



Veterinary

executive report

Fall 2009



A Legacy of Care

Barb Robbins
says goodbye



World Class. Face to Face.

Message from the dean...



Dr. Bryan Slinker

Even though I've been dean for only eight months, I recently agreed to become vice provost for health sciences at Washington State University. This new responsibility is in addition to serving as the dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine. So, you might ask, "Why would Bryan do that?"

The short answer is, "Because Warwick asked me to."

The long answer may be more satisfying. For starters, I have long-standing interests in the development of WSU's health science research and education assets, and have been engaged in their planning for many years. In that sense, accepting this additional assignment is a natural for me. I look forward to the challenge and to the many opportunities that will play out over the next few years.

In my blog (blogs.vetmed.wsu.edu/dean) I've commented on the role of the veterinary profession in general, and our college in particular, with respect to broader issues of health, including human health. Academic veterinary medicine has a critical role to play in the advancement of the health and satisfaction of people in addition to the critical part we play to advance animal health and well being. We all know how incredibly important the various human-animal connections are as a part of our lives. These relationships are a part of everyday companion animal practice, food systems practice, research to prevent zoonotic disease transmission, and programs to improve the health of underdeveloped economies and the people who rely on animals to eke out a living in those economies.

In the end, this additional responsibility interests me because the College of Veterinary Medicine is a key component of WSU's health sciences portfolio. The broader health sciences are a growth opportunity for WSU; given this, I believe our college has both much to contribute and much to gain from engaging strongly with other health science programs. The next few years will be very exciting as WSU capitalizes on these growth opportunities in, for example, medical education, biomedical research, and the thoughtful integration of research and education programs across our health science-oriented disciplines. For all these reasons it's a natural fit to take on a leadership role with respect to this broader health science portfolio.

I am very happy to serve as your dean and I am committed to working hard alongside all of you as we continue to move ahead. My additional responsibility does not diminish my enjoyment of, or commitment to, being your dean. To the contrary, I believe it will enhance it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan Slinker'.

Dr. Bryan Slinker, Dean
WSU College of Veterinary Medicine

AVMA comes to Seattle!

WSU played host to over 350 veterinary alumni at this year's national convention of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

It was a special time for us to get together with friends, and graduates, while taking time to honor those who have given so much. Of note, our newest benefactors to the college: both Bayer Health Care and Pfizer Animal Health have been recognized as WSU Silver Laureates, having given more than \$1 million. Nestlé Purina PetCare Company and Novartis Animal Health are now Crimson Benefactors, having given more than \$500,000. The evening hosted a bit of the old and the new, with incoming Dean Bryan Slinker leading the festivities, and Provost Warwick Bayly closing the



WSU Provost Warwick "Waz" Bayly (left) leads the fight song at the AVMA WSU Alumni Reception.

night with a classic rendition of the Cougar fight song. Our thanks to those who attended, and we hope to see you next year in Atlanta!

Recognition... and a surprise!

One of our biggest supporters in radiology has been Moore & Company Veterinary Services. Their work to support a three year radiology position recently reached a benchmark. Their support has now reached benefactor status here at WSU, meaning they have contributed more than \$100,000. The company was unable to attend the university's recognition gala this last year, so the WSU Veterinary Development and External Relations team decided to surprise them. When Dr. Mike Scott brought a horse to the college, he was met by our WSU imaging team and Dean Slinker who presented him with a plaque honoring the company's achievements. "Moore & Company has always been there to help WSU," said Lynne Haley, College of Veterinary Medicine



Mike Scott (center) from Moore & Company Veterinary Services receives recognition from Dean Slinker and our WSU veterinary imaging team.

director of development. "It was important that we give them the recognition they deserve!"

How to give to WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine

What is your passion? From small animal medicine to helping students, each year hundreds of alumni and friends of the college enhance teaching, research, and outreach programs through private philanthropy and charitable donations.

Generous gifts by individuals and organizations provide scholarships and fellowships, state-of-the-art equipment for teaching and research, funding for student clubs, and a variety of other important programs.

See what opportunities are available at www.vetmed.wsu.edu.

Barb Robbins retires

After 35 years of service to the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine, Barb Robbins has decided to retire. Since the earliest tenure of Leo Bustad, the name “Barb” has stood as a constant for students passing through these halls.

“Where can you work with a better group of people than at a vet school?” said Barb Robbins. “It’s interesting, it’s science, it’s animals, it’s some really terrific students; this has been a great job.”

Barb was originally offered two positions at WSU, at the veterinary college and in the math department. “It wasn’t a hard choice, believe me,” said Robbins.

During her time at WSU there have been a number of key changes. Desktop computers replaced electric typewriters. MRI and CT scanners joined x-ray in diagnosing animal health issues. Yet one constant remained...the students, to whom Barb remained close for the better part of four decades. “My feeling was that vet school was very hard,” said Robbins. “If I could make one student’s life better each day, by answering questions, by listening to problems, by helping ease the frustrations, then that made everything I did okay. Sometimes they just need a good listener.”

Over the years, Barb’s greatest joy has been in watching struggling veterinary students blossom into veterinary professionals. She jokingly says that her work as a 7th grade teacher best prepared her for a career in the veterinary college. “Let’s face it, Bryan (Dean Bryan Slinker ’80 WSU DVM) was one of my students...there are some 15 faculty members who were once my students. They’re all like family,”

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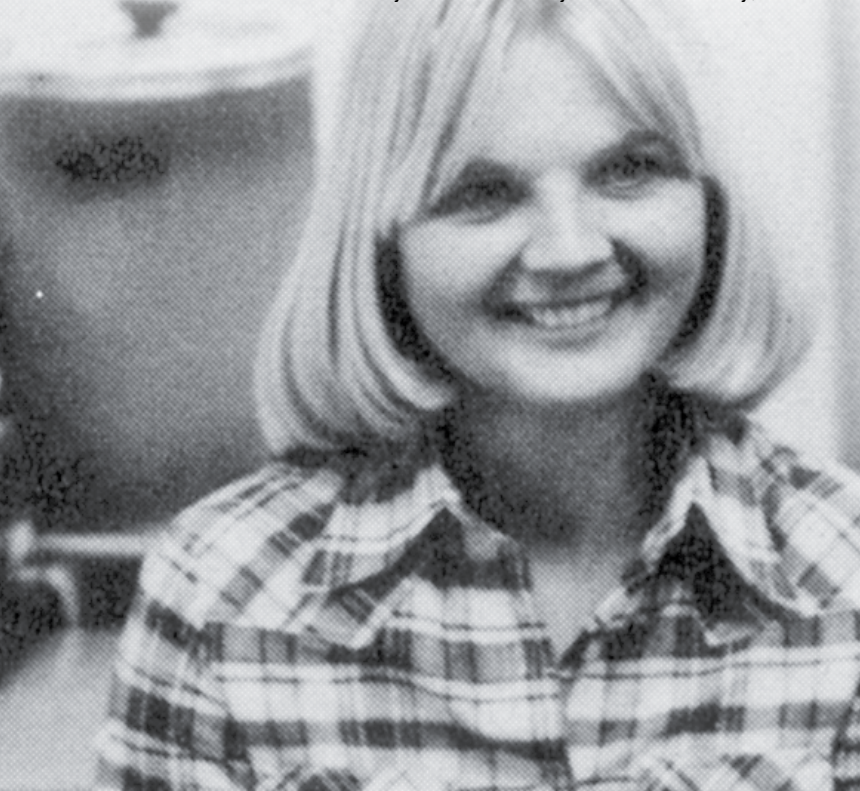
—Barb Robbins

said Robbins. “For someone like me with no children, I’ve now had 2,800. I’ve seen them through engagements and weddings, babies, and even some breakups—it’s just been like a huge big family, and I’ve never felt shortchanged.”

As students became faculty and then began retiring, Barb began to give serious thought to retiring herself. It could mean joining her husband, Dr. Charles Robbins, each summer when he travels to Alaska for his bear research. Retirement also offers her a chance to begin living the life she has longed to live. “I wanted to retire while I was still young enough to do those things you always tell yourself you’ll do.

Train my new puppy, ride my horse more, get to the swimming, running, and hiking I have long put off.”

There are plenty of memorable moments Barb will take with her from WSU. Among them are a few Junior Reviews where she was the star. One had her on stage playing the bartender during a reenactment of the popular TV show *Cheers*, while





another class performed the song “Wild Thing,” with the words changed to be about Barb. “I thought I was going to die of embarrassment. But it was always done in good spirits. Some of my favorite students were the ones that were just funny and could light up your day.”

In the end, the most difficult part may be stepping away from her front row seat from which she has watched and been a part of the undercurrent of the vet school. Even more difficult may be leaving without knowing how many of today’s students will turn out. “I will certainly miss the chance to follow up on past graduates. Just being around such good students, who are really fine people, and motivated people, and watching those who have gone through and how they’ve grown is really what made this job memorable,” said Robbins.

In honor to the service she has provided, the Barb Robbins Wildlife Scholarship has now been established at WSU’s College of Veterinary Medicine. For more information, visit vetmed.wsu.edu/Robbins.



Barb Robbins
Began in August 1974
35 years of service
6 deans
2,800 students

Love for animals leads to veterinary scholarships

Ethel Roberge was dedicated to the humane care of animals. Upon her death in 2002 she bequeathed part of her estate to the Moses Lake Grant County Humane Society. The money was used to buy property that the society, at that time, intended to use to build a new animal shelter. The group’s plans changed, and the property was sold at a profit. The proceeds of that sale, \$193,000, have now been used to establish the Moses Lake Grant County Humane Society—Ethel Roberge Scholarship for veterinary students at WSU.

“Mrs. Roberge’s desire to help and protect animals will be fulfilled by the education of veterinarians receiving this scholarship,” said Marilyn Bertram, president of the humane society.

Annual distributions from the fund will be used to award one or more scholarships with preference given to veterinary students from Grant County. If no veterinary students from Grant County are identified, veterinary students from eastern Washington will be eligible.

“This is an extraordinary gift provided from Moses Lake and Grant County for tomorrow’s veterinarians,” said Dean Bryan Slinker. “Veterinary students incur some of the largest educational debt loads of all medical professionals. Scholarships like this from people who know and understand are essential. We are very grateful.”

How Toto helped Christene become a veterinarian

There is a special bond between families and their pets.

Especially for Mark and Susan A., who marked the passing of their dog, Toto, with a special pet memorial tribute. Along with a \$25 donation to the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine's Pet Memorial Program, the couple sent a story about how much Toto meant to them. Susan wrote, "Toto was just short of 11 years old when we discovered she had a tumor in her mouth that turned out to be cancer. Mark and I miss her so very much.... She was always full of life and so loving, even to the end of her time."



Toto

Stories like Mark, Susan, and Toto's happen in families everywhere. Many turn to the WSU Pet Memorial Program to celebrate the life of their beloved companion animals. Because of Mark and Susan's generosity and the generosity of others like them, the college awarded four scholarships this spring each in the amount of \$2,500. One scholarship was awarded to fourth-year student Christene Olschewski, a member of the class of 2010. For Christene, receiving a scholarship helped ease the burden of ever increasing tuition, now at over \$18,000 per year for Washington residents, with higher rates expected next year.



Christene Olschewski

A gift to the WSU Pet Memorial Program is truly a gift that keeps on giving. Mark and Susan celebrated the life of their pet, Toto, by supporting future small animal veterinarians like Christene. The program honors the special bond families and friends have with their pets, while helping guarantee the care of animals for a lifetime.

vetmed.wsu.edu/petmemorial



Helen Louis Forsythe Reiley



A legacy of caring for animals

Let's pause to remember Helen Louis Forsythe Reiley ('41 WSU DVM), one of the pioneering women of WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine. Helen passed away this past summer, but she leaves behind a permanent legacy of caring for animals thanks to her generous estate gift to WSU.

As a little girl, Helen's dream was to become a veterinarian. In 1941 that dream came true, making her one of the first female veterinarians in the country and only the fifth woman to graduate from the College of Veterinary Medicine at WSU. At her very first job with Washington State's Department of Agriculture, she researched poultry diseases. At her funeral, family members played the Cougar fight song as guests filed out. Helen's Cougar loyalty will live on in perpetuity through her gift, which will help establish scholarships for students here at the College of Veterinary Medicine.



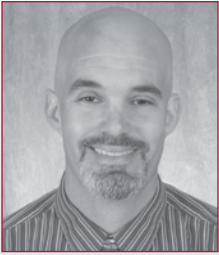
Richard M. DeBowes

Dr. Richard DeBowes

Associate Dean of Veterinary Development and External Relations
WSU College of Veterinary Medicine

Achievements

2009 Wescott Clinical Teaching Scholars



Jeff Bryan



Julie Cary



Tammy Grubb



Melissa Hines



John Mattoon



Ahmed Tibary

The designation of Wescott Clinical Teaching Scholar is awarded to selected faculty members for excellence in teaching during the fourth year of the DVM curriculum. All faculty members who teach during the fourth year are listed on a ballot that is divided into three categories: small animal medicine and surgery, large animal medicine and surgery, and diagnostics/services. The graduating class of 2009 voted for five faculty members, including at least one in each category. The top six, including the top in each category, are then recognized as Wescott Clinical Teaching Scholars.

John and Marilyn Frederic estate

Dogs have a special way of capturing our hearts, and no one knew that better than Lyn Frederic. Her love led to a special dedication to helping relinquished and problem dogs, and she found great pleasure while helping to greatly improve the lives of dogs. Over the years Lyn generously donated to many animal causes. Yet among her greatest gifts is a major contribution to Washington State University, and to the College of Veterinary Medicine.

With her passing in 2004, and the recent passing of her husband John, the Frederics left behind a significant gift to recognize the important role WSU has played in veterinary medicine and science. The funds are to be used principally for scholarships for students pursuing veterinary medicine. It was her dream to be remembered as one who cared, and her gift helps animals long after she is gone.



John Frederic was a highly decorated pilot in World War II. He flew bombers from the earliest days of the war in Europe to its conclusion in the South Pacific. He trained the crews that dropped the atomic weapons that ended the war, and he took part in the Berlin airlift.

Marilyn "Lyn" (Zygler) Frederic has been described as hardworking and adventurous. During the war, she became a drafter/engineering aide and a "Rosie the Riveter." Soon after the war ended, she moved to Japan, working as a clothes buyer for a large retail company in the United States. Lyn was relatively tall (5'10"), and had her Irish Setter with her everywhere she went. After Lyn and John married in 1958, she began to always have four or five Yorkies as her companions.

The couple would live out their last days in a home overlooking the Puget Sound. Their colorful life and their legacy of giving lives on in the veterinary students who are helped from this day on by their gifts.



Look for a WSU Alumni gathering at these upcoming events!



Dates to Remember

September 11 WSU in Seattle CVM Dean's Event

October 10 Homecoming BBQ

October 10–11 Homecoming Reunions ('69, '79, '89, '99)

April 29–30 Golden Grads Reunion ('49 and '59)

Don't forget to follow Dean Bryan Slinker on his new blog. Just go to www.vetmed.wsu.edu and click on Dean's Blog.

Dean Slinker throws out the first pitch at a WSU baseball game.

Read the WSU *Veterinary Executive Report* at www.vetmed.wsu.edu.