



# ruff DRAFTS

Fall 2019

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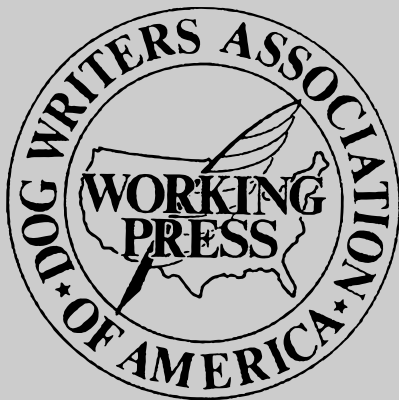
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## Homecoming in all Shapes and Sizes



Photo courtesy of B. Guenter



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# President's

# COLUMN

By **Carol Bryant**

DWAA PRESIDENT

Hello fellow DWAA members,

Happy fall! In this season of renewal and change, your busy DWAA team has been working diligently behind the scenes on a variety of projects. We are here to serve you. If you haven't renewed your membership or visited the new website lately, now is the perfect time to do so.

We strive to honor the roots of DWAA while propelling the organization into a digital, fast-paced era. You'll notice some changes and renewed efforts to drive membership, while continuing to serve those who renew and partake in all of the group's offerings.

The more streamlined DWAA website and blog is the undertaking of webmaster, **Jill Caren**, founder of 2 Dogs Media and a DWAA member. The feedback has been amazing, and it would not have been possible without the hardworking team of myself, **Maggie Marton**, **Kristin Avery**, and **Marsha Pugh**.

DWAA's new Banquet and Contest Chair, **Darlene Bryant**, has been heavily ensconced in the writing competition. Though our home became a small book warehouse filled with entries, all of Darlene's hard work paid off. I am happy to report an increase in submissions, over \$14,000 in sponsorship monies and many surprises in store at the upcoming awards event.

Speaking of which...I hope that you will be able to attend the 2020 DWAA Awards and Event Banquet taking place the evening of Sunday, February



**Carol Bryant, President of the DWAA**

9, 2020, at the Holiday Inn Secaucus Meadowlands in Secaucus, New Jersey. This exciting new location is a quick 5.2 miles from Madison Square Garden and DWAA has special hotel rates for attendees.

Over the years, I've attended the annual event in New York. There, I exchanged business cards and had face-to-face meetings with book publishers, editors and more. While social media is awesome and has many benefits, nothing comes close to meeting someone and having a conversation in person. I've pitched and landed assignments, grown as a writer, expanded as a dog blogger and took steps to advance myself through the benefits of DWAA membership. Most importantly for me, it's been the networking.

While in town, there's plenty to do to channel your inner puppy. Take a peek

*See PRESIDENT'S COLUMN pg 19*



By **Merrie Meyers**

Dear Readers;

Fall is right around the corner. As vibrant as the summer flora and fauna are, the colors of autumn offer their own special sparkle. Trees exchange their capes of blue-green foliage for crowns of crimson, copper and golds.

Every corner of this country has festivals designed to spotlight the transitional beauty of the season. Octoberfest, Apple festivals, Pumpkin extravaganzas, craft fairs and the like; tens of thousands of unique experiences taking place across the nation.

Even pets have become part of these celebrations. Take a stroll through any craft or department store at this time of the year, and you're sure to find holiday costumes and attire for the family pet. In North Carolina, we have the Woolly Worm Festival (dedicated to the appearance of a striped furry caterpillar whose presence on tree trunks predicts the severity of the coming winter.) Religious organizations have restructured ceremonies to include our four-legged family members. It's no longer a rarity to see "bowser" bear the ring at a wedding or pups in the pews at the weekly worship service.

Despite the diverse nature of these celebrations, all of these events provide the platform for bringing family and friends together, sharing experiences, creating memories. It is the coming together with those who matter, "Homecoming," that we've focused this issue of *Ruff Drafts*. Thanks to those of you who generously provided theme-oriented



**Merrie Meyers, Editor of Ruff Drafts**



**Woolly Worm Festival**

content for this issue. Your work underscores the universal truth, that "in the dew of little things, the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."

However you celebrate this season, enjoy the moments and cherish the memories with those who matter in your life. 🐾

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### ISSUE DEADLINES

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

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# *Annual* EVENT AND AWARDS BANQUET

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020**

HOLIDAY INN SECAUCUS MEADOWLANDS

5:00 PM ~ 10:00 PM

**FEATURING**

**ANNE SERLING**



ANNE IS THE AUTHOR OF  
AS I KNEW HIM: MY DAD,  
ROD SERLING. SHE WILL  
SPEAK ABOUT THE ROLE OF  
DOGS IN HER LIFE AND ON  
GETTING PUBLISHED.



**LARRY WOODWARD**



LARRY IS THE PRESIDENT AND  
LEAD EDITOR OF DOGWISE  
PUBLISHING. LARRY WILL SPEAK  
ON GETTING TRADITIONALLY  
PUBLISHED.

Join us for the Dog Writers Association of America  
annual event and awards banquet at our exciting  
new location just 5.2 miles from New York City.

Visit [DWAA.org](http://DWAA.org) for tickets and hotel reservations.



**LEARN / NETWORK / GROW / CELEBRATE**



# DWAA 2020 EVENT

## and Awards Banquet Breaks New Ground

An interview with our new Banquet and Contest Chair, who reveals all the details and why this is an event not to be missed.

By **Carol Bryant**

Steeped in history, the annual DWAA banquet and awards event is a time-honored tradition that continues on Sunday, February 9, 2020.

Staying true to its roots while adding modern touches, Banquet and Contest Chair, Darlene Bryant, sat down with us to share all the details and why members and non-members should attend this limited-ticket event.

**DWAA:** For those who don't know you, tell us a bit about yourself and how you got involved with DWAA.

**DARLENE BRYANT (DB):** As a retired English teacher and school principal, I've always been passionate about the written word. As a dog lover and event planner, when the opportunity presented itself to fill these roles, I happily accepted.

**DWAA:** Who should attend the event in 2020?

**DB:** Members and non-members are invited for an evening of networking, business card exchange, education, celebration, photo opportunities, and more surprises to come.

Anyone who has an interest in creative endeavors that promote the interest of dogs should attend. This includes writers, authors, journalists, publicists, bloggers, social media influencers, pho-

tographers, illustrators, and on-air personalities.

We'll also be announcing the winners of our annual writing competition and awarding Maxwell Medallions, as well as over \$14,000 in special awards thanks to our generous sponsors.

**DWAA:** How many tickets are available?

**DB:** We started with 100 tickets when they went on sale on August 1, 2019. The tickets are on a first-come, first-served basis. Once we sell out, there are no additional tickets available, so folks are encouraged to buy them as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

**DWAA:** I understand there are two keynote speakers on the agenda this year to inspire, educate, and celebrate with us. Who are they?

**DB:** Anne Serling and Larry Woodward will headline the event.

Originally from southern California, Anne Serling now lives in upstate New York, preferring a small town and the change of seasons.

Anne, a former early childhood teacher, is the author of *AS I KNEW HIM: My Dad Rod Serling* which won The Killer Nashville Silver Falchion Award for best memoir/biography in 2015. The adaptations she wrote of two of her father's teleplays appear in the anthology *The Twilight Zone: The Original Stories*. She has had



**Darlene Bryant**

poetry published in *The Cornell Daily Sun* and *Visions*; articles in *Salon.com*, *The Huffington Post*, and literary journals (*The Write Place at the Right Time* and *Foundling*). Anne has appeared on several radio shows which include *George Noory—Coast to Coast* and *NPR'S Snap Judgment*. Currently she is at work on a novel: *AFTERSHOCKS*.

