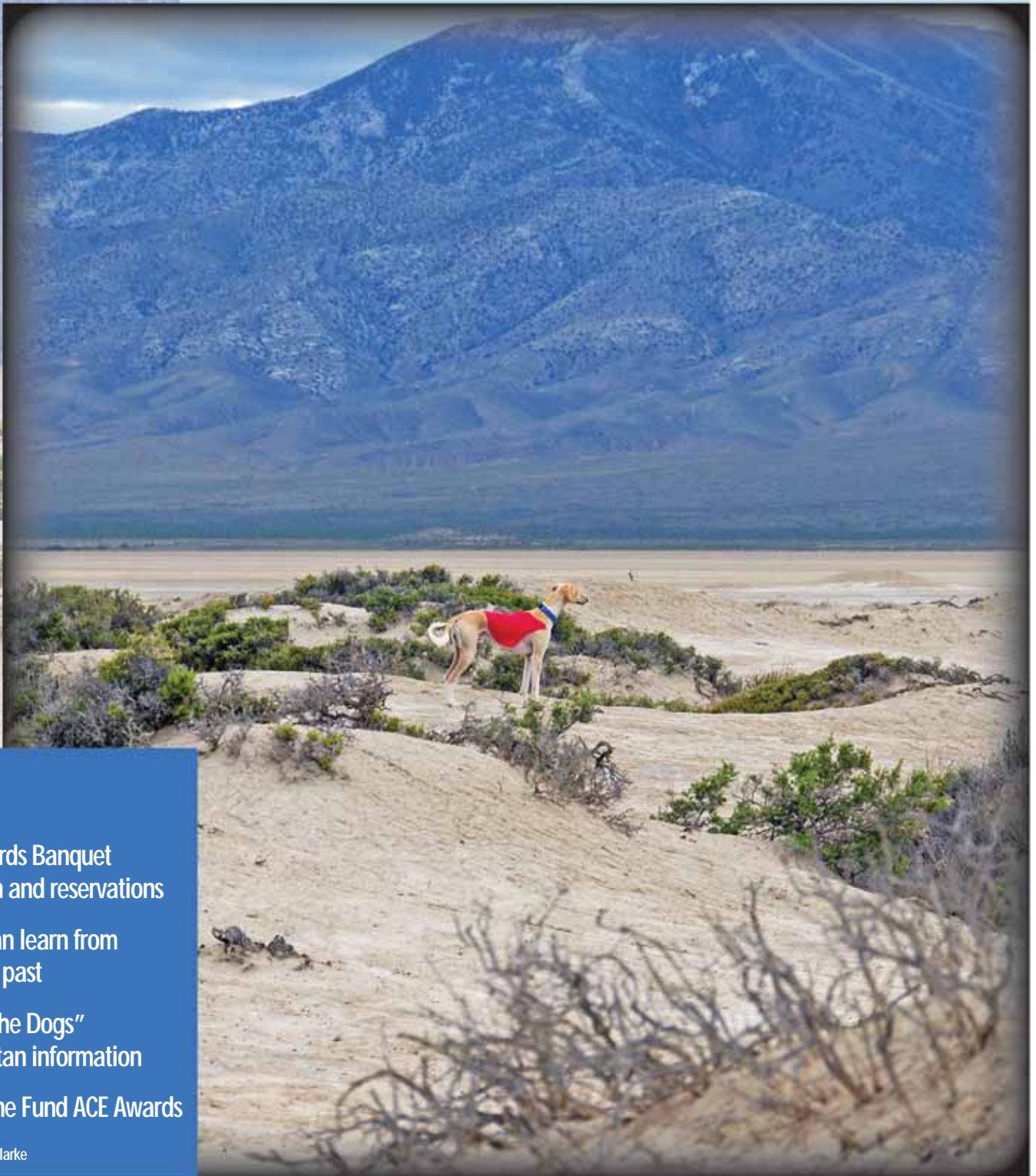


Dog Writers Association of America



ruff DRAFTS

Fall 2013



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cover photo: Vicky Clarke



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President's column

Hound Dog Blues

by Ida Estep, Esq.

I have lost five dogs this year and grieved for all of them, but there is one - Blue, a Blue Tick Coonhound - who was one of those special dogs whose loss leaves us devastated.

