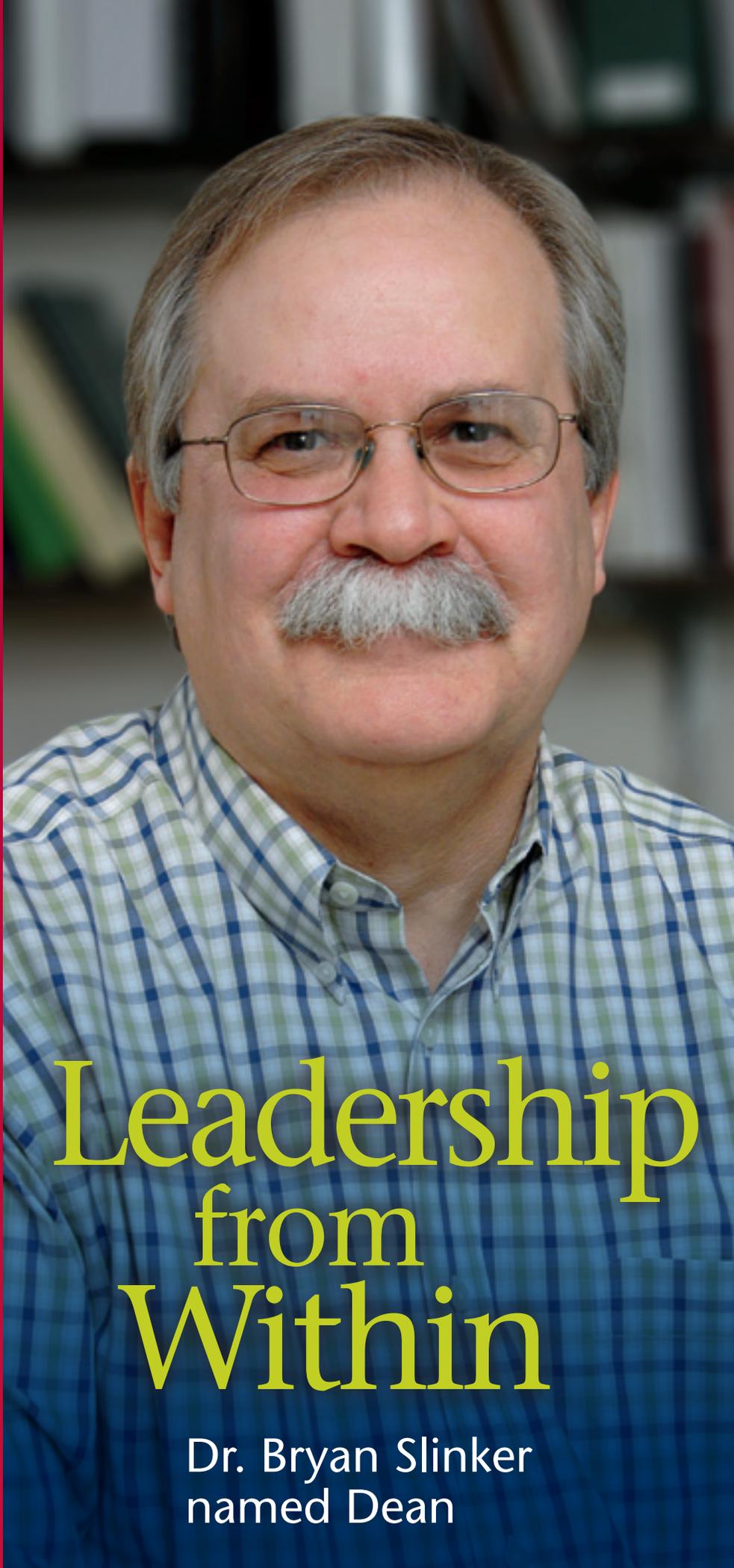




# Veterinary

*executive report*

Spring 2009



# Leadership from Within

Dr. Bryan Slinker  
named Dean

WASHINGTON STATE  
 UNIVERSITY

*World Class. Face to Face.*

# Message from the dean...



Dr. Bryan Slinker

There is a big difference between “interim” and “permanent” when it comes to filling leadership positions. Many faculty members aspire to academic leadership. For others, like me, opportunity happens. For those who aspire to the titles, many of the questions about why they want to do the job and what they want to accomplish have already been asked and answered. For me, I had to take a few months to learn on the job while wrestling with the “Do I want to do this?” question.

