



RCVS

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

news



MARCH 2000



NEW JUNIOR VICE-PRESIDENT ELECTED

Roger Green was elected Junior Vice-President at the Council meeting held on Thursday 24 February 2000. Qualifying in 1960 from London, Mr Green has been a practitioner all his working life and is currently sole principal of a mixed practice in West Sussex. President of BSAVA in 1974-75, Mr Green has played an active role in veterinary politics as a member of BVA Council and the Association's representative on RSPCA Council. He is currently a UK delegate to the Federation of Veterinarians in Europe (FVE) and in 1998 was appointed as a member of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee of the European Commission. Elected onto RCVS Council in 1990, Mr Green has been the Chairman of Preliminary Investigation Committee and is currently Chairman of External Affairs Committee.

UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION ISSUES

Stephen Ware, the Chairman of the Preliminary Investigation (PI) Committee, reported to Council that of 23 new cases considered by the Committee, two had been referred to solicitors for further investigation and one had been referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

The details of four cases were reported to show the sort of decisions made by the Committee. One case involved the death of a dog following treatment with ivermectin without the informed consent of the owner. The veterinary surgeon was advised that this was unacceptable. Another case involved a veterinary surgeon convicted on several counts of cruelty to dogs owned by his wife. Mr Ware indicated that usually such convictions resulted in referral to the Disciplinary Committee. In this case the mitigating circumstances were exceptional because the veterinary surgeon only had access to the dogs for 8 days after his allegedly dominant wife of 25 years had become seriously ill and been taken to hospital. He was under severe stress, was ill at the time and had been trying to re-home the dogs. The court had ordered a conditional discharge.

In the third case a veterinary surgeon had supplied medicinal products to a friend which had come to light following an unrelated police investigation. The police reported the matter to the College after becoming concerned that investigating officers had been misled. The veterinary surgeon denied this but accepted that he had been wrong to supply medicines to a friend and the case was concluded with the issue of advice.

The final case concerned a young veterinary surgeon who had failed to provide emergency treatment following an out of hours call. The PI Committee offered an interview as an alternative to consideration of more formal disciplinary procedures, which was accepted by the veterinary surgeon. The case was discussed and advice issued at the interview.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - FINDINGS

The Disciplinary Committee sat in the first week of February to consider two cases. The first case was against Meredydd Jones, from North Wales, who it was alleged on two occasions, when drunk, had treated an animal and certified that a horse had died from a lightning strike without examining it. He had been convicted of a drink/driving offence in 1994. Mr Jones pleaded not guilty to all charges. The Disciplinary Committee found Mr Jones guilty of disgraceful conduct in a professional respect on one count of being unfit to treat an animal through alcohol and on the second count in relation to the false certification. The Committee was then informed that Mr Jones had previously been struck off the register in 1990 for false certification. In mitigation Mr Jones provided a medical report that indicated that he had had an alcohol problem and asked for the decision to be postponed, but after considering this request, the Committee directed that his name be removed from the register.

The second case involved Michael John Roach from Bristol who had been accused of charging for a cat spay operation that he had not carried out and failing to provide an adequate level of professional care for a guinea pig he had castrated. Mr Roach, who pleaded not guilty to the charges, claimed that he was suffering from clinical depression and occasional blackouts and that he was unaware that he had not completed the cat spay operation. The Committee found the allegation that he had falsely charged for an operation not proved but found him guilty of disgraceful conduct in respect of his lack of care for the guinea pig. Expressing concern at Mr Roach's medical problem, judgement was postponed for two years on the basis that he undertook appropriate medical treatment, carried out only certain minor procedures alone, undertook 15 hours of clinical CPD each quarter and submitted regular reports about his compliance with these conditions to the Disciplinary Committee. The final terms of these conditions to be agreed.

