

Alexander deLahunta

December 3, 1932 - August 17, 2021

Rye – Dr. Alexander deLahunta, 88, of Rye, passed away peacefully at his home on Tuesday, August 17, 2021, surrounded by loving family.

He was born in Concord, NH on December 3, 1932, the son of the late Mary Louise (Alexander) deLahunta.

Raised in Concord, he graduated from Phillips Academy Andover, Class of 1951. He went on to graduate from New York State College of Veterinary Medicine in 1958. After two years as a practicing veterinarian at a mixed animal practice in Concord, he returned to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University in 1960 for graduate study, where he was awarded a PhD in 1963.

Dr. deLahunta had a highly successful career as a professor and as a pioneer in veterinary neurology at Cornell University. Throughout his career he received numerous awards and had many accomplishments, one of which was the inaugural recipient of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine Lifetime Specialty Achievement Award for the Specialty of Neurology. He would tell you that his greatest accomplishment was teaching the introductory anatomy and embryology courses to the incoming freshman class each year. This allowed him to get to know every student in the class, and they all came to know him as Dr. “D”. He took great pride serving as a

mentor to them and many stayed in touch up until his last days.

Family was his passion and he enjoyed sharing his love of the outdoors with them. Together they cycled, ran marathons, backpacked in the mountains, skied, played pond hockey, and more.

He shared 56 years of marriage with his late wife Patricia (Frink) deLahunta who predeceased him in 2011.

Surviving family members include his partner, Shirley Reed Dutton of Maine; children, Scott deLahunta and his partner Eva-Maria Hoerster of Germany, Harry deLahunta and his wife Katie of Utah, Brian deLahunta of New Jersey, Leslie deLahunta Melfi of New Hampshire and 9 grandchildren.

All services will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Rye Public Library, c/o Friends of the Rye Public Library, 581 Washington Road, Rye, NH 03870.

Tribute Wall



“ *Alexander deLahunta*

September 18, 2022 at 12:49 AM

BI

“ Very late do I come to this page. Dr D was my teacher for veterinary anatomy & neurology and during his famed 1-2AM neurology rounds. His enthusiasm for teaching and his students was as obvious as it was monumental. He started classes on time; if you were late, not too worry - you could hear his voice booming down the hallway even around right angle bends! He taught using homespun multimedia before "multimedia" was even a thing: colored chalks on the blackboard while starting and stopping 8 mm film that he projected next to the anatomical drawings that accompanied his lectures.

My fondest memory was a lecture on the skull and the bony enclosure around the inner ear-the tympanic bulla. With inner ear infections, it can fill with fluid, but to know for sure using radiographs if you have fluid, and if it is in one or both sides, you must take 2 views, from the side (lateral) and 90 degrees to that bottom to top (ventrodorsal) He showed one radiograph, from the side and asked if the cat had an inner ear infection. Feeling bold I said "No"... he looked at me with a smile and asked if I was sure. Committed to my answer, I said "no" again. He then peered at me and ask, possibly 3 times if I was sure... and it became obvious I was wrong... So he produced the second radiograph (which allowed everyone to see that there was fluid in the bulla that was not visible in the first view) and asked me again... "Are you... s-u-r-e..." At this point I know my goose is cooked so, with as straight a face as I could manage I said. "Oh, I am SURE! I am SURE I am.... WRONG!!!" And Dr. D, closed his eyes shut tight, put his hand to his shaved head and bent over (laughing, I hoped!). I have never forgotten that day, and what ear infections look like on radiographs, and to always take 2 views! Thank you Dr D, for teaching me to love neurology.

Bitty - March 04, 2022 at 02:34 PM

OW

“ *Thoughts, Prayers and Condolences to the entire deLahunta Family. Hoping you all can find peace to light your path in your times of darkness.*

Oren Whitfield - HHH

Oren Whitfield - November 02, 2021 at 02:04 PM

“ It is a sobering thought to think such a giant in our profession, someone who seemed immortal, has left us. Dr. D touched so many lives - teaching us veterinary medicine and how to apply our knowledge to caring and treating of our patients. "Tincture of time" and giving the benefit of the doubt to the patient was one of Dr D's phrases I have always remembered.

The path that leads us to certain people in our lives is an interesting one. It took me some time to reflect, thus my tardiness in posting my personal Dr. D memory. However, after losing my father in the spring of 2020 and personally knowing the continued void and pain of the loss of my own Dad, I pray for peace and comfort for the deLaHunta family.

So, my story...I was a sophomore at Colgate University in the fall of 1982 and decided to run cross country. In high school I ran distance and was also a springboard diver, having been neither great at either (likely a better runner than diver). Injuries my high school senior year discouraged my pursuit of collegiate distance running initially. After a year of rest from running, Sophomore year I decided to take another shot and joined the Colgate Cross Country team. Come to be, the assistant coach, who we spent the most time was Harry deLaHunta. Somehow in conversation, he told me that his dad was a professor at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine. Little did I know...

My junior year, I decided that veterinary medicine was the career path I wanted to explore over being a chemist. In my hometown I volunteered at Jamestown Veterinary Hospital, owned by Dr. William "Bill" Seleen, while I was also lifeguarding that summer on Lake Chautauqua. It took me only 2-3 visits to know that veterinary medicine was my calling.

When Dr. Seleen saw that I had become serious about pursuing veterinary medicine, he would tell me stories about Cornell that mostly focused on Dr. D, "Sandy" as he would like to refer to him as

well. And how impactful Dr. D was at the veterinary school and how much I would enjoy his teaching style. Dr. Seleen made me aware of the many cases he would send Dr. D, who would always be available to help him out.

Shortly thereafter, Dr. Kathy Linn, who had just graduated Cornell, was working at Jamestown Veterinary Hospital and the Dr. D stories continued that also included the provocation that "when you get into Cornell, you must do the early morning rounds with Dr. D."

Well, it took a couple times of applying, but I did get into Cornell (after graduating Colgate, interestingly, I did a graduate assistantship coaching at the University of Utah). Although the expectations were high, Dr. D exceeded all the stories I had ever been told, and I did do early Dr. D morning rounds (1-3 am) occasionally, and sometimes I was the only student, which made for a very special learning experience.

