

Ruff Drafts: The Voice of DWAA™

DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.
FOUNDED 1935

May 2009



This Month:
Member Survey
Web Site Launch
Forum Update



2008 Westminster Best in Show winner, Uno, a three-year-old Beagle, howls to the fans, before the baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the St. Louis Cardinals at the 4th Annual Purina Pooches in the Ballpark event, Sunday, August 24, 2008, in St. Louis. Nearly 150 dogs and their owners cheered on the Cardinals from a special section of the Stadium. (AP Photo/Tom Gannam)

DWAA LEADERSHIP

DWAA Officers

President

Deb Eldredge, DVM

Vice President

Susan McCullough

Secretary

Liz Palika

Treasurer

Rue Chagoll

DWAA Board of Governors

Past President

Dr. Carmen Battaglia

Class of 2010

Elaine Gewirtz
Marion Lane

Class of 2011

Dr. Caroline Coile
Charlotte Reed

Class of 2012

Eve Adamson
Stephanie Smith, Ph.D.

Committee Chairs and Members

Annual Awards Contest

Terry Albert
Kim Thornton (special awards)

Annual Banquet

Marsha Pugh
Pat Santi

Archives

Pat Santi

By-laws

Susan McCullough

Chat List

Dr. Stephanie Smith

DWAA Benefits

Deb Eldredge, DVM
Susan McCullough

DWAA / Cat Writers Liaison

Marion Lane

Forum Administration

Pat Steer
Forum "Shepherds":
Chris Walkowicz, Diane Schuller

Green Connections

Nancy Boyd

Hall of Fame

Bardi McLennan
Committee Members:
Terry Albert, Linda Rehkopf

Juniors

Kate Eldredge

List Moderation

Stephanie Smith
Committee Members:
Chris Walkowicz, Kim Thornton

Member Advisory Board

Linda Rehkopf

Member Survey

Dr. Mary Burch

Membership

Elaine Gewirtz
Liz Palika

Newsletter / Web Editor

Matthew Schenker
Committee Members:
Cindy Read, Pat Steer

Publicity

Elaine Gewirtz
Committee Members:
Elizabeth Jarrell

Scholarship

Lea-Ann Germinder
Susan McCullough

Secretary's Page

Submitted by Liz Palika, DWAA Secretary

Unfortunately, we have quite a few people who have not renewed their memberships. If you have not yet renewed, your membership will be considered lapsed as of the first of June.

If you don't know whether you renewed or not, drop me an email and I'll check the database: lizpalika@gmail.com

If you forgot and want to renew, send \$40 to:

Liz Palika, DWAA Secretary
250 Flame Tree Place
Oceanside, CA 92057

Welcome Our New Board Members:

Marion Lane (Class of 2010)

Can be contacted at
marionl@earthlink.net

Stephanie Smith, PhD (Class of 2012)

Can be contacted at
lamdakenels1@juno.com

President's Message

Submitted by Deb Eldredge, DVM, DWAA President

Dear Fellow DWAA Members,

Things are coming along in our organization. Please take the time to fill out the survey so we can work to make DWAA even more meaningful and useful to you.

I would like to welcome our two new Board members – Stephanie Smith and Marion Lane. These talented members fill the spots vacated by two other talented members, Arlene Klein and long-time board member David Frei. DWAA is fortunate to have such a depth of membership quality that we can easily fill important positions. Many thanks to Arlene and David for their time served. We expect to continue our warm relationships with both Westminster and Morris Animal Foundation, represented by those two members.

The Hall of Fame Committee is hard at work, as are our Banquet Co-Chairs, Pat Santi and Marsha Pugh. The By Laws Committee has started their prodigious task. We are preparing for our audit. Web master Matthew Schenker is hard at work putting finishing touches on his new version of the website. Many other members are working quietly behind the scenes to make DWAA even better. The business of DWAA is moving along!

Sadly, the economy continues to be a problem for many of us. Magazines are cutting back columns and trying to stay in house for some of their articles. Some book publishing is being cut back as well, and it seems like there are daily notices of newspaper deaths. However, I firmly believe that people will continue to search for entertainment and knowledge through reading – whether that is online, in a book, or in a magazine. Our members provide a wealth of information and fun for so many dog lovers across the board. We will all survive but this makes networking even more important. I know many are uncomfortable with the forums, but check them out again. (See info elsewhere for help getting set up.) If nothing else you will enjoy the fun photos often posted by Jean Fogle and Diane Schuller. They often brighten my day.

