



# THE WRITE DOG

**DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.**

Founded 1935

September 2006



*(photo courtesy of The HSUS)*

In the few weeks after the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina on August 29, take a moment and remember the displaced people and pets. So many pets were lost – some lost their lives, some lost their families. A handful of pets were reunited with their people, but most of them were separated forever. So let's concentrate on the positive: let's give thanks to the huge numbers of animal rescues that occurred thanks to determined people and the positive response by the public to adopt Katrina animals. And the most positive aspect of all is that the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act was thankfully passed by both the House and the Senate and President Bush is expected to sign it. Bill Number: S. 2548 & H.R. 3858 states: *The PETS Act requires local and state emergency preparedness authorities to include in their evacuation plans how they will accommodate household pets and service animals in case of a disaster. Local and state authorities must submit these plans in order to qualify for grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).*

## ***President's Column***

By Ranny Green

It's hard to believe a year has passed since Hurricane Katrina. By now you've probably read dozens of stories about pet and volunteer reunions and viewed countless television accounts, as well.

As the TV editor of The Seattle Times, I've previewed a number of Katrina documentaries, but I give the high-water mark to "Dark Water Rising: The Truth About Hurricane Katrina Animal Rescues," by Mike Shiley, of Portland, Ore.

This brisk, full-throttle presentation covers considerable emotional terrain, ranging from evocative grittiness to pure velvet, focusing chiefly on Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the more renegade, yet effective outfit code-named Winn-Dixie, since its headquarters were established in the parking lot of a heavily damaged W-D store.

While no one knows the exact numbers, Wayne Pacelle, HSUS president, estimates more than 50,000 dogs and cats were left behind in New Orleans in the aftermath of Katrina, some incredibly surviving as long as six weeks without food and water.

"Dark Water Rising" accompanies members of both groups as they break down doors, crack windows, pull themselves over fences to reach their emaciated and dehydrated targets. And be prepared for a few expletives, as well.

As we read about lawsuits today matching adoptive owners in different parts of the country against pets' former New Orleans caretakers, there's no mistaking that some of the pets were poorly treated pre-Katrina.

One volunteer remarks, "I've never seen so many unneutered dogs in my life." Also, many close-ups of pit bulls suggest they were used for fighting.

(I have a lasting visual impression of a small brindle-and-white pit bull I walked daily while volunteering with Noah's Wish in Slidell, La., last September. The 6-month-old's face was entirely pock-marked from bites, which the Slidell animal-control officer I accompanied on daily runs felt were from being used a "bait dog." By that, he meant, it was thrown into a training ring to determine the ferocity of older fighters. Despite the horror it must have experienced, it didn't reflect a glittering hard edge, instead a bubbly, warm-hearted demeanor.)

Compared to the more orderly focus of HSUS volunteers at the Lamar Dixon Pet Rescue headquarters in Gonzales, La., the Winn-Dixie group was a diverse range of salient, yet forceful players, some of whom had been turned down by HSUS. They stopped at nothing to extricate an animal from its locked-up house of horror.

Shiley's absorbing portrayal leaves an impression Winn-Dixie volunteers are battering rams compared to HSUS's nimble lambs. While both approaches of this emotional

balancing act work, the Winn-Dixie group is dealing with animals trapped for several weeks; HSUS conversely swept in within days after Katrina struck Aug. 29. You quickly learn, however, they have one common denominator: a shortage of personnel.

At one point, W-D volunteers enter the boarded-up store at night, rummaging for booze after a hard day's work. Earlier they paid a visit to the pharmacy.

As you follow them into one house after another, you'll see a trail of animal corpses, mostly victims of no water and starvation. One is even hanging from the top of a fence.

But nothing can really prepare you for the grisly sight of about 20 dogs shot to death on the third floor of an old school building, purportedly by a St. Bernard Sheriff's deputy. No one, however, has come forth to testify against the deputy, and you get the feeling no one will.

But Shiley's unvarnished portrayal has an upbeat side, too. When pets and owners are reunited, it brings a smile and occasional tear to your face, recognizing that the 16- and 18-hour days were not done in vain. And the touching scenes at the nearby Dixie Prison, showing inmates hugging Katrina rescues, capture the inherent therapeutic value of these four-legged waifs in a win-win scenario.

