



ruff DRAFTS

Spring 2018

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Observations of a WKC Newbie

By **Merrie Meyers**

So here's the thing, I had no idea what to expect. While not a first-time dog-show-attendee, it was my first time attending the "big show." As a seasoned TV participant, I was curious if the actual event would rival the presentation package home viewers receive. After all, watching from the comfort of your couch, in your jammies, on TV or online, has its benefits. So, on your behalf, I took one for the team and assigned myself to "cover" the event.

Coming to the WKC Dog Show has been "on the list." You know the list, the famously hypothetical bucket full of things you want to experience before you can't. Because I'm at the age where the names and faces listed in the obits are more familiar than vague, checking things off the list has become more important. So with this renewed sense of "do it now," I trundled off to NYC to attend DWAA's Awards Banquet and, of course, the WKC Show.

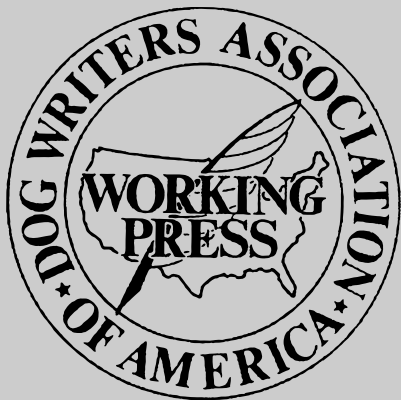
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Running with the Dogs in NYC

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Our cover girl Emily models a Maxwell Medallion. Photo by Mary Bloom



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President's

COLUMN

By **Jen Reeder**

I was pretty nervous before giving my welcome speech at the DWAA Awards Banquet last month at the New Yorker. It wasn't just the pressure of not embarrassing myself in a roomful of my colleagues and luminaries like **David Frei** and **Dr. Marty Becker**, or the fear I'd start crying while introducing the special award in honor of my late grandpa.

The main issue is that one of my first attempts at public speaking ended disastrously. I was about to give the toast at my best friend's wedding. There was a lovely reception in her parents' backyard, and just before I rose to address the crowd, I turned to the bride and groom to tell them how perfect everything was. To emphasize my point, I deliberately put down my glass of wine – which landed between two uneven tables. Red wine shot over all over the bridesmaids, myself included. (If only I'd been drinking white wine instead!) It wasn't pretty. Thank goodness my friend thought it was funny instead of upsetting.

It's a huge relief that the banquet went much more smoothly. Our speakers – **Dr. Marty Becker**, **Laura Coffey**, **David Frei** and **Carol Bryant** – gave inspiring speeches and there was a real sense of celebration in the room. I'm indebted to **Marsha Pugh** for handling registration and doing so much to keep me from fainting. Thanks also to **Mary Bloom** for volunteering her services as the evening's photographer; Contest Chair **Su Ewing** for emceeing; *Ruff Drafts* and banquet program editor **Merrie Meyers**, who also filmed the speeches for Facebook Live; **Lea-Ann Germinder**



Jen Reeder, President of the DWAA

and her team at Germinder + Associates for publicity; **Dr. Joel Gavriale-Gold** for helping with registration, posing for photos with winners and presenting **David Frei** with his Hall of Fame plaque; our sponsors, who provided a whopping \$14,000 in prize money; the nearly 100 professional members who volunteered as contest judges; the friendly, efficient team at the New Yorker; and everyone who attended. Shout out to perfectly behaved dogs Dexter (**Carol Bryant's** Cocker Spaniel) and Emily (**Mara Bovsun's** Leonberger) for reminding us why we love our work. Thank you all for making it such a special evening!

At the banquet, I was proud to announce a new DWAA program: Young Writers on the Web. Thanks to a wonderful idea by children's book author

See PRESIDENT'S COLUMN pg 7

By **Merrie Meyers**

Dear fellow dog writers;

I arrived back in Fort Lauderdale after a whirlwind 5 days in New York. It was a wonderful weekend and my first time attending the DWAA Writing Awards Competition and "covering" the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. It was 2:30 p.m. As the plane taxied to the gate, I turned my phone back on to connect with my ride home. Immediately, news alerts filled the screen. It was February 14th, Ash Wednesday and the date of the horrendous mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School – located in the northwest corner of my county.

Even before this tragedy, MSD had a piece of my heart. As Broward County Public Schools community relations director, I helped coordinate a visit from the school's namesake during the grand opening of the building. The school got its name because it sits on the edge of the Everglades, aptly named "A River of Grass," by Marjory Stoneman Douglas. As a reporter, Ms. Stoneman Douglas fiercely advocated for preservation of this aquifer that fuels the entire south Florida ecosystem. Parallels to the high school, the core of Parkland's ecosystem, are inescapable.

The theme of this issue is humor, selected long before this awful tragedy. While there is nothing funny about what happened, the presence of humor in the aftermath of the tragedy is clearly a saving grace. Several organizations, including the one I volunteer for, brought therapy dogs to help the staff and the students begin to heal. It was



Merrie Meyers, Editor of Ruff Drafts

one of the few bright spots in the midst of immense sadness. One student said spending time with a therapy dog on campus was the one thing that made her smile all day.

Humor is the antidote to many of society's ills. Sharing their lives with us, dogs make the days a little sweeter and our smiles a little wider. One minute they are sleeping upside down with their legs straight in the air, and the next they are bounding through the house with some contraband hanging from their mouth. (Insert assorted stolen items here; toilet paper, a morsel off the dinner table, or some gem from the trash.)

Life with dogs is the great equalizer. They don't pay attention to the quality of your bedding, the score on your

See EDITOR'S COLUMN pg 9

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Carmen Battaglia, Martin Deeley,
Susan Ewing, Marsha Pugh

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Ida Estep, Chair
Carmen Battaglia, Patricia Cruz

2017 CONTEST

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Officers and Board

HALL OF FAME

Joel Gavrielle-Gold
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LIAISON WITH CAT WRITERS ASSOCIATION

Susan Ewing

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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.

