



# ruff DRAFTS

Winter 2019

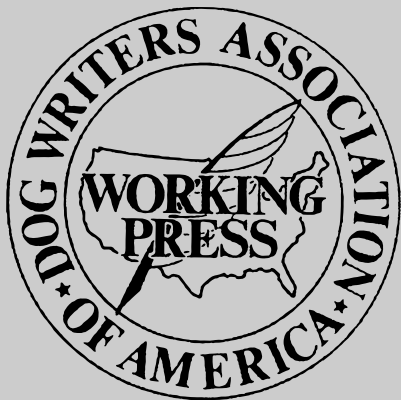
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## Contest Finalists

Page 4



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# President's

# COLUMN

By **Jen Reeder**

Recently I had lunch with a writer that left me brimming with optimism about the future of dog writing. **Kendle Frank**, a 16-year-old who has written several wonderful stories for DWAA's Young Writers on the Web program, didn't look at her phone at all when we met at her request to discuss journalism. Instead, she peppered me with intelligent questions about how to succeed as a freelance journalist who specializes in dogs. She's already working toward that goal, writing articles about dogs for her high school's magazine, contacting journalists and professors for advice, and engaging in canine activities in her community. She even started a club at her high school for students who love dogs.

Kendle's excitement about dog writing reminded me of why I've volunteered for the past two years as DWAA President. It's been a wild ride, but I've done my best to stick to my goal: help members help dogs. I'm proud of some of the initiatives we've enacted during my term, such as "Successful Queries" and "Editor Insights." But I think my favorite is "Young Writers on the Web," which offers mentorship and publication opportunities to the next generation.

We will celebrate the future of dog writing by honoring the four winners of the Junior Writer Awards at the DWAA Awards Banquet, as well as the year's best work involving dogs. Tickets are on sale now for the event, which takes place the evening of Sunday, Feb. 10, 2019, at the Hotel New Yorker in Man-



**Jen Reeder, President of the DWAA**

hattan. We will announce the winners of Maxwell Medallions and award an astonishing \$15,950 thanks to our generous Special Award sponsors!

Attendees are in for a treat, with keynote addresses from NBC correspondent and host of Animal Planet's "Dog Bowl" **Jill Rappaport** and radio host/journalist/author **Steve Dale** of Steve Dale's Pet World. We're thrilled to be inducting **Deborah Wood** into DWAA's Hall of Fame. **Mara Bovsun** – the talented journalist/author/editor who spearheaded Young Writers on the Web – will accept the DWAA Distinguished Service Award. We'll also feature a surprise announcement from the Grey Muzzle Organization. There are only 100 seats

See *PRESIDENT'S COLUMN* pg 23



By **Merrie Meyers**

Dear Readers;

As we leave 2018 in the rearview mirror and chart a course for 2019, I wanted to take a moment to thank you, fellow members, for continuing to share great stories and articles. The quality of your work is what makes our quarterly Ruff Drafts something people look forward to receiving. The time you commit to creating and submitting materials to this publication is a generous gift. Thanks also to our amazing webmaster and graphic designer, **Angela Capodanno** ([angela@visualspring.net](mailto:angela@visualspring.net)). She takes what you offer and makes it even better by making sure that every article receives the prominent positioning it deserves.

And, I want to tip my paw to two other behind-the-scenes angels. The first is our cartoonist, **Janice Binoik** ([re-  
alpets@aol.com](mailto:re-<br/>alpets@aol.com)). She faithfully crafts a cartoon for every issue, all designed to deliver a quick smile. But, my biggest thanks goes to **Jen Reeder**, our outgoing president. Not only is she an amazing editors' editor, catching typos and other grammatical faux pas so that we always look our best, but she is a great motivator. Jen is always in my corner. Everyone should have a Jen on their team. Her emails always end with a motivational cheer. I don't know where her energy and positivity come from, but if she ever bottles it, I'm ordering a case.

This has been a transition year for me. I left full-time work in May, but it seems I'm a failure at retirement. My very senior dogs demand a certain lifestyle (veterinary specialists, pricey pre-



**Merrie Meyers, Editor of Ruff Drafts**

scription food, occasional medical procedures). So, I can't say no to teaching one or two classes a semester or writing a grant or two.

In the meantime, you – dear colleagues – are my inspiration. Hoping to branch out from technical and non-fiction writing, I joined with some nearby authors to form a writers group this year. We gather monthly to critique each other's work. It's stressful getting the materials together, but rewarding to get feedback. When it was my turn to submit, I shared some of my Ruff Drafts work. Although I only submitted my work to be reviewed, my fellow group members used the link to read through multiple issues. Boy, were they impressed!

*See EDITOR'S LETTER pg 27*

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### ISSUE DEADLINES

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

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## 2018 DWAA Writing Competition

# FINALISTS

### Regular Categories

Congratulations to the finalists in the 2018 DWAA Writing Competition! All nominees needed to score at least 80 points out of 100 to qualify for awards, and the caliber of entries was terrific!

We will announce the winners on Sunday, Feb. 10 at the DWAA Awards Banquet at the iconic New Yorker Hotel. Keynote speakers are Jill Rappaport and Steve Dale. There are only 100 seats available so please purchase your tickets online before they sell out. Good luck and thank you all for creating such fantastic work about dogs!

#### A. Newspaper Articles and Columns

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

- Taking the Pet Out of Petrified – Dr. Marty Becker, “America’s Veterinarian” by Denise Alexandra Fleck

- Everyone Should Have Their Pets Microchipped by Susan Ewing
- Have a Heart for a Shelter Shepherd by Joanne Anderson
- It’s A War by Kim Kavin

##### 2. ARTICLE – BEHAVIOR OR TRAINING

- Do Dogs Really Get One Free Bite? by Patti Lawson
- Dogs Can “Read” Us by Joanne Anderson
- Making Vet Visits Fear Free by Susan Ewing
- Separation Anxiety Not Just For Shy Dogs by Kim Campbell Thornton

##### 3. Article – Rescue

- Adopting the Right Furry Friend for You Takes Some Forethought by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Go Dog Go Pooch Powers Through Race by Allen Laman

- Oldies But Goodies by Jen Reeder
- Saving the Chain Dogs: Dog by Dog by Pam Gleason

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

- Are Pets Gaining Personhood Status? by Patti Lawson
- Baxter’s Pet Pantry by Joanne Anderson
- Dog Fight by Kim Kavin
- What Happens If You Die Before Your Pets by Patti Lawson

#### B. Magazines

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

- AKC Family Dog by Liz Donovan and the staff of AKC Family Dog
- Dogster Magazine by Melissa L. Kauffman and Annie Shirreffs
- The Pointing Dog Journal by Jillian LaCross
- The Retriever Journal by Jillian LaCross

## **6. ANNUAL, SPECIAL INTEREST, OR ANY OTHER**

- Chronicle of The Dog by Devon Hubbard Sorlie and Chris Guzicki
- From Rescued to Rescuer – USA Today Pet Guide by Nancy Monson

## **C. Magazine Articles**

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

- A Better Biome (Fecal Transplants) by CJ Puotinen
- Cancer, Canines and the Human Connection by Rachel Brix
- The Fear Free Revolution by Jen Reeder
- Ticks' Increasing Threat by Kim Campbell Thornton

### **8. ARTICLE – BEHAVIOR OR TRAINING**

- Behavior Matters! by Laura Donaldson
- Communicating Effectively – Proper Diagnosis, Correct Terminology Essential by Melissa McMath Hatfield MS, CBCC-KA, CDBC
- Look At That by Laura Donaldson
- Taking It to the Streets by Mara Bovsun

### **9. ARTICLE – RESCUE**

- From Shelter Dog to Therapy Dog: The Story of Murray by Cori Solomon
- Rising from the ashes: Former shelter dog helps firefighters cope with stress and grief by Laura Teresa Coffey
- The Soul of Saving a Senior Pet by Christy A. Doherty

### **10. ARTICLE – BREED**

- Comfort Dogs: Golden Retrievers Offer Emotional Support in Difficult Times by Amy Hempe
- For Laughter and Little Ones by Mara Bovsun
- Lab Lifeguard by Jen Reeder
- Using Degenerative Myelopathy Genetic Test Results in Predicting Litter Outcomes by Nancy P. Melone, Ph.D

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

- A Veterinarian's Prescription for Grief (or, How I Mourned My Own Dog) by Karen R. Fine, DVM
- Home Growing Our Heroes by Penny Leigh
- Testing the Limits by Penny Leigh
- Safety, Comfort are the New Black by Lauren Darr