Another huge plus coming out of the aftermath was the passing in Congress of the Pets Evacuation and Standards Act, which will require local and state disaster plans to include provisions for household pets and service animals in the event of a major disaster or emergency.

For producer-director Shiley, the main objective for the documentary "was to portray the heroic efforts of the rescuers who came from a wide cross-section of the U.S., and conditions that the animals left behind had to endure to survive." "I wanted to tell the stories that the mainstream media missed," he says.

He is particularly proud the film was shown to every state-elected congressperson in the U.S., at the National Conference of State Legislatures, sponsored by the American Humane Association.

Shiley is scheduled to screen "Dark Waters Rising" in 12 cities.

He adds, "It is not about suffering or sadness or anger, as many might want to assume. It's about hope. Hope that when natural disasters strike and our government is unprepared, that Americans from all walks of life will step up to the plate and do the right thing."

From this reviewer's perspective, the only shortcoming is that it focuses on two organizations and is limited to New Orleans while many other cities like Slidell and along the Mississippi Gulf Coast suffered huge hits from Katrina, too. But that's a minor quibble.

The \$25 DVD (plus handling and shipping) can be purchased by visiting the Web site <http://darkwaterrising.com/>.

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### DWAA-Pro List

One of the benefits of DWAA is networking with colleagues, and a good way to do that on a regular basis is to join the DWAA-Pro Internet list. The volume isn't high, the information is applicable and the networking is of great use. To join our e-list for writing questions, advice and conversation, send a blank e-mail to [DWAA-Pro-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:DWAA-Pro-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

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### DWAA Writing Contest

The rules, categories, and entry form for this year's writing contest were included in July's issue. If you need to review that information but can't find your copy, go to [www.dwaa.org](http://www.dwaa.org) for the information. The work must be original (no revisions) and must be published during the competition period from September 1st, 2005 through August 31st, 2006. Entries must be postmarked by September 30th, 2006. Late entries will not be accepted. No exceptions.

Winners of special awards will be notified prior to the banquet so that they can make plans to attend the banquet as well as experience Westminster.

### Reviews of Member Books

By Phyllis DeGioia, your Newsletter Goddess

***My Recycled Pets: Diary of a Dog Addict***, by Randi Berger, iUniverse, \$16.95, 179 pages, [www.recycledpetsrescue.com](http://www.recycledpetsrescue.com) to order

Berger has written a lovely, endearing book about her experiences running a California dog rescue agency called Recycled Pets in the 1980s. Berger began the agency when she learned exactly what the euthanasia statistics were in Southern California (75 percent). She is the kind of person her shelter contacts know they can call late to ask her to take just one more dog. Berger began taking anywhere from 100 to 200 about-to-be euthanized dogs a year out of shelters. She used a system of foster homes and was one of the first to use open-house adoptions at places like pet-supply stores.

Berger's heart is especially captured by senior and/or abused dogs. You know that it takes a heart the size of Texas. She has a folksy writing style that invites intimacy. The photographs are adorable. The inception of her nonprofit agency is told through the

stories of individual dogs, which makes you understand the process she goes through and why she does it.

This book won the award for the Inspirational category in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Writer's Digest International Award.

*Adopting a Pet for Dummies*, by Eve Adamson, Wiley, \$19.99, 362 pages

Another winner from the Dummies line, the nicest aspect of this book is that it covers adoption of all types of pets, including dogs, cats, small mammals, birds and reptiles. Adamson discusses the pros and cons of shelters and petrescue groups, which is an important topic I haven't seen before in one book. She also has some terrific terms, such as "huggable snakes," "cage-free manners," "bright eyes and scaly tails," "listening to your guinea pig," "itchy kitty?" and "mouse manifesto." She has a creative approach to everything.

Another intriguing facet is the section called "The Part of Tens," which lists 10 reasons to spay and neuter, 10 favors you can do for your adopted pet and 10 ways to support your local shelter or rescue group. There is an absolute *wealth* of information in this volume that makes it a good choice as a gift to someone who wants a pet but doesn't yet know what type of pet best suits him/her, but also for experienced pet owners. Can't say enough good about this book!