When I moved to North Carolina, Blue was the first dog I rescued. The animal control facility was at the dump with no glass in the windows, no screens, no water pressure, no hot water. The animals were hosed down in their concrete cells with cold water and the food polluted with vermin. The animals were killed in a partition-less, home built gas chamber, thrown in together, often using a truck exhaust pipe.

I had to practically do hand-to-hand combat to pull Blue from the employee determined to gas him because, "This dawg don't hunt!"

I spent the next four years fighting with the County Commissioners to build a new shelter and destroy the gas chamber. Finally we prevailed.

In the meantime, Blue and I visited the county schools, handing out information on spay/neuter and animal care. The kid's first question? "Can we pat Blue now?" It was clear who was important in our twosome.

We also went to the County Senior Center monthly; the ladies loved his gentleness. The gentlemen would begin to talk enthusiastically about dogs they had in their youth. Blue accepted all admiration with poise and grace.

Blue and I rode in every County Christmas Parade. He wore antlers or Santa hats and he had that look all dogs get, and which I do believe that coonhounds have perfected, "Okay, Mom, if it is what you want."

But Blue also was by my side during private efforts. An eight-month-old Blue Tick puppy had been abused by his owners and ultimately thrown from a truck, breaking his hip. I picked the little boy up at a local coonhound jamboree and took Blue along

for cover. I rescued the pup, walking unscathed through camo-clad hunters, with testosterone so thick in the air that we practically needed a gas mask.

Then there was Buford, a dog whose owner had tortured to death ten of his Blue Ticks by hanging, starvation, and drowning, before the local rescue could stop him. Buford, the only male, was terribly traumatized and could never trust humans; he lived his life in terror. The local rescue asked if I could take on a dog who could barely tolerate me, let alone love me.

Blue and I found Buford huddled in the corner of his most recent foster home. When Buford saw Blue, he let out a shriek and began to kiss him on the face, like puppies do their mother. Blue looked a little surprised, but, like everything in his life, seemed to figure, "Okay, Mom, if you think this is a good idea."

Blue was Buford's lifeline for the two-and-a-half years he lived with us until he passed peacefully in his sleep with Blue by his side. Buford managed vet visits, heartworm meds, etc., as long as Blue was there; seeming to recognize that Blue trusted me and Blue was never wrong in Buford's eyes.

When I rescued Blue, he was already an adult and my vet estimated he was 14 or 15 years old when he was diagnosed by NC State via ultrasound last July with an inoperable adrenal gland tumor (Pheochromocytoma). The tumor results in the release of too much epinephrine and norepinephrine, hormones that control heart rate, metabolism, and blood pressure.

He received palliative treatment with meds that offset the release of the hormones. His vet checked his heart rate and blood pressure every two weeks. For three months, he was stable.

Then, in October, Blue took a turn for the worse. After consulting with NC State, we

increased the meds, added a pain med to offset any discomfort, and made a recheck appointment.

But the next day, he died peacefully in the night, on my bed, with me beside him.

I have been lucky to have many good, and even great, dogs and exceptionally lucky to have two special ones - a mastiff named Maxie and now Blue.

There is a song by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band called "Mr. Bo Jangles." The lyrics speak of a dog Bo Jangles had for 15 years. The dog died and the song goes on "after 20 years, he still grieves."

After 20 years, I still grieve for Maxie and, assuming I am still around in the next 20 years, I know I will grieve for both Maxie and Blue, yet also feel incredibly blessed to have had two such dogs in my life.

K. CHEN



Not a good way to start off with an editorial, however, I feel I owe all officers and members an apology. Your newsletter is late; hopefully, the first and last time during my editorship. When I was hired to replace Terry, I knew it would be hard to start with the Fall 2013 issue due to an elbow surgery I had scheduled in August. The surgeon warned me, and he was correct; it is not a quick recovery. So, I have been slowly stumbling along.

Secondly, although I have been a graphic production artist for 42 years, and produced many dog publications, as well as commercial work, it is always hard to get started with a new client, not knowing what they expected. I need your feedback and advice, please.

To [partially] quote a previous editor, Marion Lane . . . *GOT STUFF? An editor's plea: ruff DRAFTS is by and for the members. I can plan, organize, edit and design with a professional look. But only you can make this newsletter "newsy."*

Her suggestions for submissions included: articles, tips, Q&As, and other material on the craft and business of writing about dogs, as well as getting published; if you know another member who has something worth sharing, why not interview them for the rest of us?; letters to the editor on anything you see or want/don't want to see in the newsletter; photos, illustrations (both which could also be used for covers) and cartoons; filler pieces about dogs or dog writing; short humor, because we can all use a laugh; "stuff" for an "About our members" page: send news about you, a speaking gig, recent awards/honors; personal milestones (marriage/births/degrees/retirement) . . . you know, the stuff we like to read about one another.

