

Dog Writers Association of America



ruff DRAFTS

Summer 2013



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PRESIDENT'S column

By Ida W. Estep, Esq.

Fellow members,

While I was going through one of the seemingly endless boxes in my attic and basement in an effort to "simplify" my life – why is simplification so complicated sometimes? – I came across a diary I had kept when a pre- and early teen.

Believe me the pathos and bathos contained therein had nothing in common with masterpieces like *Catcher in the Rye*, although there was more than a passing resemblance to the refrain of that country song that goes, "Poor, poor pitiful me."

Anyway between wincing and laughing – with a frequent expression of gratitude that, to the best of my recollection, my parents had not been the type to read my diary – I began to think how writing, in its infinite variety had reflected the stages of my life.

Having somehow pulled myself out of the tragedy of early teenage, I was lucky enough to be selected to be an exchange student to Switzerland. In order to save time, I basically kept a travelogue type letter exchange up with my parents. Actually these were pretty interesting, seen through the eyes of a late teenager who had barely left PA before this trip. And happily for me, they were legible since my mother, in order to save me time and hassle – I guess she wasn't the ogre of my early teen years – had typed up the letters and forwarded them to our extended family of aunts and uncles, saving me endless correspondence. These were chatty and excited and really enjoyable to read, even at this distance of years.

Thinking of my next foray into writing brought me to my stint as editor of my high school paper. I recall vividly having drummed who,

what, when, where, how and why – preferably in the first paragraph – into my head. Not exactly inspiring stuff but it does do wonders for your ability to focus on the facts.

Next came college and the endless papers decreed for an English major. Unfortunately more citation than inspiration. Having successfully "op cit'd" my way through three years of college, I was terrified when, in my senior year, we were assigned a paper to be written wholly based on our original thought, without any outside research or citations. My anxiety was not in the least diminished when I drew Sir Walter Scott's *The Heart of Midlothian*; Ivanhoe aside, not all of Sir Walter's epics were, well, that epic. But I muddled through.

Then came law school with another style of writing entirely. While in other writing, one uses synonyms and descriptive phrases, at law it is a lot closer to "just the facts, Ma'am." We are all familiar with, say, contracts having a name followed by the definitional (Seller) or (Purchaser). But at law, not only is the individual always the Purchaser and never the Buyer, but, for clarity, other terms must be repeated exactly as first referenced. So if you are talking about a dog, it does not become a canine midway through the brief. Another whole system of communication with which to become familiar.

Finally in something of a combination of all these phases, I start writing for dog periodicals. So it was the return of op cit but with the added pleasure of synonyms and more creativity.

Anyway, I rather enjoyed my stroll down memory lane with its signposts of writing styles, from teenage emoting to publishable articles. It was an interesting journey.

SECRETARY'S report

**The DWAA Annual Writing Awards Banquet,
to be held on February 9, 2014,
will have a new location.**

**The banquet will be held at the 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, Luftansa 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, but 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 so make your reservation early!

Hotel Pennsylvania phone number 212- 736-5000.

Pat Santi
Secretary/Banquet Chair



from the EDITOR

By Terry Cardillino

Dear DWAA members,

This issue of *Ruff Drafts* features contributions from many of our new members. I would like to thank them for their participation, and also welcome them to the DWAA. The DWAA was established many years ago, and our new members continue to be the future of our organization. I am very impressed by their enthusiasm and the wide variety of experience they offer. It is so interesting to know the backgrounds of our members as the DWAA has such a variety of talents. We are a writ-

ing organization, but the expertise of our membership goes well beyond dogs into many fields. Because of this, we are a stronger and richer association intellectually.

This issue features the writing competition guidelines. Please note that our awards banquet location has changed to the Hotel Pennsylvania. The awards banquet is a *must* for every DWAA member. If you have not attended in the past, try to make this your year to do so. You will not be disappointed by the great people you meet there!

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www.dwaa.org

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Ruff Drafts

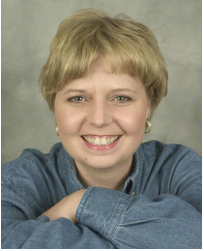
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WEBMASTER
Paul Costa

Finding *Inspiration* for a Regular Column

By Yvette Van Veen



Ten years ago, I pestered the editor of a local newspaper into allowing me to write a pet column. Over the years, that column developed into a regular piece at *The Toronto Star*, Canada's largest daily distribution newspaper.

A regular column differs from a feature because the writing process is repeated within a short period. Within one week, a writer must find inspiration, write and edit. Wash – rinse - repeat. Ten years of weekly columns works out to more than 500 ideas.

**Do I worry about running out of fresh concepts?
Absolutely.**

**There is no room for writer's block
or lack of inspiration.**

Regular columns adhere to a fixed structure of deadlines. For instance, every Wednesday, I submit a new piece. That deadline exists well before I find a topic. At the end of the week, you just have to make it happen. Immediately upon filing, the need to find new ideas begins again.

By contrast, a feature or blog piece is the result of inspiration. An idea prompts the query. When the time comes to write, the main outline already exists. There is no additional pressure to find a concept because it was conceptualized in advance.

**When on a repetitive deadline, generating ideas
and finding inspiration are paramount.
The sooner inspiration comes;
the sooner one can begin writing.**

If I had to be honest, this means that a disproportionate amount of my time involves cooking, baking and cleaning. Looming deadlines add pressure. Whisking eggs, chopping onions or scrubbing the sink with a toothbrush are repetitive and monotonous. These types of tasks force me to relax. Yet, they do not require too much energy. My thoughts can drift to a creative place where ideas freely germinate. During these freethinking phases, the basic structure and outline begins to form, as does the angle of the story.

Granted, readers submit questions that often become columns. The questions, as they appear, are edited for length. Hidden behind the scenes often lies a lengthy dialogue between writer and dog owner. This ensures that questions address the individual needs of the dog.

Reading and responding to questions takes time. Unfortunately, it becomes impossible to respond personally to everyone. However, I do read all correspondence.

People do need help. Some of the questions relate to very simple, basic pet care. I try to remember that these people, the ones that have very little knowledge, are in fact reaching out. Many express embarrassment, feeling more comfortable asking anonymously. They are afraid that experts will ridicule their lack of knowledge.

This variety of demographics plays an important role. Technical jargon is important when writing for professionals and dog fanciers. Many average pet owners legitimately struggle with simple words such as mouthing. To a dog person, it means biting and chomping. Non-fanciers wonder who is speaking in a pompous manner. Imagine how many more problems are created with even more complex terminology.

Jargon laden pieces require far too much defining. Each definition eats away at word counts, leaving little room to say anything of value. There is always this challenge to come up with a way of explaining things as accurately as possible, without sacrificing readability.

Readers make a good muse but it is not enough. How many times can you write about, "How do I get my puppy house trained?" Columns can become stale if one relies too heavily on questions from readers. Subscribing to journal alerts is one way to keep things fresh and exciting, not to mention that they help ensure readers get the most up to date information available.

Alerts only provide research abstracts – a condensed overview. Purchasing the full study provides a deeper and more meaningful review of the topic. One study leads to another, becoming a treasure hunt of sorts. While I do not know where the story will lead, the journey is bound to be interesting.

With the increase in canine studies, continuing education absolutely helps untangle complex subjects. A basic understanding of genetics, animal cognition, statistics and other topics does not make one an expert. It does make one knowledgeable enough to ask good interview questions.

Regular columnists often receive marketing campaigns in the form of media releases. These can generate some good stories, whether it is an innovative product or medical procedure. Others are thin-

ly veiled self-promotional materials, presented under the guise of news. It is another reason to stay current on research and have a wide array of general knowledge on a variety of topics. It helps sort the wheat from the chaff.

Once formed, ideas turn into completed stories. The second most important part of the week is editing the finished product. I remember asking an editor early in my career, "What does it take to get regular paid writing work?" He replied by saying, "Serendipity and solid writing skills."

Editing is a process that I personally find painful, boring and tedious. It is editing that keeps a writer employed long-term. Editors are busy people with multiple deadlines and constant demands on their time and attention. Having to edit, correct and clarify points is an additional strain on their already busy schedule. Arguing over the merits of a suggested grammatical change does not make for long-term job placement.

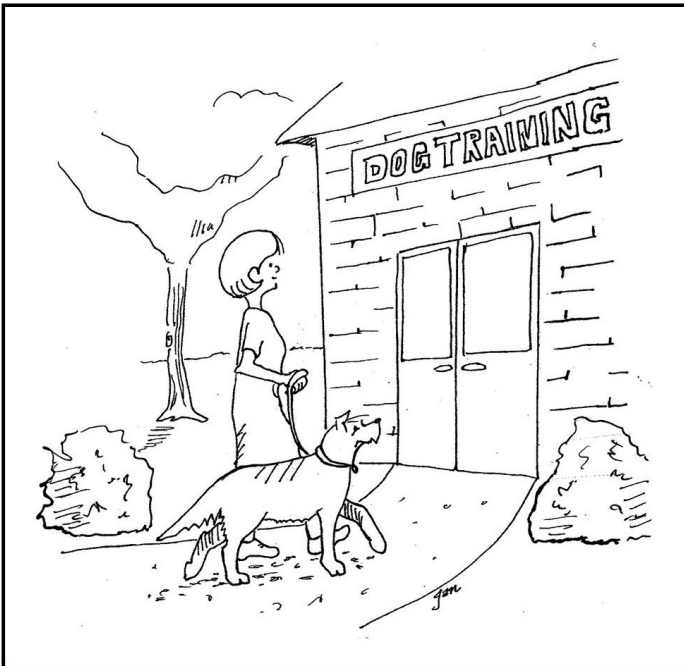
For someone like me, that means repeatedly reading a piece aloud. Sometimes I read to the dog, who cocks his head quizzically. It does help catch those annoying typos. In between each edit, I go back to my tried and true strategy of clearing my head. Do a load of laundry, proof the column. Mix cookie dough. Proof it again.

