

## Visiting the Dog Park: Having Fun, Staying Safe

Cheryl S. Smith, *Dogwise*, \$11.95, 130 pages, paperback

This topic is near and dear to my heart as I go to a dog park several times a week. They are not for every dog, and there are people who bring dogs that have no business being there. But when the park is filled with appropriate dogs and people, my dogs think there is no better place under the sun. Smith's first chapter is devoted to who should and should not use dog parks; it's a sad statement on society that oftentimes those who have no business being there are clueless about it. (Give them this book.) Smith goes on to discuss people who aren't suited to the park (people who can't control their dogs, who ignore their dogs while socializing with other people, and don't obey the rules). She discusses the design and rules of dog parks. Dog parks can generate some level of controversy as to whether or not they are worthwhile, but Smith outlines both the pros and cons so well that if you have any question at all about whether or not you should go

## Book Reviews

By Phyllis DeGioia

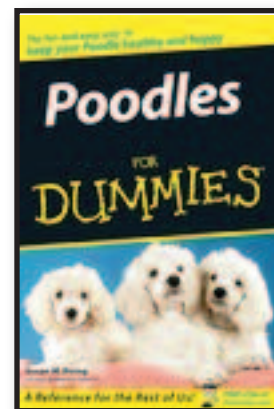


with a certain dog, she can guide you to the answer.

## Poodles for Dummies

Susan J. Ewing, *Wiley*, \$16.99, 270 pages, paperback

What I always love about Dummies books is how they let the author's sense of humor come through, and Ewing has a wonderful sense of humor clearly displayed: about grooming your poodle yourself, "Here's hoping it goes better than Grandma cutting your hair as a child!" On the froufrou grooming that make Poodles somewhat notorious: "Early breeders designed the froufrou hairdo as a way to lighten the weight of a waterlogged coat while providing warmth and protection for vital organs and joints. Can you say the same for your designer hair cut?" Ewing's goal is to make sure people who think they want a poodle really do, and that those who really don't want one don't get one. A wonderful resource for someone researching the breed, think of this if someone mentions the froufrou thing.



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DECEMBER 2007



New Board Members  
Elected

Caroline Coile and Charlotte Reed have been elected to the DWAA Board of Directors for the Class of 2011. Congratulations!

# The Not-Yet-Named NEWSLETTER DWAA

DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.  
FOUNDED 1935

Ida Estep rescued Blue, a handsome Blue Tick Coonhound. To help others get rescued, Blue wears his donation dog cape to all of the Franklin County (NC) Humane Society fundraisers and collects money for dogs and cats still waiting to be adopted. Kids love Blue and are more than willing to ask their folks for money to give to him. Blue has his Canine Good Citizen, and acts as a true citizen of the rescue world.





AMY FERNANDEZ

It doesn't matter if you are reading Sports Illustrated or the IKEA catalog, you can see that dogs are a big topic this time of year. They never fail to grab public attention, although it's debatable how much of the resulting publicity is beneficial. The Chinese Shar Pei craze that nearly destroyed the breed began with a 1983 Neiman Marcus Christmas catalog featuring a puppy on the cover.

The message of responsible ownership has been out there loud and clear for decades. Yet every holiday season pet shops stock up, customers line up and as soon as it's over, rescues fill up. At times it may feel futile to constantly belabor such a familiar subject. But you will always reach someone who hasn't heard it before. Not only that, your perspective on this shopworn topic will strike precisely the right chord with a particular segment of readers.

This is one of the things I love about dog writing. We come from such diverse backgrounds, yet we are all passionate about the same subject. And we're all experts in some particular area, ranging from mainstream to obscure. In many cases this is because we didn't start out planning to do this at all. The same can be said of writers in general. Many successful writers started out with this goal in mind but an almost equal number did not. The late Norman Mailer is a perfect example. He

studied at Harvard and planned to become an aeronautical engineer before carving out a career as a superstar author. Lack of specialized training is a disadvantage in most professions, but for writers talent and insight trump everything.

