

Leland C. Grumbles
1921 - 2006



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Date: 2010
Revised:

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The Life of Leland Grumbles

Introduction

Dr. Leland Creed Grumbles was a giant within the group who call themselves “poultry pathologists.” He was one of the founders of the American Association of Avian Pathologists and served it well. I first met Dr. Grumbles in 1956 when he presented a paper at a meeting of the Arkansas Turkey Federation. I was to join his faculty at Texas A&M University in 1959. Over a fifty year period, Dr. Grumbles was my department head and co-worker, - but most of all, he was a friend.

Dr. Grumbles was born in Star City, Arkansas on September 21, 1921. He was raised on a farm near Jasper, TX and graduated Jasper High School in 1940. On leaving Jasper to attend Texas A & M in the fall of 1940, Leland was told by his father, “not to worry about sending any money home.” Leland obtained a job on the college poultry farm and worked his way through school, obtaining the D.V.M degree in February, 1945.

Professional Career

Upon graduation, he entered private practice in East Texas. In November of 1946, he left practice and joined the staff of Dr. John Delaplane at Rhode Island State College as an Assistant Professor. This was to be the start of an academic career that was to lead him to Louisiana State University and back to Texas A & M. He was to spend the “long haul” at A&M with the exception of two years, 1953-1955, when he served as a Captain in the USAF Veterinary Corps in Alaska. Dr. Grumbles retired in 1984, but he continued to work half time until 1986. Throughout his professional life, Dr. Grumbles was recognized as an outstanding educator, research worker, and administrator.

When Dr. Grumbles went to Rhode Island State College as an Assistant Professor in the fall of 1946, it signaled the start of a relationship with Dr. John Delaplane that was to last until Dr. Delaplane’s untimely death in the fall of 1957. At Rhode Island, working with Dr. Delaplane, Dr. Grumbles did the early work in establishing the efficacy of feeding low levels Sulfaquinoxaline for the prevention of coccidiosis in chickens. This finding and other studies involving the low level feeding of drugs to prevent disease were major factors in modernization of the poultry industry.

When Dr. Delaplane moved to Texas A & M in 1948 to head up the Department of Veterinary Microbiology, Dr. Grumbles moved to Baron Rouge and joined the staff of Dr. William Oglesby at Louisiana State University. Here he was to continue his studies on the use of sulfonamides in the control of poultry disease.

In 1949, Dr. Grumbles returned to Texas A & M and rejoined the staff of Dr. Delaplane as an Associate Professor. He joined a group which over the years was to include, among others, Dr. William Boney, Dr. Frank Wills, Dr. Rob DuBose, Dr. Don Davis, Dr. A. I. Flowers, Dr. Wayne Moore and Dr. C. F. Hall. It was a group that under the leadership of Dr. Delaplane made significant contributions in the study of Newcastle disease, Mycoplasmosis, Salmonellosis and Chlamydiosis.

In 1957 Dr. Grumbles completed his M.S. degree. His thesis was a product his research with Dr. Delaplane and was entitled, *“The Etiology of Infectious Sinusitis of Turkeys.”* When Dr. Delaplane died later in the year, Dr. Grumbles was named head of department, a position which he continued to hold until 1977 when he stepped down to return to teaching and research. Under Dr. Grumbles the teaching and research programs in avian medicine were continued.

Service programs administered by Dr. Grumbles for the Texas poultry industry included: the operation of poultry disease diagnostic laboratories at Texas A & M, Gonzales and Center; the administration of the National Plans testing programs for pullorum/typhoid and mycoplasmosis; and a program which led to the eradication of pullorum/typhoid from backyard flocks in Texas.

Dr. Grumbles – the Organizer

Dr. Grumbles' role in the founding of the AAAP has already been mentioned. He was a member of its organizing committee and its interim Chairman: 1957-1958. The details of the founding are documented in Avian Diseases: *Grumbles, L.C. and C.F. Hall. The History of Avian Medicine in the United States. VIII. The American Association of Avian Pathologists – a Thirty-Year History. Avian Dis. 32:175-194. 1988.* Dr. Grumbles was to serve the AAAP well in many capacities. Among them were:



- Editor of Avian Diseases for 7 years: 1967–1973
- President: 1974–1975.
- Representative of the AAAP on the Executive Committee of the United States Animal Health Association. 1977
- AAAP Committee on Chlamydiosis – Chairman, 1981
- Received the AAAP Special Service Award, 1983
- Editorial Committee: A Manual of Methods for Laboratory Diagnosis of Avian Chlamydiosis. 1986
- Awarded Life Membership in the AAAP, 1987

Dr. Grumbles was also a founding member and first president of the Southern Conference on Avian Diseases (SCAD), - an organization that had its origin in 1960 as a sub group within the Animal Disease Research Workers in the Southern States (ADRWSS). SCAD was to become one of the four AAAP regional associations.