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

### **12. CANINE OR ALL – ANIMAL NEWSPAPERS OR NEWSLETTERS**

- DogWatch newsletter by Cynthia Foley and Debra M. Eldredge, DVM
- GRRAND GRROWL of Golden Retriever Rescue and Adoption of Needy Dogs by Devon Hubbard Sorlie
- The Companion – Canine Companions for Independence by John Bentzinger & CCI Editorial Staff
- Tufts YOUR DOG Newsletter by Larry Lindner

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

### **13. ANY TOPIC**

- Canine Cataracts by Deb M. Eldredge, DVM
- Choosy About Chews by Deb M. Eldredge, DVM
- Hands-On Healing: Physical Rehabilitation for Animals by Lyn T. Garson CVT, CCRP
- OP/ED: The Integrity of Our Words by Kate J. Kuligowski

## **F. Online**

### **14. BLOGSITE OR WEBSITE**

- Dogster.com by Melissa L. Kauffman and Cait Kelly
- Goodnewsforpets.com by Lea-Ann Germinder

- Help is a Four-Legged Word by Canine Companions for Independence
- National Purebred Dog Day by Susi Eniko Szeremy
- The Pet Safety Crusader's BLOG & VLOG by Denise Alexandra Fleck

### **15. MAGAZINE OR NEWSLETTER**

- AKC Canine Partners News by Penny Leigh
- For Active Dogs! Newsletter – Canine Sports Productions by Chris Zink
- Speaking of Dogs Rescue newsletter by Lorraine Houston, Nancy Foran and Cathy Vandergeest
- The IAABC Journal by Mychelle Blake, Jesse Miller and Marjie Alonso

## **G. Online Articles or Blog Entries**

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

- Achy Joints? – Pet Connection/ Andrews McMeel Syndication by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Flu Factors – Pet Connection/ Andrews McMeel Syndication by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Inside Heartworm – Pet Connection/ Andrews McMeel Syndication by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Twist of Fate – Pet Connection/ Andrews McMeel Syndication by Kim Campbell Thornton

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

- On "Fixing" Behavior Problems: Reachable Goals and Wishful Thinking by Jennifer Leigh Summerfield
- Through Thick and Thin: Caring For and Training Companion Dogs With Disabilities by Nee Kang, Jeffrey Lee and Nan Arthur
- Top 10 Tips for Dealing with a Traumatic Dog Experience by Nancy Tanner

*Continued on next page*

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- What Big Ships Can Teach You About Walking Your Dog by Pamela Douglas Webster
- What Type of Training Do Therapy Dogs Need? by Risë VanFleet

#### **18. ARTICLE OR BLOG – RESCUE**

- A Passion for Helping Pooches by Jayson Kimberly
- How the Internet is Changing the Way Dogs Find Homes by Gray Chapman
- Saving the Dogs of Kauai by Christy A. Doherty
- The Special Bond of Older Dogs and Older Owners by Jen Reeder

#### **19. ARTICLE OR BLOG – ANY OTHER TOPIC**

- Fly Away Home by Susan J. Kroupa
- No PAWS About It: Hiring a Professional Pet Sitter is the Right Move for Your Pet by Denise Alexandra Fleck
- Paw Preferences & Dog Emotion by Chris Zink
- The Power of Rescue: How a Dog Helped 2 Boston Marathon Bombing Survivors Heal by Laura Teresa Coffey

## **H. Graphics**

#### **20. SINGLE PHOTO**

- Hank Dock Diving by Kevin Cummings
- Jasper “Nose” Leaves by Susan C. Willett
- Lab Rescue of the L.R.C.P. Inc. by Janet Ann Brake
- Tucker Has a Ball in the Fall by Susan C. Willett

#### **21. SERIES PHOTO**

- How Good Breeders Raise Puppies Who Grow Into Happy, Confident Dogs by Linda C. Rehkopf
- Show Me the Bunny – The Rip Van Wrinkle Basenji Club by Joe Stewart

#### **22. SINGLE ILLUSTRATION OR PAINTING**

- Blue Stove Beach – The Rip Van Wrinkle Basenji Club by Susan Kamen Marsicano

- Fall Fun with Fido by Melanie Feldges
- The Tail End: Delta Airlines Toughens ESA Policy by Jeroen van Rossum

#### **23. SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

##### **OR PAINTINGS**

- Clean Paws are Very Important For A Scottie, You Know by Pilar Kuhn, Rod Ott and Valeria Moldovan
- Marla Wears A Halo – Hartwood Pet Lodge LLC by Carol McElhaney and Joan Critz Limbrick
- Ollie the Autism-Support Collie – LawMux Press by Billie Holladay Skelley, James Paul Skelley
- Wish and Hope: Images from the National Dog Week Blog honoring its 90th Observation by Lisa Begin-Kruysman

#### **24. POSTERS, CALENDARS, BROCHURES OR PAMPHLETS**

- Bernese Mountain Dog Calendar 2019 by Dr. Bernd Guenter
- Chester & Friends 2019 Calendar by Christina Potter and Taylor Potter
- Guide to Dog Walks, Beaches and Pet Services by Judy Macomber and Beverly Haney
- Portuguese Water Dog 2019 by Nutmeg Portuguese Water Dog Club, Inc.

## **I. Humor, Poetry, Short Fiction, Essays/Editorials**

#### **25. HUMOR**

- Bark Out Loud by Heather Blaine Marcoux
- Bunny Come Home – The Aussie Times by Elizabeth M. Jarrell
- Trade Secrets by Nancy Tanner
- When Your Dog Is Socially Awkward (And So Are You) by Kristin M. Avery

#### **26. POETRY**

- A Thousand Tears . . . Song For A Magical-Dawg by Amy Shojai, CABC
- Haiku by Dog: Chasing by Susan C. Willett

- Haiku by Dog: Laughing by Susan C. Willett
- She’s Just Like Me by Debra Lampert-Rudman

#### **27. SHORT FICTION**

- Balance Due by Susan J. Kroupa
- The Poodle Who Picked Pockets by Lynn Franklin
- There’s Always Room For Jell-O by James Colasanti Jr.

#### **28. ESSAYS/EDITORIALS**

- Cloud-based Hope by Susan C. Willett
- Doodlewhacked: a Memoir by Susan J. Kroupa
- Crossing Off the List by Zach Hively
- What I’ve Learned from Smudge, Lola, and Dewey by Kendle Rae Frank

## **J. Other Media**

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

- Behind the Scenes With David Frei: Live on Facebook by Carol Bryant
- Canine Reproduction, Whelping and Puppy Intensive Care Seminar by Myra Savant
- How to Judge the St. Bernard by Janice Davis
- WGN TV Midday Fix: Dog Walking Tips with Laura Monaco Torelli by Laura Monaco Torelli, Kristina Miller Liberatore and Vicki Zwart

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

- LEPTOSPIROSIS SYMPTOMS, TREATMENTS AND PREVENTION by Laura Jane Reeves
- LORI WELLS AND PIGLET – CATAHOULA LEOPARD DOG|SEARCH AND RESCUE by Laura Jane Reeve
- Reliable Recalls – Dog Talk With Dr. Jen by Jennifer Leigh Summerfield
- The Doggie Bucket List – The Raven Narratives by Zach Hively



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

### 31. MAGAZINE FORMAT

- Australian Shepherd Journal by Kathleen Glaes and Leslie Ziesing
- Spotter – Dalmatian Club of America by Katherine Szomoru, Debbie Zink and Jennifer Cramer
- The Bagpiper, Official Publication of the Scottish Terrier Club of America by Scottish Terrier Club of America
- The Courier – The Official Publication of the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America by Susan Myrick

### 32. NEWSLETTER FORMAT

- BCOA Bulletin Board – Basenji Club of America by Mary Ellen Chaffin & Suzanne La Croix
- Five Ways to Make Your Entle's Walk Extra Special on "Walking the Dog Day" February 22nd by Linda Liebrand
- International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants by Jesse Miller
- National Search Dog Alliance by Sue C. Wolff and Norma Snelling

## L. Club Publication Articles

### 33. ARTICLE – ANY TOPIC

- Hurricane Harvey Horror and Heroes by June Greig
- Off-Colored Bostons Not the Standard by Patricia S. Johnson
- Rocky's Hemangiosarcoma Journey by Matt Repko
- Test Your Testicle Knowledge by Michele Gawenka

### 34. REGULAR COLUMN OR SERIES

- Breed Standard Column: Getting the Full Picture & All in the Family by Matthew Mullin
- In The Path of a Hurricane by Barbara E. Magera, Jody Sutton and Elaine L. Mitchell

*Continued on next page*

# Contest Chair

# REPORT

By **Lauren Darr**

## CONTEST CHAIR

Being the contest chair has given me an entirely new perspective on the annual contest. I first saw a Maxwell Medallion on a children's book in the mid-2000s and was so impressed with the award when I researched both the organization and contest. When I started judging, I realized that the talent pool was vast and varied. Now, I've become even more awestruck with the caliber of people that enter their work in the annual contest.