I am publishing a current photo of myself so you now have a face with the name. Here's a little about my past, relating to my life with animals. I grew up in a household that always had cats, which I still love to this day. Earlier this week I lost my final cat; it's very strange living without one. At around 12 years of age, I started bringing home stray or unwanted dogs, and would find them homes or keep them. I had three mixed-breeds, then purchased my first purebred, an Afghan Hound, in 1971 as a high-school graduation present to myself. The next Afghan came along about five years later. At that time, I lived in Ohio and was actively involved in obedience (taught classes and judged matches) and lure coursing (helped start an ASFA member club). Although I was promised my first Saluki in the late 70s, the breeder reneged and I waited until 1983 for the right one to come along. Since then, I have been owned mainly by Salukis. I moved to California in 1984 to pursue my dream of hunting live game [open field coursing jackrabbits]. It is still my main passion in purebred dogs, although I have been known to compete in the show ring and finish some dual [breed/field] champions along the way. I met my husband in the field; he also had Salukis. We are now on the seventh generation in our household. I now live in north-central Nevada, on 100 fenced acres, with five Salukis and one rescue field beagle. My other passions are photography and walking. Both good qualities to possess when you are owned by Salukis!

Although I know a few DWAA members, I hope to meet many more of you in the future! -Vicky

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Marsha Pugh, Co-chair

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Ida Estep, Chair
Carmen Battaglia, Martin Deeley
Susan Ewing, Marsha Pugh, Pat Santi

Bylaws

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Alan Alford, Carmen Battaglia
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issue deadlines~

Spring, March 1
Summer, June 1
Fall, September 1
Winter, December 1

The editor reserves the right to refuse and/or edit material, and is not responsible for errors in difficult to read copy. Every attempt will be made to publish information accurately. Submission implies right to publish all or in part. Unsigned or misleading material is not accepted. Material published is the opinion of the author and does not imply endorsement by the editor or DWAA. Neither editor nor DWAA assumes liability for information contained herein or typographical errors. Reproduction of photos and editorial is forbidden without permission.

Secretary's page

by Pat Santi

Before August 1, 2013, the nominating committee was named: Chair Marsha Pugh, Bryna Comsky and James Colesanti.

Two Board positions are available. The nominating committee has selected Patricia Cruz and Gail Parker.

Any member in good standing may petition to run for a specific office if he sends to the secretary, by November 20, a petition signed by ten (10) members in good standing.

On or about December 1, the secretary will mail a ballot to each member in good standing. If feasible, the newsletter can be used to contain the ballot.

All ballots received by the secretary before December 31 will be delivered unopened to the Annual Meeting where three (3) tellers appointed by the President will count them.

The nominees receiving the highest number of votes will be declared elected.

If the election is uncontested, no ballots need be mailed.

From the Bylaws Article V section a to g.

Welcome, new members!

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Sponsors: Jean Hofve and Amy Shojai

WANTED: new member bios and photos!

In your newsletter, we would like to profile the DWAA members and their work in the business of dogs. As a new member, you are invited to submit an approximate 200-word summary of your background and work in the field of dogs along with a photo of yourself.

If you have anything else that you would like to contribute to ruff DRAFTS, please let me know of your idea. We do not have a budget to pay for articles, photos and artwork, so any contribution would have to be pro bono. And please remember that submissions are always welcome for our cover!

Looking forward to hearing from you - thanks!

-editor

DWAA Annual Writing Awards Banquet

February 9, 2014

New location: Hotel Pennsylvania, across the street from Madison Square Garden

The Hotel Pennsylvania was designed by the same architectural firm that designed the original Penn Station. The "World's Biggest Hotel," at that time, was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad and opened in 1919. Ellsworth Statler was the original manager of the hotel and then acquired it in 1948, renaming it the Hotel Statler. Statler sold all of his hotels to Conrad Hilton in 1954, at which time it became the Statler Hilton and remained under Hilton ownership until the 1980s. It went through another name change and ownership before being purchased in 1984 by the Penta Hotels chain, a joint venture with British Airways, Lufthansa and Swissair, thus the name New York Penta. In 1992, Penta went out of business and the original name of Hotel Pennsylvania returned. There has been much said about demolishing the hotel to make room for offices, yet city organizations, politicians and historical societies have saved the hotel and it will not be demolished due to its history. There have been many historical moments at the Hotel Pennsylvania.

