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Donor Profile: Ms. Gail Petty Riepe

Jane Simone
University of Pennsylvania

Ms. Gail Petty Riepe

BY JANE SIMONE

Gail Riepe has a long and distinguished relationship with the University of Pennsylvania, both as a graduate (CW'68) and as the wife of recently retired Trustee Chair James S. Riepe (W'65, WG'67).

The Riepes' dedication to Penn is legendary, but until recent years was driven largely by Jim's involvement, with Gail playing a strongly supportive role. Such was the satisfaction they derived from this involvement that Gail felt more and more that she would like to have a role at Penn that was uniquely hers. She found it through her love of animals and her particular passion for horses. The logical place for her to direct her energies was Penn's School of Veterinary Medicine.

Gail joined the School's Equine Advisory Committee and in 2003 toured New Bolton Center in one of the antique carriages from its carriage-driving program. Her personal friendships among the local equine community brought her back for both Vet School business and pleasure, getting to know faculty and staff through her committee work and the fun of a frosty but sunny carriage drive at the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup. In March, 2004, she accepted Dean Kelly's invitation to join the Board of Overseers and has served loyally and enthusiastically ever since.

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At her lovely, historic home in Cockeysville, MD, Gail oversees the wellbeing of her beloved dogs, horses and chickens. Her primary equine care veterinarian, Cooper Williams, V'85, is another strong link to Penn Vet. Gail is actively involved in the care of the Riepe menagerie and is particularly interested in homeopathic and natural remedies.

In her role as a Penn Vet Overseer, Gail has seen the unveiling of New Bolton Center's master plan for the



refurbishment and expansion of the critically important George D. Widener Hospital for Large Animals. This venerable facility, that has pioneered so many revolutionary diagnostic, surgical and care modalities for equine and large animal veterinary medicine, is now more than 45 years old. Advances in every aspect of veterinary care has made its space both inadequate and obsolete and if the hospital is to meet the needs of Pennsylvania's vital agriculture industry – a large part of which is the State's burgeoning equine industry – it must have infrastructure that is capable of the latest in biosecurity, technology and patient care delivery.

Gail knows and understands how important a state-of-the-art surgery suite is to the Widener Hospital, its exceptionally skilled and talented clinicians, its patients and its students. She has made an outstanding leadership gift to the project of \$1 million, and has vowed to help raise the remaining \$16 million for a fully equipped, 21st century equine surgical suite that will be second-to-none. Her generosity continues a well-established tradition in the Riepe family of seeing a need and responding in a way that is transformational. If you'd like to join Gail in this key endeavor for Penn Vet's New Bolton Center, please contact Jane Simone at 610-925-6500 or jsimone@vet.upenn.edu. 