DWAA Annual Meeting Minutes

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2018

THE HOTEL NEW YORKER

Present: DWAA President Jen Reeder, DWAA Treasurer Marsha Pugh, DWAA Vice President Laura Coffey, DWAA Contest Chair Su Ewing, DWAA Board of Governors Member Dr. Joel Gavriele-Gold, Publicity Lead Lea-Ann Germinder of Germinder + Associates, Susan Willett of the blog "Life with Dogs and Cats," and Ann Hohenhaus, DVM, DACVIM of Animal Medical Center in NYC.

The meeting was called to order at 4:17 p.m.

I. PRESIDENT'S UPDATE FROM JEN REEDER

- A. Germinder + Associates will stay on as the DWAA's public relations agency for another year.
- B. Contest entries jumped by 24 percent in 2017.
- C. Merrie Meyers and Morgan Humphries are doing a great job as the editor and assistant editor for DWAA's Ruff Drafts newsletter.
- D. DWAA awarded a total of \$14,000 in prize money to contest winners in 2017. Of that amount, \$7,900 came from these new special awards secured in 2017:
 - The Fear Free Pets Award – \$2,000
 - Fear Free Dog Enrichment Award – \$2,000
 - The Canine Scribbles Award – \$350
 - The Ceva Heartworm Prevention Award – \$1,500
 - The GNFP Digital Online Article Award – \$500
 - The Harrison Stephens Inspirational Feature Award – \$300
 - International Association of Pet Fashion Professionals Pet Fashion Award – \$350

- The Morris Animal Foundation Canine Health Award – \$300
- The PSI Professional Pet Care Award – \$300
- The Take Your Dog Award (PSI) – \$300
- The Walter R. Fletcher Memorial Award – Seat of honor at the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show
- E. New programs announced at the DWAA banquet:
 - Successful Queries
 - Editor Insights
 - Young Writers on the Web. (Mara Bovsun will oversee the Young Writers on the Web program. Writers under the age of 18 can send submissions of 1,000 words or less. These submissions may be shared on our website and could become eligible for the \$400 DWAA Junior Writer Award sponsored by Karen Petit.)
- F. A survey of DWAA members led to

significant awards banquet changes this year. About 200 people responded to the survey, and those responses resulted in our moving the annual awards banquet from Sunday to Saturday evening, changing our event venue, and revealing all contest winners on social media prior to the event. Despite those changes, only about 15 contest winners attended the 2018 awards banquet.

II. VICE PRESIDENT'S UPDATE FROM LAURA COFFEY

- A. Dr. Marty Becker is the keynote speaker for the 2018 DWAA banquet and is not charging to do so. Laura also is speaking about book marketing at the 2018 DWAA banquet without charge.
- B. Laura has ideas for additional fun, dog-loving speakers who likely would be happy to speak at future DWAA banquets at no charge.

Continued on next page



Dr. Joel Gavriele-Gold, Sarah Rumble, Dr. Marty Becker, Jen Reeder

III. SECRETARY'S UPDATE FROM LAUREN DARR

(who was not able to be present at the meeting but who provided these updates nonetheless)

- A. Associate membership application has been revised to be more inclu-

sive and to encourage even more quality people to join DWAA.

- B. DWAA grew by 23 new members between March and December 2017. By way of comparison, DWAA grew by 16 new members during the preceding year.



Dr. Marty Becker and David Frei



Dr. Joel Gavriele-Gold, Carol Bryant, David Frei, Laura Coffey, Jen Reeder

IV. TREASURER'S UPDATE FROM MARSHA PUGH

- A. Contest revenue went up slightly in 2017.
- B. Total ending balance for the DWAA treasury in 2017: \$30,713.77
- C. Marsha provided a full, detailed treasury report to everyone in attendance.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. DWAA Board of Governors Member Dr. Joel Gavriele-Gold is very happy about inducting David Frei into the DWAA Hall of Fame at the 2018 banquet.
- B. Contest Chair Su Ewing reported these contest highlights for 2017:
- Entries were up 24 percent, with a total of 576 entries.
 - In 2016, 114 people entered their work for special awards. In 2017, we had 231 special-award entries.
 - In 2016, 98 non-members entered the competition. In 2017, 130 non-members entered. "Thanks to the publicity efforts of Jen Reeder and Lea-Ann Germinder, people are discovering us," Su noted.
 - Some contest categories saw significant growth this year. For instance, the "online blog or article, any other topic" category grew from 31 to 53 entries; the "single photo" category grew from 4 to 21 entries; and the "video, DVD or TV broadcast" category doubled from 10 to 20 entries.
 - The competition was unusually intense in 2017 because of so many high-quality entries. In one category, the difference between the score of the winner and the next highest entry was just 0.3. "The quality was amazing," Su said. "A nomination really and

Continued on next page

truly is a huge honor if you've got scores like that."

- Su has stepped down as contest chair, so the DWAA needs to find a replacement. The contest chair should be tech-savvy since the majority of entries are submitted online.

C. Lea-Ann Germinder of Germinder + Associates shared these public relations updates:

- Our goals have been to help secure sponsors, generate more contest entries, generate more banquet ticket sales, increase DWAA visibility, and set the stage for future growth. Great strides have been made in all these areas.
- Jen Reeder represented DWAA in many radio interviews in the past year, and this led to more contest entries.
- David Frei did a nice radio interview with Jon Patch and called attention to DWAA in the interview.
- We've been using the [Good News for Pets](#) publication as a nice outlet for DWAA publicity.

- Big recommendation: Beyond the annual contest and the annual banquet, can we find touch points/nice ways to reach out to DWAA members and sponsors and engage with them once a quarter? Could this outreach lead to media coverage that would increase the visibility of DWAA even more?

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Rue Chagoll restitution is ongoing (\$190.48/month; balance remaining – \$57,658.32).

