



Meow

The Award-Winning Newsletter of the Cat Writers' Association ♦ Spring 2012

A professional writers' association encouraging professionalism among cat writers, photographers, artists, and broadcasters

California, Here We Come: Attend CWA's 19th Writers' Conference in L.A! By Dusty Rainbolt, CWA Vice President

Is it really April 2012 already? That means that the November 1-3 CWA Conference is only seven months away. Unbelievable!

This year will mark CWA's 20th anniversary and the 19th CWA Writers' Conference and Writing Competition. I joined this incredible organization back in 1995. (That sounds like the beginning of a life story from an elderly relative, doesn't it?) I attended CWA's third conference in Anaheim, California.

I remember attending a talk by Mordecai Siegal about working with a coauthor. As I listened to his lecture, I thought, "I'll never have to worry about a co-author." As it turns out, my *Four Redheads of the Apocalypse* series is written with three other redheaded authors. Talk about an abundance of blessings. At particularly trying moments, I recall tidbits of Mordy's wisdom. It never occurred to me, as I sat wide-eyed in that seminar, how relevant that talk would be more than a decade later.

Prior to attending the conference I was a local journalist with cat articles published in *Cats USA*, *PetLife*, and *Cats Magazine*. I have to give CWA and the conference organizers credit for my writing success. At the 15 conferences I've attended since Anaheim, I've gleaned information from speakers and made invaluable contacts. One thing led to another. One article led to another. Who'd have thought...?

Now, I find myself entrusted with the daunting task of booking speakers and scheduling talks. Amy Shojai, Kim Thornton, Michael Brim, and Nancy Peterson, all previous conference organizers, set the bar very high. And I am working hard to plan programming to reach that bar.

Although I'm still working on speakers and schedules, I'm very excited about the programming we've lined up. In the box below is a teaser for what you can expect at our upcoming conference in Los Angeles. Stay tuned for more details and more great speakers!

CWA 2012 CONFERENCE TOPICS & SPEAKERS

- * WordPress 101 & 102 – JaneA Kelley
- * Blogging for Beginners and Beyond – Janiss Garza
- * Recycling Ideas and Articles (an informal workshop) – Sandy Robins
- * Writing for Children, Tweens & Teens – Lee Wardlaw
- * Surefire Feature Writing – Paul Glassner
- * Everyone's a Photographer: How to Stand Out in the Cat Crowd – Bob Walker
- * Going Multi-Media – Me-WOW! – Arden Moore & Zeki
- * Kindle & Electronic Publishing – Amy Shojai
- * Contracts & Legal Issues for Writers – Charles Werner, copyright attorney
- * Writing about Feline Behavior with Clicker Training Demonstration – Marilyn Krieger & Bengal Friend
- * Working on the Web – Web Editor Panel
- * Ensnaing Web Readers: What Every Writer's Website Must Have – Web Editor Panel
- * Using Social Media to Maximize your Publicity – Social Media Panel
- * Jackson Galaxy (Film schedule permitting)

EDITORS

- * Susan Logan, *Cat Fancy* Editor
- * Melissa Kauffman, Editorial Director, Websites and Exotics, for *Bowtie*
- * Lisa King, Managing Editor, *Cats USA*, *Kittens USA*, *Dogs USA*, *Puppies USA*, *Natural Dog*, *Natural Cat*
- * Annie B. Shirreffs, *Cat Fancy* Managing Editor
- * Ernie Slone, *Dog Fancy* Editor
- * Anastasia Thrift, Managing Web Editor for CatChannel.com

**2012 is CWA's
20th anniversary!
See story inside...**

INSIDE

President's Message.....	2
Note from the Contest Chair.....	3
Call for Contest Judges.....	3
CWA Contest Rules.....	4-5
CWA Contest Categories.....	6
Special Awards & Guidelines....	7-9
CWA Contest Entry Forms....	10-13
Article: CWA's 20th Anniversary by Amy D. Shojai	14-17
2012 Conference News.....	1, 18
Call for Volunteers.....	18
Bits & Bytes/Barks/News	19-20
Article: I'm Cat Codependent	21
Article: Stuck on Cats	22
The Cat's MEOW.....	23

CWA's 20th Anniversary: Better Than Ever

Can you believe that our little CWA is 20 years old? (And not so little anymore. <grin>) Yes, 2012 is CWA's 20th anniversary year. Come join us in celebrating at our 19th annual conference in Los Angeles in November. We've



Linda Kay Hardie and Bo

got some great times planned.

This year also marks a number of changes, as our Cat Writers' Association continues to grow and improve.

The contest committee has made some changes to contest categories.

The biggest change is that we've moved the conference up, scheduling it for the first full weekend in November, instead of the weekend before

Thanksgiving. Because of the airfare costs and personal commitments around the

holiday, this change should make it easier for more of us to gather together.

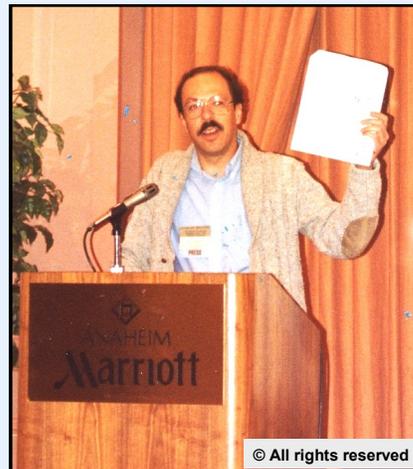
We'll be at the Renaissance Los Angeles Airport Hotel from Nov. 1-3. There's a free shuttle from the airport, which cuts down on our travel expenses.

And, because it's become very hard to coordinate our conference with a cat show, this year we're flying solo. But don't worry! Even without a cat show, we won't run out of fun.

Because there's no cat show to visit, we're adding new seminars! Vice President Dusty Rainbolt is packing our conference with even more excitement and more helpful information. Our conference, which has always been the biggest bargain in writing education, is now New and Improved, with more fun and friends and useful, real-life information about writing and publishing, as well as many opportunities to meet editors and others from whom you may get writing assignments.

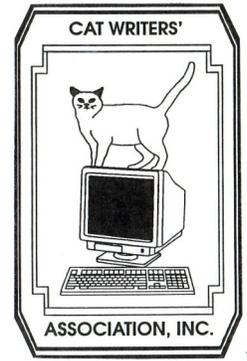
As always, you can get even more out of the conference if you volunteer. We welcome all help. Don't worry that you're new or that you've been a "lurker" or that you don't know what you could do. There are plenty of CWAers who are happy to help you figure out what you can do to make our organization even better. Volunteering is good for you, too, because you can network and make contacts. Most members who attend the conference end up finding some writing work at it, when they are open to the opportunities.

Elsewhere in this issue of *MEOW* (our award-winning newsletter), you'll find some specific volunteer opportunities. You'll also find an article by CWA co-founder, multi-past-president, and cheerleader Amy Shojai, looking at our organization's history and accomplishments. Here's to many more glorious years! ♥



© All rights reserved

The CWA Conference then and now, continuing a great tradition: Paul Glassner spoke in 1996 at the 3rd annual CWA conference, held in Anaheim. In 2012 we're back in California, and again Paul will be a seminar speaker!



Cat Writers' Association

(www.catwriters.org)

Officers

LINDA KAY HARDIE, President

Phone: 775-324-2512

4 Riesling Loop, Reno, NV 89512

Email: linda@louielarkey.com

DUSTY RAINBOLT, Vice President

Phone: 972-724-0032 * Fax: 214-632-9367

P.O. Box 293413, Lewisville, TX 75029-3413

Email: dustycatwriter@pobox.com

WENDY CHRISTENSEN, Secretary

Phone: 603-878-4251 * Fax: 603-878-1000

256 Timbertop Road, New Ipswich, NH 03071

Email: christensen@catlas.mv.com

ALLENE TARTAGLIA, Treasurer

Phone: 732-977-1691 (C), 352-304-8531 (H)

9024 SW 91st Circle, Ocala, FL 34481

Email: ATartaglia1@cfl.rr.com

Council of Directors

Class of 2013

Jane Brunt, DVM

Andrea Dorn

JaneA Kelley

Class of 2012

Lyn Garson

Ramona Marek

Clea Simon

Co-Founder/Lifetime Director

Amy D. Shojai, CAB

Immediate-Past President

Susan M. Ewing

MEOW Editor Emeritus

Betsy Stowe

Newsletter Editor

KAREN PAYNE

Phone 305-665-1639 * Fax: 305-665-1639

P.O. Box 430784, Miami, FL 33243-0784

Email: karen90@attglobal.net

Webmistress

KAREN LAWRENCE

Phone: 905-934-5726 * Fax: 905-934-1661

P.O. Box 573, Lewiston, NY 14092-0573

Email: kml@cfa.org

A Note From the Contest Chair: Call for Judges, New Award, Category Changes; Get Your Entries Ready!

By CWA Contest Chair Nancy Marano

Once again it's time to recognize CWA's talented membership. Gather up your best published or radio/TV work from the last year and enter it in the 2012 CWA Communication Contest! The deadline for entries is July 1, 2012. No ifs, ands, or buts. **Your entry MUST be postmarked on or before July 1, 2012, to be considered.**

Thanks to the Committee: Your contest committee has been busy adding categories, changing categories, and going over rules and awards with a fine-toothed kitty comb this year to give you the best chance of winning a Muse Medallion™ or Special Award for your work. Huge thanks go to the contest committee members – Marion Lane, Anne Leighton, Stephanie Piro, Dusty Rainbolt, Fran Shaw, and Sandra Toney – for all their help and advice.

Sign up for judging: Now all of our Professional members need to step up and offer to judge. By my count, we have 200+ Professional members. This is more than enough to fill all the judging slots and have a few people left to serve as backups. Just send me your name and category choices. Please fill out the form below, or email me at nmarano@aol.com with your preferences. I will do my best to accommodate your wishes, but it is on a first-come, first-serve basis. When picking your categories, please remember you cannot judge a category you plan to enter.

Fees: Everyone who volunteers to judge or help the contest committee gets a discount on his/her own Regular Category entry fees. If you are submitting a Regular Entry and one or more Special Award entries, you may combine the fees you owe into one check made out to the Cat Writers' Association. Send your check and entries to Nancy Marano, Contest Chair, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. If you prefer to pay your entry fee using PayPal, that option is available at <http://www.catwriters.org/contest.html>.

Contest categories: Please refer to the full list of categories on page 4 of this issue of *MEOW*.

Changes: There are several changes this year. We found that an increasing number of the articles entered in various categories deal with cat rescue issues. These articles include feral cats and TNR as well as stories on rescue groups and articles about rescue cats in shelters and what shelters are doing for them or about rescue groups working with shelters. In order to recognize the importance of "rescue" as a topic, the Contest Committee decided to add the topic "Rescue" to the following categories: I.4 – Magazine Article – Rescue, II.3 – Newspaper Article – Rescue, III.6 – Newsletter Article – Rescue, and VII.5 – Online Article – Rescue. This will make the categories somewhat smaller and easier to judge, too. However, if we find that there aren't enough entries in these new categories to make them competitive, the Contest Chair will move the rescue articles to another appropriate category and notify the entrants of the change.

