



DECEMBER 2008

*This Month:*  
Special Awards Nominees  
DWAA Voting Results  
Special Activities



# Ruff Drafts: The Voice of DWAA™

DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.  
FOUNDED 1935



*An image from the Ruff Draft editor's past. My earliest memories include showing and sledding our family's Siberian Huskies. In this image, I'm seated at front (age 8), with my brother Keith (age 6), and my mother, Roberta Davies, at the runners. Taken at a Northern Breed Club event in Mahopac, NY, on January 26, 1975. Matthew Schenker.*

# President's Message

This month I thought I would review what has taken place since August when I became president. Some areas needing attention involved the bylaws, certain policies and procedures and the financial health of the club.

1. The Bylaws (Chair Ida Estep ) were last updated in 2004. Several members suggested that we look at better ways to structure them and look at the issue of governance. Many suggestions have been received and the by laws committee will be ready with their first report on or about February. Once the report is received and reviewed by the board it will be prepared for mailing to the membership for a vote. I hope the entire process and the new bylaws will be in place by the end of 2009.

2. Some of our policies needed attention. Members have asked about our policy and procedures, which are on the DWAA website. I hope to better identify them with a button on the home page. Secretary Pat Santi has done a good job keeping them up to date. Now we need the webmaster to work on placing a new button on the DWAA website so they can be easily accessible.

3. Election Process. I have been working to smooth out some of the procedures. For example, the timely submission of bios needed from the candidates running for office, the lock box, counting of the ballots and the guidelines used by the editor (Matthew Schenker) of the DWAA newsletter for publishing them.

4. Financial health of the Club. The club continues to be solvent thanks to the efforts of those who help with fund raising. Our largest expense is the annual banquet and writing contest. The primary source of income for the DWAA is our dues, which have not changed since 1999. DWAA has three kinds of membership: full membership, those with voting rights; and associate and junior membership, which do not have voting rights. Most of our 564 members are full members.

Our reserves (money needed for rainy days) is low for an organization our size. Our treasurer (Rue Chagoll) has done a great job managing our expenses but I think we may need to consider a dues increase or find alternative sources of income. As everyone knows, these are financially hard times in America. Raising dues is never popular, but the costs of doing business increase each year. Rue is studying this matter, and will have some recommendations very soon. Perhaps by the annual meeting.

Other areas of the club are doing well thanks to our committees, who all work hard. For example, the Hall of Fame Committee (chair, Ranny Green) has submitted their report and the inductees will be recognized at the annual meeting in February.

The writing contest committee (chair, Liz Palika) has received many manuscripts and the reviewers have completed their work. The winners will be announced at the annual meeting in February 2009.

Pat Santi has made plans for the February board meeting, annual meeting and annual banquet at the Affinia Hotel, which is across the street from Madison Square Garden.

AKC will host an open house at their headquarters (260 Madison Avenue) on Sunday February 8, 2009 from 12:00 to 4:00 PM. Everyone is welcome. The AKC is also providing storage space for materials received from vendors at our banquet.

Finally, I am pleased to report that we will be adding a new link to our website. Dog Wise publishers has agreed to give us a small royalty for each book purchased through our site. More about this opportunity at the annual meeting and awards banquet next month.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carmen L. Battaglia  
President DWAA

## DWAA Officers

### President

Dr. Carmen L. Battaglia, GA, cbattaglia@mindspring.com

### Vice President

Susan Ewing, NY, dogwriter@windstream.net

### Secretary

Pat Santi, PA, rhydown@aol.com

### Treasurer

Rue Chagoll, NY, rchagoll@capital.net

### Annual Banquet

Pat Santi, PA, rhydown@aol.com

Committee Members:

