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The Mission

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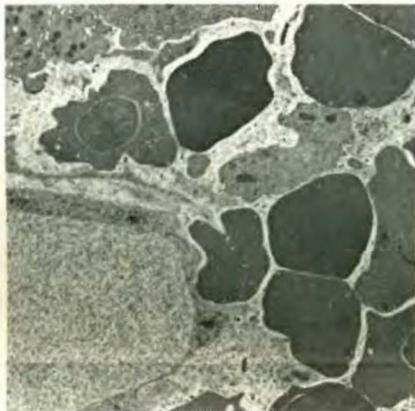
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University of Pennsylvania

Spring 1982

The Mission

To a degree generally unapproached by the leading schools in other professions, the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine leads and molds the education and practice of veterinary medicine in the nation and the world.



Our school has pioneered in the development of veterinary clinical specialties and clinical investigation, in comparative medicine, and in the development of such new fields as aquatic animal medicine, and animal/human interactions. We have successfully integrated scholarship and research into all aspects of veterinary medical education and we supply disproportionately high numbers of faculty nationwide to veterinary schools and other medical institutions. We have made continuous and significant contributions to basic and clinical research and have trained large numbers of students and faculty as biomedical research scientists. We have led the way in curriculum development, as exemplified most recently by the school's unique core/elective curriculum, and we were the first to create programs in continuing education for American practitioners. We have maintained a professional and loyal relationship with our alumni and have established strong bonds with important agricultural associations, humane societies, dog breeders, horse breeders, and other organizations and individuals concerned with animals and animal welfare. We have established a Center on the Interactions of Animals and Society in an effort to bring to the veterinary profession a heightened awareness of the social, behavioral, and cultural interactions of animals and human beings.

Alone, among schools of veterinary medicine, we possess both a rural and an urban campus and, owing to our biological breadth and our medical disciplines, we enjoy a special role in the University, interacting in significant ways with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Faculties of Medicine and Dental Medicine. And, by steadfast attention to the traditional concerns of veterinary medicine, we provide, on a regional basis, the most advanced level of veterinary care and services.

As we face the future, we see extraordinary opportunities for growth and for a greater role in the mainstream of American life. Working with the livestock and poultry industries, we must strive to increase the numbers and improve the health and productivity of food animals to help meet the nutritional requirements of the six billion or more people who will inhabit the earth in the year 2000. And, as society has become increasingly sensitive and demanding about the quality of our

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The Mission

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foods and increasingly intolerant of potentially dangerous food additives and of poisons which contaminate and defile the environment, veterinary medicine has come to assume greater responsibility and greater leadership in preventive medicine and public health.

Today, more than half the families in the United States own a pet, millions of citizens derive pleasure from horses and other sporting animals, and we are increasingly aware that, beyond companionship, pet animals may in some fundamental way protect against somatic disease and early death. As a people, we have become more accepting of our animal nature and of the fundamental qualities that unite all animals. Among other things, this has led to a vigorous animal rights movement, one element of which clearly aims to eliminate the use of



animals in medical research. Thus, the ancient profession of veterinary medicine has responsibility for the delivery of highly sophisticated care to our pet and sporting animal populations and for guiding society through the highly politicized thicket of animal rights vs. scientific need, to a sensible and appropriate value system on how animals may be used.

Despite austere financial circumstances and the realization that veterinary medicine lacks the third party payments and subsidizations taken for granted in other medical cultures, we believe that our school is on the threshold of its most productive era and that we must continue to take broad responsibility for matters relating to the health and welfare of

animals and humans. We shall continue and amplify our contributions:

- To the health care and protection of food and fiber producing animals, companion and sporting animals, and laboratory animals;
- To the health care, protection, and preservation of zoo animals and wildlife, including aquatic species;
- To the diagnosis, surveillance, and control of diseases transmissible from animals to humans, and to protection against environmental hazards which threaten animal and human health and safety;
- To the health aspects of the production, processing, and marketing of foods of animal origin;
- To veterinary and comparative medical research and the application of research findings to animal and human health needs; and
- To expansion of veterinary medical interests, encompassing virtually every significant aspect of the interactions of animals with human beings and with the environment.