Once submitted, the process immediately starts again. The next deadline is approaching. The process of reading, researching, searching begins again.

Cookies anyone?

Roxie

By Janice Biniok



I didn't know you could do 2nd drafts on obedience training!

MEMBER news

New Website for 'Dogs in Print'

Dog writers take note: DWAA member Don Messerschmidt has started a new web blog at www.LiteraryDogs.com. He defines it as 'The site for Dogs in Print' – dogs of all sorts, with postings from books, articles, essays, and other blogs. The intent is to provide an online forum for serious writing for knowledge and discussion about dogs in literature and at the cutting edge of science, as well as remarkable dogs in the news, dogs in film, dogs in art, and the like...

Readers are encouraged to comment on the reviews and articles posted, and to submit their own reviews and suggestions for posting. Authors and publishers of books on dogs are invited to send review copies for reviews on the site.

Don Messerschmidt is a member of DWAA, an anthropologist, a writer, writing mentor and former magazine editor, and author of the popular book *Big Dogs of Tibet and the Himalayas* (Orchid Press) which recently won DWAA's Maxwell Medallion for excellence. He is also a member of the Oregon Writers Colony and of PEN International (the worldwide writers' organization, through PEN Nepal Center, Kathmandu). He has traveled widely, and is well known for his interest in dogs, dog culture, history and science, and ultimately in all good writing about dogs.

Some praiseworthy comments about LiteraryDogs:

"Your website is fantastic. Thank you for creating a serious website devoted to dogs and literature!"

"...outstanding design and style."

Check out the site and add to the forum.

Don Messerschmidt can be contacted by email at LiteraryDogs@gmail.com or by snail mail to his home office: 1218 SE 121st Ave., Vancouver, WA 98683-6239 (USA).

Bash Dibra and Canine Court

DWAA member Bash Dibra and the Friends of Canine Court recently celebrated the 15th anniversary of this 14,000 square foot canine playground in Van Cortland Park, Riverdale, The Bronx. Canine Court has given New York City a place for fun, socialization and pet events. Responsible pet ownership is promoted along with city-wide pet-related topics, events and charities which provide enrichment to the community and help to inform the public of the benefits of the human/companion-animal bond.

A "Fitness with Fido Walk" was scheduled in May 2013 as a fundraiser to restore the parks and Canine Court. The Walk promotes responsible pet ownership, gives pets, children, adults and seniors exercise, and celebrates how pets and parks enrich our lives.

DWAA Member Teaches Book Publishing Classes

By Loren Spiotta-DiMare

Long-time DWAA member Loren Spiotta-DiMare of New Jersey had her first magazine article published at the age of 19 and her first book published at 22. Now 50- something Loren says, "I enjoy being an author as much now as I did when I had my first book published."

Loren's career has broadened over the years: she writes for both adults and children; works with traditional publishers; self-publishes; has formed a small press, J. Pace Publications; serves as a publicist for herself and others; and most recently started teaching **Introduction To Book Publishing** classes.

"I laughingly refer to myself as a One Woman Band," Loren says. I worked in a corporate marketing department right after college. I was a production coordinator and acted as a liaison between graphic artists and printers. I learned all about printing. I loved the process from the start. Still do. Although a lot has changed over the years."

Later in her career, Loren served as a public relations coordinator for several nonprofits. "I enjoy PR just as much as writing books and articles. All of this experience has served me well as an author," Loren explains.

A few years ago, Loren decided to try something new and offered to teach three-week book publishing classes at her local book store. The course highlights the world of traditional, nonfiction publishing as well as self-publishing. Students learn how to capture the attention of an editor with a proposal, outline and sample chapter. As an alternative, they're also taught the steps required to produce and publicize their own books. Topics include: writing, editing, illustration, design, printing and marketing. Children's book publishing is also discussed.

The classes have been well-received attracting eight or nine students in each session. "The first night I share the highlights of my career explaining how the publishing business works. Then I ask the students about their interests and give each a personalized homework assignment. In the second session we review homework assignments as a class. Next I talk about the importance of publicity and explain how to write a press release. I then ask students to write their own release (as if their first book had just been published) for the following week. In the final session, we review releases and I answer lingering publishing-related questions.

Interestingly, I've found many of my students want to write animal books. So I offered a specific class for aspiring dog writers at a pet resort. That session was especially enjoyable. The students were dog trainers, pet sitters, animal photographers etc.

"Loren's class was just what I needed to put all the pieces together and publish the book of my dreams!" says Becky Kwiatkoski. Becky is a third grade teacher and self-published *Harley & Heloise . . . It's A Rescue*. Although a work of fiction, this children's novel is based on Becky's adoption of Harley, her beloved Rottweiler mix.

"When Becky enrolled in the class she was very eager to learn and make her book a reality. I'm so proud of her determination and accomplishment. *Harley & Heloise* is a lovely book," Loren says adding, "I'm really enjoying teaching the classes. It's very rewarding to share my publishing industry knowledge with students who are so eager to learn. I've been meeting the most interesting people with varied backgrounds and interests."

Loren and her husband, Lou share their lives with numerous companion animals: Loren's Quarter Horse, Elwood; Lou's 46-year-old Amazon parrot, Loro; five dogs; 25 small pet birds; and their outdoor pond Koi and goldfish. "There's no lack of inspiration around here," Loren says with a smile.

Her titles include: *Beyond The Finish Line: Stories of Ex-Racehorses*, *The Sporting Spaniel Handbook*, *Cavalier King Charles Spaniel*, *Everyone Loves Elwood*, *Madeline's Miracle*, *Chelsea & The New Puppy*, *Rockwell: A Boy and His Dog*, and *Norman To The Rescue*, *Broke Leg Bear* and *Hannah's House Rabbit*. Her new children's reference book series: *Horses That Help with the American Humane Association* will be released next year.

Published both nationally and internationally, Loren's work has been recognized by the Humane Society of the United States, The Doris Day Animal Foundation, The Dog Writers Association of America, and New Jersey Press Women.



The Nonfiction Perks of Writing Fiction About Pet Rescue

By Linda O. Johnston

When I started writing the Pet Rescue Mystery series for Berkley Prime Crime, a spinoff from my Kendra Ballantyne, Pet-Sitter Mysteries, I hadn't considered all the possible perks and ramifications. The series has been a journey into many aspects of animal rescue that I hadn't even considered before, one that has affected me in many heartwarming ways.

A lot of the perks involve, or at least start with, research. I knew a bit about pet rescue when I began the series, but I dug in to learn all I could. Part of it involved becoming a volunteer at a local private shelter. I loved it and am still there! I'm a dog adoption counselor, so I sometimes get to introduce dogs to their new families.

Another aspect of research? Observation! One of my fictional characters supervises what was previously known as the Small Animal Rescue Team-SmART-of Los Angeles Animal Services. When I started writing the series, I contacted the real SmART members and they were utterly kind in allowing me to observe some of their training sessions, which included ziplining down mountainsides, sometimes into water, to practice in case any of their rescues involved that kind of maneuver.

Then there's meeting even more people involved in many different parts of pet rescue and care. For example, in my February release *Oodles of Poodles*, I featured the film industry and the "No Animals Were Harmed"® certification by the American Humane Association, a trademarked certification that no other group can use. I learned about that after frequently passing the then-new office of American Humane on Ventura Boulevard, near where I live. The people there were amazingly helpful, including allowing me to reference their certification as well as giving me useful information for my story. Now, when I see ads on TV about how certain companies that raise and produce chickens nationally have received a certification (different kind, of course) from American Humane, I cheer!

Plus, there's the research part of my first work to be published strictly in e-format, a novella called *Nonstop Spaniels* coming out as part of the Pet Rescue Mysteries. It features NKLA – No Kill Los Angeles – which is an initiative of Best Friends Animal Society to reduce the number of animals killed in shelters. That was fun to research, too, and the folks at Best Friends also were extremely helpful.

The next full-length mystery in the series, *Teacup Turbulence*, features a group that helps to rescue animals thanks to volunteers who happen to be pilots. They fly pets from areas where there aren't enough available homes to those with plenty of open arms. That was an aspect of pet rescue I hadn't previously known about, but now I follow those rescues with lots of interest.

The parent company to my publisher Berkley Prime Crime, the Penguin Group (USA), has also selected two of my Pet Rescue Mysteries to be part of their Read Humane program, in the company of a number of other authors whose books they publish. The Penguin Group has made substantial donations to pet rescue, and our selected books have been reprinted with a special symbol on them to encourage readers to recognize how important pet rescue is.

And recently, I was invited by a local Barnes & Noble store to be part of their program to contribute to Paws & Learn, an organization that goes into schools, bookstores and other places to help teach children both how to act humanely toward animals but also how to be careful around them and not get bitten.

All of these, and more, have made my venture into writing about pet rescues even more exciting. I'd imagine that other dog writers have similar perks that they didn't anticipate when they start to research stories. In any event, I really love knowing that there's even more to writing than the fun of writing!