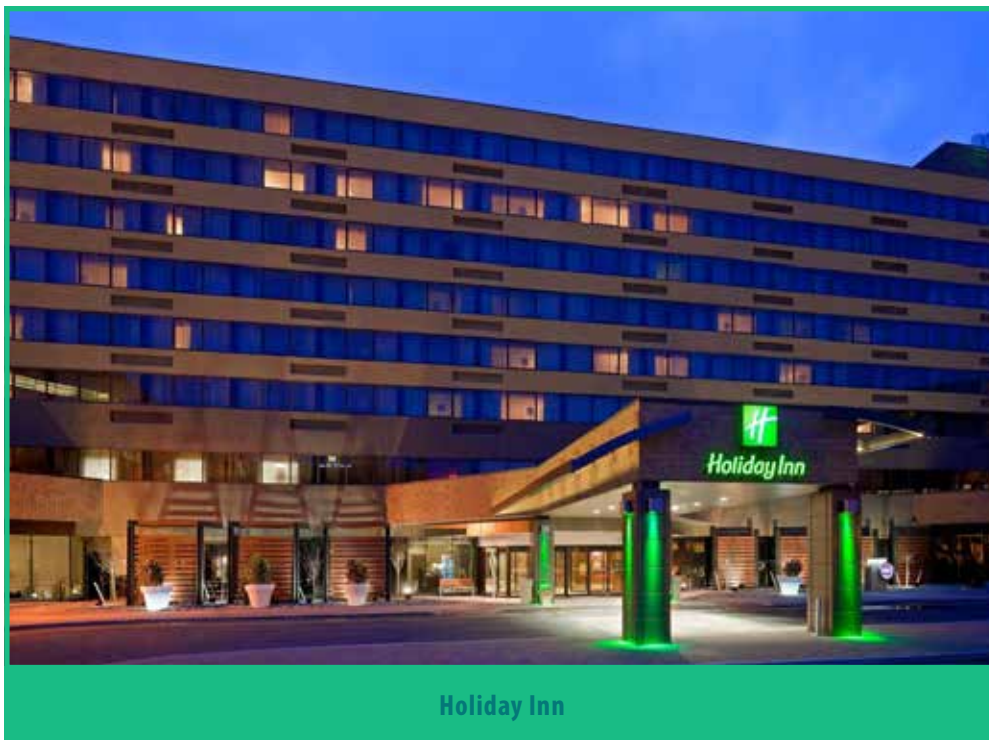
Anne will be speaking about the role of dogs in her life and on the topic of getting published.

Larry Woodward is President and Lead Editor for *Dogwise*, based in Wenatchee, Washington.

Giving up a career in banking, he and his wife Charlene founded *Dogwise* in 1988 with an initial focus on selling books to participants and attendees of dog shows in the Pacific Northwest.

Pleasantly surprised by the response, they spent the first few years in

*Continued on next page*



Holiday Inn

*Continued from previous page*

the business building up a large inventory of books from the major dog book publishers of that era and learning what dog enthusiasts wanted to read. Over time they added a mail order catalog and eventually a web site to sell books to a larger market than they could reach through dog shows. Dogwise Publishing was started in 2002 and ever since Larry has focused on working with authors, many of them first-time authors but long-time experts, to produce books to meet the needs of dog professionals and dog enthusiasts, in particular, books on training, behavior and health care. Larry's biggest goal now is to work less and delegate more to enjoy more time with his two grandchildren, playing tennis and traveling.

Larry will be speaking on the role of getting a book published in these modern times.

**DWAA:** You were able to secure a terrific new venue for the 2020 event. Tell us more about that.

**DB:** As a successful event planner, my goal is to give the members what they want. I've attended the yearly event many times with my spouse, DWAA President Carol Bryant, and spoke with guests. After listening to feedback and hearing what members want, my goal is to deliver on those requests.

The 2020 DWAA Awards Banquet takes place the evening of Sunday, February 9, 2020, at the Holiday Inn Secaucus Meadowlands in Secaucus, New Jersey. This exciting new location is a quick 5.2 miles from Madison Square Garden.

Most notably, the more affordable overall costs are easy on the pocket-book while still providing the glam, glitz and allure of New York City without the massive crowds, traffic jams and parking concerns.

**DWAA:** Why the change of venue?

**DB:** Members asked, we listened. Cost is a big factor, but I did not want to sacrifice quality. In addition to a lower-priced ticket, attendees receive more choices in menu items ala buffet style, an affordably-priced cash bar and more.

## Menu Italian Buffet

Minestrone Soup  
Caesar Salad  
Shaved Parmesan  
Garlic Crostini  
Fresh Mozzarella  
Tomato  
Basil Salad  
Antipasto Salad

Pan-Seared Chicken Mozzarella  
or Francaise  
Rigatoni Primavera  
Cream Sauce  
Seared Salmon  
Lemon Caper Sauce  
Sauteed Broccoli  
Oil  
Garlic  
Roasted Peppers  
Herb and Tomato Focaccia Bread

### Chef Choice of Desserts

Assorted Soda  
Bottled Water  
Seattle's Best Regular Coffee  
Seattle's Best Decaffeinated Coffee  
Tazo Tea Assortment

The short 5.2-mile jump over to New York City means affordable hotel pricing and parking on the Jersey side. DWAA has a member block at the hotel for event attendees, which can be accessed through the event tab on our new website. This link must be used in order to receive the block room discount.

**DWAA:** Will a meal be provided?

*Continued on next page*

Continued from previous page

**DB:** Yes! In addition to a reasonably priced cash bar, the meal is a scrumptious Italian buffet.

**DWAA:** Is transportation and parking available?

**DB:** The host hotel shuttle offers free service from the hotel to the Secaucus Train Junction Station (STJS). If you are coming into the STJS, call the hotel and the shuttle will pick you up.

The train takes you to Penn Station located directly above Madison Square Garden for \$7 each way per person.

Across the street from the hotel you can take the NJ Transit Bus to Port Authority, \$5 each way.

Parking is \$15 per night at the hotel or free if you park across the street.

**DWAA:** What is located near the host hotel for attendees and their guests to do outside of the event?

**DB:** The hotel is located right in the heart of The Plaza at Harmon Meadow featuring shops, restaurants, and a stadium cinema. The wonders of New York City are just a short NJ Transit bus ride from the hotel's front door. The hotel's complimentary shuttle service provides transportation within a four-mile radius including the Secaucus Train Station and Teterboro Airport.

Iconic destinations in New York City are within a short drive from our hotel in Secaucus. Don't miss a chance to experience a Broadway play, visit Times Square and Central Park or splurge with a shopping spree at any of the boutiques.

Be sure to discover the many offerings of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show and the AKC Museum of the Dog, a museum of canine-related artwork located in New York City.

**DWAA:** Remind us of the details.

	2018	2019
<b>Total Number of Entries</b>		
Regular	422	609
Specials	198	374
Total Combined Entries	619	983
<b>Most Regular Entries for a Category</b>		
C. Magazine Articles	81 entries	
G. Online Articles or Blog Entries		239 entries
<b>Total Submissions</b>		
Digital Online Submissions	291 entries	895 entries
Mail-In Submissions	154 entries	150 entries



Darlene Bryant

**DB:** The DWAA 2020 Event and Awards Banquet will be held on Sunday, February 9, 2020 from 5 pm to 10 pm. The annual meeting takes place at 4 pm, and members are invited to attend. The Holiday Inn Secaucus is located at 300 Plaza Drive in Secaucus, New Jersey.

Tickets will sell out, so purchase them as soon as possible. A special group rate for hotel rooms is available. Complete details and the link to book the room can be found on the [dwaa.org](http://dwaa.org) website under the EVENT tab.

**DWAA:** Tell us about the dog in your life.

**DB:** Carol and I are dog moms to Dexter, our sweet Cocker Spaniel, who attendees can meet at the event. He's really a special little boy who loves to mingle and get to know people.

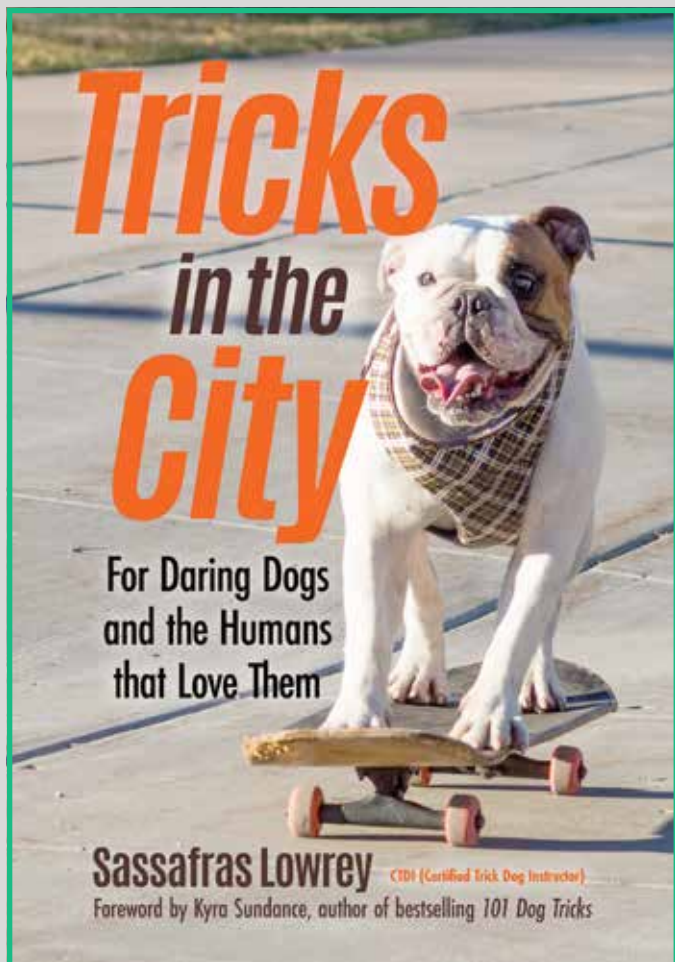
**DWAA:** If anyone has questions about the event, how can they contact you?

