

Executive Director's Report

Saturday, September 26, 2020

Louisville, Kentucky

Thank you for attending the 53rd Annual Conference of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners and first virtual conference. It is my pleasure and honor to serve this organization as the Executive Director

I am pleased to report that we have 979 registrants in attendance at the virtual conference including 264 students, 1 veterinary technician, and 149 colleagues who are members of the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners. In addition, we have nine AABP members as attendees of the conference onsite and one accompanying person. I have the unique distinction of the largest and smallest onsite attendance as an Executive Director of AABP. We also have 51 exhibitors who participated in our virtual trade show. Since the trade show opened, we have had over 31,000 hits to the link on our website! I would like to thank our exhibitors and our sponsors for this conference, especially for sticking with the most tenacious group of veterinarians on earth – bovine practitioners!

The AABP Foundation is the charitable arm of our organization, administering education and externship grants, scholarships, and research grants. This year, our volunteers reviewed 196 applications from 102 students. Thirty-one of those students received a scholarship, including three students winning two scholarships and one student, Meghan Oswald from Cornell, receiving three scholarships. Both Cornell and Iowa State University had five students winning scholarship awards, leading the veterinary schools in the number of awards given. These scholarship awards are only possible due to the generous contributions from our members and industry partnerships with Merck Animal Health and Zoetis. Last night, the AABP Foundation awarded a total of \$193,500 in scholarship awards.

This year, the Amstutz live and silent auction generated \$40,845 with an additional \$2,459 in donations and \$2,500 in raffle ticket sales. The AABP Foundation has received \$1,060 in donations and \$2,500 in raffle ticket sales. While the auction numbers are lower than previous



Dr. Fred Gingrich, AABP Executive Director, delivered his annual report to the members.

years, the good news is that the online auction site is still open to accept direct donations to the Amstutz Fund and AABP Foundation. Please click on the Amstutz Auction button and donate today to both funds. Although we are apart, we can still come together to support our students.

On Tuesday morning, those of us who had arrived at the conference earlier in the week woke up to a city that was in the beginning stages of turmoil. While I am disappointed we could not meet in person, we must also put things into scope and perspective and recognize that the world outside of AABP is in a difficult time. We made the decision to cancel the in-person conference because our member's safety is our primary concern. Member benefits are also a concern, and like true bovine veterinarians, we put on our virtual boots and coveralls and got to

work. We quickly moved all of our equipment to an off-site facility to get setup in time for the conference. There are 14 of our volunteers and AABP staff here to put on this conference and I am proud of their accomplishment. Thank you to AVSC, Experient, the team from Louisville and our volunteers onsite who put this together. Our new mantra here in Louisville is "we will figure it out."

Bovine veterinarians also have foresight and continue to look for new ways to provide services to their clients. We do the same thing at AABP, bringing new member services to you. This year we have started a new electronic newsletter and a podcast "Have You Herd?". You can find our podcast on your favorite platform and listen to the interviews with our guests during your windshield time. We have over 10,000 downloads in 6 months. AABP has also provided virtual CE before we heard the word "COVID-19" in the form of RACE approved webinars. We have had nearly 800 views of our live webinars. In addition, our conference CE is recorded, RACE approved, and available for viewing on the BCI CE portal by clicking the purple cow logo at the bottom of any page on our website. These CE sessions have over 8,000 views since the redesign just four years ago. We also have placed over 50 years of our

Bovine Practitioner and conference proceedings online in a high-quality scan that is searchable at the article level in an open access platform. Go to the publications menu to find these publications. Thank you to Dr. Bob Smith for serving as our editor and initiating this tremendous project. Notice that all of these services are free, provided to you as a member of this great organization.

I also want to recognize that some of our members, and other veterinarians, are suffering today. Mental wellness, high debt, long hours, isolation, anxiety, compassion fatigue, and stress affect veterinarians more so than other professions. We have an unacceptable rate of suicide and unfortunately there are AABP members we have lost in the past year who decided to end their life rather than live it with us. Last year, I shared a personal story in hopes that we could feel comfortable saying “I need help.” If you need help, reach out. BELIEVE in yourself and your future. ENGAGE and CONNECT with your colleagues.

Thank you, Dr. Booker for your constant dedication and service to AABP. I am sure you will miss our Tuesday morning phone calls. You led this organization through trying times and we are better because of it and you. I look forward to working with our new President Dr. Carie Telgen and will unfortunately go through the **process** of deleting Calvin from my favorites contacts and adding you. I want to congratulate Dr. Telgen and Dr. Gorden, as well as the program committee, for putting together a conference, changing it to a hybrid conference, then changing it again to a virtual conference. This has been an unbelievable accomplishment and every AABP member thanks you for it.

Finally, I want to thank our staff. AABP operates with a small staff and many of my association executive colleagues are amazed when I tell them we have three staff in the office (including me) and two working remotely. Allison, Tasha, Geni and Steve do the work that makes the organization run. When people ask me what IT company we are using for the virtual conference, I tell them “its Steve”. To express my sincere gratitude to our staff, I am giving them Monday off.

And as always, I would like to thank my wonderful wife Michelle and my children Abbey, Avery, Chloe, and Ethan. We all know the work a bovine practitioner does and how it can take away family time occasionally. All of us owe our loved ones gratitude for allowing us to do the greatest job on earth – being a cattle veterinarian.

I look forward to seeing those of you in-person who are much younger than me at the 4th Recent Graduate conference in St. Louis, February 11-13, 2021 and all members will be invited to register virtually.

Thank you for coming to our conference and for your membership in AABP.

Respectfully submitted,
K. Fred Gingrich II, DVM
Executive Director, AABP