The Veterinary Science Foundation’s second annual fundraising concert, Animalia, was held on Thursday 1 December at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Attracting an audience of 350 guests, Animalia featured the wonderful musicians of the internationally-acclaimed Australian Youth Orchestra with superb soloists including the event’s curator and leading harpist Marshall McGuire, mezzo-soprano Suzanne Johnston and soprano Christine Douglas, and Riley Lee, Australia’s only Grand Master of the Japanese bamboo flute, the shakuhachi.

Media personality Sally Loane generously supported the event as Master of Ceremonies for the second year, and the concert, created by Marshall McGuire just for the Veterinary Science Foundation, was hailed as a unique and memorable performance that celebrated the world of animals with beautiful music. The audience responded to the warmth and humour of the soloists and orchestra to conclude the concert with their own highly competitive and entertaining rendition of ‘The Twelve Days of Christmas’.

Following the performance guests bid at auction for the opportunity to purchase a personal recital by an Australian Youth Orchestra Quartet, with the added bonus of a special catering package by Fusion Catering with Fosters Australia sparkling wine.

The Veterinary Science Foundation gratefully thanks our Animalia audience, the many individuals unable to attend who still gave generously, and we are particularly pleased to acknowledge the tremendous support of our Animalia sponsors: Qantas, KPMG, Inghams Enterprises, Royal Agricultural Society NSW, Oracle Corporation Australia, Fiona and James Balfour, Deborah Smithers and John McMurtrie and Roger and Belinda Massy-Greene. Fosters Australia generously sponsored the evening’s beverages and further support was received from the JW Marriott Hotel Hong Kong, Mary Rossi Travel, Australian Airlines, Voyages, The Markdale Experience, James Gordon, Fusion Catering, and P and I Publishing.

The Foundation also thanks the Faculty students and staff who so enthusiastically volunteered to help stage the event – including forming an ‘animal guard of honour’ with their pets for arriving guests.
I am pleased to report very positive news from the 2005 round of academic staff promotions: all Faculty staff who applied for promotion were successful in the three different categories – Professor, Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer.

Associate Professor Nick Sangster has been promoted to Professor, recognising his 20 years work in the Faculty and boosting his discipline of veterinary parasitology. To my knowledge there is only one other veterinary parasitologist who has achieved the level of Professor in Australia (Professor Ian Beveridge of Melbourne University).

Dr Peter Thomson has been appointed an Associate Professor. As a Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Biometry and Statistical Genetics he has not only contributed a great deal to teaching and research in the Faculty, but has also provided valuable support to staff and students in these specialist areas.

These new positions follow the November 2005 successful promotion to Senior Lecturer of Dr Sue Hemsley (Veterinary Anatomy and Pathology), Dr Mark Krockenberger (Veterinary Pathology), Dr Jacqui Norris (Veterinary Microbiology and Animal Disease), Dr Paul Sheehy (Cell Biology) and Dr Imke Tammen (Animal Biotechnology) - a tremendous end of year success for the Faculty.

As Rumenations will now take a break until March 2006, I wish everyone an enjoyable break over Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Professor Leo Jeffcott

New Adjunct Professors

The Senate of the University has recently approved the nominations of Drs Richard Malik and Tony Moore (veterinary oncologist) to the position of Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Veterinary Science for the next three years. Both these eminent veterinarians are highly regarded within the profession and will make important contributions to teaching and learning and research within the Faculty.

Professor Honoured

Professor David Fraser was elected a Fellow of the Nutrition Society of Australia at the Society’s Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne this month - the Society’s highest award. Professor Fraser specialises in Animal Science, undertaking research in the Dairy and Poultry Research Foundations. His areas of research have included rickets in Mongolia and Bangladesh, evolutionary biology and intestinal absorption.

Sydney student finalist

Faculty Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience student, Fiona Sparke, has qualified for the 16th annual Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) scholarship tour of the US in January 2006. To qualify for the competition students assessed beef, lamb and pork carcasses according to cut and quality, as well as beef and lamb retail cuts.

Fiona will join five other finalists to tour the US to gain an understanding of the USDA grading system and processing regimes as well as to compete against US students at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

Sponsored by Meat and Livestock Australia, 70 students competed in the ICMJ contest, with a further 10 students completing MSA training.

ARC Linkage Grants

Professor Gareth Evans, Associate Dean for Research, recently announced the success of two ARC Linkage applications. Dr Kathy Belov receives a grant for the project, ‘Characterisation of the tammar wallaby MHC’, and Dr Trish Holyoake, working with Associate Professor David Emery, will receive funding for her project, ‘Reducing antibiotic usage in pig herds: controlling Lawsonia intracellularis by vaccination, housing’. To secure prestigious ARC linkage grants projects must have also won significant funding from external industry and other partners.