

Preface

Advances in Feline Medicine



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Guest Editor

The *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* has a long history of presenting current and relevant information to veterinarians who are interested in cats. In fact, the second issue—Volume 1, Number 2, May 1971—was entitled “Symposium on Feline Medicine.” Even the very first issue, “Physical Diagnosis in Small Animals,” included an article on cats. Before that time, there were relatively few publications devoted to cats. The adage “cats are not small dogs” was popular at the time, perhaps to serve as a friendly reminder to veterinarians who too frequently were required to extrapolate what they knew about canine diseases and attempt to apply it to cats. But the *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* has done its part. By my count, 12 issues—including the one in your hand—have been devoted exclusively to cats, and articles relating to feline disorders abound, even in issues with a broader species focus.

The first task of a guest editor is to decide which topics to include. Rather than depending entirely on my own intuition, I asked e-mail-connected members of the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) to offer suggestions. Not surprisingly (I’ve found AAFP members to be *very* interested in cats), their response was enthusiastic. The phrase “by popular demand” perfectly characterizes this issue of the *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, because every article was requested by practicing veterinarians.

The table of contents is interesting from a historical standpoint. With the exception of “Feline Infectious Disease Control in Shelters,” each topic has

received coverage in previous issues. For example, feline infectious peritonitis first received attention in May 1971, then again in the August 1976, September 1984, and January 1993 issues. Articles on feline lower urinary tract disease were contained in the May 1971, August 1976, January 1993, and March and May 1996 issues. Various aspects of feline diabetes mellitus and other endocrinopathies, enteric protozoal diseases, feline zoonoses, hepatic lipidosis, and feline encephalopathies have all appeared in prior issues. At first blush, this might discourage some of us because we've still not eradicated these serious disorders. But the creativity and tenacity of veterinarians studying these conditions is being rewarded: the updates contained in this issue offer a wealth of insights into how to better understand and manage the frustrating diseases with which we've struggled for years.

I'm deeply indebted to the talented authors whose contributions enrich this issue. As with all people at the peak of their chosen field, none of them was looking for more to do, yet they believed in the merit of the project, met tight deadlines and graciously suffered through my naggings. Special thanks go to John Vassallo, editor of *The Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, for honoring me with the request to serve as guest editor, for his tireless dedication to the project, and for his sense of humor that lightened the burden. I'm especially grateful to my lovely wife, Anita, and my sons Jesse and Seth for bearing with yet another of my endless stream of projects. Lastly, I'm thankful to the Creator of heaven and earth who blesses us with good things, including cats. These fascinating little creatures have captivated me since childhood and made my life richer beyond measure.

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