Harry, your dad must be very proud of you, and although we didn't know each other long (I ran a single collegiate meet because of recurrent injury), you reflected many of those same character traits of your Dad. It is an honor to be able to post my memories of your father.

Another phrase of Dr. D, "life is too short not to share information." Well, we have all been blessed with the long and well lived life of Dr. D and his contributions to our profession. God bless the deLaHunta family and may these and your family memories bring you joy, happiness and peace during this time of loss.

*Greg "Woody" Lisciandro, DVM
Class of 1991*

Greg Lisciandro - September 27, 2021 at 01:43 AM

SN

“ Whenever I see patient with a neurologic issue I hear Dr. D's voice in my head saying "what's the anatomic diagnosis?". He was an amazing teacher and managed to make the complex field of neurology approachable for the general practitioner. I am so honored to have been his student. My deepest condolences to his family. As you can see from this tribute wall he had an incredible impact and he lives on in all of us.

Sally Nicolson DVM '00

Sally Nicolson - September 16, 2021 at 11:10 AM

BL

“ Unreplaceable, unforgettable and amazing! My deepest condolences to the deLahunta family. What an amazing teacher and human being. I am honored to have had my life touched by his. I still say "Chi - who-a who-a" to this day and have never had a problem spelling it. Thank you Dr. D for all the wisdoms and great memories. A life very well lived!

Bethann Lewis, '95

Bethann Lewis - September 03, 2021 at 04:58 PM

JD

“ Friday afternoon neuro rounds: The large animal breezeway with smells of hay, and beasts wafting from one large doorway to the other. Students with their bookbags, faculty, residents and interns all tired from the week but expectantly and eagerly gathered from the inner workings of the hospital, all shoulder to shoulder surrounding the large open space around Dr. D and the animal he was holding. You could here a pin drop. Having instructed us on what to look for, he leads the horse in a short trot and when done, his booming voice having no trouble finding every corner of the barn, says "That's inappropriate." I still hear that every time I find a neurologic deficit in an animal, and often say it out loud myself. Thanks, Dr. D. You were loved by so many and live on in everything you gave us.
Janine DiStephan '92

Janine DiStephan - September 01, 2021 at 09:54 AM

LD

“ As everyone else has said, Dr. D had a profound impact on his students. His love of learning and teaching was infectious—he had a gift for sharing knowledge like no other professor that I ever had. And, he was a wonderful person as well—I always enjoyed seeing him over the years after graduation when our paths crossed. Thank you, Dr D, for being an inspiration to so many and my deepest condolences to his family.
Liz Dole, DVM '86

Liz Dole - August 29, 2021 at 11:50 PM



“ My senior year of Veterinary School at UF started with a four week externship to Cornell Veterinary School. I had heard what an amazing experience it was to watch him do his neurology consults, so I asked him if I could meet with him to observe. He was so kind and said sure, meet at 4. Then he casually added AM! Well every day I did it and it was such a marvelous experience, I did not regret 1 minute of lost sleep. He spent so much time with me even though I was not a Cornell Vet Student.

He was a remarkable man and I will always treasure those early morning teaching sessions.

To the deLahuanta family, my heart and prayers are with you. He was indeed a special teacher, veterinarian and person.

Robert Schick DVM ACVD

Robert Schick - August 29, 2021 at 08:00 PM

RP

“ Dr. D was present at my veterinary school interview in 1970. At the time, I wondered why there was a student taking part in interviewing me. Little did I know that "student" would be my most respected, revered, and inspirational teacher!

Dr. D drew the answers out of you with patience. He had more confidence in us as students than we had in ourselves, and he worked with each student to help them succeed. His energy and excitement were contagious, inspiring us to do better, and when you came up with the right answer or insight, he was so excited you couldn't help but be excited also (and relieved). He had a unique style that made you feel like a colleague, even though it was obvious he had so much information he wanted you to understand. It was an honor and a privilege to be one of his students. He will never be forgotten, and his spirit will live on through all the students he inspired to become better veterinarians, better teachers, and better people.

My condolences to his family. I hope you can see how much he was loved by the veterinary community and all he touched.

Roger Peduzzi, Vet '74

Roger Peduzzi - August 26, 2021 at 07:39 PM

AD

“ What a sad day for Dr D's family, his friends and the 1000's of veterinary professionals that he inspired. The end of a era but not the end of the memories or his impact. Feeling so lucky to have been in his classes. He holds the title of the best teacher I ever had. And I still hear his voice every time I hop a dog.

Alison Hazel DVM '92

Alison Hazel DVM - August 26, 2021 at 04:11 PM

LC

“ *Simply a great teacher, a great veterinarian, and a truly amazing person. I am very grateful for all the wisdom he shared with us at Cornell.*

Laurie Coger - August 26, 2021 at 04:07 PM

BV

“ *D, my teacher, my friend, my mentor, and my friend. He will be missed, but never forgotten.*
Beth Valentine, Class of 1981

Beth Valentine - August 26, 2021 at 02:47 PM

JS

“ *My sincere condolences to Dr. D's family. It was my pleasure to work in the College of Veterinary Medicine and my honor to have met and known Dr. D. There should be a "Hall of Fame" for veterinarians like him!* *Jill Short*

Jill Short - August 26, 2021 at 11:28 AM

SW

“ *Dr. D somehow instilled neurology into my resistant brain such that random, pertinent knowledge still pops out at opportune times. His lectures and rounds were always fascinating and informative. (I wish I had his magic when I present or teach!) Decades after graduation he still holds a place of honor in my memories. I am extremely grateful to have been able to learn from him.*

*Stephanie West DVM
Cornell '89*

Stephanie West - August 26, 2021 at 10:52 AM

ST

“ I had many great teachers and mentors at Cornell but Dr. D was my favorite. There is no doubt that he had a huge impact on my life and my professional career. Neuro rounds were the highlight of my week as a student and when I worked summer nights in ICU I looked forward to Dr. D breezing through at 4am and bringing patients into the ICU for their Neuro Exams so I could watch. I never tired of watching him and listening to him - he was a force of nature. It was inspiring to observe someone so brilliant and so experienced who still got excited about every case and his enthusiasm was infectious. He was a huge factor in my deciding to pursue further training and ultimately an academic career where I could aspire to make a difference in the careers of my students, interns, and residents. I had the great honor of teaching Medicine and Neurology to veterinary students for more than 30 years, and Dr. D was never far from my thoughts, as I tried to model my teaching and my approach to neurologic gait analysis after his example. Dr. D also helped me on several occasions with my research into canine exercise intolerance neurologic disorders, even volunteering to look at dozens of videos of affected dogs and helping me to describe and interpret the abnormalities we observed. Dr. D was an incredible teacher and mentor. His passing is no doubt a huge loss, but he leaves behind a legacy of students, interns and residents that he inspired to embrace and enjoy Neurology and veterinary faculty all over the world who he inspired to love teaching.