ATTENTION: DWAA POSITION AVAILABLE EDITOR, RUFF DRAFTS

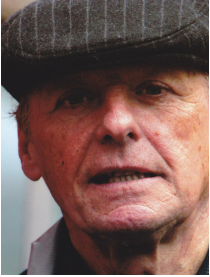
The Dog Writers Association of America is seeking a qualified individual to fill the position of editor of their quarterly publication *Ruff Drafts*. We would like to thank our current editor, Terry Cardillino, for the work that she has done for the DWAA and wish her the best.

The position is available immediately with the Fall 2013 issue.

Interested candidates should send resume to DWAA Secretary Pat Santi at rhydownen@aol.com

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Meet our new MEMBERS



Robert Amen

ROBERT AMEN

Stamford, CT
BobAmen@yahoo.com

My career began at the *New York Times*, writing news items for WQXR radio, then as a news assistant in *Business News*. I moved into corporate public relations, working for major companies in New York, and eventually into consulting for the next 40 years.

My love of dogs began as a hobby and became an avocation. My primary interest was in dog obedience, which led me into training, competition, and judging at AKC obedience trials. When I retired, I became an obedience training instructor at a local dog training club, and later served as their Obedience Training Director.

While competing with my Australian Shepherd dogs, I was asked to write the obedience column for the United States Australian Shepherd Association's beautiful magazine, *The Journal*, and served on USASA's board of directors. One of my *Journal* articles made it to the finals in the 2007 DWAA writing competition. This year, I won a Maxwell Award for an article I had written for the AKC's *Family Dog* magazine, about a Bullmastiff that had achieved the first Utility Dog Excellent (UDX) title ever awarded in her breed, along with other significant achievements.

I am a member of the editorial board for *Front & Finish* magazine for obedience trainers, and occasionally write articles for that publication. I am a member of the AKC Board of Directors.



Charlene Logan Burnett

CHARLENE LOGAN BURNETT

Davis, CA
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Charlene Logan Burnett devotes much of her time to animal advocacy and rescue. She is a member of HeARTs Speak, a global network of artists who help raise awareness of homeless animals. She writes the HeARTs Speak column for *The Virginia Maryland Dog*.

After adopting a Collie in 2007, Charlene became devoted to the breed. She is an area coordinator and board member for NorCal Collie Rescue. She finds it especially rewarding to provide shelter to senior dogs.

Charlene has worked in an animal hospital, a holistic veterinary clinic, and a boarding facility. During the '70s she earned a certificate in kennel management. At that time, she also trained dogs in obedience and protection work and was certified by the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors.

She went on to receive a B.A. in Creative Writing and Theatre from Wellesley College and earn an M.F.A. in playwriting from UC Davis. She was a writing fellow at the McDowell Colony. Her work has appeared in a number of literary journals. A short story will appear in *A Quiet Shelter There: An Anthology to Benefit Homeless Animals* to be published by Hadley Rille Books in 2013.

For many years, she served as a senior writer in the marketing department at UC Davis School of Law. She also held the position of senior editor of the law school alumni magazine.



Susan Chaney

SUSAN CHANEY

Long Beach, CA
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Susan Chaney writes and edits for *Best In Show Daily*, a website that targets the conformation world. She covers health and performance events for the site. On the editorial side of publishing since 1990, Susan started her career as a newspaper features writer and editor, eventually becoming the newspaper's editor. A lifelong lover of dogs, she has lived with German Shepherds, Labs, Yorkies, an Irish Setter, a Great Dane-Bloodhound mix, a Sheltie – the dog of her life – and currently a Chihuahua mix of unknown pedigree. Susan grew up in what some might consider a private zoo, complete with a small monkey named Kiki and a sheep named Clarence.

Prior to joining BSD, Susan freelanced for *Dog World* and *Dog Fancy* magazines, where she had been an editor for almost nine years and a group editor of several titles for four years. One of her greatest joys in publishing has been nurturing young writers and editors, helping them launch their careers. Today, she loves working part-time from home and especially enjoys taking editorial conference calls in her courtyard hammock as she lives near the beach in Southern California with her husband, Tim, a photographic artist. Susan has two grown sons of whom she is inordinately proud.



Kate Kelly

KATE KELLY

Los Angeles, CA
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Several years ago I started my website, *America Comes Alive!*, featuring little-known stories of America's past. In 2011 I wrote about Owney, a "post office dog" from the 1880s, when a friend said, "You should do a dog series."

This suggestion has been a wonderful way to explore the American story. The dogs profiled range from Hollywood dogs to military dogs, from service dogs to just plain good dogs. Each

story paints a picture of a special dog, an era, and a part of the country. At UCLA this spring I turned it into a course. Several two-legged guests brought in special four-legged guests (military dogs and guide dogs). We had a wonderful time.

The web series and my new book, *You Lucky Dog! From Homeless to Famous*, permit me to combine my love of country with my love of animals – all while working as a writer!

I come from a family who has always owned dogs, mostly mutts, and my past work experience involves having authored or co-authored about 40 books for traditional publishers. I'm delighted to be a member of DWAA. As Will Rogers said, "If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went."



Marianne McKiernan
Photo: John McKiernan

MARIANNE MCKIERNAN

Denver, CO
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I've always loved animals, but I come by it honestly. My dad was the kid who always had a menagerie, often wild animals that he'd rescued. The squirrels climbing the living room drapes sent my grandmother over the edge and thereafter Dad's foundlings were restricted to the basement. Dad is the only person I know who could teach wild deer to shake hands, using Oreos and lettuce. "Gimme your paw," he'd say, and the deer would obligingly lift its hoof in exchange for the treat.

My husband and I have two cats and two dogs plus Jeb, our ninth Canine Companions for Independence puppy in training. We started raising pups for Canine Companions (www.cci.org) in 2001, not realizing how involved we'd become with the organization. In May our eighth puppy, Rocket, graduated as a Successor Service Dog. There is nothing in the world to compare to the feeling of handing over the leash, knowing the puppy we raised is going to change someone's life!

"Let the Dogs Speak! Puppies in training tell the story of Canine Companions for Independence" started as a series of DogBlogs in 2007 for www.TheDenverChannel.com, my work website. I thought it would be more interesting to tell viewers about Canine Companions in the pups' words. Six years and six dogs later the DogBlog is going strong. The publisher Booktrope approached me in 2011 about using the DogBlogs as the basis for a book, which turned into a two-year project.

When I'm not working at KMGH-TV as a producer, consumer advocate (and DogBlog facilitator), I have my own animal communication business called Telling Tails (www.telling-tails.com).



Rachel Phelps

RACHEL PHELPS

Owensboro, KY
Rachel@PrestonSpeaks.com

Rachel Phelps is the writer/publisher of the award-winning pet travel and lifestyle website PrestonSpeaks.com. Her site covers K9 culture, pet travel, current pet issues, product reviews, pet rescues, and the adventures of her two West Highland White Terriers.

Since childhood, pets were always a big part of her life. It wasn't until after she graduated college with a degree in Computer Science and an MBA that her career led her to making a profession of combining her passion for computers and pets as an online content producer.

She has volunteered with several animal organizations. Currently, she is on the national board of directors for WestieMed and Westie Rescue Indiana, and oversees the social media endeavors and website content for several animal non-profits.

Rachel is the online ambassador for Amazing Pet Expos which has consumer shows all over the country with 10,000+ attendees each. At these shows she speaks from the main stage about pet travel and saving money on pet care.

As she travels the country, Rachel has a unique opportunity to cover many pet-friendly places for her website. Some unusual pet places have included a harbor boat dog tour, a pet coffee shop, and a doggie bar.



Anne Marie Rasmussen

ANNE MARIE RASMUSSEN

Eldersbank, Canada
AnneMarie@doggoneartmagazine.com

Wow it is not easy to write about yourself! So says the editor who frequently asks artists, writers, photographers and breeders to provide profiles on themselves for her digital online magazines: *Dog Gone Art* ("examining the cultural side of the dog" i.e., dog art, books, photography, movies),

The Universal Cavalier (Cavalier magazine) and *The Global Toy Spaniels* (multi breed magazine). And I did it in less than 200 words! I am basically a jack of all trades, though whether I've actually mastered one is the question. I write, I edit, I layout, I publish and I design and maintain my own magazine websites. Most recently I have started a consulting company RhiannonPromotions.com to help clubs and associations to take their publications digital. I have been involved in the dog world for nearly 35 years and I have bred and shown Cavalier King Charles Spaniels and Lhasa Apsos. I have also owned and shown Whippets, Wolfhounds and Shih Tzu. I have owned boarding kennels and grooming shops and I have worked in vet clinics. In other words, I have lived my adult life immersed in dogs and I wouldn't have it any other way. Oh I am Canadian, eh.



Lisa Rogak
Photo: Ben Gately Williams

LISA ROGAK

Berkeley, CA
lisa@lisarogak.com

I have been a professional writer for over 30 years, with 40+ books under my belt. One of those books hit the *New York Times* bestseller list, and another was nominated for an Edgar.

Currently, to my great dismay I am owned by no dog of my own because I travel too much. So I serve as Good Mommy to two dogs in New Hampshire I visit frequently who own a friend of mine who is consequently known as Bad Mommy.

Continued next page

Meet our new MEMBERS continued

I am also Crazy Aunt Lisa to a Shih Tzu named Reagan who I rescued and delivered to a longtime friend back in 2007. Dog and human were joined at the hip within five seconds of meeting.

I have written two books about dogs published by St Martins Press: *Dogs of War: The Courage, Love, and Loyalty of Military Working Dogs*, as well as *Dogs of Courage: The Heroism and Heart of Working Dogs Around the World*.