*Bulldogs for Dummies*, by Susan M. Ewing, Wiley, \$16.99, 268 pages

Want to know anything at all about a bulldog? Get this. Along with gorgeous color photographs of those so-ugly-they're-adorable bulldog faces, the author provides not only basic information on pets, such as how to prepare for a natural disaster and taking the Canine Good Citizen test, but also bulldog-specific topics, such as their health (or lack thereof). These happy little brachycephalics need special care, particularly in hot and humid climates. The first-aid section is very good and covers a few areas not often seen ("If your Bully sinks, get him out of the water, hold him by the hind legs for about 30 seconds to drain the water from his lungs, and then start artificial respiration." And always remember, Ewing points out, wrinkles are beautiful.

*Head of the Class: A Teen Dog Expert Teaches You to Raise and Train the Perfect Pal*, by Kate Eldredge with Debra M. Eldredge, DVM, Howell Book House, \$16.99, 224 pages

Teenage Kate Eldredge, who has already won a Maxwell in the professional, non-junior categories, has produced a book with copious amounts of common sense about dogs, living with dogs, training dogs and going places with dogs. An up-and-comer in both the Terv and Corgi worlds and the dog-writing world, every adult could probably learn something new from this kid.

Her book is well written, co-authored with her veterinarian mother, well organized and doesn't just say "I did this, I did that." She profiles several junior dog-handler teams. More than just training and understanding dogs ("possession is nine-tenths of the law"),

she covers dog etiquette in campgrounds, and how to do therapy work with your dog. She also emphasizes how kids and dogs can participate together in their community.

In addition to serious discussions on training and raising dogs, and traveling with them, Eldredge also includes a novel section titled “Fine Arts, Home Economics, and Shop Class,” in which she gives other kids tips and instructions on how to do dog needlework, rubber stamping, woodworking and PVC construction, painting, pottery, photography and bake dog treats.

Needless to say, there are more than a few sidebars for parents written by Kate’s parent. This book cannot fail to get kids excited and participatory with the dogs they have!

*The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Dog Tricks*, by Liz Palika, Alpha, \$14.95, 286 pages

Written by a professional trainer, this tells you how to train your dog to do numerous tricks ranging from weave poles, to sneezing, to dancing, to “take this to dad.” In addition to providing clear, concise steps on how to teach your dog a specific trick, she also discusses special tricks for therapy dogs that can provide extra enjoyment to the people they visit (how to make people laugh, or simple easy tricks for very ill or dying people) and has a chapter on how to look for an agent for your dog for film and television (stage mothers, unite). Even if you just want your dog to play the shell game to amuse everyone during a holiday, this will tell you how to do it and how to have fun while you’re doing it.

*The Dog Diet, A Memoir: What My Dog Taught Me about Shedding Pounds, Licking Stress, and Getting a New Leash on Life*, by Patti Lawson, Health Communications, \$15.95, 270 pages

If you need a good laugh along with some solid common sense about your body, this is for you. An entertaining read, Lawson’s style and content are absorbing. “It’s a startling unfamiliar feeling when you step into your jeans and they aren’t slipping on like your old shoes. This feeling quickly turns to panic.... Yep, time to move up a size, and although you must purchase a larger size of jeans to appear in public, you hate it. How can this be? You’ve done nothing differently, but you are a size bigger!” See what I mean? And you know that exercising by walking your dog is practically a requirement of losing weight.

The “walkies” made famous by Barbara Woodhouse appear here, needless to say. She has a chapter called “Dogercise, Workouts When You Least Expect Them” that is just priceless. Speaking as a perennial overeater, Lawson’s experiences and denial of weight gain are totally familiar to me. For anyone fighting the battle of the bulge or experiencing too much daily stress, relax and learn with Lawson and her dogs.