This brings me back to my original point. The holiday season is the ideal time to showcase your skills regarding issues near and dear to your heart. If you don't feel like devoting time and effort to a book proposal or magazine pitch, write an essay - the same kind you dreaded writing in high school. You may want to reframe it as a commentary or opinion piece but if it is well crafted there is a good chance it will be published. Animal rights extremists have turned this concept into a veritable production line. We are definitely better writers and we can do the same to protect the continuation of the canine species.

Opinion pieces are also a great way to recycle earlier writing efforts that never made it to the production line. Taking a second look at your early work can also be great for your morale. Nothing in the world will dispel insecurity better than a glance through your college portfolio. Hunter Thompson saved every single scrap of his writing from the time he set on his career path as a teenager. Most of us are not quite that obsessive, but don't be too quick to jettison your embarrassing early efforts.

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### Wanna be on the Radio?

By Deborah Wolfe

Just a reminder that I'm always looking for guests for my radio show, which is now made live every Thursday from 1 to 2 PM pacific time. If you have a book, issue or message you would like me to hear about please email me privately at [debwolfe@telus.net](mailto:debwolfe@telus.net).

I'm also always searching for cute little animal related (family friendly) filler such as jokes, recipes, riddles, quirky facts, quotations, etc. and will give the writer's association and the sender a radio plug when their contribution is used. It will be published in a magazine and then posted on my website. When that happens I'll let you all know. So far I've had some great suggestions.

One surprise is the vinegar battle. I have equal numbers of people emailing me from both lists in favor and against vinegar as a pet mess cleaning solution. What is your opinion? Got any home made wonders for your pets? Onion for bee stings? Lemon for mosquitos?

## DWAA CONTACTS



### 2007 OFFICERS and BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President—Chris Walkowicz, 1396 265th St, Sherrard, IL 61281-8533—309.754.8723—[walkoway.dogbooks@mchsi.com](mailto:walkoway.dogbooks@mchsi.com)

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Newsletter Editor/Goddess—Phyllis DeGioia, 4226 Beverly Road, Madison, WI 53711-3713, 608.271.1763, [woofingdog@tds.net](mailto:woofingdog@tds.net)

Please send all material for the newsletter to the Newsletter Editor

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Web Site: <http://www.DWAA.org>

Kim Townsend, [kimtowntsend@hughes.net](mailto:kimtowntsend@hughes.net)

## Contest News

By Sue Jeffries, Contest Chair, [Jeffo95@aol.com](mailto:Jeffo95@aol.com)

I'm happy to report that all regular entries are now in the hands of the judges, and score sheets are due back to me by December 10th. We ended up with 796 entries in 42 categories. All I can say is, it was a monumental task, made slower by some things out of my control and other things I could have handled better. Thank goodness for e-mail! I corresponded with a whole lot of entrants either to clarify what their intentions were, to make sure their entries were in the correct categories, to ask for more copies and/or money, or to handle any one of a million (it seemed) discrepancies. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with heartfelt thanks.

I had to do the chair's usual duties of hauling heavy boxes, opening strongly taped packages, unstapling a bunch of stuff, making extra copies of entry forms (for special awards), removing pages from magazines, cutting down newspaper articles, taping a few entries to regular pages of paper, and other frustrating time wasters. Along the way, I collected some neat paperclips which I'll bring to New York.

I also paid very careful attention to the content of each entry to make sure each piece receives the best possible chance. Sometimes, this meant moving magazines and articles around so the judges would be comparing apples to apples, oranges to oranges, and yes, bananas to bananas. I tried to notify each entrant if a change was necessary, so there shouldn't be any surprises.

The biggest challenge came with the categories we had set up for books. While we started out with what seemed to be adequate categories, the changes in the book-publishing industry and the nature of what writers are doing now presented some insurmountable disparities. To be fair to all the writers and publishers, I added a non-fiction category and a separate category for all the single and mixed breed pet guides, whether they're soft or hard-bound. Then it became apparent that we needed an anthology category, and finally, I opened one last category called "dog wisdom." So we now have 11 book categories, as follows: #32, single breed; #33, general interest and reference; #34, care and health; #35, training and behavior; #36, fiction; #37, children's; #38, soft cover guides; #39, non-fiction; #40, single or mixed breed pet guides; #41, anthologies, and #42, dog wisdom.