Charlotte Reed, Deb Eldredge

### Annual Awards Contest

Liz Palika, CA, lizpalika@gmail.com

### Publicity

Charlotte Reed, NY, char@charlottereed.com

### Junior Scholarship

Lee-Ann Germinder, NJ, lgerminder@germinder.com

### DWAA / Cat Writers Liaison

Marion Lane, NY, marion@aspc.org

### Newsletter

Matthew Schenker, MA, mschenker@comcast.net

### Web Master / Graphic Designer

Paul Casto, NY, paul@paulcasto.com

### Chat List

Dr. Stephanie Smith, TX, lambkennels1@juno.com

## Committee – Chair and Members

### By-laws

Ida Estep, NC, iwestep@earthlink.net

Committee Members:

Rue Chagoll, Deb Eldredge, Patricia Cruz, Pat Santi

### Hall of Fame

Ranny Green, WA, rannygreen@hotmail.com

Committee Members:

Patricia Cruz, Ida Estep

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# Secretary's Page

Wishing everyone a very Happy and Healthy Holiday and may you be safe if you are driving to family or friends.

Please remember that it is important to vote and return your votes before December 31, 2008 to the P. O. Box listed on the envelope you were sent. The ballot contains a great group of talented people and your voice should be heard.

The Board has also voted on the following procedures for an election.

## **DWAA ELECTION PROCEDURES November 2008**

The election policies of the DWAA for biographies to be printed in the DWAA newsletter are as follows:

Once the deadline for petitions occurs the Secretary will contact all eligible candidates running for office and advise them of the deadline date for submission of their biography. The Newsletter editor will publish the bios sent him from the club secretary.

ASAP after the deadline for petitions has passed the Secretary will notify the candidates to submit a self prepared biography. These biographies will be strictly limited to 250 words, but may be in any format chosen by the candidate, e.g. prose, bullet points, outline, résumé, etc. Candidates may include any personal, business, or sport information they believe would be relevant to their qualifications to be elected to the position for which they are running. So that all candidates are on an equal footing, the secretary will edit down any submission that exceed 250 words. Because of time constraints this will be done without the approval of the candidate. This will be done without changing or removing anything significant. It is best if the candidates stay within the 250 word limit themselves. Receiving biographies earlier than the deadline date rather than later will be a tremendous help in getting them ready for the editor.

At the start of the regular annual meeting of the membership held in February of each year the tellers will be delivered the ballots unopened. They will begin to count the ballots at the beginning of the annual meeting and in the meantime the annual meeting will continue. When all the ballots have been counted, a written report will be delivered to the Secretary. The report will show the total ballots cast and the total votes for each candidate. The top vote getters will be declared elected.

Each candidate will have the opportunity to designate one observer (club member) to watch the counting of the ballots. Such an observer would be sequestered with the tellers until the results are announced so they will miss part of the meeting. The tellers will all be DWAA members, and there will one DWAA board member appointed by the President to over see the counting of the ballots.

If anyone has any question on the election or the procedures, the publishing of bios in the DWAA newsletter should feel free to contact the President or the Secretary.

*The above measure was voted on by the DWAA board. It passed with a vote of 8 "yes" and 3 "no."*

## **Guidelines of DWAA Newsletter Content November 2008**

The purpose of the DWAA Newsletter is to inform the memberships about activities, program and policies of the DWAA. It serves as a forum to assist and provide useful information.

The editor will be guided by this general guideline and the caution that material submitted for publication that criticizes the DWAA, its board, officers or members will not be considered news worthy.

The Newsletter editor will attempt to provide a balance of timely information and materials that has interest to as wide an audience of members as is possible.

A section will be reserved for special announcements of interest. i.e. Seminars and event dates, place and contact information. These announcements should be limited to no more than 3 lines.

When controversy arises and the board or editor believes that subject matter, cost or other important matters need a higher level of attention the concerned party will forward the matter to the Secretary, who will send it to the President for resolution. When necessary it will be sent to the Board for a vote.

