

# A Message from the Dean

In articles and letters discussing those components of our public health system deployed to contain the now all too real threat of bioterrorism, veterinary medicine is rarely mentioned. Yet veterinarians are positioned to contribute to the health and safety of human, as well as animal populations, in uniquely significant ways. Many of the pathogenic agents believed to be candidates for use by terrorists cause disease in animals and/or are carried by animals.



Veterinary epidemiologists study patterns of

disease in animal populations to identify and monitor diseases potentially dangerous to man. In the case of West Nile virus infection, the discovery of dead birds first alerted authorities to the possibility of ensuing human infections and to the need for stringent mosquito control measures.

When, in 1993, the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo cult released anthrax spores in a Tokyo building, there were no human deaths, but several pets succumbed to systemic anthrax, probably from licking their fur or other objects. In contrast to cattle, sheep, horses, and pigs, dogs and cats are not highly susceptible to anthrax. Nevertheless, these examples illustrate how affected animals, if diagnosed early, can serve as sentinels of disease, alerting physicians to the possibility of human infection.

In addition to those viral and bacterial agents of direct public health concern, veterinarians protect our health and welfare by

surveillance, prevention, and control measures aimed at highly contagious diseases that threaten the nation's livestock and poultry industries. The agents of foot and mouth disease, avian influenza, and swine fever, to name a few, if introduced into the United States, would severely damage America's agricultural economy and consumer access to affordable supplies of milk, meat, eggs, and poultry. Large animal veterinary practitioners can thwart acts of agro-terrorism by rapidly communicating suspicious infectious disease patterns to appropriate state and federal diagnostic laboratories and agencies, and by imposing appropriate animal handling and quarantine measures.

We must ensure that the same lines of communication are readily accessible to veterinarians in companion animal practice.

**Alan M. Kelly**

*The Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine*

## Herb and Ellen Moelis Honored

A gala reception honoring **Herb and Ellen Moelis** was held in a flower-filled marquee adjacent to the Allam House at New Bolton Center on October 25th. The reception was rescheduled from the American Gold Cup in September, when it was cancelled due to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

In spite of gusty winds and the threat of falling temperatures, more than 100 people came to celebrate the Moelises, and their many charitable endeavors. In a well-illustrated tribute, Dr. Kelly highlighted Herb and Ellen's efforts on behalf of the School of Veterinary Medicine, Penn's Library, Thoroughbred Charities of America, Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding program and, more recently, the New York Heroes Fund. Herb, a 1953 Wharton School graduate and a member of the Veterinary School's Board of Overseers, gave a spirited response; but Ellen touched everyone when she recounted how their grandchildren, who the Moelises have been tutoring in the gentle art of philanthropy, spontaneously and unanimously agreed that their own little foundation should support the disaster relief fund in New York following the events of



Betty Moran and Leonard King.



Betty Moran, Herb and Ellen Moelis.



Betty Moran, Allaire duPont, Herb and Ellen Moelis.



Dean Kelly presents Herb with "Ben on the Bench."

September 11th.

Dr. Kelly presented Ellen with a lovely bouquet of flowers, and then recognized the tireless efforts of **Betty Moran** and the **American Gold Cup** for their continued

generous support of New Bolton Center and the School of Veterinary Medicine. Everyone voted the occasion a wonderful evening of fine food, drink and fellowship.