It has been over 25 years since the first *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice* issue devoted to behavior, edited by Drs. Victoria Voith and Peter Borchelt, was published. In that time, the field of veterinary behavior has grown considerably. The field of veterinary behavior is now a recognized specialty with, at the time of writing, 46 board-certified diplomates of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, and it continues to grow. That first issue introduced the veterinary practitioner to some new concepts, and in some cases a new area of veterinary practice, and began a journey that has included several additional behavior issues in this series, with the latest coming to you today.

In this issue, we continue the tradition of helping practitioners focus on the importance of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and the integration of properly trained personnel to help clients better understand and improve the behavior and welfare of their pets. Learning, training, and behavior modification should be based on scientifically sound learning principles and an understanding of the normal behavior of the species. These tools, combined with evidence-based medicine, should help practitioners develop a sound treatment protocol, rather than using domination and punishment to change behavior, neither of which is helpful for the owner or the pet.

Several articles in this issue will help the general practitioner feel more comfortable with behavioral medicine. Drs. Seibert and Landsberg begin by helping veterinarians put behavioral medicine into an internal medicine paradigm. Handling behavior problems in practice and using auxiliary personnel, including technicians and trainers, is covered well by Shaw and Donaldson, with commentary by Dr. Landsberg. This article also addresses preventive care.
through early socialization and puppy classes and guidelines on the selection of trainers. Proper trainers can guide owners using positive training and sound science, rather than some of the misguided and heavy handed approaches that continue to be propagated in the popular press and damage the trust between owner and their pet, and ultimately perhaps the human-animal bond. The article by Dr. Seksel provides further detail into how preventive programs can be implemented in the practice for new puppies and kittens. These articles also provide a range of additional resources for the practitioner.

Aggression is an ongoing problem in dogs and cats, and it is dangerous to people and other animals. Examining aggressive animals presents a challenge to clinicians, and Dr. Moffat offers practical and useful solutions for making veterinary visits less stressful for clinicians, owners, and their pets. Management tools that allow veterinarians to give owners immediate help are presented, and Dr. Horwitz outlines how veterinarians can offer these in a practical way to clients. We also hope to further enlighten veterinarians with a new look at owner directed aggression; the article by Drs. Luescher and Reisner help practitioners understand this vexing problem. Dr. Haug tackles the serious problem of canine aggression toward unfamiliar people and dogs and provides practical suggestions on causes and management of this dangerous problem.

Anxiety issues are prevalent in behavioral medicine in dogs and cats. An update on separation anxiety and noise sensitivities, by Drs. Simpson and Mills, will provide veterinarians with an evidence based approach to treatment for owners who continue to struggle with these anxiety conditions. Feline anxiety issues are covered by Dr. Levine, and feline aggression toward people is detailed by Dr. Curtis.

Family dynamics have changed over the past 25 years, and it has become increasingly more common to add new pets to the household, combine two households that both have pets, or introduce new humans into the home whether it is a new baby, new spouse or integrating entire families. Drs. Bergman and Gaskins provide timely and pertinent advice so veterinarians can counsel owners on how to make the new introductions into the home a smooth transition.

Finally, obtaining a pet has taken on new dimensions, with shelters and rescue centers altering the way dogs are acquired and raising questions on selecting and placing dogs into homes. Dr. Duxbury offers current insights into choosing a puppy, and Dr. Marder discusses adoptions from a shelter environment.

In our careers as veterinary behaviorists, we have not only counseled pet owners on how to work with their pet’s undesirable behavior, but we have also tried to encourage veterinary practitioners to embrace behavior as an important component of clinical practice through our lectures, workshops, and publications. Along the way, we hope that we have succeeded in helping veterinary practitioners and staff members improve their skills and add more behavior services to their practices. With this in mind, we hope that this volume of
Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice will provide veterinarians with new and useful information in the field of veterinary behavior that can be implemented in each veterinary practice, and perhaps inspire a few more veterinarians to consider the field of veterinary behavior as a specialty area they might wish to pursue. Interested veterinarians should join the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (www.avsabonline.org) or the European Society of Veterinary Clinical Ethology (www.esvce.org); interested technicians should join the Society of Veterinary Behavioral Technicians (www.svbt.org); and those who have an interest in board certification should visit the websites of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (www.dacvb.org) or the European College of Veterinary Behavioral Medicine (www.ecvbm.org) to find more details.

We thank all our authors for their hard work and our colleagues, who have offered information in this format before, because they inspired us to contribute to this body of work. John Vassallo, Editor, and his staff at Elsevier, have been instrumental in making these volumes a reality, and their hard work and dedication is much appreciated.

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