



# ruff DRAFTS

Winter 2018

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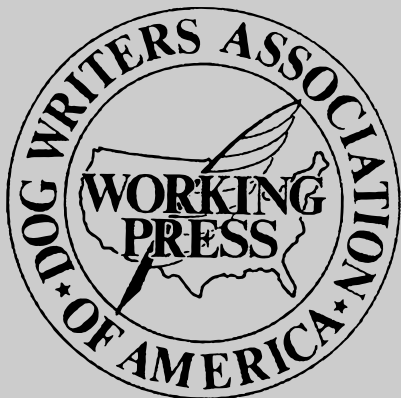
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Photo courtesy of Barbara Magera



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# President's

# COLUMN

By Jen Reeder

This September, my husband and I adopted a senior dog. The 9-pound poodle was rescued as a virtually toothless, matted stray near Denver. A shelter removed a cancerous mass from her chest before we heard her story and felt compelled to bring her home. We named her Peach. She inspires us daily with her resilience, trust and love.

I don't know that we would have adopted a senior dog if we hadn't met **Laura Coffey** at a DWAA banquet several years ago. As you probably know, Laura is the bestselling author of *My Old Dog: Rescued Pets with Remarkable Second Acts*. I've read the book and had the chance to interview Laura for several articles about senior dog adoptions, and she's opened my mind to how deeply rewarding adopting a golden oldie can be. As the saying goes, "Saving one animal won't change the world, but it will change the world for that one animal."

This is one example of why I'm grateful to be a member of DWAA. You never know how connecting with other members might change your career, or even your life. It's also an example of why our writing matters – because Laura wrote her book, a cancer survivor is getting a second chance at life in a loving home.



Jen Reeder, President of the DWAA

We will celebrate the power of our words and the strength of our dog writing community at our annual awards banquet the evening of Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018 at the Hotel New Yorker in Manhattan. We're thrilled to be inducting legendary dog show host **David Frei** into DWAA's Hall of Fame, and that he'll be giving an acceptance speech. **Dr. Marty Becker**, a.k.a. "America's Veterinarian," will give the keynote address, and **Laura Coffey** will share practical

See *PRESIDENT'S COLUMN* pg 21

As the saying goes,

“Saving one animal won't change the world, but it will change the world for that one animal.”



By **Merrie Meyers**

At this time of the year, it's my custom to reflect on the past twelve months and come up with some assessment of whether it was a good or bad year. As with most years, 2017 was a mixed bag. To say this was a volatile year would be a gross understatement. The stock market, health care, immigration, nuclear arms and taxes have taken center stage in our national conversations, and that's just in the last month!

So it was with nothing less than desperate optimism that we selected kindness as the theme for our final issue of 2017. I don't have a crystal ball, but I am hopeful that through simple gestures we will regain our sense of calm and civility. There is nothing perhaps kinder and more rewarding than the relationship between ourselves and our canine companions.

Throughout history, great works of literature, art and song have portrayed the dog's ability to do good things. Comparatively speaking, we have a way to go in our kindness toward others. "Marley and Me" author John Grogan summed it up nicely when he said, "A person can learn a lot from a dog, even a loopy one like ours. Marley taught me about living each day with unbridled exuberance and joy,



**Merrie Meyers, Editor of Ruff Drafts**

about seizing the moment and following your heart. He taught me to appreciate the simple things – a walk in the woods, a fresh snowfall, a nap in a shaft of winter sunlight. And as he grew old and achy, he taught me about optimism in the face of adversity. Mostly, he taught me about friendship and selflessness and, above all else, unwavering loyalty."

What else need be said?

Wishing you and yours hope and happiness in 2018. 🐾

The Oxford dictionary defines *kindness* as "the quality of being friendly, generous and considerate." The word first appears in 1250-1300 A.D., a derivative of the Middle English word, *kindenes*, and defined as courtesy or noble deeds (kind deeds, kind feelings). References to kindness date back to Aristotle, with every culture and every age documenting examples of kindness in story, art and song.

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## Ruff Drafts

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### ISSUE DEADLINES

Spring, March 1  
Summer, June 1  
Fall, September 1  
Winter, December 1

The editor reserves the right to refuse and/or edit material, and is not responsible for errors in difficult to read copy. Every attempt will be made to publish information accurately. Submission implies right to publish all or in part. Unsigned or misleading material is not accepted. Material published is the opinion of the author and does not imply endorsement by the editor or DWAA. Neither editor nor DWAA assumes liability for information contained herein or typographical errors. Reproduction of photos and editorial is forbidden without permission.

# WINNERS

## 2017 Writing Competition



Congratulations to the winners of the 2017 DWAA Writing Competition! Winners of each regular category will receive a Maxwell Medallion, which honors Maxwell Riddle; the former DWAA president and AKC judge wrote about the sport of dogs for over five decades.

All nominees needed to score at least 80 points out of 100 to qualify for awards, and contest entries rose by 24 percent this year. Needless to say, the caliber of entries was outstanding! Thank you all for creating such fantastic work about dogs.

**NAMES OF WINNERS ARE INDICATED WITH AN 🏆 ICON.**

## Regular Categories

### A. Newspaper Articles and Columns

#### 1. ARTICLE – HEALTH OR GENERAL CARE

- One Health Day (part 1 & part 2) by Joanne Anderson
- 🏆 Laser Cats – And Dogs by Jen Reeder

#### 2. ARTICLE – BEHAVIOR OR TRAINING

- 🏆 The Biology Behind Canine Comforting by Joanne Anderson
- A Different Kind of Ministry by Florence Scarinci

#### 3. ARTICLE – RESCUE

- Nina the Miracle Dog by Joanne Anderson
- 🏆 Purebred Shelter Dog Perfect by Joanne Anderson

- HFGD Junior Ambassadors: Dog Rescue's Next Generation by Pam Gleason

#### 4. ARTICLE – ART OR ANY OTHER TOPIC

- Seeing a Man About A Dog by James Colasanti, Jr.
- Laws for Paws: How to Help Be a Voice for the Voiceless by Patti Lawson
- 🏆 Creature Comforts by Jen Reeder

### B. Magazines

#### 5. SINGLE, RELATED, OR ALL-BREED

- 🏆 Just Labs
- Sighthound Review
- AKC Family Dog
- Terrier Group

### C. Magazine Articles

#### 7. ARTICLE– HEALTH OR GENERAL CARE

- 🏆 Canine Influenza by Caroline Coile
- Happy Lab by Jillian LaCross
- AKC Reunite Helps Lost Pets Find Their Way Home by Sharon Pflaumer
- Repair Surgery Among Latest Treatments for MVD by Kim Campbell Thornton

#### 8. ARTICLE– BEHAVIOR OR TRAINING

- 🏆 Hound Anxiety by Mara Bovsun
- Eager to Please? By Tracy Krulik
- Raising Angels by Kathy Santo
- Your Dog Can Be Anxiety Free by Kim Thornton

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# Contest Chair's

# REPORT

By **Su Ewing**

## CONTEST CHAIR

Wow! Another contest year gone. As contest chair, it's been amazing to see all the fabulous entries. I can't read them all, but I try to read as many as I can. What a treat! And, I've learned a lot as well.

My co-chair is my husband, Jim, and I truly couldn't do it without him. He pulls all the online orders, and records all entries, both online and mailed in. He does a lovely spreadsheet with author's name, co-author, category, name of article, name of publisher, link(s) to online entries, how many copies we received if hard copy, any special award entered, address, email, phone number, and twitter handle, if applicable. He handles all the checks that come in as well.

Judges. This year, thanks to some postings by Jen Reeder, many, many people volunteered to judge. It gave me the ability to try to give people the category, or type of entry, they preferred. I couldn't do it completely, but so many volunteers really helped. We need three judges for every category, so of necessity, some people had to judge more than one category. Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you. Without judges, there'd be no contest. And, thanks to Dusty Hellmann for the "Alpha Bitch" visor.

Jen also pulled in even more special award sponsors, which was terrific. It seems like there's a special award for just about any type of writing. More people should take advantage these generous offerings.

Now for numbers. Entries were up 24% this year. Last year, 114 people entered their work for a special award. This year, we had 231 special award entries.

In the online blog or article, any other topic, category, we had 22 more entries this year, with a total of 53.

Last year, only four people entered single photos. This year, there were 21 entries.

Video, DVD, or TV broadcast doubled to 20 this year.

In 2016, 98 non-members entered the competition. This year, 130 non-members entered. Thanks to publicity efforts of Jen Reeder and Lea-Ann Germinder, people are discovering us.

By the time you read this, all the winners will have been announced. With so many entries, many very good writers will be disappointed. I have some numbers I'd like to share to show you that not only is the Maxwell an honor, but garnering a nomination is also a huge honor. Our contest draws exceptional writing.