Many of you know that my son races a race car. Sometimes the winner of the race is literally determined by thousandths of a second. That's how close I felt many of the categories were this year in the contest – not just for winning the Maxwell Medallion, but even between the top finalists. So, truly, making it as a finalist is an honor. And, if someone didn't make it as a finalist, it was likely by the smallest margin – literally out to the hundredths decimal point. If I'm remembering correctly, I first joined the Dog Writers Association of America in 2008 and entered the contest for the first time. I didn't make the finals and win a Maxwell Medallion until 2015. So, I know how very tough the competition is from personal experience!

This year, the majority of entries were done online. A steady stream of entries came from the opening of the contest in July to the mad rush at the deadline of the contest in December. (We are writers and get those adrenaline rushes with deadlines, don't we?) Once an entry is sent in, whether online or via mail, it gets recorded onto the appropriate judging sheet along with all the information being kept on a separate spreadsheet. Checks get sent to the treasurer, links are checked for online entries, and a lot of organizing "magic" (at least that's what I'll call it) happens behind the scenes.

To ensure the integrity of the contest, there are over 90 judges who are judging the more than 600 entries for the contest. Each regular category has



Lauren Darr

*See CONTEST REPORT pg 13*

Continued from previous page

- Tervuren News Tales by Joni L. Freshman, DVM
- The Advocate – Owner Handler Association of America by Richard E. Grant

## M. Club Special Publication

### 35. CLUB SPECIAL PUBLICATION

- 40 High Points in 40 Years: Mayflower Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club Celebrates 1977-2017, Mayflower Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club, Dr. Michaelann Cox Mako and Cynthia Read
- BCOA Yearbook – Basenji Club of America by Mary Ellen Chaffin and Suzanne La Croix
- Chronicle of The Dog, 25th Anniversary Issue by Devon Hubbard Sorlie and Chris Guzicki
- Westminster Kennel Club 2018 Official Program by Gail Miller Bisher, Lisa Peterson

## N. Books

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

- Entlebucher Mountain Dogs – What I Wish I Knew by Linda Liebrand
- JONATHAN: Wolfson's Last Chapter by Alice Lovejoy Carnahan
- Samoyed Tales Trilogy by Jim Cheskawich, Annie Reid and Cheryl Lynn West

### 37. RESCUE OR ADOPTION

- Another Good Dog: One Family and Fifty Foster Dogs by Cara Achterber
- Let's Git Outta Here by Kate J. Kuligowski
- The Returned: Chewy's Story by Samantha K. Riggi

### 38. TRAINING OR SPORTS

- Barn Hunt: A Game of Hide & Seek for Dogs by Deb M. Eldredge, DVM and Eva M. Raczka
- K9 Search Rescue Troubleshooting by Susan Bulanda
- Modern Enthusiastic Tracking, the Step-by-Step Training Handbook by William R. Sanders
- Training Your German Shepherd Dog by Joan Hustace Walker and Brandy Eggeman

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

- Keeping the Peace: A Guide to Solving Dog-Dog Aggression in the Home by Nicole Wilde
- Let Dogs Be Dogs by Marc Goldberg and the Monks of New Skete
- My Patients Like Treats: Tales from a House-Call Veterinarian by Duncan MacVean, DVM
- Secrets of the Snout: The Dog's Incredible Nose by Frank Rosell

### 40. HUMAN ANIMAL BOND

- Adventures with Durango Pete by Stephen Hinman
- Animal Assisted Play Therapy by Risë

VanFleet and Tracie Faa-Thompson

- Dogs with Jobs by Laura Greaves
- Leaving the Wild: The Unnatural History of Dogs, Cats, Cows and Horses by Gavin Forbes Ehringer

### 41. REFERENCE

- City Dog Walking Safety & Etiquette – Pups & Purrs Press by Sunny Weber
- Let's Make You a Winner: A Judge's Perspective on Showing Dogs by Pat Hastings and Erin Ann Rouse
- The Teaching Dog by Nicole Larocco-Skeehan
- The Ultimate Pet Friendly Road Trip by Amy Burkert

### 42. FICTION, YOUNG ADULT OR HUMOR

- Ears for Murder by Sue Owens Wright
- Maritime Summer by Karen Anne Harbert
- Medium Rare by Karen Anne Harbert
- Ghosts of the Buffalo Wheel by Joe Jennings

### 43. CHILDREN

- Clean Paws Are Very Important For A Scottie, You Know by Pilar Kuhn and Rod Ott
- Miss Olive Finds Her "Furever" Home by Susan M. Campbell
- Ollie the Autism-Support Collie by Billie Holladay Skelley and James Paul Skelley
- Pepe Learns to Run Again; an inspirational true story by Christina Potter



Angela Capodanno  
with her Samoyed, Niko

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# Finalists

## Special Awards

Thank you to the generous sponsors of the DWAA Special Awards – and congratulations to the finalists! We hope to see you all at the DWAA Awards Banquet on Feb. 10, 2019 when we'll announce the winners ... good luck!

### 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.

- Five Ways to Make Your Entle's Walk Extra Special on "Walking the Dog Day" February 22nd by Linda Liebrand
- Safety, Comfort are the New Black by Lauren Darr
- Sheep du Soleil by Elizabeth M. Jarrell

### AKC Reunite Microchip Awareness Award

Sponsored by AKC Reunite 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 \$1,000 cash grant. For information about actual recovery stories, writers can contact AKC Reunite at [microchip@akcreunite.org](mailto:microchip@akcreunite.org).

- A Tale of Two Lost Dogs by Caroline Coile
- Everyone Should Have Their Pets Microchipped by Susan Ewing

### 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.

- In Case of Accident... by Caroline Coile
- Is Heartworm Prevention a Scam? by Caroline Coile
- Protecting Your On-Leash Dog and What to Do Should the Worst Happen by Denise Alexandra Fleck

### The AKC Family Dog Award

Sponsored by the American Kennel Club, this award is for the best writing (including books, articles and blog posts) about any or all of the good manners programs under the AKC Family Dog umbrella, including AKC Therapy Dog, AKC Trick Dog, AKC Canine Good Citizen, AKC Community Canine, Urban CGC and AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy. While participating in these activities that are fun for both dogs and people, dogs become well-socialized and develop a lifelong bond with their owners. This award consists of a \$500 cash grant.

- AKC Trick Dog Perform Title: Starring William the Circus Ringmaster and his Uncaged Bear Act by Elizabeth M Jarrell
- No Dog Left Behind? by Caroline Coile

### 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.

- For Laughter and Little Ones by Mara Bovsun
- Salvation Of All-Breed Clubs by Linda E. Kornhi
- Search and Rescue Dogs: Making The Lost Found Again by Bev Thompson
- What Teddy Taught Us by Mara Bovsun

### The Captain William Lewis Judy Award

Sponsored by American Legion Post 348 of Brick Township, New Jersey. 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.

- Four-Legged Warriors – Pet Connection/Andrews McMeel Syndication by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Megan Leavey, K9 Rex and Bringing Home K9 Heroes by Laura Jane Reeves

### The Ceva Heartworm Prevention Award

Sponsored by Ceva Animal Health, this award is for the best article that

*Continued on next page*



## 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.

### CATEGORY: 7-9

- 🏆 Atlas by Nikolas Anthony Klimenko, 9  
(Read this winning entry on page 17)

### CATEGORY: 10-12

- 🏆 A Passion for Helping Pooches by Jayson Kimberly, 12  
(Read this winning entry on page 17)

### CATEGORY: 13-14

- 🏆 Full Circle by Daly Dodsworth, 13  
(Read this winning entry on page 19)

### CATEGORY: 15-17

- 🏆 What I've Learned from Smudge, Lola, and Dewey by Kendle Rae Frank, 16  
(Read this winning entry on page 20)

DWAA is thrilled to announce that we had a big influx of entries from writers under the age of 18, thanks to DWAA's new Young Writers on the Web program, which offers mentorship to budding dog writers. Thanks to an anonymous donor offering matching grants, in this first year, we are awarding four awards by age group! Congratulations to the winners!

One of the goals of Young Writers on the Web was to help children and teens have the opportunity to have their work about dogs published. All four of the winning entries for the DWAA Junior Writer Award were originally published on the DWAA website as part of the program! We are reprinting them in Ruff Drafts so that you can all be inspired by the talent and passion for dogs in the next generation. Enjoy!

*Continued from previous page*

educates the public about heartworm awareness and prevention tips. The winner will receive a \$1,500 grant.