**DB:** Contact me through email at [frmrtcher@gmail.com](mailto:frmrtcher@gmail.com). I look forward to seeing everyone in February! 🐾



# MEMBER NEWS

## Two DWAA Members Recently Celebrated the Release of New Publications



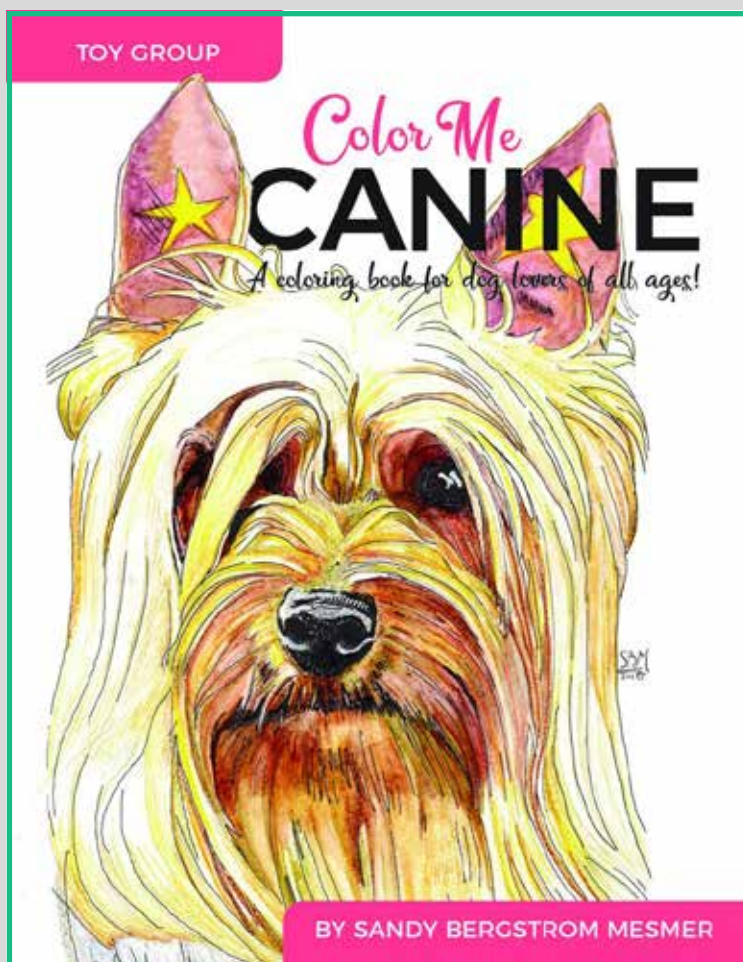
**SASSAFRAS LOWREY** recently released her latest book, "Tricks in the City." The book goes beyond basic training to help owners discover their pup's hidden talents. "Tricks in the City" provides step-by-step training instructions to help teach dogs tricks, from basic to advanced. In addition to recognition for her books, Lowrey is a Certified Trick Dog Instructor (CTDI). She has trained and competed in sports from dog agility and rally obedience to canine parkour and tricks.

*Do you have news to share?*

Send to Ruff Drafts Editor, Merrie Meyers at [merrie.meyers@gmail.com](mailto:merrie.meyers@gmail.com)

**SANDY BERGSTROM MESMER** has just published her fourth book "Color Me Canine (Toy Group) -- A Coloring Book for Dog Lovers of All Ages." The book includes two coloring pages for each breed, along with a canine quote on the back, and detailed descriptions of each breed, including a descriptive crowd-sourced "In Three Words." Mesmer is a Maxwell Award Winning Artist and an AKC Platinum Breeder of Merit for Silky Terriers.

Ultimately, she hopes to publish eight volumes of these books, one for each AKC Group and Miscellaneous. The book can either be found on Amazon or signed copies can be purchased on her website at <https://sandy-bergstrom-mesmer-designs.myshopify.com/collections/color-me-canine/products/color-me-canine-toy-group>





# Meet our

# NEW MEMBERS



Wesley Coburn



Paula Fitzsimmons

## Paula Fitzsimmons

Paula Fitzsimmons is a content marketing writer and journalist specializing in pet health, nutrition, and lifestyle. She's written for publications and organizations like PetMD.com, "Prevention" magazine, PetCoach, Lucky Vitamin, "Happy Paws" magazine, "AARP – the Magazine," and Chewy.com.

When she's not writing, she spends much of her time reading, walking, and volunteering. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin with her husband and birds. While she writes about dogs extensively and would love to adopt at least one pup, the birds have vetoed that decision.

Paula is grateful to have been accepted to the DWAA and looks forward to meeting the other members.

## Stephanie Seger

Stephanie is the award-winning blogger of [BigDogMom.com](http://BigDogMom.com) and founder of the Dog Nailpro™ Method, with decades of experience as a big dog owner. Over 30 years have been devoted to health, nutrition and behavior of dogs. Backed by a BS in Microbiology, an MBA, and a passion for writing and big dogs, Big Dog Mom™ is a purpose-driven brand with a mission to empower, educate and inspire large and giant breed dog owners through outstanding content, useful resources and actionable information.

Stephanie proudly shares her life with her husband, two children, and the inspiration for Big Dog Mom™, her two Mastiffs, Junior and Sulley.



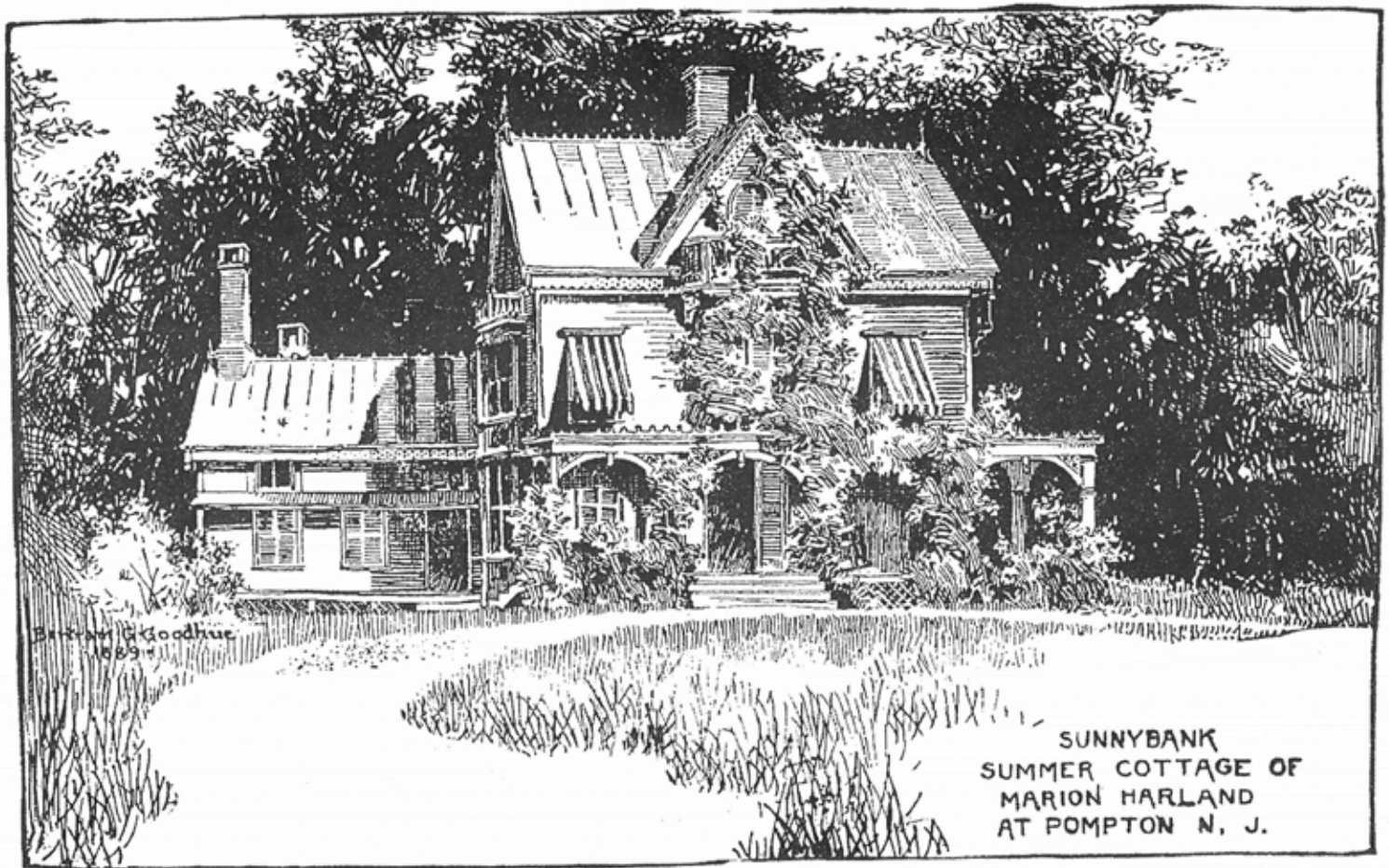
Stephanie Seger

## Wesley Coburn

Wesley edits the website Dog O'Day, which covers canine sports, entertainment and lifestyle. He has a BA in English from Rogers State University, minoring in Radio/TV Communications and Creative Writing. He is a freelance writer from eastern Oklahoma who also cov-

ers auto racing, food and superhero TV/movies after starting his career in middle school as the sports reporter for the local paper.