Susan Meric Taylor DVM DACVIM, Cornell 1982.

Susan Taylor - August 26, 2021 at 12:52 AM

JL

“ *Dr. D made every student want to be a neurologist. His passion was infectious. Because of that, Cornell graduates from his era approach neurological cases with far more confidence and expertise than any other graduates. He was always happy to help, even long after graduation, and enjoyed meeting former students at conferences and seminars throughout the years. Just 5 short years ago my daughter (Cornell 2005) and I (Cornell 1976), both former students of his, cornered him after attending one of his lectures in Boston for this “reunion” photo. She graduated his last year at Cornell!*

Dr. D, your voice will echo in the ears of everyone you taught every time we ponder a neurological case for as long as we all shall live... and beyond. You were a rare and wonderful gift to our distinguished profession. Thank you for your unparalleled inspiration.

- Jim Lawless, DVM and daughter Lisa Lawless Kimball, DVM



Jim Lawless - August 25, 2021 at 11:03 PM

DF

“ *Dr D was a wonderful teacher in a class by himself. I remember his drawing on the board a diagram of a brain in neuroanatomy. He would use both hands and draw both sides at the same time.
We all miss him
jess franklin 1978*

Dr Jess Franklin - August 25, 2021 at 10:56 PM

LE

“ Like so many Dr. D was an inspiration & role model. He cared & was so dedicated to every student. I'll always remember despite how busy he was he took the time to lecture one-one-one several lectures I missed when I had surgery. Just one small example of his greatness. Deepest sympathy to his family & all of us who will miss him but are better veterinarians because of him.

Laura Eirmann - August 25, 2021 at 12:25 PM

BK

“ My mother, Muriel Keller, was Dr. D's administrative assistant for many years at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Mom would start her work day around 6 am so "D" would have hot coffee to carry him through his workday -which started, as I recall, around 3:30 am. Dr. D was revered around the vet school and well beyond, and I know my mother thoroughly enjoyed and was honored to work with and for him. She also valued the personal friendship he had with D and Pat. We lost mom in 2001 and Dr. D was there to "see her off". He was a force in his field and will be remembered as such throughout the vet school and his many students around the world. For me, when I think of D I can't help but see his unique running posture heading down route 366! My condolences to his family and friends for the loss of this special person-

Betsy Keller

Betsy Keller - August 23, 2021 at 08:42 PM

ME

“ Dr. D was the most amazing professor I ever had. I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to have experienced his brilliance, passion and generosity. Thank you Dr. D for everything!

Marlene Schaefer Eleck '99

Marlene Eleck - August 23, 2021 at 02:58 PM

DA

“*Dr. D was one of the best teachers I ever had the privilege to learn from, and he spoiled the next three years for me. His energy and enthusiasm for science and knowledge over anecdote and story shone through everything class he taught - brining us evidence-based medicine before its time. Who expected anatomy and embryology to be such exciting and memorable classes?*

I was in awe of his ability to illustrate, in colored chalk and drawing with both hands simultaneously, embryonic structures and spinal anatomy.

Many years after graduation, I sat next to him at a dinner in Ithaca and introduced myself and was surprised and gratified that he not only remembered me as a student but kept track of what I did afterward. He cared deeply about the profession and Cornell, but even more about us students.

With love and gratitude,

Doug Aspros

Doug Aspros - August 23, 2021 at 10:52 AM



“*Dr. D was one of the finest people. Caring, fun, funny, and astute. I had the great honor of knowing him because of a job. We always looked forwards to seeing him, and his 10 or so rolls of slide film! God Bless.*

Sally Quick - August 22, 2021 at 10:45 PM

PR

“ Studying for finals ran well into the wee hours one morning and just as I was leaving the office where I was working, Dr D arrived, whistling a tune, dressed in a freshly pressed uniform, ready for the day. It was 3am. Not missing a step Dr. D. greeted me with a cheerful “good morning!” and “don’t worry about it, you’ve got this!” Everyone admires Dr. D’s professional achievements! We are all eternally grateful for the example he set for us to embrace the challenges and enjoy the joys of veterinary medicine. He invested in each and every one of us. He was committed to personally providing a solid educational base for each individual student. I feel so grateful for having had the opportunity to learn from Dr. D!!! Thank you and prayers for his family.

Pamela Reppert - August 22, 2021 at 08:14 PM

GB

“ There simply are not enough words to describe the enormity of the loss to the veterinary community and to all who knew Dr. D. His countless acts of generosity, compassion, and enthusiasm coupled with his gentle spirit made him one of the most incredible people I have ever met. The kindness, encouragement and patience he showed me and all his students was truly extraordinary. He often spoke of his pride in his children and grandchildren as well as his love for his beloved Shirley.

I have always kept a picture of Dr. D above my desk at work for when I feel unmotivated or want to give up and need an infusion of his enthusiasm and passion. He has inspired me every day and will continue to do so for the rest of my career. Being his student was one of the greatest privileges of my life and I will miss him terribly.

My deepest condolences to his family and all those he touched.