- Heartworm Disease Deadly But Preventable by Christy Elizabeth Caplan
- Inside Heartworm – Pet Connection/ Andrews McMeel by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Is Heartworm Prevention a Scam? – Canine Chronicle Magazine by Caroline Coile

## 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.

- A Piglet State of Mind by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- From Rescued to Rescuer by Nancy Monson
- Points to consider when adopting a pet by Kim Campbell Thornton
- Rising from the ashes: Former shelter dog helps firefighters cope with stress and grief by Laura Teresa Coffey

## 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.

- Brave New World: Fear-Free Veterinary Visits by Caroline Coile
- Changing Behaviors by Sarah Rumble
- The Fear Free Revolution by Jen Reeder

## 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 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.

- How Good Breeders Raise Puppies Who Grow Into Happy, Confident Dogs by Linda C. Rehkopf
- Making Vet Visits Fear Free by Susan Ewing
- Never Fear by Caroline Coile

## The GNFP Digital Canine Companion Award

Sponsored by GNFP Digital, this award is for the best digital story – online video, blog post or online article with photography that best demonstrates the bond between people and their canine companions. The content must be demonstrated as having been shared through digital media. The winner will receive a \$1,000 grant and a special gift.

- A Piglet State of Mind by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- Piglet, the Deaf Blind Pink Puppy's Trip to the First Annual Special K9 Games by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- Piglet, the Deaf Blind Pink Puppy Visits Classrooms to Educate, Inspire, and Create Smiles by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- The Power of Rescue: How a Dog Helped 2 Boston Marathon Bombing Survivors Heal by Laura Teresa Coffey

## 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.

- A Perfect Match by Susan Wroble
- Piglet, the Deaf Blind Pink Puppy's Trip to the First Annual Special K9 Games by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM

- Piglet, the Deaf Blind Pink Puppy Visits Classrooms to Educate, Inspire, and Create Smiles by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- What Teddy Taught Us by Mara Bovsun

## 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.

- Canine Influenza Is Here to Stay by Debra M. Eldredge, DVM
- Congestive Heart Failure in Dogs by Christine Caplan
- Ticks' Increasing Threat by Kim Campbell Thornton

## 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.

- Atlas by Nikolas Anthony Klimenko
- A Thousand Tears . . . Song For A Magical-Dawg by Amy Shojai
- She's Just Like Me by Debra Lampert-Rudman

## The Pet Fashion Guild Pet Fashion Award

Sponsored by Pet Fashion Guild, 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.

- Quick and Easy Halloween Costumes by Bryn Nowell

*Continued on next page*



- The Wedding...The World According to Rosebud and Brody by Ted Slupik and Gail Diedrichsen
- What Not to Wear – Dog Leashes by Kate Eldredge

## 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.

- Bloat in Dogs: Signs, Symptoms and Prevention Tips by Carlotta Cooper
- No PAWS About It: Hiring a Professional Pet Sitter is the Right Move for Your Pet by Denise Alexandra Fleck
- Pet Separation Anxiety by Christy Caplan

## The Rio Award

Sponsored by Jen Reeder and Bryan Fryklund in honor of their beloved Labrador retriever mix, Rio, this award is for an article, book or essay that profiles a dog who changed someone's life in a profoundly positive way. The award consists of a \$300 cash prize.

- Dogs with Jobs by Laura Greaves
- Let Dogs Be Dogs by Marc Goldberg and the Monks of New Skete
- My Deceased Dog Connected With Me In The Twilight Zone by Carol Bryant

## The Sleepypod Pet Safety Award

Sponsored by Sleepypod, this award is for the best article or book that shares tips for pet safety during travel and/or anecdotes of dogs helped by owners who take safety precautions. The award consists of a \$500 cash grant.

- Chloe's Adventure Cori's Nightmare: A Lost Dog Rescue Story by Cori Solomon
- On The Move With Your Best Friend by Denise Alexandra Fleck
- The Ultimate Pet Friendly Road Trip by Amy Burkert
- Top 12 Dangers of Traveling With Dogs By Car by Carol Bryant

## 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.

- A Mighty Pip: Grief, Reflection, and Four Years Gone by Kristin M. Avery
- Piglet, the Deaf Blind Pink Puppy Visits Classrooms to Educate, Inspire, and Create Smiles by Melissa S. Shapiro, DVM
- The Soul of Saving a Senior Pet by Christy A. Doherty

## 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. The winner will also receive \$300.

- American Cocker Spaniel Striker Comes Close at Westminster by Carol Bryant
- Four Dog Shows – The Post-Journal by Susan Ewing
- Our New York City Adventures: Progressive, Meadowlands and Westminster 2018 by Barbara E. Magera and Elaine L. Mitchell

## 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 and will be announced at the Feb. 10 DWAA Awards Banquet.



## 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.

🏆 And the winner is ...

Mara Bovsun

**Mara Bovsun is an award-winning journalist, author and features editor of *AKC Family Dog*. She has volunteered her talents and expertise for many years with DWAA, from speaking at events to meeting with members to discuss story ideas and assignments. In 2018, Mara spearheaded DWAA's inaugural year of Young Writers on the Web, reaching out to schools and communities about the program and mentoring budding dog writers. Her passion for nurturing the careers of writers of all ages is inspiring, as are the lovely articles and books she crafts about dogs and the people who love them. Congratulations – and thank you!**



**Mara Bovsun and Emily at the 2018 DWAA Banquet**  
Photo by Mary Bloom

## Contest Report

*Continued from pg 7*

three judges whose scores are averaged. This means that the majority of judges had more than one category to judge. Thank you to all of the judges that stepped up to the plate when I contacted them to judge again. And, thank you to the judges that proactively volunteered to judge for the first time. I'm sure we'll be calling on you again in the future. So, consider yourself forewarned (If we were on social media, I would insert a winking smiley face here). Without volunteers, the contest would not run properly or uphold its reputation.

What does it take to even be considered for a Maxwell? First, an entry has to have at least an average score of 80 on a scale of 1 to 100. The Maxwell goes to the entry with the highest score in a category. There are 43 regular categories in this year's competition. Finalists in a

category receive a certificate for their accomplishment. These should be in hand by the third week in December to all finalists.

For special awards, we had another banner year in both the number of special awards and the amount of money that the entrants could win. Thank you to Jen Reeder and Marsha Pugh for spearheading that effort. And, a special thank you to Lea-Ann Germinder and her team at Germinder + Associates - and her digital platform GoodNewsForPets - for another phenomenal year of publicity for the contest itself. While we have a great number of entries for special awards, even more writers could enter their work and both be recognized and earn additional money. It's a great additional way to be recognized. The same rating system and process is followed for the special awards. This year,

all finalists in the special award categories also receive a certificate.

The top entered regular category was the Online Article: Any Other Topic category. For books, two categories were tied in top number of entries: Fiction, Young Adult, or Humor and the Human/Animal Bond categories. In the special awards, the most entered category was the Harrison Stephens Inspirational Feature Award.

Winners for both regular categories and special awards will be announced at the annual banquet in New York City at the New Yorker Hotel on February 10, 2019. Reservations are now being accepted online at DogWriters.org. There are a limited number of seats. So, grab your seat sooner rather than later! This is a great opportunity meet peers in person, enjoy time with fellow members, and network. I hope to see you there! 🐾





Jill Rappaport  
Photo courtesy of Kristin Gray

# TV Host Jill Rappaport and Radio Host/Journalist Steve Dale To Speak at 2019 DWAA Awards Banquet

The Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA) is delighted by the keynote speakers for the 2019 DWAA Awards Banquet: Jill Rappaport and Steve Dale.

"We're thrilled that these two luminaries in the dog writing community will be giving keynote addresses at our annual awards banquet in New York City," said DWAA President Jen Reeder. "They both have a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion for pets. They will make the night so special for award finalists, guests and members – everyone who attends the event!"

The banquet takes place the evening of Sunday, February 10, 2019, at the iconic Hotel New Yorker in Manhattan. After the speeches, DWAA will announce the winners of Maxwell Medallions as well as a whopping \$15,950 in special awards.

## Jill Rappaport

Jill Rappaport is an award-winning animal advocate, network journalist and best-selling author, known nationwide as the popular, longtime correspondent on NBC.

Considered a "Voice for the Voiceless," Jill works tirelessly to make a difference for animals in need by shining a light on shelters across America. Rappaport is also the host and consulting producer of Animal Planet's new show "Dog Bowl," which was an idea she came up with to shine a light on older animals in need.

She launched her award-winning segment "Bow To Wow" on NBC's TODAY show and this popular series aimed at finding shelter animals a one-way ticket to a loving home, ran for 8 years



and had a 100% adoption record. In addition, Rappaport's heartfelt animal welfare stories for NBC'S "Nightly News" really resonated, all going viral.

