

# Alumni engagement thrives under Dean Hendricks

By Shannon Groves

**A**s a graduate of Penn Vet's VMD-PhD program, Dean Joan Hendricks, V'79, GR'80, knows firsthand the value of strong relationships between the School and its alumni. As Dean, it has been a priority that alumni stay connected long after graduation.

Acknowledging all that had been done previously to keep graduates engaged, and to deepen this connection, she established the Dean's Alumni Council in January 2011. Her goal was to bring together a passionate, dedicated group to work closely with the Dean and Office of Alumni Relations on various projects connecting alumni, students, and the public to the Penn Vet community—with a focus on engagement, ambassadorship, and mentoring.

Under Dean Hendricks' leadership, the Dean's Alumni Council has evolved to include a diverse and broad network of alumni ranging in class years, careers, and geography, who are well-informed about Penn Vet today. Members actively engage with the School by participating in activities including Alumni Weekend, Orientation, the Admissions Committee, the Penn Alumni Board, White Coat ceremonies, and more.

The School's bond with Penn Vet alumni has thrived under Dean Hendricks. Alumni Weekend has grown in attendance, with nearly 200 alumni and guests returning last May. Students have seen an increase in opportunities to engage with alumni at events and programs, as well as in their veterinary school careers.

During Dean Hendricks' tenure, alumni gave nearly 13,000 gifts totaling \$9 million for the School. Recognizing the impact alumni make through their generous support, Dean Hendricks helped establish the annual Dean's Cup, which highlights the Penn Vet classes from each decade with the greatest giving participation percentage.

There is no doubt that, thanks to Dean Hendricks' unwavering support, the alumni relationship is stronger than ever.



Members of the Dean's Alumni Council handed out alumni pins to students at the 2013 White Coat Ceremony.



“What a wonderful few years it's been to serve as a Penn Vet ambassador, with Dean Joan Hendricks at the Alumni Council's helm. It has been an honor to promote her fierce passion for innovative research and her dedication to improving the educational experience for our veterinary students. It has also been a privilege to support her tireless dedication to position Penn Vet as a leader in the veterinary community and demonstrate its powerful global impact.”

—*Gia Croce, V'92, pictured above with Dean Hendricks*

## SHARE YOUR MEMORIES AND SAY THANKS

Throughout her tenure, Dean Hendricks has made a lasting impact on Penn Vet alumni, students, staff, patients, and friends.

**We are collecting notes of gratitude and memories of Dean Hendricks from the community.**

Share your memories, reflections, and notes of thanks and farewell online at [www.vet.upenn.edu/tributes](http://www.vet.upenn.edu/tributes).

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“Honest, caring, passionate, compassionate, and committed to veterinary medicine and veterinary education; these are the words that come to mind when I think about Dean Joan Hendricks. She was approachable and inspiring as a first-year student in 1987, and encouraging and empowering as a fourth-year student in 1991. She has undoubtedly touched countless others in her role as Dean.”

—*Lindsay Shreiber, V'91*



# alumniweekend

## May 11–13, 2018

### WELCOME BACK!

Come celebrate with us and relive your veterinary school memories. Join us for events on both school campuses.

Alumni with graduation years ending in a “8” or a “3” will also be celebrating a class reunion. Register today to enjoy the festivities.

[www.vet.upenn.edu/alumniweekend](http://www.vet.upenn.edu/alumniweekend)



## Class Notes

### 1980s

**Mark Logan, V'83**, of Cape May Court House, New Jersey, was selected by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) to serve in the 2017-2018 AVMA Fellowship Program, to provide Congress with scientific counsel on policies related to animal health, animal welfare, and public health. As one of three fellows, Logan will serve for one year in Washington as full-time staff in a congressional office or congressional committee. During their tenure, the fellows will advise policymakers on a wide range of issues, such as food safety, public health, animal welfare, research, and small business issues.