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Board of Governors incumbents have agreed to remain.
- B. Discussion about creating a "Dogs and Cats Award" with the Cat Writers' Association. Susan Willett of the blog ["Life with Dogs and Cats"](#) loved this idea and offered to be a liaison between DWAA and the Cat Writers' Association because she's involved with both organizations.
- C. Discussion of future plans for the 2019 awards banquet. Do we make it a cocktail party? Move the event back to Sunday? Discussed the need to find corporate sponsors to help sponsor the banquet.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m. 🐾



**Dr. Joel Gavriele-Gold
and Joanne Anderson**

New Members

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floridapets.net

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Lea-Ann Germinder

Treasurer's

2017 REPORT

by **Marsha Pugh**

1/1/2017 THROUGH 12/31/2017

OPENING BALANCE 01/01/2017	\$31,816.81
INCOME	\$36,451.06
Applications	\$1,156.76
Awards Banquet	\$3,901.63
Contest Entry Fees	\$11,721.72
Dues	\$8,237.34
Paypal – 12/31/2017 Paypal Reimbursement	\$599.76
Restitution	\$1,904.80
Seminar	\$3,143.60
Special Award Sponsor	\$5,785.45
EXPENSES	\$(37,554.10)
Donation – AKC Reunite, hurricane relief	\$(500.00)
Bank Charge	\$(154.00)
10/17/2017 Returned Check	\$(120.00)
9/14/2017 Check Order Fee – new checks \$(34.00)	
Accounting	\$(1,115.00)
Banquet Expenses	\$(11,705.01)
Computer Services	\$(8,097.07)
Contest Chair Stipend	\$(3,000.00)
Contest Expenses	\$(1,091.77)
Contest Supplies	\$(2,643.14)
Insurance	\$(1,759.00)
Postage	\$(17.71)
Printing	\$(484.40)
Special Award Winners	\$(6,950.00)
State Filing Fee	\$(37.00)
ENDING BALANCE	\$30,713.77
SAVINGS	\$101.67



DWAA Distinguished Service Award
winner Carol Bryant with Dexter

President's Column

Continued from pg 7

Karen Petit, we are going to begin nurturing the next generation of writers. Children under 18 can submit articles for potential publication under the mentorship of award-winning writer/editor **Mara Bovsun** of *AKC Family Dog*. If you know a young writer, please send them the program's link on our website: <http://dogwriters.org/youngwriters/>.

I'm grateful to the other volunteers who have lent support during my first year in office, including the members of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors; **Morgan Humphries**, *Ruff Drafts* assistant editor; and social media gurus **Dawn Taylor**, **Shelley Bueche** and **Lisa Begin-Kruysman**. We're always looking for more volunteers, so please email me if you're interested in getting involved.

Thank you so much for being a member of DWAA. Here's to a fantastic Year of the Dog! 🐾

Why Writers Become Hermits

And Why A “She Cave” Just Won’t Work

By **Gail C. Parker**

I am one of those people who like to write in peace and quiet. The radio is not even playing. When I decide to write an article, the first thing I do is locate my husband. Best case scenario is he is already out on an errand. If he is home, I make sure to tell him I will be writing. “Why?” you may ask. He likes my company, which would be flattering except “company” means he will sit at his desk (same room as the computer), turn on his radio and either talk to me in between whatever he is doing or start shredding papers. Not annoying noises for a normal day, of course, but imagine sounds increased by many decibels in my preoccupied mind. Feelings get hurt when I announce: “I am WRITING!” That is why I have learned to locate the spouse and announce I will be writing. He knows to find something to do in another part of the house. This does not mean I am safe—often I will hear jingling and then him talking to Daisy, our Irish Setter, downstairs.

This brings me to the next reason I really need to find a cave with computer access. After finding husband, I make sure Daisy is happily snoring away on her bed. We have walked, she has been fed, and she seems relaxed. “Seems” being the key word here (see jingling and spouse in above paragraph). I stop typing and ask if Daisy wants to go out. Spouse says she doesn’t she is just changing position. Okay. But talking to her may wake her up and then she will want out. Sigh. Stop typing and go downstairs to check on them both.

By this time, I am almost ready to actually start the article. Photographs are taken and notes prepared. All I have to



Daisy at rest, rarely stays at rest! Photos by Gail C. Parker

do is turn on the computer right? Uh no. I should explain we have one room that is perfect for our mutual office, the litter boxes for the cats, and their dish of dry food. Next step before I may try to write is to check on the cats. All are quiet and well fed. I find one cat in my chair at the computer. I feel so guilty making him move, so I carry him over to an upholstered bench that is covered with soft pillows. He leaves. Athena, my black cat, decides to walk across the desk and block the ‘puter screen. Miffed when I move her; she proceeds to knock the whole container of pencils, pens, emery boards and odds and ends on the floor behind the file cabinet. She then goes and lies down in her box looking down at me with an annoyed expression on her face.

See WRITERS BECOME HERMITS pg 9



That cat is up to no good!

Writers Become Hermits

Continued from pg 8

At least the cats are all settled now. I should be able to start typing. I sit down, sniff, what the heck? Another cat, meanwhile, has used the litter box so I have to scoop out the poop or be distracted by grossness. Two others have used two other boxes for urinating in so I might as well clean them out too.

I didn't latch the door; we have a latch that holds the door open only far enough for the cats to enter so Daisy cannot eat their dry food. It does not agree with her for one thing. I hear jingles and here comes a very happy Daisy heading for the cat food dish. She thinks I'm not paying attention. Grab her and send her out, latch the door. Daisy is annoyed and proceeds to "knock" on the door with her foot-hard. I ask her to be quiet please. Wait. I TELL her to please stop. Wait. I give up and take her downstairs and give her a treat to distract her. I eye the wine bottles lovingly as I pass them while I am getting her treat.

Wine would be nice about now but would not help my writing. As you can tell, I need all the help I can get.

Quiet—should I be glad or worry that something is amiss? I decide to be optimistic and start to write. I cannot think of the word I want to use OR any of the other words I could use in its place. Wine is looking better all the time.

Husband tiptoes into the room. I can tell he is being very cautious. He whispers he is going to go outside and work on the lawn. I whisper a thanks and try to look appreciative to bolster his morale because he really did seem a bit timid about interrupting me. Am I that ferocious when interrupted? Did I hear him clinking the wine bottle downstairs? As soon as he goes outside, the phone rings. We are expecting a call so I have to answer it (I can't see the screen on the phone in this room). Maybe just a little wine?

