



10-1-2009

## Alumni Profile: Tom Bowman, DVM, VFL'71

Coreen Haggerty  
*University of Pennsylvania*

## Tom Bowman, DVM, VFL'71★

BY COREEN HAGGERTY

**D**r. Tom Bowman, VFL'71, applied for a post-doctoral fellowship/internship in clinical reproduction at Penn Vet's New Bolton Center campus in the spring of 1969. Until then he had planned on a career in small animal surgery. "Two things prompted me to send in my application. First, I realized I was happy being outdoors with large animals. Second, was the possibility of continuing my education at Penn's New Bolton Center," notes Dr. Bowman. To his surprise, **Richard A. McFeely, V'61**, then chief of the Section of Clinical Reproduction, soon called to confirm his acceptance. "Without a doubt," says Dr. Bowman, "this was the defining moment of my entire 40-year career in veterinary medicine."

### From Soccer to Surgery

Dr. Bowman attributes his love of animals to his father, Roland, who was a full-time mailman and part-time farmer. The small Bowman farm housed numerous barnyard animals. "The one animal that we never had, and one that I always wanted, was a horse," says Dr. Bowman, "an influence I still feel today."

Young Tom Bowman had two primary interests—sports and animals. Dr. Bowman recalls, "Somehow my dad, who never attended college himself, convinced the soccer coach at the University of Maryland that I was worthy of a scholarship." Dr. Bowman became the captain of Maryland's freshman team, playing in three NCAA national tournaments, but he attributes his path to veterinary medicine to his freshman coach, Ian Forest, a goalkeeper from Scotland, agricultural major and former pre-vet student. "If it weren't for him, I probably would never have gone to veterinary school. He steered me toward the College of Agriculture and also taught me to become a good goalkeeper," remarked Dr. Bowman.

As a sophomore in college, Tom volunteered with small animal practitioner and former Johns Hopkins athlete, Dr. Peter Hine, who had recently broken his hand. "We hit it off from the beginning. I did far more on the surgical front than expected and I was sure I wanted to follow in his footsteps. He was intensely loyal to the Penn Veterinary program and convinced me it was the Harvard or the Hopkins of the veterinary world. He was the first person I called when I got the internship at New Bolton."

### The Years at New Bolton Center

Dr. Bowman's initial one-year internship at New Bolton Center evolved into two-and-a-half years after becoming the first resident in the Section of Clinical Reproduction who simultaneously completed a master's degree in reproductive physiology in cooperation with the University of Maryland.

"Those were the happiest and most productive years of my veterinary education," says Dr. Bowman. "I was in the midst of true pioneers in large animal veterinary medicine—**Bill Boucher, V'40**, **Bill Donawick, HOM'72**, Loren Evans, Bob Kenney, **Charlie Raker, C41, V'42**, and Jim Rooney. My colleagues included **Simon Kenyon, GR'76**, Bob Lee, Frank Lockner, Bill Moyer, **Fred Peterson, V'68** and **Jim Stewart, V'68**. I made lifelong friendships—it was a real family atmosphere." Dr. Bowman also recounts, "When Dean Bob Marshak heard that my wife was suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, he immediately scheduled an appointment for her at Penn's human hospital. This is just an example of how wonderfully we were treated during our stay at Penn."

### Most Meaningful Accomplishment

Dr. Bowman notes he has accomplished all of his goals since leaving Penn, which includes a successful and gratifying career as a broodmare veterinarian and raising, selling and racing numerous champion thoroughbred race horses, including two-time Eclipse award winning Good Night Shirt. He is presently co-owner of Northview Stallion Station which stands 12 stallions and has divisions in Maryland and Pennsylvania. He was co-owner and editor of Modern Horse Breeding magazine which has evolved into the monthly magazine, *The Horse*. He was a college soccer

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Photo by Coreen Haggerty

\* Note: As with the "V" following the names of School of Veterinary Medicine matriculating students, "V" followed by "RS" denotes residency, "IN" denotes internship and "FL" denotes fellow.

coach for 20 years, and is presently in his second term as president of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association.

However, Dr. Bowman cites his family life as his most meaningful accomplishment. He married his high school sweetheart, Chris, and they have five children and eight grandchildren (soon to be nine). “Chris is definitely the strength of our family,” he says. “In addition to being a busy mother and now grandmother, she continues to be our farm business manager, practice manager, and was until recently, our night watchman during foaling season—all of this despite enduring multiple surgeries for joint replacements related to rheumatoid arthritis. She is an inspiration to all who know her.”

Sons Tom and Brooke, and daughters Becky, Margaret and Quin grew up working on the home farm in Chestertown, Maryland. Becky manages the family farms and is a successful equine sales agent. Margaret is a food safety veterinarian in Omaha, Nebraska. Brooke

is entering his fourth year of veterinary school at Purdue University and Quin has recently decided to return to school – perhaps veterinary medicine.

### The Fork in the Road... Take it!

Dr. Bowman prefers to focus on the *reasons* for his accomplishments. “We all have experiences early in our education that shape our life story. Being a product of New Bolton Center gave me the education, confidence and credibility to pursue my career of working with broodmares.” Dr. Bowman reflects, “I recently was invited to speak to the students at Ross University Veterinary School about career choices and practice ownership. I felt compelled to repeat Yogi Berra’s wonderful advice... ‘when you come to a fork in the road, take it!’ In my case, I took the right fork and ended up in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania.”

## vmas president's letter



### Dear Fellow Alumni,

As I approach my six-month anniversary as President of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society Board, I call on fellow alumni to join me in helping our Alma Mater. Even in the most difficult times, alumni can and do continue to give generously and respond quickly.

**We can support the School.** By writing dozens of letters this summer, our collective voice was heard by Pennsylvania legislators and the Governor regarding the School’s appropriations. We increased alumni annual giving 5% this year from last, growing the Pet Memorial Program and infusing the School with much needed unrestricted funding. We can serve as ambassadors to rotary and community groups, place Penn Vet’s Web link on our practice Web sites, and encourage clients to also support the School.

**We can support students.** Through VMAS, we support New Student Orientation; host families of first year students at Parents and Partners Day; fund the first “Welcome to Campus Happy-Hour” of the school year; pin third-year students at the White Coat Ceremony; host the young alumni luncheon at the Penn Annual Conference; and provide graduating students with information and resources at Commencement. In

addition, we can employ and mentor current students in our own businesses and practices, and hire students after graduation. Time spent now with current students offers us a way to learn the needs and skills of our newest alumni, while supporting our legacy.

**We can support each other.** Join us at Penn Vet’s alumni receptions at national veterinary conferences, to share your ideas and network. Stay connected with classmates through our VMAS class listservs of [vmdclassofXXXX@lists.upenn.edu](mailto:vmdclassofXXXX@lists.upenn.edu) (replace the “xxxx’s” with your class year, ie. 2006). Visit [vet.upenn.edu/alumni](http://vet.upenn.edu/alumni) for current information and resources. Follow us on Facebook (Penn Vet School) and tweet us on Twitter ([pennvet](http://pennvet)).

Learn, share, network and reunite with us at Penn Annual Conference March 3 – 5, 2010. Return to campus Alumni Weekend on May 14-17, 2009 for reunion activities at New Bolton Center and in the new green courtyard in Philadelphia. Call on your classmates and invite them to reunite and re-visit campus.

All of us in the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society, which includes you, have the opportunity to be proud of, engaged with, and supportive of Penn Vet. We have a real opportunity to make an impact on our School – please join in the effort.

—CARLA CHIEFFO, V’86 GR’98