In 1978, Dr. Lyndon Graf graduated from Oklahoma State University (OSU) with his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. In 1980, he opened the Marlow Veterinary Clinic where he still practices today. In 2004, Dr. Graf had the pleasure of hooding his oldest son, Tristan Graf, as the younger Graf graduated from OSU with his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. On May 3, Drs. Lyndon and Tristan Graf had the honor of hooding a son and a brother as the youngest Graf boy, Gatz, earned his veterinary medicine degree also from Oklahoma State.

“I am really excited. I hooded Tristan four years ago and now Gatz,” says Lyndon. “I’m very proud of them both.”

Tristan works in an emergency clinic in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Following graduation, Gatz will work in a mixed animal practice in Ness City, Kan.

“I told my boys I would never pressure them to come back to Marlow to work,” says Lyndon. “When Gatz learned we were losing an associate, he said maybe he should just come back home and help out. I told him to go and live his life. The clinic will always be here anytime he wants it.”

Growing up, the Graf boys helped their Dad with his farm and his veterinary clinic.

“We worked hard together and we played hard together,” smiles Lyndon. “I taught them to help work the cattle and drive tractor. When we weren’t working, we spent time hunting together. They both learned a strong work ethic and I expect them to do the same.”

Whenever he could, Dr. Graf took his sons with him on veterinary calls. They would help out in the clinic. As they progressed through veterinary college, he would give them as much hands on practice as he felt confident they could handle.

“I didn’t know if Gatz would go to veterinary college or not,” says Tristan. “Growing up he would go back and forth. Being older, I started going with Dad on calls first. By the time Gatz was old enough to go, I was interested in other things. It was neat to hood him with Dad.”

“I’ve always enjoyed large animal medicine,” says Gatz. “I will probably always be in a mixed animal practice in somewhat rural America. I like veterinary medicine because it’s different every day.”

“Gatz has had a lot of hands-on experience, probably more than most veterinary students are exposed to,” says Lyndon. “Gatz is very good in bovine work. He knows how to handle cattle and he can determine if a cow is pregnant or not with great accuracy.”

Dr. Graf goes on to say that Gatz’s overall education along with his hands-on veterinary experience will serve him well as he enters the veterinary medical profession.

“Gatz strives for perfection,” adds Lyndon. “Wherever he goes he will bring that drive and competency skills that are very good for a new graduate. He’ll do well.”

As he completes his formal veterinary training, Gatz has this advice for those who desire to become a veterinarian, “It’s a profession where you have many opportunities to use your education and skills to improve the health of animals and people.”

Gatz Graf was one of 76 veterinary students who earned their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Oklahoma State University. Celebrating its 60th Anniversary, the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine has graduated 3,165 veterinarians since opening its doors in 1948.