Have you ever seen those attractive storage sheds they sell at Sam's Club? They look like little houses with window boxes and everything. I'm short. I could easily walk around inside one of those. I could have a hot plate for making tea in there and everything. I would promise not to move into the shed, I would just stay there once week for a couple hours. Promise! Imagine how much writing I would get done. Nope because every time I do go outside, the squirrels and birds come around looking for hand-outs. I would just have an audience of different species than the ones who "help" me inside the house. I guess I should just get used to noise and chaos. Their love is worth it after all. 🐾

Editor's Column

Continued from pg 3

credit report or the amenities in the car you drive. They seek your heart. The observations and experiences shared in this issue are proof of that. Without the laughter our dogs provide, our world would surely be a bleaker place.

In the coming weeks and months, the MSD-Parkland community will find its way again. Softly, with small gestures, dogs – humankind's best friend – will nudge our community to a new normal. My favorite quote from Khalil Gibran's *The Prophet* says it all; "And in the sweetness of friendship, let there be laughter and sharing of pleasures. For in the dew of little things, the heart finds its morning and is refreshed." 🐾

The 149-year-old **Kennel Club of Philadelphia** won the 2017 Show of the Year award presented by Purina Pro Plan's ShowDogs of the Year. The ShowDogs of the Year ceremony was held February 10, 2018, in conjunction with the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York City.

Congratulations!

Thank you to Mary Bloom for photographing the DWAA Awards Banquet!





RENEW ONLINE!

Use our website to pay online:

www.dogwriters.org

Payment of dues, \$50

The DWAA yearly membership runs from
March 1, 2018–March 31, 2019.

Use our website to pay online: www.dogwriters.org

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work or Cell Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

(Please use your current e-mail address. It is used for all DWAA online services)

Website _____

Please indicate if you are:

☐ Professional ☐ Associate
(Paid) (Not Paid)

Freelance _____ Or employed by: _____

Please make check payable in US Funds to DWAA and send along with this page to:

*Marsha Pugh, Treasurer
P.O. Box 787
Hughesville, MD 20637*

Questions to Marsha Pugh, Treasurer marsha_pugh01@comcast.net

To pay by PayPal, visit our website: www.dogwriters.org - renew membership or log into your PayPal account and send \$50.00 to: dwaatreasurer@dwaa.org.

Be sure to advise us of any changes in your contact information.

Awards Program Updates

New Program: Young Writers on the Web

DWAA is excited to encourage the next generation of writers with a new program called Young Writers on the Web. Writers who are under 18 years old are encouraged to submit stories about dogs for possible publication on a special section of the DWAA website, and potentially in our newsletter Ruff Drafts as space allows.

We're thrilled that **Mara Bovsun**, features editor at *AKC Family Dog*, will edit submissions and work with young writers to help polish their work for publication. The chance to work with a professional of Mara's caliber is a fantastic opportunity for budding writers!

Articles published by the program will be eligible as entries for DWAA's annual writing competition. This is great news since Karen Petit, a prolific author of children's books, sponsors a special award just for writers under 18 years old. It's a wonderful chance to receive recognition and win \$400!

So if you know of a young person, teacher or parent who might be interested in learning more, please invite them to visit:



dogwriters.org/youngwriters/

DWAA Junior Writer Award

Sponsored by Karen Petit, an author of children's books, for writers under 18 years of age. This award is to recognize and encourage young writers who exhibit talent, resourcefulness, dedication and integrity in their writing about dogs and dog-related topics.

Award: \$400 cash grant, DWAA Maxwell Medallion and lapel pin.



The competition opens in early July, so get writing!

The Heroes for Healthy Pets Award

DWAA is excited to announce a new special award for our annual writing competition:

The Heroes for Healthy Pets Award

Sponsored by Merck Animal Health, this award is open to all forms of media that cover topics on infectious diseases that affect dogs.

The winner will receive a plaque and a \$1,500 cash grant.

WKC Newbie

Continued from cover

For full disclosure, I should mention that my 40-year career in public relations includes planning and executing a lot of events of varying sizes (make that many, many, many?). And, as a long-time terrier owner, I have a healthy tolerance for insanity. But this was literally a 10-ring circus!

For those of you that haven't been, I can only equate it to playing three-dimensional chess with Mr. Spock on the Enterprise, but to the third power. Two buildings, multiple levels, vendors, competitions, seminars, benched competitors; the whole pooch and poodle (with apologies to the kit and caboodle)!

Saturday's agility competition was great to watch. The dogs were lively and upbeat, moving through their paces as directed by their handlers. However, the real fun began when an occasional

competitor was more enthralled by the audience than the course. Oops! Viral blooper reel here we come!

Walking through the Meet the Breeds area was a trip down memory lane. I visited with the breeds that played a part in my childhood and early adult years. Being surrounded by so many dogs took me to a happy place. It's great to be around so many well-behaved dogs (mine are not) with handlers that understand the fundamentals of control (I don't have that gene). It was a lot like being the grandparent who gets to hand the kids back when they get cranky or you get tired. (Full disclosure: I do this.)

Although I arrived at the Piers early, by the time I'd made the rounds, there were throngs of people walking through the buildings. I was thankful I could hop on the freight elevator to get back to the street level. The connection between the two buildings was a scaffold style corkscrew staircase, filled

with folks of all ages and agility.

My fellow DWAA members warned me ahead of time about the amount of walking required. So, I wore what I thought were comfy yet supportive shoes. But by Saturday afternoon, a stop at CVS was clearly on the schedule to get some additional inserts. Exhausted, I returned to the hotel and camped in for the night. The rain began Saturday and persisted through Sunday, giving me ample time to regroup and participate in a little retail therapy at the nearby Macy's at Herald Square.

Monday arrived, and the rain was replaced by some very strong winds. It was tough waiting for the shuttle from my hotel. I was just about to grab a cab when the charter bus pulled up. My fellow riders included several dogs, a junior handler, a professional groomer who had dogs competing and other novices experiencing the show for the first time.