When he isn't writing, he enjoys prowling through used bookstores, playing with the dogs and cats, and following NHL hockey and Oklahoma City Thunder basketball.



# COME-HOME

By **Ted Slupik**

There's no better example of "coming home" than Albert Payson Terhune's love of his Sunnybank home and his beloved collies. Lad, Terhune's first famous collie, was devoted to his owner and was a "come-home" dog. Allowed to romp freely on the grounds of Sunnybank and trained to break loose, he always came home. Most dogs are fairly capable of finding their way home within a three-mile radius and some of his mates always came back to "The Place" at Sunnybank.

Lad (the world's first famous collie) and Lady (Lad's mate) had only one descendant named Wolf who was killed

saving a stray dog on a railroad track. The event was witnessed by many people and was printed as front page news. This helped to contribute to the legend of Terhune's dogs. Another of Terhune's more famous collies was Bruce, a dog imported from England that continued the Sunnybank heritage line.

Lad's place in the house was in the music room on a cool floor under the piano. He could see who was coming up the drive as well as the residents of the house. He was the house and guard dog and was the only dog allowed inside. Lad was the hero of the book, "Lad, a Dog," with his master and mistress as secondary characters. As you read the book, you are drawn into almost playing

the part of these unnamed characters. It seems logical that Terhune, loving his home as much as he did, started a business that kept him there. On average, there were 40 to 50 collies on the property. The dogs were brushed daily year round and bathed weekly in the lake from April to November with Ivory soap flakes. Terhune's collies loving water was very unusual for the breed.

This year is the 100th anniversary of the 1919 release of "Lad, A Dog." The publisher did not expect the book to be successful, so they did not insert a title page in the initial printing. As it turned out, the book was reprinted 30 times the first year alone. Audiences could not get enough of Lad. Considering there was



*“As far back as I can remember, The Place has had a grip on me that I can't explain. It is the only spot on earth where I want to live. Every tree, every foot of its rolling wooded acres is inexpressibly dear to me.”*

—Albert Payson Terhune

no television, internet, or social media to spread the story, this book's success and longevity is remarkable.

Collies were originally brought to America in the late 1800's by J.P. Morgan. Although Terhune and Morgan probably knew each other, there is no evidence of a connection. Subsequently, Eric Knight continued the collie theme with Lassie, another “come-home” dog. He published his story, “Lassie Come-Home” on December 7, 1938, in the Saturday Evening Post. The hyphen was removed for the movie title. This tale focused more on stories of the working class in Britain. Terhune's original Lad story was published in Redbook Magazine in 1915. Both Knight's and Terhune's articles expanded into books and both ultimately became movies; “Lassie” in 1943 by Knight and “Lad a Dog” by Terhune in 1962. Terhune wrote books prolifically in the 1920's and 1930's. In his peak year his earnings exceeded \$60,000 (over \$753,000 in today's dollars). Knight did not get a chance to continue his writings about dogs. He died in 1943 prior to the release of the movie.

For the 23rd consecutive year, approximately 250 collie lovers with 100-plus collies made their way to Sunnybank to celebrate “The Gathering.” The 3-day-weekend celebrates Terhune, his love of his home and the collies he loved and cared for so dearly. Terhune devotees enjoyed every minute of the event.

One speaker at The Gathering read a letter she had written as a 13-year-old girl to a friend. Fifty years later, she re-

counted visiting The Mistress, then in her 80's. This recently discovered letter was a very emotional tribute to Sunnybank and an important piece of collie history.

On Sunday, an actual collie competition was part of the weekend. The “Virtues Match” judged specifics including General Appearance, Expression, Profile, Skull, Muzzle, Front, Rear and Side Gait. It's a good thing we don't judge our mates on this many categories!

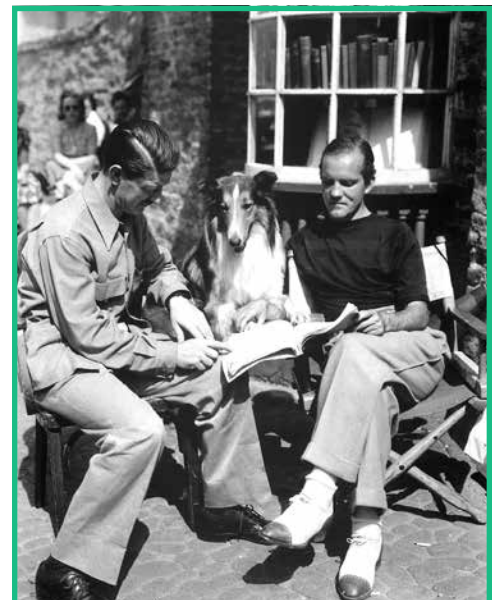
The people who attended this year's 100th anniversary of the book and the “Come-home” dogs were “Come-Home participants,” celebrating Terhune, the original “Come-Home Man.” Terhune wrote, “As far back as I can remember, The Place has had a grip on me that I can't explain. It is the only spot on earth where I want to live. Every tree, every foot of its rolling wooded acres is inexpressibly dear to me.” Every time Terhune made a trip to New York or especially overseas, he longed to return to his dear home. No matter where or whenever he traveled, Terhune always wanted to get back to Sunnybank!

Today, Terhune Memorial Park encompasses only nine of the original 55 acres. Terhune's house was unfortunately demolished in April 1969. Four stories high, it had 11 rooms and spanned 4,000 square feet and was covered by Wisteria vines. Terhune stood 6'3-1/2" tall with a chest girth of 50" so he required a large home. The dog kennels were only 70' from the house, with dog runs 30' long.

In the nearby Van Riper-Hopper House Museum, we enjoyed six short



Bruce, Lad and Wolf



Eric Knight on set

movie reels converted to digital media from 1924-1940, saved by daughter of Terhune's attorney, Bruce Chapman. One film was narrated by Terhune himself, the sound conveying his very deep, distinct voice. Another reel was colorized, making the grounds even more stunning, transporting the viewer back to a moment in time.

See *TERHUNE* pg 19

# Cooper

By **Maggie Marton**

A few weeks ago, my husband and I started the adoption process.

No, not for another dog to add to our mix, but for a baby – a human one. We adopted our daughter, Violet, almost two-and-a-half years ago, and we realized that we wanted to start the process again sooner than later. So, we reached out to our social worker and began filling out the paperwork.

In the time since our first adoption, the state implemented a new form for our background check, which required every address where we've each lived since 1988.

I know many people live in one place for a long time. They plant roots, grow, flower, and pass away on the same stretch of land. I'm not one of those people.

The form allowed me to lump college housing together in one City/State field, but even without those half dozen dorm rooms and off-campus-housing dumps, and skipping the four moves prior to 1988, I still amassed 13 addresses over those three-ish decades. My husband, John, only lived at one address prior to college. The rest of his moves happened after he met me.

While we filled out our forms, we talked about our moves. He said after his childhood home, no place ever felt to him like home, like the place his roots would take.

As I moved through the decades, conjuring up each house and apartment, one after another, I wondered why I never felt un-planted, why I never felt like I wasn't "home" in any specific place since most of them were temporary stopovers.

It finally occurred to me: My dogs anchored me in each spot.



Cooper

*“ It doesn't matter where my actual home is as long as I'm greeted at the door by my dog. ”*

It doesn't matter where my actual home is as long as I'm greeted at the door by my dog. Throughout the 80s and early 90s, it was my family's Bichon, Sparky. He moved from Maryland to Pennsylvania to Indiana with me. Shortly after he died, Lennon and Rutherford, our Springers, arrived just before I left for college. Even though the college years are for growing up and away from your childhood's tethers, those dogs kept me rooted in my family and rooted in that house.