*With love and gratitude,
Gina Barone*

Gina Barone - August 22, 2021 at 06:39 PM

MM

“ My/our deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of the incomparable Dr. D. How incredibly blessed I feel to have had his mentorship, friendship, guidance, voice, and influence in my head for my entire veterinary career so far. I cannot imagine being the veterinarian I am without his outstanding teachership. With each exam or client communication, there is some part of my veterinary self that always wanted to uphold Dr. D's standards of excellence that he expected of us, his lifelong students. He commanded a respect and an expectation for us to do the work, to be fully present in his classes. At all times, he was DEEPLY kind and compassionate: I witnessed this many times, most pointedly during my junior year when we had our infamous one-on-one oral applied anatomy exam with Dr. D. It was the end of the semester and my exam with him was still scheduled to occur in a day or two, my only exam left, when my father had a major heart attack at my home in Maryland. Dad was expected to survive but in the ICU. I went to Dr. D, scared but trying to be brave, not knowing what to do (I KNEW I was not done studying). Dr. D offered me several options: 1) I could take my oral exam at the end of the summer after I had taken care of my father; 2) I could drive back up sooner if I wanted to to take my exam; or 3) I could take my exam right now, pass/fail. He said, "look, let's just take it now," he asked me 4 basic questions from the class, told me I passed, and said, "get on the road, kiddo, and go take care of your father." I have never forgotten his grace and humanity, and his faith in me that I would or had absorbed his classes' information. Dr. D's wee-hour early morning hospital rounds were a gift in case problem-solving for students who went, Fri noontime neuro rounds a great display of the delight in how the body works.

Gratefully, over the years since, we remained friends, with hand letters and emails, visiting in person sometimes, and him encouraging my children on their own unique paths. When I saw he was teaching as an in-person continuing ed neurology speaker even in his retirement, I made sure to go, like watching a rock star in concert. I could not say it enough to him, "Dr. D, you know how much you mean to me and to an entire generation of veterinarians

and I will never be able to thank you." He laughed and said something humble, probably having heard that sentiment from so many others! Be at rest, Dr. D, and Job Well Done!! You were so loved by so many.

Monica Bors Mansfield, '87

Monica Bors Mansfield - August 22, 2021 at 04:46 PM

JD

“*Dr. D impacted our lives and professional development in many different ways. On learning that I was trained as a population geneticist he handed me pedigrees of Gordon Setters affected with cerebellar abiotrophy. That turned into my co-authoring a JAVMA article with him my sophomore year, jumpstarting my career as a veterinary clinical geneticist, and meeting my wife Candice, a Gordon Setter breeder.*

I atypically aced his neurology final exam just because I didn't want to disappoint him. That was the relationship that Dr. D had with us. The worst thing for him wasn't not knowing an answer. It was not putting in the effort. Referral specialists comment that they can identify Cornellians because we all know how to do a neuro exam. (Thank you, Friday neuro rounds.)

Dr. D would tell you that he wasn't the father of veterinary neurology (Hoerlein) and he wasn't even the "real" Dr. D. (Dr. Delahanty). But he was a giant in our profession, a dedicated mentor, and a wonderful caring person. Knowing that he is no longer in Rye for a phone call or e-mail is sad. Rest in Peace Sandy.

Jerry Bell '82

Jerold S Bell DVM - August 22, 2021 at 11:37 AM

Lois
Rich

“ *I truly loved the man. He was brilliant, dedicated to his profession, and loved sharing knowledge with his vet students. I considered him my mentor, and during my third year when I was diagnosed with cancer, he advised me to get the necessary surgery ASAP and arranged for his lectures to be taped. Each week they were mailed to me at home and because of D I did not fall behind my class.*

He was universally loved and respected for his contributions to neurology and neuropathology- as well as teaching. He had a unique style and sense of humor, and his energy made us all crave learning. We were so lucky to have known him.

Thank you to his family for sharing his light with the veterinary world, and sincere condolences for your loss.

Lois C Rich, 2001

Lois Rich - August 22, 2021 at 07:19 AM

D'

“ The first time I saw Dr. D, I thought he was part of the custodial staff. He was dressed in all white, pushing a cart of VHS tapes and waiting for an elevator.

He soon became an outsized influence on my life. Anatomy, embryology, and neurology became fascinating subjects because of his enthusiasm. He inspired me to pursue neurology as a career, along with 4 others in my class alone.

Dr. D, your lectures I recorded are my audio treasures. They are one of the countless ways you live on through your students. Thank you for being who you are, for choosing to be a teacher, for keeping a binder of every class photo in your office so you'd always remember your students, for showing us old videos that connected us to the history of the college and the profession, for putting on weekly neuro rounds that showed us what collaboration and life-long learning can look like, for answering questions by email years after I graduated, and for so many other things I won't remember but have left their mark.

He was the best teacher I've ever had. I consider myself lucky to have been his student.

Rest in peace, Dr. D.

Dharshan Neravanda

Class of 2003

Dharshan Neravanda '03 - August 22, 2021 at 01:38 AM

RW

“ There's not enough space or time to state all the ways Dr. D influenced my life as teacher and mentor. Accompanying him on 5 am neuro rounds was enlightening and challenging. He was endlessly patient, guiding us toward a diagnosis, pulling the answers out of us, and so obviously pleased when we came to the correct conclusion. He was always looking out for his students, and aiding them in their careers. After second year I had a once in a lifetime opportunity but was worried because I would miss the first week or so of third year classes. When I talked to D. about it he just looked at me and said, c'mon, are you kidding? This is a great opportunity that you will regret if you don't go. Don't worry about the classes, you can just catch up when you get back, the notes and books will be there. I was really grateful for his support, and appreciated his candor. As a freshman I also had the pleasure of adopting his beautiful black lab (and freshman and junior anatomy model dog) Strider. Later, I would bring Strider back in for the anatomy classes and tests. It was obvious that D. and Strider maintained a bond over the years as Strider would race at top speed down the hallway to D's office and D. would jump up to greet him. Whenever possible I tried to apply everything D. taught me to my zoo animal cases (not always successfully!). I am honored and humbled to have had him as a teacher. My deepest sympathy to his entire family. RIP Dr. D!

Roberta Wallace '85

Roberta Wallace - August 21, 2021 at 06:26 PM

MM

Roberta, I remember Strider! Dr. D had such affection for that dog!

Monica Bors Mansfield - August 22, 2021 at 04:52 PM

M'

Strider was one of a kind, too!