As I thought about whether to take the “interim” out of my title, the most difficult of the many questions that needed to be answered was, “Am I the right fit for the job?” Because there are two sides to a “fit,” I turned to the students, staff, and faculty here at WSU’s College of Veterinary Medicine with a series of “town hall”-like sessions to discuss the possibility. What I heard was the commitment of this team to sticking with what has worked, the eagerness to forge ahead despite the critical challenges we currently face, and the readiness to experiment with new directions to keep our college among the state’s and WSU’s crown jewels. The support given me throughout ultimately made this decision easy. So, in mid February, I agreed to take the “interim” out of my title. I am proud and excited to be your dean; we are a “can do” group, and we will need that attitude by the bucketful over the next couple of years.

The immediate challenges facing the university and our college are daunting. Legislative budget cuts are likely to be unprecedented, with the promise of deeper cuts to come if the state’s revenue continues to lag and as the federal stimulus funds dry up. Yet there are many bright spots. Construction may soon begin on our new Global Animal Health Building, thanks in large part to a \$25 million gift from the Gates Foundation. Even in these tough times, **President Floyd** and **Provost Bayly** (still hard for me not to refer to him as “Dean Bayly”) have made this effort a priority. Thus, our efforts to better understand and solve problems at the human–animal interface will still be taken to a new level in spite of the tough times we face. As always, research and innovation from our college offer real hope and opportunity for our team of faculty, staff, and students, and the animals and people we serve; the research grants are rolling in, patients are coming through the door, and we have wonderful students who are eager to learn, including a great bunch of seniors we are about ready to turn loose on the world.

Finally, let me invite you to join in our conversations. I have started a blog entitled From the Dean ([blogs.vetmed.wsu.edu/dean](http://blogs.vetmed.wsu.edu/dean)). This series of communications will be open to all, within the university and without. This is meant to complement, but not replace, more traditional means of passing along information. I will also use the blog to provide information and observations about a variety of topics that would typically not be passed along in traditional communications channels—virtual hallway chats, if you will. You might read everything from the impact of budget cuts, to my thoughts on Cougar basketball, to accounts of my latest water-flogging attempt to catch trout on a fly rod (there’s a nice picture on the blog, by the way). Please join us in our discussions as we chart the future of the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine.

Thank you all for your kind words of support as we embark on a new era here at the college. As Waz would be apt to say: Thank you mates, and Go Cougs!



Dr. Bryan Slinker, Dean  
WSU College of Veterinary Medicine

# Dr. Bryan Slinker selected to lead WSU's veterinary college

**Dr. Bryan K. Slinker** accepted permanent deanship of the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine in February. He formerly served as chair of the Department of Veterinary and Comparative Anatomy, Pharmacology, and Physiology.

"Dr. Slinker was ranked as an outstanding choice by virtually all the college faculty. He is highly organized, has great vision, and is perfectly positioned to continue implementation of the college's very progressive and productive strategic plans," said Provost Warwick Bayly, the college's former dean.

WSU's new dean grew up in southwestern Idaho and worked on a dairy farm and for the University of Idaho's Beef Experiment Station in Caldwell. Dr. Slinker received his DVM and Ph.D. degrees from WSU in 1980 and 1982, respectively. For more on his outstanding career, see [www.vetmed.wsu.edu/research\\_vcapp/slinker.asp](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/research_vcapp/slinker.asp).

"I took the job because it seemed like the right thing to do at the right time to do it," he said. "The job grew on me while I was the interim dean. Also, I felt I had broad support, which made it much easier to envision myself being dean—we have great people who I can count on to work effectively.

"My challenge in the face of a record budget reduction is not only that but keeping this college moving forward and making progress toward our priorities."

One thing that sets Dr. Slinker apart is his blog, a two-way electronic journal that allows him to post his thoughts and allows readers to post comments. The blog is located at [blogs.vetmed.wsu.edu/dean](http://blogs.vetmed.wsu.edu/dean). So far he's written about everything from serious college matters to the future of veterinary practice, his musical tastes, and a recent fishing trip.

With optimal funding, Dr. Slinker says he'd do two things first in order to help the college overall. "I'd invest in the infrastructure of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and see the School for Global Animal Health through to completion," he said. "Those would allow us to also make progress in the college's other priority areas by allowing us to redirect scarce, flexible funds.

"When I leave this position, I'd like to be remembered for overseeing growth of this college in quality," he said. "I'd like us to have a more diverse and stable budget and I'd like to continue to build our sense of community across the state. After that, I'd like to be able to say I had fun doing it and got to meet a lot of great, interesting people."



