will be able to teach it effectively. This course is designed to help graduate students become effective instructors.” 



Photo/Dani Ausen



Photo/IPPA

## IOWA AGRICULTURE Organizations Invest in College Growth Program

Two of Iowa's leading livestock and agricultural groups recently contributed gifts to the College of Veterinary Medicine's teaching hospital and laboratories building project.

Gifts from the Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA) and the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF) will help the college expand its physical space by 25 percent, allowing the college to better meet the needs of 21st century livestock producers and a growing student population. The building project is the highest priority for fundraising in the college. Phase I will include large animal isolation unit, large animal surgery unit, an intensive care unit and an imaging area.

"The Iowa Pork Producers Association has had a long and successful partnership with the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine and is pleased to contribute \$200,000 to the college's current renovation and expansion project," said Gene Ver Steeg, DVM, president of the IPPA. "The IPPA Board of Directors recognizes the importance of the college to the pork industry and wants to help ensure its continued success. By enabling Iowa State University to continue providing an adequate supply of swine veterinarians, pork producers will be assured of having the quality support needed to address the challenges they face. And, without the work of the diagnostic laboratory and the research conducted by the college, the ability to diagnose and treat diseased animals is greatly diminished. The College of Veterinary Medicine is important to the future of the pork industry and IPPA is proud to be a partner."

Iowa Farm Bureau Federation President Craig Lang, commenting on the \$100,000 contribution from the IFBF, said: "Iowa is an agriculture state and the IFBF's goal is to help the agricultural industry flourish as much as possible by enhancing or growing new markets for farmers. One key to that is having a successful and innovative veterinary medical facility to train veterinarians on the latest in livestock care. We are fortunate to have the college in our neighborhood and are pleased to support its renovation efforts."

"The gifts are an investment that will give back to the IPPA and IFBF for years to come," said Dr. John U. Thomson, dean of the veterinary college. "We're grateful for their support and look forward to working with them to serve the state's agriculture community of producers and farmers."

For more information about the building project, please contact Rich Bundy, vice president of development, at [rbundy@iastate.edu](mailto:rbundy@iastate.edu) or (515) 294-9088. [iastate.edu](#)

Photo: Dean John Thomson receives contribution from the Iowa Pork Producers Association. From left, Leon Sheets, IPPA vice president of market development, John Weber, IPPA vice president of resources, Steve Kerns, IPPA past president, Dave Moody (back), IPPA vice president of operations, John Vossberg, IPPA vice president of producer services, Gene Ver Steeg, IPPA president.

## A Veterinarian's

# Love Affair



**Dr. Robert Philbrick** retired from small animal practice in 1976. He continued his philanthropic work throughout this retirement, committed to supporting the college. A few months before his death, he volunteered to serve as a member of the campaign team that will support the college's efforts to secure private gifts for high-priority initiatives in the coming years.

**Dr.** Robert Philbrick ('44) had a love affair with his wife, Doris, for 72 years. "I met Robert, a native of California, when I was in third grade and he was in the fifth grade," Mrs. Doris Philbrick said. "We would have been married 65 years this August." Dr. Philbrick, a long-time supporter of the college, died in April, a few months before his wedding anniversary.

Mrs. Philbrick has a lot of memories of her husband, as a hard-working man and wonderful husband. She confides that Dr. Philbrick had a second love – the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine. "Robert applied to the veterinary colleges at Michigan State University and Iowa State University," Mrs. Philbrick said. "He received an acceptance letter from Michigan State University, but we hadn't heard from Iowa State where he really wanted to attend

veterinary college. Our friends had given us a going-away party and we were packing up the car to head for Michigan State when he received the acceptance letter from Iowa State. We drove to Ames, Iowa.

"Robert was so happy that he got that letter," Mrs. Philbrick said. "He always bragged about Iowa State. We enjoyed our years in Ames and we met lots of good friends. We'd always come back to Ames for Homecoming to renew our friendships at the college. Last year was the first that we weren't able to attend because Robert was ill."

One of the friendships that the Philbricks developed was with Dr. Frank Ramsey ('46) and his wife, Joyce. "Robert greatly admired Dr. Ramsey," said Mrs. Philbrick. "Dr. Ramsey and Robert were veterinary students, a couple years apart, in veterinary college. They both entered veterinary college as older students." It only seemed natural that Dr. Philbrick began his philanthropic work with Dr. Frank Ramsey to establish the Veterinary Endowment Fund, which has become a significant source of funding for the college.