Unfortunately, we've found that there weren't enough entries in the "Regional" publications to make them viable categories. To accommodate this we are removing the following categories: I.7 – Magazine – Regional – Article – Health and General Care, I.8 – Magazine – Regional – Article – Behavior and Training, I.9 – Magazine – Regional – Article – Any Other Topic, and I.10 – Magazine – Regional – Column.

The next change is a small one. We found that Category V.7 – E-Book was not a practical way to recognize the rise of e-book publication. This year we are deleting this as a separate category. If an entrant wishes to enter an e-book version of his or her book, he/she should enter the e-book in the appropriate book category. It is still up to the entrant to make sure the category judges can download the book without cost to the judges and can read the e-book without difficulty on their computer, Kindle, or other device.

In a continued effort to make judging blog categories more fair to the entrants and what they are attempting to accomplish in their blogs, the next change affects the blog categories. Since the contest rules state a person must blog regularly for at least two months to be eligible to enter this category, the judges will be looking at blog entries for July/August 2012. This replaces the previous rule that says an entrant must enter three individual blogs. Now the entrant only submits the URL for the blog. Two blog categories, VII.8 – Blog: Educational and VII.9 – Blog: Entertainment, will be judged directly from the Internet from August 1-August 31 as we do with VII.1 – Online Magazine, Newsletter and VII.2 – Website. 7

New award: The Contest Committee is pleased to announce a new "In the Spotlight" Special Award. The "IN THE SPOTLIGHT" AWARD, sponsored by Jacat Cattery, home of award-winning, pedigreed Japanese Bobtail Cats, is presented to the entry that best advances the protection, preservation, and promotion of pedigreed cats and/or the pedigreed cat fancy. This includes breed rescue. Qualifying entries include all media. This award consists of \$500, a certificate, and a Maneki Neko.

The Contest Committee wishes to thank CWA member Carolyn Vella and the Jacat Cattery for their generosity in establishing this new Special Award.

Special Awards judges AND regular category judges needed: I invite members to submit the names of people they might like to see as Special Awards judges along with a brief statement of their expertise. A Special Award judge cannot be a CWA member. When submitting a name, include a valid email address and phone number. If at all possible, please ask the individuals whether they would be interested in judging. You don't have to explain the contest; we'll take care of the explanations, but we would like to contact candidates who are interested. Remember, our regular-category judging slots are open and waiting for your name. Sign up today! ♥

YES! I WANT TO BE A 2012 CONTEST JUDGE!

(Please type or print legibly.)

Please sign up now to judge the 2012 CWA Contest. It's easy. Simply fill out this form and send it to Nancy Marano (see below).

◆ I am a Professional member and volunteer to judge in the 2012 CWA Communication Contest.

◆ I am an Associate member and volunteer to assist the 2012 Contest Committee.

Although I understand that no category can be guaranteed to any judge, the categories I would most like to judge are (please list at least three) (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

Send to Nancy Marano, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109 or email her (preferred) at nmarano@aol.com.

NAME _____ EMAIL OR PHONE _____



2012 CWA COMMUNICATION CONTEST RULES



1. Entries for all categories must be postmarked by July 1, 2012, to qualify for the contest.
2. All entries must be sent in such a manner that they can be reasonably expected to arrive within 7 days of the July 1 postmark deadline. Regardless of the delivery method you choose, **you MUST specify that the recipient need not be present in person to sign for the material. The Contest Chair cannot be home every day during business hours to sign for packages.** It is the entrant's responsibility to package the entry carefully, so that it will not be damaged in transit. Posters and other large items should be packaged in tubes. The CWA will not assume responsibility for items that arrive damaged or do not arrive at all. If you wish acknowledgment of receipt of your entry, send a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the entry.
3. The contest is open to anyone whose work qualifies in any CWA contest category and was first published or broadcast between June 16, 2011, and June 15, 2012. Entries must not have been published before in any medium. Material published prior to the current contest period is not eligible, even if it was published in a different form. Publication date is the published date cited on the entry. When there is a question regarding eligibility, it is the entrant's responsibility to clarify the issue, that is, to include with the entry a signed letter from the publication's editor or publisher clarifying the date of publication.
4. The categories Online Magazine, Newsletter, Website, Blog: Educational, and Blog: Entertainment will be judged directly from the entrant's web site between August 1 and August 31, 2012.
5. In order to be equitably judged against other contenders, entries in all categories should devote one-third or more space to cats.
6. All contest entries must be published work. "Vanity" publications are not eligible. However, quality self-published professional work is eligible. It will be judged based on the same criteria as all the other entries in a given category. It is the entrant's responsibility to provide any supporting documents with self-published entries to clarify that the work does, indeed, qualify under this rule. For example, self-published work **MUST** be offered for sale by professional outlets (that is, book stores, commercial web sites, and other venues not owned by the author/artist). E-books will be accepted. The author is responsible for providing the Contest Chair with amazon.com gift cards or some other means of enabling judges to read the e-book for free.
7. Submit each regular category entry in triplicate (3 copies), with **one** entry form for each entry.
8. The CWA Entry Form, with category and subcategory noted, must accompany each entry and must be sent to the Contest Chair along with the total entry fee at the time of entry. Any entry that is missing any element (required number of copies, entry form, entry fee) will be considered incomplete and will not be judged.
9. Make sure your entry is legible and provide clean photocopies in a large enough format to be read. If the judge has difficulty reading an entry, it may be disqualified. Online articles/columns must be submitted in hard copy along with the original online URL and publication date included so that online entries may also be viewed online at the judge's discretion. The exceptions are the categories Online Magazine, Newsletter (VII.1), Website (VII.2), Blog: Educational (VII.8) and Blog: Entertainment (VII.9), which are judged on the Internet during the judging period specified in Rule 4. For these categories only, submit an entry form with just the URL (and dates for Blog issues) specified.
10. Blog entries (VII.6 and VII.7) may be posted either on professional (commercial or nonprofit) sites, or the authors must provide proof that (1) their blogs have been posted two or more times weekly for at least two months and 2) proof of blog traffic or visit or count to their blog site. The purpose of personal blogs is understood to be building a platform, creating interaction with readers, and fostering social relationships, while many for-pay sites blog less frequently and leverage "blogs" in an advertorial style. (If you are blogging on a commercial site less than twice a week, you should consider entering your "blog" in one of the "Online Article" categories.)
11. In the Newspaper categories, when an entry first appeared as a syndicated article, in those specific cases where a syndicated writer is not able to obtain actual copies of the published newspaper articles, the entrant may provide a copy of the original article and a letter of authentication from the syndicate editor.
12. For the Newsletter categories, a newsletter is distinguished from a magazine in that the newsletter does not take paid advertising and is sold only to subscribers (that is, it is not sold on newsstands). Single cat breed newsletters and nonprofit/charitable newsletters are the exception in that they may take paid advertising.

(continued)



2012 CWA COMMUNICATION CONTEST RULES

(continued)



13. Entries in the Video or Television Production and the Radio Presentation, Audiotape, or CD categories must be submitted in their original form; that is, a transcript of a radio or television program is not acceptable – an actual audio or video recording must be entered. Video entries must be submitted as a VHS videotape or a DVD that plays in a standard DVD player. If an entire radio or television program is less than 10 minutes long, the entrant may select his/her three best programs and enter them as a single entry.
14. We will accept entries published in a foreign language, but they must be accompanied by a complete English translation. Entrants must provide three copies of the original that clearly show the date and name of the publication, and three copies of the translation. Bear in mind that the judges cannot judge the quality of the translation; they will base their decision solely on the English language content. Of course, entries in graphic arts categories are the exception and need no translation.
15. An individual person or entity may submit an unlimited number of entries, but each individual work can be entered only one time in one regular contest category. In other words, the same individual work may not be entered in more than one category. Photos or illustrations that are entered in a Graphic Arts category may appear again as a part of a writing entry (for example, as part of a magazine article or a book). Columnists must choose only their three best columns and submit them as a single entry for that column. This applies to all the Column categories (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, and online) and means no other individual installments of that particular column may be entered as single articles, except in the Editorial and Humor categories. (A column appears regularly in the same publication[s] with the same column title, byline, slug, and/or artwork.)
16. An entry must be entered in a regular category to be considered for a Special Award. Send one additional copy for each Special Award entry. (Exceptions: Three copies of the nomination form should be submitted for the Shojai Mentor Award. No additional copies are needed for consideration for the President's Award, and no entry form is needed for this award; the winner of the President's Award is chosen from among the Muse Medallion™ winners, and all Muse Medallion™ winners are automatically considered.) Special Award entries are sent to the Contest Chair.
17. Anyone may submit an entry on behalf of an author/artist, but the award will be presented solely to the author/artist of the entry. The author/artist must be a current CWA member to qualify for the discounted member's entry fee, and CWA membership dues must be paid current at the time of the contest deadline.
18. All judges are chosen by the Contest Chair and his or her Committee. Entries in the regular categories are reviewed and judged independently by three professional CWA members and their scores are averaged by the Contest Committee to determine the winner. Winners of Special Awards are selected by judges who are not members and are not affiliated with the award's sponsor; each Special Award is judged by one judge. Special Awards sponsors may be shown the winning entry before the award is given, but that announcement decision is at the discretion of the judge and the Contest Committee.
19. The Contest Chair has the right to make category changes as deemed necessary. The Contest Chair may also delete or combine categories if there are not sufficient entries. What constitutes sufficient entries is decided by the Contest Chair, but there is no absolute minimum number of entries for any category to be judged. If, in the opinion of the judges, no entry represents excellence within a category, no award will be given.
20. Entries will not be returned. Judges' decisions are final. Situations that may arise from time to time that are not specifically addressed in these rules shall be adjudicated by the Contest Chair and her or his committee.
21. Regular award finalists receive a CWA Certificate of Excellence and shall be notified in October. In order to earn a certificate, the individual must score an average of 90 or higher based on the scores submitted by the three judges for each category. The winner in each regular contest category shall receive the CWA Muse Medallion™. Special Award winners shall receive recognition as specified in the Special Awards list.
22. Contest results will be announced at the Annual CWA Awards Banquet and published in the Winter 2012 *MEOW* newsletter and on the CWA web site at www.catwriters.org. Please do not call the Contest Chair or anyone on the Contest Committee to ask if you have won. Those who do not have access to the Internet or the CWA newsletter may enclose an SASE for a list of winners. Please mark on the back of the envelope "CWA Contest Winners."
23. The entrant must comply with all rules. Deviation from the rules will result in rejection of an entry and loss of the entry fee. Entrants will be notified of disqualification in as timely a manner as possible. However, CWA is not responsible for disputed entries. ♥

CAT WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
2012 COMMUNICATION CONTEST REGULAR CATEGORIES

I. Magazines

- I.1 - Monthly Magazine - National (3 issues, 3 copies of each)
- I.2 - Magazine Article - Health and General Care
- I.3 - Magazine Article - Behavior and Training
- I.4 - Magazine Article - Rescue
- I.5 - Magazine Article - Any Other Topic
- I.6 - Magazine - Column (3 individual columns, 3 copies of each)

II. Newspapers

- II.1 - Newspaper Article - Health and General Care
- II.2 - Newspaper Article - Behavior and Training
- II.3 - Newspaper Article - Rescue
- II.4 - Newspaper Article - Any Other Topic
- II.5 - Newspaper Column (3 individual columns, 3 copies each)