Michael Roth '85 - August 24, 2021 at 08:08 AM

GD

Dr. D was my senior seminar adviser and a wonderful inspiration during Vet School, my Anesthesiology Residency at Cornell, and later even when I did my second residency in Laboratory Animal Medicine in Chicago, I ran into him. There are at least 20 drugs that had neurological side effects that I recognized from Dr. D's instruction in Neuroanatomy and Advanced Clinical Neurology. The investigators in a number of Contract Research Facilities and Pharmaceutical Companies did not believe me until I pointed out from Dr. D's notes and his book that these signs could be localized to specific parts of the brain of Non-Human Primates, Dogs, and Rodents. When the Veterinary Pathologist confirmed these lesions, many of these Physicians and Pharmacologists had a great respect for Dr. D's instruction and research. Dr. D made have made great strides with instructing veterinary students and providing excellent clinical service but in my viewpoint, his instruction saved many human lives from major side effects of a great number of pharmaceutical agents which could have proceeded through the drug approval process. I'll always remember the early morning hours after working on difficult colic cases during my Veterinary Anesthesiology Residency when Dr. D would arrive, his kind words and encouragement gave me the boost I needed to provide the best service possible.

Gary P. Goldberg DVM, DACLAM - August 25, 2021 at 11:21 AM

RW

Strider was really the best dog that anyone could ever hope to have. Friendly, obedient and so patient with all the anatomy students one by one palpating the white spots placed on him indicating important anatomic structures. A great personality and a great teacher in his own right. Just like D!

Roberta W.

Roberta Wallace - August 26, 2021 at 12:32 AM

CV

“ My deepest condolences to Dr. DeLahunta's family. I worked at the gym that he used to frequent and he always came in with a smile on his face. He was deeply inspiring to myself and many of the members, especially as he was able to keep up with members half his age. He was one of my favorite people to see each day. He was definitely one of a kind.

Crystal Vetter - August 21, 2021 at 05:06 PM

KB

“ A deeply depressing day to learn of his loss. Over the years we kept in casual contact and had mutual faculty friends at Edinburgh. Our last communication was just a few months ago and will share that he was still very busy being the D we all knew, currently revising the dissection of the dog and also working out regularly on an upright stationary bicycle. Perhaps only death could slow him down. I recall Dr. Sack commenting (in 1975) that "he's going to burn himself out in a few years".

Keith (Kit) Blackmore '79

Keith Blackmore - August 21, 2021 at 02:30 PM

GP

“ We will miss seeing Dr. deLahunta here at the Rye Public Library. Accompanied by his lovely partner Shirley, we were always delighted with their visits and sharing stories about travel destinations, books and favorite authors! He will remain a special memory for us all. Our deepest condolences to his family,

The Staff at Rye Public Library

Gwen Putnam-Bailey - August 21, 2021 at 11:57 AM

LR

Dr. D was one of the finest teachers I ever had, a brilliant clinician and a true mentor. His Friday afternoon rounds were a must-see event. His enthusiasm was so contagious, we just couldn't wait for the next neuro case to walk (or hop) in. The world has lost a great teacher! Linda Weiss Ruth (Cornell DVM '81)

Linda Ruth - August 28, 2021 at 10:32 PM

LD

*“ An absolutely incredible human being. I'm sure that God broke the mold after Dr. D's birth. He will be missed by an infinite number of people. Teacher extraordinaire. I feel so lucky to have had him on my admissions committee, as my faculty advisory and, of course, as my professor. My condolences to his family. RIP.
Les Dattner '75*

Leslie and Maxine Dattner - August 21, 2021 at 11:42 AM

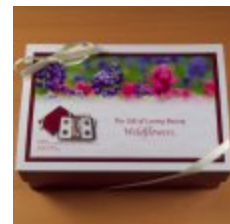
GR

*“ Deepest condolences to the family,. I am saddened by his departure! We had so many great times together backpacking, and on our demanding bike trips! I expected him to go on forever! He was always my hero. What an extraordinary human being.
Gerry Rehkugler*

Gerry Rehkugler - August 21, 2021 at 10:32 AM

WF

“ With love, Gina Barone and family purchased the Wildflower Seeds - Build A Memory Garden for the family of Alexander deLahunta.



With love, Gina Barone and family - August 21, 2021 at 10:01 AM

CB

“ I was so saddened to hear of Dr.D’s passing. I am a graduate from the Class of 1996 and to this day he crosses my mind each time I examine a pet with possible neurological disease. He had such a gift of teaching, and his enthusiasm of the material radiated in the classroom as well as during rounds. Sharing hundreds of neurological exams performed over the years when he would show his films were priceless in learning about the most common, and rarest, of diseases. Two that stuck out in my mind include the pathognomonic gait of a dog with contracture of the infraspinatus tendon, as well as the appearance of a dog with tetanus, both of which I’ve seen exactly once in general practice. Thanks to Dr.D, I walked into the room, observed the dog from a distance, and exclaimed “oh! I know what he has! But let me think for a minute!” (Both dogs recovered uneventfully) You will live on, Dr.D, in the hearts of so many of your students. May you be in heaven running with the “chi-hewa-hewas”. You were so very loved.

Chris Boshart-Adamson - August 21, 2021 at 09:32 AM

CW

“ The incredible, inspirational Dr. D. A man whose thought process, enthusiasm, and memorably clear penetrating voice injected us with his love of veterinary medicine. The ability keep us awake at 8 AM with a magical control of slide projectors and verbal mastery of neuroanatomy was a gift we will never forget.
A memory: sitting on a rock overlooking Rye Beach in 1983, I noticed a man walking up the shoreline about 400 yards away, not just walking but devouring and observing every detail as he walked. Immediately my mind said Delahunta !! I walked down to the sand to intercept, 10 feet away he pointed at me “Williams 77” he said. Unforgettable, amazing , man and teacher.
Craig Williams 1977

Craig Williams - August 21, 2021 at 09:17 AM

SH

“ *Godspeed, Dr De Lahunta.*

I had the privilege of being your student at Cornell from 1988 onward. Such brilliant and talented teacher, who had the rare ability to impart his passion and excitement for neurology and neuroanatomy to his students.

I am humbled and blessed to have been one of them. There could be no finer a mentor.

