



Volume 10 - Number 3

May - June, 2001

# Newsletter

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

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# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## How to Contact AVI

Applications for membership, accompanied by a check 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://www.avinformatics.org/>

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;  
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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. The electronic (PDF) version is faster, searchable, easier to store and retrieve, and environmentally friendly.

Current and past issues of the AVI Newsletter are also available on the Web at:

<http://www.avinformatics.org/>

## AVI 2001 PROGRAMS ON VETERINARY INFORMATICS

**Richard B. Talbot Symposium on Veterinary Informatics  
Sunday, July 15, 2000 Program**

**AVMA General Sessions**

**Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; July 16-18, 2001 Program**

**<<http://avinformatics.org/symposia/talbot01/talbot01.htm>>**

DATE	SECTION	TIME	TITLE	Name
Sun 7/15/01	Opening for Talbot	8:00am	Introductions & Opening of the Talbot 2001	Paul Schmitz, DVM & Rick Mills, DVM, PhD
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	8:10am	Web-based Clinical Decision Support in the Veterinary Practice Exam	Craig Carter, DVM, MS, PhD
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	8:45am	Veterinary Technicians: An Underutilized Resource in Veterinary Informatics	Ronald Smith, DVM, MS, PhD
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	9:20am	Single Entry Discharge Summary, Client Instructions, and Referring Veterinarian Letter Using a Web-based Interface	Arthur Smith, MS
7/15/01	Sixth Annual	10:15am	Informatics in Support of	Allen Hahn, DVM, PhD

	Talbot Informatics Symposium		Evidence-based Medicine	
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	10:45am	Classification of Body Cavity Effusions by Expert and Machine Learning Methods - Student Award Presentation Winner	Christine Hotz, DVM, MS
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	11:05am	Persian Gulf War: Creation of a Database for Comparison of Deployed Military Dogs with a Control Cohort	Denzil Frost, DVM, DACVP
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	11:25am	The Impact of Telemedicine on the Veterinary Practitioner and Student Award Presentation	Larry Moore, BA, MA, EdD (ABD)
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	1:00pm	Logging on When the Kids are Asleep	Robert Lofstedt, DVM
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	1:45pm	Continuing Education, Telemedicine, and the Internet	Larry Tilley, DVM, DACVIM
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	3:15pm	Empowering Students: Using Hand-held Technology to Bring the Latest Information to Students	Mark Acierno, DVM
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	3:45pm	A Flexible Web-based Query System for a Clinical Information System	Arthur Smith, MS
7/15/01	Sixth Annual Talbot Informatics Symposium	4:15pm	Wearable Computers in Veterinary Medicine	Linda Cochran, DVM

**AVMA General Sessions - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday; July 16-18, 2001**

<b>Mon</b> 7/16/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	8:00am	Internet2: Opportunities for Veterinary Medicine	Gary Allen, DVM, PhD
7/16/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	10:15am	Should You Create Your Own Web Site?	Robin Starr, DVM, MED
7/16/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	1:00pm	Low Bandwidth Video Conferencing for Media-intensive Distance Learning and Telemedicine	Charles Branch, PhD & James Barnes, EdD

7/16/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	3:15-5:15pm	<b>Stakeholders Informational Session</b> See below*	James T. Case, DVM, PhD & Jeff Wilcke, DVM, MS, DACVCP
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**\* Stakeholders Informational Session**

The Stakeholders meeting is sponsored by the Sub-Committee on Standards of the AVMA's Committee on Veterinary Informatics. All persons interested in and associated with the establishment, transmission, storage and searching of electronic veterinary data are invited and encouraged to attend. Presentations will include updates on data transmission standards, terminology (vocabulary standards) and other areas pertaining to veterinary medical records in electronic forms.

Electronic veterinary medical records are becoming much more common and in some venues, almost 'de rigueur'. Our brief but important session will bring all up to date on the rapidly developing field of standards and information interchange. Practitioners using or anticipating using electronic records and/or transmissions should plan to attend and exchange their own ideas and concerns. Especially important will be the how and wherefore of the exchange of information among veterinarians, laboratories, referral practices and repositories. The meeting will feature reports on the vital work performed by members of the Standards subcommittee in adapting standards for transmission and storage already extant in human medicine to our profession.