III. Newsletters (Printouts of newsletters distributed by email may be entered.)

- III.1 - Newsletter - Breed Specific (3 issues, 3 copies of each)
- III.2 - Newsletter - National Circulation (3 issues, 3 copies of each)
- III.3 - Newsletter - Regional or Membership Circulation (3 issues, 3 copies of each)
- III.4 - Newsletter Article - Health and General Care
- III.5 - Newsletter Article - Behavior and Training
- III.6 - Newsletter Article - Rescue
- III.7 - Newsletter Article - Any Other Topic
- III.8 - Newsletter Column (3 individual columns, 3 copies of each)

IV. Miscellaneous

- IV.1 - Short Story
- IV.2 - Poem
- IV.3 - Humor
- IV.4 - Brochure, Pamphlet, Short Publication (under 10 pages)
- IV.5 - Annual or Long Publication (over 10 pages)
- IV.6 - Opinion Piece, Essay or Editorial
- IV.7 - PR / Humane Education / Press Kits

V. Books

- V.1 - Books - Fiction
- V.2 - Books for Children
- V.3 - Books - Health and General Care
- V.4 - Books - Behavior and Training
- V.5 - Gift Book
- V.6 - Poetry
- V.7 - Books - Other

VI. Non-Print Media

- VI.1 - Video, DVD, or TV Production (VHS videotape or DVD that plays in a standard DVD player must be included.)
- VI.2 - Broadcast, Audio - Any Format

VII. Internet / Web Sites & Blogs

- VII.1 - Online Magazine, Newsletter (URLs for 3 issues)
- VII.2 - Website (URL)
- VII.3 - Online Article - Health and General Care
- VII.4 - Online Article - Behavior and Training
- VII.5 - Online Article - Rescue
- VII.6 - Online Article - Any Other Topic
- VII.7 - Online - Column (3 individual columns, 3 copies of each)
- VII.8 - Blog: Educational (URL)
- VII.9 - Blog: Entertainment (URL)

VIII. Graphic Arts

- VIII.1 - Black and White Photograph (single)
- VIII.2 - Black and White Photograph (series)
- VIII.3 - Color Photograph (single)
- VIII.4 - Color Photograph (series)
- VIII.5 - Cartoon
- VIII.6 - Illustration (single)
- VIII.7 - Illustration (series)



**Get Your Best Work
Ready for Submission!**

**COME TO THE 2012
CWA CONFERENCE:
See You at
the Awards Banquet
in Los Angeles!!**



2012 CWA COMMUNICATION CONTEST SPECIAL AWARDS



NOTE: If you have questions about any of the Special Awards, please contact Contest Chair Nancy Marano at nmarano@aol.com.

AWARD #1: The **DR. JIM RICHARDS CORNELL FELINE HEALTH CENTER VETERINARY ISSUES AWARD**, sponsored by Cornell University's Feline Health Center, is presented to the highest-quality entry on the topic of technological advances, research, new medical developments, or innovations in feline veterinary medicine. Qualifying entries include single newspaper, magazine, or newsletter articles; columns or series of articles (print or online); blogs, a website, single books, or radio/television broadcasts, designed to educate the general cat-owning public about new developments. This award consists of \$500.

AWARD #2: The **FANCY FEAST® LOVE STORY AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented to the entrant whose work best captures the magic of the loving relationship between cats and their owners. Highest consideration goes to those works that are skillfully written/produced, and technically accurate. Qualified entries include single books, articles (print or online), features, columns, short stories, poems, blogs, radio or television submissions. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative award.

AWARD #3: The **FRISKIES® WRITER OF THE YEAR AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is for the writer who has done the most during the contest year to promote the welfare, health, and proper care of cats, which includes providing sensory stimulation to keep cats healthy and happy. This award is for "a body of work" and can include different publications during the contest period. Single entries do not qualify; therefore, multiple books, newsletters, print articles, online articles, columns, stories, blogs, websites, and series in any pet or non-pet consumer publication qualify. The award honors writing excellence and the ability to communicate technical information in a clear and creative manner to better educate cat owners and help improve the lives of cats. A maximum of 10 articles or items published within the contest period may be submitted. Choose only your best work! This award consists of \$500 and a cat figurine.

AWARD #4: The **HARTZ® EVERY DAY CHEWABLE VITAMIN AWARD**, sponsored by Hartz Mountain Corporation, is given to the highest-quality entry on the topic of older cats. Topics can include, but are not limited to adoption, health, innovative care, and senior-for-senior programs. Qualifying entries include a single book, article (print or online), brochure, newsletter, editorial, blog, photograph, and commercial radio/TV tape. This award consists of \$1000 and a commemorative plaque.

AWARD #5: The **HARTZ® GLAMOUR-PUSS AWARD**, sponsored by Hartz Mountain Corporation, honors the best single entry on the topic of feline skin and coat care. Qualifying topics include, but are not limited to, coverage of home and professional grooming, parasite control, nail care, teeth and ear care, and feline skin/coat disorders. Written and pictorial works in all media are acceptable, including articles, books, blogs, websites, online magazine, online newsletters, and videotape broadcasts. This award consists of \$1000 and a commemorative plaque.

AWARD #6: The **HARTZ® MILK REPLACEMENT FOR KITTENS AWARD**, sponsored by Hartz Mountain Corporation, is awarded to the best single article (published in a newspaper, magazine, newsletter, or professional online venue), or single radio or television broadcast on the topic of rescuing kittens. Appropriate topics include "how to" articles, stories about feral kitten rescue, early spay and neuter, orphaned kittens, and kitten adoption. This award consists of \$1000 and a commemorative plaque.

AWARD #7: The **"IN THE SPOTLIGHT" AWARD**, sponsored by the Jacat Cattery, home of award-winning, pedigreed Japanese Bobtail Cats, is presented to the entry that best advances the protection, preservation and promotion of pedigreed cats and/or the pedigreed cat fancy. This includes breed rescue as well. Qualifying entries include all media. This award consists of \$500, a certificate, and a Maneki Neko.

AWARD #8: The **KARI WINTERS RESCUE AND REHABILITATION AWARD**, sponsored by TICA, is awarded to the best single article or column (published in a newspaper, magazine, newsletter, or professional online venue) or single radio or television broadcast on the rescue and rehabilitation of cats or kittens from shelters or rescue groups for the purpose of adoption to forever homes. Entries are judged on compelling personal accounts and the education of readers on the need for rescue. This commemorative award consists of a \$500 and a plaque.

(continued on the next page)

2012 CWA COMMUNICATION CONTEST SPECIAL AWARDS (continued)

AWARD #9: The **MERIAL HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND AWARD**, sponsored by Merial, is presented to the entry that best reflects and promotes the strengthening of the human-animal bond, highlighting the bond between a cat and owner, as well as their relationship with their veterinarian as another direct caregiver. Entries will be judged for exceptional quality and on the ability to convey this concept and connect with the reader. Qualified entries include single articles (print or online), features, columns, short stories, books, and poetry. This award consists of \$1000 award and commemorative certificate.

AWARD #10: The **PETFINDER.COM ADOPT A HOMELESS CAT AWARD** sponsored by Petfinder.com, is presented to the entry that best describes the plight of homeless cats and/or the joy of cat adoption. Entries will be judged for quality as well as the ability to connect with and persuade the reader. Think — How can this increase cat adoption? Qualified *print only* entries include single article, feature, columns, and short story. The award consists of \$1000 plus inclusion in the Petfinder.com online library.

AWARD #11: The **PRO PLAN® PEDIGREED CATS AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented to the writer or creator of the best entry of the year that focuses on cat breeds, pedigreed cats, and professional breeder issues including (but not limited to) health, care, nutrition, and showing cats. Qualifying entries include entire publications, such as breed or breed club newsletters, magazines, articles, stories, blogs, photographs or illustrations in any professional venue, featuring purebred cats. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative bowl.

AWARD #12: The **PURINA® CAT CHOW® NUTRITION AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented to the best column or article (print or professionally published online), blog, or book entry on the subject of feline nutrition. Highest consideration goes to those works that are both skillfully written and technically accurate. The recipient cannot be an employee of or associated with a pet food company at the time that the entry is judged. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative pewter bowl.

AWARD #13: The **PURINA® ONE® HEALTH AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented to the outstanding single article (print or professionally published online) or blog reporting on feline health issues. Articles are judged on excellence of writing and technical accuracy; significance of the topic and public education impact on feline health are also considered. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative pewter bowl.

AWARD #14: The **PURINA® KITTEN CHOW® KITTEN AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented to the author of the outstanding entry on caring for kittens. Qualified entries include single books, articles, labeled series, columns, short stories, blogs, and websites. Entries will be judged on writing excellence and content accuracy. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative pewter bowl.

AWARD #15: The **STICKY PAWS® TRAINING AWARD**, sponsored by Fe-Lines Inc./Sticky Paws®, is presented for the best article or tape entry on training techniques. Entries should have a “how-to” focus. Appropriate entries are labeled series or single articles (print or professionally published online), columns, blogs, websites, online newsletters, and television/radio broadcast tapes on topics such as (but not limited to) litter box training, proper scratching behavior, trick training, or training cats to stay off countertops, tables, or other forbidden places. This award consists of \$1000 and a commemorative certificate.

AWARD #16: The **TIDY CATS® FELINE BEHAVIOR AWARD**, sponsored by Purina, is presented for the best entry on the subject of feline behavior. Highest consideration goes to those works that are both skillfully written and technically accurate. Qualified entries include single books, articles, features, columns, blogs, websites, online magazines, or online newsletters and should educate readers while promoting a positive approach to understanding and dealing with feline behavior. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative pewter bowl.

AWARD #17: The **WORLD’S BEST CAT LITTER-ARY AWARD**, sponsored by World’s Best Cat Litter®, is presented for the outstanding novel, short story, poem, or radio/television dramatic script which portrays cats and cat ownership in a positive way. All fiction genres are eligible. Highest consideration goes to those entries that include cats as an intrinsic part of the plot. Works will be judged for the exceptional, individual quality (“voice” or “vision”) of the writer/creator. Eligible works may be published in print or electronic media; any scripts or videos must also provide proof of production. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative pewter bowl.

(continued)

2012 CWA COMMUNICATION CONTEST SPECIAL AWARDS *(continued)*

AWARD #18: The **SHOJAI MENTOR AWARD**, sponsored by past-president Amy D. Shojai, recognizes the CWA member who has offered guidance, encouraging counsel, support, or other help that has had a direct and positive influence on another's writing/publishing success. Qualifying mentor experiences are limited to those occurring within the past three contest periods (approximately the last three years). The recipient shall exemplify the highest ideals of the CWA vision, that is, to promote communal support, networking, and mutual respect between colleagues. Only CWA members are eligible for this award. This award consists of \$500 and a commemorative item.

AWARD #19: The **MICHAEL BRIM DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**, sponsored by CWA honors extraordinary achievement and communications excellence. It recognizes the person who, by word, deed, public communication and professional excellence, best promotes the ideals, mission and best interest of the Cat Writers Association. Nominees can include (but are not limited to) writers, editors or publicists whose published work or actions have had a significant impact on improving the quality of life of cats, educating the public, promoting responsible cat breeding and ownership, and/or facilitating the professional growth of cat writers. The honoree shall receive \$500 and his or her name engraved on a permanent commemorative plaque (at the offices of the Cat Fanciers' Association Foundation).

