

A tribute to Barbara Weinraub

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It is our honor and privilege to dedicate this section of our journal to Barbara Weinraub, who has been the face of Penn Orthopaedics since 1991 serving the Department with profound dedication as the residency coordinator. “Barb” (as the residents and faculty affectionately call her) is a Philadelphia native, who has chosen to stay in the area her entire life. Barb admits to loving the Jersey Shore, and she

particularly likes to spend the little free time that she has in Sea Isle. Ms. Weinraub can best be defined as a loving mother and grandmother. The mother of two and grandmother of five, she has also nurtured over 250 residents since she began to work at Penn. This is best illustrated by her great stories of the current leaders of our department as she remembers them as medical students and residents, applying and training in a different era of medical education. Barb has been an integral part of several transitions in the program: from the move from PAH to PPMC, to the most recent shift with the grand opening of the John J. Pryor Trauma Center, she has been a unique actor in the evolution of the residency. We wanted to allow her reflections on her time in the program to be expressed in her own words in an interview format.

Barb, what has been your favorite part about working at Penn Orthopaedics?

The residents! I absolutely love spending time with the residents. I love working with all of you for five or six years at a time and watching you grow and change and learn, and I know how hard you work. I know some people call me the “Den Mother,” and I just love it.

How has your job changed since you started?

Well I started initially as a receptionist and switchboard operator in 1978. I had been a cocktail waitress at Tudor House, when my friend Louanne Henderson told me to apply for the job. My son was starting kindergarten, so I wanted a more stable job. In 1980, an office coordinator job opened, and I took it on Dr. Brighton’s recommendation. I trained under, and worked for, Francis Hickman for many years. She is deceased now, but she was my best friend and a wonderful mentor. She taught me everything I know. Then in



Francis Hickman
Residency Coordinator, mentor
and friend.

1991 I interviewed for the residency coordinator job and did that, along with being the faculty coordinator for all the paperwork and credentialing for the faculty. It’s definitely a lot more work now, and there are so many people to keep track of, but I’ve always loved it!

What has been your least favorite part about the job?

Well, there’s so much paperwork these days! Whether it’s duty hours or operative logs, getting everyone’s credentials in on time, submitting requests to the ACGME, running the OITE or inputting the monthly schedules, there’s always more to catch up on. Also, sometimes the faculty have disagreements about things and I get caught in the middle. I try and keep things calm but sometimes they just drive me crazy!

Do you have any regrets about your time at Penn Orthopaedics?

I have no regrets at all about my time at Penn. I am sad about all the people we’ve lost- Leo Leung passed away as a resident about to become chief, and that was very upsetting. We’ve lost other prior residents that went on to do other things but died as young men and women, and it really breaks your heart.

What sets Penn Orthopaedics apart from other residencies?

Well we have many attendings, who were residents here and chose to come back; that just shows you what type of place this is. People love working here; I spend a lot of time

Favorite...

Color?

Green!

Food?

Everything... maybe Alaskan King Crab Legs

Drink?

Grey Goose Martini

Movie?

Pride and Prejudice

Book?

50 Shades of Grey!

Celebrity Crush?

Bradley Cooper, of course

Actress to play me in a movie?

Hmm... Cindy Crawford or Katie Perry

Time of the year?

Christmas

Place?

Jersey Shore!

Quote?

“They’re so book smart; they just don’t have any common sense”

Game?

I used to love Black Jack but now I would say 3 Card Poker...I just hit a straight flush yesterday!

Vacation?

Caribbean Cruise



with Ryan, Christos and Gabe as the chief residents, and of course they get frustrated by the chief resident job, but they're always so nice to me and I think it's the people that make this place so special.

What do you wish was different about Penn Orthopaedics?

I wish the residents had better schedules! I see how hard you all work and how much call and how

many hours you have to put in, and I feel so badly for you. I know it's part of your training, but I wish there was a way to make your hours better.

What do you think about the growth of the faculty in the recent past?

Well, it's great for the residents. And I love them because so many of them were former residents, and some of my favorite residents! I remember all my residents, but some of the special ones came back to teach and work here at Penn, and I just love them: doctors like Samir [Mehta], Jaimo [Ahn], [Charles] Nelson, Brian Sennett, [John] Kelly. And there have been ones that always have a special place in my heart, like Randy Culp who is at the Philadelphia Hand Center.

What are your thoughts on the transition in leadership during your tenure here?

Well, I came to the department in 1978, right as Dr. Brighton was taking over for Dr. Ralston. He was a wonderful chair,

and we've had so many wonderful doctors come through the department, in a lot of different roles. Obviously I worked closely with Dr. Lackman for many years, and I thought Dr. Sennett was such a good interim chief!

When Dr. Levin came here in 2009, he asked me to be his executive assistant and still do all the residency coordinator duties. I didn't think I could do it, but he and Dr. Sennett insisted and I've been doing it ever since. I love Dr. Levin; he is so good to me and always makes me feel important to the program. His wife Helga has been incredibly helpful too. His schedule drives me crazy sometimes, but I love him to death.

What are you going to do now that you're retiring?

Well I've got a big trip planned to Cancun in August with my family that I'm really excited for. I love to play games and babysit my grandkids, and I'm looking forward to spending more time with my husband and kids. We are trying to plan a cruise or two in the future with them.

Can we convince you to stay?

No way! I was making \$700 a night as a cocktail waitress back in 1968; even if you offered me that much, I'm not staying!

Any final words to the residents?

I'm proud of you.

Since Barb joined Penn...

“Millennial generation” began... and all 42 current residents were born!

Over 275 residents have graduated from Penn Ortho

Hollywood has made over 18,000 movies

Invention of the internet, CD-ROM, and iPod

Smallpox eradicated, first human embryonic stem cells isolated, and first mammal cloned

Voyager 1 has traveled over 12 Billion miles

Worldwide population increased from 4.5 to 7.3 billion

Collapse of the Soviet Union, end of Apartheid, and demotion of Pluto as a planet

47 new countries were formed

8 US Presidents inaugurated

8 Constitutional Amendments passed