They were followed by Jordan, a little mixed puppy I found abandoned on my college campus. I couldn't keep her on my own as a student, but I dog-sat her whenever her permanent person was away until I graduated. When I returned to campus, missing Lennon and Rutherford, I visited Jordan.

Then came Emmett, my heart dog,

the dog who changed my life. He was joined by Lucas, and those two moved with us from DC back to Indiana to Louisiana and back to Indiana again. Lucas left us too soon, but Emmett lived well into his dodderage, moving once more to our current home. At some point in those years, Cooper joined the herd, as did two cats, Newt and Ripley.

No matter what city or house or apartment I lived in, no matter how far I roamed or the hours I worked, knowing that my dog waited for me on the other side of the front door kept me moored. Cooper holds that job now. When I travel or even just zip out to the store, knowing he's there makes that house my home.

We've been in our current house for three years, a long stretch for me. In his nine years, Cooper's moved with me

*See COOPER pg 19*



# Alma Came Home

By **Mindy Schwartz**

"That's a wonderful thing to do, but I don't know how you can give up your dog!" Almost every puppy raiser for service dog organizations has heard that more than once.

I'm a volunteer puppy raiser for Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). Puppy raisers get our charges when they are eight weeks old, and we raise them until they are approximately 18 to 20 months, when we return them back to CCI for advanced training. Hopefully, after another three to six months these puppies will graduate and go home to give life-changing assistance to a person with a disability.

During the time we have these puppies, we are expected to teach them 30 commands that will be the basis of their potential career as a service dog. These commands include "hurrying" (urinating and defecating on command), waiting for permission to eat ("okay") waiting for permission to go through doorways ("out"), and walking calmly by our sides.

My puppy raising journey began when I attended my brother's graduation with a CCI service dog. I met the wonderful people who raised his puppy, and for the first time I understood how puppy raisers can "give up" these dogs. As soon as I arrived home, I filled out an application to be a puppy raiser and eagerly awaited the call telling me that my puppy was on her way.

That call came on my birthday. I was getting a black, Labrador/Golden Retriever cross. A few weeks later I learned that her name was Alma. In January, the day arrived when I went to CCI to pick up an adorable bundle of black fur. Our pet dogs had different reactions to the new arrival. Nicky, who was 12 and considered herself the queen of our house



Alma

refused to let Alma get close for a few weeks. Eight-year-old Rocky was delighted to have a new playmate.

The next 18 months went by quickly. We attended puppy class twice a month and practiced our commands every day. An important part of a puppy raiser's job is socializing the puppies, so Alma was

*See ALMA pg 19*





# Coming Home with my Dog

By **Sherri Telenko**

How many of life's milestones occur in September? Like many people, watching my oldest nephew head off to first year university evoked two responses: shock at the passing of time and nostalgia for my alma mater The University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada.

Guelph is a small city with deeply rooted ties to higher learning, agriculture and animals. In its center is the university, opened a century ago as Canada's first agricultural college, then the first veterinary school. Now it's a multiple-discipline institution and home to one of the best equine research facilities on the continent. Even as an English Lit Major, animals factored into my post-secondary school experience and shaped my worldview.

I've only attended the official Homecoming Weekend twice: once for the 10th anniversary of my first-year group and again for our 20th. Yet this is like home for me, and I've made return visits several times with my dog, Victor, to experience the open green spaces shadowed by towering historic stone buildings. Victor is a high-energy Cocker Spaniel/Parsons Terrier cross who's up for anything.

As an undergraduate, my favourite haunt was the outdoor sculpture park at the art gallery adjacent to campus. The park is defined by artist Evan Penny's "Mask," a massive black metal facial outline pressed into the earth that appears either convex or concave, depending on your viewing angle. I spent many moments silently strolling through this small park as an art-enthralled student, and later as an art critic writing about new acquisitions and believing sculpture can transform public spaces.

Fast forward decades later, and I'm visiting the campus with Victor who's become my travel companion almost by fluke. Ironically, it's because of my nephews I have a dog at all.

For almost two years, my crazy little black mutt was my nephews' pet, rescued from the local SPCA after being

surrendered there twice. Yes, twice. However, he wasn't working out for my sister who one day was seriously ranting about giving him away, yet again. Without hesitation, I took him so my nephews would know where he was. That day, on the car ride home, I be-

*See VICTOR pg 20*



**Victor**



# I Remember Duffy

By William Patterson

The best dog I ever had was like three Cardigans in one: Duffy had a classic head, an impressive chesty front and a powerful driving rear. Unfortunately, the genetic architect made a few miscalculations in assembling his parts. His topline was “linearly challenged.”

Duffy grew up his first year with our Siamese cat, Rama. We always said that Duffy got his quiet, calm temperament from Rama. They were the closest of friends. Rama was protective of his buddy, once even chasing a neighbor dog away from our front gate for barking and growling at the young puppy. Encouraged to join in “doggy” activities, my wife Liz and I began entering Duffy in conformation shows when he turned six months. The breeder had sold Duffy strictly as “pet quality” and must have been surprised at our persistence in dog show competition. She tactfully suggested that we might try obedience, and that’s what we did.

With an old book by Blanche Saunders, “Training You to Train Your Dog,” I taught Duffy some beginning skills, to heel on leash, sit, down and stay. He seemed to watch me all the time with his broad smile, as if to say, “Teach me something!”

I had forgotten just how good he was. The obedience newspaper “Front and Finish” reported that Duffy was ranked Fourth among Cardigans in obedience in 1984.

Duffy was a comical performer in the ring. The rules give credit for a brisk performance, but Duffy was known for his thoughtful deliberation. In retrieving a glove, a dumbbell or a scent article, his pace was a carefree, smiling



Duffy

walk, rather than a brisk trot. Of course, Duffy’s amble was my fault as a trainer, but after it was ingrained it was easier to accept than struggle with. And people got a kick out of him.

Time passed more swiftly than we realized. I saw the changing of the guard when Duffy conceded his Top Dog role to Billy, who had grown suddenly from a nursing puppy into maturity. Always before, Duffy could put everyone in their place with a warning bark or growl. This time, Billy accepted the challenge and ended a tussle in dominant position over my aging Duffy. Like forebears in a wolf pack, the time had come for a new leader.

Duffy became arthritic and his ambling gait gradually changed into a laborious shuffle, yet his smile and pleasant nature continued to the end. His appetite waned and he lost weight. As if to let us know that it was time to leave us, he stopped eating in the final week, subsisting on water and an oc-

casional bit of cheese or chicken breast from my hand. He gave us time to adjust to the inevitable as he grew weaker and needed to be carried in and out of the house.

It was August 4, 1997, fifteen years after the date of his registration. When I picked Duffy up to carry him out into the yard that morning, I saw a strange bulge in his mouth. When he dropped it, I saw that it was a tennis ball. After sitting together for a while, I laid him in the car for our scheduled trip to the vet. As he prepared the syringe, our vet explained that sometimes there could be an involuntary groan or bellow at the final instant, especially if an animal’s heart was strong, but that there would be no pain or consciousness. Duffy’s heart was indeed strong. The vet made a final check with his stethoscope and then quietly said, “You did the right thing.”

The King is dead ... long live the King! 🐾

# Madame

## A Hedgehog Comes Home for the Holidays

By **Ann Hohenhaus**

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON  
12/27/10 AT [THIS LINK](#)

While I realize this story is not on par with O'Henry's "Gift of the Magi" or Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," from a New Yorker's perspective and a veterinarian's viewpoint, it is a truly heartwarming story for the season.

The story starts with the daily 5:30 am email to the Animal Medical Center staff announcing the overnight admissions to the hospital. At first the list did not seem unusual: a coughing dog, a vomiting cat. But then I got to the ICU admission of a "stray" hedgehog. Stray didn't seem quite right since hedgehogs are clearly not indigenous to New York City. When I arrived in ICU for morning rounds, sure enough, there was a hedgehog, eating cat food pellets from a paper plate.

The ICU staff reported the hedgehog had been found the night before on Third Avenue near Dylan's Candy Bar and was brought to AMC by a Good Samaritan who kindly took a shopping break to help this poor creature reach a safe haven. The hedgehog was not your "typical hedgehog." It had a bandage on one of its hind legs and when the ICU staff examined the hedgehog, they found the bandage covered a recent surgical site. The AMC's Avian and Exotic Pet Service was contacted, and they reported caring for a patient matching the description of the hedgehog in ICU. The phone-a-thon to locate the owner began immediately but was unsuccessful in reaching the hedgehog's family.