LISTING OF DEGREES AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

The College receives many requests to list a variety of qualifications alongside members' names in the Register. Some are clearly related to their veterinary practice; others not. To publish everything would take up a lot of space in the Register. The guidelines below identify those which can be included:

- (a) Any qualification entitling a person to be registered in the Register under the provisions of the Veterinary Surgeons Act, 1966.
- (b) The Fellowship or other diploma of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
- (c) Any certificate awarded by the RCVS as a result of passing a certificate examination held under the provisions of Byelaws for certificate and diploma subjects.
- (d) Any degree or diploma in medicine or dentistry registerable by the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom, or by the General Dental Council of the United Kingdom.
- (e) Any other degree of any recognised university in the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, the Republic of Ireland or any other member state of the European Community.
- (f) The National Diploma in Agriculture, the Scottish Diploma of Agriculture, the National Diploma in Dairying and the National Diploma and Fellowship in Poultry Husbandry.
- (g) The qualification of Barrister, Advocate, Writer to the Signet, or Solicitor.
- (h) The qualification of Pharmaceutical Chemist (PhC) or Member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (MRPharmS) or the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (MPSI).
- (i) The qualification of Member (MRCPPath) or Fellow (FRCPath) of Royal College of Pathologists.
- (j) The Fellowship, membership etc. of any learned body or society, not gained by examination but which shall represent a special honour in recognition of scientific learning or research and which may from time to time be recognised by Council for the purposes of entry in the Register.
- (k) The membership of the Royal Society of Chemistry or the Institute of Biology.
- (l) A rank, honour or appointment derived from the Crown.

Specific qualifications already approved for inclusion in members' Register entries are listed in the Registers and Directory. A title or qualification which does not fall within any of the sections listed above must be approved by RCVS before it may be included in the Register. Members who wish to add any of these qualifications to their Register entry should send a copy of their Diploma or Certificate to the Membership Department.

The Survey 2000 questionnaire will be arriving on your doormat about the same time as this copy of the RCVS News.

Those of you who participated in the Survey two years ago will recall that the RCVS decided to undertake regular surveys of the profession, so that it could develop an accurate picture of its current state. Comparing surveys from different years allows the College to keep track of changes taking place in veterinary practice, employment, education and related areas. RCVS Council believes strongly that the survey provides information that is essential if it is to continue to monitor trends and enable effective manpower planning.

The Survey is quite detailed and it will require a few moments of your time to complete. Remember, the more people who respond, the more accurate the findings will be!

MAKING THE DIRECTORY OF PRACTICES BETTER

The Directory of Practices, published annually by the RCVS, is the only produced reference for veterinary practices in the UK, giving detailed information on Specialists, referral practices and partners, broken down by area. For its next edition, changes are underway, designed to make it even more comprehensive and accurate.

From 2000 we will be:

- moving the publication date to August. This is the time of year at which our information on members is most accurate
- writing to all the veterinary practices included in it each year (in May) to check their entry details
- contacting veterinary practices that are not currently listed in the Directory to ask them if they would like to be included.

Many of the questions that come to the College are from members of the public who want to find a practice either in a particular area or with specific expertise. These questions are usually answered straight from the Directory of Veterinary Practices.

Later this year, it is likely that an electronic version of the Directory will be included on the College website. If we know about you, you will be asked if you want to be included in the new Directory, and listed on our website. However, we have not got details of every practice in the country. If you want to be sure your practice is included and secure your free copy, then call the Publications Department at the College or email publications@rcvs.org.uk.

THE BIG NUMBER AND OTHER CHANGES

Don't forget that six cities in England, including London, and Belfast change their area codes on **22 April**.

The new telephone numbers for the RCVS can be used now:

Main Switchboard: 020 7222 2001

Fax: 020 7222 2004

Wellcome Library: 020 7222 2021

You may also be interested to know that the College is replacing its telephone system at the start of March in order to provide a better service to members and the public. If you have any difficulty calling us following the change, then please let us know what the problem is. You can email the College at admin@rcvs.org.uk.

RECORD-KEEPING REGULATIONS DILUTED

At the end of last year, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) announced the outcome of its consultation exercise on a proposed set of regulations setting out record-keeping requirements for practices and pharmacies supplying veterinary medicinal products by retail sale. The consultation caused much debate at the time, particularly from within the veterinary profession, and Ministers re-examined the Regulations on the basis of the comments they had received. In the end it was agreed that the Regulations should apply only to the retail sale of veterinary medicinal products for administration to food producing animals.

No Regulations on record-keeping have therefore been imposed on the sale of medicinal products for pets or other companion animals, although the VMD encourages practices to maintain records of sales in order to assist product traceability and product recall if the need arises.

