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Newsletter

James V. Schoster - President; Eric (Rick) M. Mills - President Elect, Robin Starr-Chichester - Secretary Treasurer;
Ronald D. Smith - Newsletter Editor

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

1999 Talbot Symposium

From: James Schoster
<schoster@svm.vetmed.wisc.edu>

Dear AVI members,

The Talbot Symposium was very successful and reasonably well attended. There were 18 speakers and 5 posters with one 90 minute computer laboratory plus Cheryl's computer laboratory.

The presentation room worked out just fine for our symposium and everything ran smoothly. We had a fast T3 Internet connection that hick-upped a few times but over all did not let anyone down.

Over all I was very pleased with the entire symposium and a big thank you goes out to all presenters and to Pets.com for their sponsorship.

I especially want to recognize Dr. Albert Dorn (Chair of the Personal and Professional Development unit of the AVMA [AVI is under this group]) and Dr. Cindy Coursen from the AVMA. I worked closely with these two individuals over the past year preparing for this symposium and they were very helpful and responsive to our needs.

As you know next year Dr. Robert Featherston is the new Chair of the AVI Education committee and responsible for the Talbot Symposium. He and Dr. Al Dorn along with the AVI Education Committee members will be starting now to develop another great symposium for next year in Salt Lake City. Keep your eyes on this list server for an announcement of call for speakers/posters which should be coming out soon from Dr. Featherston.

I am happy to begin to serve as the new President of the AVI. I believe that the direction of the AVI can go where ever it's membership wants it to. I plan to be a facilitator of the membership's wishes over this next year. The

AVI should continue to function as a medium for coordination of information management in veterinary medicine for the profession.

I would like to know what you all would like to see or have as members of the AVI. Please share your thoughts with the membership and myself by posting to this list serve.

Jim Schoster
President, Association for Veterinary Informatics

How to Contact AVI

Applications for membership, accompanied by a check for \$35 payable to the AVI, should be sent to:

Dr. Robin M. Starr; Secretary Treasurer, AVI;
31575 Griffin Drive, Conifer, CO 80433
Phone: 303/674-5231; FAX: 303/674-9717;
e-mail: starrchi@earthlink.net

Membership application forms are available online at:

<http://netvet.wustl.edu/avi.htm>

Dr. Starr is responsible for distribution of the hardcopy version of the AVI Newsletter.

Newsletter items can be sent to:

Dr. Ronald D. Smith, Newsletter Editor, AVI;
UI College of Veterinary Medicine; 2001 South Lincoln; Urbana, IL 61801.
Phone: 217/333-2449
FAX: 217/333-4628
E-mail: rd-smith@uiuc.edu

If you are an AVI member and would like to be on the AVI Newsletter electronic distribution list, send an e-mail message to the Newsletter Editor. Although the electronic version is only an ASCII (text) file, it's faster, searchable, easier to store and retrieve, and environmentally friendly.

CORRESPONDENCE

Congratulations to the New AVI President

From: Mauricio Garcia
mauricio@technovet.com.br

Dr. Schoster:

I congratulate you for the new AVI Presidency. Although I am the only Brazilian member of AVI, Brazil has a strong veterinary community

that likes computers and informatics. Don't hesitate to contact me if you need anything from Brazil and, please, let me know if I can be useful to you and AVI.

Regards,
Mauricio Garcia, DVM, PhD
mauricio@technovet.com.br
Sao Paulo/SP - Brazil

REPORT ON 1999 AVI MEMBER SURVEY

Robin M. Starr, DVM, MEd
AVI Immediate Past-President, Secretary-Treasurer

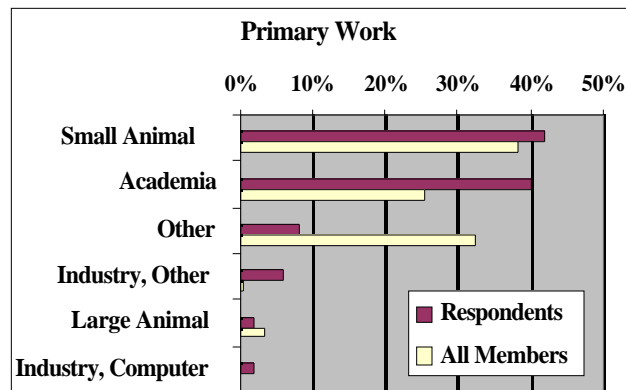
The AVI has long struggled with knowing our members' interests – what topics should be in the newsletter or presented at the AVMA Convention, what keeps people renewing their membership or causes them to lapse. A survey to start quantifying this type of information was included with the ballots for the 1999 – 2000 officers in June of this year. The highlights:

- We had an excellent response rate of 37.3% – 50 surveys returned out of 134 sent to members eligible to vote.
- Members belonging for 2 to 4 years had the highest participation rate, a good indication of their interest levels and of a healthy organization.
- The newsletter is our most valued benefit.
- A membership directory would be valued – and is done! The 1999 AVI Directory is included with this newsletter or in a separate mailing for those who receive the newsletter electronically.
- The top interest areas are Advanced Information for Practice and Cutting Edge Technology. There is also strong interest in Computers in Education.

Bottom line – the newsletter provides the forum and the membership has interest to reward member input and exchange of ideas. We will see the information that members desire when members contribute. Why don't **you** participate by sending in a quick note on how you use a feature of your practice software or other practice tips? Did you try the latest greatest Palm Pilot or voice recognition software? Do you have a tip for preparing materials for students? Why not tell all of us about it in the newsletter?

In future years, similar surveys will go out with membership renewal notices. I would appreciate your comments on the survey or on the findings.

The respondents:

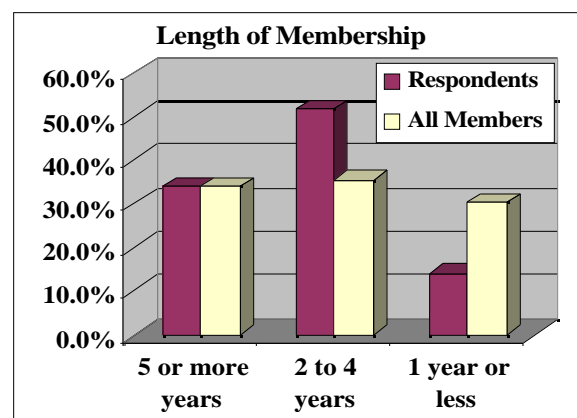


Primary Work

Most of the survey respondents were evenly divided between Small Animal Practice (42%) or Education, R & D, Academia (40%). By comparison, our total member database lists 38% in small animal practice, 25% in academia, and 33% in "Other." Academics may be somewhat over-represented in the survey, but the large percent of "Other" in the total membership makes this difficult to evaluate.

Length of membership

Half of survey respondents had been members for 2 to 4 years, a third for 5 or more years, and only 14% for 1 year or less. By comparison, all members are nearly evenly divided between the three groups. This shows a healthy interest level by the mid-term members. It is understandable that newer members would be less likely to fill out a survey: the unfortunate result is that we have less information on what these members value about AVI membership.



Value questions:

This set of questions is ranked in order of the number who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that a particular item was of value to them.

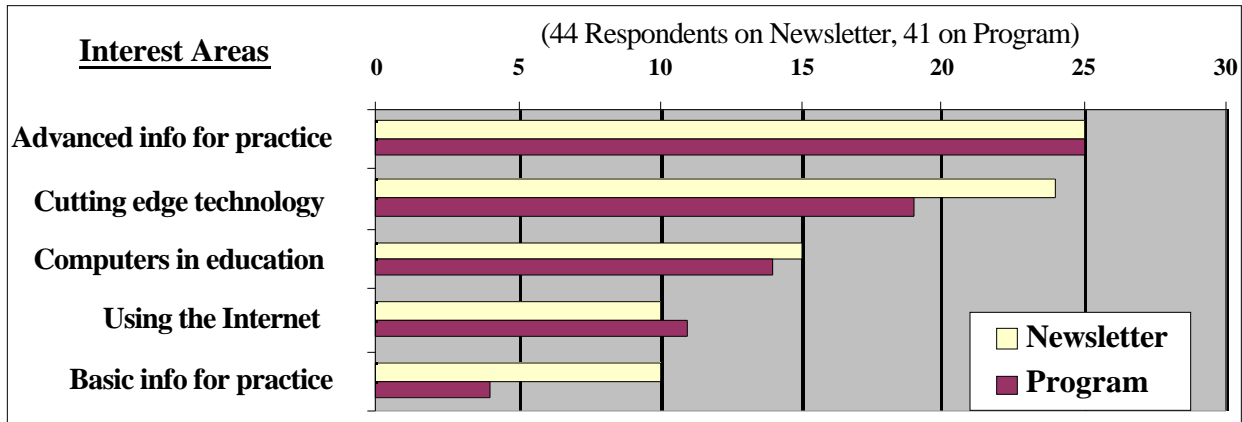
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion	Total Agree
1 The AVI Newsletter is valuable to me.	14	33	2		1	47
2 Proceedings from the AVI program at the AVMA meeting would be valuable to me.	18	28	1		3	46
3 The networking opportunities of AVI membership are valuable to me.	10	30			10	40
4 An AVI membership directory would be valuable to me.	10	30	3		7	40
5 The AVI Web site is valuable to me.	2	36	2		10	38
6 The AVI program (Talbot Symposium) at the AVMA meeting is valuable to me.	7	16	5		22	23
7 The AVI annual business meeting at the AVMA meeting is valuable to me.	2	9	8	1	30	11
8 Participating in AVI workgroup(s) is valuable to me.	2	7	7	2	32	9