<b>Tues</b> 7/17/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	8:00am	Controlled Vocabularies in Clinical Information Systems	Arthur Smith, MS & Jeff Wilcke, DVM, MS, DACVCP
7/17/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	10:15am	The Past, Present, and Future of Distance Learning in Veterinary Medicine: Reaching the Veterinary Desktop	Duncan Ferguson, VMD, PhD
7/17/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	1:00pm	A National Companion Animal Disease Database: What's in it for Practitioners?	Elizabeth Lund, DVM, MPH, PhD
7/17/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	3:15pm	A "Practical" EMR and Using Computers & Software to Your Advantage in the Modern Veterinary Practice, Part I	Paul Schmitz, DVM

<b>Wed</b> 7/18/01	AVMA Informatics Sessions	8:00am	A "Practical" EMR and Using Computers & Software to Your Advantage in the Modern Veterinary Practice, Part II	Paul Schmitz, DVM
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## PRODUCTS & REVIEWS

### **New Veterinary Reference Right At Hand**

By GREG KLINE  
Published Online June 11, 2001  
Copyright 2001 The News-Gazette

Urbana, IL - University of Illinois veterinary science Professor Rhonda Schulman had a big question for the author of the book she was editing, but not about spelling or grammar. She needed instructions on how to install the thing.

Schulman, a teacher and veterinarian, is now the editor of the first veterinary reference book written for hand-held Palm computers. She had never edited a book before this year, let alone an electronic book.

"I wanted to do it because I thought it was a cool idea," Schulman said recently. "That is so way of the future." The future has been here for some time for people doctors, who have several reference works and lots of other medical software available for hand-held computers.

That made Schulman's former colleague, veterinarian and Palm fan Mark Acierno, a little jealous, especially since his wife is a medical doctor, so he decided to do something about it. "He's one of those extremely gung-ho people who manages to write books in his spare time," Schulman said.

The result was The PocketDVM (for doctor of veterinary medicine), the computerized book which Acierno subsequently asked Schulman to edit.

Schulman said the task probably took a couple hundred hours, jammed in between her day job at the UI and life in general. Among the challenges: She had to get a Palm (she co-opted one her husband hadn't been using) and then figure out how to get the book off the computer CD it had arrived on and into the hand-held

device. That's what took a phone call to Acierno, who walked her through the process.

The editing of the book had some twists as well. Meant to be used in an environment with limited storage space and screen space, the entries needed to be compact but still authoritative. A lot of the usual charts and other illustrations common in medical-type reference works also were out. "Keeping in mind the screen size was a big deal," Schulman said. "It's definitely been a learning experience."

Schulman called The PocketDVM "a very basic textbook that's meant to be used for very quick reference," mainly by veterinary students and new practitioners. She and Acierno liken it to the "nerd books" vet students commonly keep, binders of note cards on things that come up frequently, particularly in emergencies, where quick access is required.

Focused on dogs and cats, the book covers topics ranging from common small-animal heart problems to infectious diseases. Want to know how to give an animal CPR? It's in there. How to do dog and cat blood transfusions? Covered. What to do with a poisoned pet? Ditto. Any topic can be accessed with a tap of the stylus the Palm computers use for navigation.

Potential users can find out more about the book, which costs \$40, and how to buy it at

<http://pocketdvm.com>

Schulman said she thinks The PocketDVM, the second edition of which she and Acierno already have begun, will find an audience. She sees more and more of her students packing Palm devices and expects it to become common, much the way using desktop computers did a decade ago.

She's ready. She never did give her husband back that Palm, carries it today and has even started to keep her calendar on it.

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## NEWS & COMMENTARY

### Tools To Help Medical Groups Better Use The Internet

The MedBiquitous Consortium aims to develop standards and software applications for the medical community to use for education and testing, collection of outcomes data, and online journal publishing. Founded by Johns Hopkins University and a number of medical specialty societies, the MedBiquitous Consortium will turn to IBM, Rational Software, and Sun Microsystems for technical expertise. John Hopkins and the other members "want to be leaders in defining how the Internet changes health care," explained Dr. Peter S. Greene, associate dean for emerging technologies at Johns Hopkins' school of medicine. The MedBiquitous Consortium includes the MedBiquitous Laboratory, which will develop the new Internet tools, and MedBiquitous Services, a for-profit unit that will provide the larger group with Web hosting and other services. (Baltimore Sun, 23 May 2001)

### Doctors Analyze Health Data on the Web

A new study from the RAND research institution, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, reveals that health information on the Internet is not all that easy to locate and understand. In the study, 34 physicians looked at 25 English- and Spanish-language health sites for a six-month period. The physicians examined how each site presented information on four specific medical topics: obesity, asthma in children, breast cancer, and depression. The study found that of the English- language sites, 25 percent gave no mention of these topics, while 53 percent of the Spanish-language sites did not. For the most part, researchers said the information presented on the sites was reliable. The most common source of confusion was information presented two different ways on the same site, not erroneous information. The study notes recent research that shows 100 million U.S. residents use the Internet as a source of health information. (Washington Post, 23 May 2001)

### Online Veterinary Education Grant to UIUC-CVM

CONTACT: Jim Barlow, Life Sciences Editor  
(217) 333-5802; b-james3@uiuc.edu

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — A \$100,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation has paved the way for the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine to develop a comprehensive online continuing education program for veterinarians.

