



Spring 2015

### Dr. Marilyn Weber

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#### Recommended Citation

Gross, Karen (2015) "Dr. Marilyn Weber," *Bellwether Magazine*: Vol. 1 : No. 83 , Article 7.  
Available at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss83/7>

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Penn Vet's Alumni Award of Merit in 2011. New Jersey VMA's Veterinarian of the Year in 2006. Jersey Shore VMA's Veterinarian of the Year in both 2000 and 1988.

These are just some of the honors Dr. Marilyn Weber has received throughout her veterinary career. And she traces it all back to *The Noisy Book* by Margaret Wise Brown—a children's story about a dog who had to visit the vet. "My mother tells a story that, ever since I saw that book, that's what I wanted to do."

Weber was undeterred even by permanent paralysis from poliomyelitis, which requires her to use braces and crutches to get around. She credits her parents with supporting her veterinary ambitions and instilling a resilient, can-do mentality. And she found a mentor in the family's vet, Dr. Lloyd Kornblatt, V'47, working in his office in her hometown of Metuchen, New Jersey, during high school. "He was the one who made me believe that I could become a veterinarian," Weber said.

Her guidance counselors, however, discouraged her from applying to veterinary school. "It made me more stubborn," Weber laughed.

At Penn Vet, nearly two decades before the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, "a lot of places didn't have elevators. I remember when we had anatomy, we had to climb up three or four flights of stairs." She recalls being treated like her classmates—which is how she prefers it.

"I don't consider myself a handicapped person. I consider myself a veterinarian first," Weber said emphatically.

She did an externship in lab animal medicine, but her heart wasn't in it. "I didn't really want to sit at a desk or at a bench the whole time. To me, clinical practice was more exciting," she said.

At the Penn Annual Conference in 1975, she interviewed with Dr. Thomas Sollas, V'56, and took a job with him at Sea Girt Animal Hospital in New Jersey. At the time, she was just the second woman to join the Jersey Shore Veterinary Medical Association. "Now, it's more women than men," she said.

Weber purchased the practice from Sollas in 1988 and ran it for the next 13 years. "I did a lot of cat work. I'd see large dogs. And I took care of a couple goats," she said. In 2009, she received the SPCA of Monmouth County's Three Wags Award for her tireless work with strays.

Weber is a founding member of the Dean's Alumni Council at Penn Vet. She has sponsored several full and partial Opportunity Scholarships and is invested in mentoring the next generation of veterinarians. Asked why she stays involved at the School, she responds without hesitation: "To give back to my profession."

Reflecting on her legacy, she noted, "I think I paved the way in making people realize that people like me, who may not be 100 percent physically well, could still have an impact in veterinary medicine. And to me, that means a lot."



## Dr. Marilyn Weber

*Penn Vet Class of 1975*

*"I don't consider myself a handicapped person. I consider myself a veterinarian first."*

