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NEWS & EVENTS

MU Veterinarian Wraps up Year Leading Mastitis Council

John Middleton, DVM, PhD, has earned many accolades in his career as a food animal veterinarian. Witnesses to one of his most recent honors saw the renowned mastitis and milk quality expert escort a sord of mallard ducks through the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee. While Middleton, who is a professor at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, is more accustomed to working with cows than ducks, he took his Honorary Duckmaster duties in stride on Feb. 1, as the ducks were paraded at 5 p.m. from the marble fountain in the hotel's lobby back to their Royal Duck Palace on the rooftop.

The hotel selected him as Honorary Duckmaster to recognize his service as the president of the National Mastitis Council, which was holding its annual meeting at the Peabody Feb. 1-3, 2015. The meeting was the culmination of Middleton's year-long term as the organization's leader. Middleton's Duckmaster honor was not the only recognition he received during the meeting. Members of the NMC presented him with the NMC Distinguished Service Award for Presidential performance.

The NMC formed in 1961 in the United States and has evolved into a global organization whose members work to control mastitis, and improve dairy cattle health and milk



John Middleton, DVM, PhD, (right) served as the president of the National Mastitis Council for 2014. He was recognized for his leadership during the organization's annual meeting held at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was also named Honorary Duckmaster during one day of the conference and helped the resident duckmaster guide the hotel's group of mallards from the lobby fountain to their rooftop home.

quality. Middleton said among his goals during his year at the organization's helm were to increase global awareness of the NMC and to move it toward financial stability.

"We had a positive year financially, and we are working on initiatives to increase sponsorship of meetings and increase the value of the organization to members and sponsors," he said. "That said, as an information-based organization, financial stability in an era when people have ready access to information from other sources will continue to be a challenge."

Middleton is also happy with efforts to raise the organization's international profile. The NMC has traditionally held one regional meeting and one annual meeting per year. The regional meeting has typically been held in a dairy region of the United States or Canada and has catered to approximately 250-350 dairy producers and veterinarians. The 2014 regional meeting was held in Ghent, Belgium, in partnership with the University of Ghent and attracted 650 participants from around the world.

Middleton gave an interview reviewing the Ghent meeting for *M2 Magazine*, a journal aimed at dairy professionals. That article can be found [here](#).

In addition to his role as a professor of food animal medicine and surgery, Middleton is the assistant director of the Agricultural Experiment Station for the MU College of Veterinary Medicine. His duties involve teaching and providing clinical services to clients in the large animal clinic. His own research focuses on coagulase negative staphylococcal mastitis in dairy cattle, molecular characterization of bacterial mastitis pathogens, heifer mastitis, and mastitis interventions. He will spend the next year as the NMC's past president and plans to continue to work toward financial stability and greater visibility for the organization. Efforts under way toward those goals include a collaboration with the University of Minnesota to hold a regional meeting in October in China.

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