

## **Summary of the 20th Meeting September 2-7, 2006, Pacific Grove, CA**

### **Meeting Summary-**

The 20th meeting of the American Society for Rickettsiology took place at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove, CA on the beautiful Monterey Peninsula. The meeting was held in conjunction with the 5th International Conference on Bartonella as Emerging Pathogens. The venue of this meeting was not new to many members of the ASR since the 12th National Meeting was held at this location in 1996. The organizing committee, together with the Veterinary Medical Continuing Education group at Kansas State University, worked hard to ensure a scientifically stimulating and enjoyable meeting.

The conference was kicked off on the evening of September 2 with a keynote address by Dr. David Relman of Stanford University followed by a welcome reception for all participants. Dr. Relman gave an outstanding talk entitled, 'Efforts to Understand an Eradicated Pathogen before it is too Late'. The main conference included 11 oral presentation sessions: 1) Emerging Pathogens and Bioterrorism, 2) Genetics, Genomics & Proteomics, 3) Pathogenesis I, 4) Pathogenesis II, 5) Infection in Animals, 6) Immunity, 7) Genetics and Vaccine Development, 8) Genetics, Physiology and Metabolism, 9) Ecology & Epidemiology, 10) Clinical Aspects, Diagnosis & Treatment, and 11) Host, Vector & Pathogen Interactions. In addition, three poster sessions were organized. Together, a total of 65 oral presentations and 126 poster presentations were given in four and a half days.

The meeting also included a very informative session on 'Research Opportunities' presented by Dr. Sam Perdue from the National Institutes of Health (USA) who gave an excellent overview and perspective of funding opportunities at the NIH. Attendance at the meeting included 203 participants representing 22 countries. It was an excellent forum for exchange of the most recent scientific developments on all topics related to *Rickettsia* and *Bartonella* research. The meeting received generous support from the National Institutes of Health in the form of a Conference grant. These funds made a very significant difference in that they permitted many young scientists, including graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, as well as scientists new to the field of rickettsiology, to attend the conference. The NIH grant funds provided support for 38 individual ASR travel grants. The recipients of these travel awards represented 14 different countries.

The ASR is grateful to the members of the planning committee, and especially, Marci Ritter and Linda Johnson, Continuing Education, Kansas State University for their hard work in organizing this highly successful and enjoyable meeting.

### **Minutes of the Business Meeting-**

- 1) Comments were made by the president, David Silverman.
- 2) A finance report\* was given by the Secretary/Treasurer, Roman Ganta.

- 3) Roman Ganta presented the ASR travel awards (\$750 per award) to the 38 awardees.
- 4) Nominations were solicited for honorary membership in ASR. Two individuals were nominated and both nominees\*\* were approved by the ASR membership.
- 5) Nominees for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Councilor-at-Large, were presented by Marina Eremeeva, chair of the nominating committee. The ASR members elected the new Executive committee by secret ballot\*\*\*.
- 6) The outgoing President, David Silverman and Vice President-elect, James Samuel opened a forum for discussion of forthcoming meetings. Jim Samuel also addressed the society and thanked the outgoing Executive Committee and the Planning Committee for organizing an excellent meeting.
- 7) After very extensive discussion, a consensus was reached to have annual meetings instead of sesquiannual meetings; the plan is to organize two consecutive national meetings followed by an international meeting that would be held in collaboration with colleagues from other countries. The society felt that annual meetings would allow students, post-doctoral students and young faculty members a better opportunity to attend the conferences and present their research.
- 8) Roman Ganta agreed to host the 21st national meeting in September, 2007. A decision was also made to hold the 22nd ASR meeting in association with the next International Meeting on Rickettsiae and Rickettsial Diseases that will be held in the summer of 2008 in Marseille, France.
- 9) The meeting was adjourned.

**\*FINANCE REPORT (As of January 20, 2007)**

**INCOME**

Balance Forward (from 1/22/04	\$ 32,075.76
NIH R13 conference grant award (2005)	\$ 15,000.00
NIH R13 conference grant award (2006)	\$ 30,000.00
Intervet sponsorship	\$ 1,500.00
20th ASR meeting registration	\$ 60,530.00
ASR membership dues	\$ 4,150.00
Interest income	\$ 1,207.56
Total funds	\$144,462.00

**EXPENSES**

19th ASR (Spain 2005) meeting sponsorship	\$ 2,000.00
ASR travel awards (2005 Spain meeting)	\$ 17,000.00
ASR travel awards (2006 Asilomar meeting)	\$ 28,500.00

20th ASR meeting organization expenses	\$ 65,557.97
Total expenses	\$113,057.97
<b>Available balance</b> (as of January 19, 2007)	<b>\$ 31,404.35</b>

**\*\*New Honorary Members-** Michael Ascher and Herbert Thompson

**\*\*\*Results of the election:**

<b>President:</b>	Michael Minnick
<b>VicePresident:</b>	James Samuel
<b>Secretary /Treasurer:</b>	Roman Ganta
<b>Councilor-at-Large:</b>	Kelly Brayton