Madame

The hedgehog stayed in the Exotic Pet ward at AMC for the next couple of days. Her presence made all of us smile to see such a cute little critter in our midst. At the end of the day, a few days after the hedgehog arrived at AMC, Dr. Cazzolli of AMC's Emergency Service was heading home on the subway. Posted in the Lexington Avenue subway station were lost pet flyers announcing, you guessed it, a missing hedgehog. Immediately, Dr. Cazzolli called the owner who was overjoyed to learn her hedgehog was safe at the AMC, where she was happily reunited with Madame, the formerly stray hedgehog.

Pretty incredible, a city of millions of people, wrapped up in their pre-Christmas frenzy, a kind stranger and now a 300 gram hedgehog is back with her family for the holidays. As Tiny Tim would say, "God bless us every one." 🐾

# His Only Flaw

By **Kate J. Kuligowski**

My friend Sharon was middle-aged by the time she was introduced to Geoffrey, handsome, charming, educated, internationally traveled and interesting. What more could a girl ask? Her animated conversations while dating Geoffrey usually pertained to her wondrous adventures with her beloved dogs. And their relationship was so smooth, so easy that, after a few months of dating, Geoffrey was convinced that they were becoming serious. So, he confessed, "Sharon, I think you should know that I am allergic to dogs." That statement hit her like a tsunami. This revelation was not the fly but rather the dinosaur in the ointment. She no longer was so sure that she wanted to spend the rest of her life with this wonderful man. Sharon was emotionally torn between two powerful desires. But her enchantment with Geoffrey was so overwhelming that, in spite of his only flaw, she married him six months later.

Early on in this union, she knew it was to be forever. So, to feed her affinity for dogs, she was getting her fixes from those pets belonging to her friends...but it wasn't enough. The more she played with and loved on these fetching canines, the more she missed their special love. Her need was pushing to be met. And it became more apparent when the couple visited charming Vienna where Standard Poodles adorned every chic sidewalk café, lounging next to their owner's feet, behaving every hand signal or soft-spoken command with-

*See CURLY pg 21*



# Homecoming

By **Barbara E. Magera MD, PharmD, MMM**

Today, my Cavalier boy Rutledge, returns home after a successful show circuit career. We have strong bonds. As a puppy, we played fetch for hours. We never tired of this game because it was an act of love. I proudly showed him at his first conformation show. We had great fun in the ring. We amused ourselves during down time by tossing and fetching "Mr. Rat," a coveted fur toy. While the other puppies looked bored or scared, my boy was engaged and, best of all, happy! We won the class for our efforts but that weekend he won my heart. We cuddled, played and bonded.

He sleeps quietly during our flight home. No one notices a Cavalier snoozing in his Sherpa bag. When I take him out of his carrier, he immediately recognizes his home. His ears are up, his eyes widen as he looks around. He bolts up the stairs. He stares at everything in our bedroom. He runs to other rooms as if to ensure that everything familiar is in its proper place. He prances back to the kitchen and instinctively remembers the location of his toy box. Fervently, he tosses toys in the air until he finds his favorite. He trots and drops a knot ball in front of me. We play a quick game of fetch.

At dinner time, he slips into his snood to protect his long silky ears. He remembers his favorite bowls. This first night home, he doesn't eat with his usual gusto. I suspect he is distracted by familiar scents and sounds. After dinner, his eyelids are heavy as he falls asleep in my arms. I carry him and gently place him in our bed. His rhythmic snoring is soothing.

In the morning, we head for a pampering bath. After intensive brushing,

his lovely coat is shiny. I carefully snip the tips of his toenails. This is an intense task as I cautiously avoid cutting into the quick of the nail. On his paws, I trim the fur between his pads to complete his pedicure. I place him in the oversized sink used for bathing. I am pleased that I purchased a restaurant grade sink for washing dogs. He relishes the warm water and sudsy bubbles covering his body. I massage shampoo into his fur. I wash him several times paying particular attention to his lovely ears. I use several brushes and dryers to groom him into a stellar Cavalier show dog. He licks my cheek as a gesture of gratitude. I respond by giving him a treat.

My boy is a curious little guy who sniffs all my grocery bags. He finds a toy in my bag. He is jumping up and down with joy as I cut off tags and strings which, if swallowed, could be hazardous. He yelps with excitement. When I toss the toy, he nimbly catches it in mid air, prances towards me and drops it at my feet. We play for several minutes.

It is September and hurricane season is active along the Southeastern coast. Weather predictions identify a major storm headed towards us. We intently listen to evacuation warnings. Instinctively, my boy understands our serious mood as we start disaster preparations. Charleston is long overdue for a devastating hurricane. During the last several years, warm Caribbean waters fueled monster hurricanes, devouring property and all living things. Lately, storms are stronger, more intense in frequency,



**Rutledge and Barbara**  
*Photo credit Tom Weigand, The Winning Image*

duration, precipitation and destruction. I try not to panic but my Cavalier senses that something is wrong. As I lay awake reliving visions of storm surge, pounding winds and crashing tree limbs, Rutledge quietly climbs onto my bed. He gently wraps his left paw around my neck while nestling his nose in my right ear. His cooing calms my anxious mind. As I cradle his soft body, I thank God for my little dog who provides me comfort.

The calm waters reflect the early morning sunbeams. The golden hour fuels our bodies for more storm preparation. We move items to higher elevation and pile sandbags to minimize flooding from storm surge. Outside, we remove anything that could become a destructive missile. The storm is wobbling and losing forward speed. Its path is unpredictable. Category 5 winds besiege the Bahamas for 36 hours re-

*See CAVALIER pg 21*

# A Homecoming in Triplicate

By **Gene Maddox**

"You won't believe what I did," said my wife, Linda, sporting a sheepish grin upon her return from the ladies' social at the church. Given the event's locale, I doubted her offense to have been particularly grievous, and I bade her to 'fess up.

"Our friend Lisa brought along her new dog, a young Shih Tzu named Mia," she said. "Mia was so cute that I told Lisa to bring her over any time, and we'd be glad to dog-sit."

Mia proved to be cute, friendly and playful. Her bond with Cody, our rescue Shih Tzu of Mia's own age, was intense. They held paws, like furry sweethearts, and they play-wrestled as if it were an unruly night at the WWE.

Over time, the frequency of Mia's visits increased. We came to regard them not as dog-sitting gigs, but as welcome stopovers by a canine friend. Two years

after we met Mia, we adopted a troubled Lhasa Apso rescue named Snow Panda. Cody and Mia moved at once to bring Snow into their circle, and they played key roles in easing the angst of her traumatic background.

Lisa's work responsibilities were growing, as was the travel they entailed. For Mia, that meant more time spent with us, which well-suited all under our roof.

After Cody and Snow underwent simultaneous surgeries, "Nurse Mia" refused to leave their sides. She nuzzled them, lay beside them, and watched over them like a canine hawk, until both were well.

Linda and I were heading out for a beach vacation with Cody and Snow. Lisa would be home soon and had asked that we leave Mia inside her house as we left town. The cagey Shih Tzu, though, ascertained at once that this car jaunt was disturbingly different. Cody and Snow were ensconced in backseat cag-

es. And the car, for whatever reason, was packed to the gills.

As we carried Mia up Lisa's driveway and deposited her inside the house, she wailed at a volume we'd not realized she could reach. Her beseeching gaze shifted from Linda, to me, and back to Linda. We closed Lisa's front door, and, through its mostly shut blinds, we could see Mia leaping frantically, as she howled a final plea that we take her along.

The tempo of Cody's and Snow's beach play was subdued throughout the trip. The episode brought home to us, as never before, how close-knit the three dogs had become.

"I have good news, and not-so-good news," Lisa told us. "I'm getting a rather important promotion. But I'll have to move from here in Tennessee up to Kentucky." She asked if Mia could stay with us nearly full-time during the coming months, while Lisa supervised the construction of her new house. We readily agreed.

"And and, after moving, I'll try to get back here as often as I can. And I'll always bring Mia to visit with you guys and her buddies." We humans glanced at the three fur balls asleep on the sofa, each mercifully oblivious to the coming changes.

The toys, treats and dog food were packed neatly in Mia's carry-bag. Lisa hoisted it over her shoulder and toted a wide-eyed Mia out to her car. Lisa had suggested, now that her house and the move were complete, that we transition the dogs to their new reality through a series of ever-longer Kentucky stays by Mia. Today's departure would begin that process, with a ten-day trip.

We three humans were intently concerned about the upcoming passage

*See THE TRIPLETS pg 20*



**The Triplets**



# Alma

*Continued from pg 13*

my constant companion. She accompanied me to the grocery store, to restaurants, to shopping malls, to doctors' offices and movie theaters. We practiced walking on grates and uneven sidewalks and lots of different surfaces. Then, one day the letter I'd been dreading came. Alma's was scheduled to be returned to CCI in just a few more months.