First, to be considered for a Maxwell, a piece has to have received an average of 80 points or higher from the judges. The highest score in a category wins the Maxwell. Certificates of nomination are given to the next two to four highest scores, depending on the number of entries.

In the Magazine category, for single, related, or all-breed, all the entrants scored above 90. In the category of magazine articles, health or general care, all 24 entries scored above 80. The article category of breed, all certificate nominees scored over 90. In article of



Su Ewing, Contest Chair

blog, any other topic, all finalists had over 93. In another category, of 20 entries, 7 scored over 90. In still another category, the lowest score was an 85 and six out of the ten entrants scored over 90. Lastly, in one category, the difference between the score of the winner and the next highest was just three-tenths of a point.

I am so proud of DWAA and of all those who entered. I get a little choked up when I look at the numbers and consider how many talented writers participate in our contest.

Lastly, celebrate with your peers at the annual award banquet, Saturday, February 10, 2018 at the New Yorker Hotel in New York City. You can make your reservations online at the DWAA website. Space is limited, so do it now. See you there! 🐾



## 9. ARTICLE – RESCUE

- Flames and Dogs by Marco Adda
- A Sense of Security by Mary Helen Berg
- How to Be the Best (Foster) Home Possible by Jill Breitner
- One Last Glance by Nancy Gallimore
- 🏆 Beyond the Track by Devon Hubbard Sorlie

## 10. ARTICLE– BREED

- Goldens Rule! By Mara Bovsun
- Understanding the Sloughi by Dr. Marie-Dominique de Caprona
- Good Dogs! By Jen Reeder
- Liberating Labs by Jen Reeder
- 🏆 Taigan: Sighthound of Kyrgyzstan by Jutta Rubesam

## 11. ARTICLE/COLUMN – ART OR ANY OTHER TOPIC

- Legacy by Mara Bovsun
- 🏆 They Smell Dead People by Mara Bovsun
- Bills and Mills: How Ag-Gag Legislation and Puppy Mills Affect Dog Trainers by Rachel Brix
- The Glorious Art of Coursing Greyhound by Debra Lampert-Rudman

## D. Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters

### 12. CANINE OR ALL-ANIMAL NEWSPAPERS OR NEWSLETTERS

- 🏆 The Companion – Canine Companions for Independence
- The Dog & Hound

## E. Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters Articles and Columns

### 13. ANY TOPIC

- Laser Therapy Promotes Healing by Stimulating the Body's Own Cells by Kate Eldredge
- I Am. We Are. by Kate Kuligowski

## 🏆 Words that Wound by Larry Lindner

- Saving a Far-Off Genetic Legacy with Cornell Help by Kim Campbell Thornton

## F. Online

### 14. BLOGSITE OR WEBSITE

- Fidose of Reality by Carol Bryant
- Pam Dennison's Positive dogs, Positive Methods, Positive Results by Pam Dennison
- ISPEAKDOG.ORG by Tracy Krulik and Kelly Duggin
- The IAABC Journal Marjie Alonso, Jesse Miller

## 🏆 Norwich Terrier Club of America

### 15. MAGAZINE OR NEWSLETTER

- The Rip Van Wrinkler
- The Collie Nose
- AKC Gazette
- 🏆 AKC Canine Partners News

## G. Online Articles or Blog Entries

### 16. ARTICLE OR BLOG – HEALTH OR GENERAL CARE

- A Sense of Peace by Laura Teresa Coffey
- 🏆 New Screening Tool Provides Early Detection of Bladder Cancer by Penny Leigh
- Pet Owners Seek Out Mitral Valve Repair Surgery Overseas by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Laparoscopic Spay: the New Option by Cori Solomon

### 17. ARTICLE OR BLOG – BEHAVIOR OR TRAINING

- 🏆 Sounds of Panic by Deb Eldredge
- Multisensory Enrichment for Shelter Dogs by Mik Moeller
- The Ultimate Dog Training Tip by Zazie Todd
- Separation Anxiety and a Second Dog-Will It Help? by Lisa Lyle Waggoner

## 18. ARTICLE OR BLOG – RESCUE

- After Rescue From Abuse, A Drooly Pooch Named Hooch is 2016 American
- Hero Dog by Laura Teresa Coffey
- Fostering Ginger by Lisa Begin-Kruysman
- 🏆 Rescuers or Fanatics? The Dark Side of Animal Rescue by Debby McMullen
- Rescue Dogs Help Protect Endangered Species as Conservation Canines by Jen Reeder
- Paralyzed Rescue Pup "Albert on Wheels" Rolls Right into Hearts by Monica Weymouth

## 19. ARTICLE OR BLOG – ANY OTHER TOPIC

- 🏆 More Good in the World Than Bad by Laura Teresa Coffey
- What Do Dogs See in Mirrors? by Julie Elizabeth Hecht
- Marc Ching: Fighting Tooth and Nail Against the Dog Meat Trade by Nicole Pajer
- Giving Dogs, Inmates, A New Leash on Life by Monica Weymouth

## H. Graphics

### 20. SINGLE PHOTO

- Dash in the Field by Pam Gleason
- 🏆 Junior Exhibitors Class, Carolinas Hound Show by Pam Gleason

### 22. SINGLE ILLUSTRATION OR PAINTING

- Summer Graduation 2017 by John Bentzinger
- 🏆 Top Ten Reasons Why Terriers Make the Best New Year's Dates by Melanie Feldges
- FiveSibes Top 10 Back-to-School Dog Tips by Dorothy Wills-Rafty

### 23. SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIONS OR PAINTINGS

- Just Giants, Illustrations by Julie Brenan
- Honey, Have You Squeezed the Dachshund? by Kelly D'Anne Guntner

Continued on next page

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- Sleeping in Bed with Your Dog: The Essential Guide by Josh Carter
- Toby by Hazel Mitchell
- 🏆 The Golden Retriever: America's BFF by Molly Poole

## 24. POSTERS, CALENDARS, BROCHURES OR PAMPHLETS

- Dog Stars-Collie Club of America 2017 Calendar
- Bernese Mountain Dog Calendar 2018 by Bernd Guenter
- The Pet Lovers Handbook-San Diego 22nd Edition by Judith Macomber
- 🏆 The FiveSibes (Red) Nose Knows: Red Nose Day by Dorothy Wills-Raftery
- 2017 Puppy Calendar Canine Companions for Independence by Florence Scarinci

## I. Humor, Poetry, Short Fiction, Opinions/Editorials

### 25. HUMOR

- 🏆 Does Your Rescue Dog Have Issues? (Or Do You)? by Kristin Michelle Avery
- Top Ten Reasons Why Terriers Make the Best New Year's Dates by Kristine Kibbee
- 25 Ways My Dogs Celebrate National Dog Week by Susan C. Willett
- Haiku by Dog: Canvas by Susan C. Willett

### 26. POETRY

- Let's Walk by Lee Netzler
- Maggie May by Lee Netzler
- No Racing Allowed by Lee Netzler

- 🏆 I Lay at Her Feet by Corina Olsen
- Lead On by Debra Lampert-Rudman

### 27. SHORT FICTION

- 🏆 On the Scent of Life by Lisa Beggin-Kruysman
- That Doggy Not in the Window by James Colasanti
- The Comfort of a Dog: An Unexpected Gift from My Mother by Mary Beatrice McGrath
- Trained to Serve by Amy Shojai

### 28. ESSAYS/EDITORIALS

- My Struggle with Compassion Fatigue in Animal Rescue by Katelyn Aase
- My Dog Made Me the Mother I Am, But She Didn't Live to See It by Brook Bolen
- What Makes a Breeder? by Kate Eldredge
- 🏆 Mitral Valve Repair Surgery Saved our Dog Harper by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Glory Days by Patience Renzulli

## J. Other Media

### 29. VIDEO, DVD, OR TV BROADCASTS

- The Leash Reactivity Blueprint by Tristan John Flynn
- Life Saving Bond: Woman's Dog Gives Her Courage to Heal by Jane Miller
- 🏆 Video Guide to Grooming the Scottish Terrier – Scottish Terrier Club of America
- Pet First-Aid by Denise Fleck and Riannon Trutanich

### 30. RADIO, PODCAST, OR OTHER AUDIO

- 🏆 What To Do When You Get Stuck by Hannah Branigan
- The Sibe Vibe: Huskies and Heroes Outreach Program by Dorothy Wills-Raftery and Robert Forto
- Talkng Canine Epilepsy & Seizures with Dr. Arnold Rugg by Dorothy Wills-Raftery and Robert Forto

## K. Club Publications (National, Regional or Local)

### 31. MAGAZINE FORMAT

- The Alpenhorn
- 🏆 Chronicle of the Dog
- Griffonnier: The Magazine of the American Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Association
- Harp and Hound
- Mastiff Club of America Journal

### 32. NEWSLETTER FORMAT

- 🏆 Pasanita Obedience Club Newsletter
- The Scottie Scuttlebutt
- The USDAA Overview

## L. Club Publication Articles

### 33. ARTICLE – ANY TOPIC

- Fairy Tales, Christmas, & the Indomitable Spirit of an Old Dog by Mary Fish Arango
- 🏆 Whitney's Miracle by Emelise Baughman
- Billy and Candi by Michael J. Cody
- Heartworms 2017 by Caroline Coile
- Canine Herpes Virus: The Now-You-See-It-Now-You-Don't Killer of Neonatal Puppies by Nancy Paule Melone

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# Congratulations to the Winners!