Rest in peace

Susan Hayden - August 21, 2021 at 08:52 AM

MC

“ *We often crossed paths while running. Even after vet school he showed much interest in my commitment to competitive fitness and my mentor & also student of his Norm Goldstein. Unbelievable teacher with those 2 slide projectors going at one time. More importantly unbelievable human being*

Mark Chmielewicz - August 21, 2021 at 07:32 AM

RS

“ My thoughts go out to all the family, students and friends of the legendary Dr D. It was a brilliant plan to give us his neurology class first semester of freshman year. It hit us immediately that we would actually be treating real animals! It was thrilling and captivating. And hard. But it inspired us for the coming years. And since then I can never suppress a smile when I think of Scottie Cramps. We would all get swept up in his diagnostic cases as he moved from history to exam (including videos of the patient) and further description of likely diagnoses. We would become thoroughly invested in the patient and the outcome. Our excitement would grow and then the thought would form, “please don’t let the next image be brain cross sections!”

Robin Truelove Stronk '75

Robin Stronk - August 21, 2021 at 07:29 AM

TN

“ My deepest condolences to the Dr. de Lahunta's family. My first encounter with Dr. D. was when I visited Cornell on an interview for the anatomical pathology residency. It was a Monday, so we naturally attended his neuropathology (histopathology) rounds. His infectious enthusiasm for veterinary neuropathology sealed the deal for me to accept the offer. As a resident, I always admired his patience and diligence in dissecting the tissues of the neurological cases. Then he would always return the histological slides with his notes so the resident on the case can include Dr. D's notes and observations with the report. Phenomenal teacher and a warm-hearted man. Thank you for all your knowledge, humor, and wisdom for us in the pathology residency program! I will miss you Dr. D.! Rest in peace.

Tamas Nagy, DVM, PhD, DACVP

Tamas Nagy - August 20, 2021 at 10:54 PM

RE

“ Yom Kippur is the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. Most Jewish Students would not attend classes that day. Considering this, most professors agreed to only review the course work and not introduce new material. Dr.D had a different idea. He would teach new material that day. I was understandably upset. I was upset until he said - and I will meet the Jewish Students at sundown when the holiday ends.

Here is a very busy, famous , brilliant professor making a most magnanimous gesture. He didn't want any student to miss a learning experience-Jewish or not. He donated his time for the benefit of his students. He was truly one of a kind

Robert Efron - August 20, 2021 at 10:44 PM

RE

“ *I feel so lucky to have had Dr. D as a teacher and a colleague who always was ready to share his knowledge! Thank you Dr. D for all you gave us and the animals we care for. Roger Ellis*

Roger Ellis - August 20, 2021 at 10:10 PM

KR

“ *With deepest condolences, you were an awe inspiring and yet so down to earth teacher. You will be missed but I am thankful that your heart lives on in uncountable students. Goodbye Dr. D!! Kristine Chan (Cornell DVM Class of '03)*



Kristine - August 20, 2021 at 09:06 PM

DM

“ One of the best and most memorable teachers ever! I feel honored to have learned anatomy and neurology from the best. Rest in Peace, Dr. deLahunta. You will be missed. My deepest condolences to his family.

Donna Mignemi - August 20, 2021 at 08:47 PM



“ What a privilege it was to learn from such a compassionate brilliant man. His legacy to the veterinary profession will be enduring. I remember the practical exams in Applied Anatomy that he administered. The thought of a practical exam was intimidating, yet Dr. D with gentle guidance could coax your brain through the reasoning process how to apply the knowledge you had learned from him, and lead you to the correct answer. Our class was in awe of his wisdom and adored him fiercely. Neuro rounds were always crowded with students excited to learn from a legend. He will be greatly missed. I want to thank his family for sharing him with so many of us over the years. God bless you. Michelle Ferrera, DVM Class of 1993



Michelle Ferrera - August 20, 2021 at 08:46 PM



“ It is because of Dr. D that I Made it through vet school. I was diagnosed with a seizure disorder when I was in college and began having trouble while in vet. school due to long hours and stress. I later learned that Dr. D was supportive of my trying to make it through the program when many opposed to letting me continue. It is because of him that I fought hard to stay and graduate. I made it and credit it mostly to his encouragement. I will never forget him.
Karen Negrin, DVM 1998.

Karen Negrin - August 20, 2021 at 08:36 PM

JC

Dr.D was a wonderful teacher who inspired us to learn with his enthusiastic presentation of case histories. He was firm but kind, and made us want to be the best we could be so that we wouldn't disappoint him. He will be greatly missed.

Janet Christiansen - August 20, 2021 at 09:10 PM

CC

“ I remember Dr. D telling us the story of his admission to veterinary school. The gist of it was that he did not have the best undergraduate academic record, and it sounded as if he almost had to plead to get in. He promised the admissions committee that they would not be disappointed in him, and if admitted he would work hard and graduate in the top of his class, which he did. I think this experience contributed to his legendary skill as a teacher, his boundless enthusiasm for veterinary medicine, and his ability to encourage students even when they felt that they were not worthy of a professor's time.

I was also impressed that not only did he arrive at school around 2:30 every morning to make his rounds, but most days he arrived by bicycle! I often rode my bike to school, too, but my apartment was only 3 miles away, not way out in Dryden! His genuine concern for the welfare of the animals he examined was always evident, too. When he had finished studying an animal with an unusual, but not life-threatening abnormality, he tried to find a home for it. Many students ended up with interesting pets this way. One day, as a junior in one of his lectures, he had another case that needed a home. After pointing out the dog's finest features, he first asked, and then almost begged for someone to take it. Finally, a voice from the back of the room called out, "Dr. D, try the freshmen. We already have too many misfit pets!"

Chris Camann '80

Christine Camann - August 20, 2021 at 08:32 PM

BP

“ will miss Dr D - won't miss "special visceral afferent vs special visceral efferent!"

