

# The American Milking Devon News

*A rare breed that deserves a good future*

January 2008

## Away to Africa

Drew Conroy and family will spend the year 2008 in Africa, thanks to a Fulbright scholarship. We deeply appreciate Drew's contributions to AMDCA over many years and wish him and his family well and safe return.

The Board has decided to leave the Director position vacated by Drew open until the 2008 Annual meeting and has elected John Hall to serve as President until that time.

## Call for Director nominations

In accordance with the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee is appointed by the President "...for the purpose of soliciting nominations from both the Board and the membership, and nominating a slate of prospective Directors to be placed on the ballot". Nominations are now being accepted for the position of Director (member of the board of Directors) for the term May 2007 through May 2010. Voting will be by mail, and ballots will be counted and results announced at the Annual Meeting in May.

As an all-volunteer organization, AMDCA depends on its Directors to both manage the organization and do much of the actual work. Directors must expect to invest significant time and money in carrying out their responsibilities to AMDCA. The Board meets monthly by telephone. In addition we host one or more regional meetings each year which Directors are expected to attend at their own expense. Directors must be voting members, ie, must own registered American Milking Devon cattle and have paid their dues for the current year.

Currently, there is one vacancy on the Board. In addition, Ray Clark's term expires this year. Ray has agreed to serve another term if elected.

If you wish to place a name in nomination, please submit the following information no later than Friday, March 7, 2008 to Nils Berglund, Nominating Committee Chair, 2341 Highgate Road, St. Albans, Vermont 05478, phone (802) 868-2738, email <[nilsdon@together.net](mailto:nilsdon@together.net)>. Email is preferred.

- The nominee's full name, address, phone and email.
- A statement of the nominee's background, qualifications and his/her philosophy and goals for AMDCA. Please limit this information to ½ page.
- A statement signed by the nominee that she or he is a voting member and agrees to serve if elected.

## Advance Notice

The 2008 **Annual Meeting** will be held in Tunbridge, VT on May 10, 2008. A full announcement will be forthcoming.

## Embryo Transfer Survey Results

Some 25 people responded to the Embryo Transfer Survey. Seven favored no restrictions; 13 favored restricted use; and 5, outright prohibition. Among the respondents, thirteen had five years or less experience, the remainder averaged about 15 years. Eighteen respondents owned herds of ten or less animals. This profile appears to reflect the membership as a whole.

Comments covered a variety of economic and genetic issues:

- Focus on quality, not quantity.
- ET is expensive, time consuming and the results are uncertain.
- I don't want to see the same genetic concentration on the female side that AI has produced on the male side.
- Donor and sire should be DNA tested.
- Good and bad breeding decisions are independent of technology.
- The cow to be flushed should be evaluated by a third party.
- The people who can afford it don't necessarily have the best cattle.
- Limit the number of calves sired by any one bull.
- Implant in non-AMD cows, preserve AMD cows to produce their own calves.
- More calves may permit more rigorous culling.
- ET may enable those in remote areas to more easily obtain registered stock.
- Provide for termination of ET in the future if adverse effects are identified.
- High prices are preventing new breeders from purchasing AMD stock.
- Our cattle only have value because of their scarcity.
- Flooding the AMD herd with highly consanguineous animals could be disastrous.

After reviewing these results, the Directors have concluded that appropriately regulated ET should be permitted. A proposed policy to that effect, including at least DNA testing and maintenance of an audit trail, will be presented to the membership at the May Annual Meeting.

### **Spring Gathering Anyone?**

We have had Fall membership gatherings in upstate New York and the mid-South and expect to return to Williamsburg, VA this Fall. Would anyone like to host a Spring gathering? The only firm requirement is a place to meet and, ideally, a place to eat. Some local point of interest would be a bonus. The Directors would like to hear your ideas.

### **Dues are Due**

Member Dues for 2007-2008 must be paid prior to the Annual Meeting in order to be able to vote. Please fill out and [return the dues notice](#) with your payment. Thank you.

Note: According to our records the following members have already paid through 2008-9: Lee Blackwell, Eastman Farm LLC, Dena Lebo-Funk, Bill Biggers, Anne Derousie/Karel Titus, Gurney Davis, Doug Fell, Stanley Huckins.