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE WINNERS AT OUR ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2018 IN NEW YORK CITY!  
TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT [DOGWRITERS.ORG](http://DOGWRITERS.ORG)

Dog Writers Association of America  
Annual Writing Contest Awards Banquet  
Saturday, February 10, 2018  
The New Yorker - A Wyndham Hotel  
The Sutton Place Room - 3rd Floor  
481 Eighth Ave. New York, NY 10001  
(212) 971-0101

4-5 p.m. - General Membership Annual Meeting  
5-6 p.m. - Banquet registration/Cash bar opens  
6:15 p.m. - First speech begins  
7-9 p.m. - Dinner service and awards ceremony

Please join us for a special evening of networking and celebration!

Dr. Marty Becker, a.k.a. "America's Veterinarian," will give a keynote speech and legendary dog show host and author David Frei will be inducted into the DWAA Hall of Fame! Laura Coffey, Today.com producer/editor/writer and author of the bestselling book *My Old Dog: Rescued Pets with Remarkable Second Acts*, will share tips about book promotion. Winners of the contest will accept Maxwell Medallions and checks for special awards.

\$135.00 per person... Space is limited to first 100 reservations  
Dinner menu, please choose one:

Pan Seared Breast of Cornish Hen with Butternut Squash Puree and  
Fresh Watercress Salad with Crispy Prosciutto Pan Dripping Gravy \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian Mushroom Ravioli with Brown Butter and Tarragon \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner also includes Caprese Salad with Roma Tomato and Basil Pesto Drizzle and  
Raspberry Chocolate Mousse Cake with Crème Anglaise

Name of person making the reservation: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number of reservations \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Guest name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

For land mail reservations:  
Marsha M. Pugh, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 787  
Hughesville, MD 20637

Questions: marsha\_pugh01@comcast.net



**REGISTER ONLINE!**

**For online entries, please visit**

[www.dogwriters.org](http://www.dogwriters.org)

**and click on EVENT**



### 34. REGULAR COLUMN OR SERIES

- To Godmother's House We Go by Elizabeth M. Jarrell
- Rescue Column by Kay Marks
- Obedience Column by Diane Currie Niland
- 🏆 Azize's Princess Levia: The Training of a Search and Rescue K-9 by Sharolyn L. Sievert

## M. Club Special Publication

### 35. CLUB SPECIAL PUBLICATION

- Cairn Terrier Club of America – 100 Years of Celebration Commemorative Chronicle
- 🏆 New Complete Dog Book by AKC; Mara Bovsun, editor
- The Westminster Kennel Club 2017 Official Program

## N. Books

### 36. SINGLE, RELATED, OR ALL-BREED

- 🏆 The Leonberger: A Comprehensive Guide to The Lion King of Beasts by Caroline Bliss-Isberg
- Just Giants by Enid S. Lagree

### 37. RESCUE OR ADOPTION

- I Once Was Lost, But Now I'm Found: Daisy and the Olympic Animal Sanctuary Rescue by Laura Koerber
- 🏆 Life with Forty Dogs: Misadventures with Runts, Rejects, Retirees and Rescues by Joseph Robertia

### 38. TRAINING OR SPORTS

- 🏆 Fun & Games for a Smarter Dog by Sophie Collins
- Training Dogs by James O'Heare
- Beware of the Dog by Pat Miller

### 39. BEHAVIOR, HEALTH, OR GENERAL CARE

- The Ultimate Guide to Dog Care by Tammy Gagne
- Modern Dog Parenting by Sarah Hodgson
- 🏆 Symptoms to Watch For In Your Dog: How to Tell if Your Dog is Sick and What to Do Next by Jana Rade

### 40. HUMAN ANIMAL BOND

- Incredible Dog Journeys: Amazing True Stories of Exceptional Dogs by Laura Greaves
- 🏆 Rescue Smiles: Favorite Animal Stories by Tamira Thayne and Heather Leughmyer
- Sophie: Best Friends are Forever by Theodore Slupik

### 41. REFERENCE

- 🏆 101 Things to Know Before Getting a Dog by Susan M. Ewing
- The Pet Safety Crusader's My Pet & Me Guide to Pet Disaster Pawparedness by Denise Fleck
- Gamify Your Dog Training by Terry Ryan

### 42. FICTION, YOUNG ADULT OR HUMOR

- 🏆 Land of the Free by Donna Ball
- Flash of Brilliance by Donna Ball
- Blood Red White and Blue by Kathleen Delaney
- Ghosts of Iwo Jima by Joe Jennings
- Starting Over by Sheri S. Levy

### 43. CHILDREN

- Sled Dog Dachshund by Laura Atkins
- 🏆 Toby by Hazel Mitchell
- The Story About Tigger by Cameron Pendergraft
- Harry Taylor, Hometown Hero by Alden Taylor

## Special Award Categories

Thank you so much to our generous sponsors who make the DWAA Special Awards possible! We are so grateful to you for recognizing outstanding work by dog writers.

### AKC Club Publication Excellence Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award is for the best article in a national, regional or local AKC club publication in magazine or newsletter

format. The award consists of a plaque and a \$500 cash grant.

- 🏆 The History of the Cairn Terrier Club of America by Tammy Erickson – Cairn Terrier Club of America – 100 Years of Celebration Commemorative Chronicle

### AKC Microchipping Awareness Award

Sponsored by The AKC Reunite Program for the best article on how microchips can be used in pet recovery. Articles can include recovery stories of how dogs were identified or returned to owners, permanent identification in cases of theft, uses of microchips to confirm identity of dogs in competition, etc. The award is a \$1,500 cash grant. For information about actual recovery stories, writers can contact AKC Reunite at 1-800-252-7894.

- 🏆 Lauren Darr – Where's Bella?

### AKC Responsible Dog Ownership Public Service Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award goes to the writer of a print or online feature article that best educates pet owners about responsible dog ownership. The award consists of a plaque and a \$500 cash grant. To enter, submit one article, which must also be entered in this year's contest in one of the regular categories.

- 🏆 Kate Eldredge – The First 24 Hours with Your New Dog

### AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy and Canine Good Citizen Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award is for the best writing about the AKC Canine Good Citizen Program or the puppy level of CGC, AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy.

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Recognized as the “gold standard” for family dog manners, CGC and AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy focus on teaching good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership to dog owners. This award is a \$500 cash award.

🏆 Susan Kroupa – Ruff-Housed

## **The Ceva Heartworm Prevention Award**

Sponsored by Ceva Animal Health, this award is for the best article that educates the public about the heartworm awareness and prevention tips. The winner will receive a \$1,500 grant.

🏆 Caroline Coile – Heartworms 2017

## **DWAA Robert H. McKowen Memorial Friends of Rescue Award**

Sponsored by his family and friends. For the best article describing the rescue process: adoption, fostering, transporting, home visits or other aspects of rescue. \$300 cash grant.

🏆 Pam Gleason – HFGD Junior Ambassadors

## **James Colasanti, Jr. Poetry Award**

For the poem/poetry which best exemplifies the unconditional love of a dog. Sponsored by James Colasanti Jr. The award is a \$200 cash grant.

🏆 Lee Netzler – Let’s Walk

## **The Captain William Lewis Judy Award**

Sponsored by American Legion Post #348, Brick Township, N.J. and Lisa Begin-Kruysman. For a submission in any form of media that educates

the public about the important role our military dogs play in our Armed Forces, including issues affecting their emotional and physical care during their training, active service and retirement. The award consists of a \$350 cash grant.

🏆 Laura Teresa Coffey – Never Give Up: How An Ex-Military Dog Rescued the Veteran Who Needed Him Most

## **The Walter R. Fletcher Memorial Award**

Sponsored by The Westminster Kennel Club in memory of legendary dog show reporter Walter Fletcher, this annual award goes to the reporter who best exemplifies continued press coverage of dog shows in America. The writer must have written a bylined article in a print or online general interest publication about a dog show (or shows). The winner will be honored with a reserved seat in the Walter Fletcher Memorial Chair for both nights of the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. The chair is located at the end of the front row, in the working press section, on the arena floor of Madison Square Garden.