Contrary to most, it has a 13th floor. In fact, it has 22 floors, plus three additional levels in the Penthouse. The Penthouse is the 21st floor. The cause for this unusual numbering is the existence of several mezzanines.

The DWAA will host its February 2014 Annual Banquet in Penntop South on the 18th floor. There are 1700 rooms available; make your reservation early! Hotel Pennsylvania, 212-736-5000

-Pat Santi, Secretary/Banquet Chair

Treasurer's Report

June 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013

Opening balance	\$28,109.33
Total income	\$2,114.56
Applications	\$750.00
Dues	\$960.00
Reimbursement, transferred to savings	(\$595.44)
Special Award Sponsor	\$1,000.00
Expenses	(\$8,276.55)
Bank charge, adjustment	\$2.67)
Banquet expenses, deposit to Hotel Penn.	(\$4,948.00)
Computer services	(\$620.00)
Design, newsletter	(\$700.00)
Donation, Catwriters Association of America	(\$1,000.00)
Lapel pins	(\$462.00)
Postage	(\$46.00)
Printing	(\$482.88)
Tax, State of Massachusetts	(\$15.00)
Ending balance	\$21,947.34

DWAA Awards Banquet Reservation Form
Sunday, February 9, 2014 at 6:00 pm
Important: note new location!
Penntop South, Hotel Pennsylvania
401 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10001



Menu~

[please choose one per guest]

Grilled chicken breast in white wine mushroom sauce

Grilled Atlantic salmon

Vegetable plate

All meals come with appetizer, mixed green salad, cheesecake, brewed coffee, decaffeinated coffee, tea, or soda upon request.

If you have food allergies, please let us know so we can better serve you.

Cost: \$65.00 per person

Name of guest(s)
.
.
.

Address of person making reservation
.
.

E-mail Phone number

Number of reservations

Total amount submitted

Make checks payable to DWAA in U.S. funds and send along with this form to:

Pat Santi, Banquet Chair
173 Union Road, Coatesville, PA 19320-1326
Phone 610 384-2436
Fax 610 384-2471
RHYDOWEN@aol.com

You may phone, fax, or e-mail your reservation to Pat, however, your reservation is not complete until payment has been received.

You may also make reservations and pay online through PayPal at: www.dwaa.org

If you have questions, contact Pat [above] or Marsha Pugh, 301-274-3435, mmpugh@crosslink.net

What we can learn from *dogs of the past?*

To better understand life in any given era, we need look no further than how a community treats its dogs.

My website, America Comes Alive, is dedicated to little-known stories from American history. During the summer I spend two months celebrating the Dog Days of Summer, telling stories of the famous and should-have-been-famous dogs in our country . . . both past and present.

In the course of my research, I have found that newspapers in the late 19th century and early 20th century often printed stories relating to dogs. Reading about the dogs of the day is ceaselessly entertaining because it reveals a great deal about life in America at the time the story was published, and it also shows the great intelligence and sensibility of dogs in a day when they were given more opportunity to roam and to be in charge of themselves.

I have picked a few stories to share with you. Some show dogs that are amazingly clever, and all show that one thing about many Americans doesn't change: we love our dogs.

Where is that dog going with his breakfast?

A young boy in Wanaqua, New Jersey told a newspaper reporter for the Warwick Advertiser the following story about his dog, a shepherd-Newfoundland mix: The dog had begun accepting his breakfast in the morning but not eating it - leaving right away and carrying the food with him. (The breakfast must have been a bone though it wasn't specified.) The young master was curious as to where the dog was taking the food so one day he followed him.

The dog crossed several fields, and the boy wondered if the dog was deliberately pursuing a roundabout path because he knew he was being followed. Finally the dog put the breakfast down for a moment and sat waiting, still not eating it. At that, the boy pretended to leave. The dog waited a few moments and then got up again, disappearing into an overgrown thicket.

Of course, the boy was in quick pursuit to see what was behind all the greenery. There, he found a "decrepit and emaciated old dog" eagerly devouring the breakfast the younger dog had brought him.

