President’s Corner

Why do you go to a WDA meeting? I have just returned from a fantastic joint meeting in San Diego with AAZV, AAWV and WDA, with almost 900 attendants and more than 500 presentations. It was a fantastic meeting in many ways, having a wonderful venue and perfect organization. Everything went so well “in spite of” three different organizations and so many people attending. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all members of the organizing committee. You did a great job.

When attending the meeting in San Diego I reflected over the fact that all these 900 people from all over the world have made their way to San Diego. What was the main motive for them to spend a lot of money and time to go to this meeting? Was it because they wanted to listen to papers of good scientific standard? Was it because they wanted to meet people within their working field with whom they could discuss important issues? Or was it “just” to see old friends? Or was it for some other reason? And what role did the locality play? I think that most people would say that there are several reasons. The scientific standard is important. To see old friends is important. To discuss the “off-records” is important. And to see nice and new places is important. Maybe more important than we think? I am convinced that the choice of San Diego was a reason for some people to go to this year’s meeting.

One of WDA’s most important tasks is to arrange conferences, and by this “to acquire, disseminate, and apply knowledge of the health and diseases of wild animals....” as written in our constitution. When arranging meetings we try to find different localities in different parts of North America and in other countries and continents. This is a way to spread our mission in a good way. We look for nice places, but not too expensive, so as many members as possible can attend. The scientific quality of the program is always very good.

But these truths are not only valid for the Annual meeting. WDA has sections in Australasia, Europe, Scandinavia and Africa. And a new Latin American section is hopefully on its way. Maybe you think that these Section meetings are local arrangements that have little to do with what you do? You couldn’t be more wrong. These section meetings are always of good scientific standard. Attending these meetings is a great way to see places that you might not visit otherwise. Like the Nordic Section, that always has its annual meetings on islands, where there are possibilities for good bird watching. Like the Australasian section, that held their meeting in 2004 in the Kinchega National Park, more than 1,000 kilometres west of Sydney, a wonderful place in the Australian inland. This section always arranges its meetings in spectacular places. So please consider going to the Annual meeting next year in the northern part of Australia in Cairns. It is going to be another fantastic meeting - in a fantastic place - in a fantastic country – with marvellous people.

-Torsten Mörner, President
WDA ACTIVITIES
San Diego, 2004! The 53rd Annual Meeting of the Wildlife Disease Association was held in San Diego, California, USA, from August 28 to September 3, 2004. This conference was held jointly with the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians and the American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians. The meeting was a great success with a multitude of excellent papers given during the week. In addition to the joys of spending a week in beautiful, sunny San Diego, all registrants and their families were allowed free access to the area’s zoos. One of the highlights of the meeting was “Zoo Day”, when everyone received the afternoon off and got a chance to visit San Diego’s Wild Animal Park, where a fantastic picnic and auction were held in the early evening. As usual, the auction was a big success, bringing in nearly $4,400 for the WDA. The most notable item for sale was Dr. Dave Jessup’s pony tail, which was detached from its owner by WDA’s notorious Voodoo Sisters (Drs. Helen Schwantje, Judit Smits, and Frances Gulland), who were assisted by other rowdy members of the crowd (including our Viking President). Dr. Jessup’s hair was donated to "Locks of Love" to make a wig for a child undergoing cancer treatment. One would expect that such a noble contribution would gain him a place of distinction in the WDA, and indeed it did. Dr. Jessup had the honor of being the first ever two time recipient of the prestigious Duck Award. QUACK!!

Cairns, 2005!! The 54th Annual Meeting of the WDA will take place in Cairns, Queensland, Australia, June 26 to July 1, 2005. The theme of the conference will be “Wildlife Health in a Shrinking World: Ecology, Management, and Conservation”. Symposia on the ecology of introduced wildlife diseases, and sessions on lessons learned from management of diseases in wildlife, the health of marine ecosystems, amphibian diseases and population declines, and wildlife health in the tropics (including studies on cassowaries, crocodiles, alligators, mahogany gliders, and tree kangaroos) will make this conference highly relevant in our rapidly changing world. The Australasian Section is excited to host this meeting and we promise a unique conference allowing you to experience the tropical Australian environment. Cairns is located in beautiful north Queensland. The conference will be held at the Colonial Club Resort, within a short walk to ancient rainforest, amazing mangroves, the tropical botanical gardens, and Cairns city. We will offer rainforest spotlighting trips to see nocturnal tree kangaroos, lemuroid possums, tree frogs, and more. You will learn about local conservation issues and a mid-week field day will offer the option of a rainforest or barrier reef excursion. Families
are most welcome. The Australian Society of Veterinary Pathology annual conference will be held in Cairns the preceding week, to facilitate attendance at both meetings. **Deadline for abstracts is January 31, 2005!** **Deadline for early registration is February 28, 2005 and deadline for regular registration is May 30, 2005!** Please mark these dates in your diary! Details on the conference are available at http://www.rainforest-crc.jcu.edu.au/events/conferences.htm, or under “Meetings” on the WDA website at http://www.wildlifedisease.org. Contact: Lee Skerratt, School of Biomedical Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia 4811. Email: Lee.Skerratt@jcu.edu.au Ph: +61 (0)7 47814838, Fax: +61 (0)7 47791526.

From left to right: Dr. John Fisher, Dr. Don Forrester, Dr. Tonie Rocke, and Dr. Torsten Mörner

**WDA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

The recipient of the 2004 Distinguished Service Award is **Dr. Tonie Rocke**! Dr. Rocke earned a BS from University of Illinois, Urbana in Ecology, Ethology and Evolution, and MS and Ph.D degrees in Veterinary Science from University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is currently an epizootiologist at the USGS/National Wildlife Health Center in Madison Wisconsin.

