Dear Graduates of the College of Veterinary Medicine,

Nine years ago this month, President Rawlings invited me to serve as Cornell's ninth dean of veterinary medicine. As I approach the end of my second term, in June 2007, I now look forward to passing the baton to my successor and returning to serve on the faculty.

The support and encouragement that I have received from graduates of the college has been simply extraordinary. I have met and come to know graduates from the 1930's to the present. Though your experiences are quite different, generation to generation, your abiding love and support of Cornell is a constant.

I often remark to people who are not familiar with Cornell-educated veterinarians, that every good thing that happens to our college is touched in one way or another by one of our graduates. You have influenced aspiring students, legislators, clients, publicists and donors. An unusually large proportion of you give generously of your time or your resources to support us directly.

Though I am not an alumnus of Cornell, I am very grateful that you have welcomed Doris and me into the Cornell family as if we were your own. That was especially important as our three children were still teenagers when I became dean, and your friendship was very meaningful to us as they progressed through their various college experiences at Cornell and Delaware.

The College of Veterinary Medicine is vigorous and well poised to recruit our tenth dean, who will most likely lead us through Cornell's sesquicentennial in 2015. I trust you will give my successor the same support and encouragement that you have provided to me.

With sincere thanks and very best wishes,

Donald F. Smith, DVM

Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine