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A Profile of the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Approximately 32,000 accessions received each year, teaching professional and graduate courses in toxicology and pathology, numerous research projects on food animal disease problems of Iowa, and approximately 100 telephone calls to practicing veterinarians each day provide a thumbnail statistical profile of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

Those 32,000 accessions mean that many different cases are submitted to the Laboratory by practitioners generally with many specimens or several animals submitted per case. Therefore, this diagnostic volume represents many more thousands of specimens, analyses, and reports.

The Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory has been in existence as a separate administrative entity since 1947 and has grown steadily ever since. At one time, the Laboratory conducted post-mortem, histopathology, bacteriology, and limited serological examinations only. Today, the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory is recognized as one of the finest anywhere and provides high-quality diagnostic assistance in gross and histologic pathology, bacteriology, virology, serology-immunology, electron microscopy, analytical chemistry, and toxicology. It is a tremendous challenge to conduct examinations on received specimens involving the many scientific disciplines and dozens of different diagnostic tests relating to those disciplines, and make interpretations of those findings. That is what the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory does on a daily basis.

The Laboratory, chaired by Dr. Vaughn A. Seaton, has five sections including pathology, microbiology, chemistry, toxicology, and administrative. There are about 50 people employed in either full or part-time positions, and the personnel include pathologists, bacteriologists, virologists, chemists, and toxicologists in both faculty and staff positions.

The personnel of an organization are the key to its success. This is true in the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. The pathology section led by Dr. John Andrews, currently on a faculty improvement leave, also has Dr. George Daniels, Dr. David Larson, and Dr. Jim Holter as senior faculty members, with Dr. Tim Anderson, Dr. Dale Miskimins, and Dr. William Van Alstine as residents. Three histotechnicians complete this section.

The microbiology section is led by Dr. Howard Hill, who directs the virology and serology-immunology diagnostic and research laboratories, and Dr. Lorraine Hoffman, who leads the bacteriology diagnostic and research efforts, and has a total of twelve technicians conducting different analyses in large volume.

The chemistry section is led by Dr. Mike Stahr and includes two other very responsible positions filled by Walter Hyde and Paula Martin. Five other laboratory and research technicians assist in the chemistry section.

The toxicology section is led by Dr. Gary Osweiler. Dr. Tom Carson is a senior toxicologist and is heavily involved in toxicology teaching as well as graduate and resident instruction. Dr. William Cook and Dr. Stan Casteel are toxicology residents in this section. Dr. David Hopper, a psychologist-behavioral toxicologist, and Dr. William Kernan, a physicist employed on a part-time basis, complete the faculty in the toxicology section.

Nadine Buss, Administrative Assistant, leads the clerical section of eight clerk-typists, receptionists, and secretaries. This section is responsible for all administrative records, fiscal records, manuscript and research proposal preparation, report typing, filing, recording, purchasing, and fee assessment.

The Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at Iowa State University is recognized nationally and internationally. Many of its faculty and

staff present diagnostic and research papers at national meetings, hold committee assignments, and serve as officers of national discipline organizations as well as the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians.

Dr. Vaughn A. Seaton and Nadine Buss are President and Administrative Assistant, respectively, for the World Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. This organization just held the III International Symposium for Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians in Ames in 1983. Over 100 papers were presented by diagnostic scientists from around the world, and over 500 attendees represented 29 countries.

The Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory has trained personnel from several countries at the M.S. and Ph.D. level. Many international visitors arrive annually for a period of a day to a year so that they may work in the Veterinary

Diagnostic Laboratory with outstanding veterinary diagnostic laboratory personnel.

The Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at Iowa State University sees a busy and productive future as newer technology makes possible greater analytical techniques. It is also challenged by technology to keep abreast scientifically on the one hand and to keep abreast fiscally on the other. New technology is generally expensive. Fee income is the source of monies necessary for new innovations, personnel, and equipment. There is a constant balancing effort to keep diagnostic fees as low as possible and yet provide the diagnostic assistance needed by the Iowa practicing veterinarians to serve the Iowa food and companion animal industries. With over 36 years of experience in veterinary diagnostic laboratory medicine at Iowa State University, the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory looks forward enthusiastically to the new opportunities ahead.

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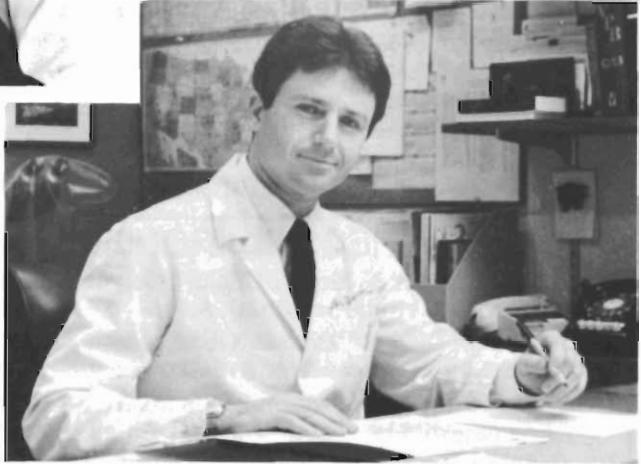
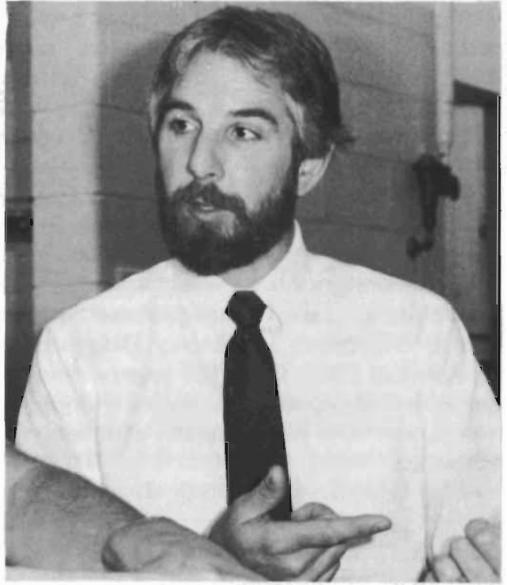
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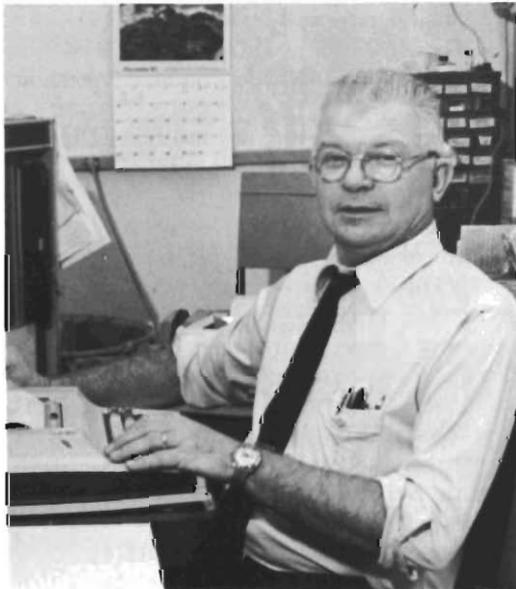
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Diagnostic Laboratory Pictorial

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L. Hoffman, G. Osweiler
H. Hill, D. Hopper

Page 153: Drs. W. Kernan, V. Seaton
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Holter
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Photography by Debi Stambaugh, RBP
Biomedical Communications