

Professor Valéria Letková, DVM., PhD. is celebrating her birthday



The birthday anniversary of Professor Valéria Letková, the Head of Department of Epizootiology and Parasitology at the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice, is associated with an Indian summer, as she was born on September 30, 1946 in Košice. After graduating from the University of Veterinary Medicine in Košice in 1970 and specializing in general veterinary medicine, she started working first at the Department of Comparative Physiology, but soon she transferred to the Department of Parasitology and Applied Zoology and since then she has been devoted to parasitology and has never looked back. She started her career as a scientific researcher, and in addition to it, since 1978 she has been active as a teacher, lecturer and supervisor. In 1984 she successfully defended her PhD. thesis, studying the invasion cycle of the most important intestinal helminths in pigs in ecological conditions of Eastern Slovakia. She habilitated in 1989, defending her habilitation thesis titled "*Selected protozoan diseases of animals with respect to epizootiology, therapy and prevention*" and in 2003 she was awarded the degree of Professor in the field of "*Infectious and Parasitic Animal Diseases*". Prof. Letková was supervised by the Academic Prof. Ján Hovorka, DVM., DSc., following in his footsteps in embarking on a career as parasitologists and since 2002 as the head of Dpt. for Parasitology, Diseases of Fish, Bees and Game and as a result of the change in an organiza-

tion's structure of the UVM in 2007 she now serves as the head of the Dpt. for Epizootiology and Parasitology.

Particular attention should be paid to her pedagogical activities, especially her novel approach to lecturing parasitology that is innovative in both form and content. She is the supervisor of four and a deputy supervisor of three study subjects in Slovak and English languages; a co-author of 18 monographs and textbooks; a member of the State Examination Commissions in Slovak and English. Prof. Letková supervises diploma and bachelor theses and has already supervised 6 Slovak and foreign PhD.-students. She attended numerous international stays at various scientific institutions in the Czech Republic (1984), Germany (1989), UK (1994), Italy (1995), Belgium (1996) and Spain (1997, 1998, 2009, 2010).

Scientific and research activities of Prof. Letková are rather distinctive, focused initially on the epizootiology of intestinal helminthes in domestic and wild animals, and later on protozoology, particularly in the field of coccidiosis in pigs and carnivores. At present, she deals with parasitic zoonoses, natural-foci diseases and vector-borne parasitic infections. Results of her work were published in multiple national and international journals and presented at national and international symposia, congresses and conferences in more than 335 reports. She has delivered a total of 28 invited plenary lectures at numerous international conferences and her SCI index includes 120 citations.

As a principal investigator or scientific co-worker she has participated in 13 domestic (VEGA, TEMPUS, KEGA) and 2 foreign R & D projects. She is the president of the WAAVP UVMF in Košice, member of the WAVES Committee, member of Helminthologia editorial board, Vice President of Collective Sectional Committee for PhD-study: Infectious and parasitic animal diseases, member of the Commission for scientific attestations at Institute of Parasitology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. She was a member of the Council for Agricultural and Forestry Science ASRD.

Prof. Letková was honored for her scientific and educational activities with the UVM Silver Medal, Professor Ján Hovorka Medal and Stanislav Prowázka Medal for merits in research and development.

The colleagues and the students take this opportunity to wish Prof. Valéria Letková many happy returns of the day, everlasting energy and success. May the coming year bring you Good Health, Happiness and Prosperity.

Mária Goldová

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