*Dr. Bryan Slinker, WSU class of 1980*



*Assistant Professor Dr. Bryan Slinker, 1992*

## Bald eagle released

A majestic bald eagle is back to roaming the skies over Moses Lake after undergoing medical treatment and rehabilitation at WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine. Named Maier after the veterinarian that presented him to WSU, he had been shot by an air rifle pellet through the left wing. Fortunately, the fracture was not severely displaced, allowing the wing to be stabilized using a bandage to keep the bone pieces in alignment while the injury healed. On hand for the release were representatives from Avista who recently helped facilitate the donation of electrical work by local contractor QC Electrical to enhance WSU's Raptor Rehabilitation Center. **Paul Kimmell** with Avista said, "The thing was gigantic. It's neat to see them set back in the wild...It's been a great partnership, and we look forward to doing more of this in the future with WSU."



## A statistical miracle

### Triplet bull calves born on St. Patrick's Day

In what is a St. Patrick's Day statistical miracle, a registered Red Angus cow has given birth to triplet bull calves at Washington State University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

All three calves were positioned in a dangerous breach presentation and required the assistance of three WSU veterinarians and five veterinary students for delivery. All the calves weighed between 36 and 41 pounds apiece. The dam and her calves are resting comfortably and are expected to thrive.

"No one person here takes credit for this delivery," said attending veterinarian **Dr. Martha Delaney**. "It is always a team effort. We work together."

"That's pretty cool," said owner **Josh Dykes** of Pasco, Washington, when told he was the owner of three new bull calves. "We knew when she was due and last night she didn't look very good. I thought she might die. I'm glad to hear she's alright."

Here's how the numbers work out. From literature dating back to the 1920s, cattle experts say triplets are rare, about one in every 105,000 births. The chances they will all be born alive are about 25 percent. And the odds of triplets of the same sex are estimated by some to be one out of every 700,000 births in beef cattle.



# From a great school...great people!

One of our third year students remarked recently that there are two things she most noticed about Cougar veterinarians: their incredible contributions to animals, and the immediate camaraderie they share with fellow alums from WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine. Truly, there is something special about this place, where achievement begins and then continues for a lifetime. These pages are filled with plenty of accolades, but I wanted to point out a few of WSU's finest.



*Dr. Jere Dick*

Do you remember **Dr. Jere Dick**, DVM class of 1979? Jere is a career federal veterinarian who in 2008 received the prestigious U.S. Presidential Rank Award for his efforts to implement innovative changes to the nation's animal health infrastructure. As the current associate deputy administrator and chief of field operations for APHIS' veterinary services program, Dr. Dick is credited with changing the way the USDA approaches the regulation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Jere represented the department in trade negotiations with Japan, Canada, and Mexico to reopen markets for U.S. beef following the discovery of the disease in Washington in 2003. His hard work has now helped to restore millions of dollars in U.S. cattle and beef trade by reopening foreign markets to more than 40 agricultural commodities.

Then there is **Dr. Jack Reynolds** ('75 DVM) who graduated from WSU second in his class, a full semester ahead of his classmates. Dr. Reynolds has helped revolutionize the technology and approach to pre-clinical drug safety testing. Simply put, his model makes drugs more effective and reduces the time needed to bring them to the marketplace, a critical step in creating leading drugs for human and veterinary medicine such as Zoloft, Celebrex, and Relpax, to name a few. That's why it's no surprise to us that Cellumen, a major discovery toxicology company, has named him director.

Both of these alums have proven that you can't just be satisfied with the status quo. Both have gone above and beyond. But you don't have to go to the federal or research niche to make a difference. Consider the wonderful contribution of **Dr. Nancy Merrill** ('97 DVM) who developed the "Outside the Box" award for recognizing innovation and unique qualities in our veterinary students. She writes "As I've gotten older I believe it is important to be involved and improve whatever you do, wherever you are, even if sometimes it upsets the status quo."

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*Jack Reynolds receives his WSU CVM Distinguished Alumnus Award*

This award, originally started by **Dr. Craig Woloshyn**, has often brought humor with things like "The Dauntless Dissembler Award," or "The Politically Challenged Award." Yet it stands as a reminder that among the special traits you'll find with Cougs, one that stands out is the ability to think about life in a new way.

Jere Dick has that gift, as does Jack Reynolds and a host of other wonderful Cougar colleagues. Think of your classmates and the difference that a number of Cougar alums have made in your life. Cougars leave this college with the spirit that moves us to great things. As you watch your school continue to make a difference with its efforts in global animal health, leadership and communication, basic research, and a host of clinical domains, all at a time of severe funding cuts, realize that it is our Cougar magic and your generous gifts that keep the dream alive.

Without the support of our alumni, clients, and friends whose support encourages and directs the well-being of the college, this record of significance and relevance will fail.

Thank you for considering what you can do to leverage the Cougar magic!



**Dr. Richard DeBowes**

Associate Dean of Veterinary Development and External Relations

WSU College of Veterinary Medicine

# Achievements



**Dr. Wendy Brown**, a professor and veterinary immunologist in WSU's Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Pathology, has been recognized as a WSU 2009 Regents Professor and also gave the Distinguished Faculty Address.