🏆 Barbara E. Magera, MD and Elaine L. Mitchell – Westminster 2017

## **The Canine Scribbles Award**

Sponsored by Canine Scribbles, LLC, this is awarded for the best article that promotes the reasons to own a purebred canine. The fiction or nonfiction article of 1000 to 1500 words must be published in a print or online publication. The focus of the article should exemplify the virtues of owning a specific purebred dog. A high-resolution .jpeg (at least 300 dpi) should accompany the article that depicts the canine about which the article is written. The article should be clearly and succinctly written, and should

outline the advantages of purebred dog ownership, with a unique journalistic voice. \$350 cash grant.

🏆 Mara Bovsun – Pup of their Dreams

## **The Fear Free Pets Award**

Sponsored by Fear Free, LLC, this is awarded for the article, book, blog, TV segment, radio spot, video, column or other creative media format that best educates, promotes, or demonstrates the importance and benefits of taking a dog to a Fear Free certified veterinary professional. This may also include how a dog’s emotional well-being can play a role in all aspects of its life and health, including veterinary care, how decreasing fear, anxiety, and stress is beneficial to the patient and owner both during the veterinary visit and at home, a focus on Fear Free applications pre- and post-veterinary visit, successful case studies/stories of how a dog went from fearful to Fear Free during or throughout the course of a single or series of veterinary visits, positive experiences working with a Fear Free certified veterinary professional or anything that highlights how Fear Free and what it stands for is all around better for staff, patients, and clients. This award consists of a \$2,000 cash grant and a one-of-a-kind commemorative award.

🏆 Sarah Rumble – The Ladder to Successful Veterinary Visits

## **Fear Free Dog Enrichment Award**

Sponsored by Fear Free, LLC, this is awarded for the article, book, blog, TV segment, radio spot, video, column or other creative media formats that best educates, promotes, or demonstrates how enrichment activities (exercise, food puzzles, scent training, etc.) can benefit a dog’s emotional—not just

*See SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS pg 12*

# MEMBER NEWS

Long-time DWAA member, **Loren Spiotta-DiMare** of Tewksbury, New Jersey recently coordinated a new book publishing conference. *By The Book: Traditional and Indie Publishing Today* was a great success. Read what an attendee had to say:

*Just a short note to let you know that my sister and I thoroughly enjoyed the book conference - it was great! There was so much good information and we loved meeting everyone. The program was brilliant (in content and in print) I especially love that you included pictures of all of the speakers and participating authors - it really helps with keeping their names and faces straight - particularly after the event!*

*Everyone was so nice, warm and willing to share their expertise, knowledge and tricks of the trade. Thank you for all of your hard work - a grand success! Hope you do it again next year! Be well, Peggy*

Loren is now planning an Animal Writers' Workshop to be held in the Spring (date to be announced.) in ei-

ther Somerset or Hunterdon County, New Jersey. It will cover writing and publishing animal books for adults and children. There will be a panel discussion with Q & A, lunch with guest speaker and an Author & Illustrator's Alley. If you would like to be kept informed about the workshop, please write to [author@LorensReadingRoom.com](mailto:author@LorensReadingRoom.com).

To date, Loren has had 20 books published. Her titles include: *The Sporting Spaniel Handbook*, *Cavalier King Charles Spaniel*, *Beyond The Finish Line: Stories of Ex-Racehorses*, *Chelsea & the New Puppy*, *Because of Bentley*, *Rockwell: A Boy and His Dog*, and *Hannah's House Rabbit*. She also has several new titles in the works.

An avid animal lover, Loren and her husband, Lou, have a large animal family including a Quarter Horse, six adult dogs and a new Red Setter pup, four entertaining rabbits, a 50-year-old Amazon parrot, 20 small pet birds and a Koi pond. "Certainly no lack of inspiration around here," Loren is fond of saying.

Loren can be reached at [www.Lorensreadingroom.com](http://www.Lorensreadingroom.com)



Loren in her home library alongside some of her books.

## New Members

### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

#### Maria Ruoto

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#### Jenise Carl

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#### Jodi Helmer

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### ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS

#### Jerome Rendich

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## Member Changes

#### Diana Kerew-Shaw

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#### Lyn Richards Pawlowski

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[doglogiclyn@gmail.com](mailto:doglogiclyn@gmail.com)



# Special Award Winners

*Continued from pg 10*

physical—well-being and the role that has in their overall health. This may also include topics relating to how the resulting benefits of such enrichment to the dog's emotional well-being can help set them up for more successful veterinary visits in the future, thus living a happier, healthier life. This award consists of a \$2,000 cash grant and a one-of-a-kind commemorative award.

🏆 Erica Beckwith – Enrichment for Fearful Dogs

## The GNFP Digital Online Article Award

Sponsored by GNFP Digital, this award is for the best online article that highlights the human-canine bond in action. The winner will receive a \$500 grant.

🏆 Jeff Meade – Meet Pender, The Moss-Rehab Assistance Dog

## International Association of Pet Fashion Professionals Pet Fashion Award

Sponsored by the International Association of Pet Fashion Professionals, this award is for a submission in any form of media that demonstrates the enhanced bonds and connections between humans and their dog(s) through pet fashion. This award consists of a \$350 cash grant.

🏆 Katy Cable – Roxy, Bono & Blue... The Pupstars of Pomona

## The Captain Haggerty Award for Best Training Book or Article

Sponsored by Babette Haggerty of Haggerty Dog Training in memory of her father, Captain Arthur Haggerty, this

award is for the best book or article on training. The winner will receive a \$200 cash grant.

🏆 Zazie Todd – The Ultimate Dog Training Tip

## The Morris Animal Foundation Canine Health Award

Sponsored by Morris Animal Foundation, a nonprofit that invests in science to advance animal health, this award is for the best science-based article or book about canine health issues or research. The winner will receive a \$300 cash grant.

🏆 Jana Rade – Symptoms to Watch for in Your Dog: How to Tell if Your Dog is Sick and What to Do Next

## The PSI Professional Pet Care Award

Sponsored by Pet Sitters International (PSI), this award is presented to the entry that best educates pet owners about the benefits of using professional pet sitters. Qualifying online or print entries include newspaper or magazine articles and blog posts. This award consists of a \$300 cash prize.

🏆 Amy Shojai – Pet Sitters Can Cause Problems

\*NOTE: The title is tongue in cheek.

## The Take Your Dog Award

Sponsored by Take Your Dog To Work Day® creator Pet Sitters International, this award is presented to the entry that best highlights the special human-canine bond and importance of pet adoptions. Qualifying print or online entries include newspaper or magazine articles, blog posts and personal essays. The award consists of a \$300 cash prize.

🏆 Jill Breitner – How to Be the Best (Foster) Home Possible

## The Harrison Stephens Inspirational Feature Award

Named in honor of Harrison Stephens, a newspaper editor who wrote thought-provoking features marked by journalistic integrity and humor until his death just before his 100th birthday. This award is for a feature article that highlights the human-canine bond and leaves the reader with a smile. Potential topics include working dogs (or a lazy dog with a winning personality), or dog-centric nonprofits that promote positive outcomes for pets and people. The award is sponsored by Sally and Tom Reeder and consists of a \$300 grant.

🏆 Ronni Gordon – A Favor Returned

## Dogwise Best Book Award

Sponsored by Dogwise Publishing. \$500 to the author of the best book. The winner will be chosen by the president of DWAA from the winners of all the book categories. The award is a \$500 cash grant.

🏆 Joseph Robertia – Life with Forty Dogs

## DWAA Distinguished Service Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award honors extraordinary achievement and communications excellence. It recognizes the person who, by word, deed, exemplary conduct, public communication and professional excellence, best promotes the interest of the sport of dogs. The award consists of a plaque and a \$1,000 cash grant.

🏆 Carol Bryant

# Celebrating National Dog Week

By **Lisa Begin-Kruysman**

In the spirit of celebrating this issue's theme of practicing kindness, I recall why I chose to make the dog-human bond the topic of my writing. Back in 2010, I remember standing in a large bookstore realizing how many titles are dedicated to our relationship with man's best friend - from books on training, breed education and fuzzy-hearted memoirs, there seems to be no end to dog-centric reading material. Despite all this published knowledge, I believed then, and still do, that we are only just beginning to realize the potential of canines in the betterment of mankind.