RADIATION PROTECTION

New rules from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) governing the training and qualifications of Radiation Protection Advisers (RPAs) came into force on 1 January 2000. The new Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999 (IRR 99) "require formality in the process of recognising the competence of individuals to act as RPAs". Accordingly, all RPAs will need to hold a vocational qualification which attests to their competence as radiation protection advisers - either the level 4 NVQ in Occupational Health & Safety (Radiation Protection Practice), or other valid certificate of competence issued by an organisation "recognised as an Assessing Body by the HSE". HSE will be publishing details of assessing bodies on their website in due course (<http://www.hse.gov.uk>). Organisations are now applying to the HSE to be considered as assessing bodies. In due course, RCVS should be able to advise veterinary surgeons who wish to act as RPAs on the most suitable body to apply through.

Transitional arrangements have been specified, so that RPAs appointed by employers under the 1985 regulations will be deemed to meet the HSE requirements until December 2004. However, even if employers wish to continue using their existing RPA - assuming they are still 'suitable' - they will need to reappoint them for the purposes of IRR99. This is because the new regulations are more specific than IRR85 about the circumstances when an RPA should be consulted.

The HSE advises that there are three issues members should consider in deciding on an appointment of an RPA:

- 'Do I need to consult an RPA about the observance of the Regulations?' (For veterinary applications, the answer will almost certainly be 'yes')
- 'Has the person or organisation I intend to appoint obtained an NVQ/SVQ at level 4 in radiation protection, or received a certificate from a recognised assessing body showing that they satisfy HSE criteria for basic competence?'
- 'Is the RPA 'suitable' to give me advice for the type of work I do, i.e. does the RPA have relevant experience for that type of work?'

Members need to inform the RCVS of the name of their RPA in connection with the following three applications:

- approval or re-approval as an ATAC
- approval or re-approval as a Veterinary Hospital
- enrolment for the Certificate or Diploma in Veterinary Radiology.

All veterinary surgeons should comply with the legislation and those who act as RPAs will be responsible for obtaining the necessary certification. Currently, RCVS advises that RPAs in veterinary practice should normally either hold the RCVS Diploma in Veterinary Radiology, or should be qualified health physicists with an interest in veterinary radiology and an appropriate certificate of competence to give advice on radiation protection.

The above Ionising Radiations Regulations are available from The Stationery Office. The full text of the new regulations can be downloaded from The Stationery Office website at

<http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1999/19993232.htm>. Guidance and the approved code of practice is due to be published by HSE in March.

For inquiries contact the HSE information line on (0541) 545500, or write to the HSE Information Centre, Broad Lane, Sheffield, S3 7HQ.

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR DATA PROTECTION

New legislation came into effect on 1 March 2000 which will mean that data held on manual files as well as on electronic systems will be protected. The aim of the legislation is to protect individuals from having data about them used by unauthorised persons or for unauthorised purposes. The legislation gives rights to the 'data subject' to see the data held about themselves and to object to misuse of it. In turn, those collecting and holding data have certain legal responsibilities to register with the Data Protection Registry and to act fairly and in accordance with the statutory requirements. Certain breaches of the legislation will be criminal offences.

The College holds a lot of data about its members, most of which it needs in order to be able to discharge its statutory functions. Opportunities will be taken however to make members aware of the uses which are made of data, giving them the opportunity to consent, or otherwise, and to confirm that the data held by the College is accurate.

Many veterinary surgeons will, of course, hold data about their client, patients, suppliers and others and should take steps to ensure that they comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

COMPULSORY INDEMNITY INSURANCE?

The College has consulted a number of veterinary organisations on a proposal for mandatory professional indemnity insurance. It is suggested that the Guide to Professional Conduct should state that "Practising veterinary surgeons must ensure that all their professional activities are covered by professional indemnity insurance or equivalent arrangements. Such cover may be held individually or through an employer". The consultations demonstrated general support for the proposal with some surprise that professional indemnity insurance was not already compulsory. The Council's Advisory Committee is due to re-consider the issue on 13 April 2000 and anybody who wants to comment on the proposal should write to Mr Gordon Hockey, Head of Professional Conduct.