- As expected, the AVI Newsletter is our most valued benefit. It is primarily the result of the dedication and work of Dr. Ron Smith.

- Close behind is Proceedings from the AVI program at the AVMA meeting. There several issues involved in distributing proceedings, from incentives for the authors to write them to the fact that the AVMA holds copyright. The survey indicates members' interest level justifies having the Executive Board investigate how proceedings might be distributed to members.
- Networking and a Membership Directory tied for third place. The directory is an important tool to facilitate networking.
- The AVI Web site, largely the work of Dr. Ken Boschert, is also highly valued.
- The events at the AVMA Convention are ranked lower, presumably a reflection of the proportion of members able to attend the meeting.
- The work groups ranked low, probably a result of their relative inactivity.

Interest Areas:

Respondents were asked which 1 or 2 topics they would like more information on in the AVI Newsletter and next year's program at the AVMA meeting. Some checked more than 2, for a total of 84 responses regarding the newsletter and 73 on the program.



The number one interest area for all respondents is advanced information on computer usage in practice. For respondents in the 2 to 4 years of membership group, technology edged out advanced info for practice (25 to 22), perhaps indicating a future trend. There is also strong interest in computers in education, an item that included undergraduate, continuing, and staff education.

PRODUCTS & REVIEWS

Veterinary Endoscopy CE Courses

From: Tracy Svihart
<tracy@ksvea.com>

We have recently gone on-line with a completely revised, information rich, web-site for Karl Storz Veterinary Endoscopy-America:

<http://www.ksvea.com>

Our goal is to build the site into a cohesive information source for DVM's interested in the use of endoscopy in their practice. We sponsor numerous CE courses each year throughout the United States. Our goal is to provide the highest quality courses, technology and services. Our link page is

<http://www.ksvea.com/links.html>.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Handbook of Medical Informatics

<http://www.mihandbook.stanford.edu/>

Developments in medical informatics are progressing at great speed. As a consequence, there is a need for a broad overview of the field, recognizing that current students in medicine and health care will be the clinical professionals of the next millennium. By then, computers will be in widespread use for the support of patient care, the assessment of the quality of care, and the enhancement of decision making, management, planning, and medical research.

Medical informatics has both an applied and a theoretical dimension. These two aspects of the discipline have expanded dramatically during the last decade, and will continue to do so in the years to come. We are witnessing a radical change as technologies that primarily support administrative processes are augmented with systems that address the core of medicine: patient care in both the ambulatory and in-patient setting, disease prevention and health promotion, rehabilitation, and home care. Computer-based patient records and electronic communication will be the most visible developments in the years ahead.

The field of medical informatics is too extensive to be covered by only a small number of experts. Therefore, this Handbook of Medical Informatics has been written by a host of renowned international authorities in medical and health informatics (see the Table of Contents and the List of Authors).

The development of the Handbook has been the work of the two editors, one from Europe and one from the United States, assisted by a managing editor. The editors took much care that the Handbook would not be merely a collection of separate chapters, but rather would offer a consistent and structured overview of the field. They are aware that there is still considerable room for improvement and that certain elements of medical informatics are not fully covered, such as modeling and simulation.

