Spring 2016

Alumni News

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Alumni Updates

Checking in with Penn Vet graduates around the world

By Kristen McMullen

JESSICA DIMUZIO, CW’74, V’78
A high-energy veterinarian, Dr. Jessica Dimuzio wears many hats: wildlife veterinarian, conservation educator, writer, children’s book author, speaker, and owner of Nature Tales and Trails, LLC.

As a veterinarian, Dimuzio specialized in wildlife preservation. Soon after her studies of wild baboons in Kenya, Africa ended, the baboons’ home range was sold to a cooperative of small farmers who regarded baboons as pests. The only way to save the baboons was to relocate them to a remote area of the country. The realization that land preservation was as vital as species studies led her, with her husband Dr. Tim Halverson, to design holistic conservation education programs—incorporating animal studies, land use, culture, and economics. They conducted these conservation programs for college students and wildlife biologists in the United States, Africa, and Asia.

The enthusiasm of students in naturalist programs she led in the U.S. and abroad encouraged her to engage even more young people through writing as well as speaking and storytelling engagements. In her tenth year as founder and leader of the Milestones Children’s Critique Circle, Dimuzio recognizes that she has come full circle in her quest to preserve wildlife. The books she read as a child about animals and nature inspired her to respect and protect wildlife. Now, “Dr. D” writes to inspire the next generation.

Her book Bark! Bark! Bark for My Park! is told from the viewpoint of her five-pound Papillon dog, Johnny Angel. The book recounts a true struggle to save a 690-acre farm park from destruction, demonstrating that no matter what size, age, or even species you are, you have the power to make a difference. The book won the Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators International Kimberly Coles Memorial Grant Award, received a Mom’s Choice Award, and was endorsed by actress and animal activist Betty White.

Her second book, Bow Wow Wow! Green Beans Now?, also a Mom’s Choice Award recipient, follows the quest of canine conservation hero Johnny Angel for his favorite treat—garden-fresh green beans. The little dog humorously introduces children to organic gardening and the joy of eating vegetables. Mike McGrath, host of the NPR show You Bet Your Garden, has endorsed it.

As a published children’s book author, invited speaker, storyteller, and nature guide, she offers “Stories from the Wild: Programs for Your Child” through her company, Nature Tales and Trails, LLC. Her latest project, African Animals’ Lullaby (expected fall of 2016), is an immersive approach to sharing her experiences living in the bush in Kenya. Learn more at www.naturetalesandtrails.com.

COME MEET DR. JESSICA DIMUZIO AT HER BOOK-SIGNING TABLE DURING THE SPRING ALUMNI PICNIC ON MAY 14 AT NEW BOLTON CENTER!

ROBERT MOFFATT, V’87
Cape May Point, New Jersey, is a beautiful seaside community at the tip of the Cape May Peninsula and home to the Cape May Lighthouse. On January 6, 2015, Dr. Robert Moffatt was selected by the Cape May Point Borough Commission to serve as Cape May Point’s Mayor. He will be responsible for leading municipal meetings and general oversight of community affairs.

Moffatt, a native Philadelphian, was raised in the Germantown section of the city. In 1974, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from La Salle University. After graduation, he relocated to Boston, where he worked in the hospitality industry. Upon his return to Philadelphia, he attended Temple University in order to meet the prerequisite science courses necessary for veterinary school. He graduated from Penn Vet in 1987.
Moffatt entered small animal practice in Center City Philadelphia and subsequently worked as an associate veterinarian for many years in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania. In 1993, he was one of the founders of Philly Paws (Philadelphia Pets are Wonderful Support), an organization that provided medical and general care for the pets of people who were critically ill with HIV/AIDS. In 1997, Moffatt was named one of the area’s Great Vets by Philadelphia magazine. After many years of commuting weekly to Cape May, he made the move to full-time resident in 2000 to become a Cape May veterinarian.

ADAM DENISH, V’93, AND MARNE PLATT, V’93

Dr. Adam Denish is pictured here with classmate Dr. Marne Platt, standing in front of a French veterinary hospital last July. Denish and his family were traveling through Europe and spent three days with Platt in Switzerland. Over fondue and wine, the classmates discussed the current state of veterinary medicine, politics, and world affairs.