ONLINE VETERINARY SERVICES

Advice on the provision of veterinary services via the Internet is now available from the College. It emphasises that a practice may use the Internet to communicate with clients and that Internet-only services may provide advice, but should not be involved in the supply of medicines as part of any professional practice. The advice, which was considered by the Advisory Committee and reported to Council, is based on existing legal and ethical provisions and is available from the Professional Conduct Department.

VAAJ MEETING

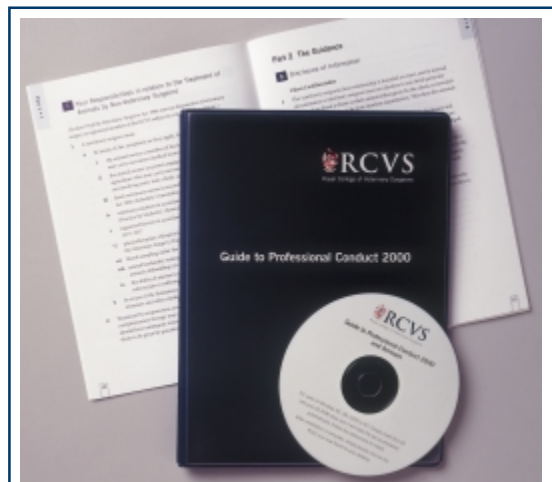
The Millennium Meeting of the Veterinary Association for Arbitration & Jurisprudence (VAAJ) will take place on Thursday 8 June 2000 at The Puckrup Hall Hotel, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, under the Chairmanship of RCVS President, Professor Bob Michell. The programme will address:

Animal Welfare

Email vetting

'Woolf' - one year on

Speakers will include Professor Sir Colin Spedding, Chris Laurence, (CVO RSPCA) and Douglas Jack (Barrister at the American Veterinary Medical Legal Association). Places are limited and cost £60.00. For further information and an application form, please contact John Penfold, Hunters Spinney, Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire GL54 1LD, telephone (01451) 831567, fax (01451) 831545.



You should have recently received your Guide to Professional Conduct 2000. Please contact the College if you have not

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO NEWS OF VETERINARY NURSING?

Members may have wondered why the veterinary nursing section of RCVS News has become smaller recently. The answer lies in the publication of a dedicated veterinary nursing newsletter for Listed VNs and all concerned with veterinary nurse training issues.

Veterinary Nursing News is published twice a year and is distributed to all training and assessment centres, VN colleges and Listed VNs. Content includes examination dates and portfolio submission information, feedback from examinations and news on developments within the S/NVQ training scheme. The newsletter also addresses issues of interest to qualified veterinary nurses such as the ongoing review of Schedule 3 and the possibility of regulation for veterinary nursing.

Members who are not on the circulation list as an ATAC Principal and who would like to receive Veterinary Nursing News may be added to the circulation list by contacting the VN Department (email: VetNursing@rcvs.org.uk).

Annual Training Centre Update

All approved training and assessment centres will shortly be sent a brief update form to complete and send back to the RCVS. This will be the first annual survey to maintain the accuracy of RCVS records on training centres. This should reduce the amount of mail to ATACs that appears to go astray, thus improving communication and enabling the RCVS to target support where it is most needed.

Please return the form promptly to avoid the need for costly reminders!

SUMMER 2000 VN EXAMINATIONS AND PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION - KEY DATES

All written examinations
(Part I and Level 2, Part II and Level 3) Tuesday 11 July 2000

Part II and Level 3 practical examinations Week commencing 17 July 2000

Summer examination candidates' portfolios for both Level 2 and Level 3 must be submitted by 30 September 2000.

Please note that the temporary closure of the London University examination halls, and the absence of an economically viable alternative location available for two days in London, has necessitated a change to the usual arrangements for written examinations. All written examinations will therefore take place on 11 July. The London venue will be the Royal Horticultural Halls in Victoria.