*The above measure was voted on by the DWAA board. It passed with a vote of 7 "yes" and 4 "no."*

## **Didn't Receive a Ballot?**

It has come to my attention that some people are not sure why they did not get a ballot. If you are an Associate Member or Junior Member you do not have voting privileges. If your dues are not paid for the year when a ballot is mailed you do not receive a ballot.

## Secretary's Page (continued...)

In 2007 the Board voted, and it passed that the Secretary shall no longer put a list of people in the newsletter who have not paid their dues. (Secretary note: I used to have a list of people to please get in touch with me and many members did not want to see their name listed. Now I e-mail people after the third notice is placed in the newsletter.)

Bylaws Article 1 Section 6:

"Reinstatement of Membership: With the Approval of the Board, a member whose membership has been terminated for nonpayment of dues may reinstate his membership by paying for the current year. After one year of termination, a new application must be submitted".

Dues notices are going out again in January and are due March 1, 2009. Those whose dues are not paid this year will be dropped on March 1st. When dues are collected in November and December we apply that to the following year's dues. So if you are not paid now and you pay this month we apply that to your 2009 dues.

We are more than tolerant of the economy and lack of work, but we need to keep our dues up as they are the major source of income to the DWAA.

If you have questions concerning your status please contact me and I will be more than happy to help.

### DWAA Chat List is Open to All Members!

If you have problems joining the list e-mail Stephanie Smith (list Administrator): [lbmdakennels1@juno.com](mailto:lbmdakennels1@juno.com).

Your smiling Secretary,  
Pat Santi

### Roster Updates

<b>Andrew DePrisco</b> 714 Fernmere Ave. Interlaken, NJ 07712-4347	<b>Sarah Hoggan, DVM</b> 2589 Holly Valley Dr. Vista, CA 92084-2222	<b>Barbara McNinch</b> 113 Lightwood Knot Road Rocky Point, NC 28457-9212	<b>Mordecai Siegal</b> % Supinski 530 E. 20th St. Apt 5G New York, NY 10009-1323
<b>Dominique DeVito</b> 1900 State Rt. 66 Ghent, NY 12075-2508	<b>Tracie Hotchner</b> 334 Eaton road Bennington, VT 05201-9340	<b>Leonard Reed</b> 4607 Dorset Avenue Chevy Chase, MD 20815-5447	<b>Dorothy Walin</b> 12440 Warpath Lane # 10 Minocqua, WI 54540-0742
<b>Tanya Ditto</b> 2424 W. Bayshore Road Gulf Breeze, FL 32563-2524	<b>Patricia Daly Lipe</b> 1523 Rutledge Avenue Charlottesville, VA 22903-1417	<b>Jill Richardson, DVM</b> 34 Winding Way Andover, NJ 07821-4035	
<b>Claire Dunavan, MD</b> 455 Bellmore Way Pasadena, CA 91103-3203	<b>Katie Marsico</b> 425 E. Atwater Avenue Elmhurst, IL 60125	<b>Lynn Roberts</b> 1212 Huntsville Hill Dr. Huntsville, AL 35802-2740	

### Dues Notice

Remember...pay your dues by March 1st each year. DWAA Membership is just \$40 per year, allowing you to network with fellow dog writers, receive *Ruff Drafts* newsletters, and join DWAA's discussion forum and chat list. Members also get a discounted rate at the annual banquet and awards ceremony. Fill out this form to complete your membership:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work or cell \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization or Freelance \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Year joined (if available) \_\_\_\_\_

Professional \_\_\_\_\_ Associate \_\_\_\_\_

Choose "Professional" if you are paid for writing; "Associate" if you are not paid. Check your the roster to see if it is necessary to update your status.

If your dues were not paid for this past year and you are still getting a newsletter this may be your last issue unless you dues are paid. Make checks out to DWAA, and send to:

Pat Santi, Secretary

173 Union Road

Coatesville, PA 19320-1326

Phone: 610-384-2436 Fax: 610-384-2471 e-mail: [rhydowen@aol.com](mailto:rhydowen@aol.com)



# The First Business of Pet Writing Conference

Dog aficionados around the world know that February in New York City is synonymous with the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. On Saturday, February 7th, writing enthusiasts who write about pets will gather at The Business of Pet Writing Conference at the Radisson Martinique and rub elbows with the best in the publishing and pet industries.