Will Judy, co-founder of the DWAA and the man who launched National Dog Week in 1928, wrote, "The battle of the kind heart is never won; it must be fought steadily with every child with every person, with every new generation."

Today, that "battle" is fought with the help of a variety of daily, weekly and monthly observances established to educate and inspire us on so many levels (like Judy's National Dog Week) to be concerned about the welfare of animals as well as our fellow humans.

While several of these observances honor the dog-human bond, even those that don't can encourage us to be better humans. In that spirit, January is designated as Celebration of Life Month, an observance that encourages us to celebrate our lives through resolutions that get us to practice more healthful eating habits, exercise more, and to take time to honor the people, and pets, that we love and positively impact our lives. As writers with deadlines and a passion for our work, we often find ourselves neglecting this practice. If we are more mindful, we can

be more effective in our efforts while living happier and more healthful lives.

This January, consider celebrating an animal's life by reaching out to your local shelter, or local rescue group, by offering a dog (or other pet) a forever home, or a safe foster home. Your life will change for the better and you'll eliminate the loneliness of a shelter dog that was most likely surrendered through no fault of their own. True, fostering has its emotional challenges; you may cry when your foster dogs find new homes, but recognize that without your kindness, there would be no one to cry for them!

If your pledge is to make things better in your life *and* your dogs', ask yourself if your dog could benefit from additional obedience training. Fittingly, January is also National Train Your Dog Month. Since 2010, the Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) has sponsored this observance to promote the many benefits in training family dogs no matter what their age, and to make it fun, too.

On their official website, the APDT states, "We selected January as the perfect month because so many dogs and puppies are adopted, or purchased from breeders, and brought home during the winter holidays. Our desire is to help these new pet parents start off the New Year right with their newest family member."

January is also Unchain Your Dog Month, a time to be alert to those dogs left outside in the cold without proper shelter. Many communities have passed laws to empower officials to help to save these pets during winter storms and subsequent summer heat, however, in many places legislation is not in place. By raising awareness of

this issue, perhaps more laws will be passed that will enable law enforcement to take appropriate action.

February presents National Prevent a Litter Month. Sadly, every year, thousands of pets die, not because they're sick, but because there's not enough people to adopt them, and no room in the shelters for them.

Thankfully there's a surprisingly simple and kind solution; Spay and Neuter, a principle promoted during National Prevent a Litter Month because one litter can turn into hundreds of thousands of animals in just a few years if all these offspring reproduce themselves. Many of these animals end up fighting for life on the streets, or find themselves relegated to a local shelter, or animal control facility. Unfortunately, many shelters are short on space, causing animals to be euthanized for space. February also contains Spay and Neuter Day to raise awareness of what some call the best, and truest, form of Rescue.

March is PAWS to Read! Month, an observance established to encourage kids to read aloud to a pet, a practice known to have numerous benefits including increased concentration and focus, bolstered confidence in reading skills and an opportunity to simply enjoy reading. Reading to pets can also help to develop the tools students need to manage overwhelming emotions and focus on learning,

To find opportunities to read to animals in your community in honor of PAWS to Read! Month, contact your community center, library, or local animal shelter, to see what programs are in place nearby.

If you've ever witnessed read-to-

*See NATIONAL DOG WEEK pg 15*

# Spectator Etiquette:

## How to Enjoy a Dog Show

By **Barbara E. Magera MD, Jody Sutton** and **Elaine L. Mitchell**

Showing dogs is competitive and fun. Spectators, particularly families, are always welcome at the dog shows. Understanding what goes on behind the scenes can enhance a visitor's experience at a dog show.

Expressive eyes, sweet faces and happy personalities of canines make them irresistible. The initial human response is to pet or caress the canine however; always ask before touching a show dog. Keep in mind that grooming a show dog is a tedious and lengthy process. For many long haired breeds, their coat requires extensive and meticulous work. Petting a show dog who is ready to enter the show ring is the equivalent of "messing up" a work of fine art. Often the handler continues brushing and combing right up to the moment the starlet enters the ring.

Often club show rules do not allow a pet dog to come to the dog show. In fact, most rules and regulations of dog shows do not allow any dogs except those registered for the show to be anywhere on the show grounds. Only when there is a special promotion offered at the dog show, such as a medical clinic or specific activity for pet dogs, are non-exhibitor dogs allowed on the show grounds. Leaving your dog at home is for the safety of your dog and the exhibitor dogs. It is best to check the premium, printed online or in hard copy, that lists the rules and policies of the show.

Spectators are asked to stay clear of the ring entrances and exits. This area is where the ring steward lines up the exhibitors to enter the ring. If the entries

are large, the exhibitors need plenty of room for their dogs to get ready to enter the ring.

Be careful where you step around the dogs. Delicate paws, tails, fur, heads and tails can easily become injured with human footsteps. Large purses or bags are also potential hazards because they can inadvertently catch on the dog's body and cause injury.

Spectators – particularly children – are asked not to touch or hang on the ring markers. The markers are fragile and can easily tip over. The markers are carefully set to determine the ring size and jarring them from their original position could alter the show ring. Only the exhibitors, handlers, ring steward and Judge are allowed in the show ring. Spectators are to remain outside of the show ring barriers at all times. When the show ring is empty, strict rules forbid anyone from using the show ring as a practice area. Even if unoccupied, the show ring is not a play area for children.

The well-meaning public should avoid asking questions of the exhibitor or handler prior to their entering the show ring. Minutes before entering the ring, the attitude of the show dog is extremely important. Each exhibitor has only, at most, three minutes to show their dog to the Judge. The conformation ring is highly competitive, and handler and canine must remain focused and calm. Each dog is different. Whether shy or easily excited, the handler works carefully to mentally prepare each canine for competition. It is imperative that the dog concentrate on the handler's cues. A lot of activity goes on between handler and show canine 20-30 minutes before entering the show ring.



Rosettes ready to be awarded.

The Judge has complete jurisdiction of everything and everyone in his or her show ring. This means the Judge also has the ability to dismiss any exhibitor or dog from the show ring and does not need to provide a reason. If a spectator even innocently appears to interact with a dog in the show ring, the Judge can dismiss the canine from the ring and the show. Please do not talk to an exhibitor in the show ring and do not gain the attention of any dog in the show ring.

The Judge is very aware of an activity known as "double handling" and if the Judge thinks this may be occurring, the handler and the dog will be dismissed from the show and may face further reprimand.

During competition, tensions are high as exhibitors concentrate upon showing their dog to perfection. Silence is required during these times. The Judge may even silence the audience if chatter, laughter or the chiming of cell phones, computer or other electric devices occurs. It is not appropriate to clap when the dog is gaiting or, in laymen's terms, "prancing" around the ring. The dog is focused upon the cues of the

*Continued on next page*



*Continued from previous page*

handler. Clapping is encouraged only after the Judge identifies the winner. When rooting for your favorite show dog, it is best to do this with clapping. Try to avoid loud screams or whistling. Do not throw anything such as toys, flowers or food into the show ring.

Please turn off cell phones or electronic games around the show ring. Loud or strange noises are distracting to the dogs and people sitting near you. The chiming or alarm emitted by a rogue cell phone is annoying to others watching the show. Families are welcome to visit and watch the show however; screaming or crying toddlers may be asked to leave the show area.

Some show dogs are easily frightened when a stranger tries to caress or pet them. Even after a canine competes in a class, their day to show may not be finished as they may be asked to return to the show ring for further competition. After the competition, the winners generally return for a "victory" lap in the show ring. For the top winners, they must return to the ring or other designated area for win photos with the Judge.

Many camera hobbyists flock to dog shows to photograph beautiful dogs. The use of flash photography while the show is in progress is highly discouraged. Many Judges will not allow camera flash in the ring as this is distracting to the show dog and handler. At most shows, the use of a camera tripod is strictly forbidden because of the potential hazards to furry paws and human feet tripping over equipment with resultant injuries. A unipod to stabilize the camera is allowed. Some judges even question the noise emitted from a camera set on a "burst" mode because of the high pitched noise emitted that can be distracting.

Visitors with food or drinks wandering through the grooming area are a

source of anxiety for the handlers. Accidents do happen and handlers are hyper-vigilant to protect their perfectly groomed show dog from stray liquids. Avoid bringing food in the vicinity of the grooming or show ring area. Never offer any type of food or treat to a show dog. Never open a pen or crate to pet or remove a restrained dog.

The general public and spectators are welcomed at dog shows. At most regional or local shows, there is no charge of admission for spectators. There is a charge to purchase a catalog. The catalog represents the program for handlers and fanciers to follow the progression of each competitor in the show, as well as to identify the breeders, owners and lineage of the dogs.