These shortcomings will be addressed in future editions and by the provision of material for advanced studies on the World Wide Web site associated with this Handbook. Whereas this Handbook provides a comprehensive survey of current work performed to develop information technology for the clinical workplace, we recognize that the exciting and rapidly expanding discipline of bioinformatics is beyond our scope. Although many of the basic methods described in this Handbook are also applicable to work in computational biology, students will want to consult other sources for specific discussions of topics in bioinformatics.

Purpose

The purpose of the Handbook is to provide a systematic overview of medical informatics for medical students and nursing students, for physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals, and for students in other areas, such as informatics and computer science. There are three main reasons that we developed the Handbook:

1. Informatics is becoming part of the curriculum in an increasing number of universities and institutions for the higher education of health care professionals worldwide. The Handbook may serve as an introduction to the field for these students.
2. Health care workers are frequently confronted with information systems for the support of patient care, the assessment of the quality of care, research, or management and planning. For these professionals, the Handbook can serve as an orientation to the rapidly developing field of computers in health care.
3. Expanding numbers of graduate students are turning to medical informatics as a discipline for study and investigation. The more advanced chapters of this Handbook provide comprehensive overviews of topics in medical informatics that should be of value to specialists in the field.

Organization

The Handbook has been organized systematically. The 37 chapters are grouped into three main clusters that are subdivided into nine parts:

The first cluster deals with data:

- * I. The transformation from data into information.
- * II. The processing and storage of data in computers.
- * III. The acquisition of data from patients.

The second cluster describes the different types of systems in medicine and health care:

- * IV. Patient-centered information systems.
- * V. Systems for knowledge and decision support.
- * VI. Systems that are used to support institutions such as hospitals.

The third cluster pertains to methodological aspects of medical informatics and is intended to be used for more advanced or specialized education. The third cluster contains:

- * VII. The methodology for information processing (an extension of Parts II-V).
- * VIII. The methodology for information systems (an extension of Part VI).
- * IX. Medical informatics as a profession.

The Handbook contains only a few references to the literature, given at the end of most

chapters. A list of literature for advanced study can be obtained from the Handbook's Web site. This list will be continuously updated.

The editors invite readers, teachers, and students to send comments and feedback (suggestions, remarks, corrections, exercises, demonstrations, questions and answers, and so forth) to further improve and expand future editions of the Handbook and to be included immediately on the Web site.

The Editors,

Jan H. van Bommel, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Mark A. Musen, Stanford, California, USA

Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine List (CAVM-L)

CAM&VM-L (Complementary and Alternative Medicine and Veterinary Medicine List) has changed names. The new name is CAVM-L (Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine). CAVM-L is a list for doctors (DVMs, MDs and PhDs in health related fields) to discuss theory, practice and evidence for complementary and alternative therapies. This is a closed list, and membership is restricted to qualified doctors. For an application, please contact Dr. Susan Wynn (swynn@emory.edu) or Dr. Jan Bergeron (jbergeron@monmouth.com).

Owner/moderator address: swynn@emory.edu

NEWS & COMMENTARY

Microsoft Explorer is New Browser Leader

A new study to be released Monday by Ziff-Davis research group InfoBeads will report that Microsoft's Internet Explorer is used by half of the combined household and corporate browser market, surpassing Netscape's Navigator. The study found that IE was installed on 33.8 million PCs by January 1999 -- almost double

the amount from the previous year -- while Navigator is in use on just 32 million computers, or 47 percent of the market. However, nearly 60 percent of users with five or more years of Web experience use Navigator, but only 42 percent of users with one year of experience use Netscape's browser. (Los Angeles Times 06/07/99)

Most of Web is Beyond Scope of Search Sites

Edupage, 9 July 1999

A new study from the scientific journal Nature reports that the Internet's rapid growth is outpacing the capabilities of most search engines. The most sophisticated search engines list no more than 16 percent of all Web sites on the Internet, according to the report, and the majority of engines cover less than 10 percent each. Northern Light got top ranks in the report with 16 percent coverage, while Lycos, a much more popular and well-known engine, covers just 2.5 percent. Combined, all of the major engines cover just 42 percent of the Web. The remainder of sites are lost to users unless they know the exact address of a Web site. The search engine companies do not dispute the report's findings, and analysts say the situation may give rise to a backwards leap in the distribution of information as more data is lost to easy public view than is made available. (Los Angeles Times 07/08/99)