Platt has been a resident of Basel, Switzerland, for over five years. Denish is the owner of Rhawnhurst Animal Hospital and Elkins Park Veterinary Hospital/Boarding Kennel. He is the staff veterinarian at the Elmwood Park Zoo in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and has a special interest in exotic animal medicine and surgery.

GIVE US THE SCOOP
Doing interesting things in your career? Have any photographs with fellow Penn Vet alumni? Please send your news and photos to kmcmul@vet.upenn.edu.
**1960s**

**Wilbur B. Amand, V’66,** was presented with the Frederic L. Frye Lifetime Achievement Award on October 22 by the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians (ARAV) for his many significant contributions to the field of herpetological medicine and surgery. The award was presented on the occasion of Dr. Amand's retirement as ARAV Executive Director (1994-2014). Dr. Amand previously served as the Executive Director of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (1988-2005). He is currently the Executive Director of the American Academy of Veterinary Nutrition.

**Mark Haskins, V’69, PhD’79,** Professor of Pathology and Medical Genetics at Penn Vet, received an award from the International Society for Mannosidosis and Related Diseases at the Glycoproteinoses: Fourth International Conference.

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**1980s**

**Linda Mansfield, V’86,** was awarded the title University Distinguished Professor at Michigan State University last November in recognition of her achievements in the classroom, laboratory, and community. Those selected for the title have been recognized nationally and internationally for the importance of their teaching, research, and outreach. Mansfield is a Professor in the departments of Large Animal Clinical Sciences and Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, and she leads the MSU Enterics Research Investigational Network.

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**1990s**

When **Nicole Ehrhart, V’90,** assumed the Wilkins University Chair, she received an actual chair, engraved with her name and the name of the endowment that funds her cancer research. Known officially as the Ross M. Wilkins, MD, Limb Preservation University Chair in Musculoskeletal Biology and Oncology, the maple chair, trimmed in black and gold, is important for what it represents: a $3 million endowment ensuring that the research continues in perpetuity, and the fact that Dr. Ehrhart is the first woman at Colorado State University appointed to an endowed University Chair. At Colorado State’s Flint Animal Cancer Center, she teaches and treats animal patients. She also studies ways to prevent limb loss and to regenerate bones and muscle in people and animals whose extremities are threatened by cancer, infection, or trauma. Dr. Ehrhart employs surgical and bone-grafting techniques, as well as biologics and stem-cell therapies.

**Patrick Mahaney, V’99,** is the first recipient of the Dr. Greg Ogilvie CLEAR Vision Award from Canine Lymphoma Education Awareness and Research (CLEAR). The nonprofit organization learned of Dr. Mahaney's efforts to spread education and awareness as his own dog, Cardiff, was battling the devastating disease. Mahaney is a premier, concierge, house-call veterinarian through his company California Pet Acupuncture and Wellness (CPAW), Inc. in Los Angeles. He also provides holistic treatment for cancer patients at the Veterinary Cancer Group. Mahaney shares the story of Cardiff’s cancer diagnosis and treatment every 14 days for petMD’s The Daily Vet at www.petmd.com/blogs/thedailyvet/pmahaney.

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**2000s**

**Chuck Arenberg, V’03,** got married to the beautiful Joanna Howard Jones (now Joanna HJ Arenberg) on a sunny Halloween afternoon, with fall colors in full splendor, at Grace Winery at Sweetwater Farm in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania. Penn Vet graduates Drs. Steve Berkowitz, V’83, Mark Donaldson, V’93, and Barbara Forney, V’82, were in attendance. A bluegrass band banged out tunes, Southern BBQ livened the party, and bourbon flowed smoothly. The couple is living in the “horse country” of Chester County, Pennsylvania, where Dr. Arenberg continues to work as an equine sports medicine veterinarian. Joanna, originally from Williamsburg, Virginia, and a George Mason and William & Mary graduate, is a CPA and currently a head corporate controller in the health services field. A horse farm search is now underway!