*Small Dogs, Big Hearts: A Guide to Caring for Your Little Dog*, by Darlene Arden, Howell, \$19.99, 225 pages

This update of Arden’s famous *The Irrepressible Toy Dog* is actually much more accessible than the first version, and I like it better. Any dog under 20 pounds is a toy

breed, purebred or mixed. Toy breeds, who Betty White refers to in her foreword as “a nation unto themselves,” have different needs than bigger dogs: their nutrition is different, their training focuses on different behaviors, they’re predisposed to low blood sugar and they lose body heat rapidly (hence their need for clothing when you’re cold). Heart disease occurs more often in small dogs than in their larger counterparts. Toy neonates are a class unto themselves and special care must be taken with them. What do you need to know when a tiny dog lives with a big dog? Find out here. This book makes an excellent gift to someone contemplating sharing their lives with a small dog. The photographs are just beautiful!

*Dog Grooming for Dummies*, by Margaret H. Bonham, Wiley, \$19.99, 358 pages

I *need* this book. Grooming is a “big, hairy deal.” My dogs look like they’ve been groomed in a Cuisinart, as a friend once said when I was first learning to use an electric clipper. I haven’t gotten that much better, and as my dogs age, they like grooming even less than they did before. So this book is full of tips on how to groom dogs of all coats and needs, not to mention some hilarious “The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave” comics. The book also covers show grooming (a whole different critter than pet grooming), grooming first-aid emergencies such as strangulation or electrocution, getting sticky stuff out of the coat, skin diseases that affect grooming and how to set up your own grooming business.

*Getting Started: Clicking with Your Rabbit*, by Joan Orr and Teresa Lewin, Karen Pryor Clickertraining & Sunshine Books, Inc, \$16.95, 81 pages

Sure, you can clicker train your house rabbit. After learning how to train it from this volume, your bun could “gimme five,” or “gimme ten” with a paw or paws, jump through a hoop (literally, not figuratively), fetch, navigate tunnels, spin on command and come when called. Oh yes, and use a litter box and stop biting. You can use their innate love of jumping to create tricks from natural behaviors. Clicker training works very well with buns, as they are smart little guys who can learn quickly. It can also help with nail clipping, not to mention help you work with a bun’s natural desire and need to chew. If you know anyone who loves bunnies, has bunnies or wants a bunny, this would be a great gift. You can even download it at [www.clickertraining.com](http://www.clickertraining.com).

## **Computer Crashes, Backing Up, and Your Newsletter Goddess**

Despite having discussed backing up your work in some long-ago previous issue of this newsletter, your Newsletter Goddess had a double whammy of two crashes in one week (so call me an overachiever). So here’s a reminder to back up whatever you can however you can: onto discs, a flash card, whatever. Talk to a computer expert about what system is best for your needs. What this also means is that I lost a tremendous amount of material saved for DWAA. So if you sent me a photo of your dog for the cover and haven’t seen it appear yet, I’ve lost it and you won’t see it unless you send it to me again (please do...I feel just terrible). Ditto if you sent an article. And don’t forget to back up, back up and back up!

(SEE ENTRY FORM ON THE BACK SIDE OF THIS PAGE)

## Entry Checklist

\_\_\_ All entries have been submitted in triplicate with an entry form.

\_\_\_ Check that the entry form is completed with the appropriate category marked for each entry.

\_\_\_ **An additional copy of each entry submitted for a special award has been enclosed, along with an additional entry form.**

\_\_\_ All entry fees have been totaled and a check or money order is enclosed, made payable to "DWAA."

\_\_\_ If you have questions, email the contest chair at [terryalbert@cox.net](mailto:terryalbert@cox.net)

\_\_\_ Mail your entry to: Terry Albert, 14021 Earie Lane, Poway, CA 92064

Good luck!

Terry

*(this half page intentionally left blank for use as entry form)*



## 2006 Writing Competition Entry Form

Please read the complete rules; it is your responsibility to comply with them. Entries must be postmarked no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006. No late entries will be accepted. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Send entries to: Terry Albert, 14021 Earie Lane, Poway, CA, 92064

Entrant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Entrant is the writer, photographer, illustrator or other person who created the work. Submitter is the person sending in the entry when different from the entrant.)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (circle) Day/Evening/Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of submitter if different from entrant: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (circle) Day/Evening/Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Category number and description: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of publication or publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

Issue or publication date: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Award(s) for which the work is to be considered: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this work was published between September 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 and August 31<sup>st</sup> 2006.  
I understand and agree to abide by all contest rules.