LIBRARY LINK-UPS BENEFIT MEMBERS

As the College enters the new Millennium, new RCVS Library projects are underway to enable members to access even more veterinary clinical information:

- ❑ **Electronic journals online:** the RCVS Wellcome Library already offers access to electronic journals with full text, abstracts and table of contents through WebCat. In a new partnership with Ingenta, the library will also offer access to electronic journals through Ingenta's web site (at <http://www.ingenta.com>). Items to which the library subscribes will be available free of charge to members; items from other journals may be ordered online.
- ❑ **User survey:** the full results of the library user survey are now available online at: http://www.rcvs.org.uk/downloads/Infosurvey_99_for_web.pdf. Copies have been sent to all participants.
- ❑ **Improving access:** the library is one of the lead partners in the ASVIN (Assessing and Supporting Veterinary Information Needs) project. This project brings together all six UK veterinary schools, the faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin, the Animal Health Trust and the RCVS to improve access to information for veterinary researchers. Funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP), the project's first information gathering phase is now completed, and the project web site may be accessed at: <http://www.asvin.ac.uk>.
- ❑ **Quality information:** the library is also a lead partner with the Royal Veterinary College in the Vetgate project, to build a quality-filtered gateway to veterinary internet resources. Vetgate is part of the BIOME project (<http://www.biome.ac.uk>), which is part of the UK-wide Resource Discovery Network (<http://www.rdn.ac.uk>). Vetgate will be publicly launched in April.
- ❑ **International conference:** the RCVS Wellcome Library is playing a leading role in the Third International Conference on Animal Health Information Specialists in July. Taking place not far from the RCVS, at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in Westminster, the conference is part of the Eighth International Congress on Medical Librarianship: for further details see: <http://www.icml.org>.
- ❑ **New update:** the library is now offering a new quarterly update on small animal surgery. To subscribe or for further information contact the library on 020 7222 2021 or e-mail: library@rcvs.org.uk.



Students representing the Association of Veterinary Students talk to the Head of Library and Information Services at the College, Tom Roper, January 2000



GM Crops in Animal Feeds

Applications are invited from veterinary scholars or professionals in related disciplines for a fully funded Fulbright Fellowship to the USA – to investigate the

American experience of using genetically modified crops in animal feeds. The Fellowship will be of 4-6 months' duration, tenable for one year from September 2000. Building on the successful collaboration between the RCVS Trust and the Fulbright Commission, this will be the first Fellowship offered to a UK scholar to travel to the USA to investigate a topic of trans-Atlantic interest and concern. Full application details are obtainable from the RCVS Trust at Belgravia House or from the Fulbright Commission on (020) 7404 6880. Closing date: 20 April 2000.

Veterinary Involvement in Public Health

Mr N D (Tim) Udall BVSc CertVPH(MH) MRCVS was awarded the RCVS Trust's travel scholarship to investigate and report on veterinary responsibilities in the delivery of public health teaching, and the development of public health and food hygiene policy. At the time of writing he is en route to Australia and New Zealand to consult veterinary academics and public health policy-makers. The second leg of his investigation will involve visits to several EU countries in April and May.

Triple Take-up

Over 400 College Members, VNs and staff have now started to use their new RCVS Credit Cards. This is nearly triple the number last reported 3 months ago – and nearly 3 times better than the average take-up rate of other professions that have "affinity" credit cards! A very big thank you to RCVS Credit Card holders – your use of it benefits the Trust's educational programmes.

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS.....

Come and make your views known about issues that are affecting the veterinary profession as it enters the new Millennium! The first Regional Meetings of 2000 will take place in Maidstone on Wednesday 22 March 2000 at the Best Western, Russell Hotel and in Northern Ireland at the Dunadry Country Club and Hotel, County Antrim on Thursday 23 March 2000. Both events start at 7.00pm with a buffet supper. The meeting starts at 8.00pm and will end at about 10.00pm. Invitation leaflets have been sent to members living within reasonable travelling distance to the venues, although all members are invited to attend.

To book your place, please contact Alexandra Thompson at the College. Places are limited, so book soon!



Scenes from the Regional Meetings in Cardiff and Stratford-upon-Avon, November 1999

CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA EXAMINATION INFORMATION

All those interested in continuing with or embarking on a course of study for a Certificate or Diploma are asked to take careful note of the information given below.

There are three stages to be completed prior to sitting a Certificate or Diploma examination. Fees are required at stages 1 and 3.

Stage 1 Enrolment and Initial Approval of Experience.