Dr. Rocke has conducted extremely high quality research in a number of areas, resulting in thirty one peer reviewed publications, and more on the way. As a student of Tom Yuill she worked on the effects of oil on the immune system of ducks and won the WDA Student Presentation award in 1982. For her Ph.D she researched mycoplasmosis in wild turkeys, a subject on which she became a
national expert valued by her colleagues and the Wild Turkey Federation. Dr. Rocke then moved on to explore the many questions surrounding avian botulism. She and her coworkers did such complete and elegant research that they changed the way we all view the disease. During the last ten years, Dr. Rocke’s efforts have concentrated on understanding the complicated interaction between the degraded environment of the Salton Sea and various disease outbreaks that have occurred there. In addition she has accomplished a great deal in understanding the pathogenesis of sylvatic plague in prairie dogs and black-footed ferrets, as well as in the advancement of vaccines against the disease in both species. Dr. Rocke has also contributed significantly to a large collaborative effort to understand avian vacuolar myelinopathy in the southeastern US.

Dr. Rocke has been one of the WDA’s most important assets for nearly 20 years. She served as Editor of the JWD Supplement for 7 years, from 1986-1996. She was Vice-president from 1997-1999 and President from 1999-2001. She has served on many WDA committees, including as chair of the Ad Hoc Executive Manager search committee. Dr. Rocke has proven a dedicated proponent of internationalization of WDA and her diplomatic and social skills were important in successful meetings with the Society of Tropical Veterinary Medicine in South Africa in 2002 and with the Australasian Section that same year. Dr. Rocke, through her hard work and good humor, has been an outstanding ambassador of the WDA, and is greatly deserving of the Association’s highest honor.

WDA EMERITUS AWARD

Many were present at the annual meeting in San Diego to witness the presentation of the WDA Emeritus Award to Dr. Don Forrester. The WDA Emeritus Award is an honorary membership awarded by the Council to retired members who, in the Council’s opinion, have contributed significantly to the study of wildlife diseases. Dr. Forrester recently retired as Professor from the Department of Pathobiology of the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Florida after teaching and conducting research at U of F for more than 30 years. Prior to that time, he was associated in teaching and research capacities at Clemson, UC (Davis) and the University of Montana. Dr. Forrester has had over 40 years of involvement in the study of wildlife health and has been a member of the Wildlife Disease Association for 43 years!

At U of F and elsewhere, Dr. Forrester has contributed to the training of students through teaching in 16 different courses, and has won many awards for his teaching excellence. In addition, he has served on the committees of 13 master’s students and 9 Ph.D students.

Dr. Forrester has a prodigious publication record, including being an author or co-author of two books, co-editor of two books, author of four book chapters, and author or co-author of 180 refereed publications. He has maintained the highest quality in his research and publications and has contributed a body of knowledge about health of wildlife often in ecosystems unique in many ways including in their complexity within North America.

The diversity of Dr. Forrester’s contributions is further reflected in his editorial contributions. He was editor of the Journal of Wildlife Diseases from 1981 to 1986, Book Review Editor from 1991 to 1996, and a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Wildlife Diseases for over 20 years since 1981. He has also served on the editorial boards of the Proceedings of the Helminthological Society of Washington and of Comparative Pathology, and has contributed editorial assistance to at least 38 different journals.

Dr. Forrester has contributed enormously through his strong sense of commitment to science organizations and educational institutions. Within the WDA he has served in a variety of capacities for over 25 years, including terms as Vice President and President, from 1977-1979 and 1979-1981. He has served on a wide variety of committees and as moderator of programs with organizations including the American Society of Parasitology and the Helminthological Society of Washington. Similarly, he has served on over 20 different committees within his university community. In 1986 Dr. Forrester received the WDA’s greatest honor, the Distinguished Service Award.
Dr. Forrester has achieved all of this with great dignity and respect for his fellow humans. He is an exceptional person, and we are all deeply grateful for his kindness and compassion, and the vast knowledge he shares with his colleagues and students. Congratulations and best wishes to Dr. Don Forrester!

-Ed Addison and Marilyn Spalding

President Torsten Mörner presents Drs. Emily Jenkins and Michael Yabsley with their awards (not shown: Dr. Justin Brown).

WDA STUDENT ACTIVITIES
STUDENT AWARDS 2004
Once again, the WDA student competitions drew an exceptional group of participants this year. Dr. Justin Brown received the WDA Scholarship. Dr. Brown will be starting a Ph.D program at the University of Georgia. Dr. Brown has an eclectic background including chemistry, physics, and his current interests which include reptile medicine. Dr. Brown has a very strong academic record, is the recipient of numerous academic awards, grants, and scholarships and has an impressive publication record. In sum, Dr. Brown is a very deserving recipient of this award, and we wish him the very best in a promising career.

Dr. Emily Jenkins is the recipient of the WDA research award. She is a Ph.D candidate at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. Her research focuses on the biology of nematodes in Dall’s sheep. Dr. Jenkins has made great strides in understanding the pathophysiology of wild sheep nematodiasis, the geographic distribution of infections, and the environmental factors that promote parasite development in the intermediate hosts. Most importantly, Dr. Jenkins’ findings have had significant management ramifications. Dr. Jenkins shows every promise of continuing to contribute to the field of wildlife health, and we wish her much success in her career.

And last but not least, Dr. Michael Yabsley won the Terry Amundsen Student Presentation Award with his talk entitled ‘Spatial analysis of the distribution of Ehrlichia chaffeensis, causative agent of human monocytotropic ehrlichiosis, across a multistate region’. Dr. Yabsley gave an impressive presentation highlighting the importance of applying a comprehensive GIS to a large scale epidemiological investigation.

CONGRATULATIONS EVERYONE!
STUDENT AWARDS 2005

ATTENTION MENTORS AND ADVISORS! Please encourage your students to apply for WDA’s student awards. It’s time to start preparing for next year’s competition, which will take place in Cairns, Australia!! Each year, the WDA sponsors a competition for student awards. For 2005, students are encouraged to apply for the three awards. The WDA Student Awards Committee (comprising 11 members from US, Africa, Australia, and Europe) will judge the research and scholarship awards. Members of the attending audience at the 2005 WDA meeting will judge the Terry Amundsen Award. Criteria upon which each award is judged are available on the WDA website at the following URL: http://www.wildlifedisease.org/Student/Student_Awards.htm

PLEASE NOTE the following changes from past announcements:
1) The deadline has changed. Applications for the Scholarship and Research awards must be received no later than 20 April, 2005, so plan ahead.
2) Applicants MUST be a student working towards an advanced degree at the time application is submitted for awards.

Wildlife Disease Graduate Student Research Recognition Award: DEADLINE: Applications must be received no later than 20 April, 2005. This award is given to the student judged to have the best research project in the field of wildlife disease, based on written communication and scientific achievement. The winner receives a plaque and up to $2000 US to cover travel, housing, registration, etc. related to the annual conference. The student will be the featured presenter during the Student Presentation Session at the conference.

Applicants should submit three items:
1) A summary of their research (10 pages double spaced written in type face font 10 or larger) structured as follows: Title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, references, tables and figures. The title page should be separate, and the 10-page limit applies only to the Title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, and discussion. PLEASE ENCLOSE 7 COPIES (electronic submissions as MS Word 2000 for Windows or PDF files are acceptable).
2) A cover letter stating how the research relates to WDA objectives (see inside back cover of WDA journal).
3) A letter of support from the faculty advisor indicating degree of student involvement in planning and execution of the research project.

Selection criteria: Each item (1-3) will receive a score and the sum of these scores will determine the rank of the candidate.

Grounds for disqualification include:
-Items missing.
-Summary exceeds 10 pages (excluding tables, figures, and references).
-Submissions postmarked beyond deadline date.

Wildlife Disease Association Scholarship: DEADLINE: Applications must be received no later than 20 April, 2005. This scholarship acknowledges outstanding academic and research accomplishment, commitment, and potential in pursuit of new knowledge in wildlife disease or health. The scholarship has a value of $2000 US and is awarded annually to an outstanding student who is pursuing master’s or doctoral degree specializing in research on wildlife disease. To be considered, the candidate must have completed a four-year baccalaureate degree. Candidates with an overall grade point average of 3.5 or above in 4.0 system or 80% or better in percentage system will receive priority. The candidate should
be committed to leadership, scholarship, and service in the wildlife health profession. To be considered, you should submit the following items:

1) One copy of all relevant transcripts. Transcripts can be official (i.e. with the imprint or official seal of the institution and signature of the responsible university officer) or copies signed by the student’s faculty advisor.
2) Up to 3 letters of support, including a letter from the student’s faculty advisor, that address the following specific abilities of the applicant: academic achievement, scholarly promise, research ability, verbal and writing skills, industriousness, leadership abilities, judgment, and potential for contribution to the field of wildlife diseases.
3) Evidence of superior scholastic achievement (course work, scholarships, awards, publications)

Grounds for disqualification include:
- Items missing.
- Submissions postmarked beyond deadline date.

_Terry Amundsen Student Presentation Award:_ DEADLINE: WDA Meeting 2005. _Abstracts must be submitted by January 31, 2005!!_ This award acknowledges outstanding oral presentation of research findings. Winner receives $250.00 and a plaque. To be considered, the student must give an oral presentation (13-15 min) of their topic of choice to the WDA meeting participants in the special student session. Students wishing to be considered for the award should submit an abstract according to guidelines in the “Call for Papers" to the Program Chair of the Annual WDA Conference. A copy of the abstract also should be submitted to the Head of the Student Activities Committee, Dr. Todd Cornish, at the address below. Upon completion of the presentations, evaluation forms will be handed out to the audience who will be asked to score the presentations for the following:

- Quality of science
- Quality of visual aids
- Delivery
- Relevance to management of wildlife health

The student with the highest score will receive the award. Members of the WDA Student Activities Committee will adjudicate tied scores.

These awards are non-renewable and can be received only once by a given candidate. Applications for the Research and Scholarship Awards must be submitted to: Dr. Todd Cornish, Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, University of Wyoming, 1174 Snowy Range Road, Laramie, WY 82070 (TCornish@uwyo.edu).

WANTED!

**MATERIALS FOR PROMOTIONAL MEDIA**
The Promotions Committee is requesting color photographs for use in the next edition of the WDA brochure and for a PowerPoint talk on the WDA. Please submit the credits for each photograph. Historic photographs are welcome. The photographs need to be scanned as .bmp or .jpg files (preferably .bmp). If you do not have this capability we will gladly scan and return the photographs. The Committee also needs video segments or complete videos (that can be edited) on wildlife disease activities. The videos will be used to create a digitized CD of WDA activities for use at meetings.
Send photographs via email to kathy_converse@usgs.gov or Kathryn Converse, National Wildlife Health Center, 6006 Schroeder Road, Madison, WI 53711, USA.

MATERIALS FOR WDA ARCHIVES
1) WDA NEWSLETTERS PRIOR TO 1983 and
2) PHOTOS FROM MEETINGS (with participants identified when possible).

Thank you very much to a number of members who have made generous donations of material to the WDA archives. Please contact Ed Addison (ecolink@aci.on.ca or at 905-727-4476) if you have material to donate. Thank you.