I plan to notify the nominees by Dec. 15th, probably via e-mail. We'll have only three nominees per category unless there is absolutely no way a fourth can be left out, but this still adds up to about 130 nominees. After that, we'll get the postings to the website and in the January issue of the newsletter. A word of caution to the nominees and all others who are planning to attend the banquet: GET YOUR RESERVATIONS IN EARLY! Dinner is only \$25 per plate (thanks to Pat Santi's expert money-raising talents), and reservations will sell out quickly.

We're planning an extra special presentation at this year's banquet. For the first time, every nominated entry will be displayed. Receiving a nomination is a huge honor. This will not only highlight the significance of each nomination, it will give everybody at the banquet a good, close-up look at the actual features, photos, artwork, poetry, humor, magazines, newsletters, and books that are being honored. We expect a lot of "oohs" and "aahs."

Remember, even though the nominated entries will be displayed, there will be no early announcements of winners, either in the regular categories or for special awards! Even the special award sponsors will be in the dark until the night of the banquet. So come to New York if you receive a nomination, and be prepared to win!

# Advertise in the DWAA Banquet Program

DWAA BANQUET PROGRAM FOR FEB. 10, 2008

## AD SPACE RESERVATIONS & CONTRACT

Contract and Ad must be in no Later than January 15, 2008

\_\_\_\_\_ FULL PAGE 6.5" X 9" (IMAGE SIZE , NO BLEED) \$60.00

\_\_\_\_\_ HALF PAGE 6.5" X 4.25" \$45.00

\_\_\_\_\_ QUARTER PAGE 3.25" X 4.5" \$25.00

IF DWAA BUILDS YOUR AD PLEASE AD \$15.00 PER AD

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL ( MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO DWAA)

AD MATERIAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:  
E-MAIL YOUR AD IN .PDF, .TIF, .JPEG, OR .PSD, TO  
KIMTOWNSEND@HUGHES.NET

300 DPI RESOLUTION WORKS THE BEST.

ANY QUESTIONS CALL: PAT SANTI : 610-384-2436  
OR KIM TOWNSEND : 573-762-3563

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We can scan photos or logos and build your ad for you. Please include art, photos and copy with your ad order form. Please note additional charge if DWAA builds your ad.

# Menu For DWAA Banquet

February 10, 2008

Affinia Manhattan Hotel \* 371 Seventh Avenue \* New York, NY 10001

Mesclun Greens Salad, Maytag Blue Cheese, Grape Tomatoes, Frisel Onions, Lemongrass Vinaigrette

Entrée Selection (Choose One)

- 1) Roast Tenderloin of Beef, Five Mushroom Sauce Lobster Mashed Potatoes, French Green Beans
- 2) Gruyere Crusted Chicken Wild Rice and Orzo, Julienne Carrots, and Snap Peas
- 3) Grilled Vegetable Napoleon, Shaved Asiago Wild Rice, Toasted Riso Black Currants

Served with Warm Rolls and Creamy Butter, Freshly Brewed Starbucks Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Tazo Tea, Topped off with Affinia Manhattan Cheesecake

## DWAA Banquet Reservation

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Price per Person \$25.00

# of: \_\_\_\_\_ Roast Tenderloin of Beef

# of: \_\_\_\_\_ Gruyere Crusted Chicken

# of: \_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Vegetable Napoleon      **Total Meals** \_\_\_\_\_ **Amount** \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to DWAA and Send to: Pat Santi \* 173 Union Road \* Coatesville, PA 19320-1326

Phone: 610-384-2436 \* Fax: 610-384-2471 E-Mail: Rhydownen@Aol.Com

If you have a special diet or allergies please notify Pat so we can work something out for you.