Pet books, magazines, scripts and columns are multiplying like fleas. According to the American Pet Products Association total pet expenditures expected to top \$43 billion in 2008 and pet books have been a significant part of those revenues. Americans are said to own 88.3 million dogs and books like *Marley and Me*, now a movie, have become NY Times bestsellers and remained on the list for months. With the newer book, *Dewey*, cat owners and their 74.8 million pets can boast their own Times bestseller, also slated to become a movie.

"More than ever, pet writers need to hone their skills," said Charlotte Reed, pet expert and proprietor of The Pet Socialite, Inc. "The downturn in the economy coupled with the stiff literary competition out there gives all the more reason for writers to attend The Business of Pet Writing Conference where they can learn from the best in the business and make valuable contacts"

Many respected publishing professionals will be in attendance. They include Dick Donahue, senior editor at Publishers Weekly, will kick off the day with a keynote speech: *Pet Book Selling and Publishing*. Paul Aiken, Executive Director of the Author's Guild will talk on the subject, *Negotiations and Book Contracts*.

As for the important issues of image facing pet writers and writing, Rick Frishman, Founder of Planned Television Arts, and Amy Greeman of Storey Publishing will talk about: *Handling Book Publicity*.

Susan Canavan, senior editor at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt will speak about *Tips for Having A Successful Relationship with an Editor* while Maura Teitelbaum, of Abrams Artist Agency will present *How to Find the Right Literary Agent*. Beth Adelman, president of Adelman Editorial Services will share her expertise on *Writing Better Book Proposals*.

A research panel of pet industry organizations will address trends in animal health, business and product manufacturing. Representatives from the American Animal Hospital Association, American Kennel Club, American Pet Products Association, American Veterinary Medical Association, Animal Health Institute, Automobile Association of America, National Animal Supplement Council, Pet Food Institute, and the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council are participating.

In addition, the esteemed group of conference sponsors include: American Kennel Club Publications; Castor & Pollux; Comfort Zone; Dyson; Halo, Purely for Pets; and The Metropolitan Dog Club.

The day has been organized by the following schedule:

8:00-8:25 Breakfast and Check-in

8:30-9:00 Keynote: Pet Book Selling Publishing Trends

9:10-10:00 Writing Better Book Proposal

10:10-11:00 How to Find the Right Literary Agent for You and Your Book

11:10-12:00 How to Make the Most of Your Relationship with Your Editor

12:00-1:00 Lunch sponsored by the Radisson Martinique

1:00-1:30 Introduction to the 133rd Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show

1:30-2:30 Book Contract Negotiations

2:40-3:30 Handling Book Publicity

3:30-4:45 Research Panel Discussion

Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged. For more information, contact: The Pet Socialite, Inc. PO Box 398, New York, NY 10012. Email: [info@petwritingconference.com](mailto:info@petwritingconference.com). Phone: 212-631-3648. Fax: 888-492-3452.

## Winners of the 2008 StarPet Benefit Contest

Bash Dibra partnered with Bideawee for the national online *StarPet* contest. On November 10th the 2008 StarPet Dog and 2008 StarPet Cat were crowned. Photos/videos were submitted, votes tallied, and 6 semi-finalists picked. They all came to NY for a big star-studded luncheon hosted by Montel Williams and honorary chair Eileen Fulton at the Edison Room. Tension was building. Who would be the 2008 StarPet Dog and who would be the 2008 StarPet Cat?



