

Murray E. Fowler, DVM, DACVIM, DACVT, DACZM July 17th, 1928 – May 18th, 2014

After a brief illness, Murray E. Fowler, DVM, DACVIM, DACVT, DACVT, a giant in the field of zoo and wildlife medicine, died on May 18, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Audrey, 4 children and 16 grand and 13 great-grandchildren. Although this is an extremely sad announcement, at the same time, it celebrates his life that was lived fully.

Dr. Fowler received his veterinary degree from Iowa State University, and became a Professor of Internal Medicine at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California-Davis. In 1967, Dr. Fowler initiated the new non domestic animal program at the University of California-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. During a sabbatical at the San Diego Zoo helped develop keeper training programs and later sabbaticals would take him to Makerere University in Uganda during the Idi Amin years, and to further his zoo medicine work and study in Germany, Denmark and the United Kingdom. In 1974, at UC-Davis, he founded the first formal residency training program for zoo and wildlife veterinarians.

Dr. Fowler is perhaps best known in the zoo field as the author of *Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine (ZAWAM)*, a leading text on zoo and wildlife diseases. The first edition appeared in 1978, when it was one of the first texts in this field, and he edited 7 subsequent editions (*ZAWAM 8* was published this year). With the 7th edition, it was officially renamed “Fowler’s *Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine*.” In addition to *ZAWAM* series, Dr. Fowler wrote or edited 19 additional texts on the medicine of elephants, and camelids, animal restraint and anesthesia, and veterinary toxicology, and over 200 scientific reports. His wife Audrey was a vital partner in these editorial ventures.

Dr. Fowler was a founding member of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM), the American College of Veterinary Toxicology (ACVT), and the American College of Zoological Medicine (ACZM), and a member and past President of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV), the American College of Zoological Medicine (ACZM), European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians (EAZWV), the Brazilian zoo veterinarians (they even have a group called Grupo Fowler) and many other professional organizations. He served as Editor of the *Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine*. (1977-1988), and he was a Trustee of the Morris Animal Foundation (1981-1986), supporting a research fund for wildlife health as well as that of domestic species.

However, Dr. Fowler was much more than just a member of any one group, for he was a veterinarian who very much belonged to the worldwide zoo community. That point is illustrated in the recent 8th edition of *ZAWAM* which he received the week before his death. Its 82 chapters include authors from 15 countries on 6 continents. Another example is that when the Iron Curtain separated Europe, Dr. Fowler became

friends with Dr. Rudolph Ippen of the Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in East Berlin, and together they worked beyond political boundaries to expand cooperation in the international zoo veterinary community.

Dr. Fowler received many major awards, including teaching awards at UC-Davis, the Emil Dolensek Award from the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, the Park Davis Award from the British Veterinary Zoological Society, the Marlin Perkins Award from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Honorary Membership from the European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians, the Animal Welfare Award from the American Veterinary Association, the Stange Memorial Award from the Iowa State University School of Veterinary Medicine, In 2006, the new Animal Health Center at the Sacramento Zoo was named in his honor.

Most importantly, Dr. Fowler was a person who cared deeply not only about animals, but also about people. When I first co-edited ZAWAM 4 with him, it was the first time that I had edited a textbook. I had never before been asked for autographs, but when the requests came, I simply signed “Best wishes, Eric.” That changed when I later saw Murray’s responses. They were deep, touching and personal because he had taken the time to talk to each recipient and hear their personal histories and hopes. It was typical of how he encouraged so many in the zoo medicine field.

Further evidence of that point is a quote from Teresa Fernandes, a veterinarian at the Lisbon Zoo. At her first AAZV meeting in Tulsa, she and a veterinary friend from Moscow met Murray: “He was kind enough to exchange a few nice words and shake hands with us, complete strangers to him! We had come all the way from Europe to attend this conference, and yet this moment alone made it worth it all by itself.” The reality was that if you were not a friend of Murray Fowler’s, you simply had not met him.

Following is the acknowledgement I wrote for the 7th edition of Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine: “Dr. Fowler initiated the first edition of Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine in 1978, when few texts existed in the field of zoo and wildlife medicine. In the subsequent 32 years, he has shown an unwavering dedication to the dissemination of this information with seven subsequent volumes of this text – not to mention many other related books authored by him. He has been, and continues to be, a mentor and an inspiration to many in our field, myself included.” When he edited that acknowledgement, in typical Murray fashion, his comment was “That was a little over the top.”

In conclusion, the word giant is often overused, however, Murray truly was a giant, a gentle giant - not only in veterinary medicine, but in life. Dr. Fowler’s professional colleagues and friends from around the world send their thoughts and prayers to Audrey and his family.

R. Eric Miller, DVM, DACZM

Sr. VP for Zoological Operations, Saint Louis Zoo

Co-Editor. (with Murray Fowler) of the 4th-8th editions of Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine