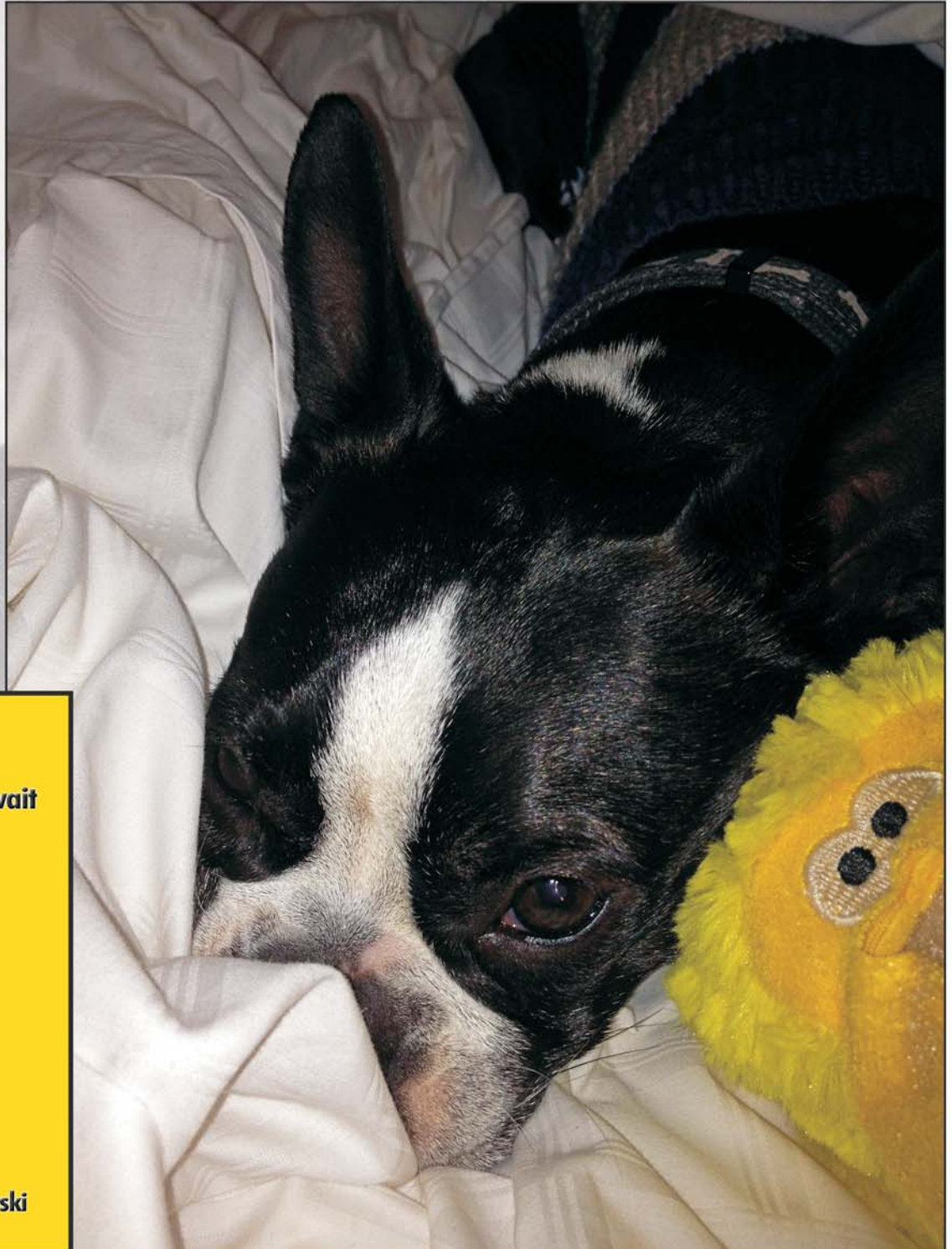


Dog Writers Association of America



ruff DRAFTS

Summer 2014



inside . . .

Oscar, a seventy-year wait

Sammy & Spartacus

Nominations

**Writing competition
and banquet info**

New Member bios

Member news

cover photo: Kate Kuligowski



Officers

Ida W. Estep, Esq., President
PO Box 295, Bunn, NC 27508
252-478-6088, iwestep@earthlink.net

Susan Ewing, Vice President
66 Adams Street, Jamestown, NY 14701
716-484-6155, dogwriter@windstream.net

Pat Santi, Secretary
173 Union Road, Coatesville, PA 19320
610-384-2436, rhydown@aol.com

Marsha M. Pugh, Treasurer
P.O. Box 787, Hughesville, MD 20637
301-274-3435, marsha_pugh01@comcast.net

Carmen Battaglia, PhD, Past President
335 Westford Glen, Roswell, GA 30075
770-998-3679, cbattaglia@mindspring.com

Board of Governors

~Class of 2015~

Bryna Comsky
565 Illinois Boulevard
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169
847-885-8395, bcomsky@aol.com

Robert H. McKowen
297 West Main Street, Leola, PA 17540
717-656-9300

~Class of 2016~

Patricia Cruz
15 Shiloh Court, Coram, NY 11727
631-928-1517, lacruz928@optonline.net

Martin Deeley
15549 Vinola Drive, Montverde, FL 34756
407-469-5583, cdawgs@mindspring.com

Joel Gavrielle-Gold, PhD
205 West 89th Street, Office 1A
New York, New York 10024
Dr.JoelGold@gmail.com

Gail C. Parker
4241 Cottman Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19135
rebelslair@aol.com



President's column

by Ida Estep

I am having problems with one of my rescues and wondered if anybody had ever run into this issue.

Noel is, as my vet calls her, a Franklin County Brown Dog, which basically means her mamma was a mixed breed and her daddy was a traveling man of indeterminate origin. She is a solid 53 pounds, medium height but all muscle. I rescued her just before Christmas 2012 (hence her name), when I was picking up a load of donated pet food from a drop-off point at the shelter.

I really was not in the market for another dog but I heard a dog in a separate room, coughing and whimpering. I found Noel, malnourished, on a blanket, spattered with blood and burning with fever. With each cough, blood drops came out of her mouth. She reminded me of those sad doomed consumptive heroines of the Victorian era, coughing delicately into a lace handkerchief.

As usual, she was getting no vet care and the director insisted she had kennel cough and assured me that she would be fine. They would keep her away from the other dogs in the (unheated) sally port overnight. I was pretty sure that would be the end of her, and for the purely selfish reason that I knew if I left her there I would wake up in the middle of the night thinking about her, I bundled her into my car and took her to my vet.

Noel had pneumonia and a temp approaching 106 degrees. But she is young and tough and three days of hospitalization with IV fluids and antibiotics brought her back to wellness. The rest was taken care of with good food and care.

She has no visible signs of abuse and loves dogs, adults and children - after

appropriate introductions. But here is the problem: she is hypersensitive to any change in the inanimate objects in her surroundings and reacts with terror. I call her my Monty Python dog as her reaction to any change is "Run away! Run away!"

When I say hypersensitive, I mean a newly-dropped pinecone, a toy left by another dog, anything that wasn't there on her previous trip outside. She views all these things as you or I might view a snake, making sure it was headed away from us. Except, of course, these inanimate objects are not moving and she keeps snatching glimpses at them as if expecting them to make a move on her. Ultimately, if the item stays there several days, she accustoms herself to it and she is okay.

I have taken her to behavioral assessments and classes for fearful dogs. I have read multiple books on the subject of desensitizing reactive dogs. The problem is, unlike other dogs I have worked with, she is not scared of sticks or men with beards or other dogs; she is frightened of the slightest change in her environment which is almost impossible to control completely.

The behaviorist suggested medication and she has been on Prozac for a month now with no noticeable change. My vet says we need to try at least two months before switching meds.

I am not expecting miracles. I just wish she could be more comfortable and less fearful. Has anybody else run into a dog with such hypersensitivity to her surroundings and such a strong fear reaction to the slightest changes in the inanimate objects in it? Noel and I could use any suggestions.

Treasurer's report

by Marsha Pugh

January 1, 2014 through August 1, 2014

Balance forward \$25,837.64

Income. \$20,004.38

Application \$600.00

Awards Banquet \$6,395.00

Awards Banquet Sponsor \$3,500.00

Contest Entry Fees \$15.00

Dues \$4,663.70

Program Advertising \$40.00

Reimbursement \$190.48

Special Award Sponsors \$4,600.00

Expenses \$(31,214.75)

Accounting \$(780.00)

Bank Charge \$(106.85)

Banquet Expenses \$(11,919.08)

Computer Services. \$(900.00)

Contest Chair Stipend \$(2,500.00)

Contest Expenses. \$(773.26)

Contest Supplies. \$(1,614.48)

Design \$(1,650.00)

Insurance \$(704.00)

Printing \$(817.08)

Special Award Winners \$(9,450.00)

Checking balance \$14,627.27

Savings balance. \$5,148.75

Total \$19,776.02

DWAA 2014 Committees

Banquet

Pat Santi, Chair
Marsha Pugh, Co-chair

Budget and Finance

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

Bylaws

Ida Estep, Chair
Alan Alford, Carmen Battaglia
Patricia Cruz, Pat Santi

2014 Contest

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Officers and Board

Hall of Fame

Patricia Cruz, Chair
Robert McKowen, Pat Santi

Liaison with Cat Writers Association

Susan Ewing

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Caroline Coile, Martin Deeley, Marsha Pugh

ruff DRAFTS

Vicky Clarke, Editor

Webmaster

Paul Costa
www.dwaa.org

ruff DRAFTS

send all material to
Vicky Clarke, editor
1138 Mohea Road, Unionville, NV 89418
775-538-7331, uziduzit@wildblue.net

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.



Membership changes

Shelly Bueche, 210 LaVaca #1902, Austin, TX 78701

Carole Field, carole@carolefield.com

Margaret Gibbs, m.gibbs@outlook.com

Alice Guthrie, wordsandpics@outlook.com

Suzette Heider, 5533 Fowler Rd, Springfield, OH 45503,
smh722@hotmail.com

Carol Erickson now Carol Kardon

Kristine Levine, 3510 Forlock Rd

Lori Mauger, lori@lorimauger.comher

Zanne McKay, shm@mts.com

C.A. Sharp, 1338 Trouville Ave, Grover Beach, CA 93433,
2helix@sbcglobal.net

Dorice Stancher, Stancher@me.com

Welcome new members

Dawn Antoniak-Mitchell, Esq.

Freelance/P

1225 N 53rd St.

Omaha, NE 68132-1359

402-203-0369

dawn@bonafidedogacademy.com

Sponsors: Charlene Woodward & Diana Laverdure

Ron Berman

P/Freelance

1334 12th St D,

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

310-376-0620

ropaulber@earthlink.net

Sponsors: Pat Santi & Ida Estep

Susan Cooper

Just Frenchies/P

1711 Gallop Dr.

Loxahatchee, FL 33470

561-719-1807

echo561@aol.com

Sponsors: Pat Santi & Ida Estep

Shannen Esposito

Misterio Press/P

11395 Dancing River Dr

Venice, FL 34292

941-525-2841, soespo@gmail.com

Sponsors: Amy Shojai & Tracy Weber

Susan Kroupa

Freelance/P

4979 Groundhog Mtn Rd

Hillsville, VA 24343

276-730-2424, SusanKroupa@gmail.com

Sponsors: Sheila Boneham & Susan Holmes

Kate J. Kuligowski

P/Freelance

905 Maverick Trl SE

Albuquerque, NM 87123

505-298-8048

wkkjk1027@gmail.com

Sponsors: Pat Santi & Ida Estep

Maggie Marton

P/Freelance

502 Crescent Blvd 37

Hounna, CA 70360

317-506-7237

maggie.marton@gmail.com

Sponsors: Carol Bryant & Peggy Freton

Dr. W.V. Joseph Schlitt

Freelance/A

P.O. Box 263

Knightsen, CA 94549

925-487-2839

wylecotejs@earthlink.net

Sponsors: Arliss Paddock & Mara Bovsun

Jane R. Schubart

Freelance/A

1690 Parkway West

Linglestown PA 17112

717-580-8527

ascotnorwich.com

Sponsors: Arliss Paddock & Mara Bovsun

Suzanne T. Smith

P/Freelance

185 Laguna

Los Alamos, NM 87544

595-662-3744

stspers@aol.com

Sponsors: Pat Santi & Ida Estep

Louis B. Spirito

P/Freelance

28274 Rey Dr Copas Lane

Malibu, CA 90265, 310-457-9859

louspirito@verizon.net

Sponsors: Ida Estep & Elaine Gewirtz

Nominations

Nominating committee: Ranny Green, Ida Estep, Pat Santi

The slate is as follows:

President, Ida Estep

Vice-President, Elaine Gewirtz

Secretary, Susan Ewing

Treasurer, Marsha Pugh

Board of Governors members,

Caroline Coile and Robert H. McKowen

DWAA Constitution. Article 5. Section 5. Nominating Committee: the Board shall elect a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) members to prepare and submit a slate of Governors for the ensuing year.

(a) The Nominating Committee shall be named before August 1.

(b) The Report of the Nominating Committee shall be received by the Secretary in time to be published in the October Newsletter.

(c) Any Member in good standing may petition to run for a specific office if he sends to the Secretary, before November 1, a petition signed by ten (10) members in good standing. (Adopted 1997)

(d) 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.

(e) 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.

(f) Those nominees, receiving the highest number of votes will be declared elected.

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

Nominees~

President, Ida Estep

I was given my first dog by my uncle for my fourth birthday and have never looked back. I have been a member of DWAA since 1995 and served since then as your legal advisor, working mostly on periodic member issues requiring legal intervention, misappropriation of funds and their recovery, auditing financial records, and drafting and reviewing letters/documents and contracts. Over the years, I have also served on the Board of Governors, as Vice-President, and most recently as President for the last two years. My major interest is currently in all-breed rescue and I am president of a 501(c)(3) animal rescue. In the past, however, I have shown dogs in conformation. I also take my dogs into the county school system to talk about how to treat animals, spay/neuter options, and generally dog/human relationships, and into county senior centers to provide the folks with the chance to pat and talk to my dogs and to share their memories of dogs long gone but still fondly remembered. I have worked actively with the local Animal Control to build a much-needed new shelter, replace the antiquated gas chamber with more humane methods of euthanasia, and obtain

veterinary care for the shelter animals. I also am involved in collecting food for lower income pet owners so they can keep their pets.

Vice-President, Elaine Waldorf Gewirtz

The author of 16 books and hundreds of articles, Elaine has been writing about dogs for more than 20 years. A five-time Maxwell winner, Elaine's a recipient of the DWAA/AKC Distinguished Service Award, and the Howell-Wiley, Eukanuba and ASPCA Special Writing Awards. She served as editor of the Dalmatian Club of America's quarterly magazine The Spotter, Dalmatian breed columnist for the AKC Gazette, and chairperson of the 2013 and 2014 DWAA Writing Competitions. A Dalmatian breeder-owner-handler and conformation class instructor, Elaine's BIS-winning Firebuster Dals never fail to bring joy, good health, and lots of laughs to their owners.

Secretary, Susan Ewing

I have been "in dogs" since 1976, have had Pembroke Welsh Corgis since 1983, and shown in conformation and obedience. I have been a DWAA board member, as well as Vice-President twice (a position I currently hold). I was Treasurer of the Cat Writers' Association for four years, President for four years, and have helped organize five annual conferences. I have won two CWA Muse medallions and two Maxwells. I have written 11 dog books, including Bulldogs for Dummies and Poodles for Dummies, as well as numerous magazine articles. I currently write a bi-monthly column for The Post-Journal in Jamestown, New York.

Treasurer, Marsha Pugh

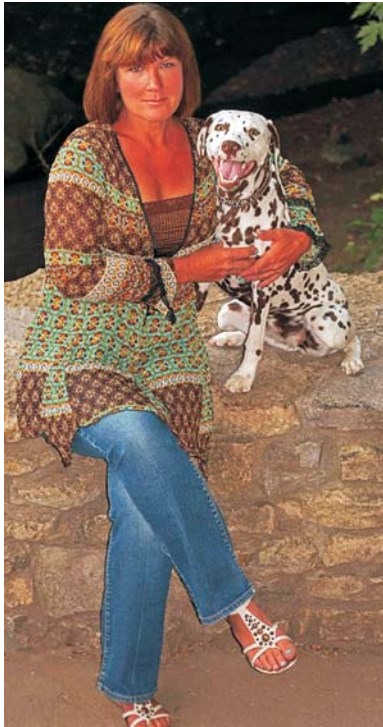
I have been the Treasurer of DWAA since 2009 and serve on the banquet committee. In addition, I am currently an officer of the Italian Greyhound Club of America and a founding officer of the Mid-Atlantic Italian Greyhound Club of Central Maryland. I am active in the 4H, providing handling classes and judging regional events. I am also involved with dog and horse rescue, currently providing a home for two special-needs horses. As a second-generation dog person, I have been showing, breeding, and handling dogs since my earliest memories. I write a by-monthly pet care column for The Italian Greyhound Magazine, a breed magazine with a long and distinguished history. I also contribute to other publications. Until my retirement, I was the administrator of a multi-million dollar pension fund. Complete office management included reporting to the Department of Labor, IRS filings, trial balance accounting and operating under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the accounting rules used to prepare and report financial statements. I would appreciate the opportunity of continuing to serve the membership of DWAA.

The current slate is focused on becoming more inclusive so that all members feel comfortable suggesting the future goals of the group and expanding member involvement beyond the Board of Governors. Specifically, we look forward to creating member committees - membership, special awards, financial planning, social events and so forth, depending on members' interest - whose input would be presented to the general membership to better understand the goals of the membership and how DWAA can help the membership meet those goals.

meet our New Members

Ed note: My apologies to Susan Holmes and Susan Willett for printing one's bio with the others' photograph. Both are being re-run in their entirety in this issue.

Dawn Antoniak-Mitchell, Esq.



Dawn is a Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge and Skills Assessed (CCPDT); a Certified Behavioral Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed (CCPDT); an AKC obedience and rally obedience judge; an AKC Canine Good Citizen evaluator; a World Cynosport (formerly APDT) rally obedience judge; a CDSP obedience judge; and has served as a Delta Society Pet Partner evaluator. She has been published in local, regional, and national publications, including Top Tips from Top Trainers published by the Association of Professional Dog Trainers, and has been

interviewed internationally on several training topics. Dawn is the author of Terrier-Centric Dog Training: From Tenacious to Tremendous and From Bird-brained to Brilliant - Teaching the Sporting Dog to be a Great Companion, both published by Dogwise Publications. She has appeared as guest author on several dog book discussion lists. Dawn is also a lecturer and advocate for the Americans with Disabilities Act and service dogs; she has been

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

invited to medical schools and disabled veterans' conferences to speak on the ADA, the rights and responsibilities of service dog owners, and psychiatric service dog training, allowing her to combine her legal expertise and her dog training experience in a unique way to help others. Dawn owns BonaFide Dog Academy in Omaha, Nebraska.

Shannon Esposito

Shannon is a Florida mystery writer currently owned by three dogs. She is the author of the Pet Psychic mystery series, including Karma's A Bitch, featuring one of the noblest breeds, the mastiff. Rainey, her sweet, thirteen-year old golden retriever was the muse for the third book in the series, Silence is Golden. Shannon's mysteries transport readers to Florida without the hefty price of airfare.

She shares this little corner of paradise with her husband, twin boys and dogs. If she's not writing, you'll find her cuddling one of the above, hiding with a book or daydreaming with her toes in the sand.

You can visit her at murderinparadise.com



Susan Holmes, Ph.D.

Fayetteville, Arkansas
dogmysteries@gmail.com

Susan penned her first story - about bears - at the age of four. She soon expanded her childhood writing to include dogs, drawing inspiration from the likes of Balto, Beautiful Joe, and Old Yeller.

Writing was the one constant in her life through military service and life abroad. Back in the States, her undergraduate studies included a focus on writing and her graduate work in communications and education built on that foundation.

Today, she is a professional writer, editor, college professor, and consultant. Her work appears in peer-reviewed journals and military publications, as well as print and digital media. The author and editor of two non-fiction books, she explores the world of dogs through her website <http://dogmysteries.com> and writes regional mysteries set in a boarding kennel.

Her third book, Deadly Ties, is the first in the Waterside Kennels mystery series and was inspired by the joyful adventures of 18 years with her beloved spaniel, Alix. While writing the series, she's joined Search and Rescue exercises, ventured through caves, forests and fields, and into dog parks, vet clinics, and kennels. She works closely with dog trainers, kennel owners, and veterinarians to create an environment dog lovers are sure to recognize and appreciate.



