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Dean's Message

Joan C. Hendricks
University of Pennsylvania



HENDRICKS

As I write this on a sweltering hot summer day, it's hard to believe the crisp, refreshing days of fall are nearing. With the change in temperature also comes much change at Penn Vet. I am also very conscious that my time as Dean is more than 60 percent complete – there is a lot going on and a lot yet to accomplish!

I look forward to the fall bringing us new students who will fill our classrooms (learn more about the next generation of veterinary leaders on page 44). Groundbreaking new research will also begin (read about the Center for Research on Microbes in Health and Disease on pages 4-13). New puppies will join the Working Dog Center (read about the remarkable accomplishments from the Center's first year of operation on page 18). And new patients will be seen, many of them through new comprehensive services at Ryan Hospital (explore our Comprehensive Cancer Care service on page 14).

In addition to turning the spotlight on these exciting developments – many of them in our tradition of historic firsts – this issue of *Bellwether* also provides an opportunity to give thanks. On pages 22-39 you'll find our Annual Report, highlighting some of our most steadfast supporters. I am always amazed by the generosity of our friends who so graciously help us fulfill our mission. On behalf of everyone at the School, I sincerely thank you.

As we continue to build upon our strengths and demonstrate in new ways how Penn Vet leads, I would like to share with you some of the impactful work that was carried out over the summer that will undoubtedly result in meaningful collaborations for the future.

In July, accompanied by Dr. Zhengxia Dou, Penn Vet's Professor of Agricultural Systems, I embarked on a trip to China. Dr. Dou and I were fortunate to visit four academic/research institutions – China Agricultural University, Inner Mongolia Agricultural University, Northwest Agriculture & Forestry University, and the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (where amazing photo opportunities abounded!) – as well as two for-profit institutions – Ringpu Biology (a pharmaceutical firm specializing in animal health products) and Hua Xia Dairy Farm.

As a result of our visits, we are forging new interactions and academic exchanges. One such example is a collaboration between Dr. Dou and Dr. Ming Xu of Inner Mongolia Agricultural University to investigate waste and food security issues throughout a dairy cow's life cycle for the dairy industry. In particular, Penn Vet's



Center for Animal Health and Productivity has already proven to be a major resource for nutrition advising, using our CPM Dairy software.

I was also able to catch up with two Penn Vet students who were spending their summers in China – Gabriel Innes at the Hua Xia Dairy and Wanxin Liu at the Giant Panda Breeding Preserve.

China's commitment to giant pandas is a matter of national pride. Throughout the trip, I was continually impressed by the rapid improvements and explicit interest in animal welfare, including for food animals such as swine and dairy cattle. In addition, an enormous increase in ownership of household pets has led to significant advances in their level of veterinary care. There is even a serious initiative to bring horse racing to the mainland, linked to speculation that gambling on racing may become legal.

There is an incredible opportunity to support Chinese veterinarians to keep up with this increased demand in the marketplace. However, as a national license is required to practice veterinary medicine in China, foreign vets do not qualify to provide additional help. But Penn Vet is poised to make an impact through continuing education courses, as well as management and business training through the Penn Executive Veterinary Leadership Program at the Wharton School (see page 40). In addition, the University is opening a Penn Wharton China Center in Beijing to facilitate outreach. The ability to supplement our revenues from international sources, while improving global veterinary care, may be an attractive means to help replace losses in US public funding for veterinary education.

Overall, my travels this summer reinforced yet again how Penn Vet leads. Our work is truly making a global impact, and I look forward to seeing these existing partnerships and new relationships flourish.

—JOAN C. HENDRICKS, V'79, GR'80
THE GILBERT S. KAHN DEAN
OF VETERINARY MEDICINE