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**2010s**

**Maral Avetian, V’12,** and **Michael Sheruda, V’12,** were married on June 6, 2015. **Thomas Nebyzoski,** V’10, **Ashley Yanchik, V’11,** and **Jessica Sheruda, V’16,** were in the wedding party. Also in attendance were **Nicole Sinclair Torre, V’11**, **Chris Torre, V’12,** **Jon Van Blarcom, V’12,** **Jose Guevara, V’12,** and **Lauren Klutchka, V’12.**

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**Residents & Interns**

The Veterinary Dental Forum, the world’s largest conference in veterinary dentistry and oral surgery, took place October 28 to November 1, 2015, in Monterey, California. **Lisa Fink, DVM,** who completed her residency at Penn Vet in July 2015, received the prestigious Debra B. Smith Journal of Veterinary Dentistry Editor’s Award for the best contribution by a resident to the Journal of Veterinary Dentistry in 2015. **Curtis Stiles, DVM,** who completed his residency in July 2006, received the American Veterinary Dental College (AVDC) President’s Medal of Honor for outstanding contributions by an AVDC Diplomate to continuing education in veterinary dentistry and oral surgery. **Drs. Lisa Fink, Nicodin “Nic” Farcas, Kristen Scott,** and **Jerzy Gawor** all received their American Veterinary Dental College (AVDC) Diplomate certificates during the award ceremony. Twenty-two of the presentations given at the Forum were presented by current or past members of Penn Vet’s Dentistry and Oral Surgery Service. In addition, past members **Michael Jennings, VMD,** and **Kristen Walker, DVM,** helped as instructors of a wet laboratory as part of the continuing education program.
In Remembrance

Stanford D. Merrill, V’39, died on December 5, 2015, at Park Residence in Waterville, Maine. Dr. Merrill conducted a general veterinary practice with his father in South Paris, Maine, for seven years. In 1946, he moved to Augusta, where he conducted a large animal practice. He then took a position with the Maine Department of Agriculture, where he organized the state poultry and meat inspection programs, retiring in 1976. These programs were later adopted by the federal matching programs. Dr. Merrill was a member of the Maine Veterinary Medical Association, serving as its president in 1948 and 1949, and as secretary-editor for six years. He also belonged to the American Veterinary Medical Association, Maine State Employees Association, and Maine Retirees Association.

Gwendolyn B. Wylde, V’40, passed away on June 6, 2015, at the age of 98. She was married to the late William H. Wylde for 68 years and was beloved by three children, six grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. Gwenn resided in Audubon, New Jersey, for more than 65 years.

George C. Poppensiek, C’40, V’42, died at age 97 in Ithaca, New York, on September 8, 2015. Dr. Poppensiek had a long and very distinguished career, beginning with an internship in large animal medicine at Penn Vet, and ending as the Dean Emeritus and the James Law Professor of Comparative Medicine Emeritus at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. During his career, Dr. Poppensiek also held positions at the University of Maryland as an Associate Professor, and at the USDA’s Plum Island Animal Disease Center as the Supervisory Veterinarian for Diagnostic Investigations. Among his numerous awards and honors, Dr. Poppensiek received the Xilth International Veterinary Congress Prize for distinguished service to veterinary science from the American Veterinary Medical Association in 1977. Four years later, he became the first veterinarian from North America to be inducted into both the Polish Society for Veterinary Medicine and the National Argentine Academy of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Poppensiek held centennial medals from both the University of Pennsylvania and the Ohio State University, each awarded independently for contributions to veterinary medical education and research. Dr. Poppensiek’s legacy is also felt in the numerous societies and organizations with which he was affiliated, and at Cornell, where the annual Poppensiek Lectureship in Global Veterinary Medicine series invites distinguished scholars to share their global experiences with students and faculty.

Grant C. Sheckler, V’44, died at age 93 in Murrysville, Pennsylvania, on September 21, 2015. He founded Borderbrook Animal Hospital in 1951. Dr. Sheckler and his father attended to animals at the Pittsburgh Zoo in addition to serving the Murrysville community. He served in the Army during World War II.