"Dr. Philbrick was also fond of students and wanted to help them," Mrs. Philbrick said. So, in 1984, Dr. and Mrs. Philbrick established the Robert and Doris Philbrick Scholarship, which was awarded to one veterinary student each year until 1997. In 1999, the Philbrick Academic Excellence Scholarship was established to provide a full scholarship for a veterinary student. In 2003, the Philbricks awarded full scholarships to

# in memoriam


two students. Dr. Jaclyn (Harry) Dykstra ('06) was one of those students.

“Sponsoring a student through scholarship is not just about financial support,” Dr. Dykstra said. “It says that you believe in that person. Dr. and Mrs. Philbrick’s scholarship was special. All through my four years of veterinary college, I wanted to make them proud. I wanted to prove that their sponsorship of a student who lived several states away was going to mean something. My regret is now I will not have the chance to show Dr. Philbrick the letters ‘DVM’ after my name.”

For Dr. Dykstra, an intern in exotic animal medicine and surgery at the Metropolitan Veterinary Hospital in Akron, Ohio, the Philbricks’ generosity wasn’t the only thing that made them special. “Dr. Philbrick took the time to meet the scholarship recipients and discuss their life and goals. He and Mrs. Philbrick traveled all the way from California each year to meet for dinner one night. Our conversations would range from our veterinary medicine classes to the way campus used to be back in the 1940s.”

“We enjoyed our time with the students and enjoyed hearing from them as they went through veterinary college,” Mrs. Philbrick said. “The only thing we asked of the students that we helped after they graduated was that they help other students if they can.”

“Few alumni have had as far-ranging influence in encouraging others to become actively engaged in supporting their colleges and universities as has Dr. Philbrick,” said Dr. John U. Thomson, dean of the veterinary college. “Throughout his extensive travels, he continually served as an ambassador for the college, always making it a point to contact alumni and promote the college and university. He has led by example, and the results have been countless added support and excellent relationships.”

Dr. Philbrick will be missed by all who knew him, but his legacy of generosity and love of the college will live on through the countless students that the Philbricks helped. 

*The Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine wishes to express its sympathy and condolences to the families and friends of the following alumni:*

## 1930s

### **Merrill Frevert ( '33 )**

Taylorville, Ill., died Feb. 21, 2006

### **Roger M. Cocking ( '34 )**

Sunberg, Minn., died Mar. 12, 2006

### **Oren Eastep ( '39 )**

Chickasha, Okla., died Nov. 16, 2003

## 1940s

### **Charles R. Forman ( '40 )**

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.,  
died Mar. 22, 2006

### **Arvid H. Gaffin ( '41 )**

Sun City West, Ariz.,  
died Mar. 11, 2006

### **Harlan E. Jensen ( '41 )**

Ft. Worth, Tex., died Dec. 30, 2005

### **Joseph A. Graham Jr. ( '42 )**

Milo, Iowa, died Mar. 25, 2006

### **Roland J. Gibbs ( '44 )**

Council Bluffs, Iowa,  
died May 1, 2006

### **Robert Philbrick ( '44 )**

Riverside, Calif., died Apr. 29, 2006

### **Vernon Dvorak ( '45 )**

Cary, Ill., died Apr. 30, 2006

### **Arthur R. Skewes ( '49 )**

Muskego, Wisc., died Mar. 9, 2006

## 1950s

### **William H. Olson ( '52 )**

Topeka, Kansas, died Mar. 1, 2006

## 1960s

### **Charles W. Sprugel ( '60 )**

Iowa Falls, Iowa, died May 12, 2006



# Hail to the CHIEF



Photo/ John Mayer

**A**nother Iowa State University graduate takes the national stage as president of the Academy of Veterinary Consultants. Dr. John Mayer ('77) recently began his term as president, after 22 years of service to the organization.

Dr. Mayer, owner and operator of Midlands Consulting, P.C., provides consulting services to cattle feeders in Nebraska and Iowa. His career in veterinary medicine spans almost 30 years and has seen a lot of change in the industry. "The challenges of food animal veterinarians are the continual reality of the consolidation of cattle feeding operations. There are fewer and bigger operations and thus fewer veterinarians are needed for these operations. Veterinarians need to become creative to stay involved in food animal medicine. High energy costs will continue to be a problem as veterinarians travel to clients and the distance between clients continues to increase."