She has received the first "Voice for the Animals" Award from HSUS, The Presidential Service Award for Media Excellence from the ASPCA, and the Excellence in Journalism and Outstanding Contributions to the Pet Industry Award. And she has had the honors of ringing The NYSE Opening and Closing bell, all to raise awareness for pets in need.

In addition, Rappaport has written four books, three focusing on animal welfare including the best-selling *People We Know, Horses They Love*, featuring Robert Redford on the cover. She also has a complete line of dog and cat toys, dog treats, leashes, collars, and dog beds all benefiting shelter animals in need! She sells the dog and cat toys and dog treats exclusively on QVC.

Rappaport resides on her farm on Long Island, New York, with her six horses and six rescue dogs whom she refers to as her "fur angels" saying, "Animal welfare is my oxygen, and when you do what you love, you never work a day in your life."

## Steve Dale

Steve Dale, certified animal behavior consultant (CABC), is the host of two nationally syndicated radio shows, Steve Dale's Pet World and The Pet Minute (together heard on more than 100 radio stations, syndicated Black Dog Radio Productions, since 2005). He's also a special contributor at WGN Radio, Chicago, and program host of Steve Dale's Pet World (since 1997). He formerly hosted the nationally broadcast Animal Planet Radio.

For 21 years, his twice weekly newspaper column was syndicated by the Chicago Tribune. Steve was a contributing editor for *USA Weekend* (2002

to 2014). He has written for a long list of magazines, from *People* to *Dog World* (where he was a columnist).

He authors a column called *Steve Dale's Vet World* for *Veterinary Practice News*, and is also a columnist for the *Journal of National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America*. Steve co-edited *Decoding Your Dog*, written by the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014). Steve's the author of e-books, *Good Dog!* and *Good Cat!* (Chicago Tribune, 2013). He's the author of several other books, including *DogGone Chicago* and *American Zoos*.

Among Steve's many awards, the AVMA Humane Award (the only AVMA honor bestowed to a non-veterinarian), *Editor and Publisher* syndicated newspaper Feature Writer of the Year Award, AKC Responsible Dog Ownership Public Service Award (twice), HSUS Pets for Life Award, American Humane Association Media Award, American Pet Products Association Pet Industry Outstanding Media Representative of the Year, and has been honored with over 15 Maxwell Medallions from the Dog Writers Association of America and over 15 Muse Awards from the Cat Writers' Association. He's also been honored by the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association, University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, and was the first recipient of the Winn Feline Foundation Media Appreciation Award, and many others. In 2012, Steve became the



Steve Dale

youngest person ever inducted into the Dog Writers Association of America Hall of Fame.

"Go online: stories about dogs are too often written by people who merely want to perpetuate their opinions – which is fine, except those opinions are too often not based on facts," Dale said. "When I read a story about dogs or a book is published about dogs, I look to see if that author is a DWAA member. For me, that brings a whole new level of credibility and integrity. I am so proud to be a DWAA member, and so looking forward to visiting with my colleagues." 🐾

**Both Rappaport and Dale volunteer on the board of the Grey Muzzle Organization, a nonprofit that offers grants that support senior pet adoptions. There will be an exciting announcement involving the Grey Muzzle Organization at the banquet as well.**

Dog Writers Association of America  
Annual Writing Contest Awards Banquet  
Sunday, February 10, 2019  
The New Yorker - A Wyndham Hotel  
The Herald Square 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 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! We'll be announcing the winners of our annual writing competition, awarding Maxwell Medallions as well as \$15,950 in special awards thanks to our generous sponsors!

We are thrilled to feature keynote speeches by two beloved luminaries in the pet writing community: NBC's Jill Rappaport and radio host/journalist Steve Dale. We will induct Deborah Wood into the DWAA Hall of Fame and give Mara Bovsun the DWAA Distinguished Service Award.

\$135.00 per person...Space is limited to the first 100 reservations.

Please select one entrée:

\_\_\_\_\_ Spinach Tortellini with Lemon Cream Sauce  
OR

\_\_\_\_\_ Herb French Cut Chicken Breast in a Sauce Poivrade (wine reduction and pepper), served with Butter and Leek Whipped Potatoes and Sautéed Broccolini

Dinner also includes Traditional Caesar Salad with Garlic Croutons and Parmesan Cheese and Individual Tiramisu

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***

**and click on EVENT**

# JUNIOR WRITER

## Award Winners



Nikolas wrote this lovely tribute to his late dog, Atlas.

### Atlas

By **Nikolas Anthony Klimenko**, AGE 9

🏆 WINNER: DWAA JUNIOR WRITER AWARD, CATEGORY 7-9

Atlas so kind, always sweet and happy.

When someone was happy, Atlas waggled.

When someone suffered, Atlas suffered and,

Always tried to make it better.

His joy, happiness, and love were as contagious as pink eye.

We must respect him as we respect Mother Nature.

He always loved to walk in our neighborhood and in the forest.

He commanded the most pets.

Being with Atlas was like a paradise of love. 🐾

## A Passion for Helping Pooches

By **Jayson Kimberly**, AGE 12

🏆 WINNER: DWAA JUNIOR WRITER AWARD, CATEGORY 10-12

When I first saw Booker in a Facebook post, he was in bad shape. His leg was bloody, and he looked very sad. He was a stray who had been attacked by other dogs and shot with a pellet gun.

I decided to try to help him using funds raised through two projects I started last year – Leave it for the Pooch and Pennies Four Paws – to help animals in need.

It all began in July 2017, on the way home from a weeklong camp called Education in Action (EIA). After attending

my second camp with this organization, I applied to be on the EIA alumni council. To be on this council, you must organize and work on a service project.

I decided pretty quickly that it had to be something with animals because I love them and it makes me happy when someone helps them. Also, I hope someday to become a vet so then my job will be making them feel better.

My idea was to collect gently used and brand-new toys, treats, food, bedding, and any item that might make the animals happier in their temporary spots while they wait for their forever homes.

After some thinking, I decided to name my project Leave It For the Pooch.

I picked a logo, got a T-shirt made with it, and started spreading the word through a Facebook page my mom set up for me.

The first message came from a lady who wanted to donate leashes and harnesses, so I had my mom set up a time we could meet. It was so exciting when she arrived because she had about 100 leashes! These would definitely benefit the dogs in our local shelter.

I always made sure to take pictures of the donors and their donations, as well as donation drops at foster homes, shelters, and rescues.

More and more people came to drop off items. People also commented

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on my posts, with nice messages like, "Keep up the good work!" and "If more kids were like you, this world would be a better place." One lady even named her dog after me.

Elite Repeat, a local thrift store, allowed me to set up a box to collect drop-offs. They also set out a jar to raise money for Pennies Four Paws, a fund I created to raise money for vet bills and supplies.

It was through Pennies Four Paws that I met Booker, the dog I saw on Facebook who had been so badly hurt. I immediately knew the money I had raised had to go to pay his vet bills.

My mom contacted Booker's foster mom, and we went to the vet to meet him, bringing him a card, bone, and blanket. His foster mom came in soon after I arrived. "You must be Jayson," she said as she ran up to me and gave me a big hug. She told me she recognized me from Facebook and thanked me for helping Booker.

Even though he was badly hurt, Booker still wagged his tail when I pet him and read him the card. The vet said he had a broken shoulder and his leg would have to be removed. I was sad for him having to lose his leg, but the vet said he would do just fine with three. Booker would now be a tripawd on the mend. I raised more money to help with his follow up visits.

Booker's foster mom kept me updated about his progress. Booker cried a lot after the surgery. He didn't like his bandages and tried to chew them off. His foster mom put him in an Angry Birds T-shirt and posted a picture on Facebook. He looked so cute in it.

Booker kept getting better and better. His fur was growing back, his bandages came off, and he was walking and running on three legs. I was so happy to go visit him again because this time, he jumped all over me.



Pennies Four Paws has since been able to help other dogs. There's Leo, who was run over by his owner and then left at a shelter. Mick was shot between the eyes. Noah was dragged by a car. Iver, a puppy, is paralyzed. Afghan Hound Roman, once a stray, also needed to have a leg removed because of an injury that got infected.

We've also helped a kitten, Willow, who needed surgery to go to the bathroom.

Most recently, we've been raising money for Gracie, a German Shepherd. She may have cancer and Pennies Four Paws will contribute money for her surgery.

I now have T-shirts, caps, and decals I sell to raise money for Pennies Four Paws, and I continue to gather items for Leave It For the Pooch.

I hope that my community service project continues to grow and what I created will become a well-known organization that helps many more dogs.

At the end of May, we got the best news! Booker has a forever home. I'm glad my donors and I were able to give him a second chance at a happy life. 🐾

**You can visit Jayson's Facebook page and follow the progress of other dogs like Booker at: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/1884290271838539/>**

# Full Circle

By **Daly Dodsworth**, AGE 13,

🏆 WINNER: DWAA JUNIOR WRITER  
AWARD, CATEGORY 13-14

My name is Daly Dodsworth, and I am thirteen years old. Three and a half years ago, I was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, an incurable disease caused by the failure of the pancreas by the immune system.