Continued on next page



Private bomb dog at the Meet the Breeds.
All photos by Merrie Meyers.



Grooming table.



It's exhausting looking this good!



Collies in the ring.

I'd done a little online snooping the night before to figure out the show schedule or some of my favorite breeds. Armed with that information, I drifted from ring to ring, taking pictures left and right.

Monday night was exciting. My press credentials got me onto the main floor, sitting in the rows of press at the far

end of the arena. But, truth be told, you can't really see anything if you're further back than the first table or two. I spent the evening taking notes and watching the Jumbotron monitors overhead. One of the advantages of being in the arena is hearing all of the catcalls. One of the disadvantages is the stone silence when the broadcast program cut-ins and

commercials air. There was no sound. I can't imagine the paying guests sitting ringside enjoyed that anymore than we did. Note to organizers: share the broadcast audio with the live audience.

On both Monday and Tuesday, I visited the daytime benching area. It's really hard to engage groomers and/or handlers in conversation. The groomers are working hard to get dogs ready, snipping last minute errant hairs. Handlers are flitting between clients, switching leads and in some cases outfits to better accentuate their charges. And both are relieving stress by networking with each other. Of course, the dogs are off limits before being shown, with everyone trying to keep them calm. Veteran dogs are hip, often snoozing the day away. After their time in the ring, everyone is packing up and counting down the clock until they wheel out.

The crowds on Tuesday were no smaller than Monday even though there were fewer groups being judged. It didn't matter whether a group had a large or small number of entrants; all the rings were surrounded by enthusiastic spectators.

After a great dinner with my fellow DWAA colleagues at the "Food Hall" adjacent to Madison Square Garden, I watched the Finals from my hotel room while packing for my early departure the next day. Next time, I will get a later flight out and ring side tickets on Tuesday so I can really soak up all of the dog fur and excitement.

So, having checked off the WKC Dog Show on the list, I'm on to other "must do" projects. But I brought many memories and few mementos back to remind me of my great doggie fix weekend in NY. When I arrived at home, the dogs were confused. They smelled so many scents on my coat that they just shrugged and went back to ignoring me as usual. 🐾

NEW MEMBERS



Skye Blaine

Skye Blaine

Skye Blaine writes fiction, memoir, poetry, and blogs, developing themes of aging, coming of age, disability, awakening, and the profound bonds we have with our dogs. She received an MFA in Creative Writing from Antioch University. *Bound to Love: a memoir of grit and gratitude*, was published in 2015 and has won three awards. Her first novel, *Unleashed*, was released in late 2017, and she's now in the middle of the sequel. Skye is published in seven anthologies, and in national magazines: "Yes" and "Catalyst." She teaches writing to older adults through Santa Rosa Junior College as adjunct faculty.

Steve Griffith

A twenty-five-year professional in Public Relations and Marketing Communications, Steve Griffith has worked at the highest levels in the New York City agency world and at NBC Sports, Madison Square Garden, The Festival Group, Main Events and the Worldwide Senior Tennis Circuit.

He is the public relations force behind The National Dog Show Presented by Purina, the NBC Thanksgiving Day special that produced the highest Nielsen TV rating in its 15-year history in 2016, bucking a decades-long trend of diminished viewership levels for all programming. The show, produced by the Philadelphia Kennel Club (PKC) received the 2017 Show of the Year award from Purina Pro Plan at the ShowDogs of the Year event in February. The National Dog Show won the award based on excellence in judging, operations, venue quality and exhibitor satisfaction. Industry voters also considered



Steve Griffith

communication efforts designed to increase spectator interest and understanding of the event.

In his free time, he edits the blog, "Learn From Your Dog" (<https://thentatldogshow.blogspot.com>) and he is curator of a list of attributes dogs have that humans should aspire to.

Elizabeth Maritz

After graduating with a master's degree from the University of Missouri Reynolds Institute of Journalism, where she studied advertising, Liz Maritz promptly dove into a successful career in marketing. For over ten years, Liz worked in promotion, blogging, web design, and copywriting, working with brands like Nestle Purina, Earth's Best, and Reebok. Liz's involvement in grass-



Elizabeth Maritz and Brody

Continued on next page

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roots social media efforts piqued her curiosity in technology. Liz then made a transition to IT project management. While working for MasterCard, Liz completed her PMP credential. She went on to manage two IT teams at Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

After the birth of her daughter in 2016, Liz battled postpartum depression and anxiety. In 2017, she made the difficult decision to leave her corporate management role to stay home with her sweet infant daughter and her terrible terrier. As evidenced by her work history, Liz's primary talent is exploring new territory and doing things she's never done before.

To date, her biggest challenge is her incorrigible wire-haired fox terrier, Brody. At the urging of friends, family and those captivated by Brody's story in veterinary waiting rooms, Liz recounts how Brody's many medical misfortunes shaped her unexpected approach to life in her first book of narrative nonfiction. Liz is a member of the Non-Fiction Authors Association (NFAA) and the Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA).

Website: <http://lizmaritz.com>

Published Articles: <http://lizmaritz.com/media-articles/>

Blog: <http://lizmaritz.com/blog/>



Patricia Stephens

Patricia Stephens

Patricia Stephens has been the owner of FloridaPets.net since 2001. The site is a resource guide to all that is pet-friendly in Florida, including where to play, vacation, live, dine, and more. She also publishes a dog-centric monthly eZine called the NewsPetter and is a Pet Food Nutrition Specialist. Patricia lives with her husband, Chris, in the artistic community of St. Augustine, Florida with their four rescue pups, Pepper, Jasmine, Willie, and Lulu. When not writing about pets, Patricia enjoys swimming, playing piano, photography, and helping her 97-year-old father in his genealogy pursuits. 🐾

