As more and more clients have been aware of the advancing medical technology, endoscopic procedures are requested with increased frequency. Several factors likely contribute to the increasing interest in this modality. For the most part, endoscopy is not as invasive as other diagnostic approaches required to obtain samples of tissue or remove unwanted objects. The increasing trend of dogs and cats being treated like family members instead of security systems, vermin reducers, and ranch hands has heightened our clients’ sensitivity to pain management, stress reduction, and quality of life. The less invasive nature of endoscopy, along with the ability to use it as a diagnostic and, occasionally, therapeutic aid, as well as a tool for monitoring efficacy of therapy in certain disease processes, makes endoscopy a multifaceted service. As newer designs of endoscopic equipment are introduced into the veterinary field, the sophistication of service to our clients will continue to increase.

The purpose of this issue is to provide the reader with a general overview of the usefulness of endoscopy in the veterinary field. For some, it may encourage you to develop this service in your practice. For others, this issue can provide information regarding when to refer a patient to a specialty hospital for an endoscopic procedure.

As you can see by the number of articles in this issue, there is hardly an orifice that cannot be explored with the aid of an endoscope. It is important, however, to remember a piece of equipment is only as valuable as the skill of its operator. While these articles can describe the generalities of endoscopic technique along with the usefulness of the various procedures, they cannot provide the hands-on time needed to become proficient in this skill. Fortunately, there are many continuing education venues with instruction in the art of endoscopy for the endoscopic enthusiast. These opportunities coupled with a good deal of practice can help the veterinary practitioner offer an exciting and valuable service to his/her clientele.
Packed within the pages of this issue is a large amount of knowledge, experience, and expertise. I'd like to sincerely thank each of the authors who contributed for their excellent work.

LYNDA MELENDEZ, DVM, MS
Guest Editor

Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences
Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine
1 BMVTH
Stillwater, OK 74078-2041