Upon being diagnosed, I was in the hospital for three days. I was scared and away from my friends and siblings. My parents alternated spending time with me. As you would expect, I watched TV for the duration of my stay, which can be boring. However, when I look back on the days that I was in the hospital, I don't think of the times I know that I cried, or the pain from IVs and shots. I think about the things that brightened my day, one of them being therapy dogs visiting my room.

One particular dog came into my room on the second day of my hospital stay, which is the one I remember most, a rough coated collie named Sophie. This dog was one in a million. She was gentle, and like a human, picked up on my social cues. Of course, I wasn't afraid of dogs, but I wasn't in a great mood either. It brightened my mood immensely and made my day.

As I grew older I graduated from elementary to middle school. Towards the end of sixth grade, we prepared for a special presentation. Ted Slupik, author of Sophie, Best Friends Are Forever, talked to us about writing his book and the power of volunteering. He explained how he had trained Sophie to make hospital visits. I immediately recognized Ted as the man with the collie who visited me. Although Sophie had passed, Ted was there with his new



**Rosebud and Daly**

dog, Rosebud, who is continuing Sophie's kind work.

At the end of his presentation, Ted offered any student the opportunity to see Rosebud work at a nursing home. After his presentation, I made sure to tell him I remembered Sophie and him, which made me want to see Rosebud in action.

My friends, Natalie, Blanca, and I set a time with him and were anxious to have the opportunity become a reality. The day arrived, and we pulled up to the nursing home. As we reunited with the Slupiks and Rosebud, I knew I was ready to go inside and be a part of the visits.

As we walked in, the faces in the lobby lit up, just like mine had when I had been the one receiving the visit. We walked the halls with Rosebud, getting the opportunity to meet many new faces, all with new personalities. One unforgettable visit was the one with Wally, a World War II veteran. I had recently

learned about World War II making it easy to ask questions about his experiences. Natalie, Blanca and I chatted and asked questions to get to know the hero. As we talked, I could see the expression on his face soften and his mood lighten. We ended our visit by asking if we could take a picture with Wally, and he gladly accepted. We did not know that Wally had not seen any faces as young as ours in a long time.

Sadly, Wally passed away only days after our visit, but it was told to us that he kept repeating the fact he loved our visit, one of his last happy memories. Hearing this as a thirteen year old and knowing that I made someone feel so good felt more than amazing. I don't have enough time in the world to explain each patient that we met, or more importantly, how each of them personally touched my heart.

After the visit to the nursing home I got to thinking. Ted gets to feel this

*See FULL CIRCLE pg 21*



# What I've Learned from Smudge, Lola, and Dewey

By **Kendle Frank**, AGE 16

🏆 WINNER: DWAA JUNIOR WRITER AWARD, CATEGORY 15-17

Dogs have been humanity's loyal companions for thousands of years. They've been my best friends since I was 2 years old.

I can't remember a time when canines weren't a part of my life and one of my greatest passions. All my friends thought I was strange when I was a kid because instead of playing with dolls I only played with my stuffed dogs.

Not only have I always loved pooches, but I've also learned a lot from them, especially from my own three pets. Here are just a few of the lessons they've taught me:

## A LITTLE PUPPY IS A BIG JOB.

My family and I recently adopted a Keeshond puppy. We named her Smudge. She is young, playful, wild, clumsy, frisky, high maintenance, and downright adorable. The biggest lesson I've learned from Smudge is that pup-

pies take a lot of work and responsibility. She needs to be cared for, played with, trained, and protected. But it's worth it because the effort we put in now will turn her into the good dog she will grow up to be.

## WE ALL NEED A LITTLE SILLINESS – AND A PUPPY.

High school is very stressful, but adopting Smudge has shown me that there is nothing that relieves stress better than a pup. Playing with her every day has reminded me not to take things so seriously and live life more. Puppies are care-free with a constant playful mindset, which is very refreshing. I think everyone should surround themselves with dogs. Based on my experiences with Smudge, their wagging tails, smiling faces, and silly antics can completely lift your spirits.

## SOME THINGS – LIKE YOUNG LABS – CAN BE OUT OF YOUR CONTROL.

My second dog, who I got in fifth grade, is my beautiful Labrador Retriever, Lola. Lola is the sweetest dog I have ever met. She is gentle with kids and dogs alike, athletic, and a self-taught huntress. The biggest lesson she's taught me is that "stuff happens." We adopted Lola from a rescue when she was 2-year-old. Even though she wasn't a puppy, she often created a lot of mayhem. She has mellowed out a bit, but still occasionally decides to wreak havoc. We get frustrated with her, but we clean up her messes and move on. That's what dogs do; they cause trouble.

## THE PACK IS A SAFE PLACE.

Lola has also taught me that dogs always take care of their pack members. When I am with her, I always feel protected because she looks out for me.





## OUR DOGS LOVE US – A LOT.

My first dog was a Pug named Dewey, who I got when I was 2 years old. He was a cute, goofy, quirky dog with a great personality. Most importantly, he was my best friend. We grew up together, and every day when I got home from school, he would cry and whine excitedly at my presence. For his whole life, up to his last day, he loved to snuggle and comfort me when I was upset. Even in his old age when he became blind, he would seek me out around the house just to cuddle. His devotion proved how much dogs love and care about their owners, which is probably why they're the most popular pets. Dogs love their owners more than themselves; they love hard, unconditionally, and selflessly. Being loved by a dog is the most incredible feeling in the world. Having a best friend like Dewey for 13 years showed me how close people can be to their pets. Dewey has always been my favorite dog because he put my happiness first and made it clear he preferred me above everyone else in our household.

## THERE'S NOTHING AS SAD AS SAYING GOODBYE.

Dewey had diabetes and arthritis and was blind for a few years. On July 15th, 2017, we woke up to discover that Dewey had suffered a stroke in the middle of the night. I didn't want to admit it, but it was time to end his misery. Putting Dewey to sleep was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. My heart was broken, but I knew I had to be there for him when he needed me most. Losing my best friend taught me the most painful and valuable lesson of all, that saying goodbye to an amazing friend is hard. Even though we made the right decision, mourning his death was difficult, and I still miss him very much. I will always miss him, but I know

that he will forever be in my heart. Dogs are members of the family and when they pass it can be just as painful and sad as it would be if someone lost a human friend or family member. That shows how much dogs worm their way into our hearts.

## DOGS MAKE EVERYTHING BETTER.

Overall, dogs have shown me how incredible life is. The world is a messed-up place, but knowing how pure and special dogs are makes it more bearable. They have a zest for life that can melt the strongest of hearts. I often trust my dog's judgments more than my own because, in my opinion, they are the best judges of character. My love for dogs has made my life a lot sunnier and passionate. Dogs make people happy and have even turned lives around. No wonder they are perhaps the most beloved and valuable creatures on Earth.

No day goes by that I take them for granted because they are truly amazing animals and friends. 🐾

## Young Writers on the Web

To read more from Junior writers:

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

More info about the Young Writers on the Web program:

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

## Full Circle

*Continued from pg 19*

feeling every week, and I felt it only a couple times, changing me for the better. I wondered if his hospital visit with me three years ago made him feel the same way I had when I was able to visit these patients.

Just a short year later, Ted returned to our school. He asked the girls and me to help him present to the sixth graders. Again, the feeling I had felt when at the nursing home returned. Ted let us in on a secret he had used to remember who of the girls was who. He called us the "BDN Girls," using the first initial of our names. B, for Blanca, meant bold. D, for Daly, meant dynamic. Finally, N, for Natalie, meant nice. This may seem like a little thing to you, but to us it was everything. It meant that he had remembered our visit. Also, that our visit had meant as much to him as it did to us.