Susan J. Kroupa



Dogs have always been an essential part of my life, but they haven't been part of my writing until 2008, after we adopted Shadow, a highly-independent labradoodle puppy, whose antics provided part of the inspiration for my Doodlebugged mysteries. Prior to that, I've worked as

a music reviewer, columnist and freelance journalist, publishing features in The Arizona Republic, High Country News, American Forests and other newspapers and magazines. I have also published short fiction appearing in a variety of places including Realms of Fantasy, Writers of the Future, and Bruce Coville's Shapeshifters.

I grew up in Southern California and lived in the west until 2005, when we moved to the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains in southwestern Virginia - a great place to indulge my love of photography and gardening.

I got the idea for the Doodlebugged mysteries, when my son discovered bed bugs in his apartment and the manager sent a dog/handler team to investigate. My son's description of the event sparked the idea for a mystery series featuring a dog trained to detect bed bugs. Narrated by Doodle, a service-dog flunky with obedience issues, the series has had good response from dog lovers of all ages. I'm on Facebook as Susan J Kroupa, and you can find me, my books, and some of my photos on <http://www.susankroupa.com>.

Kate Kuligowski

Kate, her families and husband have found, fostered or adopted hundreds of New Mexico's thrown-away pets since before statehood. Having taught in secondary schools in New Mexico and New Jersey, she accepted the position of Education Director for Animal Humane Association of New Mexico and Watermelon Mountain Ranch No-Kill Shelter. Traveling with her rescues for ten years, she presented her award-winning curriculums, "You and Your Pet Are Forever," to thousands of New Mexico classrooms. She and her husband, Wally, presently enjoy the company of nine permanent rescues.

In her recently published book, Our Most Treasured Tails, Sixty Years of Pet Rescue, Kate not only shares many of her family's heartwarming adventures, but also seeks to seriously involve her readers in pursuing stronger animal humane legislation. The



underlying theme of her hardbound book, 242 pages with 90 photographs dating from 1910, is "We can make a difference for our pets."

Her book, awarded four 5-star reviews, can also be ordered from: Our Guys Publishing Co, 905 Maverick Trl, SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123, 505-298-8048, wkjk1027@gmail.com

Maggie Marton

Maggie is an award-winning writer based in Bloomington, Indiana. She earned her master's degree in narrative nonfiction from the Johns Hopkins University. Selected publications include National Geographic.com, Pet Enthusiast Magazine, BUST Magazine, Bloom Magazine, and Victoria Stilwell's Positively.com. She contributes monthly to Pet Age Magazine. In 2012, she wrote



Clicker Dog Training, a how-to dog training e-book that utilizes positive reinforcement, for Open Air Publishing. Maggie has spoken about pets on radio and television, and has been profiled on several websites and blogs. She also writes a popular dog blog, Oh My Dog! (ohmydogblog.com).

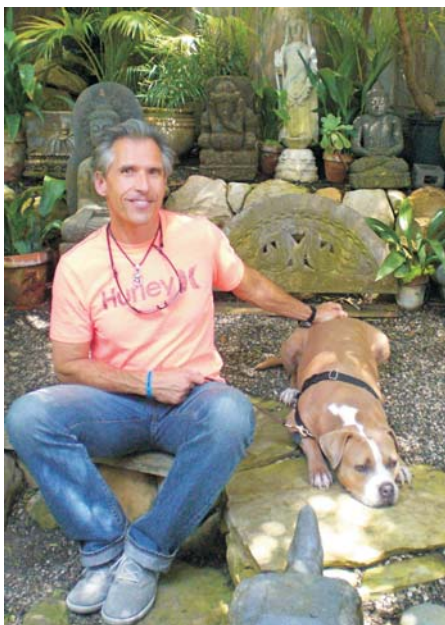
Active in animal-welfare, she served on the Board of Directors for the Monroe County Humane Association, and she works with pit bull education and advocacy organizations. Her dog Emmett is a retired therapy dog, and they worked together with the child residents of a mental health facility. In 2015, the two will appear in the renowned Pinups for Pitbulls calendar and are included in the forthcoming 10th anniversary book, sold in Barnes & Noble stores nationwide.

Maggie lives with her husband, John; Emmett, a pit mix; Lucas, a shepherd mix; Cooper, a pit mix mix; and Newt, the lone kitty (who, of course, runs the show).

Louis Spirito

A lifelong dog lover, Lou is proud to be a member of the DWAA. Lou was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He attended Iona College and Fordham University in New York City. He lives in Malibu, California with his wife, Eugenie, the love of his life, and their rescue pit bull, Tanner.

He has written for magazines and newspapers including The New York Times, WOOF! Digital Dog Magazine, Good Housekeeping, Men's Fitness, Bird Talk, Black Belt and Bride's Magazine (the last



two in the same month). As a screenwriter, he's sold material to Universal Studios, Alliance-Atlantis, Triumph Pictures, and Daniel Blatt Productions. His work has been honored by WorldFest Houston, The Nuyorican Poets Café, Writer's Digest, and the Nicholl Fellowship Competition. His memoir, GIMME SHELTER: A Damaged Pit Bull, An Angry Man, and How They Saved Each Other, was recently awarded the B.R.A.G. Medallion for non-fiction.

When he's not scribbling or playing with Tanner, Lou

teaches Okinawan GoJu Ryu karate and works with juvenile offenders at the Los Angeles County Probation Camp Schools where Gimme Shelter will be used in this fall's part of a 9-week unit on the theme of "Discovery."

In their down time, Lou and his wife travel to Italy where they were married and where they have dual American/Italian citizenship.

Susan C. Willett

Bridgewater, New Jersey

Susan@LifeWithDogsAndCats.com

Susan C. Willett is the creative force behind the website Life with Dogs and Cats. She and her husband and son live on the first ridge of the Watchung Mountains in New Jersey, along with three dogs and four cats - all rescues. A photographer, writer and blogger, Susan finds inspiration all around her: hiding in a box, splashing through a mud puddle, or taking up an entire couch. She posts stories, photos, poetry and humor on her website, and has a dedicated following on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and

Instagram. She is most known for her Haiku by Dog and Haiku by Cat: a creative combination of Susan's haiku and photography-featuring her pets. She also posts text messages from her dogs and cats, accompanied by pictures.

A multiple winner of the prestigious IABC Gold Quill for corporate writing, Susan's work outside the corporate world is also gaining recognition. Her photography was recently featured in an art show, with one of her photos chosen for the show's poster. In addition, one of her blog posts was recently named a finalist for a BlogPaws Nose-to-Nose Award, honoring writing and creativity; winners are announced in May. Her work has appeared on Mousebreath.com and in the 2014 calendar "Cats of the Cat Blogosphere." She is currently working on a book, Life with Dogs and Cats, which draws on more than three years of blog posts.

Susan's work can be found at LifeWithDogsAndCats.com. Feel free to follow her on Facebook (Life with Dogs and Cats), Pinterest (Life with Dogs and Cats), Twitter (@LifeWithDogsAndCats) and Instagram (@LifeWithDogsAndCats).