After watching 3 dog and 3 cat semi-finalists do their "Tricks," judges, led by Bash Dibra, along with *celebrities* Michael Musto, Amanda Setton, Michelle Herd, Pauline Porizkova, Mike Jerrick, Roberta Flack, and Jenna Morasca, picked the grand prize winners – StarPet Dog *Splash* and StarPet Cat *Milo*.

The StarPet 2008 Awards benefit Bideawee and NYSave. It was emceed by Montel Williams and chaired by soap opera diva Eileen Fulton, with a special StarPet performance by Broadway star Sami Gayle, from GYPSY, highlighting the event. To read more about it, go to [www.starpet2008.com](http://www.starpet2008.com).

# 2008 DWAA Writing Contest Special Awards Nominees

## **AKC Club Publication Excellence Award**

Eligible: All AKC-affiliated club publications

Criteria: Best national, regional or local club publication

Award: \$500.00

Terry Cardillino, The Courier

Carolyn Heaton, The Havanese Hotline

Cindy Read, The Corgi Cryer

## **AKC - Responsible Dog Ownership Public Service Award**

Eligible: Regularly-published newspaper and/or magazine columns

Criteria: Consistently uses public platform to educate pet owners about responsible dog ownership. Submission to be a portfolio of columns published 9/1/06-9/30/07 (at least one must be regular entry).

Award: \$1,000.00

Joanne Anderson

Jon Klingborg

Amy Shojai

## **AKC - Canine Health Foundation Research Communication Award**

Eligible: All media

Criteria: Best informs the public about canine health research, to be judged for clarity and interpretation of complex science and its terminology, making research principles and products understandable and immediately accessible to dog owners and breeders.

Award: \$1,000.00

Sally Deneen, "New Breakthroughs to Treat Melanoma" Your Dog

Lori Mauger, "An Overview of the AKC Canine Health Conference"

Borderlines

Mathew Schenker, "Musher Medicine" Dog World

## **Dogfessions Personal Dog Memoir Award**

Eligible: Articles and series in all media

Criteria: Best article or series with a strong personal theme

Award: \$500.00

Jeannie Wagner, "Come Run With Me" Irish Setter Club of America Memo to Members

Teri Wilson, "Angel and Me" Spaniel Journal

Lori Whitwam, "Time to Tell the Story" Fermented Fur Blog

## **DWAA Junior Writer Award**

Eligible: Writers under 18 years of age

Criteria: To recognize and encourage young writers who exhibit talent, resourcefulness, dedication, and integrity in their writing about dogs and dog-related topics.

Award: \$250.00

Jocelyn Brody, "Lessons in Sportsmanship" Performance

Sighthound Journal

Kate Eldredge, "Balancing Act" The Corgi Cryer

Shannon Soafer, "Future Fancy" AKC Gazette

## **Eukanuba Canine Health Award**

Eligible: Articles and books

Criteria: Best promotes the health and well-being of dogs, based on accuracy, clear writing, and representation of a fresh view of canine health (i.e., nutrition, veterinary care, etc.)

Award: \$750.00

Patricia Johnson, "Beware the Label"

Rick Hayward, "Blastomycosis" Dogs in Canada

Betty Liddick, "A Shot at Life" AKC Gazette

M. Christine Zink, DVM PhD, "The Agility Advantage" Clear Run Productions

## **Merial Human-Animal Bond Award**

Eligible: All media

Criteria: Best highlights the special bond between people and their treasured pets, promoting the strengthening of this bond and highlighting the special relationship between a dog and its owner, as well as between dogs and veterinarians.

Award: \$500.00 + \$250.00 travel stipend if winner attends the awards banquet.

Dawn Kairns, "Maggie: The Dog Who Changed My Life"

Jenny Pavlovic, "8 State Hurricane Kate"

Barbara Gail Techel, "Frankie, the Walk'N Roll Dog"

## **Morris Animal Foundation Advances in Canine Veterinary Medicine Award**

Eligible: Newspaper articles or columns, excluding syndicated veterinarians' columns

Criteria: Best informs the public about cutting-edge advances in veterinary medicine for dogs, based on clarity, accuracy and topic originality.