HAPPENINGS IN THE FIELD

West Nile Virus Continued Spread across North American Continent in 2003 (CORRECTION from April 2004). By the end of 2003, West Nile virus (WNV) activity was detected in 45 continental states and the District of Columbia, 7 Canadian provinces, and in several Mexican states. Interestingly, although WNV was detected in the state of Washington in 2002, WNV activity was not detected there in 2003. As of January 2004, over 13,000 dead birds have tested positive for WNV. The list of species found positive for WNV continues to grow longer, currently with over 220 avian, 22 mammalian and 1 reptilian species. In addition to the wildlife species, almost 6,000 horses and over 11,000 human cases (including 231 deaths) in 2003 were reported by public health agencies in the United States and Canada. Although the number of reported human cases was significantly greater in 2003, the actual number of the severe form of disease (meningitis/encephalitis) is similar to that reported in 2002. At this time, there is no direct evidence for any significant change in the virulence of the WNV strain in North America. The Midwestern states were the primary foci of activity in 2002, while in 2003 the Rocky Mountain states of CO, WY, and MT were the major foci of virus activity. Based on observed trends of WNV activity in North America, public health and wildlife officials in the western United States are anticipating high WNV activity in their states in 2004. It remains unknown if and when WNV will arrive in Hawaii and Alaska, and the impact WNV will have on the avifauna of these states.

Acanthocephalan infections in Massachusetts common eiders. Beginning in early May 2004 and continuing into early June, sick and dead common eiders were reported along Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Approximately 350 common eiders were reported dead in Wellfleet Bay through counts made by wildlife rehabilitators and National Park Service personnel. Birds were submitted to the National Wildlife Health Center, where it was found that large numbers of acanthocephalans had severely damaged the intestines. Some birds also had very high numbers of cestodes that may have compromised the birds’ nutritional status. The NWHC Epizoo database contains information on 14 mortality events involving common eiders. There were eight mortality events that occurred before 1990; six were attributed to avian cholera and occurred off the coast of Maine. Of the six mortality events since 1990, one on the St. Lawrence nesting islands was caused by avian cholera and three that occurred off the coast of Cape Cod were attributed to acanthocephalans.

Avian Botulism at a New Site in Nevada. In mid June 2004, personnel of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Las Vegas, Nevada Field Office reported mortality of waterfowl, shorebirds and an occasional songbird or upland game bird at a nature preserve encompassing secondary and tertiary wastewater treatment ponds. The facility includes 122 acres with 14 separate wetlands and no previous history of avian mortality. By the first FWS site visit on June 16, approximately 200 dead birds had been collected and deposited in a landfill by treatment plant workers. Three hundred to five
hundred water birds remained at risk. The weather had been unusually hot (daytime highs >100°F) for several weeks. FWS biologists collected two weak, lethargic ducks with drooping heads for diagnostic evaluation at the NWHC. At necropsy no significant gross pathological lesions were observed and botulism type C toxin was confirmed in blood from both ducks. The FWS biologists encouraged the treatment plant personnel to intensify their surveillance and carcass collection efforts. Over the course of the next month 100 more birds were collected. A liver culture from one bird contained *Riemerella (Pasteurella) anatipestifer*, the agent of New Duck Disease; however, no gross or microscopic pathological lesions consistent with that disease were observed in the duck.

**Cyanide intoxication of songbirds detected in South Dakota.** For the second year in a row, cedar waxwing mortality in South Dakota appears to be linked to cyanide toxicity following ingestion of buds from *Cotoneaster pyracantha* shrubs. This thorny evergreen shrub grows 3-8 feet high and is native to southern Europe and western Asia. It is a favored ornamental because of the numerous white flowers followed by bright red haws. Toxicity can vary by the amount ingested and clinical signs include initial rapid respirations followed by slow breathing, anxiety, confusion, vomiting, and dizziness. This year an estimated 30 cedar waxwings were reported in the Aberdeen, South Dakota area between May and June. In 2003, the timing of 200 cedar waxwing deaths was first correlated with their feeding in budding and flowering shrubs that contain cyanogenic glycosides. Analysis of tissues from birds in 2003 and 2004 found levels of cyanide were elevated but below the 1.0 ppm toxic dose. The combination of time between death and handling of samples could account for lowering of the tissues cyanide levels. Analysis of GI contents and plant samples by South Dakota State Veterinary Diagnostic Lab in 2003 and 2004 showed levels of cyanide >200 ppm the toxic range to all animals. In 2002, an estimated 100 waxwings died in the Aberdeen area from late May through July. It was suspected from field observations and necropsy examinations that the birds were poisoned but the connection to ingestion of *Cotoneaster sp.* was unknown and no cyanide tests were done. NWHC acknowledges the staff of the Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge staff whose observation and collection of birds and plant materials over the past three years allowed this investigation to be completed.

**Quarterly Wildlife Mortality Report**  
April 2004 to June 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Mortality</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
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<td>Tortola, British Virgin Islands</td>
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<td>Jefferson County</td>
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<td>Pinellas County</td>
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<td>Mallard, Muscovy, Unidentified Cormorant</td>
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<td>Douglas County</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Cause</td>
<td>Levels</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>Clark County</td>
<td>06/01/04-07/20/04</td>
<td>Unidentified Duck</td>
<td>300(e)</td>
<td>NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Douglas County</td>
<td>05/11/04-05/11/04</td>
<td>Unidentified Killdeer</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Anderson County</td>
<td>02/29/04-03/03/04</td>
<td>Unidentified Quail</td>
<td>15(e)</td>
<td>SCW</td>
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<td>SD</td>
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<td>30(e)</td>
<td>NW</td>
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<td>Southampton County</td>
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<td>Unidentified Avian</td>
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<td>VA</td>
<td>Virginia Beach County</td>
<td>06/11/04-06/25/04</td>
<td>Killdeer type C</td>
<td>35(e)</td>
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<td>VA</td>
<td>Virginia Beach County</td>
<td>05/14/04-05/18/04</td>
<td>Canada Goose</td>
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<td>Great Blue Heron</td>
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<td>FL</td>
<td>Duval County</td>
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<td>Eastern Brown Pelican</td>
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<td>Northern Gannet</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>All continental</td>
<td>01/02/04-ongoing</td>
<td>American Crow</td>
<td>500(e)</td>
<td>NW, ST</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unidentified Crow Blue Jay Unidentified Hawk Common Grackle</td>
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(e) = estimate

Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCW), USGS National Wildlife Health Center (NW), California Fish and Game (CFG), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FL). Written and compiled by Kathryn Converse/Rex Sohn - Western US, Grace McLaughlin - Eastern US, Christine Lemanski, NWHC. The Quarterly Wildlife Mortality Report is available at http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov. To report mortality or receive information about this report, contact the above NWHC staff, or for Hawaiian Islands contact Thierry Work. Phone: (608) 270-2400, FAX: (608) 270-2415 or e-mail: kathy_converse@usgs.gov. USGS National Wildlife Health, Center, 6006 Schroeder Road, Madison, WI 53711.

