



*George E. Lees, DVM, MS, DACVIM*

*“My career focus on the field of veterinary nephrology and urology occurred more by accident than design; that is, as a consequence of my responses to a series of circumstances/opportunities, rather than due to planning, per se. Although my early professional development was imprinted to a degree by Don Low (at CSU during my DVM training and UC Davis during my internship) as well as by Gerald Ling (at UC Davis during my internship), I was actually more enamored by clinical immunology due to the influence of Niels Pedersen (while at both CSU and UC Davis). Following my internship, however, the only institution that offered me a medicine residency was the University of Minnesota. Residents there were expected to also pursue a graduate degree (MS or PhD), and Carl Osborne was the only graduate student advisor available for medicine residents. Carl told me that I could pick any research topic that I might want for my MS degree, but he also pointed out that his ability to be helpful would be greater if I chose a urinary system topic. Also about this time, the school received a substantial bequest of funds for cat research, and I quickly became a cat urinary disease investigator (despite the fact that I was unabashedly more of a ‘dog guy’ and more interested in clinical immunology than urology). Indeed, as the end of my residency approached, I applied for and was offered an NIH Training Fellowship in Clinical Immunology at the Yale*

*School of Medicine. I ultimately decided for personal reasons not to take that position and began looking for a clinical faculty position. When I interviewed for various faculty positions, I presented my MS thesis work at the seminar I was invariably asked to give. So, when I joined the faculty at TAMU in the summer of 1980, it was logical for the course coordinator for the upcoming year's Small Animal Medicine course to approach me saying, "you are from the University of Minnesota, surely you will want to give the 'Diseases of the Urinary System' lectures – when do you want me to schedule them?" While I was at the University of Minnesota, there were at least 4, maybe 5, individuals more focused on the urinary system than I was. Nevertheless and by default, I instantly became the 'go to' guy for nephology and urology at TAMU, and nearly everything in our field that I know today I learned after I arrived in Texas in defense of my reputation.*

*"Achievement happens when preparation meets opportunity; many opportunities will come along, and everything you do is preparation" - Dr. George E. Lees, in 2010 ACVIM Robert W. Kirk Award acceptance remarks*