Member Changes

Continued from pg 6

Terry Albert
albertsark@gmail.com
www.terryalbert.com

Gavin F Ehringer
<http://www.leavingthewild.com>

Murray Weinstock
weinstockmurray@me.com
<http://www.dogtunes.com>

Lisa Peterson
lisa.peterson@barngirlmedia.com

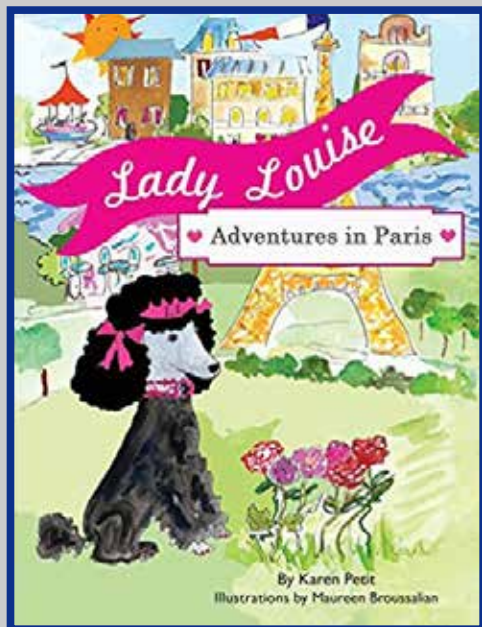
More photos from the DWAA Awards Banquet @ Mary Bloom



MEMBER NEWS

Newest book by Karen Petit

"Lady Louise, Adventures in Paris," is the second book in the popular Lady Louise series, which follows the travels of a Standard Poodle who is an ambassador of kindness and manners. The first Poodle-In-Waiting to Beloved Queen of the Land of Poodle Loo, Lady Louise in on her way to Paris, France, a place she has only dreamed of. She discovers that it is even better than she ever imagined! As the Queen of Kindness, Lady Louise takes the manners that she has learned from her mother and applies them to situations that she encounters in Paris. Lady Louise also learns the manners and protocol of another country on her travels. Book 3 in the series, "Lady Louise, Adventures at the North Pole," will be published in Fall 2018. Written by Karen Petit, the book features charming colorful illustrations by Maureen Broussalian, known as the "Original Poodle Artist."



Do you know someone who might want to SPONSOR A SPECIAL AWARD?



The DWAA Annual Writing Competition offers a unique sponsorship opportunity with its Special Awards. Private individuals, nonprofits and corporate sponsors choose a topic they'd like to see covered in the media, then offer a cash grant for writers who do so. It's straightforward: if an award is for \$500, the sponsor pays \$500.

The special awards are promoted with a 50-word description, the logo of the sponsor, and link to their website on DWAA's "Special Awards" contest page. DWAA announces the contest and special awards with press releases distributed by the PR team at Germinder + Associates, email blasts to membership, outreach to other writing organizations, social media, *Ruff Drafts*, and media interviews with members of the leadership team when available.

The DWAA writing contest opens in early July, with finalists announced the first week in December. DWAA hosts a social media event to announce the nominees in each category on Facebook and Twitter so that finalists, editors and sponsors can share the news on their sites as well.

If you'd like to sponsor an award (or know someone who might), please contact DWAA President **Jen Reeder**: jen@jenreeder.com. Thank you for supporting the dog writing community!

DWAA Awards Banquet photos © Mary Bloom



The Perfect Child

By **Ted Slupik**

AS TOLD BY LIZZY

As an only dog, I was surprised when my owners brought home Sophie, a large rough coated collie. She seemed the perfect dog; gentle, loyal, sensitive, and obedient. As new siblings, we spent nine years together. At the time of my story, Sophie had just turned age 7 and I was 15. We were both now senior dogs.

Sophie was my “little” sister, perfectly behaved, and *never* got into trouble. She was the favored child, the celebrity, the superstar. I taught her the boundaries and rules of the house. As I was always with her, I can tell you what really happened when no one was around.

Although an ideal therapy dog and companion, Sophie did develop one bad habit as she got older. She loved cardboard and if she found any, she would chew it up. Initially it was in very small pieces and of course, I got blamed. But her appetite for the forbidden treat grew and with me being only 5 pounds, my humans knew that it could not possibly be me. It had to be 65 pound Sophie, but she would never get caught or own up to it.

She started small by eating tissue boxes. She would remove the tissues, push them to the side, and devour the box. One time she took a box of antique bone china tea cups and saucers, removed them all from the box along with the newspaper wrappings, placed the cups and saucers on the floor as if setting up for a tea party and ate the box!. Boy, were my humans mad! It sure looked like Sophie was the guilty party but no one was able to catch her in the act. My day of vindication was finally about to come!

One day, a Hewlett Packard printer toner box left on the floor of the office



Lizzy and Sophie. Photo by Ted Slupik.

was emptied and the cartridge was set aside by Sophie. The blue and purple box was eaten. For the next three days, Sophie’s poop was multicolored.

I was finally proven innocent! Sophie was given a time-out in her room for her actions. From that day forward when our humans came home, if Sophie did anything bad her ears would go back and she would go to her room all by herself before even being spoken to. No door or gate would be even necessary. She finally admitted to her crime and imposed her own sentence until she was asked; “are you going to be a good girl”? Her response was to come prancing out, wagging her tail in apology, and then go about her way. 🐾

Lizzy was a long haired Chihuahua that lived a rich 16-1/2 years after getting a second chance at age 9. Lizzy’s Fund provides all vet, grooming, dental, and even the adoption fees for seniors, aged 7 or older. Find out more or make a donation at lizzysfund.org. You can also Like her on Facebook or follow her on Instagram.

Butler

By **Barbara E. Magera MD, Pharm D, MMM**

My little tricolor clown. From the first day you came home, you performed so many continuous backflips that you “flipped” high into the air and off the bed! Butler, your presence in the office instantly brought a smile to weary patients. Greeting them with a double bark and pawing them for attention. When you decided to “wrestle and kill” my ten thousand dollar rhinoscope, I really couldn’t get mad at you. Your determination was irresistible. When a massive rain and thunder storm interrupted a Cavalier fun day, you had the time of your life running and sliding through the mud while your canine companions watched in amazement. After your jaunt, the only recognizable feature was your big brown laughing eyes. The rest of you was covered in thick, gooey pluff mud characteristic of the Charleston coast. You squealed with glee during four consecutive baths to get you marginally clean. Although long gone, we and our patients remember you as the happy little tricolor Cavalier who loved making people laugh with your humorous antics.



