

r u m e n a t i o n s *

faculty research success

Associate Dean for Research, Professor Gareth Evans, recently announced a series of successful grant applications for significant projects beginning in the Faculty in 2005.

The Australian Research Council will fund advanced research into koala disease, welfare and treatment. The nationally-recognised Faculty team of Dr Mark Krockenberger, Professor Paul Canfield, Damien Higgins, Dr Susan Hemsley, Dr Merran Govendir and Dr Richard Malik now have the opportunity to make substantial progress on 25 years of previous study. As a 'linkage' grant the project will also receive funding from industry partners and wildlife organisations.



Dr Vivienne Reeve is the sole current Faculty recipient of a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council. With fewer than 20% of projects submitted to this body successfully winning funds, this is a major achievement.

Working with colleagues from the University of Bath (UK) and the Department of Physiology at Sydney University, Dr Reeve explains 'the project aims to try to understand how a key enzyme - haem oxygenase - in the skin reacts to oxidative damage from sunlight, and plays an important role in protecting us from the immune suppression that arises from chronic ultraviolet radiation exposure. This immune impairment facilitates the outgrowth of skin cancer.'

Associate Professor Chris Moran and PhD student Jaci Aldenhover have secured funding from the National Feral Animal Control Program to determine the structures of feral pig populations with the aim of better defining management strategies.



The Gardner Dairy Foundation, XY Inc and Total Livestock Genetics will provide a two year grant for a project headed by Dr Lindsay Gillan with Professors Gareth Evans and Chis Maxwell. The project will develop techniques to sex-sort cryopreserved bull semen. This will give all dairy farmers the opportunity to pre-determine the sex of offspring to produce more efficient herds. 'Securing funding for this project means we will be conducting fundamental applied research that could make a significant improvement in breeding technology used in the Australian dairy industry,' Dr Gillan explains.

These research funding successes come as a result of substantial work within the Faculty. An inaugural 'industry workshop' in February will allow staff to showcase their research skills and discuss future research partnerships with some of the grant funding bodies.

BSc(Vet) research seminar

For the 2004 BSc(Vet) students, the seminars held on 22 and 23 November were the culmination of a year's research work.

Having taken a year out of their veterinary degree to undertake a research project, part of their final assessment is a presentation of their project's findings to the Faculty's Post Graduate and Research Training Committee chaired by Professor Frank Nicholas. Sub Dean for BSc(Vet) Dr Glenn Shea introduced the sessions, highlighting the diverse range of projects undertaken by the students. These include roosting of Grey Headed Flying Foxes, Iron Storage Disease in Black Rhinoceros and anaesthesia of Koi Carp.

The Faculty received positive feedback following the Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee visit in October. The draft report acknowledges substantial progress made by the Faculty since its last evaluation in 2001 and recommends the renewal of its accreditation.

The Committee found that the new curriculum, now delivered to all five years of the course, is providing effective training for veterinary students. Recommended upgrades to facilities have been completed on time, including the B Richards Pathology Laboratory (*top*) and the Valentine Charlton Cat Centre (*bottom*) and new innovative teaching and learning strategies developed. The Committee commented positively on the use of graduate attributes in curriculum and assessment design, the responsiveness of staff to student feedback, the value of the year 5 transition to practice and the partner practice program, and the new developments in "learning through inquiry" activities that are reshaping the way students learn. The fragility of veterinary education in Australia was noted, following a decade of withdrawal of Government funding and increased reliance on student fees for provision of quality education.

The report has been submitted for comment from the Faculty by the Committee and the final document will soon be available.



VSACC update





from the dean's desk

After two months in Australia I still feel very much "the new boy" in the Faculty with much to learn. One recent project that has helped enormously has been the development of the Faculty's new Strategic Plan for 2005 – 2010. I am pleased to report this is now nearing completion and will be a short, sharp statement outlining our plans to continue the previous set of objectives and not to embark on too many more changes. It will be supplemented by a series of detailed operational plans for teaching, research and the two Veterinary Teaching Hospitals that will progress our goals for long term sustainability. I believe we will continue to play our part in achieving the Vice-Chancellor's goal of international academic recognition for the whole University, the project 1:5:40.