History: We're Losing It

Edupage, 9 July 1999

The promise that modern information storage devices--from magnetic tape to compact disks--would make data inviolate and everlasting is not becoming a reality, according to archivists. Not only are storage device materials subject to aging or accidental corruption, some of the technologies used to record data are becoming obsolete, which threatens to make it nearly impossible to retrieve even the data that does survive. The National Media Lab reports that magnetic tape, floppy disks, hard disks, and videotape can only survive for about 10 years and that CD-ROM is more vulnerable to damage and information loss than originally was thought. In order to assuage part of the problem, the National Archives maintains a collection of out-of-use data storage devices dating back to early steel-wire sound recorders that it uses to transfer old recordings and data onto new formats. (Newsweek 07/12/99)

MEETINGS & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

See the informatics section of NetVet for a more complete and current list of informatics-related activities at:

<http://netvet.wustl.edu/info.htm>

MSc in Health Informatics

From: Paul Taylor <p.taylor@CHIME.UCL.AC.UK>

From October 1999, University College London will be offering an MSc in health informatics.

The MSc is a modular programme, normally completed part-time over two years. It will provide an education in the principles and practice of health informatics, dealing with such topics as telemedicine, electronic healthcare records, consumer health informatics, health knowledge management, medical imaging and computerised decision support systems.

It is expected to appeal to healthcare workers from all professional backgrounds: doctors,

nurses, managers as well as IT specialists. Graduates will have a thorough understanding of how new technology is transforming the process of healthcare, creating new roles for professionals and placing new demands on decision-makers.

The new Royal Free and University College Medical School is one of the largest, strongest and most diverse providers of medical education and research in the United Kingdom. The College, together with its associated NHS Trusts, hosts probably the greatest concentration of health informatics expertise in the UK.

Students will hear from researchers working in the most exciting projects in the field and learn how health informatics is applied throughout the healthcare system.

For further details see:

<http://www.chime.ucl.ac.uk/HealthI/Courses/MScHI/>

Paul Taylor
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Highgate Hill tel: (+ 44 171) 288 3548
LONDON N19 5NF fax: (+ 44 171) 288
3322

**Telemedicine And Telecommunications:
Options For The New Century**
Jan 13-14, 2000; Bethesda, MD

National Library of Medicine Conference
Bethesda, MD

The Office of High Performance Computing and Communications (OHPCC), LHNCCB, NLM, is sponsoring a two day conference at the National Institutes of Health's William H. Natcher Conference Center in Bethesda MD. The meeting, Thursday and Friday, January 13-14, 2000, will highlight the telemedicine research funded by NLM from 1994 to the present. The purpose of the research is to evaluate the impact of telemedicine on medical care in terms of cost, quality, and access in urban, rural, and frontier areas.

For more information,

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/research/telesymp.html.html>

Susan M. Sparks, RN, PhD, FAAN
National Library of Medicine
sparks@nlm.nih.gov

**Third International Conference of
Animal Health Information Specialists**
July 2-5, 2000; London

The Third International Conference of Animal Health Information Specialists (3ICAHIS) will take place in London from 2-5 July 2000, as part of the Eight International Congress of Medical Librarianship (ICML8) (see <http://www.icml.org>)

Abstracts of papers are invited for 3ICAHIS. Papers should relate to the ICML8 theme of convergence and may develop the ICML8 sub-themes, though contributions on other subjects are very welcome.

The sub themes are:

- Scholarly communication: emerging models for creating and managing the knowledge base
- The animal health-care context: trends and expectations
- Standing on the shoulders of giants: lessons from history for the millennium
- The information centre: planning the architecture of the distributed resources
- The information professional: claiming new horizons ^ preserving professional identity

Abstracts may be submitted electronically in Word, WordPerfect or ASCII format either by e-mail to t.roper@rcvs.org.uk or by post on 3.5 " floppy diskette with two printed copies to: 3ICAHIS Abstracts, c/o RCVS Wellcome Library, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AF.

Abstracts should be in English and should include the following:

Forename, surname and organisation of first author
Address, including postal code.
Telephone and fax numbers
E-mail address
Title of presentation
Language of presentation
Other authors
Summary of presentation (not more than 300 words)

Abstracts should be submitted by 31 August 1999 and will be considered by the 3ICAHIS Programme Committee.

Authors will be notified by 31 October 1999 whether or not their contribution has been accepted and will be asked to confirm that they intend to attend the conference to present your work. A letter of invitation will be sent to all selected authors to assist them in obtaining funds or a visa to attend the conference. All contributors will be required to pay the full registration fee for the conference and cover their travel, accommodation and other personal expenses. Information about the ICML

scholarship process and the application process will be sent to all successful authors.