**WDA SECTION NEWS**

**NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALASIAN SECTION**

**President’s Message.** Well this year’s conference, the return to Kinchega, has come and gone with a good time seemingly had by all. Even though I have only attended four WDA meetings to date it seems to me that the formula for the success of our annual conferences relies upon three basic
prerequisites. The first is a location that provides the opportunity to get away from it all and to interact with our flora and fauna. The second is a great bunch of people, which is not too hard a prerequisite to fill when you consider the members of the Australasian section. And the third prerequisite is, of course, catering by Shirley. With these three things in place the rest of it seems to largely take care of itself. Our conferences provide a great opportunity to catch up with colleagues normally separated by geography and the demands of a busy day to day working life in a relaxed and congenial atmosphere. The lecture program provides a tremendous overview of the work that our members are undertaking in the field of wildlife health and disease. Contributors range from private veterinary practitioners, to research students, to those employed in zoos through to those who work in government and university departments both in policy development and in field and laboratory research. Outside of the formal scientific program there is the opportunity to renew old acquaintances, garner collaborative import, and to share collective experiences. For veterinary students I believe that the conference provides a unique chance to talk to and really get to know those already working in the field of wildlife disease in a way that is probably not possible in many other settings.

The attendance of Torsten Mörner, the parent body president, and Dick Montali, this year’s invited speaker, appeared to be enjoyed by all. Torsten’s attendance provided everyone with a chance to get to know him on a personal level rather than remaining a distant figure head. Torsten had the opportunity to address the section as a group at the AGM and to provide an update on the changes that the parent body is undertaking. Thanks to Pam Whiteley, who first suggested inviting Torsten late last year and to Schultz for taking Torsten under his wing (if you’ll pardon the pun) on a number of birding expeditions. Dick Montali’s mystique as one of the world’s most pre-eminent zoo and wildlife pathologists was shattered with his description as a “bodacious dude” during the introduction to his second lecture. Dick carried the baton for the USA, showing that the Yanks can hold their own with the Aussies when it comes to a party. Dick’s two presentations were well received; the first detailing his work with *Angiostrongylus cantonensis* infection, an emerging disease in tawny frogmouths, and the second a review of endotheliotropic herpes virus and tuberculosis in elephants; work for which he is internationally renowned.

One issue which was raised during the AGM and that will need further consideration over the course of the year, is that of declining parent body membership. There are now only 15 members of the parent body while we have over 100 Australasian section members. There is a very real need to provide continuing support for the parent body for a whole range of reasons and I will be looking at ways that Australasian section members who don’t wish to receive the journal can potentially be associate members of the parent body. I will take the opportunity to look at the ways in which other sections have managed this issue at the council meeting in San Diego and will also discuss the matter further with Torsten Mörner. It is important to note that a minimum of 10 individual members are a prerequisite for establishing a geographic section and our parent body membership is waning dangerously low in this respect. I am more than happy to hear people’s concerns or reasons for not retaining membership to both our geographic section and the parent body.

Preparations are well in hand for next year’s international conference to be held in Cairns. The local committee is doing an excellent job in the organisation of this event, with a great venue and an exciting program beginning to take shape. Around 100 local and 100 international delegates are expected to attend. I would encourage all Australasian section members to start thinking about making the trip north in order to attend. It will provide a unique opportunity to interact with our international colleagues. I aim to discuss the dispersal of the profits at this year’s council meeting in San Diego, with a view to retaining some of the profits for the benefit of the host section.

This year the association will again offer the $1000 research grant. The grant is open to all financial members of the Australasian section. I would encourage all those who applied last year but were unsuccessful to apply again this year, as all of these projects are potentially worthy of support. Applications should be submitted in electronic format to the executive member, Dave Spratt
Dave.Spratt@csiro.au by December 31st 2004. Further information regarding the award can be obtained from Dave Spratt.

The Barry Munday recognition award, which was established at Chris Bunn’s suggestion, to honour the memory of Barry through recognition of members who have provided outstanding contributions to the field of wildlife health and disease in Australasia over the past 5 years, was awarded to David Middleton. I think that David is extremely deserving of the award and I was very pleased to see him as the inaugural recipient of this award. The award will be offered again in 2005 and the recipient awarded at the conference in Cairns. Nominations in electronic format of no more than one page should be submitted to Dave Spratt by December 31st 2004 for consideration for next year. Dave can also provide further information regarding the award if required.

Tim Portas- President Australasian WDA

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN SECTION

EWDA Website - www.ewda.org. Visit the EWDA website and find information on conferences, members’ interests, publications and lots more. The website is kindly provided free of charge by the UK Central Science Laboratory. We are currently looking into a new look for the site so if you have any further suggestions or material then please send them to r.delahay@csl.gov.uk.

Material for publication in News from Europe can include recent wildlife disease outbreaks and new diseases in Europe, short case and meeting reports; job and scholarship announcements. We encourage submissions, and will help with the English language, if required. Please mail, fax or e-mail submissions to, Paul Duff, Diseases of Wildlife, VLA Penrith, Merrythought, Calthwaite, PENRITH, Cumbria, CA11 9RR, United Kingdom, e-mail p.duff@vla.maff.gsi.gov.uk Fax ++44(0)-1768-885314/Phone ++44(0)-1768-885295.