Our family has enjoyed the addition of six puppies whelped by Kate's stunning Belgian Tervuren bitch. Half of the puppies have headed home already and the last three will meet their new families at our National Specialty in Rhode Island. Puppy antics have made us laugh and the interactions and behaviors shown have fascinated us. Of course, Kate wasn't so thrilled by the howling chorus last night as they had their first night in separate crates! The older dogs have enjoyed the puppies too and lost a few years themselves as they raced around, "leading the pack."

So when you need a pick-me-up, or just a break from work and worries, take your faithful canine companion and go for a walk, train a bit, or just sit on the couch together and enjoy a good book – preferably one written by a fellow DWAA member!

Call For Nominating Committee Members

We need members to volunteer for the DWAA nominating committee, which chooses potential board members who are then presented to the general membership for a vote. This year two board positions will be up for renewal or replacement. If you are interested in serving on the committee or running for the board, please contact me at debme15@hotmail.com

New DWAA Web Site on the Way

Submitted by Matthew Schenker, DWAA Newsletter/Web Editor

To All DWAA Members,

It's the same address, and yet it's completely different.

The new DWAA Web site is nearly ready for its debut. From the ground up, this is an entirely re-imagined space, a whole new way to present our organization. From the moment you enter, you'll notice a different look. But beyond looks, the site has several new functions to help you obtain more information in a friendlier, interactive way. With a constantly evolving, exciting format, the site is meant to reflect the depth of DWAA members and what's happening in the organization.

What You Can View

A lot of material in the site is open to all visitors, whether they are members or not. But the following materials are viewable only to DWAA members:

- ✓ Colorful editions of *Ruff Drafts*, current and past issues (work in progress)
- ✓ Easy-to-use, searchable member directory
- ✓ Access to our member surveys

As the site develops, there will be many more viewing options just for members, so keep watching!

What You Can Do

Don't just look—interact! As a DWAA member, you can submit many different kinds of material directly through the new site's easy-to-use, interactive forms:

- ✓ Stories and photos for *Ruff Drafts*
- ✓ Stories about you and your work, to be highlighted as front-page feature material
- ✓ Your Web links
- ✓ Breaking stories for the front-page "news" section
- ✓ Opinions about the Web site and the organization
- ✓ Updates and corrections to your member roster listing



When Does it Go Live?

The new site will be launched on June 1, 2009.

To explore it, just navigate to www.dwaa.org.

How Do I Sign Up?

To access members-only materials, you need an account. But don't worry, I'll take care of the technical details.

Just send me a note at mschenker@comcast.net.

Include your full name, as you want it to be shown on the site. I'll make sure you are all set to go as quickly as possible.

* * * *

Remember, there is always room for new ideas! I look forward to the official launch, and hearing what everyone would like to see in our new Web home.

DWAA Member Survey

To better understand what people need and want, the DWAA conducts periodic member surveys. Dr. Mary Burch, chair of DWAA's member survey committee, has designed our newest survey. Please complete the survey printed below by **July 10, 2009**, then mail it to this address:
Mary Burch • 2213 Napoleon Bonaparte Drive • Tallahassee, FL 32308

You can also take the survey online at this address: <http://tinyurl.com/dwaasurvey>

Your Background Info

1. How long have you been a member of DWAA?

- ☐ 1 year or less
☐ 2 to 5 years
☐ 5 to 10 years
☐ more than 10 years

2. In which part of the country do you live?

- ☐ NORTHEAST (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)
☐ SOUTHEAST (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)
☐ MIDWEST (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)
☐ SOUTHWEST (AZ, NM, OK, TX)
☐ WEST (CA, CO, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)

3. Please check the box that best describes your writing activities.

- ☐ I make my living writing.
☐ I write part-time. I am paid for my writing.
☐ Writing is my hobby; I write for dog clubs, etc. I am not paid.

Other (please specify):

4. So that we can determine the collective readership of our DWAA members, please check all boxes that apply to tell us where your writing has appeared:

- ☐ BOOKS
☐ NEWSPAPER-columns
☐ NEWSPAPER-single articles
☐ NON-DOG (GENERAL) MAGAZINES-columns
☐ NON-DOG (GENERAL) MAGAZINES-single articles
☐ DOG PUBLICATIONS- All-breed publications
☐ DOG PUBLICATIONS- Specialty (one breed) publication
☐ RADIO-ongoing show
☐ RADIO-single appearance
☐ TELEVISION-ongoing show
☐ TELEVISION-single appearances
☐ BLOG
☐ WEB PAGE

Other (please specify):

The DWAA Annual Writing Contest

5. Have you ever entered the DWAA writing contest?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

About how many years have you entered?