Veterinarians soon can study at home or the office, on their own time any time, instead of traveling or adjusting their schedules, to keep up with often fast-changing advances in animal care, said Christine Merle, coordinator of marketing for Veterinary Education Online.

The three-year grant from the New York-based Sloan Foundation will be combined with matching \$100,000 contributions from the UI Office of Academic Affairs and College of Veterinary Medicine to develop a full line of continually updated courses. The program will begin this fall with a Web-accessible course on pain management. Official launch of the expanded online program will be in early 2003.

"This generous grant from the Sloan Foundation makes this possible," said Merle, a clinical professor of veterinary medicine administration. "There are more than 60,000 veterinarians in the United States, with 75 percent of them employed in a clinical practice. These veterinarians are the caretakers of more than 100 million companion animals and 7 billion livestock animals. It is essential for these caretakers to stay up to date."

The Sloan grant will help to create a core set of 10 courses, which will cover dentistry, ophthalmology, behavior, business, nutrition, imaging, exotic pets, emerging diseases and public health. The courses will vary in content, duration and credit hours.

"We are impressed with the energetic program in online education at the University of Illinois, and we have been long-term supporters," said

A. Frank Mayadas, program director of the Sloan Foundation's Asynchronous Learning Networks Consortium. "This new project to create online courses for veterinarians has considerable potential."

U of I Online, an Internet-based education and public service program that began in 1997 to serve the three UI campuses, has received more than \$1 million from the Sloan ALN Consortium. U of I Online last year featured some 300 courses and a total enrollment of more than 6,000 students.

"The University of Illinois has a good reputation in online education, and veterinarians need to be able to meet educational requirements while in the office or at home, if they so choose," Mayadas said. "This Veterinary Education Online program makes that possible. It will be the first such program in the country."

Traditionally, veterinarians have had to take time off from their clinics to attend seminars and lectures to obtain continuing education, Merle said. Time, distance and money often are major obstacles that confront many veterinarians, she added. Current online programs require veterinarians to be on their computers at predetermined times.

The UI College of Veterinary Medicine has offered on-site continuing education seminars and conferences since its inception in 1944. Nationally, 44 states require an average of 14 hours of continuing veterinary medical education each year to hold a veterinary license. The college's Biomedical Communications Center and the Continuing Education and Public Service units will assist in the development and delivery of the program.

### **New Disorder, Cyberchondria, Sweeps the Internet**

Overwhelming amounts of online medical information are leading researchers to coin a new psychological classification called "cyberchondria" that describes people who obsessively misdiagnose themselves using the Web.

Like hypochondriacs constantly imagining they have various fatal illnesses, cyberchondriacs

declare themselves outrageously sick after reading medical material on the Web. Because online drug stores bypass doctors to deliver drugs, medical professionals are beginning to take alarm at cyberchondriac behavior.

Last month, the British Medical Association issued a first-round set of guidelines for online medical information; British experts estimate 25 percent of online medical information is inaccurate. Some doctors and surgeons also claim they are seeing a mixed effect from online medical information. In some cases, online medical information has helped patients cope with illnesses identified by their doctor, while in others, Web surfing has brought patients into doctors' offices asking for drugs they know nothing about. (New Zealand Herald Online, 28 April 2001)

### **Handhelds to be Harvard Medical Students' First Assist**

This August, 338 Harvard Medical School students will begin using PDAs as their main data tool--the first institution in the United States to make PDAs the standard instead of personal computers, Harvard officials claim. The PDAs will be used for such tasks as taking class and patient notes, scheduling class, hospital rounds updates, and e-mail. Educators will be able to package and send text, graphics, and tables, and PDA users will be able to exchange data with PCs through the Internet. John Halamka, the school's associate dean for educational technology, says PDAs are necessary to keep students on track and on the move, thereby saving time for learning. The PDA network uses AvantGo software and servers for the system's Internet applications, and Halamka believes that implementing the system will cost about \$350,000. (Boston Globe, 7 May 2001)

### **Update on FARAD's Status**

In view of your interest in the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database (FARAD) I am writing to update you on its operational status. As you may know last year FARAD underwent a lapse of funding and was rescued by a line item in the Federal Budget that was added during the conference on appropriations. Even this last minute rescue

was not enough to halt the departure of some of our specialist staff which severely limited our ability to function. Fortunately FARAD's value to the animal health industry and human health has been recognized and there has been a concerted effort to place full funding of FARAD back into the Federal budget. The House of Representatives has adopted a million dollars appropriation and we now wait to see if a similar appropriation is adopted by the Senate as well. If this all happens we hope to begin re-building FARAD to its previous level of service and research.

