

## MARIANNE NARDI LINTON '79

ASSOCIATE VETERINARIAN



AUBURN, AL



**Don't tell Marianne Nardi Linton '79 there are no second acts in life.** For her, first acts are often just preludes.

This was evident during Marianne's formative years growing up in Havertown. She was the community nurturer of creatures great and small.

"I wanted to be a veterinarian ever since I was little, and was known for rescuing birds on the street," Marianne said last June from her new home in Auburn, AL.

"We had one cat, the best cat ever. She let me dress her up in doll clothes. She would follow me to a friend's house and would sit waiting for me at the path. She let me drive her around in a stroller. Amazing..."

When the cat passed on at 16, her late mother Mary "was hysterical; she ran outside, crying."

So Marianne followed up by adopting a rabbit – and limits. "I would have had 100 pets if my parents let me. Fortunately," she said with a chuckle, "they talked sense into me. I knew I'd have to pay for them myself."

Marianne's path to being a vet was not direct. She earned a degree in biology from Villanova University, having been advised by counselors that veterinary school was not practical. "But I couldn't do much with an undergraduate degree in biology," she said. After working in the Aston Veterinary Hospital laboratory, "I refocused and realized I had to go to grad school."

Her Holy Child experience, she said, affirmed that "nothing in life is free, and you have to work through things if they're hard. That helps you no matter what you do in life."

Marianne earned her degree from The School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in 1996 and became an associate veterinarian.

Today she is associate veterinarian at Fur Buds in Opelika, AL, after her family—husband Mark, who works in sales; and children Sara, 20, Sam, 18, and Adam, 14—relocated last spring. For Marianne, it was career advancement, for Mark, it was the chance to reconnect with his cosmopolitan college town.

"It's a great experience," Marianne said. "The practice has changed because you can do so much more now; there's a specialty for everything, which opens up a whole new world for what's possible. Because of early diagnostics and preventive medicine, pets can live to be 20."

Marianne was a Holy Child lifer, one of 17 students in the Class of 1979, "a place where everybody felt respected for whatever you brought to the table."

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"Amazing" teachers, such as the late Dan Algeo P'83'85'90'95 and the late Ed Kowalchick, were lifelong mentors. "Even today, I hear their words in my head, correcting my grammar," Marianne said. "They were such great teachers that were really dedicated to kids learning what they needed to get through life."

"Holy Child was a great community and really the biggest thing was that it made you feel special. You didn't have to be good at everything; you had to be good at something. At that age, you needed to be recognized for your own strengths and not compared to someone else."

And to learn to live your dreams. ✦