

# Opening Session

## “Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture 1976 and Beyond”

Dr. Robert J. Harris, Chairman

### Opening Remarks

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As president of the AABP may I extend a most enthusiastic welcome to this, our ninth annual conference in California. How I ever got here to sunny California, I'll never know, after leaving snow-covered Wisconsin at 10°F below last Saturday! It reminds me of that convention we had in Milwaukee when the snow fell on us the morning we were going to start ours in Milwaukee. I think we lost two speakers that morning.

Reminds me a little bit of the story of a man that was never sure how he got where he was. It seemed like his wife was seeing some other man. One morning he left their two-story apartment and went over to his office building and while he was there he got more irate and mad because he was sure he could catch her with that other man so he ran back home and there she sat, all alone. Of course, this made him madder than ever. He went over to the window and sure enough there was a man going out of that lower apartment door and he went over and grabbed the refrigerator and threw it out the window and dropped dead of a heart attack. He met St. Peter at the gate and St. Peter asked him how he got there. The man related his story of how mad he got and how he went home to try to catch his wife. St. Peter said, “Well, that’s bad. You better go over there and think a little.” To the next man coming through the door St. Peter said, “How did you get here?” The man said, “Well, you see, I was walking out of this apartment door and a refrigerator hit me on the head.” St. Peter said, “That is an unusual accident. You can go on through the gates.” The next man through the gates was asked by St. Peter how he got there. And the man said, “Well, you see, I was in this refrigerator ....”

I feel a little like that myself this morning—I guess I was in the refrigerator when I got here!

**Anyway, here we are at the conference whose theme will be “Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture in 1976 and Beyond.” As I look at the**

**program I believe it is just that. I do want to thank each and every one of you for attending and I really think it is unnecessary to thank you, but this is a great challenge to the committee when you start thinking just how many will be here.**

Will it be a success? Do we have anything to present? Believe me, this really runs through the minds of myself and everyone else. It is a challenge that we try to do our best. I feel it is a little difficult to address a convention knowing it is the end of my presidency of this organization, an experience for which I must thank the members of the AABP for and also thank God for the trust you have placed in me during this past year. It has been a year in which I did not accomplish what I had intended to do. I feel quite humble as I did when I accepted the challenge and realized that I do have some shortcomings. However, as I see the list of district meetings that we had throughout the United States this year and the conventions that were held, I realize that there is a lot of expert help sitting out here in this audience and all over the United States that will always accomplish



those things that I thought should be done and I had very little to do with. When I look at these district meetings, it is one of many things that I thought should be done and are coming to the surface.

This morning I must take one minute at least to thank you, Dr. Bob Harris, as general chairman of the conference for the work that you have put forth, and believe me, I know just how much you went through. Also, I want to make a special effort to thank the local arrangements chairman, Dr. Connor Jameson, who came forward to accomplish a great task in planning this convention. I'd like to have you know that Connor was not even a member of our organization when he came forward and said, "I'll do it." I think this is a great tribute to this young man. I also think we should thank their wives, Ann Harris and Judy Jameson, for their help in planning the ladies activities. You may not know this, but it is a first for our organization that a small animal practitioner, Judy Jameson, was actually in charge of our ladies tours. So, we've had a little outside help coming in. Thanks to you, Ann, and thank you, Judy.

I also want to thank the entire program committee: Dr. Kendrick, Dr. Koger, Dr. Norman, Dr. Silverman, Dr. Hansen, Dr. Mead, and everyone else in charge of this program. I also want to thank Dr. Herrick, Dr. Kilpatrick, and Dr. Hansen for this venture that we tried last evening on problem solving. We are constantly looking for something new to present, and whether this was a success or not, I feel that we did brush the surface of something that was new and something that we might use in continuing education. Some things have to be changed but I do think this is a thing that we have to look forward to.

I would just like to interject one other challenge to you in bovine practice that has always been with me

and with you and looms as being very promising more today than ever before. It deals with public relations with the cattle industry. Yesterday we had a representative from the National Cattlemen's Association with us and he was so delighted to be here that I think we have to look for this. We don't have to learn how to sell ourselves or how to present ourselves to the cattlemen if they will accept us. I believe Dr. Mac Cropsy touched on this problem in his messages as president of the AABP a few years ago. It is still apparent to me to remind you that with added education in this field, we will continue to present ourselves in the right image. But you, the practitioner, must also put forth some powder to explode this knowledge that we may give you. No one but yourself can do this; and you have to do it. We are in a very, very competitive field. We are dealing with an economic product and it means dollars and cents that we must succeed. So, we have to sell ourselves, because there is a nutrition specialist, a feed dealer, a drug peddler, an AI technician, and many other self-appointed specialists walking down the road every day trying to crowd in on the field of veterinary medicine. I think we should not be humble but exploit ourselves because we are very educated and have something in this gunpowder, so to speak, to explode that we must sell ourselves.

Finally, this morning we are privileged to have the president of the AVMA with us to pass on a message from our parent organization, and I stress "parent" as we are only a real sister group of a strong central body which we must still support with renewed enthusiasm. When I wrote Harry, he was most gracious to accept our invitation to be here. At this time, may I present Dr. Harry Gorman.