Stage 2 Final Approval of Experience: This stage includes submission of photocopies of CPD record cards for the period of experience since 1 July 1997 and, for some subjects, also includes submission of evidence of experience.

Stage 3 Examination Entry: Submitted work, which forms Part (a) of the examination, is required either with the examination entry or by a specified date shortly afterwards; candidates should check the requirement for their subject.

All application forms and other information on Certificates and Diplomas are available from the Education Department of the RCVS (email: education@rcvs.org.uk). Information packs on all subjects are updated each year after the annual Subject Board meeting. It is important that enrolled and potential candidates check, before submitting any application forms, that the information they hold is up to date.

DEADLINES FOR STAGES 1 & 2

1 May 2000 or 1 November 2000

Equine Medicine, Equine Practice, Equine Surgery, Fish Health and Production, Pig Medicine and Production, Poultry Medicine and Production, State Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Ophthalmology, Zoological Medicine.

1 November 2000

Animal Welfare Science Ethics and Law, Cattle Health and Production, Laboratory Animal Science, Sheep Health and Production, Small Animal Medicine, Small Animal Surgery, Veterinary Anaesthesia, Veterinary Cardiology, Veterinary Dermatology, Veterinary Public Health, Veterinary Radiology, Veterinary Reproduction.

DEADLINE FOR STAGE 3

1 March 2001

All subjects, including work to be submitted by Diploma candidates.

Candidates for RCVS examinations should ensure that the correct application form and fee and their submitted work for Part (a) of the examination reaches the RCVS by the relevant closing dates. Incomplete entry forms or late work will not be accepted.

A REMINDER.....

Don't forget that you can download a copy of the RCVS "Clinical Extra Mural Study Manual for Participating Practices" from the RCVS website at www.rcvs.org.uk/ems.html. You will need an Adobe Acrobat reader to access the document. Members with Adobe Acrobat installed onto their computers can go straight to the document on www.rcvs.org.uk/downloads/ems.pdf.

CPD NEWS

You will see that the back of the latest edition of the CPD Record Card has been altered to emphasise the importance of pre-planning CPD targets for the following 12 months. Members are encouraged to select CPD targets and consider how best to achieve these targets. The aim of pre-planning is to maximise the benefits of CPD both to an individual and the workplace.

The RCVS policy on CPD advises that practices or other organisations should appoint a CPD co-ordinator. Such a person could encourage co-operation on CPD matters between veterinary surgeons, and also consider the wider needs of the practice or organisation.

Your copy of the 2000 CPD Record Card and Guidance Notes are included in this mailing but they can also be downloaded from the College's website

SPECIALIST APPLICATION DEADLINES

Members who have been on the Specialist List for 5 years should remember to renew their application by Friday 1 September 2000 in order to remain on the List. Any new applications to the List should be received by Friday 22 September 2000.

NEW GUIDELINES ON MICROCHIPPING

After many months of discussion and consultations with BEVA, BSAVA, BZVS and MAFF, RCVS Council agreed the following statement on microchipping:

"The procedure for implanting a microchip (transponder) in an animal, for whatever purpose, should be undertaken only by a veterinary surgeon if it involves any of the following:-

- (i) a method other than the subcutaneous route, eartag or bolus;
- (ii) the need for repair or closure of the entry site;
- (iii) the need for chemical restraint; or
- (iv) any undue risk to the health or welfare of the animal."

By way of example, since the recommended implantation site for horses is the nuchal ligament and chemical restraint may also be needed, the procedure should be carried out by a veterinary surgeon, as should, for example, the microchipping of reptiles where there may be need for repair or closure of the site. However, the microchipping of cats and dogs by the subcutaneous route remains a procedure that may be carried out by appropriately trained non-veterinarians.

QUALITY OF VETERINARY EDUCATION

The Veterinary Schools in England have recently undergone visits from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to assess the standard of their teaching. Those visited so far have scored very highly against the QAA's criteria. In addition the RCVS visited Bristol in January and is due to visit London in May, to see if the course, facilities, methods of examination, etc are of a sufficiently high standard to fulfil the professional qualification required for registration. The College would like to encourage more practising members of the profession to join its visitation panels in the future. If you would like more information, or would like to nominate a colleague, please contact Freda Andrews, Head of Education (f.andrews@rcvs.org.uk).