AWARD #20: The **KUYKENDALL IMAGE AWARD** is sponsored by CWA, and is presented to the outstanding "image" entry featuring cats – whether photography, illustration, or graphic art. This may be a single piece or series entry, including but not limited to photos/artwork published in a magazine, newspaper, newsletter, book, pamphlet, calendar, poster, greeting card, or commercial online publication. This award consists of \$250 and a commemorative item.

AWARD #21: The **CWA PRESIDENT'S AWARD**, sponsored by the Cat Fanciers' Association, is presented to the best entry among all Muse Medallion™ winners in the regular contest categories. This "Best of the Best" requires no additional copies be submitted of entries. Muse Medallion™ winners shall be automatically entered and considered for the honor. This award consists of \$250 and a commemorative item.

Send your contest entries ASAP, and good luck to all!

Fly, Bluebird, Fly!

A new voice in the sky
Beyond the rainbow
My Bluebird flies
Happy and free
She waits for me

Bluebird has flown over the rainbow, a place where I can't yet follow,
her voice filling the sky – what news do you sing now, my pretty Bluebird?

- Written by Andrea Dorn for use in a memorial award she donated to the third best scoring HHP at her club's CFA cat show, to mark the passing of her Pretty Prima Donna, Bluebird.

IN MEMORIAM CH GPR RW Celestecats China Rose, DM, at 16 years old,
a Tonkinese Platinum Mink Cat and one of the loves of Celeste Yarnall's life.



Photo by Imelda Lopez-Casper

Quarterly Quote

*"If the laws of evolution hold true, then through time humans will eventually become completely perfect – that is, they will evolve into cats." – Pumpkin Puss, B. 1997
(in Utterly Adorable Cats by Stuart and Linda Macfarlane)*



2012 Cat Writers' Association Communication Contest Regular Category Entry Form



PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE RULES on our website at www.catwriters.org or on pages 4-5 of this newsletter.
Entries must be postmarked no later than July 1, 2012. NO LATE ENTRIES ACCEPTED. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Submit THREE copies of each entry, along with ONE copy of this entry form per entry.
Send your entry to Nancy Marano, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

**THERE IS A SEPARATE FORM FOR SPECIAL AWARD ENTRIES (see page 11).
DO NOT USE THIS FORM FOR SPECIAL AWARD ENTRIES.**

The contest entry fee is \$15 per entry. A Volunteer Discount is available to CWA members only.
CWA Professional members who volunteer to judge in the contest and CWA Associate members who volunteer to assist the Contest Committee may pay \$8.50 per entry.

Please make your check payable to Cat Writers' Association. All payments must be in U.S. funds.

You may also pay using PayPal at <http://www.catwriters.org/contest.html>.

If you are sending in a Special Award entry as well, you may combine the fees into one payment.

- I am an associate member and volunteer to assist the 2012 Contest Committee.**
- I am a professional member and volunteer to judge in the 2012 CWA Communication Contest.**

NAME OF AUTHOR OR ARTIST _____ CWA MEMBER IDENTIFICATION # _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

Name, Address, Phone of Submitter (if different from Author/Artist) _____

CATEGORY NAME AND NUMBER (Example: I.3 – Magazine Article – Behavior and Training) _____

TITLE OF ENTRY _____

NAME OF PUBLICATION OR PUBLISHER _____ Issue/Publication Date(s) _____

**I certify that this entry was first published or broadcast between June 16, 2011, and June 15, 2012,
and that it meets all the requirements as stated in the Rules.**

Entrant or Submitter's Signature _____

ENTRY CHECKLIST

- Each entry is submitted in triplicate with **one** entry form per entry.
- My fee is enclosed, payable to the Cat Writers' Association in U.S. funds.
- A self-addressed, postage-paid postcard is included for acknowledgment of receipt of entry (optional).
- Questions? Email the Contest Chair at nmarano@aol.com, or call 505-296-8869 (MDT).

MAIL ENTRIES TO

Contest Chair Nancy Marano, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

2012 Cat Writers' Association Communication Contest

Special Award Entry Form



PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE RULES on our website at www.catwriters.org or on pages 4-5 of this newsletter.

Entries must be postmarked no later than July 1, 2012. NO LATE ENTRIES ACCEPTED. NO EXCEPTIONS.

The fee is \$5 per Special Award entry (in addition to the fee that accompanies Regular Category entries).

Please make your check payable to Cat Writers' Association. All payments must be in U.S. funds.

You may also pay using PayPal at <http://www.catwriters.org/contest.html>.

You may combine the fees for your Regular entry and Special Award entry in one payment.

ALL ENTRIES FOR SPECIAL AWARDS MUST ALSO BE ENTERED IN A REGULAR CATEGORY.

THERE IS A SEPARATE FORM FOR REGULAR CATEGORY ENTRIES (see page 10).

DO NOT USE THIS FORM FOR REGULAR CATEGORY ENTRIES.

Submit ONE copy of each entry for a Special Award, along with ONE copy of this entry form.

Send your check/money order for Special Awards entries, along with your entry form(s), to

Nancy Marano, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

NAME OF AUTHOR OR ARTIST _____ CWA MEMBER IDENTIFICATION # _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

Name, Address, Phone of Submitter (if different from Author/Artist) _____

REGULAR CATEGORY NAME AND NUMBER in which entry is entered (Example: I.3 – Magazine Article – Behavior & Training) _____

SPECIAL AWARD for which entry is entered _____

TITLE OF ENTRY _____

NAME OF PUBLICATION OR PUBLISHER _____ Issue/Publication Date(s) _____

**I certify that this entry was first published or broadcast between June 16, 2011, and June 15, 2012,
and that it meets all the requirements as stated in the Rules.**

Entrant or Submitter's Signature _____

ENTRY CHECKLIST

- All entries have also been entered in a regular category.
- For each entry, one copy is submitted along with one copy of this entry form, for each award.
- My fee is enclosed, payable to the Cat Writers' Association in U.S. funds.
- A self-addressed, postage-paid postcard is included for acknowledgment of receipt of entry (optional).
- Questions? Email the Contest Chair at nmarano@aol.com, or call 505-296-8869 (MDT).

MAIL ENTRIES TO

Contest Chair Nancy Marano, 7601 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109



2012 Cat Writers' Association Communication Contest Shojai Mentor Award Nomination Form

The **SHOJAI MENTOR AWARD**, sponsored by CWA's past president, Amy D. Shojai, recognizes the CWA member who has offered guidance, encouraging counsel, support, or other help that has had a direct and positive influence on another's writing/publishing success. Qualifying mentor experiences are limited to those occurring within the past three contest periods (approximately the last three years). The recipient shall exemplify the highest ideals of the CWA vision, that is, to promote communal support, networking, and mutual respect between colleagues. Only CWA members are eligible for the award. The honoree shall receive \$500 and a commemorative award.

Nominations of any CWA member may be submitted by any individual (member or nonmember). The "Submitter" must be the direct beneficiary in the mentor relationship. Multiple nominations of one individual by several different people are allowed. (Impact of individual mentor experiences weighs most heavily and a "group vote/campaign" for an individual is strongly discouraged. It shall not influence the judging one way or another.) The "Nominee" contribution must go beyond that individual's required duties as defined by his/her employment – in other words he or she cannot be "paid" to act as a mentor (i.e., an editor's routine purchase, editing, or publishing of a Submitter's work does not qualify, nor does a book doctor's revision, nor an agent's sale. To qualify, the mentoring must reach above and beyond the "normal or routine" business relationship one would expect the agent, book doctor, editor, or other professional to extend to any of his/her other clients). You may not nominate yourself. Nominations shall be reviewed and a recipient selected by the contest committee. There is no entry fee required to nominate someone for this award.

Send this completed form, with any attachments, in triplicate, to Contest Chair Nancy Marano.

(Please type or print legibly.)

NAME OF NOMINEE _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

NAME OF SUBMITTER _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

Please provide a brief summary of your mentor experience, including direct, positive professional results of the relationship. (Please keep the summary to one single-spaced page.)

ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2012.

Send this completed form, with attachments, in triplicate, to

**Contest Chair Nancy Marano
7601 Vista del Arroyo NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109**

2012 Cat Writers' Association Communication Contest Michael Brim Distinguished Service Award Nomination Form

The **MICHAEL BRIM DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**, sponsored by CWA, honors extraordinary achievement and communications excellence. It recognizes the person who, by word, deed, public communication, and professional excellence best promotes the ideals, mission, and best interest of the Cat Writers' Association. Nominees can include (but are not limited to) writers, editors, or publicists whose published work or actions have had a significant impact on improving the quality of life of cats, educating the public, promoting responsible cat breeding and ownership, and/or facilitating the professional growth of cat writers. The honoree shall receive \$500 and his or her name engraved on a permanent commemorative plaque (at the offices of the Cat Fanciers' Association Foundation).

CWA members and non-members are eligible for this award. Nominations must be made by a CWA member in good standing. You cannot nominate yourself. The submitter must explain his or her reasons for nominating the person, i.e., explain how the nominee has published and/or performed in some extraordinary fashion to benefit cats or cat writers. This should include a detailed description of what the nominee has done, whether a one-time accomplishment or a listing of publications and activities over time, for example. Referral to specific publications, articles, web sites etc., is not required, but can help the judges in making their decision.

Michael Brim was instrumental in his lifetime in promoting many things that benefited cats – increasing the awareness, education, and responsibility of owners and improving the lives of cats overall (as advertising director of *Cats Magazine*); publicizing the value of purebred cats, responsible breeding, and the showing of cats (as the Cat Fanciers' Association's first public relations and marketing manager); and facilitating writers' and illustrators' professional growth (in co-founding the Cat Writers' Association). Our goal is to honor others whose writing and deeds share and reflect Michael's varied accomplishments.

Send this completed form, with any attachments, in triplicate, to Contest Chair Nancy Marano.

(Please type or print legibly.)

NAME OF NOMINEE _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

NAME OF SUBMITTER _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____ EMAIL _____

Please provide a brief summary of your nominee's accomplishments.
(Please keep the summary to one single-spaced page.)

ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2012.

Send this completed form, with attachments, in triplicate, to

**Contest Chair Nancy Marano
7601 Vista del Arroyo NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109**

CWA's 20th Anniversary — Looking Back, Looking Ahead Celebrate Our Precious Cat Writers' Association!

By CWA Co-Founder Amy D. Shojai

To honor the 20th anniversary of CWA, Co-Founder Amy Shojai agreed to set forth the history of our organization. Knowing the vision and ideals that led to its creation, and listening to Amy's advice on how to take our cat writers' group into the future will help us keep CWA strong and united, and focused on our goal of helping cats and cat writers.

Was CWA modeled after the Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA)? If not, where did the idea come from?

Yes, actually the idea for the Cat Writers' Association (CWA) came from my participation and membership in the Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA). I reached out to some of the members of DWAA, especially the then-secretary Mary Ellen Tarman. She provided me with copies of the DWAA incorporation paperwork, and also great insights about focus, officer responsibilities, newsletter purpose/content, membership requirements, contest issues, and more. She also was candid about cautions for setting the tone of the organization, what worked, what might work better, and potential pitfalls to avoid.

I'd also been a member and attended the conference of the Oklahoma Writers Federation, Inc., and the CWA conference events were patterned after that organization.

Why was it you and Michael Brim – what did you represent that flowed together? Were you more the general cat interest expert plus Michael more on purebreds? Were both of you looking for a vehicle to educate the public, elevate the status of cat writers, what? What were your goals, values, hopes, dreams?