Meet Sunny

TODAY's 3rd Puppy with a Purpose

By **Christine Morea** and **TODAY staff**

The new TODAY puppy is here ... and he's brought four of his siblings with him!

The TODAY show's third "puppy with a purpose," Sunny, made his TV debut on Monday morning, Feb. 26. We can already tell he'll make a great addition to the crew!

The male yellow Lab will train as a guide dog with the help of the Guide Dog Foundation, a sister organization of America's VetDogs. He'll spend 16 months with TODAY and guide dog mobility instructor Olivia Poff before serving as a guide dog for a visually impaired teen.

Sunny didn't come alone to Studio 1A on Monday — he was joined by four siblings, who are headed to NBC stations in Los Angeles, Boston, Atlanta and Baltimore. The siblings will be trained locally and learn the skills they need to eventually become support dogs.

Sunny's name was chosen via a fan vote held in the hours after his TODAY debut. (The names Charlie and Wrangler were already taken, of course.)

You can keep up to date on all of the pups (aka the #TODAYPuppySquad) by signing up for "pupdates" here: <https://secure.today.com/optin/pupdates/newsletter> 🐾

This story originally appeared at [TODAY.com](https://www.today.com). It is being reprinted here with the express permission of the TODAY show.



Sunny, TODAY puppy with a purpose. Photo credit: TODAY



The litter on set. Photo credit: TODAY

Running with the Dogs in NYC

By **Susan J. Kroupa**

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I was beyond delighted when I learned that the fifth book in the series, *Ruff-Housed*, won the Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA) AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy and Canine Good Citizen Award sponsored by the American Kennel Club for the best writing about the AKC Canine Good Citizen Program. (Yeah, that's a mouthful, but I wanted the description to be accurate.)

In *Ruff-Housed*, Doodle has to take the Canine Good Citizen test (CGC). The CGC is basically a test of canine behavior in public. The dog must pass a ten-part test that includes walking on a loose lead, sitting politely to be petted, staying calm when walking through

a crowd, not over-reacting to distractions, coming when called, and staying in place when commanded.

Doodle's not worried about the test. Compared to the stringent scent-detection certifications he has to pass as a bed-bug detecting dog, he thinks the CGC will be a piece of cake. But then again, getting cake isn't always easy for a dog, and he certainly didn't expect explosions.

Within minutes of finding out about the award, I called my daughter, to ask if she'd to accompany me to New York City for the DWAA banquet. "Is the Pope Catholic?" she replied. (Okay, she didn't actually say that, but she's a born traveler and has never heard of a trip she doesn't want to take.)

And so we met at the airport in Newark, stayed in a lovely room at the historic New Yorker, and had a wonderful time. At the banquet, I was humbled by the sheer amount of dog and writing related expertise assembled in the room.

Five years earlier, shortly after *Bed-Bugged* was published, I started researching sites about dogs, hoping to figure out how to make my books known to people who love dogs. I came across the DWAA site and thought, Wow! I need to join this organization. (I remember posting on FB, in awe-struck tones, "There's a professional organiza-

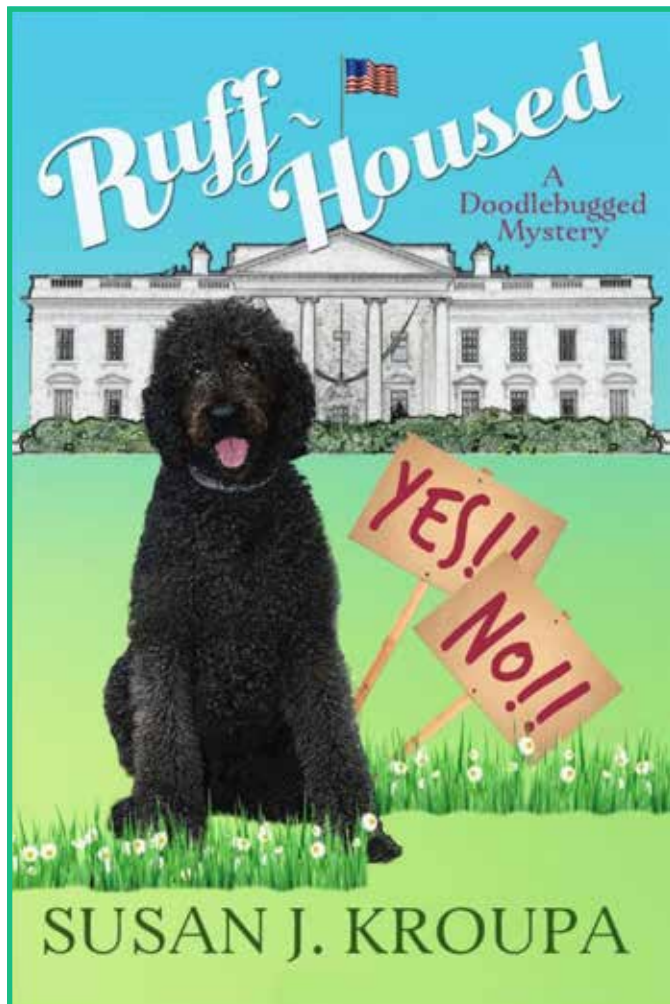
tion of dog writers. Who knew? Is that cool or what?"

The only problem was that joining DWAA required sponsorship from two current members. At the time, all my fiction publishing credits were in science fiction and fantasy and my many friends, list-serves, social groups, and professional organizations were in that field. My nonfiction was mostly about music (I worked as a freelance music reviewer and columnist for the *Bloomington-Herald Times*) or, after I moved west, about Native American and environmental issues. How could I get to know other dog writers? I searched the web and read blogs and friended any dog-book author who would accept me, and gradually made my way into the community. Along the way, I made a lot of friends who were generous with their support and advice, and got to read a lot of terrific books.