In October, I have another book coming out: *One Big Happy Family: Heartwarming Stories of Animals Caring for One Another*, which is like *Unlikely Friendships* but focusing on interspecies parenting. More than half the stories are about dogs, and I'm looking forward to seeing the book, which features many awe-inspiring and stunning full-color photographs. My website is lisarogak.com



Tracy Weber

TRACY WEBER

Seattle, WA

tracy@wholelifeyoga.com

My foray into the wonderful world of dogs began the day my husband and I adopted an eight-week-old German Shepherd puppy, Tasha. What began as love at first sight for a fifteen-pound bundle of fur has turned into an eight-year, continuing journey of discovery. Through Tasha, I have learned about

Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency (an autoimmune disease of German Shepherds), alternative methods of managing hip dysplasia, and, most importantly, tools and training methods to rehabilitate reactive dogs. But most of all, Tasha has taught me that unconditional love can endure – even thrive – through hardship.

Now Tasha has led me into the world of fiction writing. The Downward Dog Mysteries are murder mysteries set in the yoga world. But at their heart, they are stories about a yoga teacher, the dog she loves, and the struggles they face as they grow together.

My series, blog, and website provide information about training reactive dogs, living with EPI, and animal rescue.

You can learn more about my mystery series, yoga, and German Shepherds at the links below. Writing about yoga, dogs and murder.... What could be more fun?

Author Website: <http://tracyweberauthor.com/>

Blog: <http://www.wholelifeyoga.com/blog/>



Arlene Weintraub

ARLENE WEINTRAUB

Hoboken, NJ

arlene.weintraub@gmail.com

Arlene Weintraub is a freelance journalist and author with over fifteen years of experience writing about health care, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. Her freelance pieces have been published in *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, *Technology Review*, and other media outlets. Many of

her stories have focused on the growing role of pet dogs in cancer research, in particular the field of "comparative oncology," where veterinarians and oncologists work together to discover new cutting-edge therapies designed to help both dogs and people suffering from cancer. She is currently researching a book on this topic. Weintraub's first book, *Selling the Fountain of Youth* (Basic Books 2010), was an investigation of the anti-aging industry. The book stemmed from her work as a senior health writer for *BusinessWeek*, where she spent 10 years on staff writing hundreds of articles that explored both the science and business of health.



Carole Williams
Photo: Tom Weigand

CAROLE WILLIAMS

Sedalia, CO

cpwilliams@msn.com

Growing up, I wanted to be a writer and a cowboy. After a number of spills from my horses, I'm probably more successful at the first. From a start at the *Geneva Times* in Geneva, New York, with an eight-year stop at *The Blade* in Toledo, Ohio, life led us to Denver – and the beginning of my dog and pony show. I landed a job as Director of

Information for Morris Animal Foundation. I visited veterinary colleges to write about funded studies, and discovered my passion – animal health.

My free-lance career started with work for a number of non-profits, and a trip to Boca Raton to attend a conference sponsored by Iams. I wrote brochures for Iams, did work for local veterinary clinics, public relations for the Colorado Classic dog shows, and local PR for AKC's national agility show in Colorado. Now semi-retired, I do occasional articles for the Canine Health Foundation and other publications.

Along the way, I also acquired a passion for Field Spaniels. I've been a breeder and conformation exhibitor for 20 years under the Rainbow Creek Field Spaniels name. I contribute many articles to magazines and the club publication. I currently serve as Field Spaniel Society of America president.

ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION *Awards* BANQUET

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2014

See page 20 of this issue of ruff DRAFTS for more details on the 2013 Writing Competition.



Dues Renewal Notice

Payment of dues, \$40

Dues payments were due by March 1st.

The DWAA yearly membership runs from March 1, 2013 – February 28, 2014.

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

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**In order to prepare a 2014 Member Directory,
please complete and mail in the form above.**

Good Grief

Pet loss support groups and pet writers are important to the grieving process

By Jen Reeder

California resident Steve Epstein had an extremely difficult week in March 1998 when his mixed breed dog Sasha died of cancer at 13.

"I'd had her since she was a puppy. It was a devastating loss. I had never experienced loss like that. And coincidentally, I lost my father in the same week," Epstein said.

His veterinarian suggested Epstein visit a pet loss support group and gave him a phone number. The counselor he called didn't have an active pet bereavement group at the time, but when she heard he'd lost both his dog and his father, she offered him one-on-one counseling at the group rate. Epstein said it was helpful in dealing with his grief over Sasha's loss, which was even deeper than the loss of his father.

"I wasn't aware of how deep it could go," he said.

Athena Diesch, MSW, LGSW, a veterinary social worker at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Medical Center in St. Paul, MN, runs two monthly pet loss support groups and said she hears from grieving pet owners "all the time" that the loss of their dog was worse than the death of a human family member.

"It comes with a level of shame," she said. "I look at them and say, 'Don't be ashamed.'"

She said the loss of a pet is intense because they share our "intimate moments" like getting into the shower, changing clothes or using the toilet – and never judge.

"I don't know about anybody else but I've never shared my pillow with my grandma," she said. "(Pets) share our beds, we share our intimate moments with them, but when we lose them, we're expected to just move on. 'It's just a dog, it's just a cat, you can get another one, you can replace them.' Whereas if it was a human, they would say you get three to six months – at least, if not closer to a year – to actively grieve."



Jen Reeder's yellow Lab mix, Rio, inspires her to write about dogs and try to raise public perception of their importance to humans.

She said people who lose their dogs often don't have a safe place to talk about their loss because the response from coworkers and even friends and family can be unpredictable. By providing a safe forum in which to discuss grief, pet loss support groups can play an important role in the healing process.

Diesch said the bimonthly support groups are free and open to 4-11 pre-registered participants, who are asked to bring a photo to help the group "put a face to it." Attendees may have experienced the death of their pet, or be working through "anticipatory grief" for a pet that is terminally ill, has aggressive behavior that threatens their life, or may need euthanasia.

She doesn't have an agenda for the pet loss support groups, preferring to let participants do most of the talking while she

weaves a few common themes through the conversation. She said she is inspired watching the attendees come together to support one another.

"You watch this group bond in a way that's unreal to describe, and help each other through one of the most gut-wrenching experiences," she said. "Animals are no longer animals – animals are family members."

Wallace Sife, PhD, wrote "The Loss of a Pet" after his beloved miniature dachshund Edel Meister died in 1987 and he couldn't find helpful resources to cope with the grief; he said he was dysfunctional despite having two PhDs in psychology. The success of the book led to him founding the nonprofit Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement (APLB) in 1997. The group offers training for pet loss counselors, a list of veterinarians that perform at-home euthanasia, information about coping with topics like talking to children about euthanasia, and online pet loss support groups. The APLB holds five weekly chatrooms at www.aplb.org. Over 45,000 pet owners have visited the chatrooms in the past 15 years.

He said he sees a great need for more veterinarians to offer pet loss support groups to clients.

"That's why our chatrooms are so important – there are not enough counselors being listed," Sife said. "We're trying to do everything we can."

Ann Beyke, M.A., LPC, has a private practice as a pet loss counselor in Albuquerque, NM. She trained with the APLB and then worked as a counselor in the online chatrooms. Like Dr. Sife, she devoted her career to pet loss therapy after the death of a beloved pet. She had worked in animal rescue and as a counselor to survivors of domestic violence and people with disabilities when Goldie, her 16-year-old Golden Retriever, was dying in 2006.

"It was that moment when I looked at her and said, 'I know you're dying, and I can't bear the thought of it. I know there are other people that are grieving and I want to be there for them,'" she said.

Shortly afterward she lost her mixed-breed dog Nimbus to liver cancer, which reinforced her dedication to her new vocation. She now offers three pet loss support groups each month as well as one-on-one counseling over the phone or in-person, either at her clients' homes or at hers. She said people who have just lost a dog often find solace just hugging and petting her yellow Lab mix, Raj.

"They put their face in his fur and cry," she said.



Ann Beyke's dog Raj is a source of comfort to clients who have just suffered the loss of a dog.

She said a common discussion topic is how hard it can be to spend time at home after the loss of a pet, regardless of whether they were euthanized at home, because of memories, such as the spot where their dog used to sleep.

"I had a client say once, 'I can't even be in my own home,'" she said. "I'm really quite honored to be able to share those losses with people because I understand it. I wouldn't be doing it if I didn't understand it."

In addition to her own counseling and materials, Beyke often recommends clients read Dr. Sife's *The Loss of a Pet* and *When Your Pet Dies* by Alan Wolfelt, PhD. She echoed the view that many people in society don't understand grief over the loss of a dog – people who may not even like dogs – which is why pet loss support groups are valuable.

"It's a disenfranchised grief," Beyke said. "If you don't have a pet,

you can't understand how hard it is to lose a pet. We know there are a lot of people out there who just aren't interested in having pets ... they aren't interested in hearing why you're sad about it."

She said pet writers play an important role in educating the general public about how important dogs can be to humans. For example, she said stories about how dogs are helping veterans cope with PTSD, or about children's literacy "read to a dog" programs, elevate public perception and potentially generate compassion for people coping with the loss of a dog.

"It's really important for people like you to keep writing about the impact that animals have on people's lives," she said.

Freelance journalist Jen Reeder treasures every day she spends with her husband and their yellow Lab mix, Rio. Visit her online at www.jenreeder.com.

More information:

<http://aplb.org/index.php>

<http://www.petlosscounselor.com/>

<http://www.cvm.umn.edu/vmc/aboutvmc/clientsupport/gnl/home.html>

<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/pet-loss/>

ASPCA's Pet Loss Hotline: (877) GRIEF-10.