### 1990s

**Don Neiffer, V'92**, was awarded the degree of Master of Health Sciences in One Health from the Department of Environmental and Global Health, College of Public Health and Health Professions, University of Florida. Neiffer's program culminated in an independent research project entitled *A retrospective study of selected disease seroprevalence and relationships in free-ranging warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus*) populations in South Africa: Implications for disease transmission at the human/livestock/wildlife interface*. This study, as well as a related warthog anesthesia project, was completed during a trip to South Africa last spring. Neiffer is a Diplomate of the American College of Zoological Medicine and a certified veterinary acupuncturist. He is currently employed as Chief Veterinarian at Smithsonian's National Zoo.

**Ellen Wiedner, V'99**, was named Director of Animal Health at The Wilds of Ohio.

### 2000s

**Megan Andeer, V'01**, purchased the Cat Vet of South Street with **Caroline Perner, V'00**. With guidance from **Howard Wellens, V'78**, they are remodeling the hospital to make it the largest feline-only hospital in Philadelphia. **Elizabeth Knighton, V'00**, joined Andeer and Perner last fall.

**Heather Fowler, V'10**, accepted a position as the Director of Public Health Research at the National Pork Board in Des Moines, Iowa. She will guide studies on the health and safety of people involved in pork production, while focusing on food safety and diseases that can spread from hogs to humans. She was also selected to give the student address at the 2017 graduation of the University of Washington School of Public Health, where she earned her PhD and received the Gilbert S. Omenn Award for Academic Excellence.

## In Remembrance

**Lillian Bryant**, Head of Veterinary Libraries at the University of Pennsylvania from 1981 to 2001, passed away August 8 at her home in Philadelphia. She was a former member of the Medical Library Association's Veterinary Medical Libraries Section and former Secretary of the MLA Philadelphia Chapter. Lillian graduated from Virginia Union University in 1952 with high honors. She earned a master's degree in library science from Pratt Institute in New York and was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Before coming to Penn, Lillian worked as a medical librarian at Hahnemann Medical College, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and the Tri-NEB Library (nursing collection).

**Hugh J. Coleman, V'53**, of Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, passed away on August 13 at Masonic Villages, Elizabethtown. Born in Rushville, Pennsylvania, Dr. Coleman proudly served in the United States Army during World War II. He was a graduate of Rush High School and received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Scranton. Dr. Coleman retired in 1999 after practicing veterinary medicine for 48 years in Lancaster and Dauphin counties and Paradise, Pennsylvania.

**Peter Harry Craig, V'55**, of Holland Township, New Jersey, passed away on November 25. Born in Pittsburgh, he obtained a bachelor of science degree from the Pennsylvania State University, followed by a VMD and MS from the University of Pennsylvania. Peter served in the United States Air Force from 1958 to 1961 at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Montgomery, Alabama, and at Johnsville Naval Air Station in Warminster, Pennsylvania. He taught pathology at Penn Vet and also at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Peter then pursued a career in the pharmaceutical and chemical industries, retiring after 15 years with Mobil Oil Corporation.

**Clement Andrew (Clem) Schmitt, V'55**, passed away on December 6. Clem grew up in Wheeling, West Virginia. After graduating from Penn Vet, he returned to Wheeling where he practiced veterinary medicine for 55 years—truly a labor of love. Clem was an avid and competitive golfer. He enjoyed the outdoors and had a zest for life. He relocated to Wheaton, Illinois, in 1997.

**Daniel Weiner, V'55**, passed away August 12. He worked in the Public Health Service with the CDC in Atlanta, Georgia, then moved to Seattle, Washington, before going into private practice in Atlanta. Before entering retirement, Dan received his pilot's license, allowing him to fly for pleasure. After traveling all over the world, he eventually landed and retired to Sarasota, Florida, where he renewed his veterinary license and volunteered at Mote Marine Laboratory, The Pelican Man, as well as emergency animal hospitals as a relief veterinarian.