Wow, that's really hard to answer. Part of it was that I'd been a member of DWAA for a few years, but most of my writing was about cats and it just seemed a no-brainer that there should be an organization that supported writers who focused on felines. Besides, I wanted there to be a contest so I had a place to enter my cat published work, LOL! Actually that's funny because as the CWA president I didn't enter the contest for the first several years at all, to avoid any perception of conflict of interest since I acquired most of the sponsorships.



2002 (9th conference): Charter Members Amy Shojai, Wendy Christensen, Mordecai Siegal, Michael Brim, Darlene Arden, Allene Tartaglia



1996 (3rd): Preparing for the Awards Ceremony: Sally Bahner, Carole Nelson Douglas, Sandra Toney, Amy Shojai, Darlene Arden, Michael Brim

More seriously, my initial goal was to offer networking opportunities for writers, mentoring, and educational help for those wishing to publish about cats. There was nothing like that when I began writing, and it would have helped me enormously to have a go-to source for questions. There already were many animal welfare and other organizations working to educate the public about cats – but nobody was educating the WRITERS who were in the purr-fect position to reach that audience.

Also, y'all give me too much credit, I think. Many folks had that same idea to offer help to writers but we were scattered and didn't know this. I didn't even have email at the time. Communication was by phone or snail mail.

I reached out to Kate Segnar, (the editor of *Cat Fancy* in the late 1980s and early 1990s) and she put me in touch with Michael Brim – at the time he was with *CATS Magazine*. The two of them had been discussing the possibility of a cat writer's

organization for some time to improve the quality of writing they received to their publications. Michael later left the magazine to work with CFA and that gave him more resources for the effort.

Who were the earliest members?

At our first organizational meeting in November 1992 at the Purina CFA Invitational Cat Show in Fort Worth, Texas, there were four of us, and I said that I'd do any officer position EXCEPT treasurer. You don't want me handling money, LOL! So Michael volunteered to be VP. Debbie Phillips-Donaldson (then the assistant editor of *Cat Fancy* and later the editor) took minutes and →

CWA's Anniversary — Looking Back, Looking Ahead *(continued)*

volunteered to serve as secretary. Suzanne Stowe (then working in circulation for Fancy Publications) volunteered to be treasurer. That left me with president, by default. The four of us were self-appointed as INTERIM OFFICERS until an official election could be held.

Our first efforts were to contact well known “cat writers” to let them know about the new organization and to invite them to serve as INTERIM ADVISORY COUNCIL/BOARD OF DIRECTORS. This designation was later changed to COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS. We wanted the interim officers/directors to represent the face of ALL cat writing so that the organization would be inclusive and embrace those who communicate about all aspects of cats – from pedigreed to feral, animal welfare devotees and beyond. We also believed these movers-and-shakers of the cat world could extend their paw-reach to their own audience to spread the word among those who already wrote/published and those with an interest in pursuing that dream.

A new organization takes lots of time to nurture, and all of us had “real jobs” that demanded a lot. Debbie reluctantly resigned as secretary in February 3, 1993, feeling she wouldn't have the time necessary to devote to the new organization, and moved to interim director position. I assumed the role of both president and secretary. Since I had become a fulltime freelance writer, my schedule and deadlines allowed for more flexibility than others with day-jobs.

On February 17, 1993, our official press release went out on official Cat Writers' Association letterhead that included the following interim officers and directors:

President/Secretary: Amy D. Shojai (freelance)
Vice President: Michael Brim (CFA)
Treasurer: Suzanne Stowe (Fancy Publications)

Directors:

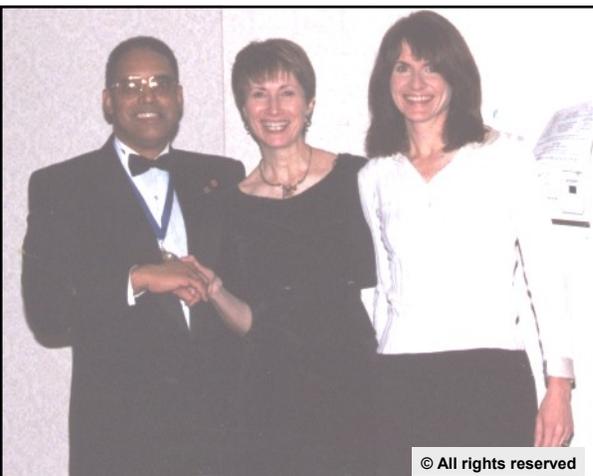
Paula Abend (editor, ANIMALS magazine)
Tom Corn (editor, CAT WORLD magazine)
Tracy Copeland (editor, CATS magazine)
Debra Phillips-Donaldson (editor, CAT FANCY, Cat Lovers of America, and CATS USA magazines)
Dr. Jim Humphries (president, St. Francis Productions; syndicated radio show host)
Lisa Sheets (editor, I LOVE CATS magazine)
Mordecai Siegal (freelance)
Allene Sergi (now Tartaglia – editor, CFA Almanac)



2002 (9th): Founding Members Mary Lee Nitchke, Paul Glassner, Barbara Florio Graham, Jane Helgren, Fran Pennock Shaw, Shirley Rousseau Murphy, Betsy Stowe



1995 (2nd): Amy on Surviving as Freelance Writer



2002 (9th): Honoring 9-Year Sponsor Purina: Michael Brim with Kerry Lyman and Julie Kahn

I don't recall how many releases we sent out, and do not have a record of all mentions, but I have tearsheets from the follow publications that printed the notice starting in March 1993: *Cats*, *Cat Fancy*, *Cat Fanciers Almanac*, *Pet Business*, *Shelter Sense*, *Pet Age Magazine*, *The Writer*, *Cat Lover's Magazine*, *Writers Digest*, and *Cat Collectors*.

By July of 1993 when the first CWA NEWSLETTER/DIRECTORY was published, I received requests for more info from more than 150 cat communicators from 38 states including writers from Alaska, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Of those, 36 became our CHARTER MEMBERS.

When did we start to acquire some foreign members?

Immediately! Canadian writers embraced CWA from the beginning. The 1995 directory says that as of 10-20-95 we had four Canadian members, as well as one member each from New Zealand, Australia, and the Ukraine.

(continued on the next page)

CWA's Anniversary — Looking Back, Looking Ahead *(continued)*



1995 (2nd): Amy Shojai presents Betsy Stowe (left) the Muse Medallion™ for Best Poetry

How has the organization changed over the years?

The membership has waxed and waned but for the past several years has remained pretty constant. As with any organization, there have been growing pains. Since CWA is a totally volunteer organization, it can be difficult to maintain a service-oriented organization when “real life” gets in the way. And the diverse nature of our membership that gives us great strength of character and offers such a real benefit to members and to cats also can sometimes strain relationships when not everyone sees cat-eye to eye on all issues.

Adding the annual contest and conference to the organization created lots of angst for those who must organize such things but also created much more value to the membership. It also created a potential for strained relationships when such things as speaker spots or awards are considered such valuable commodities. All organizations struggle with these issues. CWA handles such things with much more grace than most, I'm proud to say.

Membership fees originally were \$15 and contest entry fees were \$7.50 for members, so those fees have gone up. Very slightly. *s*

Our first conference registration fees were \$50 for members and \$65 for nonmembers.

CWA added email addresses to the directory and newsletter in 1997 – before that contact info was phone numbers and snail mail addresses. And in 1999, Karen Lawrence launched the official CWA Website.

While sadly, many of our founding cat-centric print publications are no more, email and the Internet had extended CWA's paw-reach around the world – and so do our written/broadcast work. I suspect that most of our members today have at least a portion of their deadlines generated by online work.



1996 (3rd): Carole Nelson Douglas, Dinner Speaker



1995 (2nd): Sandra Toney receives the Amy Allysa Travel Award from Amy Shojai

What sponsors have been involved and what is their role in CWA's past, present, and future?

The Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) was our first sponsor, and I hope will always be part of the CWA family. Likewise, our association with Purina (Nestlé Purina PetCare Company) came very early and has continued nonstop for the past two decades. Several other sponsors have been longtime supporters. Our organization could not survive as a purely volunteer organization with rock-bottom membership fees and high-value services without the monetary support of these sponsors. Despite the downturn in the economy, it says a great deal that sponsors have recognize the importance of our work, and with their assistance we've been able to continue our programs, support our members, and celebrate cats with outstanding good information provided by our members. CWA sponsors ROCK!



1995 (2nd): Michael Brim presents Carolyn Vella the Council Award for Conference Chair

How do you see CWA evolving over the next 20 years?

We will always be about cats, and providing accurate and helpful, enlightening, and emotive information about our beloved cats. How that information is delivered likely will evolve, just as publishing continues to evolve. Twenty years ago when few people had Email or Internet access and the Postal Service was our best friend, I doubt many writers would believe how today writers can instantly send articles around the world, edit their own website or blog, or revise an outdated nonfiction book themselves and upload for sale within a matter of hours.

CWA's Anniversary — Looking Back, Looking Ahead *(continued)*



1995 (2nd): Debbie Phillips Donaldson reveals 10 Ways to Get Rejected (note transparencies!)

How much does it all depend on the status of cats, who are now America's #1 pet (they weren't in that position 20 years ago)?

I'm delighted that more people today recognize our lovely cat companions as worthy of better care and figuring out what goes on between those furry ears. But today there is immediate and FREE (the operative word there!) access to information on the Internet or reality TV shows. So while improving the status of cats is vital, the public's perception of what constitutes valid/quality information still needs tweaking. CWA is in a unique position to become the gold kitty standard for feline information – sort of a Good House-Cat-Keeping seal of approval – if the info comes from a CWA member then it must be top of the stack. I think this is the direction the CWA should go, and it will not only help cats (goal one!) but also improve the status of CWA and its members. CWA should be the go-to source for those who need quality journalism/broadcast/artwork/fill-in-the-blank about cats, not some computer-generated crappiocca or wannabe self-proclaimed “expert.”

Find ways to contact that self-proclaimed “expert” and offer to be a source/resource for them. Maybe you can help them be what they aspire to be, and help cats along the way.

What can CWA members do to strengthen the organization?

Represent the ideals of the CWA. Write good schtuff. Support each other, mentor one another. Volunteer. VOLUNTEER! Outreach to others – read a good book, article, column, blog about cats? Invite them to become a member, not because it helps you but because it helps them. And you never know when that helping hand will turn around and pull you back from a cliff someday – or offer a hand up the ladder. Do it because it's the right thing to do. Karma happens, ya know...but that's a story for another column. *s*

blog about cats? Invite them to become a member, not because it helps you but because it helps them. And you never know when that helping hand will turn around and pull you back from a cliff someday – or offer a hand up the ladder. Do it because it's the right thing to do. Karma happens, ya know...but that's a story for another column. *s*



1995 (2nd): Carole Nelson Douglas (left) wins Jonny Cat Litter-ary Award for Fiction

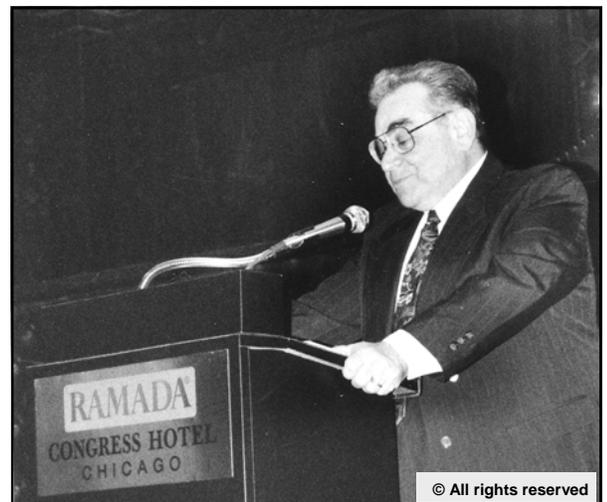
In the past we've had committees for membership outreach, but really it works best as a grass roots one-on-one spontaneous contact. Think about it – if you got a form query inviting you to join an organization would that be more appealing than a “fan” writing you a personal note commenting on how much they enjoyed your work?

