President Corry, President–Elect Kornegay, Executive Vice-President DeHaven, members of the AVMA Executive Board, Delegates, Auxiliary Members, and special guests. It is truly an honor to bring you greetings from the Auxiliary to the AVMA. We are 1,100 members strong and we have had a very busy year! We are constantly seeking ways to fulfill our duty of uniting veterinary families in order to promote, educate, and support individuals who strive daily to advance the art and science of veterinary medicine”.

The Auxiliary is in a unique position to support veterinarians because we are the Veterinary Family. As a veterinary spouse, we have unique experiences. Only the veterinary wife knows that funny feeling you get when someone comes up to you and says, “I just love your husband………… because he just saved Max”. It makes that missed dinner understandable. Only those who live with a veterinarian understand their distinctive stresses and demands. The Auxiliary is working on developing more programs to better support the veterinary family, and we welcome your input.

Our biggest asset and primary way we help the profession continues to be our Student Loan Fund. Valued at over 2 million dollars, we grant loans of $5,000 at 3% interest to 3rd and 4th year veterinary students. We have granted over 3,000 loans in 60 plus years, totaling nearly 9 million dollars. This spring we decided to allow students from off-shore schools with an active SAVMA chapter to be eligible for loans. We had 8 students from such schools complete an application for our June cycle. This year we plan to further promote and market the Student Loan Fund so that we can loan out even more money to qualified applicants. Please help us spread the word. If you know of any 3rd or 4th year students, please encourage them to check out our website, avmaaux.org, for information.

Speaking of students, they are both the future of the profession and the future of the Auxiliary. We must continually reach out to them and seek ways to support them in their studies and as they make the transition to a very demanding career. We hope to build and strengthen our student auxiliaries, and we are hoping to use social media such as Facebook and Twitter to engage and help them.

The Auxiliary is working on ways to partner with the AVMF. As you just heard, the AVMF has many great new projects going. The Auxiliary has over 1,000 members, who should have time for some short –term volunteering. Our 1st joint social event is the Aquarium Event on Sunday evening from 7:00 – 9:00. We hope to see everyone there!

The Auxiliary has many activities planned for this Atlanta convention. Saturday morning after Opening Session will be our Futuristic Thinkers meeting, devoted to brainstorming new programming ideas and discussing an overhaul of our Constitution and Bylaws. The Auxiliary Executive Board worked very hard drafting a potential new set of rules which will allow greater flexibility in the future as we continue to improve our support of the veterinary profession. We will continue working on them this coming year.

Our annual Marketplace of States returns in full force Sunday in the Exhibit Hall from 11-3. Several state auxiliaries will have tables full of unique items from their state, and many vendors and Friends of the Auxiliary have generously donated wonderful items for our Silent Auction, which begins tomorrow in the Exhibit Hall and ends at the conclusion of Marketplace of States on Sunday. Please take a few minutes to stop by the Exhibit Hall, at the back of the 1600 aisle for a fabulous shopportunity!

Of course, the Auxiliaries own Kritters Korner, our online and travelling store for veterinary gifts, is here at this convention with many fabulous items for your favorite veterinarian or anyone who loves animals. Find it in the front of the Exhibit hall near the Merial Booth.

If you happen to be free for brunch on Monday, there is still time to buy a ticket for our brunch at 10:30, featuring the locally renowned musical group, Sentimental Journey.
Thank-you to the AVMA for all your help and support. Thank-you to all the veterinarians contribute, and who encourage their spouse to pay their Auxiliary dues so that we can continue to support this wonderful profession, and thank-you for allowing me to speak today. Have a great convention!

Ginger K. Brainard, PhD—President, AVMA Auxiliary to the AVMA 2009-2010