Fulmar wrecks on Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The last Supplement to the Journal of Wildlife Diseases included an article on mass mortality of Northern Fulmars along the Pacific Coast (Supplement to the JWD, April 2004, page 2). Coastline Fulmar deaths (wrecks) were reported from the North Sea, Europe, during 2004 (in February, just after the Pacific losses were reported to have stopped). Although presumably these events cannot involve confluent populations, there were some similarities between the two, in particular it was noted that the affected birds were emaciated. We are grateful to Steve Bexton for the report below in which he tentatively suggests that these mortalities may reflect a pattern of widespread disruption to food supply.

Published references for the European incident include: -

Fulmar wreck, European coasts, 2004. In March 2004, the RSPCA Wildlife Unit in Norfolk investigated an unusual mass mortality of Northern Fulmars (Fulmaris glacialis) along the eastern coast of England. Fulmars are pelagic seabirds, resembling gulls, but are actually related to albatrosses and petrels. They spend most of their life at sea, only coming ashore to nest on coastal cliffs. Reports of a problem began in late February with fulmars sighted inland, highly unusual for this species. Shortly afterwards, large numbers of dead fulmars began being washed ashore along the north Norfolk coastline. Smaller numbers were also recorded in Kent and Cumbria. It is estimated that over a three-week period from 23rd February, over 500 fulmars were washed ashore in East Anglia. Although
difficult to estimate total numbers, it is likely that several thousand fulmars were actually involved. Similar numbers were reported from France, Belgium and Holland. About forty carcasses were post-mortemmed, and all were found to have died from starvation, with severe depletion of fat reserves, and reduced pectoralis muscling. Most birds had reduced liver and spleen size, and dark, oil-like gut content, indicative of chronic food shortage. Some birds were markedly dehydrated, and some had apparently died by drowning due to inanition and exhaustion.

Histological examinations on five fulmars failed to reveal any other significant pathological changes. All had mild interstitial nephritis with lymphocytic infiltrates, but this was considered to be an incidental finding of little clinical significance, and probably secondary to general debility. No parasites were seen in intestinal contents, routine bacterial cultures failed to identify any significant pathogens and heavy metal residues in tissue samples were within normal limits. Further toxicological testing is awaited. Samples were negative for viruses including West Nile virus. *Clostridium perfringens* was cultured from gut contents, but this is not unusual in birds. No Clostridial toxins were detected however.

The majority (90%) of birds examined were female and such a sex bias is highly unusual in mass mortality incidents. Also, the birds were smaller than UK coastal fulmars, with an increased proportion of darker morphs, rarely found in British waters. This suggests the birds originated from Arctic waters, being carried on northerly winds, until they reached the first land falls of Norfolk and western Europe. Female fulmars feed further out to sea in winter with males staying closer to breeding colonies. However, relatively little is known about the movements and diet of fulmars in winter because they are difficult to study when far out to sea. Adverse weather is unlikely to be involved, since fulmars are pelagic birds and capable of coping with harsh conditions, but they may have been ranging far from their normal winter feeding grounds if food was scarce.

None of the birds had any significant oil contamination. The severe loss of body condition ruled out a sudden mortality event such as acute toxaemia (e.g. botulism). 21% of the fulmars examined had incomplete wing moults, which was abnormal for the time of year, suggesting the birds were under pressure for many weeks before the mass mortality. Many of the dead birds had plastic remnants in the gizzard (common in fulmars reflecting their non-selective ingestion of floating objects), which is unlikely to have contributed to their mortality. Fulmars have fairly catholic tastes, and will eat virtually any floating debris such as squid, jellyfish, shrimp, zooplankton and ocean refuse.

It has been well documented that a sand eel shortage in 2003 led to poor breeding success of several seabird species in the Scottish Isles. It is possible that stocks of an important food source for Arctic fulmars were similarly curtailed in 2003. Despite their non-selective feeding for most of the year, they may rely strongly on one particular food source over winter (possibly plankton). Similar die-offs have occurred before, and there may be some cyclic pattern involved. There was a similar fulmar wreck in the USA this winter and others were recorded in 1976 and the sixties. These recent seabird wrecks may reflect a pattern of widespread disruption to food supply.

-Steve Bexton, RSPCA Wildlife Unit, Norfolk

**NEWS FROM THE NORDIC SECTION**

**Denmark**

Anne-Sofie Hammer has from September 1st replaced Hans-Henrik Dietz as Denmark’s national representative in the board of the Nordic section of WDA. H2D has moved to another working position, now at the Royal Veterinary College in Copenhagen.
High mortality among roedeer. Mortality was reported in roedeer (Capreolus capreolus) from several parts of Denmark during the summer and early autumn of 2004. Necropsies of roedeer at the Danish Institute for Food and Veterinary Research revealed that most of the animals were emaciated, with signs of diarrhoea and various parasite infections. Bacteriological and virological analysis did not reveal a specific cause of death. It is so far unknown if the unusual high mortality in this season is due to habitats becoming too densely populated, or if it is caused by yet undetected disease mechanisms. In August 2004 a new case of badger distemper was diagnosed. This badger was found disoriented and circling on a beach of the east coast of Jutland (mainland Denmark). The virus isolate is currently being sequenced to evaluate possible epidemiological connection to previous Danish distemper isolates.