If you feel strongly that America needs to retain the ability to prevent and mitigate drug, pesticide and environmental chemical residues in food of animal origin you might want to let your Congressional Delegation know of your feelings. Their addresses can be found in your local area phone book or at the following web address <http://congress.org> (provides a zip code match to your Members of Congress). If you want to contact the Secretary of Agriculture [Honorable Ann Veneman] to let her know of

your support for FARAD, letters can be sent to: The Honorable Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture, Room 200 Jamie L. Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250.

The House of Representatives through the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies has indicated their support for an allocation of one million dollars for the FARAD program in FY2002. We need to have the Senate allocate a similar appropriation, thereby concurring with the House of Representatives, if we are to succeed in obtaining full funding for FARAD. Your support of the FARAD program is sincerely appreciated.

Alistair Webb  
FARAD Director at Florida  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL 32610-0144  
(352) 392 4700 X3828

## MEETINGS & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

### **Richard B. Talbot Symposium on Veterinary Informatics – 7/15/01; 138th AVMA Annual Convention; Boston, MA**

<http://avinformatics.org/symposia/talbot01/talbot01.htm>

### **AVMA General Informatics Sessions - 7/16-18/01; 138th AVMA Annual Convention; Boston, MA**

<http://avinformatics.org/symposia/talbot01/talbot01.htm>

### **The 14th Annual Slice of Life/Computers in Healthcare Education Symposium – 7/31/01–8/4/01; Munich, Germany**

<http://www.slice.gsm.com>

Topics include:

1. Mastering Digital Images in your Teaching.
2. Introduction to ASP: Building Interactive, Database-Driven Web Applications.

3. Authoring with CASUS: to Quickly Create Computer-based Teaching-Cases.
4. Streaming Digital Media for the Web..
5. Web-based Delivery of Courseware, Tutorials, and Assessment with WebOL.
6. Internet Security.
7. QuickTime Player as a Digital Media Authoring Tool.
8. Computer Adaptive Testing: Theory and Practice.
9. From Splines to Spines: Making of 3D Models and their use in Life Sciences.
10. Dynamic Web Content with PHP4.
11. Flash 5.0 for Beginners: Animation for the Web, An Introduction to Macromedia's Animation Software.
12. Also an Intermediate Class. . Using Computers to Prepare Students for the "Real Clinic Life".
13. The State of the Art, Next Generation Handheld Computers.
14. Computer Simulations in Medical Physiology Education.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. QuickTime can do that? Harnessing the Power of QuickTime Tracks and Wired Sprites..</li> <li>16. Using PDAs in Teaching Clinical Medicine.</li> <li>17. Synchronizing Web-based Multimedia with SMIL.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Information Design in Healthcare: Cognition and Graphic Design.</li> <li>19. The Authoring System of "Docs 'n Drugs - The Virtual Hospital" - A Tutorial for Prospective Case Authors.</li> </ul> |
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## CLOSING BITS

### **Signs You Live in the Year 2001**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. You just tried to enter your password on the microwave.</li> <li>21. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach a family of 3.</li> <li>22. You call your son's beeper to let him know it's time to eat. He e-mails you back from his bedroom, "What's for dinner?"</li> <li>23. Your daughter sells Girl Scout cookies via her web site.</li> <li>24. You chat several times a day with a stranger in South Africa but you haven't spoken to your neighbor yet this year.</li> <li>25. You check the ingredients on a can of chicken noodle soup to see if it contains echinacea.</li> <li>26. Your grandmother asks you to send her a jpeg file of your newborn so she can create a screensaver.</li> <li>27. You pull up in your own driveway and use the cell phone to see if anyone is home.</li> <li>28. Every commercial on television has a web site address across the bottom of the screen.</li> <li>29. You buy a computer and 6 month later it is outdated and now sells for half the price you paid.</li> <li>30. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 years of your life, is cause for panic and turning around to go get it.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31. Using real money, instead of credit or debit, to make a purchase would be a hassle and take planning.</li> <li>32. Cleaning up the dining room means getting the fast food bags out of the back seat of your car.</li> <li>33. Your reason for not staying in touch with family is that they do not have e-mail addresses.</li> <li>34. You consider second day air delivery painfully slow.</li> <li>35. Your dining room table is now your flat filing cabinet.</li> <li>36. Your idea of being organized is multiple colored post-it notes.</li> <li>37. You hear most of your jokes via e-mail instead of in person.</li> <li>38. You get an extra phone line so you can get phone calls.</li> <li>39. You disconnect from the internet and get this awful feeling, as if you just pulled the plug on a loved one.</li> <li>40. You get up in the morning and go on-line before getting your coffee.</li> <li>41. You wake up at 2 AM to go to the bathroom and check your e-mail on your way back to bed.</li> <li>42. You start tilting your head sideways to</li> <li>43. smile :)</li> <li>44. You're reading this.</li> <li>45. Even worse, You're going to forward it to someone else.</li> </ul> |
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