Isn't it amazing how the world spins in circles? How when something is done for you, you want to return the favor? My story with Sophie, Rosebud, the Slupik's, Natalie, and Blanca, ended up going in a circle. This showed me how one action, one thought, or one feeling can be spread or returned. Helping others is so rewarding. Volunteer! And, have fun with it! 🐾

**Daly is a student at Madison Junior High in Naperville District 203. She is an active teen who loves playing sports and hanging with friends. She also enjoys opportunities to volunteer and continues to seek ways to help others. Her future plans include going into the medical field, perhaps to become a surgeon.**

# Deborah Wood

## DWAA Hall of Fame Inductee

By **Joel Gavrielle-Gold, Ph.D.**,  
CHAIR OF THE HALL OF FAME  
COMMITTEE

Deborah Wood's career is a testament to the power of a writer to create, shape and change a community. For eleven years, she was the informative and entertaining pet columnist for The Oregonian newspaper. This column created a shared base of knowledge throughout the Portland area and reinforced the value of a compassionate, mutually-rewarding relationship with animals. Deborah's eleven books spread this message nationwide. She became manager of Animal Services for the second-largest county in Oregon. Her communication skills were instrumental in reducing euthanasia in the Portland area by over 90 percent, making it one of the safest places in America to be a homeless pet. Deborah's writing always shines with the profound sense of joy she feels about the extraordinary bond between humans and the dogs at our sides. 🐾

### QUICK BIO FACTS:

"Pet Talk" columnist for *The Oregonian*,  
January 1998 - January 2009

Author of 11 books:

**The Tao of Bow Wow: Understanding and Training for Dog the Taoist Way (Dell)**

**Help for Your Shy Dog (Howell Book House)**

**Top Dogs: Making It to Westminster (Howell Book House)**

**Little Dogs: Training Your Pint-Sized Companion (TFH)**

**The Little Dogs' Beauty Book (TFH)**

**The Little Dogs' Activity Book (TFH)**



Deborah Wood with Esmeralda

**A New Owner's Guide to Papillons (TFH)**

**The Shih Tzu (TFH)**

**The Yorkshire Terrier (TFH)**

**The Dog Lover's Guide to Dating (Howell Book House)**

**The Tao of Meow: Understanding and Training Your Cat the Taoist Way (Dell)**

**Manager of Animal Services, Washington**

**County, Oregon, December 2008 - November 2017**

**\*Under her leadership, euthanasia was reduced by 93 percent.**

**Recipient of 5 Maxwell Medallions and numerous Special Awards from the annual DWAA Writing Competition**

*Congratulations!*

## MANY THANKS TO THE 2018 DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA CONTEST JUDGES!



Mary Abram	Patricia Gail Burnham	Jodi Helmer	Arden Moore
Cara Sue Achterberg	Christine Caplan	Adria Henderson	Peri Norman
Tracy Ahrens	Laura Coffey	Lorraine Houston	Virginia Norman
Terry Albert	Caroline Coile	Elizabeth M. Jarrell	Christina Potter
Skye Anderson	Pamela Dennison	Pamela Kadlec	Christy Powers
Teoti Anderson	Deb Eldredge, DVM	Melissa Kaufmann	Marsha Pugh
Joanne Anderson	Ida Estep	Emma Kesler	Jen Reeder
Dee Dee Andersson	Su Ewing	Kate Kuligowski	Linda Saraco
Dawn Antoniak-Mitchell	Sarah Ferrell	Debi Lampert	Florence Scarinci
Emelise Baughman	Mary Fish Arango	Kristin Leydig Bryant	Marilyn Singer
Lisa Begin-Kruysman	Kerri Fivecoat-Campbell	Larry Lindner	Cori Solomon
Skye Blaine	Denise Fleck	Jill Lopez	Patricia Stephens
Sue Bobeck	Lee-Ann Germinder	Susan Luck	Kim Thornton
Sheila Boneham	Elaine Gewirtz	Julie Lux	Jerry Thornton
Mara Bovsun	Tilly Grassa	Duncan MacVean, DVM	Demi Vitkute
Connie Brittain	Ranny Green	Barbara Magera MD	Sunny Weber
Carol Bryant	June Greig	Matty Margolis	Cathy Weselby
Shelley Bueche	Babette Haggerty	Sandy Mesmer	Susan Willett
Susan Bulanda	Karen Harbert	Susan Metzger	Kim Wishcamper
Mary Burch	Ron Harbert	Merrie Meyers	Michele Wojciechowski
Corally Burmaster	Linda Kay Hardie	Marilyn Miller	Deborah Wood

## President's Column

*Continued from pg 23*

available, so please don't wait to purchase your ticket if you haven't already!

Thank you so much to our Contest Chair, **Lauren Darr**, who did a phenomenal job – on top of her duties as DWAA Secretary! I also want to thank our special award sponsors and the nearly 100 professional members who volunteered to judge this year's contest. Children's book author **Karen Petit** and an anonymous donor have made this year's awards particularly special by sponsoring \$400 for each of the four winners of the Junior Writer Award – wow! Treasurer **Marsha Pugh** is the linchpin of this

organization – thank you for staying on as Treasurer and for all of your help with the banquet (and all you do in general!).

Huge thanks to the members of the outgoing Executive Committee – **Ida Estep**, **Laura Coffey**, and **Lauren Darr** – and the Board of Governors. Good luck to the incoming officers: President **Carol Bryant**, Vice President **Maggie Marton** and Secretary **Kristin Avery**. Thank you for volunteering for these demanding roles. It fills me with gratitude to know we're passing the torch to such incredible people!

On the subject of gratitude, I'm so

grateful to our newsletter editor **Merrie Meyers**; 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 your help and dedication to the organization. I couldn't have done this job without you!

Finally, thank you all for being members of the Dog Writers Association of America. It has truly been an honor to serve as your president. I wish you nothing but the best in 2019 and beyond! 🐾



Meet our

# NEW MEMBERS



Gail Gilmore

## Gail Gilmore

Gail Gilmore is a writer with an interest in the connection between people and dogs and in the kinds of questions that engage both mind and heart. In her spare time, she volunteers for Missing Dogs Massachusetts, working with families to help locate and recover their missing dog. Her articles on the subject of missing dogs have appeared in *The Dodo*. Following a career at Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences – where she helped undergraduates navigate the ever-changing career

pathways of entertainment, journalism, and the arts – and side gigs as an actor and as a musician in a women's Brazilian/Afro-Cuban percussion band, she left the city and moved to the mountains of New Hampshire. She lives with her spouse and two rescue dogs from Puerto Rico, and is the author of the memoir *Dog Church*, which was named a finalist for the 2017 Rainbow Awards' Dirk Vanden Award for LGBT Biography/Memoir. She is represented by Janet Reid at New Leaf Literary & Media.

## REMINDER

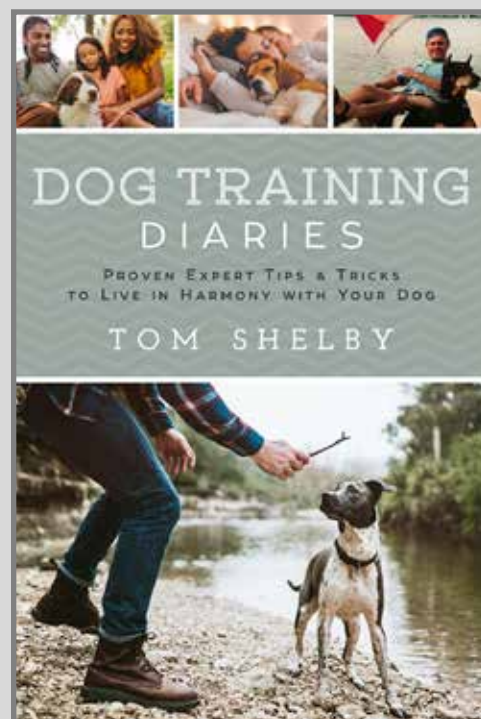
The membership renewal season is fast approaching. We are improving the renewal process, so please stay tuned for an email update!

## MEMBER NEWS

### New Book by Tom Shelby

Dog trainer Tom Shelby answers real questions from real dog owners.

Are you inadvertently rewarding your dog's bad behavior? Are you misinterpreting the peeing at the door? In *Dog Training Diaries*, lifelong dog trainer Tom Shelby captures the basic guidelines of training dogs and offers advice, strategies, and personal insight to deal with the most common problematic situations dog owners face. Tom's personal stories from his life as a dog trainer allow readers to journey through all dog walks of life – from mansions to suburban parking lots – as he explains how to restore the special relationship between dog and owner. *Dog Training Diaries* will help readers harmonize, understand, teach, and learn from their dogs – because harmony between dog and family is what it's all about.



# A Moment in Time

## Mentoring a Young Writer

By **Ted Slupik**

I started my therapy dog career with a rough coated collie named Sophie in 2002. Sophie was the most gentle and loving dog you could ever hope to meet. She became your best friend immediately. We worked primarily at a local hospital for three hours every week for over 12 1/2 years. We met and gave comfort to over 10,000 patients and visitors during that time period and many of them left the hospital with happy memories. But none of our visits were as special as meeting Daly Dodsworth. About five years ago as a 3rd grader, she was hospitalized with very high sugar levels and was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. I'm sure the experience was very scary for Daly. While in the hospital, Daly met Sophie and me.

Trying to get her mind off a scary diagnosis, we spent some time with her. We really didn't think our visit would be so significant in the long run, nor did we think our paths would ever cross again. A visit is usually a one-time experience; but this time it was not.