The success of the Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee visit (see page 1) reminds us of the April 2005 American Veterinary Medical Association accreditation visit and its importance to the Faculty's future. This accreditation will not only improve our standing internationally, but will benchmark us against some of the best Vet Schools in the world. There is still a great deal to be done for this visit, which is being managed by a Faculty committee led by Associate Professor Jennie Hodgson. I am hopeful of a successful outcome – it seems to me that when this Vet Faculty sets out to do something it usually achieves its goal.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to a most impressive occasion that took place in the Great Hall of the University on Monday 29 November: the annual ceremony for Long Service Awards. A total of 158 staff received certificates or medals for 15, 20 25 and 40 years service and the Vice-Chancellor spoke of his appreciation of these loyal members of staff. Our Faculty was represented by four stalwarts – David Fraser and Bob Ratcliffe for 20 years' service, and Paul Canfield and Don Slade for 25 years' service to the University. I am sure you will join me in congratulating them on this impressive achievement. They were definitely the best turned out staff in the whole procession!

support wildlife conservation this christmas

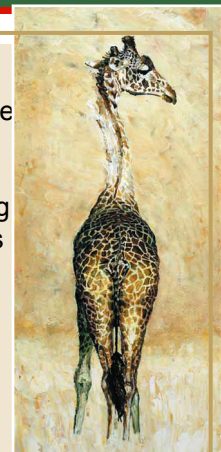
Faculty PhD student, Kelly Leigh, has been researching the endangered African wild dog in the Lower Zambezi Valley in Zambia.

This Christmas, to raise funds for the African Wild Dog Conservation project for which she is Director, Kelly is selling limited edition prints of her own art work.

Her original fundraising exhibition sold out and now there are only fifty prints of each painting available, each individually signed and numbered by Kelly. Photos of all the prints and an order form are online at www.afrikeye.net/Conservation/AWDC/pages/artwork.htm

The larger prints of the giraffe, zebra and landscape measure 690 x 490mm and are \$150, while the smaller Cape buffalo and African wild dog prints measure 510 x 410mm and are \$120. For Rumenations readers the price is in Australian dollars as opposed to US dollars as indicated on the site. All are premium quality lithographic process prints on acid-free paper.

For further details on the African wild dog project visit www.save-the-african-wild-dog.com/african-wild-dog-conserv.asp



faculty news

long service medal recipients

The full list of staff members awarded medals in recognition of their contribution to the University is as follows:

25 years

Professor Paul Canfield
Mr Don Slade

15 years

Associate Professor David Evans
Ms Elizabeth Thomas
Mrs Helen Laurendet

20 years

Associate Professor Bob Ratcliffe
Professor David Fraser
Ms Patricia Martin
Mr David Palmer

faculty christmas party 2004

The Faculty Christmas party will be held on 14 December at 4pm on the Veterinary Science Conference Centre lawn for all staff and their families. There will be soft drink and food provided as well as treats for children – BYO alcoholic beverages. Please RSVP by 9 December to the person below in your area, confirming how many children and if you are a vegetarian:

Camden

Noelene (noelenew@camden.usyd.edu.au)
Rhondda (rhondamc@camden.usyd.edu.au)
Helen (helenf@camden.usyd.edu.au)
Sanaa (szaki@mail.usyd.edu.au)
Steph (sstanyer@vetsci.usyd.edu.au)
George (G.Tsoukalas@vetp.usyd.edu.au)
Irene (irenes@vetsci.usyd.edu.au)

Camden Clinic
Sydney Clinic
Gunn Building
McMaster Building
JD Stewart Building

Don't forget your tickets for the Carnival of the Animals Fundraising Raffle

You could win a trip to Shanghai (including four nights accommodation), two return flights to Melbourne (with two nights superior accommodation), ACO concert tickets, or dinner for two at Luke Mangan's new restaurant Moorish!

- Winners will be announced on 17 Dec at the Carnival of the Animals Concert.

For further details and to buy tickets, contact Zara 9351 8026 or visit the VSF office (JD Stewart Building)

Rumenations will be back in February with the first edition of 2005. Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year from the Veterinary Science Foundation.