In 2013, still not yet a DWAA member, I entered *Out-Sniffed*, the second Doodlebugged mystery in the DWAA's annual writing competition and was honored when it was one of the nominees in the Children's Fiction category. That gave me the courage to ask a couple of DWAA members for sponsorship, and in early 2014 I became a member myself.

And now I've been able to attend the banquet and meet a great group of writers and photographers who love dogs. Plus, my daughter and I got to attend the Westminster Agility trials and the Meet the Breeds event on Saturday. It was all what I call doggone fun! 🐾

If you'd like to read the real life story of Shadow, the dog who inspired *Ruff-Housed* and all the Doodlebugged mysteries, visit <https://www.doodlewhacked.com/>



From the Editor's Desk:

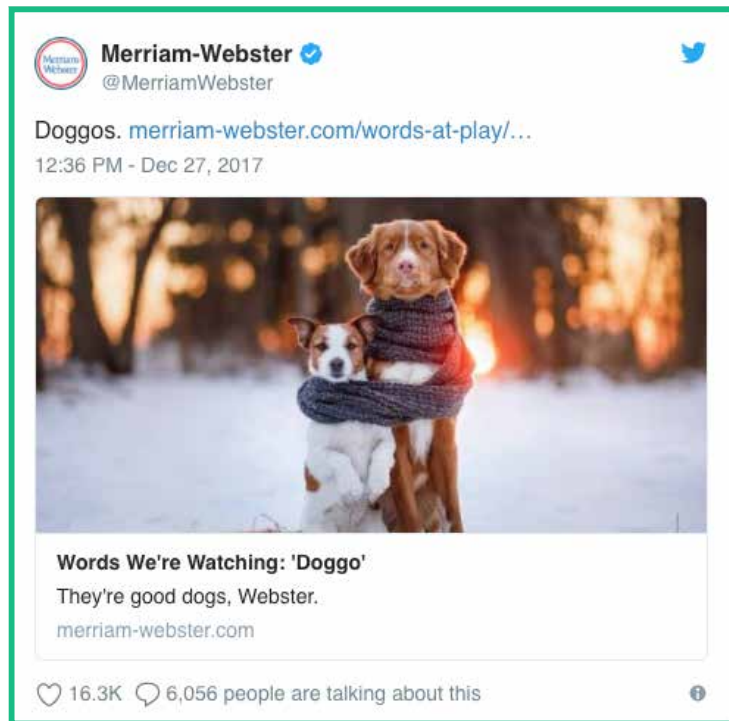
This just in...

OLDER PUPS ON THE GRIDIRON.

Capitalizing on the popularity of their football-themed Puppy Bowl, Animal Planet introduced the Dog Bowl in conjunction with the 2018 Super Bowl. The show featured adoption-ready rescues from shelters across the country. Shelters and rescue organizations transported older dogs, average age of seven, to participate in the mock sporting event. The senior pup program led to increased adoptions of older dogs. The word on the turf is that many of the loveable furry competitors were headed to new forever homes shortly after the program aired.

2018

Year of the Dog



TRACKING THE SCENT OF NEW WORDS.

Merriam-Webster is monitoring the use of the word “doggo” to see if it merits inclusion in the next edition of the dictionary. Rudyard Kipling, credited with using it frequently in his stories, would be so impressed they’ve finally caught up with him.

YEAR OF THE DOG.

According to the Chinese Zodiac Calendar, 2018 is the Year of the Dog, one of 12 animals featured in rotation. The Dog is also associated with the Earthly Branch (地支—dì zhī xū (戌)), one of the Chinese elements of nature, and the hours of 7-9 in the evening.

The Dogs’ most defining characteristic is loyalty—no surprise to dog lovers. For more information on the Year of the Dog visit <https://chinesenewyear2018.com/zodiac/dog/>. 🐾



新年快乐

By The Book

Animal Writers' Workshop

Saturday, April 28, 2018

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Oldwick Manor

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Sponsored by J. Pace Publications



Pre-Registration Fee (Due by April 15, 2018): \$65.00

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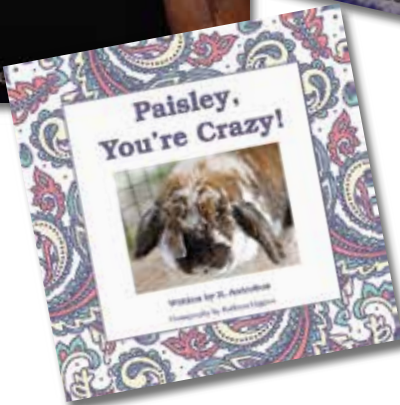
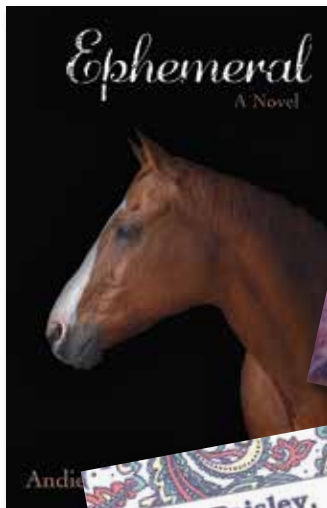
To Register Online:

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By The Book:Animal Writers' Workshop

*The workshop will highlight breaking into the animal book field.
Both adult and children's literature. Nonfiction and fiction.*

Learn about this special niche book market. Discover the various publishing options today: traditional, educational, and independent. Follow one woman's journey to becoming a published children's book author. Find out how important good graphic design is in self-publishing, and much more.



8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Registration, Light Breakfast,
Authors' Alley Book Signings

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Panel Discussion and
Question & Answer Session
with Publishing Experts

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Authors' Alley Book Signings

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8926 N. Greenwood, #293
Niles, IL 60714

Roxie

By Janice Biniok



By “behave,” do you mean your definition or mine?

“ A dog is the friend who
licks your face when you
have forgotten how to
smile. ”

— FROM *PUPPY LOVE*
BY **JAMES COLASANTI, JR.**
PUBLISHED LAST CHRISTMAS
