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Founders Day Dinner Address

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University of Pennsylvania
The Founders Day of the School was celebrated with a formal dinner at the University Museum. More than 200 guests, University and City officials, alumni, friends, benefactors and faculty, gathered Oct. 2 for the hundredth anniversary of the School's founding.

Provost Thomas Ehrlich addressed the group and Mayor W. Wilson Goode presented a proclamation declaring the School's birthday as "University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine Day" in Philadelphia.

The Honorable John A. Lafore, Jr., former U.S. Congressman and immediate past president of the American Kennel Club and Mrs. Susan Williams Catherwood, University Trustee.

The University Glee Club, under the direction of Bruce Montgomery, entertains.

Dean Robert R. Marshak accepts the City Proclamation from Mayor W. Wilson Goode.

Huidekoper seems to have been in perpetual motion, and that quality, if not a prerequisite for the deans' role over the last century, is certainly epitomized by our current dean, Bob Marshak. Time and time again over the past three years, as we have worked together, I have seen a looming rock, a mountainous hard place, and the School—piolated by Bob—seeking to slip between. Time and time again—usually with Tom Langfitt, in an effort to outnumber Bob—we would press to halt, regroup, be cautious, and all the rest of the litany that university administrators are paid to provide. Make no mistake, we always meant it. Occasionally, our cautions prove right, and occasionally Bob even admits that. More often, however, he finds a way to maneuver between that rock and hard place and emerge triumphant.

Do you know that little verse by Ogden Nash about the turtle?

The turtle lives 'twixt plated decks which practically conceal its sex.
I think it clever of the turtle in such a fix to be so fertile.

Time and again, in seemingly impossible fixes, Bob's fertile mind has found a way to propel the momentum of this extraordinary institution.

In the years ahead, of course, differences will continue to arise. The University administration is committed to doing all we can to help maintain and enhance the finest School of Veterinary Medicine. Sometimes, as in the past, our different perspectives will no doubt lead to problems about some of the scores of issues on which we work together. Every once in a while, however, it is worth stepping back from that seemingly unending series of particular problems—however serious they may seem at the time—and glance at the larger scene. And in terms of that scene, the School and its dean are magnificent.

An 18th century Hasidic line I like—particularly at this season—goes like this. "Just as the hand, held before the eye, can hide the tallest mountain, so the routine of everyday life can keep us from seeing the vast radiance and secret wonders that fill the world."

The University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine is hardly a secret, but it is a wonder. Tonight as we step back from the routine of everyday life for this special moment of celebration, I salute all of you who have helped in so many ways to build that wonder, and, most particularly, I salute our dean, Bob Marshak.

Thomas Ehrlich