Families with children are welcome at dog shows however; here are some tips for parents of young children that will enhance everyone's experience at a dog show. Please keep your children close to you. Running or screaming through the grooming or exhibit area is not allowed. Never allow your child to pet or hug a strange dog. The rule of show dogs is "no touching" unless explicit permission is granted by the handler or exhibitor. It is dangerous to poke wandering fingers into the cage of an unknown dog. Strollers may not be allowed beyond the audience area where chairs are located. Strollers can potentially run over and seriously injure a dog. In a stroller, the infant's face is at the same level as the canine's face. In dog language, this face-to-face staring may be interpreted as a threat and, at the very least, is distracting to the dog and handler.

After the show, most handlers or owners are more than willing to talk about their starlets and the breed. Best to ask if "now is a good time to talk" as most handlers still must attend to their canine's needs.

If you are new to the world of dog shows, mention this to the people hosting the welcome table. Many clubs will pair an interested novice with a knowledgeable fancier who can help teach and explain the activities of the show.

The show world is different in comparison to other sporting events. This guide is provided to help visitors optimize their experience at a dog show. 🐾

**Barbara E. Magera, MD, Caracaleeb**  
**Jody Sutton, Windnsea Cavaliers**  
**Elaine L. Mitchell, CA Cambridge**

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## National Dog Week

*Continued from pg 13*

the-dog programs at school, or community libraries, you know how these therapy dogs immediately improve the morale of young readers, handlers involved – and help to win battles for the kind heart our co-founder wrote of so many decades ago. Many of these dogs once languished in shelters.

The New Year is filled with hope and expectations that this year will be even better than the last. But as we know, life brings uncertainty and unexpected challenges and sometimes we wish we could be better at navigating life or to engage in a kinder approach. To that end, Will Judy also reminded us to be more forgiving and kinder to ourselves, writing, "Try to be the god on earth, the all-powerful and all-mighty your dog thinks you are. Never let him learn his mistake."

This January, as we observe Celebrate Life Month, remember that we as writers have the word power to make a difference in the lives of humans and dogs everywhere.

A Happy and Kind New Year to you all! 🐾

# Leo: An Act of Kindness Rescues a Voice

Excerpted and adapted from *"Sophie... best friends are forever"*, written by Ted Slupik

For almost four years, my wife and I had visited my mother-in-law "Nana", now age 92, several times a week in the Alzheimer's wing of a local skilled nursing facility where she lived. As Sophie (our Rough Coated Collie) was a Certified Therapy Dog, we would usually take her with us and we would walk through the activity room on the Alzheimer's unit to greet all the patients who were sitting there. This nursing home made it a policy to get all the patients out of their rooms every day, to help them socialize and communicate. Most of the patients never had any visitors. Sophie would introduce herself to a patient by standing and waiting until she was acknowledged before moving on to the next patient. Sophie was usually able to provoke some type of response (pet, smile, and laugh), even from patients who did not normally inter-react with staff or others.

An unusual event happened this particular day as we were walking Sophie through the activity room while the patients watched television. An elderly man in a wheelchair was sitting in a far corner. He made eye contact with Sophie and began to pat his leg and said "here girl" to call her to him. Sophie noticed him and slowly started to walk towards him. He continued calling "here girl" until Sophie got close enough and sat down next to him so that he could pet her. This man, who we later learned was named Leo, asked, "Dog name?" We told him "Sophie". Leo spoke in bro-



Sophie

ken sentences for a couple minutes and seemed to really enjoy the visit. Sophie intently watched and listened to Leo as he haltingly spoke very softly. She continued to nudge him until he responded back.

After we were done visiting all of the patients in the activity room, we left to go down the hall to visit with Nana in her room, which was at the far end of the hallway. Upon exiting the activity room, you were required to pass the nurses' station for the floor. There was a couple (man and woman) standing and talking to the charge nurse. As we walked closer to the couple, we noticed that they were crying. We asked whether there was anything we could do to help. The woman answered, "No, you've already done something to help." Asking what she meant, she explained that, Leo, the man in the wheelchair, was her

father. He had been at the nursing facility on the Alzheimer's care floor for almost six months.

*Today was the first day he spoke!*

What we thought were tears of sorrow were actual tears of joy. Whatever that brief encounter with Sophie did to remind Leo of something a long time ago which got him to speak was a wonderful thing. We had thought someone had died when we first saw the couple at the nurse's station and it turned out to be a very happy moment for Leo and his family. Although he never became a great conversationalist during his remaining time at the nursing home, Leo was able to communicate and respond to staff if he needed some type of help. Through this simple form of communication, Leo was reunited with his family and able to speak to staff members

*See KINDNESS RESCUES A VOICE pg 20*



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## Payment of dues, \$50

Dues are renewable by March 1st. The DWAA yearly membership runs from March 1, 2018–February 28, 2019.

To land mail your dues, please fill out the required fields below and mail this form with your check to Marsha Pugh, Treasurer

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# PET SITTING TALES

By **Terri Rimmer**

I'm a writer, though I've been pet sitting since the 80s. It's something I went back to because I knew I could depend on it like a comforting friend and animals have always been a healing source for me. They have healed me in big and little ways.

I get attached to my four-legged clients, like Birdie, the Boxer I took care of for three years until she died of cancer. I got her as a client the same week my dog Ripley died.

On one particularly hard day, I started talking to Birdie about the loss of Ripley and Birdie started whimpering like she understood me and I just cried as I hugged her. I later wound up telling her owner five months after Birdie's

death how she reacted to me and her owner cried.

"Birdie did that?" she asked, touched. Sometimes you just need a dog hug.

Birdie's death hit me hard because I'd been her pet sitter for so long and because she'd been sick for nine months. Also, because she was so young and a rescue dog, having already been through so much.

I nicknamed Birdie "Twistie" because when she'd wag her butt (Boxers don't really have a tail) it would twist her whole body. Her owner called her "The Birdster."

I used to cool Birdie off after walks on hot days, per her owner's instructions, with ice cubes, rubbing them on her back, chest, neck and head. She loved it.

Another time Birdie was digging in the yard and I told her "No" until I realized she was digging up a toy she buried. We played with it for awhile then Birdie went and buried it in another place on the other side of the yard.

Birdie had this cute little thing she did when I was cleaning up water with a paper towel after she drank water. She curved her paw and put it in the circle, too as if she was trying to help clean up.

And, sometimes, after I put Birdie back in her crate as I got ready to leave her, Birdie would lay in the crate and snore with her eyes open.

I remembered when I met Birdie and her owner told me: "When she grunts, that's just her happy grunt."

*Continued on next page*

Birdie grunted a lot on walks.

I often thought to myself when I heard Birdie grunt: "We should all be so simply happy."

Pet sitting has been my saving grace, making me laugh through my depression, like when I was taking care of these two cats and I couldn't find one of them and had looked everywhere in the tiny apartment and even outside.

I was positive I hadn't let them out and couldn't imagine where the female could be.

So, I come back in the door after looking again and this time I find Miss Kitty folded up in the Venetian blinds behind the flat screen TV asleep!

It was June, three years ago, when I opened the apartment door and was ready to meet my newest canine client who I would be spending time with weekdays at noon, downtown.

Instead, I met his owner, Sara, who had just moved here from Florida, among pots and pans, balancing herself on a counter as she proceeded to unpack when her mom said hello. She had literally just moved in.

"Well, as it turns out I can fill out the paperwork but Sam is still in the hotel room," Sara said. "We didn't want to move him over here to the apartment just yet until everything was settled."

So we arranged another meeting. I learned that Sam was 13, that Sara had had him since he was a pup, he was a Shar Pei, a Chinese breed known for their wrinkles top to bottom. Later I found out that as they get older their wrinkles disappear so when I met Sam he had no wrinkles.

The first day I met my new four-legged friend he barked and didn't want to come near me. I carefully put his leash on but he had trouble getting out the front door. We managed though. He didn't trust me at all but that was nor-

mal. He was black and totally smooth, walking very slow. I wasn't known for my patience, in fact I was known for quite the opposite.

Sam taught me patience. And I'm grateful for that. Every day was a lesson in that trait, some more than others.

Many times I also pet-sat Sam on weekends and I had some overnight visits with him, too, the longest being at Christmas time. The hardest times were during ice storms. He couldn't go down the icy steps or across the frozen courtyard so I needed to take him down the elevator which was a longer walk for his arthritic legs. Even with medication it was hard for him.

Some days he just didn't want to get out of bed.

Every day we just took our time. I had a bad foot at the time so we just stumbled along together, learning from each other. He taught me to slow down and I noticed my foot didn't hurt as bad. I learned he hated being dried off after getting wet from rain and never to touch his legs since he was almost blind.

