

# A Tale of Two Veterinarians

**Veterinarians benefit from active listening, empathetic communication skills**

by Carolyn C. Shadle and John L. Meyer

**W**hat coincidences! Jane and her sister Susan adopted a dog on the same day. Both chose adult male rescue dogs. Both went home with dogs that were up to date on their shots, neutered and tested for heartworm.

Jane chose an adorable little Chihuahua about three years old that she named Pooch. Susan, who lived on the other side of town, chose a large boxer that was almost four years old and named him Buddy.

The coincidences continued. On the very same day, three months following their adoptions, both of their dogs had minor lacerations that required a quick trip to the vet.

Pooch walked over a piece of broken glass when Jane had him out for his midday walk. She didn't notice it at first, but when she got home, she saw that his paw was bleeding and he was whining, as if in pain. Fortunately, her veterinarian, Dr. Marten, and the Ark Clinic were only about two miles away, so she put Pooch in his carrier and went right to the clinic.

Buddy suffered a puncture wound, apparently from a barbed plant growing in the back of Susan's yard she hadn't even noticed was there. Buddy did, however, and came into the house limping. She'd never made contact with a veterinarian before, but since there was a small animal hospital known as Pets Plus just a block away, she always felt that she could get help when she needed it. It wasn't easy getting Buddy into the car, but Susan managed.