Personally, I like that the organization remains rather small. It's hard to get to know too many folks, so growing numbers probably isn't necessarily a recommendation I'd support. Membership fees go to fund member benefits such as the newsletter, it's not a money-making proposition. But new members mean new blood, new ideas, and potentially new volunteers – to relieve the workhorse members ready to burn out.

Similarly, if there's a product you adore, why not tell them about CWA? I get press releases all the time from folks wanting their product mentioned on blogs. What if they discovered that becoming a CWA sponsor would get that product noticed and potentially written about by 250+ journalist/bloggers/authors/broadcasters?

Every member of CWA has the ability to mentor others, volunteer for the organization, and help fashion the future of the organization. I was in the right place at the right time with like-minded individuals – nothing magical about Amy or Michael or the rest of the charter members – we just stopped TALKING about wishes, and did something about it.

Are you ready to stop talking about your wishes? Just look what can happen when you take a chance, grab for the brass ring – and catch it. Meee-wow! ♥



1995 (2nd) Mordecai Siegal, Keynote Speaker

2012: CWA in L.A.

See you there!



NEW MEMBERS [member numbers in brackets]

Chas McDougall [P691-12], 40 Wilsons Crossing Road, Auburn NH 03032; 603-703-4223; Email: zee-tan@comcast.net. Chas is a writer who specializes in cat poetry and humor. His sponsor is Wendy Christensen.

Mary McGrath [P690-12], 5815 Doverwood Drive, #14, Culver City, CA 90230; 310-568-0784; Email: grathy@aol.com; Website: www.marymcgrathphotography.com. Mary is a writer and photographer who specializes in cat humor and cat behavior. She's a member of the ASJA and has numerous credits in a variety of publication such as *Newsweek*, *Good Housekeeping*, and more. Her sponsor is Cori Solomon.

An updated edition of the 2012 CWA Member Directory is now available on our website. To access it, go to <http://catwriters.org/member-logon.html> and login as username = member password = cwa2009w

Christine Michaels [A689-12], 90 SW 3rd Street, #3905, Miami, FL 33130; 305-860-9903; Email: riverfrontcats@yahoo.com; Website: www.riverfrontcats.com. Christine's specialty is public speaking on radio and TV. Her goal is to leverage her skills and experience in marketing and communications to educate the masses on misperceptions about feral vs. pet and stray cats, their caretakers (i.e., "crazy cat ladies"), and the need to spay and neuter to reverse homeless cat population. Her sponsor is Karen Payne.

Melinda Penrose [A688-12], 52 Rosewell Road, Bedford NH 03110; Email: m.penrose@comcast.net. Melinda is a writer and photographer. Her expertise is in web marketing of shelter cats: writing bios to enhance adoption, with accompanying engaging photos. Her background is in advertising copywriting and art direction. Her sponsor is Wendy Christensen.

Cori Solomon [P687-12], 11338 Bolas Street, Los Angeles, CA 90049; 310-471-6672 (home), 310-880-4924 (cell), 310-471-6554 (fax); Email: terikor@gte.net; Websites: <http://corispawtraits.com>, <http://corispawtraits.blogspot.com>, www.examiner.com/pets-in-los-angeles/cori-solomon. Cori is an artist/writer. As an animal artist, she specializes in painting, drawing, and printmaking. As a writer, she specializes in travel, food, wine, art, and animals. Her sponsor is Marci Kladnik. ♥

**Cat Writers' Association Conference
EARLY BIRD SPONSORS for 2012**

Thanks always to all of our sponsors, but thanks especially to our "early birds" who have already promised once again to support our annual conference.

**Central Life Garden & Pet / Comfort Zone® with Feliway®
Petco Foundation
Premier Pet Products
Amy D. Shojai
The International Cat Association**

Sincere thanks for your commitment to CWA!

FAITHFUL SPONSOR, NEW NAME

By CWA Immediate-Past President Susan M. Ewing

Central Life Sciences, a valued sponsor of the CWA annual conference for many years, now has a new name, Central Garden & Pet / Comfort Zone® with Feliway®. They are continuing their sponsorship for 2012, once again generously offering the membership bounty and co-sponsoring our Friday night dinner. The new company representatives are Manjari Mehrotra and Sonny Singh, and we look forward to meeting them at the conference. They are based in California, so maybe it will be an easy visit.

Meanwhile, the former representative, Carrie Foote, sent me this message, "CWA is a terrific organization and it has always been my pleasure to be of assistance, both official and unofficial. I will miss you and all the wonderful folks at CWA. Please let any who may inquire know that I wish you all, all the best."

Volunteer Now!

CWA Needs You!

By CWA President Linda Kay Hardie

CWA runs on volunteers, literally. We are an all-volunteer organization, with no paid staff or directors. We're also an organization full of talent, and I'm counting on that now.

Currently, CWA needs a number of volunteers to do small, but important tasks. We need volunteers to step up and do these conference-related tasks:

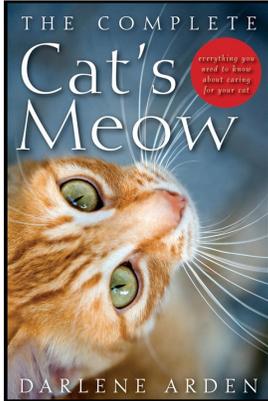
- Conference program booklet
- Banquet program booklet
- Certificates of Excellence
- Conference badges
- Set up the winners' display at the conference (about 2 hours' work)
- Input info from questionnaires (about 30) into Excel

Volunteering is a great way to network and get to know other members. It can offer you connections with editors, agents, and publishers, and opportunities for writing work. If you can help out with any of these tasks, please email me at cwaprez@louielarkey.com.

BITS & BYTES



Darlene Arden's book *The Complete Cat's Meow*, winner of a 2011 CWA Muse Medallion™, won a second significant award: the About.com Readers' Choice Award for Best Book About Cat Care. The award was announced last month by About.com Guide to Cats guru Franny Syufy.



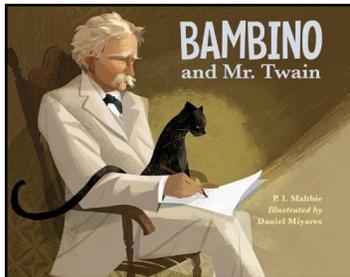
Christine Davis has a new book, *Forever Paws*, and a new website; it's a magical companion book to her titles *For Every Dog An Angel* and *For Every Cat An Angel*. This newest book of comfort focuses on what happens when the time comes to say goodbye to our treasured animal friends. The story begins by telling us that puppies and kittens are born with glowing forever paws, a wondrous gift that guides the critter to its

special person and keeps them connected for all time. Using heartfelt words and joyful illustrations, the author helps readers to know for certain that even though our four-legged friends are no longer by our side, they are never far away. See

<http://www.lightheartedpress.com/books/forever-paws-dog-gift-book.htm>. Thanks for writing this beautiful book, Christine!

Dena Harris completely redesigned her website and launched it. She asks for your feedback. See www.denaharris.com.

Priscilla Maltbie's new book is titled *Bambino and Mr. Twain*, illustrated by Daniel Miyares, published by Charlesbridge. It tells the story of a grieving Mark Twain months after the death of his beloved wife "Livy" and how his daughter's black cat, Bambino, sets in motion the events that return Twain to public life. It's 40 pages, with additional information about Mark Twain at the back, and is suitable for young readers from 5-12. Maltbie is also the author of *Picasso and Minou* and *Claude Monet: the Painter Who Stopped the Trains*. Get a copy of *Bambino and Mr. Twain* at <http://www.amazon.com/Bambino-Mr-Twain-Priscilla-Maltbie/dp/1580892728>.



partners best-selling thriller authors with first-time novelists. Amy is grinning REALLY big! *Lost and Found* features animal behaviorist September Day, who has 24 hours to find her autistic nephew and his service dog before he – and hundreds of other children – become victims of a deadly experimental autism treatment. It includes "dog viewpoint" and a highly trained pet cat, along with assorted quirky two-legged characters. The same publisher has lately brought Amy's backlist nonfiction into POD and various e-book formats.

BARKS & BYTES



The following CWA members won awards in the 2011 DWAA Writing Competition. Loud barks and tail wags to all!

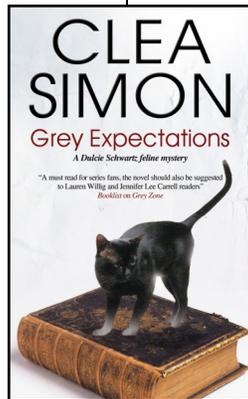
These CWA-DWAA writers won DWAA Maxwell Awards: **Amy Shojai**, Puppies.About.com (Internet, Websites or Blog – Website: Entire Website); **Kim Thornton**, "Genetics, Breeding & Disease: Science and the Future" (*The Royal Dispatch*, Spring 2011) (Club: Feature Article); **Cindy Read, Editor**, *The Corgi Cryer* (Mayflower Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club), (Club Publications: Regional or Local – Club: Magazine or Newsletter Format); **Deb Devona and Deb M. Eldredge, DVM**, "Herd, Seen, Find, Over, and Finish" (*The Corgi Cryer*) (Club: Regular Column or Subject-Related Series); **Kim Thornton**, *Careers with Dogs* (Bow Tie, December 2010), (General Interest or Reference).

Debra J. White won the DWAA Distinguished Service Award (sponsored by AKC to honor extraordinary achievement and communications excellence). **Fran Pennock Shaw** won the Morris Animal Foundation Advances in Canine Veterinary Medicine Award for "Advances in Craniate Surgery" (*Your Dog*).

In other Amy news, *Kurves, the Musical*, a two-act play with 12 original songs with full orchestration, was produced and co-written by **Amy Shojai** and Frank Steele in early March. The show, set in Kurves, Texas, in a woman's gym, featured eight talented actors on-stage virtually the entire time. Photos and audio of performance, with

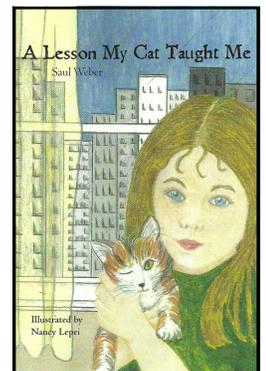
more information about the show, can be found at www.AmyShojai.com/Kurves. The Shojai/Steele team has begun work on their next musical theater collaboration titled "*Strays, the Musical*." Go ahead and break a paw – er, a leg, Amy!!