6. What do you think of the current contest categories?

- ☐ Categories are correct as they are. No changes needed.
☐ Too many categories.
☐ Need additional categories.

List categories you would add or delete here:

7. The DWAA Writing Contest Special Awards

- ☐ The Special Awards as they exist are fine. No changes needed.
☐ Too many Special Awards.
☐ Need additional Special Awards.

Which Special Awards should be added/deleted?

8. Announcing the DWAA Writing contest winners

- ☐ Keep the current procedure. Announce winners only at the banquet.
☐ Contact all of the winners of each category in advance.
☐ Contact only the Special Awards winners in advance.
☐ Do not contact winners, but tell winners who contact Contest Chair if they won.

Comments:

The DWAA Annual Banquet (held with Westminster in New York City)

9. When was the last time you attended the banquet?

- ☐ I have never attended the banquet.
☐ I am a regular and attend nearly every year or every year.
☐ I have attended the banquet 1 to 5 times total (estimate is fine).

Comments:

10. How much are you willing to pay for a banquet meal?

- ☐ \$25 or less
☐ \$25 to \$40
☐ \$40 to \$60
☐ \$60 to \$75

Comments:

11. Location, location, location. (the Banquet)

- ☐ Leave the banquet in NY with Westminster. Keep the current space for dinner.
☐ Leave the banquet in NY with Westminster- Find another location.
☐ Move the banquet to another time of year to a central location, perhaps combine with a writing conference
☐ Alternate years between east coast, west coast
☐ Alternate years/coasts-Change time of year (not in February)

Comments:

DWAA Member Survey, *continued from previous page*

12. "Banquet" Format

- ☐ Keep the sit-down dinner with the awards
- ☐ Change the format (e.g., have the Awards, then a party. No sit-down dinner)

Other Comments:

13. The Format for the DWAA Writing Awards at the annual banquet

- ☐ Keep the format as it is. Read the names of every finalist in every category.
- ☐ Shorten the awards ceremony. Read only the winner names; have the names of all finalists in a printed program on the table.
- ☐ Give out all awards at the annual meeting (instead of at the banquet).
- ☐ Give out only the Special Awards at the banquet and the rest at the annual meeting.

Other (please specify):

Your Use of the Internet

14. I have access to a computer with Internet access (e.g., can you get email, look at the DWAA web page?)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

15. Which DWAA web resources are you using now? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ None, I don't have access to a computer
- ☐ I receive DWAA emails
- ☐ FORUMS- I am using the Forums
- ☐ FORUMS- I am not really interested in using the Forums
- ☐ FORUMS- I am not using the Forums now, but I might in the future
- ☐ LISTS- I am on the lists (DWAA and/or WriteDog7)
- ☐ LISTS- I am not on the lists; I am not interested in joining
- ☐ LISTS- I am not on the lists; I might join in the future

Comments:

The DWAA Web Page (www.dwaa.org)

16. Please tell us about your use of the web page.

- ☐ I never or rarely use the web page.
- ☐ I regularly visit the DWAA web page.

Comments:

The DWAA Forums

17. Please tell us about your use of the forums.

- ☐ I never or rarely use the forums.
- ☐ I regularly visit the forums.
- ☐ I am not using the forums now but I might in the future.

Other (please specify):

18. Is there anything we can do to improve the Forums or help you with them?

- ☐ I don't use the forums.
- ☐ They are fine the way they are.
- ☐ I have a suggestion-see comments below.

Comments:

DWAA Newsletter

19. Please tell us how you would like to receive the newsletter.

- ☐ I would be fine with reading the newsletter online (no paper copy).
- ☐ PREFER TO RECEIVE VIA REGULAR MAIL-I am willing to pay up to \$5.00 to receive my newsletters in the mail.
- ☐ PREFER TO RECEIVE VIA REGULAR MAIL-I am willing to pay up to \$10.00 to receive my newsletters in the mail.
- ☐ PREFER TO RECEIVE VIA REGULAR MAIL-I am not willing to pay extra to receive the newsletter in the mail.