Bill Pomper - August 20, 2021 at 08:16 PM

TF

“*Dr. D was the best teacher that I had throughout my education. He truly cared that you learned and did everything to make sure that you did learn it. If you had a problem with the goal, he helped you. He was a genuine person and a blessing to all of the students that were able to interact with him. RIP*

Ted Fischer DVM 1982

Ted fischer - August 20, 2021 at 08:02 PM

SC

“*I was privileged to have Dr. D as my faculty advisor. I remember being called into his office second semester of first year where he asked me why I was doing so lousy in large animal anatomy while doing so well in his neuroanatomy course. Didn't I spend any time studying large animal? I explained to him that I spent 95% of my time studying large animal anatomy but I found his course logical and easy to remember. He told me to do better! My other memory that has always stuck with me was how he personally typed up his class notes for his 3rd year neuro course- while in a sling for a broken collar bone sustained in a bike accident. Those notes went on to be his Neuroanatomy and Neurology textbook. The world has lost a great teacher, mentor and friend.*

Steve Cohen DVM '75

Steven Cohen - August 20, 2021 at 07:46 PM

ER

“ My deepest condolences to the family - there are countless memories of our beloved "Dr. D". I feel honored and humbled to have learned from him. His contributions to the field of Vet Med are too numerous to count. But what I will remember most about him was his passion to learn and to teach. He was always right in the thick of things, and knew students by name. His smile and his enthusiasm when his students were learning from him were contagious - it made everyone around him as excited about neurology as he was. He taught because he loved it. And it showed. That is why students gathered around him at 2 a.m. to do rounds in the hospital, and why I chose to do my Senior Seminar with him as my advisor. His door was always open and he was always available for a question. His classrooms were always packed full because even published researchers and successful doctors wanted to learn from him, and yet, he would sit in on other lectures, to see what he could learn from others, as well. I feel very fortunate to have known him during my time at Cornell. RIP, Dr. D..... Gone but never forgotten.

Eve Ryan - August 20, 2021 at 07:25 PM

MT

“ I was so nervous for the freshman oral clinical anatomy exam that I couldn't remember the "olecranon". Dr. D still eased me through the rest of the exam so I could collect my thoughts and move on. When we stepped into the pen for the horse questions, the slightly cranky horse had had enough and nipped him on the butt. I bit my lip hard lest I laugh out loud at this renown professor, fearing it would end up being my last moment at Cornell. I held my composure and passed the test, but I'll bet that if I had laughed, he would have, too. I loved every minute of his classes, even though I'm no neurologist. I never had such an energetic and enthusiastic teacher and I feel lucky to have been his student. And I never forgot that to get a good radiograph of the bullae, you had aim the beam "looking down his yop"!

Mike Tanneberger DVM 1986

Michael Tanneberger - August 20, 2021 at 06:25 PM

GD

“ I was saddened to learn of Dr. D's passing. He was a huge inspiration to so many of us. My fondest memory of him took place when I delivered my senior seminar in 1977 in the old Jame Law Auditorium. Dr. D was my advisor and the topic I chose to present was "Narcolepsy in Dogs". We were studying a dog named Ginger who was afflicted with this condition. Dr D took many videos of Ginger demonstrating cataplectic episodes where this little dog would get excited, run towards one of us when called and suddenly collapse, totally motionless.

During my presentation, as I was talking, Dr. D got a little ahead of me and started showing one of the videos. I turned around to see which video was being shown. This one had Dr. D running ahead of ginger, and then calling her to him, at which time Ginger started running toward him and then she collapsed. I don't know where I got the nerve, but I then ad libbed the following:

"Like most of us in this room, Ginger appears to have some difficulty keeping up with Dr. D." The audience erupted in laughter, with no one laughing harder than our beloved Dr. D.

Rest in peace.

Gary Yarnell, DVM '77

Gary Yarnell DVM - August 20, 2021 at 06:09 PM

KJ

“ A true legend who impacted all parts of veterinary teaching and specialty medicine. Throughout my four years at Cornell, Dr. D was always there - pulling an all nighter studying for anatomy (he was there to cheer us on or give us some help), studying for histopath, clinical neurology and of course his neurology rounds. He made neurology easy and make sense - a true educator and always with a sense of humor. Always gracious and kind and someone to emulate. One of the phrases I remember most - "The only thing a golf course is good for - running on!" I have to agree :) We will miss you and thanks for all.
Kristin (Marschman) Jacob '93



Kristin Jacob - August 20, 2021 at 05:39 PM

E1

“ I had the privilege to work for Dr. D the summer of my freshman year. He was encouraging and rigorous at the same time. I remember being pretty petrified for his oral clinical anatomy exam, but he was great at coaxing coherent answers from me. My favorite memory though was his demonstration of what nystagmus looked like. Perched on a stool, rapidly spinning himself around several times, then abruptly stopping, while his eyes still spun - it was perfect.
A great teacher whose enthusiasm inspired anyone fortunate enough to attend his classes or seminars. He will always be remembered.

Eileen Wilentz, DVM 1990 - August 20, 2021 at 05:37 PM

J'

“ No professor ever had a deeper impact on my professional development than Dr. D. I wasn't at all interested in neurology, but missing Friday Neuro Rounds was not even an option. Lucky to have had him as my faculty advisor and honored to have been able to call him teacher, mentor, and friend. Coincidentally, we now live five doors down from his home in Dryden and not a day has passed since we moved back to NY last year when I haven't thought of him as I drive by his place. Godspeed Dr. D. Jorge Colón '95



Jorge Colón '95 - August 20, 2021 at 05:25 PM

J'

“ What an incredible man, scholar, teacher, clinician. To this day I still say "Chi-hooa-hooa" when I see those tiny dogs, which I do a lot now in California. There will never be another like him.

Joanne Zahorsky-Reeves '95 - August 20, 2021 at 05:22 PM

M8

“ I feel honored to have had Dr. D as a teacher and mentor during my veterinary education. A true legend in his field and as a human being.

