



THE WRITE DOG

DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.

Founded 1935

April 2004



The DWAA awards banquet held in February in conjunction with the Westminster Dog Show was great fun!

DUES FORM ENCLOSED

Meanderings

“One of the least impressive liberties is the liberty to starve. This particular liberty is freely accorded to authors.” Lord Goodman

*“If you copy from one author it’s plagiarism. If you copy from two, it’s research.”
Wilson Mizner*

“Your manuscript is both good and original; but the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good.” Samuel Johnson

Involuntary Reprints

Several of our members have had the unhappy experience of opening up a magazine to seeing a very familiar article in it, unbeknownst to them, or of being notified that an article of theirs appeared on a website, magazine or newsletter.

If we were writing only for the joy of it, (though we hope there is some joy in writing), this would be gratifying. However, for those of us who write professionally, it’s a bittersweet moment. It’s sweet because it’s nice to know that someone admired something you wrote enough to reprint it. It’s bitter because you weren’t asked for permission – and sometimes your copyright (or horrors! even your name!) isn’t included with the article. And, certainly, there’s no check with your name forthcoming. In addition, this may prevent you from publishing it in a similar site that wants the exclusive rights for their particular market.

Quotes, of course, are a different story. If they’re accredited to you, it brings you publicity. Fair use is usually considered to be a paragraph or two, certainly not a whole chapter or half an article!

What to do? What to do? Immediately write the publisher telling them this is an original article of yours and is copyrighted. It never hurts to ask for an amount that you think is fair. However, don’t hold your breath, as most of the people who do this are club volunteers who have no budgets or pathways to the club treasury.

Permission Granted

*“It’s a damn good story. If you have any comments, write them on the back of a check.”
Erle Stanley Gardner*

Thankfully, most editors are astute enough to know that they must (not should, but **must**) ask permission to republish an article. When I receive a request, I first need to know two things. Is this an article I plan to resell in the future? Is the publication a for- or not-for-profit one?

If I plan to resell the article soon to a similar market, I respond by saying that I cannot allow permission at this time, but might in the future. Many times, however, I can

rewrite the article enough to sell it to another market and allow permission for the reprint of the original.

Personally, I allow reprints of many of my articles to non-profit organizations. I require the following:

- 1) Use the copyright symbol (c) by my name.
- 2) Include a line or two stating that the author must be contacted for reprints.

You may include my address, phone number and e-mail address
(_____).

- 3) State that this article was first published in _____ (or wherever you take it from).
- 4) Send me a copy of the piece when it is published.

I do this because it helps to spread a message I think is important. One of my articles on responsible care, which is entitled, "One Dog's Life" has been reprinted 30-some times around the world.

If the publication does make a profit, but can afford little or nothing to pay, I require an ad publicizing my books. In this way, I often make book sales. If you don't have any books, you might be able to advertise something else. Another option is to ask for a subscription of their magazine in return for the reprint.

Milking An Article

"Just one great idea can completely revolutionize your life." Earl Nightingale

When I sell an article, I always grant only First North American Rights. If the publication wants anything more than that, they'd better increase the check accordingly – or it has to be something I'm certain I'd never want to use again.

After the piece is published, I check out other publications that might be interested in the same subject. What's good for the goose is often good for the gander, i.e., if it's appropriate for dogs, it might also be for cats – or horses – or lizards. If it works for Rottweilers, it might cross over to Min Pins. If I sell something to *The Retired Officers Magazine*, it might go to an in-flight magazine.

I often write a piece with just a couple changes. Recently, I wrote one for an organization, sending them three versions (without their asking me): one for mainstream, one for canine magazines, and one for sporting mags. It's simple to do by adding or deleting a few words and by changing the all-important leader or hook paragraph.

Another of my articles has been sold several times with just such minor changes. The first time I sold it was in my newspaper column for \$10. With a little sprucing up and updates, I've sold it multiple times since then for several hundred. Don't try to do this on "the sneak." Be honest with the editor. Tell them this article has been published _____ times in non-competing markets. If you think it'll help up the ante, tell them the amount

you were paid. I usually don't do that, however, unless I'm very familiar with the publication and their payment policy.

The DWAA-Pro List

The hot new place to be and be heard is the DWAA-Pro list. (Subscription info included in this issue.) Several people have already been helped by advice on buying a camera, tips for book signings and checking publishers' websites for book sales. Others are utilizing the files available on book proposals, article queries and tax information. Photographers have set up their own files with samples of their work, and, of course, there's no reason why an author can't do this as well. I plan to as soon as possible. DWAA members can look to see if a member best matches their requirements for illustration, possibly generating more work for the artists and photographers. And member editors and publishers will be able to look over writers' credits and clips.