The RCVS has a statutory responsibility to ensure that degrees which entitle the holder to be registered, sufficiently guarantee that those on the RCVS Register have the knowledge and skill to practise veterinary surgery in the UK.

This quality monitoring requirement also applies to recognised overseas qualifications. A visit to South Africa was conducted in November 1999 to see the newly merged schools in Onderstepoort, Pretoria and Medunsa. The report of this visit will be considered by RCVS Council as well as a proposed new mutual recognition agreement with the Australasian registration authorities.

It continues to concern the College that there is no real mechanism for monitoring the standards of the European qualifications which give nationals of an EU Member State the automatic right to free movement of labour and to registration with the College. Despite repeated representations, the European Commission seems willing to do less and less to discharge their responsibilities in relation to the EU Directive. The latest initiative, being taken by the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is to publish on the FVE website (www.fve.org) the results of recent visits to European schools. In this way it will become clear which schools have not received a visit, which schools are free of serious deficiencies and which schools are not recorded to have been found free of serious deficiencies. This information should be available on the FVE website by 1 May 2000.

The RCVS is pleased to announce

THE MILLENNIUM PRIZE

Open to veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and veterinary students

THE MILLENNIUM PRIZE will be awarded for the most imaginative and well reasoned view of the future of veterinary medicine. This may cover a broad range or it may be restricted to:

- Companion animals
- Farm animals
- Horses
- Education and Research

Entries should not exceed 3000 words and will be judged by a panel drawn from RCVS Council. The winner will receive their award at RCVS Day on 7 July 2000 (details in this issue of RCVS News) and will be invited to present their ideas in the form of a 15-20 minute talk on that occasion.

The prize will be a piece of cut glass together with a cash prize of £1,000.

If you would like to submit an entry or obtain further information, please write to the President at the RCVS (email: President@rcvs.org.uk).

The closing date is Friday April 28 2000.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION – YOU CAN HELP!

The Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) was set up in 1991 by MAFF to help protect wildlife and domestic animals from the effects of the illegal use of pesticides through advice to the public on how to report poisoning incidents and land managers on legal methods of pest control. The WIIS believes that veterinary surgeons have a crucial role to play in the campaign against the illegal poisoning of wildlife because they are often the first to recognise when an animal has been poisoned. However, as relatively few cases are reported by practices, they are stepping up their campaign by organising a series of lectures and talks directed at the profession aimed at raising awareness of the problem. For more details please contact Barbara Bell on (01209) 822038.

HONOURS AND AWARDS 2000

Honorary Associateship

Dr H J Guise
Mrs R V Hinton

Honorary Fellowship by Election

Dr A R Gray
Mr N King
Mr W H G Rees

The R W Hall of Barry, Glamorgan Prize

Dr P G G Jackson

The J T Edwards Prize

Dr D Buxton

The John Henry Steel Memorial Medal

Professor J O Jarrett

PROPOSAL TO RE-TITLE DIPLOMATES

After wide canvassing of the membership, RCVS Council decided not to re-title RCVS Diploma holders as 'FRCVS' as an attempt to resolve some of the confusion both in the profession's and the public's minds on the different 'types' of veterinary surgeons. Attempts will be made instead to explain the different qualifications surgeons may have initially via the website and through the distribution of posters and leaflets to practices.

HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR PLACE YET?

Members are invited to contact the College to obtain their free tickets to attend RCVS Day on 7 July 2000. However because numbers are limited they will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis. A new venue and format was announced in the last edition of RCVS News, but just to remind you:

Venue: The Conference and Banqueting Centre, Church House, Deans Yard, Westminster, SW1

10.00 am: Coffee

10.30 am: Prayer of Thanksgiving/Short Address

10.45 am: AGM and Presentation of Awards

12.00 pm: Millennium Prize Lecture

12.30 pm: Drinks and Canapés

ERRATUM

In the November 1999 edition of RCVS News, the penultimate line of the article entitled 'Increased Openness in Complaints Procedure' should read 'no veterinary surgeon should ever be persuaded to choose an unsuitable or inappropriate method of euthanasia against better judgement'. The Editor apologises for any confusion that may have arisen.