



## Bellwether Magazine

---

Volume 1  
Number 66 *Spring 2007*

Article 5

---

4-1-2007

### Dean's Message

Joan C. Hendricks  
*University of Pennsylvania*

---

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. <http://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss66/5>  
For more information, please contact [libraryrepository@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:libraryrepository@pobox.upenn.edu).

# dean's message

Imagine a world without vets. Farm animals and pets would not receive vaccinations or preventive antiparasite treatments. Nutrition would be lacking so domestic animals would not thrive and would be prone to disease. Animals would become pregnant when they shouldn't—leading to overpopulation of unwanted animals; and not become pregnant when they should—leading to failure for farmers and other animal producers. We would not develop or apply new treatments to help animals. Behavior problems would be handled by abandonment (the most common reason pets are surrendered to shelters) or physical force.

This is not just a thought exercise in many parts of the world, including rural and low-income urban areas of the United States. In the worst cases, the absence of veterinary attention and advice leads to pestilence and famine—vets are the first-line responders to identify emerging animal diseases and to monitor new diseases transmitted from animals to humans, and of course veterinary care and advice dramatically improves food animal health and productivity. Even where things are not quite this dire, we are facing a growing shortage of veterinary specialists, vets interested in research, vets to perform public service including support to agriculture, and academic vets—those who will teach the next generation of vets.

So, what is Penn Vet doing about the shortage? Our newly opened Hill Pavilion has provided us with superb new student facilities, including two lecture classrooms seating 130 each. Now, we are actively pursuing renovating and expanding our antiquated Multidisciplinary Laboratories and improving the Gross Anatomy Laboratory so that we will have facilities to increase our class by 10-12. We feel strongly that the education of veterinarians is a public health issue and a national imperative. The University of Pennsylvania and Penn Vet are actively working together to plan policies at the Federal level to educate Congress about the urgency of the shortage of veterinarians. Penn Vet is part of the lobbying efforts of the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges to support passage of the Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act that would support new facilities for veterinary schools, and the National Veterinary Medical Service Act to support debt relief for veterinarians

entering underserved areas. You can help by contacting your congressperson when requested.

To provide a vitally needed international platform to applaud and inspire innovative leadership by veterinarians from around the world, we recently announced the Penn Vet World Awards. Beginning next year, three awards of \$100,000 each will be given to help one vet and two vet students realize their dreams to change the world. See below for more information.

In parallel to our work to broaden our impact on public health, we must keep our intense connection with and tender compassionate care for individual animals. As veterinarians, we are critical in the link between domestic animals and their owners, fostering the healing connection between animals and people.



Photo by Sabina Louise Pierce

—JOAN HENDRICKS, V'79, GR'80  
THE GILBERT S. KAHN DEAN OF  
VETERINARY MEDICINE

**Penn Vet World Awards**  
Transforming Veterinary Medicine

Awards underwritten by  
Vernon and Shirley  
Hill of the Hill  
Family Foundation

The Penn Vet World Awards in Animal Health recognize

- Innovation • Creativity • Enterprise
- Leadership in Veterinary Medicine

The Awards were established in 2007 by a major gift from the Hill Family Foundation to identify and encourage visionary thinking, life-changing accomplishment, and ambition in the profession. Each of the three awards provides \$100,000 in unrestricted funding to the recipient, making these the world's most generous awards in veterinary medicine.

- **The World Leadership in Animal Health Award** is presented to someone who has excelled as a practicing veterinarian.
- **The Penn Vet Student Inspiration Awards** are presented to two extraordinary current Penn Vet students who demonstrate the potential to significantly advance the frontiers of veterinary medicine.

The Penn Vet World Awards recognize the importance to society of veterinary medicine and bring great distinction to the profession.

Detailed instructions for nominations will be available by September 1, 2007 at [www.vet.upenn.edu/worldaward](http://www.vet.upenn.edu/worldaward)