I was clueless about prompts so I made up my own: "Up, up, up" to encourage him to go up the steps, one at a time, sometimes together, side by side; "Wanna treat (s)," "You can do it," "It's okay, Sam." I would gently stomp one foot on a step to let him know where he was, what step he was on. Jokingly, I told myself, "This is like Helen Keller training for dogs."

When I didn't know what to do, I would pause and pray, then, all the sudden he would lift a foot or pick up the pace. I did a lot of praying on our walks down the hall. I had plenty of time to pray. He had fallen down the steps before – more than once – with me and with his owner so naturally he was scared. Who wouldn't be?

When we got close to the apartment, I'd take my keys out and jingle them to

let him know we were almost home and he seemed to like that.

After his potty breaks, I would sit in a chair, having given him a treat, refreshing his water and fixing his bed, and he would wander over to my chair where I would pet him and reassure him, then he would go to bed.

I'd had conversations with a balcony family who lived above the courtyard many times during the summer and fall about Sam.

Then fall turned into winter and we still talked. The husband got tired of hearing me coax Sam so he quit hanging out on the balcony so much. But it wasn't just my job, it was more than that. Sam deserved to be taken care of totally and loved by everyone in his life.

One time right after Christmas there was a party going on in the apartments and some guy stumbled out of a door toward Sam.

He took one look at him and slurred, "Is that a dog?"

I started to mess with his head and retort, "Why, no! It's a huge cat!" but instead got Sam away from him and politely told him it was a dog.

*Continued on next page*



**Birdie models a sit.**



Sam in a down.

*Continued from previous page*

The security guards at the apartments used to stare when I would take Sam to the gravel area via elevator because of the ice at the courtyard. You could just tell they were dying to say something but didn't. I was defensive when it came to Sam.

Sometimes Sam would look into my eyes and I would stroke his head. This dog went from not wanting to come near me to tucking his head into me when he was scared and leaning into me and wagging his tail when I patted his back.

Then, things started happening. He started losing control of his bladder and bowels in the hall and becoming disoriented. I found him in the walk-in closet one day shaking so we had to start shutting that door. I would show him where his bed was.

I didn't think I would become attached to him. But when you see a dog as much as I saw Sam, how could I not be?

I knew the day would come that I would get the text or email that Sara had made the decision to have Sam put to sleep. I also had a fear that one day I would go over there and turn the key in the lock and call out to Sam only to see a note telling me he was gone.

It was on a Sunday when I got the email during the Oscars telling me that Sam had been pacing back and forth, panting, not able to catch his breath. He had been having panting episodes for awhile. Sara said she had made the difficult decision to let him rest. He would've been 14.

I had clients who had lost pets before and it upset me but not like this. Even though I knew it was the right thing just like in 2012 when I had to do the same with my 15 1/2-year-old dog, Ripley; it still got me.

I thought about Sam for a long time and it was weird that whole week not to be going over there. I recently pet sat for a dog named Bruce Willis who has arthritis and the way his back legs splayed out reminded me of Sam.

I remember my first overnight visit with Sam. I didn't know how it would go because of his health, but it was fine. He was just snoring away and it was a comfort to me.

I woke up from a nap one night after hearing about the plan to have Sam put to sleep. In the dream I was crying and crying about my boyfriend who died in 2005.

When I woke up there was an outline of a dog standing on my side.

Crazy, I know. 🐾

## Kindness Rescues a Voice

*Continued from pg 16*

which I'm sure made his day to day life at the facility better.

It was amazing that after assuming the worst and being sad to experiencing a moment of joy, all delivered by Sophie.

We would see Leo many other times. It was almost as if he knew we were coming because we always seemed to find him sitting in his wheelchair by the elevator waiting to welcome Sophie. One time that we saw him after our first visit, my wife asked him if he would like to give Sophie a "cookie" (our word for dog biscuit). He shook his head enthusiastically and my wife gave Leo a Milk-Bone, but apparently something got lost in the translation. That day Leo had a Milk-Bone for his dessert. Leo thought it was his cookie.

Another amazing thing Leo would do when he first saw Sophie get off the elevator, was to follow her down the hall in his wheelchair, peddling with his feet as fast as he could to keep up with or catch up to Sophie so he could talk to her. This type of exercise was exactly what the nurses tried to get Leo to do many times on his own. Although not willing to exercise for the staff, he was always willing to do it to see Sophie for a longer period of time and he got his exercise this way twice a week. Leo never learned my name or my wife's name but he certainly remembered Sophie every time we came to visit. Leo lived several more years, and we have Sophie to thank for giving him back the ability to communicate with family, friends, staff, and yes, with Sophie. The family was eternally grateful for a visit with a dog named Sophie and that act of kindness which changed everything. 🐾



# Millennials:

## Looking For The Perfect Dog House

Kindness comes in many forms. This example of how we have taken our pets' needs into consideration is reprinted with permission from **Mari Adam, CFP.**

We've all heard how millennials are slow to buy homes, as they're weighed down by student debt and more at ease renting or moving back home with mom and dad.

Well, it looks like things are finally changing.

The reason behind that change is a cold nose and a fluffy tail.

One third of millennials surveyed by SunTrust Mortgage said they bought their first home because they needed space for their dog. In fact, more millennials list dogs than marriage or children as a factor in home-buying decisions.

"Millennials have strong bonds with their dogs, so it makes sense that their furry family members are driving

home-buying decisions," said Dorinda Smith, SunTrust Mortgage CEO.

"For those with dogs, renting can be more expensive and a hassle; home ownership takes some of the stress off by providing a better living situation."

"Millennials are trending toward homeownership," she added. "Demand among millennial-aged, first-time homebuyers is robust, and we expect them to continue adding strength to the housing market." 🐾

**Editor's Note: Mari Adam is my financial planner. Her work has appeared in Business Week, The Wall Street Journal, Kiplinger's, Newsweek and Money Magazine, and CBS MarketWatch.**

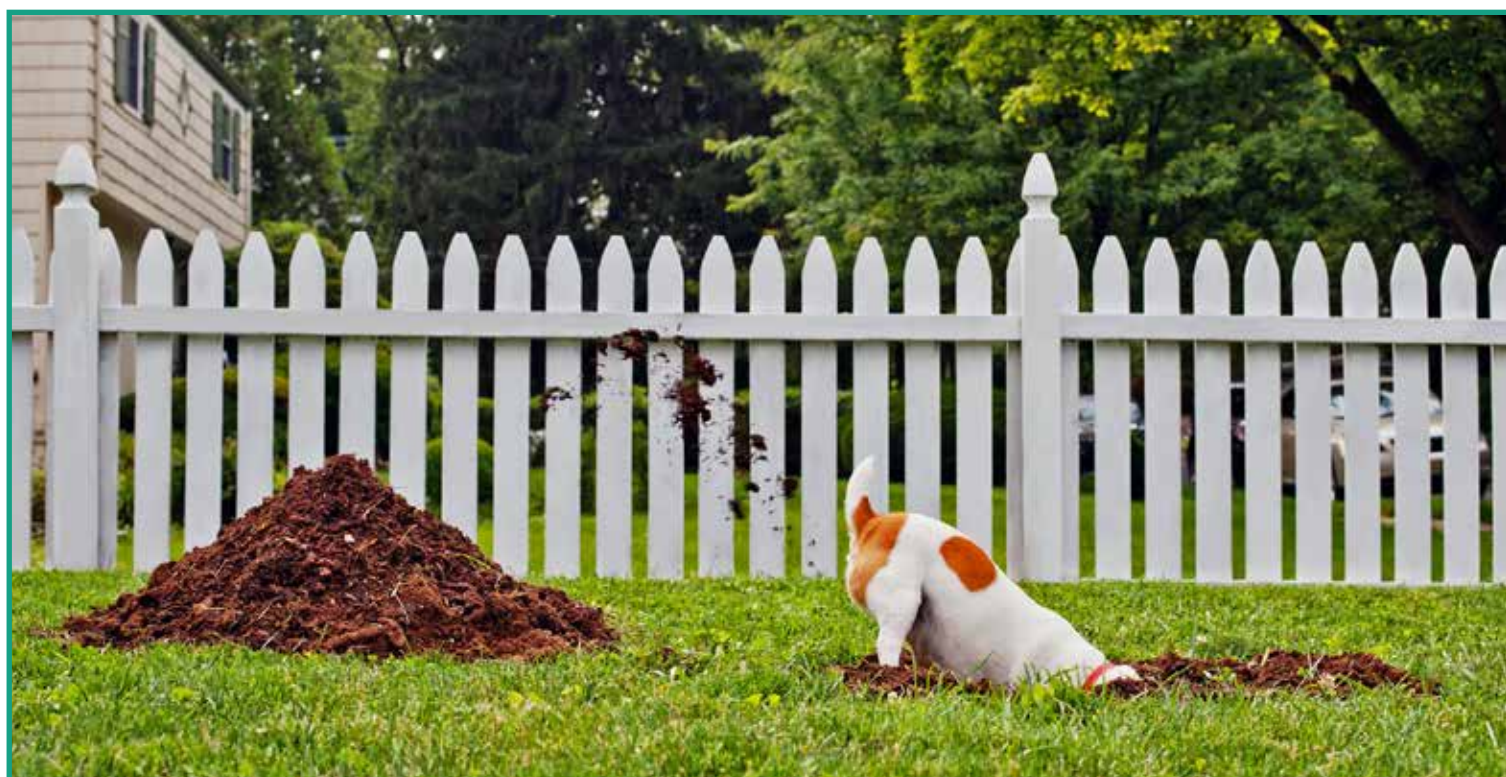
## President's Column

*Continued from pg 2*

tips about book promotion. Winners will accept Maxwell Medallions and checks for special awards – an incredible accomplishment considering contest entries increased by 24 percent this year!