TREASURER'S report

1/1/2013 to 6/1/2013

January 1, 2013 opening balance 30,787.38

INCOME

Applications	975.00
Awards Banquet	5,210.00
Awards Banquet Sponsor	1,500.00
Contest Entry Fees	22.00
Dues	10,934.63
Program Advertising	55.00
Restitution	1,142.87
Special Award Sponsor	5,900.00

TOTAL INCOME 25,739.50

EXPENSES

Archive Storage	300.00
Bank Charge	130.00
Banquet Expenses	9,809.47
Computer Services	1,016.76
Contest Chair Stipend	2,500.00
Contest Expenses	2,199.15
Design	1,400.00
Eukanuba booth	366.73
Gratuity (Affinia staff)	100.00
Insurance	578.00
Postage	186.01
Printing	1,176.43
Special Award Winners	8,655.00

TOTAL EXPENSES 28,417.55

ENDING BALANCE 28,109.33

Special Needs

By Tammi Brown

Special needs is a term used in the United States to categorize humans and animals who may require assistance due to medical, mental or psychological disabilities. In my household, which consists of myself dealing with Chiari malformation, syringomyelia, tethered cord syndrome, fibromyalgia and related issues – plus two Cavalier King Charles Spaniels (CKCS) dealing with Chiari malformation and syringomyelia – special needs is just our way of life. Honestly, I have never thought of my dogs or myself as falling under the term special needs. We are special, as is every other creature on the planet, so we live a lifestyle supporting that, as everyone should. It comes down to living very consciously in order to make daily decisions that are in the very best interest of our greater wellness. It is all about nourishing our bodies with the cleanest, most natural foods, lessening our load from everyday chemicals and toxins, balancing our rest and activities, exercising to counteract our physical challenges, using natural remedies and therapies as much as possible and maintaining a positive environment.

Over the past few years, more information has surfaced about the pitfalls of the Standard American Diet. Many of us live in ignorance regarding our health. We pay little attention to what we are ingesting be it food, medication and/or chemicals. Most of us trust that our leaders have all of our best interest in the forefront of their decisions. However, when it comes to our food supply, we have gotten so far off track from what our bodies truly need it's disturbing. The old saying, "You are what you eat" has more meaning today than ever before. Just like the gas for our cars, food is the fuel our bodies need to function; without the proper blend, much like our cars, we break down, become diseased, inflamed and unhealthy. Making the best choices everyday for our loved ones and us is the key to longevity.

When I agreed to care for my first very special CKCS, I vowed I would do everything I could to keep him healthy and fit. However,

it was when my female Cavalier arrived that I realized I needed to do more. Each morning and evening when I placed her fairly healthy kibble down, I would watch her repeatedly leave her bowl with a bite in her mouth then explode into a scratching fit, until her meal was complete. Each feeding could last up to thirty minutes. I wondered how enjoyable her meal actually was; it didn't seem like it was enjoyable at all. I started doing some research, basing my search for the dogs on what I had been experiencing in my well being for the past several years due to my organic, plant-based diet.

Even though it seemed a daunting task, I started feeding both dogs a raw food diet; alternating homemade and store bought frozen nuggets. The food is made of organic/wild raw meat, liver and eggs, garlic, plus an organic variety of raw vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, a grain (brown rice, barley, oats) and spices known to have powerful healing properties. Each meal begins with them happily lapping up a tablespoon of raw goat's milk, a nourishing probiotic to help balance their guts. Their food is topped off with two scoops of a healthy powder made with kelp, bone meal, nutritional yeast, soy lecithin, ground flax seed and vitamin C, stirred in with some warm water.

Instantly, I observed both dogs lick their bowls clean without incident. In a short time, I witnessed a change in many things: there were no more red

stained faces from running eyes, they experienced fewer bad days, less episodes of scratching and crooked walking and their energy increased. Their coats became shinier, softer and plusher. Most of all, they were overjoyed to eat their meals. It truly is worth the extra cost and work. Over the years I have learned creative ways of making it more manageable, including growing some of my own vegetables for their food and treats, even convincing a friend to hunt my sister's land for deer, so I could use the venison for their meals. They have been enjoying wild venison for quite some time. Their treats consist of only recognizable ingredients; the fewer the ingredients the better, supplemented with lots of organic fruits and vegetables.



*Happy family on a beautiful Spring day
at the Lilac Festival in Rochester, NY.*

Photo by: Timothy J. Sharpe

Editorial Note: Tammi Brown is simply sharing the personal story of her dogs and herself with fellow DWAA members. Tammi is in no way suggesting or recommending any human or veterinary advice without seeking professional advice.

For me, I use pain medicine on my very bad days and find alternative options to manage daily pain like homeopathy, therapeutic-grade essential oils, herbs and supplements, as well as hands-on therapies (massage, Reiki, chiropractic adjustments, cranial-sacral therapy, physical therapy and kinesiology). It was inevitable that the dogs would need some type of medication to manage their nerve pain. Most pain medicine did not seem like the appropriate choice as I felt the benefits did not outweigh the side effects. Fortunately I have found a medication given three times a day which is a great solution to their daily pain, combined with alternative options which become my focus on their infrequent worst days. A strict daily schedule seems to be extremely effective for managing their daily well being; following consistent feeding times with medication intake allows for a steady flow of medication balanced with nutrition.

Incorporating a clean lifestyle means also keeping the environment in which we live free of chemicals, perfumes, pesticides, herbicides and other harmful ingredients. Our body and cleaning products are made with all natural ingredients; baking soda is my non-toxic scouring solution. I even make my own laundry soap. On our daily walks, we avoid areas that have been chemically treated, and there is a soapy bucket waiting when we return to rinse off everything picked up along the way. For many years I even resisted commercial flea treatments, using every possible natural product (cinnamon, garlic, natural sprays and oils, diatomaceous earth, fresh herb blends) to keep them flea free. The fleas ultimately triumphed and although resistant, eventually I surrendered to monthly flea treatments.

Living for many years, myself, with Chiari malformation and syringomyelia, I can empathize with how my dogs may be feeling. Quickly, I learned the places on their bodies that are okay to touch and others that triggered a negative reaction. It is different for each of them. One is sensitive at the chest and mid-back, the other is sensitive on the right side of the head and neck. They both love their hind ends and bellies rubbed, often flopping and rolling

directly in my path to receive a moment. Because of their spinal sensitivities, it was important to find them comfortable harnesses, (hers a simple pink leather step-in and buckle, his a vest or a soft over the head strap behind the legs style), instead of collars. Quite frankly, I am not sure why anyone uses collars anymore, as they seem so jarring for any dog's neck and spine.

Overall, my life revolves around these two dogs, my health, our meals and exercise. We spend most of each day together starting with a long walk in the morning. Often in the summer months, you will find them in a bike trailer behind my recumbent road bike. They sleep in between following me around the house as I do my daily chores. I find time throughout our day to sit, whether on our deck or on the couch, so we all can have an extended rest. Most days they can jump up onto the couch, but getting down is difficult. Conveniently, my couch has recliners on both ends. They use the footstools like elevators, standing on one until it lowers them to the ground for an easy step off. They love their crates, which are kept in my bedroom, where they go for their safety whenever I leave the house. We deal with each situation as it arises, taking *one day at a time*.

My wish is that we lived in a more dog-friendly world, where they could go everywhere with me without question. It is very natural to spoil these two precious beings. A good friend of mine often tells me she is coming back in her next life as one of my dogs. Although it seems I go to extremes for them, what I get in return is unmatched to any other relationship. They bring an abundance of joy, laughter and love to my life. They give more unconditional love than I have ever experienced, leaving me feeling like I am the absolute center of their world. Honestly, it has been a bumpy road for the three of us, with a huge learning curve; however, in the past couple of years we have reached a place that is full of peace, joy, blessings, health and so much love. I wouldn't have it any other way!

"Be the person your dog thinks you are!"

— J.W. Stephens

the ROSTER

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Animal Advocacy Day in New York State

Annual event promotes awareness and activism

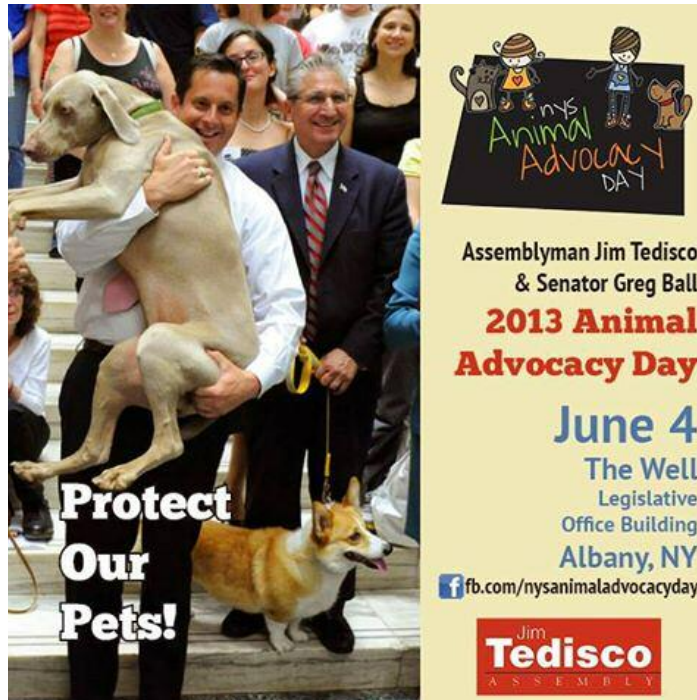
By Cathy Anderson

Helping those with no voice of their own is the goal behind New York State's "Animal Advocacy Day," an annual affair designed to boost awareness of anti-cruelty issues and increase the efforts to address them.