2014 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. Around this time two years ago, I began thinking about what I should submit to the contest, but this year, like last year, I'm chairing the competition. Now, I can't wait to see your entries.

Please note that we've updated the previous categories to reflect current media and to streamline the submission process.

We've gone online, too! Now you can either download or mail your entries, and can submit your fee through PayPal or send a check. Please read the rules, as we require four copies for each regular entry and two copies for each Special Award. A separate entry form must accompany each regular submission and each Special Award.

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.

Thanks to Labor Day weekend, we're giving you a few extra days to submit your entries. Just make sure they're postmarked no later than Monday, September 8, as no late entries will be accepted.

Please respect the competition period for original work, and check out the complete list of rules on the website.

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

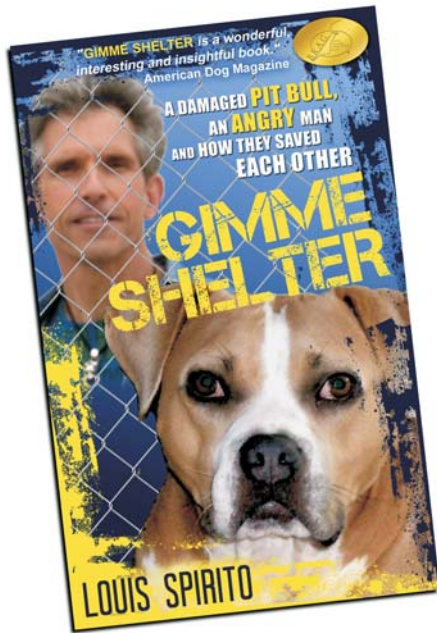
POSTMARK DEADLINE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2014. NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

memberNews!

GIMME SHELTER: a Damaged Pit Bull, an Angry Man, and How They Saved Each Other

by Louis Spirito

(Create Space Publishing, 2013, www.louisspirito.com)



"THE SOPRANOS MEETS MARLEY & ME WITH A TWIST"

That's how Louis Spirito describes GIMME SHELTER. When the last of their four-legged animal "kids" passed away, the writer and his wife go looking for a rescue dog. Although he insists that he's open to any dog in need, Lou secretly longs for a dog like Rebel, the rollicking Irish Setter that shared his world when he was a struggling actor living the vida loca of sex, drugs and disco in pre-Aids New York City. A jaunty dog that would transport him back to the carefree

days before mortgages, life insurance and missed opportunities. The last thing on his wish list is a frightened, muscle-bound, scarred, and carsick pit bull.

In contrast to his fun-loving predecessor, Tanner is an emotional Geiger counter. He cowers at strange objects, flinches at loud noises and vomits whenever he's stressed, which is most of the time. And why wouldn't he? His immature new owner is a raging bull who storms and curses at the slightest provocation - misplaced keys, computer glitches, even mayo on a turkey sandwich. Unlike Marley and John Grogan, theirs is a case of "good" dog vs. "bad" owner. For this odd couple to flourish, one of them has to change. And fast. Thankfully for the writer, the dog wins out. But it isn't easy, and it isn't always pretty.

This frank memoir chronicles the stormy transformation of the man dubbed "too scary to live with" to a mindful, almost peaceful "recovering angry guy." It's a rocky journey to consciousness in which the damaged, timid rescue dog winds up saving his owner from a lifelong battle with anger that he inherited growing up in a "Goodfellas" family in New Jersey.

The writer rescued a dog. Then the dog saved him. Now they're helping at-risk youth. In addition to writing, Lou substitute teaches at the Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Camp Schools near his home. When the instructors there read Gimme Shelter, they suggested that he share his story, and its strong anger management theme with the students, many of whom battle the same issue. Lou

wasn't sure that an adult story would resonate with teen offenders but they responded so well that the schools will be using the book this fall as part of a 9-week unit on the theme of "Discovery." In addition, the Probation Department recently purchased copies for all the juvenile camp dormitory libraries in L.A. County.

Winner of a 2014 Indie BRAG Medallion for non-fiction, Gimme Shelter has been profiled in American Dog Magazine, The Malibu Times Magazine, WOOF! (India), and Pet Life Radio. Ten percent of the profits from Gimme Shelter is donated to animal rescue organizations.

Gimme Shelter is available at Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, and Independent Booksellers

Germinder Named Nominee to PRSA 2015 National Board

Society Represents 21,000 Public Relations Professionals

New York, August 5, 2014. Germinder & Associates today announced agency founder and President Lea-Ann Germinder, APR Fellow PRSA, has been selected as one of nine candidates for officer and board positions to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) National Board. Germinder was nominated to serve on the PRSA Board of Directors representing the Tri-State District. The nominees will stand for election by a vote of the PRSA Leadership Assembly on October 11 at the PRSA 2014 International Conference in Washington, D.C.

In the full announcement of the slate, 2012 PRSA Chair and CEO Gerard F. Corbett, APR Fellow PRSA, said, "The PRSA Nominating Committee was presented with an overwhelming response to its recent call for nominations for leaders of the 2015 Board of Directors. The impressive slate of candidates included many of the industry's leading practitioners who are both highly qualified and demonstrate great energy and enthusiasm at the prospect of leading the Society. With such an extraordinary pool of talent, industry knowledge and leadership capabilities, the Nominating Committee was blessed and challenged with the difficult task of selecting only a handful of pros to lead next year's Board of Directors. We feel that those chosen will do an incredible job of fostering the core principles of PRSA, empowering our members and advancing the profession as a whole."

Germinder has worked in several industries in her 34-year career in public relations, but has concentrated in representing companies and organizations in animal health since launching her own firm in 1998. In 2000, she launched Goodnewsforpets, one of the very first niche portal pet websites and re-launched the site and its affiliated



L. Germinder with Cocoa Cat

social-media platforms in May 2014. She and her teams have created over 150 animal-health campaigns including the iconic “Pets Need Dental, Care, Too!” campaign and the “KNOW Heartworms” campaign, formed the Catalyst Council, and more recently executed the “Why Wait for the Bite?” PR campaign for Ceva Animal Health, and provided media relations for the Women’s Veterinary Leadership Development Initiative (WVLDI).

“I’m honored to have this vote of confidence from my colleagues to help guide our profession during this transformational time in our industry. I’ve spent my entire career in public relations and the opportunity to have a positive impact on businesses and stakeholders alike has never been better,” said Lea-Ann Germinder, APR Fellow PRSA, President of Germinder & Associates, Inc.

Germinder is PRSA Tri-State District Chair-Elect, Immediate Past-President of the New York chapter of PRSA, and a Past President of the Greater Kansas City chapter of PRSA. She is also a member of the Women President’s Organization (WPO), New York Women in Communications, the Publicity Club of New York, the Dog Writers Association of America, the Cat Writer’s Association and Vet Partners.