Those months were filled with lasts: our last trip to the veterinarian, our last train ride, our last visit to our favorite restaurant. Too soon, Alma's matriculation day, or turn-in, arrived. CCI always schedules matriculations in concert with their quarterly graduations. The beauty of this is that while the puppy raisers' hearts are breaking at the thought of saying goodbye to the dogs we love, we also see the difference they can make in the lives of their graduates, the people who need them in order to live more independent lives. After graduation was over, I tearfully handed Alma's leash to another volunteer and she trotted away to her new life in advanced training.

At home, while I enjoyed the break from training, I missed Alma's energy and loving nature. After having a constant companion for a year and a half, I found myself looking for her in the back of my car. I waited eagerly for Alma's first monthly report on her progress in professional training.

Then, as it often does, life took a turn. Rocky ruptured a ligament in his knee and required surgery and an extensive rehabilitation. Nicky was diagnosed with cancer and needed surgery and radiation. While I still hoped that Alma would succeed as a service dog, I found myself whispering, "Alma, I need you, please come home." When Alma had been gone for six weeks, I got the

call I'd been dreading and hoping for at the same time.

Alma had decided that the working life was not for her. She refused to do the commands she knew so well and made her unhappiness very clear. Because CCI never makes a dog work who doesn't want to, she was being released from the program and was coming home if I wanted to adopt her. I excitedly answered that I could be there in 15 minutes to pick her up, but she was already at the vet being spayed, so I had to wait a few days.

When the day arrived, I could hardly contain my excitement. I burst into CCI and waited impatiently. I first had to meet with the puppy program manager and sign the adoption papers. Finally, they brought my girl out. When she recognized me, she hid behind my legs and leaned against me. We cuddled the whole way home in the car. Alma's first day home she happily said hello to Nicky and Rocky and then clung to me until bedtime.

By the next morning Alma had figured out she was truly home for good. After the three dogs and I returned from a walk, she gleefully raced around the yard, jumping on Rocky and Nicky and grabbing her favorite toys. She quickly adapted to being a pet and doing all the things that had been forbidden before, like jumping on my bed. Most importantly, Alma snuggled with Rocky while he recuperated, gave Nicky kisses when she wasn't feeling well, and made me smile when I wanted to cry. When we finally lost Nicky, I realized that Alma had really come home for Rocky, who would have felt lost if he'd been left alone without another canine sister.

We always say that the pups end up where they are needed the most. Alma knew that we were the ones who needed her, and I'll forever be grateful that she decided to come home. 🐾

# President's Column

*Continued from pg 2*

inside this issue to help plan your stay in February.

Have a great fall, thanks for your loyalty to the organization, and here's to the good health of everyone and their canine family members! 🐾

# Terhune

*Continued from pg 11*

The importance of coming home is exemplified at Sunnybank with the comradery of the attending group so evident. The weekend reminded us that dogs are the greatest example of faithfulness that the world has ever known.

Some people say, you can never go home. Anyone who knew Lad or Lassie knows better. 🐾

# Cooper

*Continued from pg 12*

three times. He's never struggled to adjust. He takes each move or hotel stay or camping trip as it comes. I've realized and I'm heartened to know that his definition of home seems to be pretty similar to mine: As long as he's with me, he's home.

Whether we have more moves in our future or not, I can't say. I seem to be a restless sort, but I love where we are now. I don't wish for it to be one way or the other, though. If we stay or if we go, it doesn't really matter because coming home isn't about the house. It's about who's waiting behind the front door. 🐾

# Victor

*Continued from pg 14*

came a dog person. (Well, a cat and dog person). And Victor finally found his forever home. Best impulsive decision ever.

Seven years later, as time (and kids) move on, who better to recreate my own homecoming with than my best fur buddy and constant companion? To the sculpture park we go, because Victor loves to roam ... and the art gallery doesn't allow dogs inside.

The number of sculptures dotting the green space surrounding the square brick art gallery, now called The Art Gallery of Guelph, has increased during the years with abstract shelves of heads joining the familiar waving black bear near the front door and the photo-inviting metal horse under the tree.

Nose down and legs oscillating, Vic-

tor took an interest in the sculpture park as he would any green space: darting frantically from spot to spot, thoroughly sniffing every cranny and crag, then zig zagging across the grass tracking scent. Each art piece, apparently, is to be experienced up close – really close – and from below.

That's just it. There's nothing like a dog to keep you humble.

As my dog sniffed, I admired the details of pieces, such as John Greer's "Grains of Wheat" – three large scale brass replicas of wheat grains scattered on the grass. Like many pieces in this park, they are literal – realistically replicated items – yet symbolic of the agricultural contribution to the growth of the country, and perhaps a nod to the university's roots.

My dog, however, saw rocks. On the ground. So, he peed on one. Then another. And a third.

Victor! I glanced around to see if anyone saw.

Now before curatorial staff get livid (and maybe post 'no dogs' signs around the park, which I'll ignore anyway), let's reflect. If art is in the eye of the beholder, and my dog saw this piece as worthy of marking, isn't this in some way a compliment? In his critical analysis, "Grains of Wheat" is worth a 'like.' Truth be told, he 'liked' the entire sculpture park.

Which I guess is the best outcome I could expect. I pictured my younger self here, moving among the sculptures not knowing that I'd eventually find exactly what I needed. Not through some transcendental art experience, or in the pages of a literary journal, but in the form of a sturdy little black terrier cross nosing his way through the meadow of life and keeping it real along the way. Turns out, he's my reason to come home, every day. 🐾

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# The Triplets

*Continued from pg 18*

from almost-all-the-time togetherness to almost-all-the-time separateness. Might the result be three broken little hearts? We'd monitor the three dogs' demeanors during Mia's Kentucky sojourn. And we'd be especially observant when her Tennessee homecoming occurred, and the three pals came together once more.

Homecoming day had arrived. Snow Panda stood peering through the front storm door. Linda and Cody were out walking in the neighborhood.

A car pulled into the driveway, one of its doors opened, and two human hands set Mia's paws onto the pavement. In seconds, she realized where she was, and she commenced jumping into the air on all fours.

Linda and Cody were, at that moment, headed up the driveway on the return from their walk. Mia sprinted down the driveway toward her pal, while Cody did his utmost to pull Linda's leash-bearing arm from its socket. The two met in a frenzy of yipping, barking, nuzzling, wrestling and happy-dancing.

We ushered them toward and through the storm door, where Snow had seemed ready to break the glass in order to reach her friends. They tussled. They reveled. They danced. They barked, and they yipped, and they sang. The homecoming taught us – not what we humans had wanted to know, but what we needed to know.

The three dogs, we knew, dearly loved the humans in their lives. But the homecoming had confirmed that their love for each other, and their desire to be together, transcended their love of us. Painful though it might be, we hu-

mans would have to acknowledge and respond to that reality.

As much as Linda and I loved Mia, our preferred number of full-time dogs had been two. Snow was well into her senior years, and Cody and Mia were entering theirs. Vet visits, health and mobility issues, and complications in traveling would multiply – even with just two dogs, much less three. We'd need to sacrifice our preference. And so, we did.

Lisa had desired that Mia be a key part of her everyday life. She'd need to make the wrenching and selfless sacrifice of that companionship. And so, she did.

And it all worked out. "The Triplets," as their groomer called them, lived and loved and thrived with each other in the years which followed. The homecoming had shown us that the three weren't merely dog pals.

They were soulmates. 🐾



in moments. The presence of these magnificent animals, everywhere within this romantic Austrian city, actually made the city more beautiful. Sharon found it was not just the City of Music but the city of elegant, graceful four-legged athletes. Even though her itch for canine company was worsening, a plan was taking shape. Where there is a will, there is a way, sometimes.

Back in her home in hilly, foggy San Francisco, she retold, with awe of the breed, her accounts of the amazing Poodles of Austria to her treasured friend Daphne, owner of a smaller representative of this magnificent breed. Friends are there to share misgivings, secrets and concerns, so Sharon reiterated her intense longing for dogs while in Vienna. She needed to confess. "I terribly miss not having a dog, almost to the point of physical pain. It is very difficult for me to be without one, but my wonderful Geoffrey is allergic. You have a Poodle. Aren't they hypoallergenic, generating less dander and shedding less?"

"Supposedly. The Henry Ford Hospital reported that household allergens are no lower in homes with supposed hypoallergenic dog breeds versus harrier, dander-heavy breeds. Their study concluded that exposure to a dog early in life can provide the greatest protection against future dog allergies.