His advice to veterinary students and recent graduates is that they truly understand the areas of bovine medicine that they want to pursue. "They need to walk in the shoes of their clients so they understand their business. They also need to connect with veterinarians already in their area of interest.

"I entered veterinary school after two years of pre-veterinary coursework," Dr. Mayer said. "If I had to do it over, I would have gotten a degree in some field of production agriculture or agriculture business first."

In his own career, Dr. Mayer has been influenced by veterinarians he's worked with and met through his membership in the AVC. "I recently attended the funeral of a veterinarian I rode with as a student and later worked with. He graduated in 1942 and in 64 years he saw many changes in veterinary medicine and production agriculture."

Dr. Mayer credits the AVC with providing cutting-edge and high-quality information in food animal medicine that helped him succeed in his career. "It's important that the AVC get and keep veterinary students and young veterinarians interested in food animal medicine by mentoring and providing help and support to them.

"The most important thing I learned early in my career was that there was so much I didn't know. If I got in a situation where I didn't know something, I couldn't be afraid to admit that I didn't know the answer. Building relationships with other veterinarians in the field can provide a young veterinarian with contacts for advice and opinions. The AVC has been a tremendous resource to me. The AVC is more like a family to me than an organization." [gd](#)

## Class of 2010 Profile\*

One hundred and sixteen students from 16 states will begin classes at the college this fall. These students were chosen from a pool of 647 applicants.

- **88** of the **116** are women
- Average age: **23** (range – 21 to 31 years)
- Average cumulative GPA: **3.57**
- Average science GPA: **3.41**
- Degrees: **104** have B.S., **3** have M.S., and **9** have no degrees

### States of residence:

Alabama	1	North Dakota	3
California	1	Nebraska	27
Iowa	57	New Jersey	2
Illinois	2	New York	1
Kansas	1	Ohio	1
Massachusetts	2	Pennsylvania	1
Michigan	2	South Dakota	5
Minnesota	7	Wisconsin	3

\*As of June 2006

## Class of 2006 Placement

- Number of graduates: **106**
- Number practicing in Iowa: **17**
- Number entering equine practice: **1**
- Number entering small animal private practice: **33 (\$58,464\*)**
- Number entering mixed animal practice (predominantly small animals): **4 (\$52,000\*)**
- Number entering mixed animal practice (50/50): **6 (\$52,500\*)**
- Number entering mixed animal practice (predominantly large animals): **9 (\$55,722\*)**
- Number entering large animal practice: **3 (\$62,500\*)**
- Number entering the military: **3 (\$68,500\*)**
- Number accepting internship/residency: **13 (\$25,500\*)**
- Number pursuing advanced study: **3**
- Number not seeking employment: **2**

Fourteen students had not yet accepted employment at the time of the survey (June 6, 2006), and 15 students did not return the survey form.

\*Indicates average salary

## Summer Student Life



**From the top:** Josh Mack, computer services, prepares the new laptop computers for the incoming veterinary students. *Photo/Dani Ausen*; Students enrolled in the Swine Production Immersive Knowledge Experience internship outside the Animal Veterinary Medical Services in Audubon, Iowa. *Photo/Tracy Raef*; Students enrolled in the Dairy Production Immersive Knowledge Experience internship tour the Golden Grain Energy facility in Mason City, Iowa. *Photo/Tracy Raef*

# Save The Date . . .



Saturday, October 21  
**Homecoming 2006**

**Official Groundbreaking Ceremony**  
for the **Veterinary Teaching Hospital**  
at **Iowa State University**  
and **Annual College BBQ**

**Homecoming '06 will be one to remember for all**  
College of Veterinary Medicine alumni, students, faculty,  
staff and friends.

Mark the date on your calendar and join us as we celebrate the first major college building expansion in 30 years! Groundbreaking will be followed by the annual college barbecue, sponsored by the VMAA, then cheer the Cyclones on to a homecoming victory over Texas Tech.

A BBQ and football ticket order are available from the college web site, [www.iastate.edu](http://www.iastate.edu).

See you October 21!



**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

College of Veterinary Medicine  
Ames, IA 50011-1250

Return Service Requested