Germinder & Associates, Inc. provides strategic counsel, digital publishing content, and national campaigns for niche markets including animal health and pet products. The newly redesigned website Goodnewsforpets curates news of interest and importance to informed pet parents inclusive of the veterinary profession and pet industry. For editorial information, advertising and sponsorship opportunities, contact Lea-Ann Germinder at Lgerminder@germinder.com.

Sammy & Spartacus: a special bond between a dog and a girl

by Kendra Bobowick, Friday, May 9, 2014, [The Newtown Bee](#), Newtown, Connecticut

Samantha “Sammy” Kuruc, 9, is “an amazing little girl who has been through a lot,” said her mother Jill Kuruc.

Sammy was among the Sandy Hook School students who fled the building on December 14, 2012 [12/14].

“My daughter described vividly” things that she saw and heard and will never forget, Ms. Kuruc said. “There isn’t a kid I know that’s different . . . the things they don’t feel comfortable doing, the things they’re afraid of . . .”

But the tragedy’s aftermath brought with it “so many sweet connections” during her daughter’s recovery process, Ms. Kuruc said - connections especially with dogs. “Therapy dogs are part of her recovery; there are no words to thank them enough,” she said.

Two of Sammy’s connections led to a surprise visit on Saturday, April 26, from Seattle journalist Ranny Green. Sammy had first met Mr. Green at a therapy dog event in Newtown in June 2013, when he interviewed her, among many others whose lives had been touched by the dogs.

This past February, Mr. Green won the Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA) Maxwell Award for a two-part special Newtown/Sandy Hook therapy dog feature he wrote for the Seattle Kennel Club (SeattleDogShow.org) (website: seattledogshow.org/when-it-comes-to-healing-newtowns-therapy-dogs-have-no-age-limits-for-coaxing-a-smile-and-easing-pain) that was published in late summer.

He was also the only member of the national media with permission immediately following 12/14 to enter Reed Intermediate School to interview staff and students along with parents. The school was opened as a crisis center following the tragedy.

Also stopping by for a surprise visit Saturday was Sammy’s favorite comfort dog, Spartacus, an Akita, and his owner Brad Cole. Spartacus had been at Reed to provide therapy and comfort following 12/14, which is where Sammy first met him.

Ms. Kuruc recalled that her daughter only agreed to visit the school-turned-temporary counseling center because of the dogs that were there.

“She laid on Spartacus for two hours,” Ms. Kuruc said. Mr. Cole had asked Samantha if it was okay to let Spartacus go see other children. She said yes, but Spartacus didn’t want to leave her. In coming months, Ms. Kuruc and Sammy would share their story with Mr. Green.

In another article by Mr. Green, published at SeattleDogShow.org, which included comments from Ms. Kuruc and a picture of Sammy with a therapy dog (seattledogshow.org/from-politicians-to-psychologists-therapy-dog-teams-leave-a-powerful-legacy-in-newtown), Mr. Green wrote in part, “In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings, professionals’ eyes were opened as to the role of therapy dogs in aiding children and first responders in the hours and months following [12/14].

“These furry counselors put a happy face on many kids for the first time in days and weeks,” Mr. Green’s article continued. “And they delivered a gentle emotional outlet for firemen and law-enforcement officers ...”

Ms. Kuruc recalls the therapy and comfort dogs that came to Reed Intermediate School right after 12/14. Describing her daughter’s traumatized state, Ms. Kuruc explained that the young girl had experienced many losses. Dogs began to play an important part in Samantha’s life.

In his article, Mr. Green had quoted Ms. Kuruc as saying, “Two days after the shooting we brought her to Reed because we knew she had to talk to someone. She didn’t want to leave home and was really shutting down but when she saw the dogs there she opened up a bit.”

Small world weird way

Next came the magic “in a small world weird way,” Ms. Kuruc said.

She and Samantha encountered Mr. Cole and Spartacus at a fundraiser in Hartford in 2013. The Kurucs had not seen him in months.

“We had a ‘reunion,’” said Ms. Kuruc.

Noting another “weird connection” at that time, Ms. Kuruc’s friend, Kirsten Strobel, who is a teacher at Reed Intermediate School, asked if Ms. Kuruc would be interested in talking to writer Ranny Green. She had agreed, and soon “told him about Sammy.”

As he learned about Sammy, he said, “I had to meet her, which I did the following day in Newtown.” He spoke with her during a thank you ceremony that Mr. Cole had coordinated for the many therapy dog teams that had helped residents since 12/14.

They later got together at a restaurant in Sandy Hook Center.

“I went to meet [Mr. Green] and there was Brad and Spartacus, who had also been talking to Ranny,” she said.

Of that meeting Mr. Green said, “I remember sitting at a booth in a Sandy Hook restaurant with Kirsten and Jill, on the final day of school last year and talking for a couple of hours about the role of the dogs at Reed and how they specifically helped Sam [from her mother’s perspective].” He referred to the afternoon as “a very emotional interview as one question led to another and both Jill and Kirsten let it all out emotionally.”

Mr. Green has since kept in contact with Sammy and her mother and sent “cute books about dogs, and went out of his way to stay connected,” Ms. Kuruc said.

When Mr. Green won his award, Sammy was on his mind.

During his acceptance speech in February at the Hotel Pennsylvania ballroom in New York, he mentioned “that he wanted to give the award to a special little girl.”



Journalist Ranny Green, who lives in Tacoma, Washington, had interviewed Samantha Kuruc and her mother Jill last summer as part of his article about therapy dogs published by the Seattle Kennel Club. When he earned an award for his two-part feature in February, he decided to give it to Samantha, which he did as a surprise during a visit to Newtown on April 26. Photo: Kendra Bobowick

noted the “tears streaming down my face.”

“When I looked up everyone in the room was standing and applauding,” he said. “It totally blew me away. Some moments in life are special and highly precious. This was one of those.”

Mr. Green said he decided to give his award to Sammy after writing his story last summer. He began thinking about how to “give back” and “acknowledge what the therapy dogs have done for the students in Newtown since that fateful day.” He had also thought, he said, “If I am fortunate enough to win the Maxwell, I want to bring it back to where it belongs: Newtown.”

Recalling his time spent with Samantha and Jill Kuruc, Mr. Green said, he “was very taken by young Samantha’s demeanor and love

of dogs. I thought then, she would be the perfect recipient of the medal if I am fortunate enough to win.”

Jill Kuruc is happy at the impact her daughter has had on others.

“It’s amazing that this little girl made an impression on adults’ lives,” she said. “I am so proud to be her mom.”

The reunion

On Saturday, April 26, Sammy knelt down and rested her head on Spartacus, who was sprawled on her kitchen floor as she and her mother entertained a few guests. That day Sammy was enjoying a reunion with the big, calm therapy dog, his owner Brad Cole, journalist Ranny Green, and Kirsten Strobel, all of whom had grown to know one another well after 12/14. Spartacus had spent a lot of time in Ms. Strobel’s classroom after the shooting.

Soon she and Mr. Green stood in the center of her kitchen where he held something concealed in a package behind his back.