For three years the bi-partisan event has united animal advocates and legislators in a well-orchestrated appeal to bring about changes in state laws that have an effect on companion animals. Two years ago, James Tedisco of the state assembly, and Greg Ball of the state senate, joined forces and the first Animal Advocacy Day was observed on June 1, 2011.

The meeting takes place at the Well of the Legislative Office Building in Albany, NY. The "movers and shakers" of the state's animal welfare organizations now have a place to come together in solidarity. The past year's notable events in animal welfare are presented. Networking, information sharing and keynote speakers round out the daylong gathering. Lobbying legislators for tougher penalties and changes in existing laws abounds. By the end of the day there is a clearer picture of which lawmakers support the call for farther reaching anti-cruelty laws and their willingness to work with a number of diverse animal disciplines.

An important example of this process is Buster's Law, which was created and has since been strengthened as a result of the efforts of NYS legislators and their backers. Animal Advocacy Day grew from grassroots efforts to develop more stringent laws to address cases of horrific abuse. The law was named for Buster, an 18-month-old tabby cat that was doused with kerosene and burned to death in Schenectady, NY by then 16-year-old Chester Williamson. Williamson is now a felon three times over and also was later convicted for the sexual abuse of a 12-year-old disabled girl. The case is a prime example of animal abuse as a bridge crime.



As a result of extensive lobbying, Buster's Law was enacted on June 28, 1999. Efforts continue to strengthen its scope, but much work remains to convert it into meaningful legislation. However, prior to its inception, charges of cruelty to animals never resulted in more than a misdemeanor regardless of the seriousness of the act.

Speaking prior to this year's event, Assemblyman James Tedisco noted, "In 1999 113,000 New Yorkers signed petitions to get the landmark Buster's Bill passed into law to create the felony category of 'aggravated cruelty to animals'

punishable by up to two years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. . . prior to this bill becoming law, animal cruelty resulted in only misdemeanor penalties, if any charges were imposed at all. . . we will continue to update the progress of the bills and our lobbying efforts along the way. The Animal Advocacy Day will be an annual event in the month of June at the capitol. We are the voice to strengthen the Buster's Animal Cruelty Law and further protect our companion pets."

In April, Assemblyman Tedisco met with members of the Police Benevolent Association of New York State on a number of issues relating to public safety. Assemblyman Tedisco stated, "I'm very pleased to announce that the PBA of NYS has released a memo in 'strong support of S.2304/ A.4516' to create a statewide registry of convicted animal abusers. Remember, NYS Animal Advocacy Day is June 4th."

His response appeared to be a reference to criticisms that law enforcement and some other officials feel that responding to the requirements of enhanced animal abuse laws with a state registry

of offenders would increase their workload negatively. Thus, some legislators balk at the creation of such a registry. However, the response of the NYS Police Benevolent Association appears to be in stark contrast with that sentiment.

This year the so-called “Railroad puppies” are the featured guests, along with the families who adopted them after a lengthy, harrowing recovery. The puppies are the survivors of a horrendous animal abuse case last September in which a litter of abused pit bull-mix pups less than a month old were discovered by a railroad employee next to the tracks on Pearl Street in Albany. Due to the nature of their injuries, rescuers surmised the pups, less than a month old, were nailed to the wooden railroad ties by their paws. Veterinarians were unable to save one of the female puppies, but the two remaining dogs are doing well.

The survivors, dubbed “Pearl” and “Hudson,” were cared for at the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society. The pups had suffered from significant abuse and neglect, had been beaten and starved, and sustained considerable injury to their left hind paws. Hudson lost his foot and was subsequently fitted with a prosthetic paw. Shortly after their arrival at the shelter, Executive Director Brad Shear announced a reward of \$7,000 was being offered by the Humane Society to help find the perpetrator. In a news story dated January 14, 2013 it was reported a suspect had been arrested. He was apprehended due to his alleged involvement in another abuse case, that of a litter of puppies found freezing in a truck. All four puppies from that case reportedly survived.



Photo: © Emilie Krueger

and aggression in numerous forms. Cruelty toward animals, namely the family pet, can no longer be seen as a separate problem or treated in isolation. Animal abuse has long been seen as a gateway crime. Violence toward animals is a red flag and if accompanying family dysfunctions are not properly addressed, such acts will lead to even greater maltreatment for all. Abusers often mistreat animals as a means of control over others and their behaviors escalate over time.

Research has also shown that animal welfare advocates stand a better chance of addressing abuse by focusing attention on the human side of the problem. Because studies have demonstrated the connection between the issues, advocates can highlight the other underlying problems that are major contributing factors. By pointing out the connection between animal abuse and other criminal behavior the problem takes on a larger scope and attracts much needed attention to the issues surrounding abuse. (PetLynx, 2010)

Animal advocacy is alive and well in New York. The state is fortunate to have a number of legislators devoted to continuing the struggle for tougher laws to fight the mounting incidents of animal cruelty. Awareness of the problem is rising due in large part to the commitment of tireless advocates seeking to educate the public about the horrific nature of the crimes being perpetrated on helpless animals. Organizations such as the Humane Society and SPCA are more devoted than ever to educating communities about responsible pet ownership and identifying and reporting abuse. The mission can seem overwhelming at times but proponents remain resilient and loyal to the cause, and are at times buoyed by recalling the words of Margaret Mead:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

– Margaret Mead, anthropologist (1901-1978)



Photo: © Emilie Krueger

Thankfully, the plight of maltreated animals is not being ignored. Indeed, many people are willing to go to great lengths to change behavior that was once, if not acceptable, largely ignored. Changes are due in part to a great deal of research pointing to such cruelty as an indicator of further crimes against not only animals, but also humans. Research by many professionals in the field of human services and animal welfare has proven that a strong correlation exists between family violence, child and elder abuse

Epi-Dogs

Dogs Living Full Lives With Canine Epilepsy

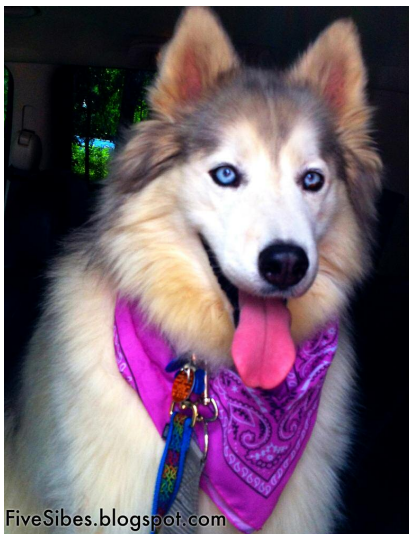
By Dorothy Wills-Rafferty

Canine Epilepsy. Those two words can strike fear in the hearts of any dog parent. Years ago, it was not uncommon for dogs who developed canine epilepsy or had seizures, to be euthanized. Thankfully, that is not the case today. Nowadays, there are many treatment options available ranging from medicinal to holistic to dietary, and a combination of all three, that you can discuss with your vet to determine the best course of care for your Epi-dog (canine epileptic). There is also much information and support available from online resources, social networking groups, and Email lists that connect Epi-dog parents. (See list at end of article).

As an Epi-dog parent, I learned first-hand about this disease when one of my Siberian Huskies, Gibson, began having them shortly after he turned three years old. My first experience was definitely a scary, trial by fire experience. After the first seizure, we had a one-month break to see if it was a rare occurrence, or if Gibson was going to be seizure prone. Unfortunately, the seizures returned with a vengeance and he had another grand mal seizure followed by cluster seizures that just did not want to stop. We transported him immediately to our veterinarian hospital, where, thankfully, they were able to break the seizure cycle. After much discussion with our veterinarian team, we proceeded with a course of treatment that Gibson, now seven, has been on ever since.

Just why do dogs have seizures? There are many different reasons and causes for a dog to have seizures. A dog could have a reaction to something; possibly a side effect to a medication; a topical application; a food; an ingested or inhaled toxin, including certain plants, shrubs, flowers, trees, mushrooms, yard sprays, hair spray, perfume, room fresheners, rawhide bones, flashing lights, loud sounds, or stress. It can be a hereditary condition, or it can occur for no clear reason at all (Idiopathic Epilepsy). When a dog has a seizure, it's a good idea to take inventory. Check the food and treat ingredients for ingredients that could be a trigger, including wheat gluts, rosemary, grains, and preservatives. Then check the dog's environment and be sure to remove anything that could pose a toxic threat and possibly cause a seizure.

As most Epi-dog parents know, even if on medication, a dog can still have a seizure. Canine epilepsy and the cause of seizures are still a bit of a mysterious ailment. Sometimes there are definitive reasons such as an injury or medical condition that could bring on a seizure, and other times it is a great unknown. What we do



Epi-Husky "Gibson" of the FiveSibes sports a purple bandana in honor of Canine Epilepsy Awareness.

Photo by Dorothy Wills-Rafferty

know is there are many dogs that have canine epilepsy and live happy, active lives.

Forging a good communicative relationship with your vet is very important for the welfare of your dog. If you are not happy with your vet's advice, check around until you find one who is knowledgeable on canine epilepsy and seizure disorders. It's key to keep a journal of your dog's behaviors and seizures to discuss with your vet to jointly decide the best course of treatment for your dog to ensure the healthiest life possible for your Epi-dog.

Learn to be your dog's advocate. Study all the information you can about seizure disorders, canine epilepsy, research medicines, and holistic supplements (with input from your vet). Join a canine epilepsy group and talk with other Epi-dog parents to see how they are treating their dog and to discuss successes, side effects, and for overall support. When a dog goes into a seizure,

you can feel very alone and scared. Having the support of others who have gone through the same experience is instrumental in learning how to react and help your dog during an epileptic episode.