Abram B. Stavitsky, V’46, passed away at age 96 on August 2, 2015. Best known for his discovery of the isotope shift, the synthesis sequence of different molecular forms of antibodies, Dr. Stavitsky was Professor of Microbiology at Case Western Reserve University from 1962-1989 and Emeritus Professor from 1989-2012. A dedicated scientist and creatively synthetic thinker, he published 200 research papers from 1943-2013 and taught microbiology to countless students at Case Western Reserve School of Medicine. He was a kind man and generous colleague who mentored many doctoral and post-doctoral students during his lengthy career.

The featured manuscript of the Journal of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science’s cover photo, “Evaluation of Presurgical Skin Preparation Agents in African Clawed Frogs (Xenopus laevis),” is from Blythe Philips, VMD, who completed her residency last July and is now a Clinical Veterinarian with University Laboratory Animal Resources (ULAR). The last featured manuscript, “Intraperitoneal Injection of Ethanol for the Euthanasia of Laboratory Mice (Mus musculus) and Rats (Rattus norwegicus),” was from Krystal Allen-Worthington, DVM, PhD, who completed her residency in July 2014.

EXOTICS, ZOO, OR WILDLIFE MEDICINE?

Are you a VMD working in the field of exotic, zoo, or wildlife medicine? We would like to hear from you as we work on a feature story about our alumni working in these fields. Please email us at kmcmul@vet.upenn.edu with your name and a bio. Photos of you at work are also welcomed.

The International Congress of Animal Reproduction (ICAR) has announced that Professor Katrin Hinrichs, DVM, PhD, of Texas A&M University, is the recipient of the 2016 Simmet Prize for Assisted Reproduction. Dr. Hinrichs is a graduate of the University of California at Davis. She completed a residency and her PhD at New Bolton Center, where she began her longstanding research into mare reproductive technology, including embryo transfer. The prize is the most prestigious award in animal reproduction and one of the largest of its kind. The clinical program in equine-assisted reproduction she founded in 2009, in collaboration with the Section of Theriogenology at Texas A&M, is now one of the largest in the world and performed over 450 embryo production procedures in 2015 alone.

The featured manuscript of the Journal of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science’s cover photo, “Evaluation of Presurgical Skin Preparation Agents in African Clawed Frogs (Xenopus laevis),” is from Blythe Philips, VMD, who completed her residency last July and is now a Clinical Veterinarian with University Laboratory Animal Resources (ULAR). The last featured manuscript, “Intraperitoneal Injection of Ethanol for the Euthanasia of Laboratory Mice (Mus musculus) and Rats (Rattus norwegicus),” was from Krystal Allen-Worthington, DVM, PhD, who completed her residency in July 2014.
Loy C. Awkerman, V’52, passed away on August 29, 2015, at Spang Crest nursing home in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He lived and practiced in Manheim for 42 years before retiring to North Cornwall Township, Lebanon County. He was a member of several professional societies and in 1999 was named Veterinarian of the Year by the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association. In 1987, he received the University of Pennsylvania’s Veterinary Award of Merit. Dr. Awkerman was a history buff, having authored or co-authored several books and papers on subjects of local historical significance, particularly Henry William Stiegel and Mt. Hope’s Grubb family. His photo essay Manheim: A Green Country Town as well as his book Thoughts While Holding a Thermometer: Short Stories of Forty-two Years of Veterinary Practice are still sought-after publications.

Paul D. Lambert, V’54, died at age 86 in Littlestown, Pennsylvania, on February 1, 2015. He was in the Air Force from 1955 to 1957, stationed in Ramstein Air Base, Germany. After his service, he set up and ran a private veterinary practice in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, from 1957 to 1959. He moved his family to Baltimore, Maryland, in 1959 to start his work with the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). His first assignment was in Montgomery, Alabama, from 1960 to 1964; then Fort Collins, Colorado, from 1964 to 1971; and ultimately Rockville, Maryland, from 1971 to 1977. In Rockville, he worked with the Tuberculosis and Leprosy Program, traveling to Japan, India, Haiti, and the Philippines. In 1977, he retired from his USPHS job and took up farming in New Oxford, Pennsylvania. He raised beef cattle and grew many farm crops.