Mr. Green pulled out a laminated Westminster Kennel Club media pass on a lanyard and placed it over Sammy’s head. She looked down to see what she now wore around her neck. Mr. Green is co-director of the Westminster Kennel Club media team and had arranged for a lanyard and media clip with her name on it, from this year’s dog show. He also gave her a 2014 Westminster Kennel Club guidebook and several dog books. He gave her other dog-related gifts including videos, and a puzzle.

“I love surprises,” Sammy said.

“There is one more coming,” said Mr. Green.

“No words,” said Sammy.

“Do you want to know what it is?”

he asked. Mr. Green, who had made this special trip from Washington to give Sammy her surprise, said, “Here is what I brought you from Seattle. Remember when I talked to you [in the summer of 2013]? I wrote a story about that.”

As emotion crept into his words, he said, “I won an award.” Dangling from a ribbon was the Maxwell Award, which he draped over Sammy’s head.

“But, it’s really yours. It’s coming home. It’s mine, but it’s yours,” he told the girl.

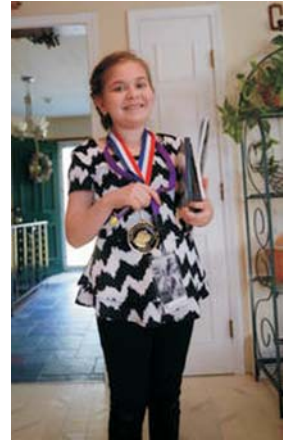
Minutes later Sammy raced down the hallway to her bedroom and came back with a necklace with a charm that read, “Dream” which she gave to Mr. Green.

Brad & Spartacus

In a recent e-mail Brad Cole said, “The dogs were the most effective mental health resource Newtown had. Period.”

“The comfort the kids took in knowing ‘their dog’ would be around was important for their sense of normalcy and security,” he wrote.

The presence of dogs at Reed “made a world of difference for the kids’ emotional well-being,” he said. “Not to mention the teachers



Samantha Kuruc wears the many surprises she received from Ranny Green, including his Dog Writers Association of America Maxwell Award. Receiving it was like “winning an Olympic gold medal,” she said.

and staff knowing they had an additional resource for the students . . . and themselves."

Several therapy dog teams "vowed to stay involved in the community so that the kids always had a familiar furry friend. We made sure to be at events outside of school. Dogs and handlers would appear at basketball games, baseball games, town events, the Sandy Hook Christmas Tree Lighting, Sandy Hook 5K, and more," Mr. Cole said, "that was successful."

He and Spartacus formed a K-9 first responder team on 12/14, which he documents in an article he wrote. In his "Newtown Day Zero And Forward," he said, "I hoped to be of assistance at Sandy Hook," on a morning of December 14 that was "just like every other day, until 9:34 am ..." Later that evening, he and Spartacus made themselves available to the families prior to a church service at St. Rose of Lima. The next day at Reed, he noticed that once counselors "saw the impact [Spartacus] had, the requests for dogs in sessions expanded quickly."

Often, families would return to Reed for follow up visits and request to sit with the same dog.

"This proved invaluable because the initial counselor might not be available and the dog teams were able to bridge that divide," Mr. Cole said. "The dog teams provided a sense of continuity in an ever-shifting environment."

Children who may not have spoken to adults would often talk to the dogs "about what happened that day," he said.

One child reportedly panicked at the sound of the school's public address system, thinking they were about to go into lockdown.

"This child was sitting with one of our dogs; saw the dog was not concerned, gave the dog a hug, and was able to calm down," Mr. Cole wrote. That child soon "unexpectedly" spoke about the morning of December 14.

In a letter to Spartacus and Mr. Cole, one little girl in Newtown wrote that she "walked into Reed and saw a big dog in front of me (this dog was about as big as a deer!)," she wrote. "Time seemed to stand still and all that mattered was the adorable dog." Very quickly she felt magic "spread through me. It wasn't magic though, it was just happiness and love," the girl wrote. "My heart was beating faster

Roxie

by Janice Biniok



Great at writing . . . not so great at hand signals . . .



because ... I needed to get closer to this big dog." She felt "so supported and loved," as she describes petting Spartacus. When she is with Spartacus, she said, she hurts "a tiny bit less."

In the wake of tragedy is "hope and change," said Mr. Cole. He said in a recent e-mail, "Because of Newtown embracing therapy dogs, they are now being incorporated into police departments, hospitals, mass casualty response plans, and at other emergency departments to assist in helping those impacted by trauma and tragedy."

Two days after visiting with Sammy on April 26, Mr. Green said, "Sam has become my long-distance Sandy Hook angel."

On the day he left to return to Washington, he remembers her saying, "Please come back."

In a poem Sammy wrote about dogs, which was published in Letters from Sandy Hook - Newtown to the World, a collection of letters and essays compiled by Newtown resident Suzanne Davenport, Sammy calls them "snuggly," "cuddly companions." She wrote, "They will be your friends forever."

In the same book is a letter from both Jill and Samantha that explains the struggle of sharing their story. They said, "You cuddle up against the soft fur of this new friend ... the comfort dogs were a place to come ... for shelter ... for unconditional caring ... for sharing all the support you need."

"As a parent, these sweet animals were the only reason you could get your child to go to school; they help you to be brave," the letter said. "The bond is unbreakable."



Samantha "Sammy" Kuruc snuggles with therapy dog Spartacus on April 26 when he and owner Brad Cole stopped for a visit. Sammy, who had been at Sandy Hook School on 12/14, first met Spartacus several days later in December when she stopped at Reed Intermediate School where teams of therapy and comfort dogs had gathered. Photo: Kendra Bobowick

Oscar, a seventy-year wait

by Kate J. Kuligowski

I was blessed with the best! Because both sets of my New Mexico grandparents had a deep respect for all life, they made it their responsibility to rescue thrown-away dogs and cats in their respective communities on the east side of the state: Artesia, Roswell and Clovis, all small, barren, dry, flat and windy. They instilled this admirable quality into their family members, and I am pleased that it continues today with my children.

From the early 1900s until his death in 1957, my mother's father (my ChooDaddy), superintendent of the Pecos Division of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, incorporated into his busy daily schedule a request for his track foreman to carefully check the Clovis railroad tracks for abandoned pets. It was not an uncommon occurrence for residents in this community, who wished to rid their households of unwanted dogs and cats, to use the railroad tracks as a convenient "drop-off." These pets were, with few exceptions, sick, filthy, neglected and/or physically abused. Because ChooDaddy considered our dog pound to be repulsive, cruel and inhumane, any castoffs that were found were then taken to his local veterinarian (with whom he had made arrangements) to be examined, inoculated, groomed and spayed or neutered. Once they were delivered to the safety of ChooDaddy's walled-in yard on Axtell Street, this kind and caring man would take the time during his available evening hours to find responsible owners for these innocent, abandoned pets. There were but a few years, those when his middle daughter and family moved in with him, that his backyard was not a safety net to these strays.