- Anne-Sofie Hammer, ash@dfvf.dk

Finland
Endangered seals under disease surveillance. The Saimaa ringed seal (Phoca hispida saimensis) is a ringed seal subspecies that is found only in Lake Saimaa in southeastern Finland. The small population comprises of 270 individuals, and the Saimaa ringed seal is regarded as endangered. For nearly 50 years the Saimaa seal has been protected and is now the object of active research and conservation measures. The National Veterinary and Food Research Institute (EELA) in Finland is involved in the health surveillance of the seal population. In 2004, researchers counted 65 new seal pups in the area of Lake Saimaa, but the mortality is fairly high: Every year about 20 individuals are found dead and this is probably just half of the actual figure. The most frequent cause of death is drowning in fishing net. In spite of local restrictions in net fishing, many young seals get fatally caught in nets. Traumas (e.g. accidents with boats) and stillbirths are also seen regularly. Parasites are rare: only one intestinal helminth species, the acanthocephalan Corynosoma magdaleni, has been found and so far no lungworms or trichinellae. Contagious diseases have not been recorded in Lake Saimaa seals. The isolated location and scattered population seem to protect the Saimaa ringed seal from the spread of infectious agents. However, active health surveillance of this unique and endangered seal population is a crucial part of the conservation programme.

-Marja Isomursu, marja.isomursu@eela.fi

Sweden
Update on seabird mortalities. This summer brought the now usual outbreaks of sea bird mortalities. Especially gull species continue to show higher adult bird mortality than normal. A few necropsied birds have been positive for botulism. Observers of nesting sites of Lesser Black-backed Gulls (Larus fuscus) found a large number of dead nestlings. Necropsies of several young showed emaciation or acute trauma, indicating absence of parents, so it may be secondary to adult gull mortalities. Necropsies of birds from local outbreaks of mortality in Common Eiders (Somateria mollissima) and in Great Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) showed emaciation and high numbers of GI-parasites. Avian influenza and paramyxovirus testing has been negative in all these outbreaks. Local massive migrations of Wood Lemmings (Lemmus schisticolor), an unusual occurrence the past decades, resulted in a multitude of dead and drowned lemmings on river banks and in cellars. Emaciation was the usual finding in necropsied animals, and all tested animals were negative for tularemia. Rotavirus was for the first time in Sweden identified (with electron microscopy) in week-old pheasant chicks (Phasianus colchicus) with diarrhoea, the birds being raised for release on hunting estates.

-Erik Ågren, Erik.Agren@sva.se, National Veterinary Institute (SVA), Uppsala, Sweden

Norway
An outbreak of contagious eczema (Orf) in free-ranging musk oxen. A small population of musk oxen (Ovibus moschatus) inhabits the Dovre high mountain plateau in mid-Norway. The flock was
established from stock imported from East-Greenland in circa 1950, and today they number approximately 200 animals. On July 21st 2004, two calves were shot after it had been observed that they had lesions around the mouth, locomotory problems, and that their dams would not let them suckle. A further 12 calves have been shot subsequently for the same reasons. In addition, a one year old heifer was shot on September 14th, and is so far the last animal to be observed with symptoms, bringing the total to 15. Some of the calves have been sent to veterinary laboratories for pathological examination, and the predominant external lesions have been "cauliflower-like" protuberances on the nose and lips, and erosions with granulomatous-like surfaces on the limbs, usually in the metacarpal/metatarsal areas. Virus-particles typical for parapox virus have been demonstrated by EM-examination. A loss of 14 calves (or more) may be considered significant, probably exceeding one third of the calf production for this year.

-Atle Lillehaug, Section for Wildlife Diseases, National Veterinary Institute, Oslo, Norway.
atle.lillehaug@vetinst.no

WDA SECTION CHAIRS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

African Section.  For information regarding the African Section, contact Elizabeth Wambwa, Kenya Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 40241, Nairobi, Kenya. Telephone: 254-2-504180; Fax: 254-2-505866; email: ewambwa@yahoo.com

Australasian Section. For information regarding the Australasian Section, contact Tim Portas, Western Plains Zoo, P.O. Box 831, Dubbo, NSW 2830, Australia. Phone: 61 2 6881 1460; Fax: 61 2 6884 1496; email: tportas@zoo.nsw.gov.au.

European Section. For information regarding the European Section, contact Marc Artois, ENVL, Unite Pathologie Infectieuse, BP83, 69280 Marcy l’Etoil, France, Telephone: 33-487-87-27-74, email: m.artois@fvet-lyon.fr.

Nordic Section. For information regarding the Nordic Section, contact Eric Agren, Department of Wildlife, National Veterinary Institute, SE-751 89 Uppsala, SWEDEN, Phone +46 18 67 40 00 Fax +46 18 30 91 62 or E-mail: Erik.Agren@sva.se.

Wildlife Veterinarian Section. For information regarding the Wildlife Veterinarian Section, contact Dave Jessup, California Department of Fish and Game, 1451 Shaffer Rd., Santa Cruz, CA 95060, USA. Telephone: 831-469-1726, email: djessup@ospr.dfg.ca.gov.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS
Visit the JWD website at http://www.wildlifedisease.org/Jobs.htm for up to date job listings.

TRAINING/EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
Visit the JWD website at http://www.wildlifedisease.org/Training.htm for additional information on training opportunities.

Training Available in Fish Diagnostics, Inspections, and Laboratory Methods. The US Fish and Wildlife Service Fish Health Centers provide laboratory and field examination services to the National
Fish Hatcheries. Our main emphasis is to assist the hatcheries in producing quality fish that will contribute to the enhancement and restoration of aquatic ecosystems. At the Olympia and Idaho Fish Health Centers, the work may involve travel to field sites to perform diagnostic examinations and collect samples that are then evaluated in our laboratories. Routine testing procedures include bacteriology (biochemical, ELISA, and PCR methods), virology (cell culture, serological, and PCR methods), parasitology (microscopic and PCR methods), histology, and clinical chemistry. Training may be arranged for one day or several weeks at one or both of these laboratories depending on the interests and availability of the individual. In general, most broodstock inspections are performed from September through November, juvenile inspections are performed from January through April, and wild fish surveys are conducted from March through September. Routine diagnostic examinations are performed year round and special projects are conducted as time and necessity permit. For more information, please contact Joy Evered DVM, at the Olympia Fish Health Center; email joy_evered@fws.gov or Marilyn Blair DVM, at the Idaho Fish Health Center; email marilyn_j_blair@fws.gov.