My main piece of advice is if your dog has a seizure, try not to panic.

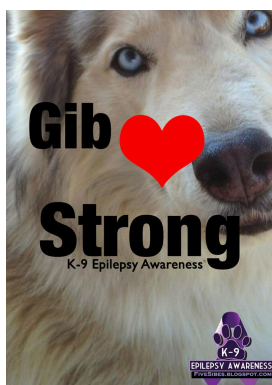
Always stay with your seizing dog and it's best to keep other family pets away as the seizure can confuse them and sometimes they may try to attack a seizing dog. As soon as your dog comes out of the seizure, keep him comfortable, safe, and cool. Body temperatures rise during a seizure, which can pose a dangerous threat to their organs, so keeping them cool is key. Post-seizure they can sometimes experience temporary blindness and confusion, so it is critical to keep them away from stairs and anything that could hurt them should they walk into it. Contact your vet immediately for an examination, blood work, and to discuss treatment options. Bring your journal with you so you can review the episode, including date, time, symptoms, and length of seizure with your vet. I would also recommend creating an Epi First Aid Kit that includes medications and a dosage chart, supplements, vet emergency hospital and vet's office phone numbers (for dog sitter), instant cold packs, a journal to note details of seizure, etc. This article is not to give any form of medical advice, so please ask your vet about what to do after a seizure, such as letting them drink some water and the possibility of giving a little natural vanilla ice cream and some kibble to help stabilize their blood sugar.

There have been peaks and valleys over the years with Gibson's care to find just the right protocol to keep him "managed." He once had a setback into a critical state of ataxia as a result of a sudden reformulation by the pharmaceutical company of one of his medications that we were very fortunate to have my vet pull him out of. It's not only seizures to keep an eye on, but also side effects of medications. Periodic blood tests are a must. To achieve that managed balance is not an exact science with canine epilepsy. Sometimes it's really just a matter of trial and error until the right balance can be achieved. And it's not a definite that all Epi-dogs can achieve that balance. The important point is to try – to do our best to give them the best life possible even with canine epilepsy. The main goal is to keep the seizures at bay or at least to reduce the number and/or frequency of them. Gibson is a very happy Husky who loves to play with his Sibemates, talk, dance, play with canine puzzle games, go for walks, and just relax with me and the family.

Inspired by my Gibson and his perseverance and zest for life, I wrote the illustrated children's book *FiveSibes Tale, What's Wrong With Gibson? Learning About K-9 Epilepsy* helps to bring awareness to these Epi-dogs and will hopefully remove the fear that children (and adults) may have if their dog has a seizure. A portion of the proceeds from the book are donated to the Canine Epilepsy Resources site at www.Canine-Epilepsy.com, home of the Epil-K9 email list in support of Emma's Fund (that benefits research and small projects conducted by the North Carolina State University-College of Veterinary Medicine), that is provided by the Epil-K9 Foundation.

Canine Epilepsy affects many breeds.

But seizures do not stop these dogs and their zest for life. Epi-dogs are sled dogs, hunting dogs, dock diving dogs, agility dogs, show dogs, and family dogs. To watch one have a seizure, come through it, and then continue on living life with excitement, happiness, and love is to truly see a four-legged warrior.



The FiveSibes™ "Live Gib Strong" K-9 Epilepsy Awareness campaign logo.

Photo/Image by Dorothy Wills-Rafferty.

Because of Gibson and the many amazing Epi-dogs I've met along the way over the past four years, I launched the "Live Gib Strong" K-9 Epilepsy Awareness campaign where I share information and resources I've learned and collected over the years with folks whose dog has been diagnosed with canine epilepsy, while also raising some funds for Canine Epilepsy Resources. My mission is to get the message out that canine epilepsy does not have to mean a death sentence for these dogs. With some special care, they can, and do, live healthy full lives, however long we are blessed to have them.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CANINE EPILEPSY, HERE IS A LIST OF SOME VALUABLE RESOURCES AND INFORMATIVE SITES:

- Canine Epilepsy Resources Center & EPIL-K9 List
www.canine-epilepsy.com
- Canine Epilepsy Network
www.canine-epilepsy.net
- The Epi Guardian Angels
<http://www.canine-epilepsy-guardian-angels.com>
(click on the dog photo to enter site)
- Nichols Online Dog Training
http://www.nichols-online.co.uk/html/canine_epilepsy.html
- Canine Epilepsy UK Online Resource
<http://www.canineepilepsy.co.uk/>
- Toby's Foundation
<http://www.tobysfoundation.org/>
- American Kennel Club-Canine Health Foundation
<http://www.akcchf.org/canine-health/your-dogs-health/epilepsy-treatments.html>
- Siberian Husky Health Foundation
http://web.archive.org/web/20070818025249/www.siberianhuskyhealthfoundation.org/health_epilepsy.asp
- Pharaoh Hound Epilepsy Foundation
www.pharaohhoundepilepsyfoundation.org
- FiveSibes™ Blog
www.FiveSibes.blogspot.com
(Enter "Canine Epilepsy" in the Search box for CE blog posts)
- FiveSibes: Siberian Husky K9 News & Reviews Facebook Page
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/FiveSibes-Siberian-Husky-K9-News-Reviews/181529415231834>
- The Wally Foundation Website (offers assistance with medical/prescription fees)
- The Wally (Canine Epilepsy) Foundation on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wally-Foundation-canine-epilepsy/343969389044774>
- Canine Epilepsy Awareness Community Facebook Page
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Canine-epilepsy-awareness/191464044230064?ref=ts>
- Canine Epilepsy Group on Facebook (A)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/28498589557/?ref=ts>
- Canine Epilepsy Group on Facebook (B)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/9991858369/?ref=ts>
- Dog Seizures Guide
www.dogseizures.net

Source: FiveSibes™ *Live Gib Strong* Resource Booklet,
Dorothy Wills-Rafferty

Writing COMPETITION

2013 OFFICIAL RULES AND ENTRY INFORMATION

See contest entry form on page 23

2013 WRITING COMPETITION

News from the Chair

It's contest time again!

Where does the time go? And why is it that every year seems to fly faster than the previous one. Last year at this time I began thinking about what to submit to the contest, and this year, I'm the new Chair. Now, I can't wait to see your entries.

Please note that we've expanded the 2013 categories to make the submission process a little easier and more inclusive of new media.

Although the entry fees remain the same as last year, some of our judges are new to the process. This year we welcome DWAA members and non-members who are professional writers to judge our competition. We're recruiting judges, so please email or phone me if you're interested in volunteering.

Thanks to Labor Day weekend, you'll also have a few extra days to submit your entries. Just make sure they're postmarked no later than Friday, September 6th, as no late entries will be accepted.

To help streamline the judging process, don't forget your Entry Forms and fees. And... please respect the competition period for original work.

Best of luck! Feel free to email or call me for any questions.

Elaine Waldorf Gewirtz
2243 Kelmscott Court
Westlake Village, California 91361
805-418-7899 – Pacific Time
egewirtz@west.net

**POSTMARK DEADLINE:
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2013.**

NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

NOTE: Check out the dwaa.org website for all contest information and a downloadable entry form.

Also see contest entry form on page 23 of this issue.

Eligibility:

- The contest is open to all writers, editors, publishers, photographers, artists and others whose work falls into the designated competition categories. Entrants do not have to be DWAA members, but work must be published.
- All work must be original and first published during the competition period from September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2013.
- Reprints, revisions, updates of previously published work, and electronic books are not eligible.
- There is no limit as to the number of times an individual or entity may enter; however, the same material may be entered only once in a regular category. If material is published in more than one format, only the primary format is eligible.
- Magazines and newsletters must be published at least quarterly.
- Submissions may be made starting July 1, 2013. The contest closes August 31, 2013. All entries must be postmarked by September 6, 2013.

Submission Format:

- Entries must be submitted in hard copy format, including internet articles, websites (sampling), and blogs. Other media, such as videotapes, CDs, DVDs, broadcast tapes and podcasts may be submitted as published.
- Material is judged by three judges simultaneously, so entries must be submitted in triplicate, with only one entry form per entry. (One entry form, three copies of material.)
- Neatness and clarity are prerequisites for submission. Please make sure information is clear and concise, use staples judiciously, and present material in a size that can be easily transported. Be sure articles are clipped or copied from magazines, newspapers, newsletters, or wherever they were published.
- Columns and series are eligible. Please submit entire series or two regular columns in triplicate. Only one two-column entry by the same author in the same publication is permissible. Work by different authors in the same publication or multiple publications is not considered a column or series.
- Material may be photocopied, or tearsheets may be submitted, with publication name and date verified.
- Only two issues are required for magazines, newsletters and club publications. Please submit three sets of two issues.
- Submit one additional copy of material for each special award

Entry Fees:

- Each regular category entry must be accompanied by a \$10 entry fee for current DWAA members and \$15 for non-members.
- Each special award entry must be accompanied by a \$7 entry fee.
- All entries should be combined in a single check or money order, payable in U.S. funds to DWAA.

Mailing Instructions:

- Entries must be postmarked by September 6, 2013. No late entries will be accepted.
- Mail entries to Elaine Gewirtz, DWAA Contest Chair, 2243 Kelmscott Court, Westlake Village, CA 91361.
- Entries cannot be returned, and all material becomes the property of DWAA for the purposes of administering the contest.
- DWAA is not responsible for entries lost in transit.