"You know, Sharon, I could lend you my Curly (a Miniature Poodle) for tomorrow, Saturday when Geoffrey will be home. We can do this under the fabrication of 'dog sitting' while I am enjoying my day, at Muir Woods Monument, experiencing the awe of their redwood rainforest. Certainly, you would have your answer to his allergy within three to four hours?"

Sharon was ecstatic. "Our scheme was in place. During the entire afternoon that we dog-sat Curly, Geoffrey did not sneeze or cough once. His skin didn't itch. He showed absolutely no reaction to Curly, and most of the time, the two occupied the same room. Daphne and I had pulled it off."

What would happen next was obvious. Since their visit to Vienna, Sharon had been smitten with Standards. So, now, under the impression that Geoffrey would not be allergic if they had a Poodle, Sharon began her online hunt...it was short lived. An ad appeared in that very day's "San Francisco Chronicle": a litter of Standard Poodles for sale in nearby Marin County, across the Golden State Bridge in the Bay Area.

"To have an excuse to visit Marin County, I disguised the lure of eating lunch in one of our favorite Bay Area restaurants, Poggio Trattorio, that Sunday. While enjoying the views of the Sausalito harbor, I confessed my quest for a Standard. 'The address in the ad is nearby. Do you think we could take a look?' I was confused when he agreed without any coaxing.

"Once we arrived, I spoke first with the breeder about their pups, their ages and the health histories of their sire and dam. The breeder had ingeniously woven a different color collar for each of the black lively litter mates, to distinguish one from the other. How could we make up our mind? But suddenly one of those precious pups made a beeline for Geoffrey. I was surprised; they bonded within minutes. To cement that bond, I suggested Geoffrey name him. He called our new Standard Poodle 'Teufel,' German from Faust's first encounter with the devil, in which the devil is a black Poodle, Mephistopheles.

"I could hardly wait for Daphne to enjoy our new addition, so we planned a puppy play time for the following week.

I was both shocked and embarrassed when she let the cat out of the bag."

"Geoffrey, you know that your dog-sitting Curly was just a roost to see if you would be allergic to Poodles?"

Geoffrey showed no surprise to her revelation. Instead, he divulged his secret. "Daphne, the laughs on you two. I am not the least bit allergic to dogs. I just knew sooner or later I would have to give in. I was postponing the inevitable. I lied."

The silence was interminable, finally broken by peals of laughter. Sharon said she laughed until she cried.

An indulged Teufel accompanied Sharon and Geoffrey most everywhere. Their weekends always included a jaunt on the beach and a stroll through one of San Francisco's heralded parks. They became the canine version of Yelp, sampling the vittles of dog-friendly restaurants in northern California. For twelve years, they were an inseparable and charming trio. 🐾

## Cavalier

Continued from pg 17

leasing torrential rain that causes horrendous flooding. It is unfathomable that anyone or anything could survive such fury. My husband and I exchange speechless glances conveying that "we could be next." I carefully place Rutledge in his crate located behind the driver's seat. We stare at our house wondering if it will still be standing when we return. During our drive inland, we pray to God to keep our home, town and all coastal regions safe. Only when we arrive at our final destination do we sigh relief. A dedicated friend welcomes us, as hurricane refugees, into her home. We hug her tightly while Rutledge thankfully licks her hand. We are truly grateful for our safe harbor from the impending storm. 🐾



# TIPS & TACTICS

## Overcoming Writer's Block

The assignment was given, and the deadline is looming, but the words won't come. Sound familiar? If so, you're well acquainted with the dreaded ailment, Writer's Block. Who among us hasn't experienced this problem at some point? What causes writer's block? The sources are as varied as the reasons to write. Based on my research, which I did one day when suffering from said issue, experts cite these as general causes: Timing, Fear and Perfection.

- **Timing.** It may not be the right time or situation for you to tap into what you want to say. You may have other things distracting you. Distractions can be internal (unresolved issues) or external (noise, interruptions, scheduling conflicts).
  - **Fear.** Putting your work out there is inviting criticism (and praise). For many of us, the pressure of being judged is stronger than the desire to express ourselves.
  - **Perfection.** Perfection can be resources needed to get started or the commitment for our efforts to be so polished they can be chiseled in stone before calling it "done."
- GETTING STARTED.** The perfect chair, pen, music, climate; all these things contribute to our ability to

think clearly, but sometimes, not having even one thing out of order becomes the rationale for why we can't begin the process. **FINISHING.**

Those who are never sure they've covered everything with the utmost closure/clarity/brevity, etc., continue traveling an endless path; revising and rewriting into oblivion. Both of these situations can lead to paralysis.

So how do you overcome writer's block. Everyone seems to have a different strategy for overcoming it. Here are some of the ideas I collected from the famous, nearly famous and infamous during one of my writer's blocks!

### **TIMING.**

There is never a perfect time to start writing. Life is imperfect. To steal a phrase from that famous sports apparel company, "Just Do It!" Write every day, even if it's just a shopping list. Continuous motion of your hands helps keep brain freeze to a minimum. Write about writing.

Charles Bukowski said, "Writing about a writer's block is better than not writing at all." One strategy I use with my students is **Freewriting**. Freewriting is all about selecting a prompt; a statement, a question or even an event.

Once the prompt is selected, eliminate distractions, set a timer and begin putting down the thoughts you have about the prompt.

Another strategy that can help is to **Establish A Routine**. There are many writers who schedule their writing time. Stephen King described his routine for writing as "no different than a bedtime routine." John Grisham said the rituals he used when he first started writing were "silly and brutal but important." Grisham says the rituals built discipline and helped him achieve his goal of writing one page a day, no matter whether it took 10 minutes or 10 hours.

### **FEAR.**

Identify the **Source of Apprehension**. Are we afraid to put our work out in the universe because it will reveal something about us? Or, are we concerned it's not as good as it should/could be? It's important to understand the source of the fear so that you can break it down and address it. **Acknowledge the Fear** without giving in to it. You can acknowledge your fear without allowing it to override your actions. Focus on the process of writing by breaking it down into manageable pieces.

Writing a book, article, play, disserta-



tion or speech all begins with an idea, expansion on the idea and then identification of sub ideas and supporting information for those ideas. Try **Mind Mapping**; a process that allows you to visually organize the idea into major components, minor components and off-shoots or outliers (checkout mind-mapping.com.)

## PERFECTION.

When it comes to writing, there is no such thing as perfection. Any writer, asked in retrospect, will admit that if they were to revisit their work, there are things that could be done differently. Our work is as unique as we are. However, if you have perfectionist tendencies, almost to the point of OCD, then here are some ideas for addressing/breaking that cycle. **STARTING. Don't procrastinate** because things aren't "perfect" for starting. Start file of notes when ideas come to you and go back to them. Jump on one of those ideas and just go! Keep going! You only get better at writing by writing. Starting gets you going. **Go for done!** You can always revise. **FINISHING.** Get those thoughts down there and then set things aside. **Get feedback.** Send your work to another person- don't just run it through Grammarly or another automated platform. **Wait to revise.** Even if you don't send your work to a peer for review, set it aside and wait to revise it. Give yourself some perspective and distance before you go back into your work.

If you are doing anything to keep yourself from writing, try to eliminate those barriers and get started. Conversely, if you keep revising your work over and over and never finalizing it, stop! Nothing will ever be perfect, but it will be yours.

Remember, no one does you like you! 🐾

# Happy Go Doodle Cover Dog, Chloe, Enjoys a Fall Frolic



Love & licks & fall & family &  
tail wags & together times &  
coming home & homecomings  
& hugs & happiness &  
long walks & long weekends.

Thankful.  
So thankful.

Chloe,  
Happy-Go-Doodle





@happy\_go\_doodle

**Cozy sweaters. Cooler weather.  
Cuddly puppy. Nothing better.**



**Blissfully pooped & waggy-tailed happy**  
Chloe, Happy-Go-Doodle



@happygodoodle

**DO I SMELL TURKEY?**

Chloe, Happy-Go-Doodle



@HappyGoDoodle

**LEAF MAGNET CHLOE**



@Happy-Go-Doodle

Love & licks.

Fall & family.

Tail wags  
& together  
times.

Long walks  
& long  
weekends.

Thankful.  
So thankful.

Chloe,  
Happy-Go-Doodle



@happygodoodle

**Thankful for all the paths already explored  
and all the adventures that lie ahead.**

Chloe, Happy-Go-Doodle

For more photos and smiles, visit Jenise's Blog at [happygodoodle.com](http://happygodoodle.com).  
These photos from the following blogs

[Harvest of Happiness](#)  
and  
[Photo Gallery: Fall Collection](#)





Kristin Avery, Secretary  
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***Roxie***

*By Janice Biniok*



*Heh, heh... You caught me with my "Typeface"!*