The newspaper article concludes with the fact that the boy now held his dog in much higher esteem because of the kindhearted spirit and intelligence he displayed. The reporter does not provide details as to what happened to the older dog but we would suspect that the boy began feeding the old dog separately and perhaps took the animal home with him. (Reprinted from the Warwick Advertiser by The New York Times, February 1, 1885)

Women's Club sharing dog stories: 1896

An article appearing in The New York Times in 1896 recounted several reminiscences by members of a group referred to as a Professional Woman's League. The reporter wrote then what is equally true now: "It is quite as productive of stories to be the owner of a dog as to be the proud mother of the best baby in the world."

The article noted that some of the members were going to be at an upcoming dog show. (The first Westminster Show was held in 1877; perhaps that was the occasion for the gathering.)

The problem with progress

The first story was about a bulldog named Jack. Jack belonged to the brother of one of the women, and the fellow had trained Jack to do many tricks, including catch a hoop that was rolled toward him. Jack became very skilled at this and could catch and stop a hoop that was rolling quite quickly.

It seem that, shortly after this, town residents began following a trend that was sweeping the nation: riding on bicycles (the earliest were the big-wheel-in-front style). Jack thought these big-wheeled things were simply hoops being rolled toward him, and he did what he had learned to do: he went after them.



The woman telling the story noted that one day she witnessed the event. Jack caught the wheel so quickly that the rider went sailing over the top of the bicycle.

"What did the fellow say?" she was asked by her listeners. She replied: "I don't know, I couldn't hear, but he seemed to be saying a great many things." (We can well imagine.)

Jack must have been an older dog by this time as the speaker said that Jack died a natural death, and that this was just as well.

"We couldn't break him of that habit, and he was very clever about that wheel. He seemed to have made a great many enemies and probably would have come to a violent end [if had not died naturally]."

Some things never change but we love the dogs anyway

Another woman mentioned to the group that she and her family raised a good number of dogs from puppyhood and that the dogs had "eaten up my hats; we have Pole on Whist (a game involving cards and perhaps a game board) that is now in an emaciated condition; and a sofa with a hole chewed in it that we look upon tenderly as a memento of loved ones departed."

Smart dog!

And yet another story was told about an occurrence at a railway station. A dog arrived on the railway platform where men were waiting for the next train. The dog was carrying a stone in his mouth and delivered it to a man who was busy reading a newspaper. The reader kicked away the stone. That was just what the dog had in mind! He fetched the stone and brought it back. This caught the interest of the fellow who kicked it again, and the dog played with the fellow for several kicks of the stone before carrying it to another fellow who was also willing to throw or kick the stone for him.

The teller of the story notes that not a single person refused the dog. He was able to find people to play the game until the next train arrived and took his playmates. (The New York Times, February 19, 1896)

Heroic rescues

In 1877, a young boy was driving a Kennedy & Gough team (it seemed to be a single horse and wagon) down Manton Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island "last Friday or Saturday" when the horse startled suddenly and began to run. The reins were pulled from the boy's grasp, and the wagon and horse careened along the street at breakneck speed.

Riding along with the boy, however, was the company's Newfoundland dog. The dog quickly assessed the situation and sprang toward the horse, trying to slow it by holding on to the tail. That didn't work so he leaped out of the wagon, "... seized the horse by the nose and succeeded in bringing him to a halt, no particular damage having been done."

The owners of the dog were so appreciative that he had saved the wagon, horse, and boy that they refused to take \$500 offered for him. (This story originally appeared in *The Providence Press* and was reprinted in *The New York Times* on April 29, 1877.)



Another Newfoundland, this one in Columbus, Wisconsin, also participated in a heroic rescue:

"A four-year-old child of Deacon D.J. Evans, of Elba, fell into an open cistern a few days ago, and an elder brother leaped in after him; but the latter found it impossible to reach the floor above while supporting the child. A large Newfoundland dog, comprehending the situation at a glance, ran off to a neighboring field, bringing back with him a number of men attracted by the strange actions of the dog. A ladder was put down the cistern, and the young man and his charge, half-drowned, were rescued."

Trainer Willy Necker on dogs

And finally we get some simple wisdom from dog trainer Willy Necker (1909-2002), who trained all types of dogs but was well-known for his troupe of trained Dalmatians and other dogs that toured the country.