Fast forward 3 1/2 years later to when I began visiting middle schools with my current therapy dog Rosebud, another collie. I was invited there to speak about volunteering and animal assisted therapy. The first school I visited happened to be Daly's junior high school. That day, I spoke about volunteering and my book "Sophie...best friends are forever." After my presentation, Daly came up to me and Rosebud and said, "I remember you and Sophie visiting me in the hospital and making me feel better!" I was amazed, but after asking Daly a few questions and

listening to her memory of Sophie, I knew we had in fact met. Not only was Sophie the only collie in the animal assisted therapy program at the hospital at that time, but Daly described Sophie perfectly.

During that school visit, Daly and her friends, Natalie and Blanca, told me they were interested in coming to watch Rosebud and me do animal assisted therapy work at the local nursing home we visited. The three young girls wanted to learn how to become junior handlers and experience visiting seniors with companion dogs. Since that day, Daly and her friends, who have become known as the "BDN Girls" (Blanca, Daly, and Natalie), have visited the nursing home many times. They realized how much their visit brightened the day of the residents and employees. Knowing they were doing something good made them feel good about themselves. This feeling is what they shared with their fellow classmates.

The following year, Daly (now in 7th grade), assisted me in my presentation at her school to the 6th graders and talked about how meaningful her experiences were. Daly's teacher, Mrs. Konrad, suggested that Daly write an essay about her experience with animal assisted therapy work as a class assignment. A week later, I received Daly's essay from Mrs. Konrad. It was wonderfully written – full of emotion that conveyed her true feelings about how she felt about volunteering.

I realized that I had stumbled upon a promising young writer. The article was published online by DWAA's Young

*See MENTORING pg 27*



# The Christmas Ornament

By **Barbara E. Magera, M.D.**

As I lie near asleep, I hear a rhythmic soft, pinging sound. I sit up in bed and realize the strange sound is coming from our family room. As I tiptoe down the stairs, my eyes smile at the sight of my young Cavalier gently tapping a silver Christmas ball. The shiny object reflects his silhouette. He paws at the Christmas ball projecting it into a gentle arc where it swings to and fro on the lowest branch of the Christmas tree. My boy is mesmerized by this game. Somehow, he instinctively understands the fragility of the ornament. He gently taps the delicate ball as it sways among the soft evergreen needles.

He continues his game and seems oblivious to the brightly colored Christmas presents surrounding him. Many are designated for him and his canine siblings. Some even contain doggie treats.

With giggles, I walk over to the refrigerator searching for goat cheese. My Cavalier puppy quietly leaves his Christmas game and immediately is at my side. He stares intently at me hoping

for some midnight goodies. Before I ask the words "do you want some" he has licked my fingers clean of the cheese morsels. I pour myself a glass of Pinot Grigio and scoop him up in my arms. I head for the rocking chair. Under the twinkling lights of the tree, we cuddle. As I caress his soft muzzle and fur, he drifts into deep sleep. Gentle snoring ensues. I sip on my crisp wine enjoying this sacred moment of family, friends and faith. Many graces are bestowed on my family because of Christmastide. I am especially thankful for my little dog...the runt of the litter who nearly didn't make it but with careful watch and an exceptionally attentive mom, grew into a lovely Cavalier puppy. He is the most affectionate of the pack. As he grows and learns new tasks, I hope to show him in the ring or whatever activity he most enjoys. But for now, this Christmas night, he remains MY lovely little puppy. I gently cradle him in my arms and bring him back to bed. I see the figure of a faceless angel who gestures over a sculptured dog. Her mes-



sage is: "Angel of love watching over my dog." I am overcome with gratitude that the Christ child has blessed me to care for the life, welfare and nurturing of this little puppy. As I kiss the top of his head, I whisper in his ear "Happy Christmas, Dear little one." 🐾

# My Grown-Up Christmas Wish for Santa

by **James Colasanti Jr.**

REPRINTED FROM THE  
GREENSBORO NEWS & RECORD

Dear Santa,

I'm worried.

We have corresponded for a very long time, over 65 years. And every year I have always wished that I had asked for something different. I thought I knew why, but I don't.

When I was a boy in upstate New York, we never lost or misplaced our car keys. They were always in the igni-

tion. You could do that back then—never needing to worry. No one would ever touch your car or your personal belongings. Everything was safe.

Things are different now. You can't do stuff like that anymore. Santa, there is too much hate in the world, too much distrust, and too much thievery for no good reason. The country is not like it used to be.

I can remember the sea of humanity while attending Woodstock, where love and music prevailed to unite everyone. It was a sight to behold. But no more. It

just isn't happening.

People do not like one another. And it is a real shame. The world will only survive if everyone works and pulls together. There is no other way. I can remember, Santa, you telling me, "Love lives within us all. You just have to feel the magic." And isn't it the time together that really matters?

Santa, I often ask myself, "Why can't people be loyal and loving like dogs?"

Over the years when I have asked, you have given me many things. On

*See CHRISTMAS WISH pg 27*



# Mentoring

*Continued from pg 25*

Writers on the Web program and in the 2018 Summer Edition of the Dog Writers Association of America newsletter, ruffDRAFTS, and was later entered for the Junior Writer Award.

When the essay was originally written, no one had any idea that it would be published or eligible for any competition. It's been a wonderful surprise for both of us.

Daly expressed an interest in doing more writing and I was happy to assist her in any way I could. She wrote another story about visiting patients at the nursing home where she beautifully recalled her experiences. Daly not only shared her own emotions and reactions, but also described those of the people she interacted with. It was touching and heartfelt.

Daly's most recent story was the result of her interest in meeting the attendees who were volunteers at a breed specific rescue picnic. Daly interviewed various volunteers who perform many different roles: foster caregivers, transporters, intake coordinators, and adoptive families. I had six or seven volunteers lined up for her to talk to. I got her started with the first one; introducing her. As she finished with the first volunteer and we were moving on to the next person to interview, she looked at me with a gleam in her eye as if to say, "I got it!" As we moved to other people, I did not need to speak. Daly's questions were very insightful. Each volunteer she interviewed had a unique contribution to the organization's success. They opened up and shared their personal stories because Daly was able to tap into each person's emotions. She was proactive and intuitive, as she elicited sincere responses to her thoughtful

questions. Several foster volunteers and adopters became very emotional and were almost brought to tears while telling Daly how and why they volunteered to help abandoned animals. At age 13, Daly was able to engage these volunteers. One by one, she got them to open up their hearts to describe what they did. Yet another great story by Daly Dodsworth!

Daly will be going to New York this February (2019) to attend the annual DWAA awards banquet. I hope that any readers attending the banquet are able to meet her to find out first-hand what a phenomenal young person she is.

Daly's next story will be inspired by her trip to New York as she hopes to interview handlers of senior dogs (aged 7 and older) at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York. As Frank Sinatra said, "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere."

I can hardly wait for the results. 🐾

**Postscript: On December 5, 2018, Daly was announced as a 2018 DWAA Junior Writer Award winner.**

## Editor's Letter

*Continued from pg 3*

Wherever the new year takes you, I hope you find a path to become best of what you want to be. Or, as Helen Keller said so much more eloquently, "Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

Cheers! 🐾

# Christmas Wish

*Continued from pg 26*

many occasions I had requested a new dog that needed care at Christmastime. You have always answered. My feeling has been that during the holidays, everyone needs love and a place to call home. And let me tell you, Santa, life with a dog is a wonderful journey; life with many dogs is Heaven on Earth.

But now I am older, and my needs and wants have greatly diminished. In truth, there's not much I really want. And Santa, isn't life really all about feelings? What other time of year is as magical as Christmas? It is the time when people believe anything is possible.

Santa, there are many people and families who have lost everything. They have been ravaged by wildfires; they have been affected by flooding; and they have been displaced by hurricanes. People are fighting just to survive. And all of them need help.

But this will take more than FEMA. It will take Santa Claus at his best with a lot more tricks in his bag than usual. My mother once said to me, "Christmas is what you make it, and also, with whom you share it." I hope, Santa, you can make it something to remember for all those folks who are in desperate need. I am looking to you for help.

And I'm talking about more than just a few million toys and stuffed animals. It is homes; it is food and water; and it is a sense of stability replaced in their lives. It is hope for a new tomorrow.

They will need all that and much more. I have always known that you are the man who can do it. Always. Your ability is outstanding, beyond reproach.

Because, Santa, I have hope and I believe!

With best wishes this Christmas,  
James 'the dog man' Colasanti Jr. 🐾



Lauren Darr, Secretary  
6137 Crawfordsville Rd  
Ste F #393  
Speedway, IN 46224

## Roxie

*By Janice Biniok*



*I can't help it if I accidentally blink, sneeze or yawn for your author portraits...*