Award: \$1,000.00

Mathew Schenker, "Healthy Integration" Dog World

Mathew Schenker, "Twisted Inside" AKC Gazette

Deb Wolfe, "A Healer Finds Healing" The Oregonian

## **North Shore Animal League America Award**

Eligible: All media

Criteria: "Best supports the missions of the League's program, encouraging spay/neuter initiatives as a way of reducing unwanted births and pet euthanasia rates; focus can be on community-wide programs or individual responsibility of pet owners."

Award: \$500.00

Joanne Anderson, "The Pit Bull Predicament" Amityville Record

Amy Shojai, "Sex and the Single Pet" Pet Peeves

## **Ottawa Kennel Club/Bob Cole Award for Educational Writing**

Eligible: Newspaper, magazine and club publication articles

Criteria: Offered for the article best illustrating either the fine points of a single breed or particular aspects of structure and movement in general, accurately informing and educating dog breeders and the public.

Award: \$350.00

Elaine Waldorf Gewirtz, "Chief of Staffs" AKC Gazette

Brytt Hasslinger, "Breeding to the Written Standard" The Courier

Stephanie Horan, "The Beauceron: Herd's the Word" Dog World

## **Pet Sitters International Humor Award**

Eligible: Articles

Criteria: Best humorous article

Award: \$350.00

Paul Glassner, 1040-DOG, Our Animals

Elizabeth Jarrell, "Whatever it Takes" The Canine Chronicle

Teri Wilson, "Chihuahuas are Better than Facelifts" Chihuahua Connection

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

Eligible: All media

Criteria: For the best story promoting and celebrating a program in which dogs serve and support their best friends, by highlighting service dogs, therapy dogs, K-9 search & rescue or police dogs.

Award: \$500.00 + \$350.00 travel stipend if winner attends the awards banquet

Paul Glassner, "High Fliers" Our Animals

Blaine Novak and Alison Landis Stone, "The ATF Canine Program" Healthy Pet

Rise Van Fleet, "Play Therapy with Kids and Canines" Professional Resource Press

## 2008 DWAA Writing Contest Special Awards Nominees (*continued...*)

### Westminster Kennel Club Angel On A Leash Award

Eligible: Newspaper or magazine articles, television news features, Internet features

Criteria: For the best story focusing on the impact of the use of therapy dogs in any of the following applications: health care facilities, schools, rehabilitation, hospice, extended care, correctional facilities, or crisis intervention. This award is in honor of Angel On A Leash, a therapy dog program in cities across the country.

Award: \$500.00 + \$350.00 travel stipend if winner attends the awards banquet.

Christine Rosenblatt, "The Smile Machine" Our Animals

Marty Van Duyne, "Stormy Will Shower Victims" Dahlgren Source

Marty Van Duyne, "ACO's Lead the Procession for Virginia Kincheloe" The Journal

### Wiley/Ellsworth S. Howell Award

Eligible: Articles

Criteria: Best writing on judging, exhibiting, dog-show reporting, or any other aspect of conformation showing.

Award: \$500.00

Chuck Bessant, "WKC 101"

Elaine Waldorf Gewirtz, "Worlds to Conquer" AKC Gazette

Sharon Sakson, "Questions of Color" Dog World

### WCFO Excellence in Canine Freestyle Media Award

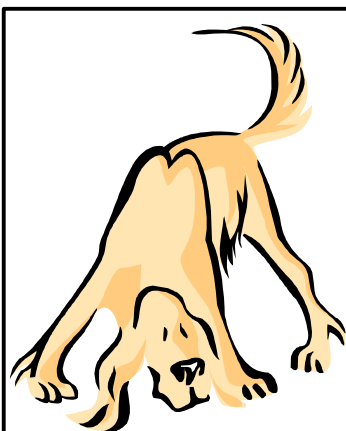
Eligible: All media

Criteria: Best work on the sport of canine freestyle

Award: \$150.00

Sarah Ferrell, "Spring Up and Dance!"