**Robert Lee Pyle, V'65**, of Blacksburg, Virginia, passed away on September 16. He graduated from Oakmont High School and went on to the Pennsylvania State University, graduating with a bachelor of science degree in pre-veterinary sciences from the College of Agricultural Sciences. He graduated from Penn Vet in 1965. After finishing his VMD degree, he was employed by Penn Vet until 1974. He then joined Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine as Associate Professor, specializing in cardiology, and subsequently served as Associate Professor at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine. In 1981, he took a position as Professor at Virginia Tech (Virginia/Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine), where he retired in 2007 after holding leadership positions including Director of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Associate Dean.

**Bruce S. Putschat, V'68**, of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, passed away on January 15, 2017, at St. Luke's Hospital, Quakertown. Dr. Putschat was the owner and Chief Veterinarian at Pleasant Valley Animal Hospital, Quakertown, for close to 50 years. He obtained a bachelor of science degree from the Pennsylvania State University before graduating from Penn Vet.

**Ralph E. Werner, V'68**, of Ocean City, New Jersey, passed away on September 13. A graduate of Upper Darby High School, he attended Rutgers University and earned his VMD from Penn Vet in 1968. Ralph proudly served in the Army Airborne's 101st Division and was honorably discharged in May 1960. Ralph worked at the Toms River Veterinary Hospital from 1968 until 1972. He moved with his family to Somers Point, New Jersey, where he built his veterinary practice. From 1992 through 2002, Ralph was a Diplomate with a Specialty in Companion Animal Practice.

**Joan E. Miller, V'78**, passed away on November 5, 2016. Joan received a bachelor of arts degree in chemistry from the University of Pennsylvania and then attended Penn Vet, graduating in 1978. After a veterinary internship, veterinary surgery residency, and a few years of work in the medical field, she decided to attend the University of Washington

School of Medicine, graduating in 1990. She practiced internal medicine at Virginia Mason Medical Center, first in Bellevue, Washington, and then at the downtown Seattle clinic. In 2006, she started working as a medical consultant for the Washington Disability Determination Service in Seattle and retired in 2010. Joan was the recipient of numerous academic and professional awards, most notably being selected as one of Seattle Magazine's Best Doctors in 2002.

**Stephen Barsanti, V'80**, of Stratham and Alton, New Hampshire, passed away on October 18. Dr. Barsanti graduated from Boston College in 1972. He worked at General Electric for a short period before he decided it was time to pursue his dream of becoming a veterinarian. He graduated from Penn Vet in 1980 and practiced veterinary medicine in Massachusetts prior to purchasing Alton Veterinary Clinic in New Hampshire in 1982. Barsanti owned and operated the clinic until 2012, when he sold the practice in order to spend more time with his family.

**Douglas Ayers, V'90**, passed away on September 12. He attended Penn Vet with the intention of becoming a biomedical researcher. He worked as a research assistant at the University of Texas in a program dedicated to restoring emotional/behavioral well-being to a large colony of chimpanzees. During vet school, he worked under an AIDS research grant as a Fellow at Harvard Medical School. Following graduation, he declined a post-doctorate position at Harvard in order to return to Northeast Pennsylvania and practice veterinary medicine. He co-founded a land conservancy that preserved more than 12,000 acres of land regionally for wildlife and green space. Dr. Ayers was the founder and visionary of The Lands at Hillside Farms, where he served as the chairman. In 1995, he opened Plains Animal Hospital in Plains, Pennsylvania. In 2007, he built the present environmentally green facility which houses Plains Animal Hospital and Northeast Veterinary Referral Hospital.

## SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Calling all VMDs, 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 [grovessh@vet.upenn.edu](mailto:grovessh@vet.upenn.edu), or write to us at Alumni Relations, Penn Veterinary Alumni Office, 3800 Spruce Street, Suite 172E, Philadelphia, PA 19104.