

DRAFT

Published for member review; to be acted upon at the May 2007 Annual Meeting

American Milking Devon Cattle Association **Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting** Tunbridge VT, May 20, 2006

The meeting was called to order by President Drew Conroy at 10:04 AM with approximately 30 members present. A motion to accept the minutes of the May 7, 2005 annual meeting was seconded and passed unanimously.

Reports

President: Drew Conroy provided an overview of the years activities. Highlights included:

- A census of the breed, with a 90% response rate, turned up 413 registered cows, 787 bulls and 30 calves. Herd sizes ranges from 1-40 animals, with an average of six. Five herds exceeded 25 animals.
- We held information meetings at M.J. Knight's farm in Pennsylvania and at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. Both were well attended and a great deal of interest was shown.
- The AMDCA website has been updated by volunteer webmaster Lawrence Gilley. Lawrence's efforts are much appreciated.
- Five bulls identified as genetically important by Professor Rebecca Splan were drawn during the year. Additional bulls have been drawn by their owners; at the moment there is an ample supply of semen.
- The new herdbook is close to completion thanks to financial help from Colonial Williamsburg to purchase software. The plan is to distribute the book electronically. (More details below.)
- The Board has meet frequently throughout the year, mostly by conference telephone.

Treasurer: John Hall reported a balance of \$5684.30 as of 1/15/06. The accounts were examined by a tax consultant, who found no errors or omissions. Subsequent reports will be on a calendar year basis, with full audits by an accountant approximately every three years. A motion to accept the Treasurer's report was seconded and passed unanimously.

John noted that he had followed up on our donation to the Franklin & Diurna Kibbe Scholarship Fund, had augmented the donation with one of his own and obtained assurance that only the fund interest would disbursed. A motion to make an annual donation to this fund in an amount to be determined by the Board was made, seconded and passed.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to establish a fund (annual amount to be determined by the Board) to assist young people in 4H programs to acquire a Milking Devon calf, with the stipulation that recipients eventually reimburse the fund or pass on the "gift", similar to the Heifer Project.

Secretary: Bill Blaiklock has analyzed the demographics of our membership. We have 132 breeders in 26 States. More than half (79) are located in the North East, including 55 in New England. There is significant activity in the mid-south (MD, VA, NC, SC, TN) and the mid-west (OH, IN, MI, WI, MO, KS). The Far West is represented by TX, CO, ID, AZ, CA.

The application for tax exempt status was recently submitted to the IRS. No response has been received yet.

Registrar: Sue Randall discussed the forthcoming herdbook. It will be a complete document replacing all previous editions. The plan is to publish it as a PDF file available on the website. Alternatively a disk could be provided at a cost of \$18. Since it is very expensive to create paper copies, Sue recommended that members utilize the PDF to make copies locally of whatever part of the book they require.

The current plan is to publish a complete new book each year. Concerns were expressed over the cost of downloading and printing the whole book annually. Sue agreed to look into the possibility of an annual update including only new/changed information.

Genetics Committee: Ray Clark noted the bulls intended to be drawn as soon as SVF is ready to resume the project, including Sunnyknoll Bright and Four J's Rudy. Now that we have an adequate semen supply, attention has shifted to improving the storage and distribution system. To that end the semen storage is being moved to North American Breeders in order to obtain lower storage costs and speed up shipping times. NAB will normally ship within 4 days although it may take several weeks during their busiest periods. Ray advised those needing semen to order as early as possible. He reminded the meeting that the semen shipping containers were just that; they must be returned immediately and will run dry within days in any case.

Registration Committee: Sue Randall expressed concern about an increase in the incidence of both incomplete applications and lost Registration Certificates. The Certification carries the Corporate seal and has some connotations of a title of ownership. Having duplicate documents in circulation might cause problems. It was suggested that both the Tamworth and Guernsey associations had resolved this issue and should be consulted.

Sue also noted that we need a better registration application form for births involving embryo transfer.

Communications Committee: Bill Blaiklock has begun activating this committee which will have several responsibilities including the website, newsletter, publicity and advertising, sale of memorabilia (tee shirts, caps etc.).

Special recognition: Bill Blaiklock noted John Wheelock's service to the association over many years and, on behalf of the Directors presented John with the following citation, to wild applause:

“The American Milking Devon Cattle Association hereby awards to John Wheelock of Colchester, Vermont an Honorary Life Membership in consideration of his many years of service to the Association and to American Milking Devon Cattle.”

John was assured that he is excused from paying any further annual dues.

Election of Directors

Ramona announce the results of the ballot count:

Bill Blaiklock 46

Richard Nicoll 47

Susan Randall 37

Erick Taylor 23

Nils Berglund 1

Accordingly, Bill, Richard and Susan are the incoming Directors.

Further Discussion

A discussion ensued concerning perceived flaws in the nomination process. Issues noted included difficulty in getting on the ballot, Board appointed replacements for resigning Directors, and perceived deficiencies in the bylaws. Two actions were taken in response to these concerns:

- It was moved and seconded that a call for Director nominations should be issued not later than January 2007 and that all nominees should be listed on the 2007 ballot. The motion passed.
- In discussion it was suggested that each nominee should get a certain amount of space for a biography and that the Board would be free to recommend their choice of candidates. It was also requested that the Board consider the next highest person not elected as the replacement for a resigning Director.
- A further motion (Bruce Farr/Sue Randall) was moved, seconded and passed: The Board is instructed to study the nomination process and related bylaws and, if necessary, recommend changes in bylaws for consideration at the 2007 Annual Membership Meeting.

In response to a question, John Wheelock advised that the “Devon” building at the Tunbridge Fair Grounds had been built by the New England Milking Devon Association (a predecessor organization). Although Milking Devon breeders have first rights to use the building, it is owned by the Tunbridge Fair Association.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 PM and was followed by speaker Dr. Mary Louise Zaroni, Executive Director of Farms for Life, Canton NY. Dr. Zaroni spoke about the proposed National Animal Identification Program, which she opposes.

William C. Blaiklock
Secretary