Clea Simon revised her website www.cleasimon.com in the run-up to her book releases in April. *Grey Expectations* published on April 1, and *Cats Can't Shoot* on April 3. She has asked for feedback on her website, which has several fun, unusual features. Also, in celebration of her Dulcie mysteries' availability as e-books, Clea and Severn House posted a free Dulcie short story as a download. See <http://www.severnhouse.com/article/Free+Download++Dulcie+Schwartz+Short+Story/673>.



Clea liked a review that summed up *Grey Expectations* as "a good solid mystery...fun without being silly" – which is what Clea says she aims for. See the review at <http://tinyurl.com/6qqakt7>.

Saul Weber's children's book, *A Lesson My Cat Taught Me*, won 3rd Place in the 2011 Smart Writ Book Awards – Children's Books Category. The contest is organized by Smart Book Lovers, whose membership is comprised of individuals who belong to MENSA and other high IQ organizations. Saul's book is available on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/Lesson-My-Cat-Taught-Me/dp/1452810885>. To see the virtual award presentation, please go to <http://www.book-lovers.net>. Paws up! ♥



MEMBER NEWS

Canadian Libraries List Offered

Barbara Florio Graham is offering a spring discount on her Canadian libraries list again this year, with mailing addresses for 90-100 libraries with purchasing power in Word format, ready to print on labels. Full database and instructions for a co-op mailing are included. Regular price is \$35; \$5 discount if you put CWA OFFER in the subject line of your email to BFG@SimonTeakettle.com. This offer ends June 30. Details about this list at: www.SimonTeakettle.com/canlibr.htm.

Kari Winters Kitty Cat Corner Dedicated

The Kari Winters Kitty Cat Corner has been opened at the Eastside Shelter in Albuquerque, to honor **Kari Winters**, CWA's award-winning writer and the namesake of CWA's Kari Winters Rescue and Rehabilitation Special Award. The new facility is a beautiful complex of glassed-in rooms, furnished like a home so people can meet adoptable kitties in a natural setting. TICA President Vickie Fisher, also president of Kennel Kompadres, the support group for the shelter, was a driving force in all this. The opening also promoted the Mayor and First Lady's Dog Ball, whose proceeds go to the shelter support group. You can see the facility in this article by Nancy Marano: http://www.petroglyphsnm.org/newsletters/spring_2011/abq_eastside_shelter_opens.html.

Winn Feline Foundation Grants Announced

The Winn Feline Foundation has announced the award of ten feline medical research grants. Winn President Vicki Thayer, DVM, said the awards are funded for \$174,018. At this time, Winn is seeking donations of \$250 and up to sponsor specific projects. Sponsors will receive progress reports and copies of any publications that result and are provided by the researcher. Donations can be made online at www.winnfelinehealth.org.

The funded 2012 research projects include: a Ricky Fund Project related to feline cardiomyopathy (HCM); a Bria Fund project aimed at improving quality of life and survival of cats with FIP; a study of the Sphynx cat HCM gene; a study of progressive retinal atrophy in the Bengal cat; a study of a cancer treatment for cats involving certain uses of vitamin-B12; development of methods to assess chronic pain in cats; a study of decontamination of textiles exposed to ringworm spores; a study of the use of pimobendan for chronic kidney disease (CKD); a study of "wool sucking" behavior in Siamese and Birman cats; and development of a product to deliver continuous treatment to the eyes of cats with chronic feline herpesvirus-1 (FHV-1).

Projects Seeking Sponsors (\$250 minimum donation): W12-026: Anti-immune evasive therapy in the treatment of FIP – a randomized, controlled clinical trial; W12-027: Development of outcome assessment instruments for chronic pain in cats; W12-034: Decontamination of household textiles exposed to *Microsporum canis* spores; and W12-039: Administration of pimobendan to cats with chronic kidney disease. For details, contact Winn at (908) 359-1184, winn@winnfelinehealth.org.



Photo © BJ Bangs

CORRECTIONS: In the last issue Deb Barnes (far left), was misidentified. She's with Layla Morgan Wilde. At right, in case of any misunderstanding, is our 2011 conference photographer BJ Bangs with award.



The Writers' Union of Canada Announces 2012 Writing for Children Competition

The Writers' Union of Canada has launched its 16th annual Writing for Children Competition. Unpublished Canadian writers may submit a piece for children up to 1,500 words in the English language that has not previously been published in any format. A \$1,500 prize will be awarded and entries of the winner and finalists will be submitted for consideration to three publishers of children's books. The deadline for entries is **April 24, 2012**. The competition submissions for all ages of young people, from picture books to young adult (YA) stories. The competition aims to discover, encourage, and promote new writers of children's literature. The winner will be announced in July 2012. No electronic submissions. For details, see http://www.writersunion.ca/cn_writeforchildren.asp or contact Nancy MacLeod at nmacleod@writersunion.ca.

Open House in May at The Cats' House in San Diego

Previously featured on *Animal Planet*, *People Magazine*, *National Geographic Kids*, *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, and *The New York Times*, The Cats' House in San Diego house will hold a rare Open House May 19-20 to benefit the East County Animal Rescue.

CWA's **Bob Walker** and **Frances Mooney**, dubbed "the modern day Frank Lloyd Wrights of feline interior design" by *Cat Fancy*, have turned their bungalow into a cat paradise, with architectural design and décor geared towards the comfort and contentment of their nine cats. A custom-built catwalk runs throughout the house.



THE AERIAL CATWALK in THE CATS' HOUSE

Photo © Bob Walker

Reserve early to attend the Special Preview on May 19, from 7-9 p.m. for \$25 including a behind-the-scenes tour. Admission on May 20 is from 1-4 p.m. for \$5.

The East County Animal Rescue is a grassroots effort of volunteers who are passionate about helping animals in need within the San Diego community and is the only rescue in the area executing TNR. For more information or to book a time slot, please contact (619) 276-3621 or email info@catshouse.com. See The Cats' House on Discovery Animal Planet at <http://animal.discovery.com/videos/most-outrageous-the-cats-house.html>. ♥

Hi, I'm Allia... and I'm Cat-Codependent

By Allia Zobel Nolan

I consider myself a forceful woman – not given to many crutches. No nightlight keeps vigil while I sleep; spiders don't make me squeamish; and I know where the oil goes in my car. Still, I do have one teeny, tiny problem: I'm a little obsessed with my cats.

Okay, maybe it's more than a bit. I do tend to go overboard when it comes to my puddies, MacDuff, my 23-pounder, Sineady-cat-the-fraidy-cat, and Angela Dah-ling. Still, my therapist says recognition is two-thirds the battle. So with perseverance, I should have things under control soon. Meantime, let people talk. I can take it.

"Did you see her suit yesterday?" one of my business associates cackled, pointing in my direction. "Covered in cat hair."

"Yeah, and her briefcase stunk of salmon," another one answered. "It's horribly unprofessional."

What do they know? They have obviously never been pulled in by a pair of big yellow eyes pleading for fish for dinner, nor heard a plaintive meow to be picked up that sounds exactly like "Mommy." If they had, they'd understand. A little cat hair and a couple of briefcases a year are small enough inconveniences when you weigh the returns: unswerving loyalty and unconditional love. Talk about close to my heart – why, they're embedded in it!

As for being in sync, no one has ever been able to match my puddies. Oh, my husband comes close. But even he has his limitations. In all the years I've known him, he's never once run down the stairs and rubbed up against my legs the minute I walked in. Then too, when I'm in the tub, he doesn't sit quietly alongside, grooming himself. And if I fall asleep on the couch after a hard day's work, you won't catch him perched on my stomach, purring and kneading, like they do. Of course, he has his attributes. Most husbands do. But my puddies are infinitely more "simpatico."

People snicker that I spoil my cats. But I am getting better. Last week, I bought kitty litter on sale instead of the designer brand. I saved two bucks in the bargain, but I felt like a cad. True to their self-sacrificing nature, the little darlings took it on the chin (or the bum, as the case may be.). Did they have a few accidents on the rug? Yes, but I've been meaning to get that replaced anyway.

It's been a hard year, so I have had to cut back in other ways. And it almost broke my heart. It isn't easy explaining to animals who're used to having the air-conditioning and TV on all day that they have to sweat and look out the window. In the end, I couldn't. So I took an extra job. In deference to my husband, though, I have economized. I no longer open up tin after tin of cat food to find one they like. I've set a limit of three discards. I've also canceled their animal enrichment classes with Ulma, their personal trainer. They were catty about this for a while – until I explained it's just so we can get back on our feet.

My husband is extremely understanding when it comes to my problem. He never gets upset if I cook for the cats first, except when he's expecting a client.

As for long romantic weekends away, he knows I can't enjoy them unless we can get a cat sitter. He did balk initially when I suggested he sleep in the guest room because MacDuff was sick. But he's a reasonable man. And when I promised never again to borrow against our 401-K for goodies like diamond cat collars and a kitty personal trainer, he was happy to oblige.

Besides, I have put my foot down. No cats are allowed on the table to eat from our plates anymore. I bought them their own china. And I don't jump up each time they want to leave the room. All the doors now have cat flaps. So despite the gossip, I'm not putty in their paws. I have to be on my guard all the time, though. I'll start tomorrow. But right now, I'll just finish massaging MacDuff's temples – he gets those awful sinus headaches when he stays up late. Then, maybe I'll surprise all three of them with a real treat. How hard can it be to give a French manicure to a cat? ♥

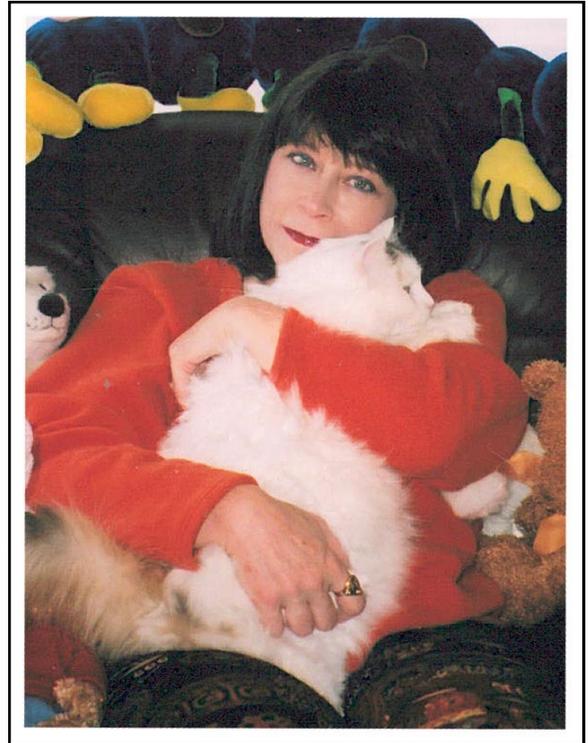


Photo © Desmond Finbarr Nolan, Angela's Daddy

ALLIA and ANGELA

Former senior editor at Readers' Digest, Allia Zobel Nolan is the award-winning, bestselling author of over 170 books for children and adults, with more than 3 million books in print; most reflect her two passions: God and cats. Allia lives in Connecticut with her husband, Desmond, and their three cats.

