PREFACE

Veterinary medicine seems to be changing at an ever-accelerating pace. Advances in many areas (dentistry, chemotherapy, and newer diagnostic techniques) have been enormous and have had a major impact on anesthesia. Client expectations for good monitoring and safe anesthesia as well as pain control have driven many practitioners toward shorter-acting anesthetics and newer techniques for providing analgesia.

In this issue of Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice, I have tried to bring together information about many of these newer techniques, drugs, and theories in a practical manner. This issue is intended as an update of information, not an exhaustive reference of older materials. So, the articles include information on newer vaporizers and inhalant anesthetics, the newer injectable anesthetics, analgesics, and muscle relaxants. One article is devoted to geriatric animals since their population has increased dramatically. Updates on fluid therapy and cardiopulmonary resuscitation also seemed appropriate. Laser surgery and newer diagnostic techniques (e.g., MRI) require fairly specific anesthetic problems associated with them, while the total number of drugs a patient may be taking can lead to more drug interactions (hence the article on drug interactions). Clinical anesthesia has certainly gotten more complicated, and we hope you will feel that this issue provides some useful information.

My most sincere thanks go to all of the authors! I feel honored that such a distinguished collection of anesthesiologists (and one pharmacologist) have contributed to this issue. The amount of experience and expertise they have brought to their articles is huge. This issue is the result of their work. I would also like to thank Mr. John Vassallo for his guidance, patience, and assistance in preparation of this issue, and W.B. Saunders for its continued commitment to veterinary publications.

NORA S. MATTHEWS, DVM
Guest Editor

Department of Small Animal Medicine and Surgery
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-4474