John Gamgee Award 2013 for Outstanding Contributions to Veterinary Science and the Veterinary Profession

In 1863, Prof. John Gamgee from the college of Edinburgh took the initiative to invite professors of veterinary medicine and veterinarians from all over Europe to a general meeting in Hamburg, Germany. In 1963 during the 17th World Veterinary Congress in Hanover, 100 years Anniversary celebrations took place, and in the honour of Prof John Gamgee, a gold medal was designed to serve as an award to selected veterinarians in recognition of their outstanding and exemplary services to the veterinary science and to the veterinary profession.

By 2013, only three great persons had the honour to receive the John Gamgee Award:

- The first recipient was Sir T. Dalling (FAO) in 1963.
- The second recipient was Prof W.I.B. Beveridge from Australia in 1975.
- The third recipient was Prof R. Vuillaume from France in 1983.

In the light of the 150 years of World Veterinary Congresses and 30 years after the last time that this award was given, the John Gamgee Award was given to three selected veterinarians in the WVA 150 Anniversary celebration during WVC 2013 in Prague, Czech Republic, on 19th September 2013.

The three selected veterinarians are by seniority:

1. James Harlan Steele from the USA
2. Milton Thiago de Mello from Brazil
3. Bernard Vallat from France

After a short introduction of the selected veterinarians (with special attention to their relation with WVA), the WVA President, Dr Faouzi Kechrid presented the John Gamgee Award to the three winners.

1. James Harlan Steele

Dr James Steele could not join the award ceremony and the Award was presented to his son; David Steele.

Dr James Harlan Steele was born 3rd April 1913 and graduated in 1941 from the Michigan State University as DVM. Dr Steele had positions in Environmental Health Science, Public Health Service in Washington DC and Atlanta, Chief Veterinary Officer, Surgeon General in veterinary affairs involving veterinary medicine and veterinary public health, public health service for WHO and FAO, Consultant for WHO, FAO, Pan-American Health Organization, Commission of Consumers Affairs. He was 57 times awarded and had so many publications hardly to summarize. For WVA he was very active too. He was a main lecturer in the WVCs of 1949, 1953,
1959, 1963, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1983, 1987, 1991 and 2008. He is WVA Honorary Member. He was the founder of the World Veterinary Epidemiology Society and President from 1971 till 1985. His Social Philosophy is nice to hear for learning for all of us: I believe firmly throughout my career that I should share my knowledge and experience with my fellow man, be an American or citizen of the world. Those of us who are more fortunate to be endowed with intellectual advantages have an even greater responsibility to share. Carry on!

Milton Thiago de Mello was born on 5th February 1916 and graduated in 1937 in Rio de Janeiro. Dr in Microbiology in 1946, Professor and researcher at the University of Brasilia of which he was one of the founders. He is a pioneer of microbiology and primatology worldwide. He had positions in microbiology in many topics like brucellosis, bubonic plague, rabies, tetanus, mycosis like chromo-mycosis and rhinosporidiosis. He was active in Brazil in the Oswaldo Cruz Institute from 1944-1960, Mid America [Dominican Republic and San Salvador] and California with airborne infections of brucellosis. He was active in primatology and spent time in veterinary education too. He had cooperation in veterinary science with Alfort and Lyon in France and with Hanover in Germany. He was consultant for WHO, FAO and PAHO. He did a lot of laboratory work in the Brazilian Army Lab. He was involved in 6 Science Academics, 14 Scientific Societies and in many international and national congresses. He is 19 times awarded and one is very special to mention: the James H. Steele Award for veterinary epidemiology. He has written 224 publications. Milton Thiago de Mello has served WVA by participating in the Animal welfare committee and in making the veterinary education policy in 1999. He was president of the scientific committee of the 24th WVC in Rio de Janeiro in 1991 and has become honorary member in 1993. In the last 20 years, he was involved in research in primates, wildlife conservation, veterinary education, lab animals, animal welfare and history of veterinary medicine in Brazil. One of his last publications is his book: “The Veterinary Profession at the Future Threshold” with many subjects of interest of One Health issue.

3. Bernard Vallat
Dr Bernard Vallat was born on 16th October 1947 and graduated in 1971 at the Veterinary School of Toulouse. Since 2001, he is the Director General of the World Organization of Animal Health [OIE] in Paris. After graduation he soon became active in Africa: The Assale Project in Chad, Livestock development in Ituri and Central Africa; advisor of the minister of Agriculture in Mauritius. In between, he did economic training and he was a research officer. In 1990 he came back to Paris as the head of the Livestock Office, than in Agricultural policy and products department and industrial products and trade. He was the head of the International health coordination commission of the department for food quality and veterinary and plant health actions. He was also the Chief Inspector of Veterinary Public Health and the CVO of France. He has written many publications and organized many conferences. As advised by IACLAM, he had a significant impact on laboratory animal medicine globally. Although the John Gamgee Award is a lifetime award, it is a pleasure to present this award to Bernard Vallat during his active life.