Stuck on Cats — and Books By Andrea Dorn

Cats are like really good books; you can't set them down. Years ago I had a Velcro® kitty named Zeit Geist. Actually he was more like a spider web. If you've ever walked through the woods or an old barn you know how sticky those things are. No matter how you try to wipe them off, they just stick. Well, Zeiter, as I sometimes called him, had muscular dystrophy, but that didn't slow him down any. Once he attached himself to you he was stuck for good. He had this strange spider-web ability that defies explanation. You would think a large human being would be capable of controlling a small muscle-deprived cat, but NO! I would push him away, pry him from my lap, peel him off my legs and he would spring right back just like a rubber band. If I did manage to stand up he'd wrap himself around my ankles, making walking nearly impossible.

Zeit's brother, Lando Calrissian, took a different approach. Like his romantic namesake, Lando was a lover. However, he expected others to do their part in the relationship. When he wanted attention he would jump up in the air and expect the startled human to catch him. He took many a visitor by surprise with this maneuver.

Today I have Jabberwocky Glitter to contend with. If I sit down to type, she's there in an instant. If I set her down she hops right back up. If I lean forward she'll jump up between my back and the chair. If I manage to keep her off my lap she still worms her way up to the back of the chair and snakes on down to the arm of the chair. She then leans against me until somehow, magically she is in my lap once again.

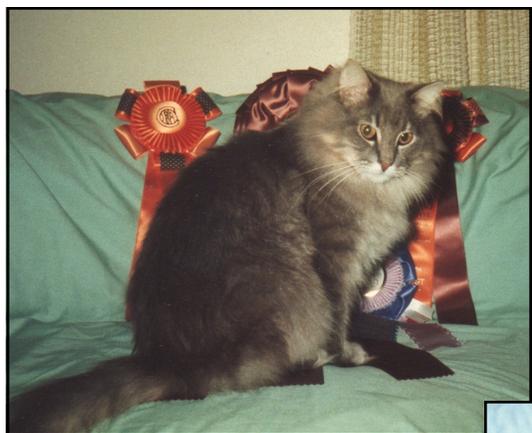
When you write a book, whether fiction or nonfiction, you want it to stay with your readers. Make it play with their minds, enticing them to keep reading, promising even more with every page. A book of fiction should have compelling characters, not only ones readers can love, but also ones they love to hate. End every chapter with a question: What will happen next? Make readers stay up all night reading your book, or lie sleeplessly pondering the fates of your characters.

Nonfiction books can be just as spellbinding. Make the topic, no matter how dry, simply sing with your enthusiasm, your own voice. Let your readers know that you are thoroughly immersed in the subject and find it fascinating. The more you enjoy writing about it, the more they'll enjoy reading about it.

So, like the cats that are stapled to your lap, let your next book be one that stays with your readers. ♥



Jabberwocky Glitter loves to plaster herself to Andrea's lap.



Past masters of the art of sticking to people: Lando Calrissian (above) and Zeit Geist (left).



Andrea Dorn is an Iowa-based writer, blogger, and grammar guru who lives with a little clowder of cherished cats. Follow her at www.andreadorn.blogspot.com.

Photos and text © Andrea Dorn

The Cat's MEOW

Happy 20th Birthday, CWA!

By Meow Editor Karen Payne

It's time to celebrate the Cat Writers' Association! As we observe the 20th anniversary year of CWA (and the 19th year of our fabulous writers' conference), I'm especially grateful to CWA's founders, Amy Shojai and Michael Brim, for their vision and hard work, and I honor the original members whose selfless dedication set our organization on the right track.

Personally I am thankful to CWA for precious memories, friendships, opportunities for professional growth, generous advice, and contacts that led to assignments. Thankful for my mentor Betsy Stowe and my purr-ific conference roommate Darlene Arden. Thankful for conference fun, goodie bags to share with my cats back home, and generous sponsors who made it all possible. Thankful for the contest in which all of us – the judges and the entrants, win or lose – can learn from the experience.

Today CWA is on the move, with new members, cutting-edge conference topics, new contest categories, and new ways of doing things. We have a presence on Facebook, a fine website, an invaluable ProList, and our newsletter is posted digitally. Our conference is – as it has always been – exciting and informative, with content that keeps us abreast of every new development in publishing.

Truly, nothing can compare to our conference and especially the thrill of that first moment when a CWA Kitten (conference newbie) finds himself or herself set loose in a room that's chock-full of cat lovers wanting to support each other and have a bodacious fun time together!! It is simply priceless.

My first conference was the fourth one, in 1997. President Amy Shojai sparkled with a diamond cat pin on her shoulder and a feline elegance befitting the leader of a band of cat fanatics. So many cat writing luminaries were there, including Mordecai Siegal, Michael Brim, Steve Dale, Bob Walker of *The Cats' House* fame, and so many others – I couldn't take it all in. I made some friends for life, and mostly I just marveled at the good luck that had landed me in such stellar company.

Certainly I never imagined that one day I'd have the privilege of editing CWA's newsletter!

My conference experience was marked by the exquisite understanding of members regarding the recent death of my famous performing cat Princess Kitty® “The Smartest Cat in the World.” Many knew Princess Kitty or knew of her groundbreaking work in cat training, the human-animal bond, and advocacy for strays. I haven't yet done justice to her star-blessed life in writing; after her untimely death I felt crippled, as if the better half of my own soul had flown away. However, with the help of colleagues, mentors, and friends in CWA, I still hope one day to tell her story properly.

My second CWA conference, in 2009, was almost as glorious as the first. It was an information-fest and a love-fest with old and new friends who all adore cats.

Over the years, I have served several times as a contest judge – and I urge everybody to sign up for this very rewarding job. I love to see the latest and greatest in cat writing, poetry, and art. Best of all, the contestants have taught me a lot about cats and writing.

In 1998, I had the pleasure of receiving a Muse Medallion™ for Princess Kitty's video, *Incredible Cat Tricks Starring Princess Kitty*. Last year, I was surprised and happy when the *MEOW* newsletter was honored. But my favorite award was the 2009 Shojai Mentor Award given to my mentor, *MEOW* Editor Emeritus Betsy Stowe. Winning is nice, but the main thing is just to participate and support each other's work!

On that topic – ahem! – our *MEOW* newsletter absolutely requires the participation of CWA's officers and generous members. Please contribute to the newsletter when you can. I am so proud that over the years some contributors have won Muse Medallions™ for their excellent

work published in *MEOW*! Volunteering is the lifeblood of CWA. Whatever you can find to do, however large or small, please do it. Participate!

Recently I asked CWA Co-Founder Amy D. Shojai a series of questions about CWA's history. Her answers are published in this issue of *MEOW* with photos from days gone by. Amy points the way for us to keep our group relevant and useful for future generations of writers who love cats. Let's all pitch in, support each other, and make our CWA a strong and vibrant organization that will continue to advance the welfare of cats and cat writers! ♥

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!



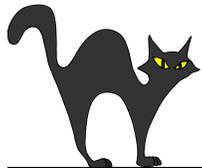
At the 2009 CWA Conference, I (left) was beyond thrilled when Amy Shojai announced the name of my mentor, *MEOW* Editor Emeritus Betsy Stowe (right), as the winner of the 2009 Shojai Mentor Award! Did I mention that Betsy is a CWA Founding Member and has won four other Special Awards and 12 Muse Medallions™? She is the cat's meow!

2012 CWA Contest Entry Deadline!!!!

Must be postmarked by July 1st
NO EXCEPTIONS!

Contest details are found on pages 3-13
of this issue of *MEOW*
Get the latest information about new contest
categories. Read the contest rules. Sign up
to be a contest judge. Fill out entry forms,
and get your entries ready to mail to

CONTEST CHAIR
NANCY MARANO
7601 Vista del Arroyo NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109



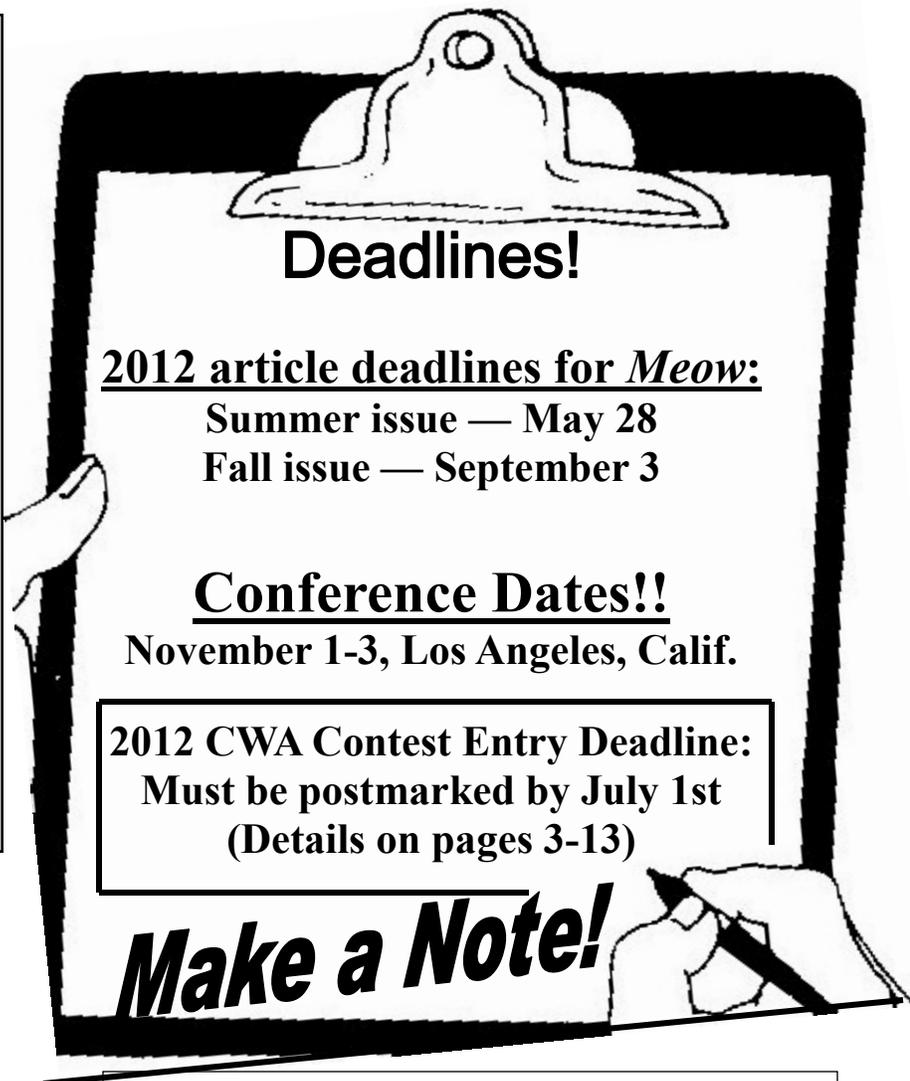
MEOW is the newsletter of the Cat
Writers' Association. It is the winner of an
APEX® Award of Publication Excellence
and is published four times a year.
© 2012 CWA; all rights reserved.

Meow

Spring 2012
Vol. XX, No. 2

CAT WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 430784
Miami, FL 33243-0784

First Class



CWA Members, please note! If you want your achievements and news to appear in MEOW, send them to me via email in suitable format (120-150 words maximum). Submissions will be accepted until the published deadline; however, please don't wait. Submit as soon as possible and make my task easier! Thank you. — Ed.

~ Heartfelt thanks to the generous sponsors who make our CWA Contest possible ~
~ Special thanks to our generous *MEOW* contributors ~



Fun in The Cats' House Photo © Bob Walker