Michael Roth, 85 - August 20, 2021 at 05:11 PM

JF

“ While I was vet school class of '71, we both lived in Dryden NY. I used to feed his “critters” at his house when he was on vacation. Best part was he let me drive his Corvair convertible too. ! He had a good “run” and charisma his memory. John Flinton DVM

John flinton - August 20, 2021 at 04:49 PM



“ One of my fondest memories in vet school was the neuroanatomy with Dr. D. He spoke so quickly and I remember leaving that first class wondering what an umbiLlicus was. A fabulous teacher!!
Victor Schwartz, 67

Victor Schwartz - August 20, 2021 at 04:48 PM

A'

“ Early AM neuro rounds and Anatomy were the highlights of my time at Cornell, inspiring a life-long personal and professional interest in neurology and neuroanatomy. He never failed to keep us riveted and engaged. Once after a lengthy and highly detailed review of canine male reproductive structure and function, and description of “the tie,” he paused and remarked . . . “Fantastic dedication to a sexual experience!” Thanks for everything Dr D--

Anne Hermans '90 - August 20, 2021 at 04:44 PM

GD

“ Dr. D taught me the essence of structure-function relationships. Before his neuro anatomy class the CNS was a big mystery to me. His plain speech, overhead drawings, and voice-over of old black and white films made a complex topic seem so clear and easy. In my later clinical experience I always felt confident in neuro, and in my current role in drug discovery I still see his overhead drawings of neuroanatomy in my head when I work on skeletal muscle or motor neuron topics. Maybe most importantly, he was happy to admit to things he did not know. In the presence of a giant, such open humility is rare, and to this day I only trust people who are willing to admit to not having the answers sometimes. Dr.D's impact was immense and lasting on all of us who were lucky to learn from him, in ways I never would have anticipated as a young whipper-snapper.



Gita Dittmar - August 20, 2021 at 04:40 PM

MF

“ I got to know Dr. D's son Scott, who was in Navy dry dock in Baltimore, when I worked at Reistertown Veterinary Hospital. A terrific young man exemplifying a terrific family. I got to see Dr. D as he visited his son and when he chatted with my mentor Dr. Wendell Loomis. I felt quite honored.

Mark Foley - August 20, 2021 at 04:39 PM

HA

“ So sad to hear of Dr. D's passing. I have two memories of him that really stick with me. Dr. D used to run (in his cut-off coveralls) by the barn where I kept my horse every day. I still remember, before I went to vet school and I was a vet tech in the small animal clinic ICU, asking him one early morning (like 3:00 AM when he would stop in to do his ICU exams), if he could kindly stop in at the barn to do a neuro exam on my horse, who was having issues. He stopped up short, looked at me ominously, and I thought- oh no- I have really made him mad and he said,..."young lady, you never ask a runner to stop a run to look at a horse!" I was so embarrassed, then he chuckled and said, if I would drive him back after the run, he would be happy to do it. And he did. The second is when I was the zoo vet at Franklin Park Zoo in Boston and had a neurologic Grevy zebra. I had been talking to Dr. D about the case and the zebra died during a horrific snowstorm. Dr. D had asked that I send him the brain. I called him during the blizzard to say I was doing the necropsy and was there any special procedure/parts of the brain he wanted and ...again he said... "young lady, isn't there a horrific blizzard in Boston right now". I said yes, I was outside in the snow doing the necropsy and he said-that is crazy- just go home and stay safe, the zebra can wait. He was an amazing man, teacher, and inspiration to many of us and left so many memories of what hard work, dedication, and a brilliant mind can achieve. Hayley Weston Murphy '92

Hayley - August 20, 2021 at 04:36 PM

SL

“ The best teacher I ever had, as well as a kind and generous mentor. I accidentally copied Dr. D. on an off-color joke once. I was mortified and profusely apologetic. He thanked me, saying it was the highlight of his day. Dr. D. was a highlight in so many lives, the reason veterinarians everywhere are so good at neurology, a model of the joy of work. It was a privilege to have known you, Dr. D. I will think of you hopping dogs in heaven. Sarah Lister, '84

Sarah Lister - August 20, 2021 at 04:25 PM

N'

“*Dr. D. was a true hero to all of us underdogs. The most perfect example that we can do anything if we put our minds to it and be persistent. We were all blessed to be part of the knowledge and experience he had to share.*

Nicholas Haley '04 - August 20, 2021 at 04:23 PM

J'

“*Dr. D was a true legend. I feel so blessed to have been one of his many students humbled by his wealth of knowledge and passion to share it. Yes, there were those 3 AM starts to see his early morning rounds and the ever anticipated jam packed Friday afternoon rounds which should never be missed. Applied Anatomy was my favourite- his seemed to tirelessly and enthusiastically teach the same course, practical and lecture 3 times a week for us and always was excited. I cannot lie, sometimes I attended twice just to relearn something. I could hear his voice for years later when doing a tricky surgery where the anatomy was a challenge to remember (and always reviewed the book, which is very well worn now). His passion to learn and to teach was incredible and so appreciated. As a runner, we would often see his scarecrow like stride out around the vet school running in all sorts of weather. Rest In Peace, your legacy lives on in all of us who were lucky enough to have known you and learned from you. Long May we learn!*

Jess Spatz DVM '88 - August 20, 2021 at 04:15 PM

JB

“ *The best professor ever! He was my advisor! My grades took a dip and he called me in his office. I was more than nervous and he said you know why you are here. I said yes and then he told be to keep working hard. I did! The other remembrance was. Dr D telling me he would not grade any more of my exams unless I printed all my answers! I am now an accomplished printer! He was an amazing champion for our profession! I have one of his bow ties!! Rest In Peace!*

Jerry Bilinski - August 20, 2021 at 04:10 PM

LT

“ *I remember so much about having the privilege of being taught by this outstanding man. He showed us videos of animals with neurologic disease in our first year and always brought the neuroanatomy home with concrete clinical examples. I also attended his Friday afternoon Neuro rounds and remember his collegial exchanges with John Cummings. The large animal breezeway was packed with students and clinicians, and there was a real sense of collegiality and excitement for learning. I also remember looking him in the eye when he asked me a question about an equine cervical radiograph and I went completely blank - deer in the headlights - and he was kind and supportive. I used everything I learned from him often during my internship, residency, and faculty career. He truly lives on in all of us.*

Lauren Trepanier - August 20, 2021 at 03:50 PM

JM

“ *A true veterinary genius in bow ties! And even more gifted at teaching and inspiring decades of veterinary students with patience and grace. It was an honor to be one of his students.*

Dr. J. McCracken Cornell'99

Jaye McCracken - August 20, 2021 at 03:50 PM



“ *Wildflower Seeds - Build A Memory Garden* was purchased for the family of Alexander deLahunta.



August 20, 2021 at 07:48 AM