Preface

Geriatric medicine is a major growth area in the veterinary profession. Advanced diagnostics and equipment, once reserved for universities and specialty referral centers, are currently accessible to these progressive primary care veterinarians. Those hospitals can now provide their older patients with the high-quality health care that even the “average” pet owner expects. Enhanced senior diets, improved dental care, pain management plans, safer preanesthetic protocols, new drugs, advanced surgery techniques, cancer chemotherapy protocol, drug-monitoring schedules, and the use of multimodal management strategies have changed the senior health care landscape.

What is commonplace today was just an idea in the mid 1980s when I began lecturing in the area. Momentum was painfully slow as the concept began to take shape . . . one practice at a time. I would like to recognize some of the leaders responsible for where senior care is today: foremost is my mentor Dr Jacob (Jake) Mosier for all his help; Drs Johnny Hoskins and Richard (Bill) Goldston for taking the discipline to the next level; Dr Fred Metzger for his unceasing passion for senior care programs; and Dr Gary Landsberg for all of the older pets he has helped during his career.

This Geriatrics edition represents a “topic-based” approach to many of the age-related problems commonly seen in older dogs and cats. Each author was selected based on their expertise and ability to convey practical knowledge to the reader. Their efforts exceeded my expectations. But without Mr John Vassallo’s leadership, editorial genius, and patience with me, this issue would not have been possible. My sincere hope is that every veterinarian and veterinary technician reading this issue will share my enthusiasm and passion for older dogs and cats.
Last, a special thanks to my amazing wife of 42 years, Sheila, who has devotedly helped me deal with the consequences of my recent stroke. She spent countless hours re-teaching me the alphabet and elementary level reading, writing, and arithmetic.

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