Entrant Responsibilities:

- It is the responsibility of the entrant to comply with all rules and guidelines. Deviation may result in rejection of the entry and forfeiture of the entry fee.
- The maximum liability of DWAA is limited to refund of the entry fee.
- If the work is entered in the wrong category, DWAA reserves the right to make the correction, at the discretion of the Contest Chair, upon notification to entrant.
- Entries may be made on behalf of someone else, but the name of the person creating the work must be listed as the "entrant." The entrant's address and contact information are required, as well as the submitter's. The submitter is responsible for obtaining written permission from entrant to submit the work prior to making an entry.
- For optional confirmation receipt, please include a SASE postcard.

Judging and Awards Information:

- Each entry will be judged by a panel of three judges to include DWAA members and professional writers. A composite of the judges' scores will determine the nominees and winners.
- The decisions of the judges are final.
- A complete list of judges, approved by the DWAA Board of Directors, will be posted to the Judges List August 15, 2013. Names will be in alphabetical order, with no designation as to which categories judges will be assigned.
- Nominees will be notified by mail between December 1, 2013 and December 12, 2013.
- Names of nominees will be published on DWAA's website starting December 15, 2013, and in the January 2014 DWAA newsletter.
- Winners will be announced at the Awards Banquet held in New York City Sunday evening, February 9, 2014.
- Nominees in the regular categories will receive certificates; winners will also receive the DWAA Maxwell Medallion, named in honor of the late Maxwell Riddle.

Special Awards:

- Special awards are made possible through the generosity of individuals and organizations, and consist of cash grants as noted in the Special Awards list.
- Material must be entered in a regular category to be considered for a special award. See submission format for specifics.
- Judges for special awards will be comprised of a committee of DWAA officers. Sponsors of special awards are not involved in selecting winners.
- Winners will be announced at the February 9, 2014 Awards Banquet.

Please feel free to contact the Contest Chair by email egewirtz@west.net, or by telephone at (805) 418-7899 (day or evening, Pacific time zone). QUESTIONS ARE ENCOURAGED!

2013 Writing Competition

Regular **CATEGORIES**

Download the Application form or see page 23 of this issue

A. Newspapers

1. Article – Health and General Care
2. Article – Behavior and Training
3. Article – Rescue
4. Article – Any Other Topic
5. Column

B. Magazines

6. All Breed
7. Single/Related Breeds
8. Special Interest or Annual
9. Article – Health and General Care
10. Article – Behavior and Training
11. Article – Rescue
12. Article – Breed
13. Article – Any Other Topic
14. Regular Column or Series

C. Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters

15. Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters
16. Health or Care Article
17. Article on Any Other Topic

D. Internet, Web Sites & Blogs

18. Website
19. Online Magazine, Newsletter
20. Online Article – Health and General Care
21. Online Article – Behavior and Training
22. Online Article – Rescue
23. Online Article – Any Other Topic
24. Online – Column
25. Blog – Educational
26. Blog – Entertainment

E. Graphic Arts

27. Single Photo (as published)
28. Series Photos (as published)
29. Single Illustration or Painting
30. Series of Illustrations or Paintings
31. Posters, Calendars, Brochures and Pamphlets

F. Humor, Poetry, Short Fiction, Opinions/Editorials

32. Humorous Art and Writing
33. Poetry
34. Short Fiction
35. Opinions/Editorials in Any Medium

G. Other Media

36. Video, DVD, or TV Broadcasts
37. Radio, Podcast, or Other Audio

H. Club Publications (National, Regional or Local)

38. Magazine format
39. Newsletter format
40. Feature
41. Regular Column or Series
42. Special Publications

I. Books

43. Single Breed
44. Related Breeds or All Breeds
45. Health and General Care
46. Training and Behavior
47. General Interest or Reference
48. Fiction, Mystery or Humor
49. Children's
50. Soft-cover Guides on Any Dog-Related Subject
51. Human/Animal Bond

Continued next page

2013 Writing Competition

Special Award CATEGORIES

The Adoptashelter.com Adopt a Homeless Dog Award

Sponsored by AdoptAShelter.com, is presented to the entry that best describes the plight of homeless dogs, the joy of dog adoption, and/or improving the quality of life of dogs in a shelter environment. Entries will be judged for quality as well as the ability to persuade the reader. Qualified *online only* entries include single articles, features, columns, series of articles, short stories, websites, blogs, videos photos or any other accepted online venue. The award consists of an Amazon gift certificate for \$500 and inclusion in the AdoptAShelter.com online library.

AKC Car Microcipping Awareness Award sponsored by The AKC Companion Animal Recovery.

For the best article on microchips, pet recovery and the microchip database of not for profits vs for profits. The Award is \$1500.00 Cash Grant.

AKC Club Publication Excellence Award

This award is for the best article in a national, regional, or local AKC club publication in magazine or newsletter format. The award consists of a plaque and a \$500 cash grant.

AKC Responsible Dog Ownership Public Service Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award goes to the writer of a print or online feature article that best educates pet owners about responsible dog ownership. The award consists of a plaque and a \$500 cash grant. To enter, submit one article, which must also be entered in this year's contest in one of the regular categories.

AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy and Canine Good Citizen Award

- Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award is for the best writing about the AKC Canine Good Citizen Program or the puppy level of CGC, AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy.
 - Recognized as the 'gold standard' for family dog manners, CGC and AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy focus on teaching good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership to dog owners.
- This award is a \$500.00 cash award.

Angel on a Leash Award

Sponsored by David Frei in honor of Angel On a Leash therapy dog teams and programs around the country, for the best newspaper or magazine article or television news feature about the impact of the use of therapy dogs in health care facilities. The award consists of \$250.00 cash grant.

Dogwise Best Book Award

Sponsored by Dogwise Publishing. \$500.00 to the author of the best book. The winner will be chosen by the president of DWAA from the winners of all the book categories.

DWAA Distinguished Service Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award honors extraordinary achievement and communications excellence. It recognizes the person who, by word, deed, exemplary conduct, public communication and professional excellence, best promotes the

interest of the sport of dogs. The award consists of a plaque and a \$1,000 cash grant. Do not apply for this award.

DWAA Friends of Rescue Award

For the best article describing the rescue process; adoption, fostering, transporting, home visits or other aspects of rescue. \$300.00 cash grant.

DWAA Junior Writer Award

Sponsored by Karen Petit for writers under 18 years of age. This award is to recognize and encourage young writers who exhibit talent, resourcefulness, dedication, and integrity in their writing about dogs and dog-related topics. Award: \$300 cash grant, DWAA Maxwell Medallion and lapel pin.

Eukanuba Canine Health Award

Offered by the Iams Company-For the article or book that best promotes the health and well-being of dogs. The award consists of a \$1,000.00 cash grant.

Merial Human-Animal Bond Award

For the work that best highlights the unique relationship between a dog and its owner and best brings to life the concept of the human-animal bond. The award consists of \$1000.00 cash grant.

Morris Animal Foundation Advances in Canine Veterinary Medicine Award

This award recognizes the newspaper, magazine, or online article, excluding syndicated columns written by veterinarians, that best informs the public about cutting edge advances in veterinary medicine for dogs. Entries will be judged on clarity, accuracy, and topic originality. The award is \$500.00 cash grant.

North Shore Animal League America Award

For all media which best supports the missions of the League's program, encouraging spay/neuter initiatives as a way of reducing unwanted births and pet euthanasia rates; focus can be on the community-wide programs or individual responsibility of pet owners. Award: \$500.00 cash grant.

Planet Dog Foundation Sit. Speak. Act. Canine Service Award

For all media. For the best story promoting and celebrating a program in which dogs serve and support their best friends, by highlighting service dogs, therapy dogs, K-9 search and rescue, or police dogs. Award: \$500.00 cash grant.

PSI First-Canine Award

Sponsored by Pet Sitters International, this award is presented to the best humorous feature story or article. The winner will receive a certificate and \$350 cash grant.

Pro Plan President's Award

Pro Plan offers a \$750 cash grant. This is the Best in Show chosen from all the winners of the individual categories. Do not apply for this award.



DWAA 2013 WRITING COMPETITION OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Please read complete rules and categories before entering. Send entries to Elaine Gewirtz, DWAA Contest Chair, 2243 Kelmscott Court, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

For optional confirmation of your submission, please include a SASE postcard.

Entries must be postmarked no later than September 6, 2013.

Please e-mail the Chair at egewirtz@west.net or by phone at 805-418-7899 (PST) if you have any questions.

Entrant Name: _____
(Entrant is the writer, photographer, illustrator or other person who created the work.)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: Day: _____ Eve: _____

Email Address: _____

Category No. & Desc.: _____

Title of Entry: _____

Name of Publication or Publisher _____

Issue/Publication Date: _____
(Must be between 9/1/12 and 8/31/13)

Name of Special Award: _____
(Include extra copy of material, entry form, and \$7 entry fee for each.)

I certify that this entry is original work and that it was first published between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013. I understand and abide by all contest rules, and further agree that the Dog Writers' Association of America and/or special award sponsors may use my name and likeness in connection with the 2013 DWAA Writing Competition publicity and anthology purposes.

Signature of Entrant or Submitter: _____

Name/Address of Submitter (if different from entrant): _____

For Junior Writers under 18 years old:

Jr.'s Birthdate and Parent's Signature _____



Pat Santi
Secretary
173 Union Road
Coatesville, PA 19320

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Warnerville, NY
Permit #5

***It's summer and time to submit
your entries for the 2013
DWAA Writing Competition.***

***Postmark deadline
is Friday,
September 6, 2013.***

***See page 20
for details***



Photo: © Emilia Krueger