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Dr. Joseph Belinsky, veterinarian to R.I. animals for years, dies at 62

WARWICK — Dr. Joseph Belinsky, 62, of 739 Post Road, Warwick, a veterinarian who treated the pets of many Rhode Islanders for more than 35 years and served as veterinarian at the Roger Williams Park Zoo, died in Rhode Island Hospital yesterday after a long illness.



Although he relinquished much of his work as zoo veterinarian several years ago, he was still on call, and prescribed medicine for an ailing bear two weeks ago, according to Roger Valles, zoo director.

Valles said the veterinarian often was called in the absence of his son, Dr. Peter B. Belinsky of Cranston, with whom he practiced veterinary medicine.

His tough exterior at times concealed a compassion and love of animals, his son said today. "He was real gruff on the outside, but ice cream on the inside."

"There were many things that people are not aware of, how far he went to treat his animals. He talked to them like children," said Mrs. Shirley Magsamen, a friend of the Belinsky family for years. "All his whole life was just one big kindness."

Dr. Belinsky was a graduate of Texas A&M University, and later worked for the U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

He then joined the Army veterinary corps, rising to the rank of major. Among other things, he looked after mules at Fort Adams in Newport and members of the canine corps at Burlingame State Park in Charlestown, and in Somerville, N.J.

Later, he supervised the inspection of food for the armed services in Chicago and Boston. In 1946, he returned to Providence and was named city veterinarian, a position in which he was, once again, in charge of food inspection.

He served for several years as the Providence Animal Rescue League veterinarian, became zoo veterinarian in 1962 and for more than 35 years operated the Belinsky Animal Hospital at 1177 Elmwood Ave., Providence.

Dr. Belinsky had a lifelong interest in music, and before going to college had a band which toured the Rhode Island area, his son said.

"At one time, he studied to be a concert pianist," said Mrs. Magsamen, who was first president of the Providence Opera Theater. "Music was just about everything to him. He had a big Hammond organ in his home that he played every day."

"He was a good man. He enjoyed a good practice," said Dr. Seymour Hoffman, a Providence veterinarian who had known Dr. Belinsky for years. "He was

very fast, very quick." Dr. Richard Mello, who served with Dr. Belinsky on the state Board of Veterinary Examiners, said Dr. Belinsky was "very tough, but fair" with persons who applied to become veterinarians in Rhode Island.

Dr. Belinsky was a past chairman of the state Board of Examiners, a past president of the R.I. Veterinarian Association, a past grand chancellor of the Knights of Pythias, and a member of the Jewish War Veterans Association, the Scottish Rite and the Palestine Shrine, and Temple Beth Am.

He was born in Providence, a son of Mrs. Sarah (Torindae) Belinsky of Providence, and the late Samuel Belinsky. He was the husband of Marilyn (Mott) Belinsky.

Besides his widow, mother and son, he is survived by a daughter, Miss Pamela A. Belinsky of Cranston; a sister, Mrs. Bella Awerman of Providence, and a brother, Dr. Gabriel Belinsky, DVM, of Lowell, Mass.

The funeral service will be held tomorrow at 10 a.m. in Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence. Burial will be in Sharon Memorial Park, Sharon, Mass.

BELINSKY, DR.
JOSEPH