According to an article in *The Chicago Sun-Times* (February 19, 1976), Necker was addressing an audience at a sportsman's show and talked of how much a dog can help a hunter: The man who hunts with a dog is the smart hunter as "... a dog can save a lot of steps for a hunter by smelling out the game."

But he also pointed out, "Even when a hunter comes home empty-handed, he's got a friend."

"All a dog asks is a little food and water. He'll forgive you for your wrongs. And when you're down, he'll come up and say, "Boss what's wrong?"

Some of the best parts of owning a dog never change.

More dog stories by Kate Kelly can be found at www.americacomesalive.com/category/americandogs/

Welcome to Bhutan . . . the tour and trek of a lifetime! March 29 ~ April 12, 2014

by Dr. Don Messerschmidt

In March 2014, I will be leading a "Going to the Dogs" trek and tour of Bhutan for about two weeks. Six days of it are trek; the rest is the cross-country Himalayan tour. I expect that some DWAA members will be interested. After doing the trip, they could use it to write and publish a great story. And, we can prepare a brief synopsis for *ruff DRAFTS*.

Our forthcoming 2014 tour-and-trek of Bhutan is very special. It's your chance to see the high Himalayas, trek rhododendron forests and mountain pastures, experience the unique "Brokpa" culture, see some imposing (big) yaks (the one at the right stared us down on the trail one afternoon), and meet the renowned livestock guardian dogs, the Tibetan mastiffs.

Your guide is Himalayan Anthropologist, Dr. Don Messerschmidt, author of *Big Dogs of Tibet* and the *Himalayas*, winner of the Maxwell Medallion for Excellence. (He calls it his "Poochitzer Prize!")

The trip includes ~ 6-day trek in east Bhutan (with pack animals; you carry only a light daypack, tented camps); an eco-tour on the "Royal Road" west to Thimphu; staying in comfortable guesthouses on the way; a visit to Bhutan's traditional weaving centers and the arts and craft school; a short hike to the "Tiger's Nest," the cliff-side Taktsang Monastery; enjoy a "teschu" Buddhist ritual dance drama festival, and more.

Spectacular photography every day! You'll marvel at whole forests of rhododendrons in bloom (Bhutan has 46 varieties); exotic birds and wildlife; monasteries and village fairs; children on their way to school; and Bhutanese hosts who are most gracious and accommodating. *Happiness is a Place!* (Bhutanese motto)

For more information contact Don at dmesserschmidt@gmail.com and/or our trip agent, Rusty Brennan, at Ri Adventure Travel, 307-460-4404, rusty@rustytraveler.com. Online, go to <http://riadventuretravel.com>. On the menu bar click on Destinations, then Bhutan. Our trip is Bhutan: Going to the Dogs Trek and Festival. And then? . . . start packing!





AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM



Five canine heroes honored with AKC[®] Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE)

New York, NY. The AKC[®] Humane Fund celebrates the loyalty, devotion and strength dogs share with us by announcing today the winners of the 14th annual AKC Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE), which commemorate five hard-working dogs that have made significant contributions to their communities. The awards are presented in each of the following five categories: Exemplary Companion Dog, Law Enforcement, Search and Rescue, Service and Therapy. This year's winners include a Newtown therapy dog and an active amputee that helps wounded warriors overcome their own injuries.

"The dogs honored by the ACE have contributed immeasurably to the lives of individuals and communities across the country, and with so many great stories, it's difficult to choose just one recipient in each category," said AKC Spokesperson Lisa Peterson. "We're proud to award these five deserving dogs with AKC Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence."

All the ACE recipients will receive \$1,000 to be awarded to a pet-related charity of their choice and an engraved sterling silver medallion presented at the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship in Orlando, Florida on December 14, 2013.

This year's ACE winners include:

Exemplary Companion Dog: Bart, a Vizsla owned by Darcy Hodges of Brooks, Georgia.

Bart was only three years old when he developed a limp during hunt and field season. After x-rays revealed 80% of his scapula eaten away by cancer, Bart had his entire front left leg removed. Only four months after his amputation and three weeks after completing chemotherapy, Bart earned his Senior Hunter title and continued to the Master Hunter level, earning that title ten months later. Bart and Darcy were also invited to visit with soldiers from the Wounded Warrior program. Recently, nearing his eighth birthday, Bart ran fast and hard during a guided hunt with the Wounded Warriors, inspiring soldiers that had returned home without all of their limbs but were overcoming their battle scars.