Signature of entrant or submitter

\_\_\_\_\_

## CWA Writers Conference Update

If you're interested in the November CWA writing conference in Foster City, CA (just south of San Francisco), co-sponsored by DWAA, please check out the CWA Web site. There have been several additions and changes to the scheduled events, including the seminars. See <http://www.catwriters.org/annual-info.html> for details.

There is a new tour option of UC Davis Veterinary School (other plans are in the works too, including a different, short field trip for Saturday afternoon). Folks registered for the conference are invited to visit the vet school in Davis, Calif. for a free tour of its SMALL ANIMAL CLINIC on Wednesday (Nov. 15th) or Thursday (Nov. 16) before the first official conference event. You must call or write ahead to reserve a tour. Small groups of any size (by prior appointment) will be given a 90-minute, personalized tour conducted by Lynn Narlesky, senior writer in the school's public-information department and a presenter at the CWA Conference. To make tour reservations, phone Lynn at (530) 752-5257 or email [lnarlesky@ucdavis.edu](mailto:lnarlesky@ucdavis.edu) or write her at UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, Office of the Dean, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616. All requests must be made before Nov. 6. Individuals must also make their own transportation arrangements to the campus, which is about 75 miles from San Francisco, off Interstate 80. From Foster City (at the convention hotel) a one-way trip will take about two hours, depending on traffic. Directions via public transportation or via car are both listed below.

The current list of editors and literary agents attending, which can change at the speed of a hot spot:

- Susan Chaney, editor of *Dog Fancy*
- Georgia Hughes, editorial director, *New World Library*
- Melissa Kauffman, editorial co-director, BowTie Inc. (supervising *Pet Product News*, *Veterinary Practice News*, *the News Division*, *Cat Fancy*, *Bird Talk*, *Ferrets*, *Critters*, *Reptiles*, and *Aquarium Fish* magazines)
- Betty Liddick, editor, *Your Dog* newsletter
- Susan Logan, editor of *Cat Fancy* magazine
- Tom Mazorlig, TFH Publications, editor of bird, cat, reptile, and small animal titles
- Brie Mazurek, project editor, Ten Speed Press.
- Arden Moore, editor, *Catnip* newsletter
- Ellen Price, editor, *The WORLD of Professional Pet Sitting*

Although it is now too late for early registration, it's not too late to sign up. Get the scoop at <http://www.catwriters.org/annual-info.html>. The CFA International Cat Show will be at the nearby San Mateo Expo Center.

Some of the scheduled seminars include:

*How to Have a Successful Book Proposal* - Georgia Hughes

The Editorial Director at New World Library publishing house gives insight and tips on how to develop a successful book proposal.

*The Truth about Dogs and Cats and Writers* - Arden Moore

Get the most out of your interviews. Don't limit the information to one publication. Learn how to stretch one interview into several articles.

*Getting the Sources You Need* - Lynn Narlesky

Using university professors as sources for stories can be tricky. Get first-hand information from the media liaison at UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine on how to get the information you need, how to separate spin from fact and how to present yourself to get the information you want.

*From Web Site to Best Seller* - Jim Edgar

The author of "Bad Cat" will talk about his experience of having his web site turned into a best selling book.

*The Feline Genome* - Dr. Niels Pedersen

One of the leading feline researchers in the country will be speaking on the feline genome and its relation to cats and humans.

In addition to the popular editors' panel, panels include Feral Cat Issues and Human/Animal Bond. The keynote speaker at the awards banquet is Dr. Niels C. Pedersen, professor at UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and director of its Center for Companion Animal Health (a nice score for CWA).

## **Captain Haggerty**

As a dog trainer and a member of DWAA, I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the "Memories of Capt. Haggerty" article. Even though the circle of dog trainers in Los Angeles has greatly expanded in the last several years, I never once heard a negative word about Mr. Haggerty. In fact, I always heard praises about his work, his integrity and way with dogs, not only from clients but from other trainers. And you know what they say: The only thing two dog trainers can agree on are what the third one is doing wrong." Thus, I always considered him with great respect, even though we never met.

God bless Capt. Haggerty. I'm sure he's being met by many a canine friend.

Jill Kessler

## **Membership Roster**

*Changes*

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