We particularly welcome contributions from first time presenters. ICML8 will make an award for the best presentation by an author aged under 35 on January 1st, 2000.

I look forward to contributions from members of Vetlib-L. This call is also going to AHIS-L and AVI-L(Vetinfo) but if any list member

knows of other electronic lists that may be relevant, please feel free to forward it. A hard-copy of this call is being mailed out to contacts around the world.

Tom Roper, Head of Library & Information Services Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Wellcome Library Tel: (44)171 222 2021 Fax: (44)171 222 2004 E-mail: t.roper@rcvs.org.uk Web site: <http://www.rcvs.org.uk>

SUGGESTED READING

Telepathology: Telecommunication, Electronic Education and Publication in Pathology

KAYSER / Springer-Verlag New York Inc, 1999, \$95.00.
ISBN: 3540652450.

"...focuses on the rapidly developing field of telemedicine and specifically telepathology...how it works, how to use and set up such a system, cost effectiveness and other benefits are discussed in detail."

Health Sciences Literature Review Made Easy: The Matrix Method

GARRARD / Aspen Publishers Inc, 1999, \$19.95. ISBN: 0834212234.

"This book provides a complete and easy-to-understand description of the matrix method, a systematic methodology for conducting a thorough and efficient review of health science literature."

Diagnostic Imaging

<http://www.dimag.com>

Diagnostic Imaging (DI) is an award-winning monthly newsmagazine dedicated to covering

clinical and technical innovations, practice management issues, and economics in the medical imaging field. This web site contain a partial electronic version of DI. The magazine is written for radiologists, nuclear medicine physicians, radiology managers, radiology technologists, nonradiologists engaged in medical imaging, and other imaging professionals. We provide news, commentary, analysis, clinical reviews, product reports, and humor on topics of importance to our readers. The imaging technologies we cover include MR, CT, ultrasound, nuclear medicine, and all forms of radiography and fluoroscopy.

Evidence-Based Medicine

<http://www.acponline.org/journals/ebm/ebmmenu.htm>

Evidence-Based Medicine, a co-publication of the BMJ Publishing Group and the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, is published bimonthly. This partial electronic version is available free of charge.

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Dr. David Hackett, MD, Editor,
david.sackett@ndm.ox.ac.uk

CLOSING BITS

Y1K Problems

Canterbury, England. A.D. 999.

An atmosphere close to panic prevails today throughout Europe as the millennial year 1000 approaches, bringing with it the so-called "Y1K Bug" a menace which, until recently, hardly anyone had ever heard of.

Prophets of doom are warning that the entire fabric of Western Civilization, based as it now is upon monastic computations, could collapse, and that there is simply not enough time left to fix the problem.

Just how did this disaster-in-the-making ever arise? Why did no one anticipate that a change from a three-digit to a four-digit year would throw into total disarray all liturgical chants and all metrical verse in which any date is mentioned? Every formulaic hymn, prayer, ceremony and incantation dealing with dated events will have to be re-written to accommodate three extra syllables. All tabular chronologies with three-space year columns, maintained for generations by scribes using carefully hand-ruled lines on vellum sheets, will now have to be converted to four-space columns, at enormous cost. In the meantime, the validity of every official

event, from baptisms to burials, from confirmations to coronations, may be called into question.

"We should have seen it coming", says Brother Cedric of St. Michael's Abbey, here in Canterbury. "What worries me most is that 'THOUSAND' contains the word 'THOU,' which occurs in nearly all our prayers, and of course always refers to God. Using it now in the name of the year will seem almost blasphemous, and is bound to cause terrible confusion. Of course, we could always use Latin, but that might be even worse -- the Latin word for 'Thousand' is 'Mille' -- which is the same as the Latin for 'mile.' We won't know whether we're talking about time or distance!"

Stonemasons are already reportedly threatening to demand a proportional pay increase for having to carve an extra numeral in all dates on tombstones, cornerstones and monuments. Together with its inevitable ripple effects, this alone could plunge the hitherto-stable medieval economy into chaos.

A conference of clerics has been called at Winchester to discuss the entire issue, but doomsayers are convinced that the matter is now one of personal survival. Many families, in expectation of the worst, are stocking up on holy water and indulgences.