The six children in my father's Artesia family had a knack for "finding" dogs (many dogs), and therefore, always had a houseful of canines, explaining, as they "surprised" their parents, "Look what followed me home!" or "Look what I found in the street . . . or at school!" In 1910, two years before New Mexico statehood, Uncle JoFord found a Newfoundland "wandering in the playground," he claimed. My Grandmother Kate wrote a small article for the Artesia Advocate in an attempt to locate this sizeable, sweet dog - surely a dog that size would not go unnoticed in a town of only 2,900. But none of the town's residents claimed him, and her replies, when querying her friends, were evasive or unsuccessful. None could afford to feed Percy, so he spent his next eight years enjoying a full, active and well-loved life with the Jacobson family.



My father, Pud, sits with rescue, Percy, in New Mexico, 1910.

With a family so dedicated to rescuing pets, it was no surprise that, at age three, my first pet was a playful and patient Boston Terrier that my father discovered, frantically trying to escape from inside a

burning trash barrel in a Borger, Texas alley. The fur which grew back to partially cover those serious burns on his hind feet was coarse and curly patches. My parents named him Sinbad, after Sinbad the Sailor, vintage 1935. This dapper little black-and-white pup was my adoring and energetic playmate, my constant companion.



Sinbad and I enjoy water fun, 1942.

My most special adventures with Sinbad were spent in the many warm afternoons in the backyard of our new home in Carlsbad, a small New Mexico town where the average high temperature was 72 degrees. After our naps, curled together, we would race to the metal washtub-pool for creative water games. My squeals of delight pierced the neighborhood as he, hose in mouth, playfully chased and squirted me. Then we changed roles. I was puzzled why, after a couple of hours of soggy activity, Mother would take us both into the house and fill the bathtub with more water to bathe me, no splashing, no Sinbad, just suds, soap and a soft washcloth. She explained this bath away succinctly. "Don't you want to look special when your father comes home from work tonight?"

No more questions. No discussion necessary. I adored my father. When he returned home from working in the lab at the potash mines, Daddy, even though obviously exhausted, would quickly sketch any special animal on his lab specimen tags that I wanted. Since I was enthralled with dogs, naturally I only requested dog pictures. He even drew my best bud, Sinbad, playing with me. Fortunately, I still have and will always cherish these treasured sketches. Then after dinnertime my tall (6'3"), handsome daddy would sweep me into his arms and we would dance together (without my feet touching the ground) and sing Daisy, Daisy.

But six weeks after my fourth birthday, on the first day of spring in March, 1943, my family's life changed drastically, forever. We were faced with the sudden and devastating loss of my beloved father. This tragedy resulted in our move 180 miles south to my grandfather's home located in Clovis, whose residents were mostly ranchers, farmers or railroaders.

Because my young mother was suffering and overwhelmed with the shock of his death, I was left to my own resources to cope with the finality of "death." I did know that it meant that I would never dance again with my wonderful father. Each day, as I tried to comprehend my new life, with new people, without my father, in a new home, a new town, I held on tightly to my Sinbad whose love for me helped to soften my sorrow and ease my confusion. My world turned even darker only one month later, when my best bud, my confidant, my

delightful Sinbad, suffered a violent death at the hands of my uncle.

I spent much of my spare time during the next thirteen years helping my ChooDaddy, along with my mother and sister, to shelter, foster and find homes (including our own) for the town's discarded dogs and cats. Several of their previous owners uttered ignorant and superstitious excuses such as "got herself pregnant," "unlucky," because it had black fur or "was too old." Every time the veterinarian opened our gate to deliver another rescue, I was always on the lookout, praying for another Boston, another Sinbad.

While teaching secondary education in 1962, I met and married my honey-heart of 52 years, Wally; a dentist stationed at Cannon Air Force Base. We were meant to be. On the very evening we met, we made plans to spend our future years together following in my family's footsteps: rescuing, caring for, fostering, and adopting abandoned dogs and cats.

And true to our ambitions, we have literally taken-in, tended to and found homes for hundreds of these poor creatures, from the streets, country-side abandoned buildings and vacant lots, abusive situations, city shelters and calloused owners. These homeless canines and felines covered a multitude of breeds and combinations. Each came with a different background, different history of abuse or neglect, and with those came a different and necessary set of survival skills. With three exceptions, each came with fear, a fear of humans, society's ugliest predators. After grooming and veterinary exams, inoculations, chipping and spaying/neutering, we contacted our friends at one of New Mexico's five no-kill shelters: Fur and Feather Animal Assistance in Pie Town, Watermelon Mountain Ranch in Bernalillo, Dixon Animal Protection

Society in Dixon, Kindred Spirits in Santa Fe and Sunflower Sanctuary in Albuquerque.

Of course, not all of our rescues were adoptable. There were those who had physical ailments that would require hefty ongoing veterinarian expenses; quite a few were blind, deaf or both, and some pets had behavioral problems that would require months or even years of training, orientation and socialization. These canine misfits, numbering at any time between six and thirteen, became our own "guys" . . . loving, respected and permanent members of our family.

But none were Boston Terriers. After 70 years, my heart was still searching for an abandoned, thrown-away Sinbad. A March 2013 phone call would quickly change that. I'm sure that my heart actually skipped a beat when we received a request from Warren, a friend and neighbor who, because of severe health problems, was no longer able to care for his new Boston puppy, Valjean, found and given to him by his daughter. She had discovered, at a highway rest stop in Colorado, this tiny, nine-month old pup, shivering and crying, abandoned and wrapped in a thin towel. Would we adopt Valjean so that Warren could visit? My uncontrollable tears of joy were his answer.

In honor of my father, who brought home my first Boston, Wally and I changed the name of this energetic, engaging and precious puppy to Oscar. A special delight to our family, he is our eager and well-behaved canine companion on all of our out-of-town trips. Our Oscar, regarded as first among equals in our household of nine wonderful and loving rescues, was well worth my 70-year wait.

I waited a very long time for you, Oscar. [Front cover photo: Finally, our rescued pup can rest.]

DWAA Awards Banquet

Sunday, February 15, 2015 at 6:00 pm

Important: note the location! Hotel Pennsylvania, 401 Seventh Ave, New York 10001

Menu~ [please choose one per guest]

☐ Grilled chicken breast In white wine mushroom sauce. Quantity:

☐ Grilled Atlantic salmon. Quantity:

☐ Vegetable plate. Quantity:

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

Please make checks payable to DWAA in US funds and send along with this form to:

Marsha M. Pugh, Treasurer, P.O. Box 787, Hughesville, MD 20637, 301-274-3435, marsha_pugh01@comcast.net

You may phone or e-mail your reservation, or direct questions, to Marsha, but your reservation is not complete until payment has been received. Reservations can also be made online through PayPal at www.dwaa.org

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 Marsha Pugh, Treasurer.

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

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Choose one:

☐ Professional (paid) ☐ Associate (not paid)

To insure complete information, are you:

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*Make check payable in U.S. funds to DWAA and send along with this page to
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P.O. Box 787, Hughesville, MD 20637
marsha_pugh-1@comcast.net*

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



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