Kim Campbell Thornton, "Dancing with the Dog Stars"



### "Newshound" Hospitality Suite at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show

Please join the American Kennel Club Communications Department during the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show for the "Newshound" Hospitality Suite at the Affinia Manhattan Hotel. All members of the media covering the festivities are invited to come and relax, grab a snack, work on a story, conduct an interview, meet AKC Staffers or chat with fellow professionals. A continental breakfast and coffee as well as afternoon snacks and refreshments will be available. FREE WI-FI access will also be provided.



# AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®

**WHO:** AKC Communications Department

**WHAT:** Invites the media to the "Newshound" Hospitality Suite

**WHERE:** Affinia Manhattan Hotel, 371 Seventh Avenue, across from Madison Square Garden

**WHEN:** Monday, Feb. 9 and Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009 from 8 am to 5 pm.

**HOW:** If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Smith at 212-696-8228 or [sxs2@akc.org](mailto:sxs2@akc.org). RSVP to order Wi-Fi access by January 26, 2009.

### A TRULY SPECIAL DOG

In dog show parlance, a dog is called a "special" when he is a champion who is also good enough to continue showing, winning Best of Breed and even placing in the group he belongs to. But some of these dogs are special in even more ways.

On the weekend, Beep, CH Chiron's Coyote Dreams UDT OA NAJ HIAs was a top show Belgian Tervuren. He would compete in conformation, obedience, agility or herding. But on Wednesday mornings, Beep was special in another way.

I had received a call asking if I would do a visit with my certified therapy dogs to a class for special needs teenagers. The class had a wide range of students – a student who was blind, two students who were deaf, three students with Down's syndrome, three students with cerebral palsy, two students who were "crack babies" with endless motion and energy and various students with behavior problems. Quite a mix for one teacher and aide to deal with!

As soon as I walked in with Beep, everyone responded to us. The students were all eager to pet him but the teacher insisted they watch first while I explained about proper behavior approaching a dog and how to pet a dog. Beep then did an obedience demonstration. As soon as the OK was given, Beep was surrounded by teenagers eager to make contact with this wonderful dog. And Beep just took it all in. At the end of the class, the teacher told me that having Beep come in was the very first time every student was interested and involved in the activity. Could we possibly come on a regular basis?

So that was the start of Beep's other "specials" career. Each Wednesday for a year we went to "school." Beep was an extraordinary dog with plenty of confidence and biddability. He was perfectly willing to do utility hand signals for the students who were deaf, truck alongside wheelchairs in heel position, fetch toys for anyone and even walk nicely through the school with the students with Down's syndrome.

(story continued on back page...)

(...story continued from previous page)

We started doing many of our activities out in the main courtyard and I started bringing along one or both of our Pembroke Welsh Corgis as well as my champion Kuvasz. All of the dogs were willing to work for the students but Beep remained the star as he was clearly, as one boy put it, "the macho hot dog."

The group of dogs attracted a great deal of attention and suddenly the "special needs" students were stars themselves. They had the "cool dogs" with them and they could even control the dogs and make them perform. Other students began to stop and talk to them to find out about the dogs, ask to pet the dogs, etc.

Of course, there were minor upsets. One day, one of the boys with a behavior problem asked if he could walk Beep around the courtyard. I said of course, but to avoid the cafeteria as dogs should not be in the food prep or eating areas. Naturally, I look up a minute later to see the boy and Beep disappear into the cafeteria! By the time I got there, the cafeteria staff was oohing and aahing and Beep had eaten one whole bagel! After that I had to watch Beep as he would occasionally try to take the student walking him into the cafeteria again for another snack.

Yes, there are some dogs that truly are "specials."

Deb M. Eldredge, DVM

**Pat Santi  
173 Union Road  
Coatesville, PA 19320**