Therapy Dog: Drago, a Spinone Italiano owned by Lauren Friedman and Chris Sweetwood of Milford, Connecticut.

Drago, a "do-it-all" Spinone Italiano with more than 1,000 therapy visits to his credit, faced a challenge like no other in Newtown, Connecticut last December when his therapy skills were called upon after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Lauren and Drago immediately headed to Newtown, a chaotic scene full of shell-shocked local residents. They spent nearly every day until January at the Crisis Center that was set up at Reed Intermediate School, providing love and support to those who needed it. Drago accompanied kids and adults into counseling sessions, and spent time with children who were doing crafts and activities while their parents were busy with chaplains and psychologists. Lauren and Drago still visit area schools today.

Service Dog: Tuesday, a Golden Retriever owned by Capt. Luis Carlos Montalván of New York, New York.

Luis and Golden Retriever Tuesday were partnered through the Educated Canines Assisting with Disabilities (ECAD) facility in New York after Luis returned from two tours in Iraq with a spinal cord injury (SCI), a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). From retrieving things Luis needs so that he doesn't have to strain his spinal cord injury to gentle nuzzles that return Luis from horrible flashbacks caused by his TBI and PTSD, Tuesday has given Luis back his life. Tuesday and Luis also inspired Senator Al Franken to co-sponsor the Service Dogs for Veterans Act (SDVA), which is leading to scientific evidence proving the



[clockwise]: Bart, Drago,
Tuesday, Zeke, Jesse

efficacy of assistance dogs to mitigate many disabilities, including psychological ones.

Law Enforcement Dog: K9 Zeke, a Belgian Malinois handled by Cpl. Tyron E. Meik of the Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Police Department.

Earlier this year, Cpl. Meik and Zeke were called to assist a nearby police department. An armed suspect had allegedly stabbed and shot at an individual, then turned the gun on police before fleeing into an area close to an elementary school and busy suburban shopping area. Zeke was shot in the neck by the suspect upon discovery as he attempted to protect the officers. Even with a bullet lodged inside of him, Zeke held the suspect until there was no longer a threat to police. Bleeding from his gunshot wound and going into shock, Zeke was air lifted to an emergency veterinary hospital to undergo surgery. Zeke has since made a full recovery and has returned to active duty.

Search and Rescue Dog: Jesse, a German Shepherd Dog owned and handled by Susan Condreras of Riverhead, New York.

For the past five years, Jesse has served her community and surrounding communities by deploying on multiple searches in arduous terrain. Snakes, ticks, steep cliffs, swamps, extreme weather conditions, fox, bears, and gunshots have all threatened her safety while she has diligently searched for missing people. After a recent injury and difficult rehab period, Jesse made it back to work looking for the missing. On her first search back, she found a hunter alive in the swamps of New Jersey. To view photos and stories about the 2013 AKC Humane Fund ACE recipients visit:

<http://www.akc.org/news/ace/2013/honorees.cfm>.

Media note: ACE Winners are available for interviews. Please contact Hillary Prim at 212-696-8220 or hap@akc.org to schedule an interview or request photos.



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

September 2013 AKC Chairman's Report: Changing the Future

New York, NY. Last Thursday we posted a charming photograph of three Golden Retriever puppies on the American Kennel Club Facebook page. The caption was "I love my breeder" with a request to "share your love for your dog's breeder." The image was shared 2,500 times, received 11,000 likes and almost 500 comments. We posted this because we love responsible breeders, but also because we wanted to see the reaction it would elicit.

The post sparked a lengthy conversation about the merits of finding your new dog at a breeder vs. adopting a dog. That passionate debate proved two important issues. There are ardent, articulate, and knowledgeable supporters of responsible breeding who possess facts and are capable of persuasively educating the public about the truth of responsible breeding. However, it also proved that there is a great deal of misinformation about responsible breeding that result in significant prejudice against breeders. There is no doubt that prejudice against breeders has impacted our breeders, our sport, and the public's ability to enjoy the unique experience of a purebred dog in their lives.

Just 20 years ago, a purebred dog was the dog to have in your life. Twenty years ago, a responsible breeder was viewed as a respected resource. Twenty years ago there were virtually no important legislative efforts aimed at eradicating all dog breeding.

