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## A Whirlwind of Activity

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## A Whirlwind of Activity

MICHAEL COSTELLO<sup>†</sup>

That Wednesday morning started way too early for the middle of spring break. But this was no ordinary spring break for Iowa State veterinary students. Delegates from all the vet schools would begin arriving at any moment marking the start of the SAVMA Symposium. Dozens of Iowa Staters were receiving last minute instructions along with hand-held radios to help keep everyone in touch, or at least to make them feel they had some control over what was to come. This was the last moment before the fun began, and the craziness didn't stop until late Sunday night.

Wednesday night, the delegates gathered at the vet school bragging about how many students that they had coming from their schools, and how excited they all were to be coming to Ames, Iowa in the middle of March. After touring the vet school wide-eyed and full of questions, the socialization began. Old friendships were renewed and many new ones began as they anticipated the exciting weekend to come.

Thursday morning came all too soon as the delegates began their business meetings hidden out at the Holiday Inn. Meanwhile, cars, trucks, vans, buses, and planes filled the roads and the airways carrying vet students eager to visit ISU. That night, after running all the energy out of those poor souls at the Registration Desk, the luau began.

From aquatherapy to zoo animal medicine, not a topic was ignored. Students sat in lectures where questions and discussions flew freely, filling the air with the excitement and enthusiasm towards veterinary medicine. In addition to the distinguished faculty here at ISU CVM, the cast of lecturers included such prominent speakers as zoo veterinarian Charlene Jendry, behaviorist Temple Grandin, and ethicist Bernard Rollins. At the same time, students were getting the hands-on opportunities that they love so much. If small animal medicine was the interest, students were dissecting eyeballs, examining ears, handling puppies, or

wading in the pool rehabilitating dogs with orthopedic problems. For those who wanted to work with larger animals, they were placing nasogastric tubes in horses, doing breeding soundness exams on bulls and stallions, learning about swine or dairy productions, ultrasounding or shoeing. Still others were enthralled with the more "exotic" medicine while restraining ferrets, working with fish, or anesthetizing birds.

So much was going on at the vet school, but there were other students who were traveling around Ames and central Iowa and seeing just how diverse our profession really is. Students could choose to take a side trip that included visits to the National Animal Disease Center and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, both here in Ames, IA. These two government labs are some of the most important facilities in the research, diagnosis, and control of animal diseases, both foreign and domestic. Students who wanted a more relaxing side trip chose to visit the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska on the Wednesday before Symposium. Those who visited the ISU Meat Lab and Linear Accelerator facility learned about the latest technology in food preservation. Some students spent a whole day to gain some practical exposure to swine and dairy production systems at one of the ISU satellite research farms. Truly, there was something for everyone at this year's SAVMA Symposium.

The whole weekend culminated with an awesome evening of great food, wonderful speakers, and a party to end it all. When Sunday morning did come, everyone gathered their things and headed for home. We Iowa State students, now thoroughly sleep deprived and over-stressed, were left staring at each other in utter disbelief that it was all over. ISU CVM had truly put its best foot forward and shown everyone what a great place it is. Then reality hit us all: tomorrow was Monday, and that meant back to being vet students. ♦

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