Thus, stated in simplest terms, the mission(s) of the School of Veterinary Medicine is to:

- Train a highly qualified body of general practitioners, appropriate numbers of specialists, and bio-medical scientists equipped to meet society's present and future needs;
- Create new knowledge through fundamental and applied biomedical research, including behavioral with particular emphasis on diseases of domestic animals and on animal homologues of human disease through systematic development of the School as a center for comparative medicine;
- Develop and maintain facilities and systems for the delivery of veterinary medical services on a regional basis, especially sophisticated care not generally provided by veterinarians in private practice;
- Offer quality continuing education programs aimed at refreshing and advancing the knowledge and skills of practicing veterinarians;
- Broaden the contributions of veterinary medicine to society through the development of new disciplines and specialties, for example, aquatic veterinary medicine, veterinary social work, and advanced animal technician training programs.

We take cognizance of the fact that in our complex School, as in our complex larger society, we must satisfy legitimate and essential needs which may at times may be incompatible with one another—either on philosophic or operative grounds. We must find our way, meeting the demands for research, teaching, and patient care, by means of information sharing, thoughtfulness, tolerance, and a long-range collegial view.

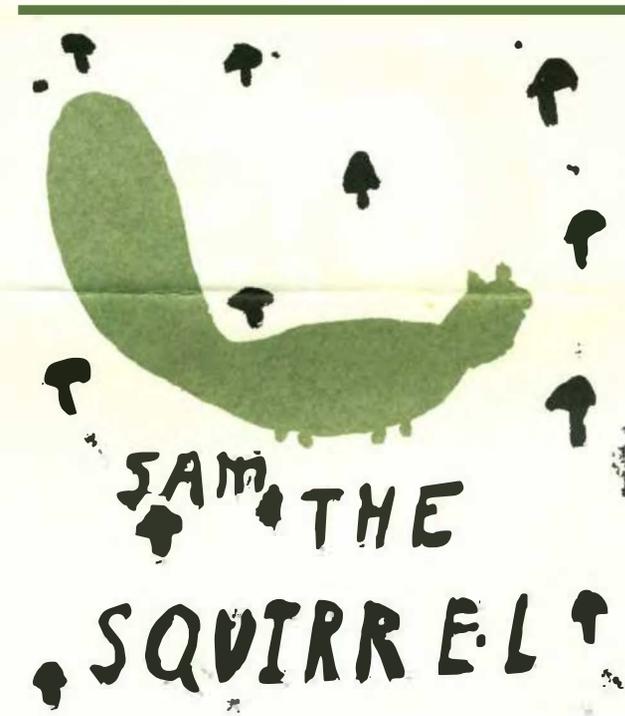
This statement was prepared by the Long-Range Planning Committee of the School of Veterinary Medicine.

Wildlife Service...

One day in February more than thirty get-well cards, each handmade by second graders from a suburban Philadelphia school, arrived at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania for a furry patient which had been admitted earlier that week. The mail was unusual, the presence of the patient, a squirrel, was not.

It was one of the many wild animals cared for by the Wildlife Service, a student-run organization which treats and nurses small unowned, wild animals until they have recovered and are ready to be released into their natural habitats or placed in a rehabilitation center.

The Wildlife Service came into being after an emergency—the oilspill on the Delaware River in 1975 which soiled many birds. At that time, Eileen Hathaway (V'77) organized a



group of students to help wash 500 birds, mostly Ruddy ducks. During these efforts, the Penn team found that little was known about proper medical care for birds. Eileen began to organize a wildlife committee, and with the help of the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA) she raised funds and solicited supplies from veterinary manufacturers and Philadelphia industry. The school obtained the necessary state and federal permits to house and treat wildlife and the service was born.

Today it is an active organization treating about 180 cases annually. The patients are birds, squirrels, chipmonks, turtles, raccoons, and other small wildlife animals that are found injured or ill along roadsides in the city and surrounding counties. Sometimes the animals are brought in by people who discovered them, as was the case for the squirrel, or at other times by game wardens. Animals not only come from the Philadelphia area but also from neighboring states, as has a recent patient, a turkey vulture, which was brought from Delaware with a dislocated shoulder.