This is for DWAA members only. To access the files, members need to establish a profile with yahoo, which can be as simple as your name. Simple guidelines apply: no flaming, no jokes, no personal notes of congrats or me too, etc. This means the list is not heavy traffic. Be there to ask and give invaluable advice. Yahoo groups gives us the convenience of going "no mail" when we're traveling or receiving the digest (a single post with all the of the messages sent that day), without having to go through the folderol of subscribing and unsubscribing. There are many other benefits. Check it out!

By-laws Changes

In March, the DWAA board voted on another by-laws change, this time about membership. This month it's just a board announcement; next month we'll have discussion, and the third month we'll all vote on it. Not getting an answer from voting members constitutes a yes vote, so don't forget to vote.

First Review

Article 1

Membership

Section 1. Membership shall be limited to those persons to promote the best interest of dogs through news or informational channels and qualifying fields of experience (adopted 1997)

There shall be the following classes of membership

- a.) Professional Membership shall include those persons who are actively engaged, on a regular basis, in writing (or other forms of dissemination of information) about dogs and who are paid for their work. This class of membership shall pay dues, have voting privileges, and be entitled to receive the Association's Press Card.**
- b.) Associate Membership is established to encourage writers who are published but not necessarily paid for their work. May serve as a member of a regular appointed committee. Associate Membership shall pay dues but shall not run for or hold office and shall not have voting privileges nor receive a Press Card. (Membership Card Only). (Adopted 1997)**
- c.) Retired Membership shall include those persons who are no longer actively writing and have reached the age of at least 65 and had at least 15 years continuous membership in the Association. Any member may apply for Retired Membership at any age after 6 when**

he discontinues writing on an active and regular basis. A member may apply and, when approved by the Board, shall pay one-half the regular dues and retain the same privileges he had as a Professional or Associate Member.

d.) Honorary Membership may be conferred by the Board upon any member who is retired and has been a member for at least 20 years. There shall be no annual dues and the member shall retain the same privileges he had as a Professional or Associate Member.

NEW

e.) Junior Membership for those under 18 years of age who actively engage on a regular basis, in writing and are paid for their work. This class shall pay dues, receive a Press Card, but will not hold office or have voting privileges. (If they are not paid they will receive an Associate Card). They will automatically become Professional Members at the age of 18 if paid and Associate Members if not paid.

From last month:

Constitution Change Voted on by Board and Officers of the DWAA

Second Review.

Next Month We'll for a Vote of the Membership the Following Month.

CONSTITUTION SECTION 2 (d)

READS: TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THE DOG WRITERS EDUCATIONAL TRUST.

PROPOSED CHANGE: TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT AN ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION.

PLEASE DIRECT YOUR CONCERNS OR COMMENTS TO THE SECRETARY.

Book Reviews from Your Newsletter Goddess

8 Weeks to a Healthy Dog, Shawn Messonnier, DVM, \$14.95, Rodale

This book is excellent – well written, easily understood, and full of common preventive sense, it's a canine version of Dr. Andrew Weil's *8 Weeks to Optimum Health* for people. Billed as "a preventive-care program for your dog's total health," it fills the bill. Dr. Messonnier uses both holistic and conventional therapies, preferring a holistic approach and use of conventional therapies when appropriate. He believes in what he calls the best of both worlds. He discusses why a dog should start out with a visit to the vet for a physical, and moves on to treating parasites, selecting an appropriate diet for your dog's needs, supplements, treating diseases naturally, the importance of not being overweight, and more. Based on what I learned here, I'm planning on making some changes for my dogs.

The Rosetta Bone: The Key to Communication Between Humans and Canines, Cheryl S. Smith, \$24.99, Howell

The title of this book is creative and apt, as is the books' content; the Rosetta Stone was a stone tablet found by Napoleon's troops that provided the key to translation of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Smith, a trainer, points out that effective communication not only increases the emotional quality of your relationship with your dog, but increases your ability to train your dog. Her ABCs of communication are: A = any reward, B = better luck next time, C = consequences. Smith provides exercises for you and your dog, and incorporates useful quotations from many different sources and. She discusses the basics of human-canine communication, how dogs speak to us,

understanding body language, the communication inherent in touch, and making rewards and reprimands more effective. Smith even discusses when children are ready to share their lives with dogs. Her book is full of information that will easily help improve communication between dogs and their people, and it has some wonderful photographs.

Calico Tales...and Others, Betsy Stowe, \$14.95, Infinity Publishing

This delightful collection of black and white photographs taken by Stowe and poems written by Stowe makes an excellent gift book for the cat lovers in your life. If you're a cat lover, you really owe it to yourself to have this book. If you have any affection for cats, you will love the photographs and the variety of cats in them. The poems range from short to a page or so, and vary in tone from funny to poignant to cute. Since there poetry is very subjective to personal taste, I'll share with you one of the short poems I liked best.