Other (please specify):

20. DWAA newsletter specifics. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ OVERALL- The newsletter is fine the way it is.
- ☐ OVERALL- The newsletter could benefit from some updates.
- ☐ APPEARANCE- Looks fine as it is now.
- ☐ APPEARANCE- Needs improvement (Comments can be added below).
- ☐ CONTENT- Fine as it is now.
- ☐ CONTENT- Add new columns/articles (suggestions in Comments below).
- ☐ CONTENT- Delete some sections (suggestions in Comments below).

Comments:

Membership in DWAA

21. I enjoy being a member of DWAA.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Comments:

22. I have felt that my input as a member has been valued in the past.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Comments:

23. I would recommend DWAA membership to a fellow writer.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Comments:

24. I believe the benefits DWAA can offer members are:

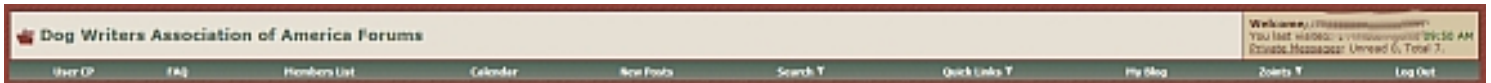
25. Are there any other services DWAA should offer? (member insurance, etc):

26. As a writer, I would like to learn more about:

27. Is there anything else we can do to help you as a DWAA member?

Forum Update

Submitted by Pat Steer, DWAA Forum Administrator



Welcome to Cheryl Smith, Debra Berdan Trace, Sherry Carpenter, Cynthia Gallagher, Tilly Grassa, David Fritsche and Darlene Koza, the newest members of the DWAA online Writers Community at the DWAA online forum: <http://www.dwaa.org/forum>

Current forum conversations include:

➤ **PR: Promoting Your Work & Yourself:**

- ✓ Effective use of social media (Twitter):
<http://www.dwaa.org/forum/showthread.php?t=1412>
- ✓ Blog tips and tools
- ✓ Using Skype to connect with readers
- ✓ Methods for photographing dogs

➤ Share your latest photo of the day in the **DWAA General Chat** forum:

<http://www.dwaa.org/forum/showthread.php?t=1437>

➤ Stay on top of breaking news and **Legislative Updates:**

<http://www.dwaa.org/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=32>

How to Get Involved

In order to participate in the writers' community, each member must visit the online forum page (<http://www.dwaa.org/forum>) and register. Create a forum ID (your real name) and password, using the email address you include in the membership roster. If online privacy is a concern, you're welcome to create a first initial(s)-plus-last-name forum ID. *But remember, your forum ID is what search engines will find and index.*

Benefits of Registration

Forum registration automatically boosts your visibility to people searching the Internet for a writer, artist, or editor with your expertise. Search engines sort through the DWAA forum daily, updating files that link forum user IDs to key words and subjects. Forum members have access to Zoints, which helps you create a personal web page and blog. Your Zoints personal page can serve as your main Internet presence, or you can link it to your other blog(s) and webpage(s). Either option places more information about you and your work into Internet search engine indexes. Like any community, you'll get out of the DWAA forum exactly what you put into it. And you have to be a registered member to fully enjoy the benefits.

Questions?

Please email me (gaelen2@yahoo.com) if you need help with registration, forum use, or have questions about the forum's profiles, blogs, and personal pages.

Our forum shepherds are also ready to help everyone navigate posts, replies, and general conversations. Here's how to contact them:

Chris Walkowicz (walkoway.dogbooks@mchsi.com)

Diane Schuller (dianeschuller@gmail.com)

Have you registered for the forum yet?

Opportunity for DWAA Members

Are you interested in being on a national radio broadcast?

Dr. Shawn Messonnier is welcoming pitches from DWAA members for his show "Dr. Shawn, The Natural Vet," which airs nationwide every Tuesday from 8:00 to 9:00 PM (EST), with repeat broadcasts on Sundays from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM (EST).

The show includes discussions about natural approaches to pet health, interviews with guests, and calls from listeners. It airs on Martha Stewart Living Radio, on Sirius channel 112, and on XM channel 157.

For more information about Dr. Shawn's show, tune in at the above times, or check out the show's Web site: <http://www.petcarenaturally.com/sirius-radio-show.php>

Interested members are encouraged to send copies of their books, background, or products, along with a brief pitch letter, to this address:

Dr. Shawn-The Natural Vet • 2145 W Park • Plano TX 75075

Go Digital!

Just a friendly reminder that *Ruff Drafts* is available in digital format, delivered to your e-mail in-box. To sign up, contact the newsletter editor: mschenker@comcast.net

Liz Palika
250 Flame Tree Place
Oceanside, CA 92057