Honorary Secretary Report - 2019

Dear friends,

I am sure this has been a very busy year for us all. I thank you again for giving me the opportunity to serve the WSAVA as its Honorary Secretary. It makes me very happy and proud to see that the secretariat continues to grow professionally and in hours as is needed. This dedicated team allows the Executive Board (EB) to focus on strategy and become less hands on. This is work in progress as the EB consists of vets who are by nature hands on, but now have to learn to leave the operational work in the very capable hands of the executive assistant, Emma van Rooijen and CEO, Arpita Bhose. This process takes time but is a major step forward and enables the CEO to focus more on strategic direction and the EB on governance. Our new financial officer Joyce Dao is also doing a superb job and has now fully taken over from June Ingwersen. June has been the working heart of our association for years, for which we all are very grateful.

Over the past year, the WSAVA has continued to grow in strength and influence. With new members from several countries joining in 2018, the WSAVA now has 105-member associations, representing over 200,000 individual veterinarians. We benefit from the broadest geographical and cultural footprint the organization has achieved in its history. This expansion enables the association to better fulfill its mission around the world.

The new sponsorship plan has provided a lot of work for the CEO and is of the utmost importance to provide the WSAVA with sufficient income to make all our dreams possible. In order to enable Arpita to focus more on that, our Executive Assistant, Emma, is now working full time.

What have been and will be my focus areas besides the secretariat this year and next year? One has been to reinforce the Leadership and Nomination Committee (LNC) as their new EB liaison. The LNC, under excellent leadership of Geeta Saini, is now heavily involved in leadership decisions and has renewed and standardized the open nomination processes of committees, Executive Board and membership applications. All this with the ultimate goal of creating an engaged and open WSAVA community.

Another focus area is the very rapidly changing veterinary landscape and how to deal with that. The role of corporates is increasing in, not all, but many parts of the world. This development affects a lot of our members, the member associations as well as our individual members. It is of the utmost importance for the WSAVA to have strong associations, which are the backbone of the WSAVA, and to work together with corporates.

The veterinary community nowadays and in the past is dealing with another big issue, professional wellness. This concerns all of us in our clinics whether privately owned or by corporates. We also need to look at involving vet technicians more, because of a lack of veterinarians. As new EB liaison for the Professional Wellness Group, I hope to contribute in this area.

Last but not least is Europe one of my responsibilities. It gives me great pleasure to be able to tell you that relationships with the European veterinary associations as FVE, UEVP and especially the FECAVA are excellent and we are working together on the issues mentioned above and will continue to do so.

We need to keep working on building a strong veterinary community that communicates in the way that works for all, young or old, making people feel they belong. We need to communicate through all channels, social and digital and in person when and where ever we can. Rebecca George our PR consultant and Emma van Rooijen are vital in building our
community. Communication is a big part of the Strategic Plan that is being developed. The operational part, the How will be a big part of the responsibilities of Emma. All of this will be discussed with you all during the Members Forum in Toronto. As for me: I have always felt very strongly about being a WSAVA member, I have attended WSAVA congresses since 1986, in Paris, Toronto will be my 19th WSAVA Congress! I hope you do too.

The secretariat exists of

- WSAVA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Arpita Bhose
- WSAVA Executive Assistant - Emma van Rooijen
- WSAVA Finance Officer – Joyce Dao
- PR Consultant – Rebecca George

The goal was and is to have the secretariat developed in that way that in 2020 a specific position of Honorary Secretary is no longer necessary and that the board position can be taken by a Board member that can focus on strategy. There is no doubt that this fantastic group of people that is very much dedicated to the WSAVA will reach this goal. I want to thank all of them for their tremendous and hard work and I am very grateful and happy to work with them.

I am sure we will have your support as we move forward. We always welcome your suggestions on what you want from your membership and how we can provide this.

Kind regards,

Dr. Renée Chalmers Hoynck van Papendrecht
WSAVA Honorary Secretary