Thank you so much to our fearless Contest Chair, **Su Ewing**, as well as our special award sponsors and the nearly 100 members who volunteered to judge this year's contest. Huge thanks also to the members of the Executive Committee and Board of Governors, our newsletter editor **Merrie Meyers**, assistant editor **Morgan Humphries**, webmaster/graphic designer **Angela Capodanno**, **Lea-Ann Germinder** and our PR team at Germinder & Associates, and social media gurus **Dawn Taylor**, **Shelley Bueche** and **Lisa Begin-Kruysman** for all your hard work this year.

Finally, thank you all for being members of DWAA. Here's to success, health and happiness in 2018! 🐾



# Canine Kindness

By **Merrie Meyers**

About 10 years ago I discovered my Collie, Bailey, could read. Well, he actually didn't read as much as he helped young readers sound out their words. "Is this right, Bailey?" a boy asked as he tackled a particularly challenging word. He extended his paw, and they moved it across the page of a book as they worked through challenging pronunciations. Bailey responded as only collies can, offering a toothy grin accompanied by his laughing sound, "Keh, Keh, Keh." As the first "reading volunteer" for our local school district's Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) program, "Wags and Tales," Bailey and I visited schools to help struggling students overcome their apprehension with the printed word.

Animals have been used for therapeutic purposes since the earliest bonding between species. The first documented use of AAT was in the mid-1800s. In the 1900s, Florence Nightingale, Sigmund Freud and child psychotherapist Boris Levinson all discovered the calming and confidence-building effect that their patients experienced when dogs were part of therapy sessions.

In the early 2000s, children with low literacy levels were put into "special" reading groups. These groups used the "drill and kill" method, with students mindlessly repeating or writing vocabulary words over and over. Afterwards, students were expected to read out loud, creating apprehension and anxiety over the prospect of being judged on pronunciation and/or comprehension. At that time, alternative approaches, such as AAT were considered "fluffy" programs, all show and no substance. The data proved just the opposite<sup>1</sup>.



**Merrie Meyers, her dog Bailey and a budding reader**

Around that time, the Humane Society of Broward County was looking to expand its AAT reading program from public libraries to the public schools. As expected, there was tremendous skepticism among educators over the benefits the program could provide, and major apprehension about introducing a program to students in a classroom setting.

As an AAT volunteer and school system administrator, I was asked by both "sides" to figure out how to pilot the idea. Already vetted as an AAT humane education dog for afterschool programs, Bailey was chosen as the Wags and Tales "Spokesdog."

Bailey was selected because of his gentle nature. He was no stranger to the kind of stress these children faced. Adopted by my family at age two, it took at least three years for him to stop drooling and panting when under stress, and

two more years for him to stop being stressed in general. As he aged and adjusted to life, Bailey's legendary herding skills presented themselves. You couldn't go anywhere without a gentle bump of that long collie nose guiding you. We decided that Bailey needed a purpose other than serving as a Canine Bumper Car. So, after passing the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test, we signed Bailey up to become a pet volunteer. I tagged along with him, because, well, he still couldn't drive.

As mentioned earlier, our first two years were spent conducting Humane Education programs at the local Boys and Girls Clubs. Then we visited area elementary schools for three years, usually working with 9-year-old boys with minimal reading skills. The age and grade were critical. True fact: juvenile justice

*Continued on next page*



experts can predict the number of jail beds needed in 10 years based on the number of students who can't read by the end of third grade.

For many of these kids, their entire experience with dogs came down to guard dogs outside of a home or business- trained to attack. But Bailey had his own history of being attacked by other dogs, hence the drooling and panting. He understood their stress and gently lay next to these children, never touching them until they extended a hand to pet his fluffy fur. By the end of the semester, these once timid children were using my dog as a body pillow. And we were helping them read. Because animals are attentive and non-judgmental, children with poor reading skills become more relaxed and able to enjoy themselves while reading to dogs, leading to a more engaged, focused and alert experience. Many a third-grader helped Bailey "sound out" a word with them to better understand it.

Our term as "readers" ended abruptly when Bailey, normally so conscientious about his habits, started having accidents in the house. The vet found a tumor in his bladder, wrapped around blood vessels and inoperable. Knowing that he wouldn't be able to control his bladder for a whole class period (45 minutes), we said goodbye to our students. Bailey made it another two years using a combination of nutritional supplements and cold laser treatments. When it was time to let him go I thanked him for his gifts; to me, and to the children who had a brighter future because of his kindness. 🐾

<sup>1</sup> Kaymen, Maria S., "Exploring Animal-Assisted Therapy as a Reading Intervention Strategy" (2005). *Master's Theses and Capstone Projects*. 166. <http://scholar.dominican.edu/masters-theses/166>

# The U.S. Is Going To The Dogs!

By **Merrie Meyers**

The research is in and it's official: dog ownership is at an all-time high, which means the 2018 outlook for dog writers continues to be positive as well.

According to the 2017-2018 National Pet Ownership Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association, 68 percent of U.S. households own pets and 48 percent of these include at least one dog. This continues a consistent upward trend in both pet and dog ownership documented over the last two decades. Specifically, while pet owners have more cats than dogs in the house (2.0 versus 1.49 per household), many more homes include a dog (60.2 million compared to 47.1 million with cats).

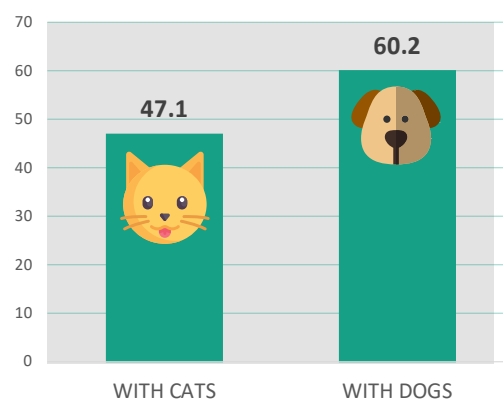
Collecting data on pets is not limited to industry associations; even the U.S. Census Bureau is getting in on the act. The Bureau's American Community Survey offers interesting data on pet-related careers, products and services, business patterns and housing. Part of the reason for the increased analytics on pet ownership is market driven. Pets are becoming more mainstream and pet owners have quadrupled their spending on goods and services from \$17 billion in 1994 to \$62.75 billion in 2016. By 2020, the APPA estimates the industry could hit \$96 billion.

But wait, there's more!

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data reflects spending on not-vet-related services that exceeds the National Consumer Price Index with only one category, live pet purchases, declining. According to the ASPCA, this reflects a shift towards adoption and rescues over purchasing, with animal adoptions increasing from 2.7 million to 3.2 million annually – and euthanasia rates are down.

In 2018 and beyond, the hot demographic for targeted communication will be Generation Y/Millennials. The percentage of Generation Y/Millennials who are dog owners (38% percent) has surpassed Baby Boomers (31% percent). According to Wakefield Research (2017), Millennials are more thoughtful about purchases and product evaluation, and they gravitate to brands that rise above the communication clutter with stories about their mission and impact. Made-in-the-USA and locally

## HOMES WITH CATS, DOGS IN MILLIONS



based products are also important to this audience, with emphasis on quality food ingredients and production processes. Millennials are more likely to splurge on pet products, even more than they would for themselves, and they are ready to share their excitement online, with more than 90% of the generation using social media to communicate with friends and family.

While interest in dogs continues to rise, interest in dog-related fiction and nonfiction will rise as well. In the words of Groucho Marx, "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read." 🐾





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## **Roxie**

*By Janice Biniok*



*Maybe you should write an article on "How to Get Your Dog in the Tub"!*

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