### DWAA is Invited to the The Hartz Mountain Corporation's Free Buffet Breakfast

Have breakfast with friends in the Madison Room of the Affinia Manhattan Hotel with the Hartz Mountain Corporation. They are honoring and giving awards to veterinarians, including a beautiful full buffet breakfast, and they have invited us to attend. The banquet is February 10, 2008 -- 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

DWAA BOARD MEETING WILL BE AT 10 AM AFTER THE BUFFET.



### Calling All DWAA Members to the AKC Hospitality Room during the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show

*February 11 & 12, 2008, at the Affinia Manhattan \* 371 Seventh Avenue \* NY, NY 10001*

The AKC Communications Team invites dog writers and members of the press to take advantage of AKC Hospitality in the Empire Room, on the Mezzanine level above the Affinia lobby. The Affinia Hotel is located across the street from Madison Square Garden.

AKC Hospitality will be open all day Monday and Tuesday for you to conduct interviews, network, meet AKC staffers, grab a bite to eat or just put your feet up and relax. A continental breakfast will be provided in the morning with light snacks and beverages, including Starbucks coffee, available throughout the day.

More details, including information on AKC-sponsored media opportunities to be held in the Empire Room, will follow in the next newsletter.

# Golden Retriever Symposium

by Toni and Ed Eames

We couldn't refuse; it was just too exciting! An all expense paid trip to Chicago to speak to 150 Golden Retriever breeders from all over the world. Royal Canin, sponsor of the event, would be purchasing copies of our book, Partners in Independence, to give to all attendees. What a deal!

Our Golden Retriever guide dogs, Keebler and Latrell, were almost as excited as we. They strode into the lobby of the Fairmont Hotel with heads held high and loved our spacious room in this deluxe hostelry. The reception on Wednesday, October 10, 2007 provided an opportunity to meet people from Japan, Hong Kong, Holland, France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

For the next two days we were immersed in Golden Retriever lore. Participants learned a great deal about the history of the breed and its working characteristics. Leading experts presented research on medical issues ranging from cancer to osteoarthritis to dermatological and dental problems. Royal Canin veterinary staff then presented information about their recently launched Golden Retriever dog food designed to address these health issues.

On the less scientific front, speakers described the various facets of the breed in conformation, field, search and rescue, obedience and therapy work.

Our presentation focused on the Golden as working guide, hearing and service dog. With almost 60 years of Golden Retriever guide dog partnerships between us, we reminisced about the unique characteristics of our previous dogs. Toni talked about Charm, the pioneering guide dog who obtained an AKC novice CD obedience title, Flicka who bound Toni to the veterinary profession when diagnosed with lymphosarcoma, and Ivy who became the first guide dog to obtain the AKC CDX intermediate obedience title. Ivy was also honored as Guide Dog of the Year by the Delta Society. Ed shared his feelings of highs and lows as his guide Kirby was diagnosed with bone cancer, went through a left front leg amputation and was rehabilitated as the first three-legged guide dog in history.

We ended by showing our Maxwell award-winning video, Partners in Independence. The audience must have shared the DWAA judges' opinion since they offered a thunderous round of applause at the completion of the film!

Several attendees told us they donated puppies and stud services to a number of assistance dog training programs. Hopefully, our educational message encouraged many more to become an active part of the assistance dog community. Thank you, Royal Canin for underwriting this outstanding symposium and offering us the chance to spread the word about the multiplicity of capabilities of our breed of choice!

*Editor's note: Ed and Toni Eames received the Ned E. Freeman award from the American Council of the Blind for their article, "The Recruitment and Retention of Committed Volunteers." This award came with a plaque in both braille and print and a cash prize.*

## Email List Woes

When DWAA switched servers earlier this year, we were finally able to set up our own group discussion list that ran off of our new server. To our joy, and dismay, we quickly outgrew our server's free program for daily emails amongst our members and have continued to encounter email overload on our server for the last month.

