

In memoriam Wolf-Dieter Prieur

* January 16, 1927 † February 13, 2019

21 March 2019



Wolf-Dieter Prieur (left) with Gary Clayton-Jones

Professor Wolf-Dieter Prieur died on February 13, 2019 at the age of 92. With his passing his colleagues have lost an outstanding figure in veterinary medicine, the AO has lost an individual who was central to the development and the success of AOVET, and his family and friends have lost a man whose humanity and generosity of spirit shone through at even the darkest moments.

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Prieur was born on January 16, 1927 in Breslau (now Wrocław) Poland. He completed his doctorate with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, at the University of Giessen (Germany), and opened his own practice in Duisburg (Germany) in 1957. This was his first step in what was to become a defining feature of his career: the role he played in the subsequent flourishing of small animal clinics in Germany. Although it was still early in his career, he had already made a name for himself at congresses as an engaging and sometimes provocative speaker.

He devoted his professional life to the operative fracture treatment of small animals, and in 1976 moved to the AOVET Center in Waldenburg (Switzerland). He served as executive secretary and director of AOVET for 16 years. Over this time, he made a significant contribution to the adoption of osteosynthesis techniques in small animals, not least through the AOVET courses he held across the world.

He developed surgical techniques and implants, such as the hook plate. He was recognized as a leading authority in his field both nationally and internationally thanks to his zeal for international cooperation, lectures, publications, and contributions to books. He co-edited two editions of the Manual of Internal Fixation in Small Animals, alongside Brinker, Hohn, Olmstead, and Sumner-Smith. This, together with his work on Orthopedic Surgery and Traumatology with Bonath, meant that he was one of the most respected experts in his field.

The peak of his recognition at home came in 1985, when he was awarded the Richard Völker Medal by the German Society for Small Animal Medicine—German Veterinary Society (DGK-DVG), in the United States with professorships at the Michigan State University and the Ohio State University.

As a founding member of the European Society of Veterinary Orthopaedics and Traumatology (ESVOT) Prieur served as its first secretary from 1987 to 1995, and it conferred honorary membership on him in 2000. He was also a founding member of the European College of Veterinary Surgeons (ECVS).

He was also central to the creation of the Journal of Veterinary and Comparative Orthopaedics and Traumatology (VCOT), which is today one of the leading professional journals.

After an international career distinguished by his vision, dedication, and skill, Prieur returned to Germany on retirement. In 1992, he acquired an agricultural estate in the Hunsrück region, where he kept almost all the animal species that

can be found on a farm. This move brought together two strands of his life—his professional achievements in the veterinary field, and the happy childhood years he spent on his grandfather's land.

In 2011, he moved to Bavaria to be closer to his son Joachim, for health reasons. One day, while out looking for his roving canine, Strupp, he had an accident. He sadly did not recover.

Prieur leaves behind a legacy of outstanding commitment to the cause of excellence in the care for small animals and will be remembered by his colleagues not only for his numerous scientific achievements, but also for his open-hearted generosity of spirit to younger colleagues all over the world. He was a dedicated veterinarian and a man who understood the value of mentorship in his passion to spread the word of osteosynthesis far and wide.

He is, and will be, greatly missed by all of us in this community.



Faculty of the Columbus Courses 1977: Wolf-Dieter Prieur standing in the front row at the very left (from the book: History of AOVET, The First 40 Years)



Faculty of the Columbus courses 1985: Wolf-Dieter Prieur standing in the back row, seventh from the left (from the book: History of AOVET, The First 40 Years)



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