What changed in those 20 years? The noble quest to give every dog a "forever" home was co-opted by the animal rights organizations as a method to raise funds for their mission to completely eliminate pet ownership. Under the guise of supporting adoption, they have been raising a significant war chest - over \$200 million last year alone - to fuel a campaign aimed squarely at destroying our ability to preserve breeds for future generations.

As told by AR groups, responsible breeders have been dishonestly accused of being the sole cause of dogs in shelters - not irresponsible owners.

As told by AR groups, purebred dog breeders have been maliciously portrayed as evil people only interested in money and winning at events, at the expense of their dogs' health and well-being.

As told by AR groups, purebred dogs have been wrongly defined as being plagued with genetic health and temperament problems caused by breeders.

After 20 years of this propaganda - mostly unchallenged by those who know better - a portion of the public has accepted this fiction as reality.

No more.

AKC Staff, led by Chris Walker along with Bob Amen and I, have been working with Edelman, our new public outreach partner, on the

plan that will change the current conversation, as demonstrated in that Facebook post, by confronting the prejudice and telling the truth about purebred dogs and their responsible breeders.

We will focus our efforts on two key audiences - families with kids 8-12 and empty nesters. These groups represent the critical inflection points for dog ownership and hold our best opportunities to correctly educate the public about purebred dogs and responsible dog breeding.

An additional audience will be federal and local legislators. Our experience makes it clear that once legislators know the truth, the legislative outcome is positive.

We will expand our voice to include breeders, dog owners, AKC thought leaders, veterinarians, and AKC's over 700,000 grassroots followers.

We will relentlessly focus on these foundational story themes: the unique qualities of purebred dogs, the desirability of purebred dogs as family pets, the truth about the health of purebred dogs, and the truth about responsible breeders.

We will use every outreach channel to relentlessly tell our story in a shareable and searchable way, including national and local media, hybrid media, AKC's own media, and social media.

By focusing on these key audiences with expanded, credible voices centered on our core narratives we will get better stories in the media, more often.

In addition, we will immediately and aggressively respond to any attack utilizing our partners, our supporters, and our full media assets.

There are three things you can do to help regain control of our destiny.

Tell us what you are hearing from your community, what the toughest questions are that you face. We'll compile the answers and get you a toolkit to respond from a position of knowledge, strength, and pride.

Tell us your story - how you picked your breed, why you became a breeder and what has changed about the health of your breed due to the efforts of your Parent Club.

Tell us who you know who can help tell the truth - supportive officials in parent, children's, or seniors' organizations either locally or nationally; a veterinarian who is actively involved in a professional organization either locally or nationally; or an informed and outspoken government official.

You can share all of this information with Chris Walker at cw2@akc.org or 212-696-8232.

As an avid Bullmastiff breeder, I am reminded of the description of that great protector of the family and property - fearless and confident, yet docile. I believe the AKC is a great protector of our rights to responsibly breed dogs. We too are fearless and confident, but it is time to stop being docile regarding the lies and propaganda that defile purebred dogs and responsible breeders.

We will communicate the truth about purebred dogs and their responsible breeders, emotionally and memorably.

We will increase the desire to own a purebred dog.

We will de-stigmatize responsible breeders.

We will change the conversation.

We will change the future.

As always, your comments are most welcome at atk@akc.org.

Sincerely,

Alan Kalter, Chairman

Dues renewal notice



Payment of dues, \$40

Dues payments are due by March 1

DWAA annual membership runs from March 1- February 28

Please fill out the required fields below, cut along the dotted line and mail this form to Pat Santi, DWAA Secretary.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Home Phone

Work or Cell Phone

Fax

Email

(Please use your current e-mail address. It is used for all DWAA online services.)

Website

Choose one:

Professional (paid) Associate (not paid)

To insure complete information, are you:

a freelancer or, employed by:

Make check payable in U.S. funds to DWAA and send along with this page to

Pat Santi, DWAA Secretary, 173 Union Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

Questions: rhydown@aol.com

NOTE: Your dues must be paid to be included in the 2014 DWAA membership roster



Pat Santi, Secretary
173 Union Road
Coatesville, PA 19320

Presorted
Standard
US POSTAGE
PAID
Warnerville, NY
Permit #5

Roxie

by Janice Biniok



Does she really need to speak in all exclamation points?

**DWAA Annual Writing Awards Banquet
February 9, 2014
New location: Hotel Pennsylvania, across
the street from Madison Square Garden**

**MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW!
see pages 5-6**