And in the mid-sixties, it was Dr. Grumbles, along with the likes of Drs. Ben Pomeroy, William Hinshaw and Mel Hofstad, who saw the need for and organized the American College of Veterinary Microbiologists. He was a Charter Diplomat, a member of its board of governors from 1966–1972; and a member of its examination committee, 1966-1971

Memberships and Awards

Dr. Grumbles was a member of numerous other professional, honorary and civic organizations. He was honored by many of them by positions of leadership and other forms of recognition. Among them were:

- Texas Veterinary Medical Association -Research Award – 1967
- American Veterinary Medical Association – Life Member
- Chairman of the Poultry Section - 1957
- American Association of Veterinary Bacteriologists – President, 1965
- United States Livestock Sanitary Association

- Poultry Science Association
- Animal Disease Workers in the Southern States (ADRWSS) – President, 1963 - 1964
- Texas Poultry Federation - Golden Feather Award – 1984 (the most distinguished award given by the federation)
- Texas Poultry Improvement Association – Honorary Life Member
- National Turkey Federation – Health Advisory Committee
- World Poultry Science Association – Life member
- American Society for Microbiology, Texas Branch
- Conference on Diseases in Nature Transmissible to Man – Chairman, 1971
- Conference of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians – Member of Salmonella Committee (1965-1971) which compiled: *“Recommended Procedures for the Isolation of Salmonella Organisms from Animal Feed and Feed Ingredients”*
- Phi Zeta -1956
- Sigma Xi - 1957
- Phi Kappa Phi (Texas A&M Chapter) – President 1957
- College Station Lions Club – Charter Member and Past President
- Texas Lions League for Crippled Children – Life Member
- Who’s Who in America – 1970
- Outstanding Educator’s of America - 1973

Personal Life – Family, Hobbies, etc

Dr. Grumbles was married to Helen Beatrice Battle on September 18, 1943. They had two daughters, - Paula Ruth who was born on August 29, 1946 and Jane Sallie who was born on March 6, 1950. The family loved the outdoors and lived in the country where they had several acres. The family enjoyed horseback riding and fishing, - and spent a great deal of their free time camping. At the time of Dr. Grumbles’ death, he had 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Leland was an avid “Aggie” fan – football in the fall and basketball in the winter. He was an avid “42” player and enjoyed the monthly sessions with a retirees’ group from the veterinary college. For the uninitiated, 42 is domino game which is very popular in the south.

Necrology

Dr. Grumbles died in College Station, TX on May 4, 2006. He will be remembered by his colleagues for many things: he loved life; he was a leader; he was fair; he was compassionate; he loved his chosen field; - and he had an uncanny ability to sense a “need” and to meet it. Those of us who are in the field of avian medicine can be thankful that he and a few other far sighted individuals saw the need for an organization of avian pathologists, - the AAAP.

Addendum by R.L. Witter, 2010

In addition to the AAAP activities mentioned above, Lee Grumbles was a member and chair of the AAAP History Committee for several years in the late 1980s. During this period, there was considerable discussion on the need for a historical archive for the AAAP. Charlie Cunningham advocated for an archive at Michigan State University. Arnold "Rosy" Rosenwald advocated for an archive at the National Agricultural Library in Beltsville, MD. Several others proposed the archive be established at Iowa State University, which already was administering an archive for the Poultry Science Association. Dr. Grumbles presided over a period of fact-finding and active debate and ultimately submitted the recommendation on behalf of the AAAP History Committee that an archive be established at Iowa State University. This recommendation was approved and the archive was established in September 1989. This example not only documents a chapter in AAAP history but also showed how Grumbles skillfully used his leadership skills to obtain a consensus on what at the time seemed to be a contentious issue.

Dr. Grumbles prepared his important 30 year history (see earlier) to coincide with the 30 year anniversary celebration of the AAAP. In addition to the above article, prepared with Dr. C.F. Hall, Grumbles provided a number of letters and personal documents on the early inception of the AAAP that were used during the subsequent 35 year celebration and as the basis of a poster prepared by the AAAP History Committee. These documents are historically important, unique, and are now safely preserved in the archive at Iowa State University that he helped create.

Biography solicited by the Committee on the History of Avian Medicine, American Association of Avian Pathologists.

Additional biographical materials may be available from the AAAP Historical Archives located at Iowa State University. Contact information is as follows:

Special Collections Dept. & University Archives

403 Parks Library

Iowa State University

Ames, IA 50011-2140

Phone: (515) 294-6648

Fax: (515) 294-5525

WWW: <http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/index.html>