

## Dr. Charles W. Raker Retires—A Tribute

Dr. Charles W. Raker joined the faculty of the Veterinary School in 1950 as assistant professor of veterinary medicine at the invitation of Dr. John D. Beck, then professor of medicine. Charlie graduated in 1942 and for the next eight years he was engaged in practice.

In 1950, Bolton Farm, located in Bucks County, was still in existence, and Dr. Raker became director of this facility. New Bolton Center was acquired in 1952, and at this time Dr. Raker began his distinguished career in equine surgery when he was appointed assistant professor of surgery and head of the Large Animal Clinic. Dr. Raker became professor of surgery in 1957, and in 1958 he received a joint appointment as professor of comparative surgery in the Graduate School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. Charlie served as chief, Section of Surgery, from 1962 until 1975.

In 1967, Dr. Raker received a signal honor when he was named the Lawrence Baker Sheppard Professor of Surgery. This was the first endowed chair in any veterinary school in the United States. Mr. Lawrence Sheppard, who endowed the chair, was the owner of Hanover Shoe Farms, Inc., one of the top flight breeding establishments for Standardbred horses in the world.

Dr. Raker is a founding diplomate and charter member of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and served as president of this group in 1975. His outstanding contributions as a teacher have been recognized through the Norden Distinguished Teaching Award in 1965 and the prestigious Lindback Award by the University of Pennsylvania in 1977. In 1967 he was named Veterinarian of the Year by the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association.

These and other tributes reflect the high place which Charlie Raker came to occupy in the professional and academic communities, but perhaps no honor is greater than the esteem in which he is held by his colleagues in the Veterinary School. In 1976, when Dr. Raker relinquished his position as Chief of Large Animal Surgery, Dean Robert R. Marshak commented that "the magnitude of change in the sweep and



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sophistication of horse surgery gained in the past two decades can probably be appreciated only by those privileged to have worked in close association with Dr. Raker, Dr. Jacques Jenny, and their small group of disciples." Dr. Marshak characterized Charlie by saying, "his physical stamina was matched by an exceptional surgical talent, a keen intellect and a strong aversion to sloth or procrastination in students and staff."

Without question, Dr. Raker was a key individual in the development of New Bolton Center as one of the top facilities for equine surgery in the world. From his pioneering work with Jacques Jenny on orthopedic surgery to his more recent interest in the medical and surgical treatment of respiratory diseases in horses, Charlie has been a leader, not only in his fields of work but as a person. One need only to talk with him briefly to perceive his warm feelings and sincere pleasure in being part of the career development of young people—students, resi-

dents and interns. Upon his retirement he was deeply touched by receiving a case of 14 bottles of California wine (each different!) from 14 California veterinarians who had passed through his department as residents and interns. In today's era of great specialization, it is refreshing to hear someone of Dr. Raker's caliber say, "I like to teach."

Charlie is very proud of New Bolton Center and when asked about those things which impressed him most in the growth of the Center he quickly mentioned the impressive record of the Medicine Section under Dr. Robert Whitlock. Dr. David Nunamaker's orthopedic work and equine colic surgery also came in for high praise.

On October 4, 1985, Dr. Raker was honored by a full-day symposium, entitled "A Tribute to Dr. Charles W. Raker," at the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Many of those who spoke were former students of Charlie Raker, and much of the program was devoted to fields of work developed by him.

At dinner following the symposium, Dean Marshak described Dr. Raker as "one of the most admired and looked-up-to teachers of his generation. To his students he is a conscientious, acute, sympathetic and stimulating teacher. He never allowed himself to intimidate or pillory the weaker among them or ignore them, or to treat them with disdain. He is attached to his students and follows their subsequent careers with great interest and sympathy."

In further remarks Dr. Marshak stated that "when he lectures there appears to be nothing between him and the subject of his exposition or criticism... in clinical rounds he speaks his mind with candor and precision and with a great natural courtesy that is an essential attribute of his character... he is a just man who has made his example and his influence dominant in his generation."

Upon reflection, Dr. Raker says that one of the great pleasures in his work was the opportunity "to meet so many nice people at all levels." We in turn have been privileged to have known and worked with such a nice human being as Dr. Raker!

*John E. Martin, V.M.D.*

## *A different operation at New Bolton. Hollywood comes to film for Ripley's Believe It Or Not.*



Marie Osmond prior to filming in the cardiology unit.