Sr. Veterinary Student Preceptorship in Avian and Conservation Medicine. A four to six-week preceptorship in Avian and Conservation Medicine is being offered to a senior-year veterinary student by the International Crane Foundation (ICF) in Baraboo, Wisconsin. The preceptor will train with the Veterinary Services Unit of the Conservation Services Department in all phases of the clinical practice, but have opportunities for interaction with the Crane Conservation Department to learn captive propagation, husbandry, and management of this unique family of birds. The preceptor can expect to gain practical experience in crane capture, transport, anesthesia, preventive medicine, disease surveillance, and the contribution of veterinary medicine to crane conservation including field project support and professional consultations. Preceptors are encouraged to complete and report on a research or laboratory project during their stay. Opportunities for visiting the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine and the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, WI will be made available to interested preceptors. No stipend is available for this position; however, on-site housing in the ICF Guesthouse will be provided depending on availability at the time the preceptorship is scheduled. Applicants should send a cover letter, curriculum vitae, or resume and one letter of recommendation from a faculty member of their home institution to: Barry Hartup, Director of Veterinary Services, International Crane Foundation, E-11376 Shady Lane Road, Baraboo, WI 53913, email hartup@savingcranes.org. Please view our website at www.savingcranes.org.

Directory of Post-Graduate Educational Opportunities in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. The World Association of Wildlife Veterinarians has recently produced a Directory of Post-Graduate Educational Opportunities in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. The Directory covers opportunities in over fifty countries and is a must for veterinary students or graduates interested in furthering their careers in the field of wildlife medicine. For further information, please contact the Secretary of the WAWV at: F.Scullion@zoo.co.uk.

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES
Veterinary Clinical Pathology invites the submission of high quality research articles, research communications and reviews on all aspects of veterinary clinical pathology and clinicopathologic mechanisms of disease. The journal features PubMed/MEDLINE indexing, no submission fees or page charges (minimal charges for color plates), rapid turnaround time, and e-mail manuscript submission (send to: asvcp@vetclinpathjournal.org). See online instructions for authors at http://www.vetclinpathjournal.org/authorinfo.html. You also are invited to visit the Veterinary Clinical Pathology website at http://www.vetclinpathjournal.org for browsable archives. For articles on aquatic, exotic, and wildlife see http://www.vetclinpathjournal.org/archive/exotic&wildlife.html. For a
MEETING AND CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visit the JWD website at http://www.wildlifedisease.org for more conference listings.

54th Annual Meeting of the Wildlife Disease Association. 26 June to 1 July 2005. The 54th Annual Meeting of the WDA will take place in Cairns, Queensland, Australia, June 26 to July 1, 2005. See WDA ACTIVITIES in this issue. Remember: The deadline for abstracts is January 31, 2005!! Deadline for early registration is February 28, 2005 and deadline for regular registration is May 30, 2005! Details on the conference are available at http://www.rainforest-crc.jcu.edu.au/events/conferences.htm, or under “Meetings” on the WDA website at http://www.wildlifedisease.org. Contact: Lee Skerratt, School of Biomedical Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia 4811, Email: Lee.Skerratt@jcu.edu.au, Ph: +61 (0)7 47814838, Fax: +61 (0)7 47791526.

2nd International Chronic Wasting Disease Conference. July 12-14, 2005. The 2nd International Chronic Wasting Disease Conference will be held July 12-14, 2005 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison, Wisconsin, USA. Sponsors of this meeting are Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, USGS National Wildlife Health Center, and USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services. There will be several sessions which include the following topics: Prion Biology; Diagnostics; Environmental Contamination/Disposal/Disinfection; Management/Control; Regulatory Issues; Human Dimensions; Ecology/Epidemiology; Impacts/Costs/Policy/Administration; Prion Diseases and Other Species. Additional information is available at http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/CWD/conference.htm.

27th Congress of the International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB). Hannover, Germany, 28 August-3 September 2005. The German Union of Game and Wildlife Biologists and the Institute of Wildlife Research at the School of Veterinary Medicine Hannover announce the 27th Congress of the IUGB. Wildlife researchers, wildlife managers, ecologists, conservationists, and veterinary and agricultural scientists worldwide are invited to share their knowledge and present their latest research. Main topics are as follows: habitat networks for large wildlife and habitat fragmentation; wildlife in urban areas; small game and predation; wildlife diseases; wildlife ecotoxicology; sustainable use, population assessment; and biomonitoring. More information contact Anne Strattnner, Institute of Wildlife Research, School of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Bischofsholer Damm, 30173 Hannover, Germany, T: +49-511-856-7360, E: Info@IUGB-2005.de Homepage: http://www.iugb-2005.de

Note from the Editor:
Send any items such as reports, meeting announcements, diagnostic riddles, position and grant announcements, or anything else deemed appropriate for the Supplement to the Journal of Wildlife Diseases or the WDA website, to Pauline Nol (Supplement Editor) at USDA/APHIS, National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80521 USA, Ph: (970) 266-6126, Fax: (970) 266-6157, Email: pauline.nol@aphis.usda.gov, or Michael Ziccardi (Website Editor) at Wildlife Health Center, University of California, Davis, CA, 95616, USA, Ph: (530) 754-5701, Fax: (530) 752-3318, Email: mhziccardi@ucdavis.edu. Files in Microsoft Word sent electronically or via disk are
preferred, though submissions in any form are welcome!! The deadline for submission of articles for
the next issue (January 2005, JWD Vol. 41, No. 1) is December 31, 2004.

**WDA Committees 2004-2005**
(Subject to revision) (See the WDA’s online membership directory for contact information at www.wildlifedisease.org or http://wda.allenmm.com)

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**Budget and Audit Committee**
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**Sections Committee**

**Student Awards Committee**

**Student Activities Committee**
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