Joseph R. Geraci, V’63, a scientist and veterinarian who was a leading expert in marine mammal medicine and aquatic wildlife conservation, died of cancer at his Leesburg, Virginia, home at age 77. A former official of the National Aquarium in Baltimore, he was professor in the University of Maryland School of Medicine’s Department of Pathology. He was a proponent of teaching aquarium visitors about sea life and the issues affecting it. In his four decades in the field, Dr. Geraci led research teams from the Arctic to the tropics to study the health of marine mammals and their environment.

H. Michael Maetz, V’66, passed away on March 4, 2015, at his home in North Shelby County in Birmingham, Alabama. Michael received his Bachelor of Science degree in Pre-Veterinary Medicine from Penn State University and his VMD degree from Penn Vet. He received a Master of Public Health degree, specializing in epidemiology and microbiology, from the Harvard School of Public Health. He had a fruitful career, joining the faculty of the Department of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1976. He achieved the rank of professor in 1985 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 2003. He served many vital leadership roles in the School of Public Health: Chairman of the Faculty, Vice-Chair and Chairman of the Department of Epidemiology, and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Mike lived a vibrant life and stoically survived cancer for 15 years. During that period, he continued to cheerfully share his time serving others. He received the Public Health Service Award in 1998 from University of Alabama at Birmingham and was a finalist for the Excellence in Teaching Award at UAB in 1999 and 2002. His was a life of service and he believed strongly in a citizen’s right and responsibility to address social problems. He was the convener for the Alabama Constitutional Collaborative from 2012 to 2014 and was on the Alabama Constitutional Reform Task Force, which he chaired from 2009 to 2011. He served on the Board of Directors and as a member of the Executive Committee of Greater Birmingham Ministries from 2005 to 2011. He also served as chair and was on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of Partnership Assistance to the Homeless (PATH) from 1991 to 1997. Early in his career, he served for many years on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Zoological Society.

Augustus Edward Fricker, Jr., V’67, passed away on October 18, 2015, at the age of 75. He lived in Southern Shores, North Carolina, a small community in the Outer Banks, for the last six years. Prior to attending Penn Vet, he went to Drexel University, where he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 1963. Dr. Fricker had a private veterinary practice and worked concurrently for the USDA for 30 years. He received the Public Health Service Award in 1998 from University of Alabama at Birmingham and was a finalist for the Excellence in Teaching Award at UAB in 1999 and 2002. His was a life of service and he believed strongly in a citizen’s right and responsibility to address social problems. He was the convener for the Alabama Constitutional Collaborative from 2012 to 2014 and was on the Alabama Constitutional Reform Task Force, which he chaired from 2009 to 2011. He served on the Board of Directors and as a member of the Executive Committee of Greater Birmingham Ministries from 2005 to 2011. He also served as chair and was on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of Partnership Assistance to the Homeless (PATH) from 1991 to 1997. Early in his career, he served for many years on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Zoological Society.

Alumni Memories

Arthur Richards, Jr., V’49, shared his memories of being part of the first ambulatory service out of the large animal facility – the “Media Field Service.” Junior and Senior students were assigned two-week rotations of two or three students at a time participating in field calls with Dr. Bill Boucher. In the evenings, the students would get together with Dr. Boucher to play music and enjoy some of Mrs. Doris Boucher’s homemade cookies. The Media Field Service moved to Bolton Farm north of Philadelphia around 1949, and later to Oxford, Pennsylvania, as New Bolton Center.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Calling all VMDs and former Penn Vet interns and residents! Have you received a promotion, been married, had a baby, received an award, had a research finding, or opened a new business? Please share your good news with us! Visit the Alumni page of the Penn Vet website, email your news to the alumni office at kmcmul@vet.upenn.edu, or write to us at Alumni Relations, Penn Veterinary Alumni Office, 3800 Spruce Street, Suite 172E, Philadelphia, PA 19104.