True Love

When a cat sleeps with you,
You know you are truly loved.

Or maybe...
Your blanket is warm.

Bride and Groom, Susan Conant, \$22.95, Berkley Prime Crime

Holly Winter fans will love this new tail about the murder of several women in Cambridge who all have something in common. Holly fits the profile of the women being killed. In this installment, Holly is finally preparing to marry Steve, the man of my dreams. I mean, the man of her dreams. Anyway, in the short time they have to make arrangements, their circle of friends suffer significant changes, and not all of them revolve around death. I've always loved the way Conant manages to teach her readers about dogs, and here she has some wonderful instruction-that-doesn't-sound-like instruction on the integration of Holly's two dogs and Steve's three into one family. Conant mentions DWAA a few times, which is unexpected and fun to read. It's interesting to see Holly learn to promote her new book, *101 Ways to Cook Liver*. I cried at the ending; other sentimental types will do the same.

The Anti-Dog Movement

By Melanie Coronetz

I sometime dream I have a big dog. No, not a big dog, but a huge dog. A dog of such great size and appetite that she might gobble up all the bureaucrats and rule makers who keep impacting her environment through mindless restrictions and/or fees. In a previous issue of *The Write Dog*, I railed against the airlines and their discriminatory fees charged for carry-on bags containing a dog or cat. A domestic traveler can tote a reeking salami and stick it under the seat for free, but a sweet-smelling, quiet pet costs the owner a bundle.

Now there's more bad news for dog owners. Many insurance companies are refusing to write homeowner's policies for people who share their lives with so-called dangerous

breeds. And sometimes "dangerous" just translates to "big." I wonder what an agent would think if he or she came face to face with Josh, our Westminster winner? Why, the agent might risk getting a ..kiss! If this sounds silly, it isn't. Misconceptions about companion animals abound in today's society and, unfortunately, this leads to more and more restrictions.

Recently, after a big snowfall here in the city, I took my two Schipperkes across the street to Central Park. These days, a good part of the park is fenced, so dogs can no longer romp off leash where they want, but there still are a few sections where they may, up until 9:00 a.m. One such area is nearby, but it's too close to home to safely let these little devils run free. Further in, there is a terrific field. Riders used to gallop across it on horseback in the early 1970s, but now it has become an enclave of fenced-off baseball fields. On this particular day, the fences were open here and there, and a sign proclaimed that whenever snow was at least 6" deep, people could cross country ski there. The Schips and I entered, and I watched them play for a while. Soon a parks worker told me to "get those dogs out of there." It was nowhere close to 9:00 a.m. A week later, I noticed a new sign: Open to cross-country skiers. No dogs allowed. I have written to the Parks Department and demanded that they explain themselves. Most dogs (excluding Josh) weigh less than a skier, and could not possibly damage the underlying grounds. As for pottying, by the time any dog arrived at this interior location, it would have relieved itself, and its owner (hopefully) would have cleaned up after it. Would dogs chase and frighten a skier? Maybe, if they could find one. But I've never seen anyone skiing across those fields that early in the morning at any time during the past few snowfalls.

Today, in *The New York Times*, there was more bad news for dog owners. The management of an apartment complex on the east side of Manhattan is trying to impose more regulations on dog owners who live there. Among the brilliant ideas is one that would forbid non-resident dogs from entering the premises. For example, if you invited a friend to come up for coffee after you both walked your dogs, and if your friend didn't live in the building, her dog would not be allowed inside. Management also proposed making dogs wear special identification tags showing what apartment they belonged to, and levying fines for owners who didn't comply. Naturally, this being New York, the dog people immediately hired a lawyer who specializes in pet issues, and who will help them fight against the implementation of these inane rules and restrictions.

But the warning lights are on full blast. For every magazine article or "Animal Planet" segment that extols the wonders of the dog/human bond, there is a counterpoint. This consists of people, often in lawmaking or rulemaking positions, who see dogs as public nuisances. They believe dogs are naturally destructive. They believe dogs defecate and urinate all over the place, all the time. They believe dogs are by nature noisy and eager to bite people. Ridiculous? Of course. But this is the mentality we are up against and if we don't start paying more attention to these issues, writing about them, and trying to educate those who would create bans, restrictions and other limits to having canine companionship, we will find ourselves in an increasingly dogless world. As a first step, I urge all DWAA members to sign up for the ASPCA's Advocacy Center get their emails,

and join their email letter writing campaigns as the issues arise. For more information, visit their website at www.ASPCA.org.

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Banquet Photos



Thanks to everyone who helped make the banquet a great success!

Dues Notice

Dues are due March 1, 2004

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