We know how important the daily interactions are amongst our members, so DWAA has purchased a professional discussion list program that will give us incredible functionality well above anything we have used in the past. The program will be installed before the first of the year, but we desperately need a volunteer that can be actively involved in list management. Given our past problems, we have opted for the package that gives us free tech support. You only need a general knowledge of how email lists, but will need to be active on the list so you can contact tech support should a problem arise. If you are interested, please contact Amy Fernandez at [flappy666@aol.com](mailto:flappy666@aol.com)



## Promote Yourself

By Tammy Hayes, Alpine Publications

The holidays are here, so now is a great time to get the word out about your books! Sometimes the best way to publicize your book is by little actions that you can take individually, rather than attempting to go through the usual channels of bookstore chains and distributors. These do not necessarily require a lot of time, but do require planning and forethought. Some are just out right simple, but could reap decent rewards. They may also hit on customer bases that may not have been tapped before. Focus on local possibilities; your local town, community, region. Cover newsletters, magazines, newspapers, horse/dog magazines in your area! Become an expert in your field in your geographic area!

A few important questions to keep in mind as you read the tips below are:

1. What is the Number 1 thing that makes this book worthwhile?
2. Why does your audience need to read this particular book?
3. Who desperately needs this book?

### Promotional Tips:

- Leave a copy of your book in public places, especially doctor's offices; veterinarian's offices; automobile service waiting rooms; places where people won't be as likely to take them home, but where many will see them and possibly order a copy.
- Tell everyone that your book is available at all quality bookstores, even if right now it's not. Create a need for it, so when people start asking for it, the stores will have to take note.
- Place advertisements or publicity pieces in your local media (newspapers, newsletters, horse or dog

publications, etc.); tell the audience that they are available at all good booksellers. Again, create awareness and a demand.

- Write articles that creates awareness of the need for your book. For example, for Marty Whittle and Nicole Cuomo's *Yoga on Horseback*, they could write about how yoga benefits the rider in all disciplines. Pam Dennison could write about the number of dogs that are given to humane organizations because of aggressive or fearful problems, or the intense emotional trauma that comes from living with an aggressive dog. Jennifer Coates (*Dictionary of Veterinary Terms*) could write about the need for vet techs and receptionists/assistants to be properly trained and supplied with adequate references so they can efficiently assist clients. Judith Pilgrim (*Shipped Semen 101*) could write about the number of misses that occur each season from improperly shipped or checked semen and the cost to the horse breeding industry. Since many doctors, nurses, and therapists are not aware of the rich rewards their patients may reap from interaction with a service dog, Marcie Davis could write articles for placement in newsletters at hospitals, universities, and colleges, clubs such as the Lions Club, any place where she could teach them about the great benefits that a service dog has to offer. Yes, you can mention the book, at the end, but the most important thing is to create a need!

- Join internet community boards/forums and become one of the recognized authorities on your subject, such as:

<http://www.dogster.com/forums/home.php>

<http://forums.petfinder.com/>

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

(These are just examples. Type in forums, dog training forums, etc. There's sure to be a forum in your particular field of expertise, so be sure to check that as well as the general forums. There's a ton out there!)

### Obituary: Mel Downing

By Chris Walkowicz

In early November, the dog world lost an icon to the judging community. Melbourne T.L. Downing Sr., a retired lawyer and businessman who was also a longtime American Kennel Club judge, died at the age of 94. Mr. Downing earned a law degree from the University of Baltimore Law School in 1943 and practiced estate law until retiring in 2000. He also continued to serve as president of Frank Downing Inc. until retiring in 2005.

With his parents, Mr. Downing



Melbourne Downing Sr. with  
CH Manora's Windrush Joy, JH  
(Manora Labradors 1990)

owned and operated Holly Lodge Kennels in Essex, where they bred German shepherds, Pekingese and pugs. At an early age, he began showing some of their dogs at shows in the area. Like his father, he became an AKC all-breed judge. He judged his first show in 1938 and traveled throughout the nation and Canada, as well as Sweden, Bermuda, Denmark, Australia and South America, judging shows. He was named Cycle Dog Food's Dogdom's Man of the Year in 1995 and received the AKC Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002. He was a former president of the Baltimore County and Catonsville kennel clubs.