**Dr. Bryan Slinker**, dean of WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine and former VCAPP chair, is among six WSU faculty members selected as new fellows for the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). These new members were chosen "because of their scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications." The official announce-

ment was made in the December 2009 issue of the *Journal of Science*. WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine now has four AAAS fellows in its ranks.



**Drs. Terry McElwain and Sue Ritter** are this year's recipients of the 2009 Sahlin Faculty Excellence award. Dr. McElwain was recognized for outreach and engagement and Dr. Ritter was recognized for research, scholarship, and arts contributions. The Sahlin Faculty Excellence award recognizes the truly outstanding accomplishments and exceptional individual achievements of WSU faculty members.



**Lauri Kramer**, VCAPP financial staff member, was honored with the Grant and Contract Administration Contribution Recognition Award for her service nationally, regionally, and locally on the work she does with grant and contract administration.



**Dr. Clive Gay**, professor emeritus of veterinary clinical sciences, has been awarded the 2009 WSU Emeritus Society Excellence Award. The award recognizes outstanding contributions while in retirement to academia, the university, the community, and mankind. Dr. Gay's areas of research expertise include diseases of agricultural animals, neonatal calf disease, and trace element defi-

ciency. Dr. Gay has also been granted an honorary doctorate in veterinary science from the University Melbourne.



**Dr. Debora Sellon**, professor of equine medicine, and associate dean of the Graduate School at WSU, has been named to the board of the American Association of Equine Practitioners.





**Dr. Steven Hines**, professor of veterinary microbiology and pathology, has been given the WSU Libraries Public Relations and Marketing Working Group's Library Excellence Award for 2009. Dr. Hines worked diligently to save the CVM library, even raising funds to ensure it would become a student-centered study and reference space.



**Gudrun Gunther**, a fourth year veterinary student at WSU, opened a gallery of her paintings in April for an exhibit in the Animal Health Library in Wegner Hall. She is finishing her fourth year and is about to head out into the real world. Gudrun's painting of her cat, Schoenchen, was on the cover of the September 15, 2006, issue of *JAVMA*.



**Aaron Gibbons**, a third year veterinary student at WSU, is now president elect for the Student American Veterinary Medical Association. Gibbons is studying to be a large animal practitioner.



*WSU's Dr. Betsy Charles accepts award for Dr. Richard DeBowes*

**Dr. Richard DeBowes**, associate dean of veterinary development and external relations in the College of Veterinary Medicine, has been awarded the Hill's Pet Spirit Award for 2009. The award was given for his work in developing the Veterinary Leadership Experience and its interactive curriculum for veterinary students, which promotes leadership and growth skills.

The Newbrey Teaching Scholar is awarded to faculty for excellence in teaching during the first three years of the veterinary curriculum, as selected by their students. This year's winners are **Bonnie Campbell, Bill Foryet, Steve Hines, Charles Leathers, John Mattoon, Katrina Mealey, Mushtaq Memon, Steve Parish, Patricia Talcott, Jane Wardrop, Tamara Wills, and Patrick Wilson.**

## Deal or No Deal

Dr. Bryan Slinker played the role of the bank in a recent classroom production of the popular TV game show *Deal or No Deal*.

With Dr. Jeffrey Bryan playing the role of host, third year veterinary students were playing for answers to an upcoming clinical pharmacology exam by Dr. Katrina Mealey. "I previously used the game show *Jeopardy* in my class, but the generation gap finally took its toll," said Dr. Mealey. Students gambled at the chance for as many as fifteen clues to answers on the test, but eventually settled on winning just two.





Read the *WSU Veterinary Executive Report* at [www.vetmed.wsu.edu](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu).

## Look for a WSU Alumni gathering at these upcoming events!

### Mark your calendars

#### **Peter A. Zornes Memorial Golf Tournament**

The second annual Peter A. Zornes Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on **June 27, 2009, at the Colfax Golf Club** to benefit the Peter A. Zornes Memorial Neuroscience Scholarship at Washington State University.

The event includes a four-person scramble, box lunch, putting contest, dinner, awards, a silent auction, and live music in the evening. Register now and remember to invite your friends to play!

#### **Other important dates to remember:**

**June 2–7** Veterinary Leadership Experience

**July 13** AVMA WSU Alumni event in Seattle

**August 17–21** Cougar Orientation and Leadership Event

**August 21** White Coat Ceremony

**August 21** Bill Johnson's Third Annual Bicycle Ride for WSU

**September 11** Seattle Game Event

**October 10–11** Homecoming BBQ, Reunions

**April 29–30, 2010** Golden Grads

