



THE 2026
CAT WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

President	Conference Organizers	Keynote Speaker
Andrea Dorn	**Andrea Dorn & Dusty Rainbolt**	**Arden Moore**



CWA
www.catwriters.com

Header cats: Archie/Jonathan Losos, Sochi/Petra Luna, Brewski/Rochelle Newman-Carrasco, Luna/Christine Booras, Gracie/Linda Joy Singleton, Sylvester/Kathy Finley. Kitty Cowboy Graphic by CWA member Stephanie Piro.

WELCOME

…to all cat authors, journalists, photographers, artists, illustrators, broadcasters, vloggers, and other professionals. This year's conference explores so many aspects of the craft and business of cat writing and content creation.



MEOW Y'ALL!

The 2026 Cat Writers' Association Annual Conference Committee invites you to "Saddle Up for the Future of Pet Media." We hope you have a rip-roarin' good time, while also learning to herd your cats (and dogs), er . . . I mean furthering your knowledge of feline content in all its forms.

– Andrea Dorn, CWA President and Conference Chair

EveryCAT HEALTH FOUNDATION

EveryCat® is the world's only nonprofit focused solely on feline health.

SADDLE UP FOR THE FUTURE OF PET MEDIA



Casey,
Arden Moore



Goose,
Tracy Ahrens



Duckie,
Tracy Ahrens



Olivia,
Patricia Fly



Maddie,
Clark Greer



Mia,
Deb Barnes

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Please note: there will be a plain paper schedule in your swag bag if you find this schedule hard to read on your device of choice. But please peruse the whole digital program because there are a lot of cat photos and other information in here you don't want to miss!

Thursday, November 5, 2026

7:00 - 9:00 pm	For early arrivers: gift bag stuffing party, CWA Suite

Friday, November 6, 2026

8:00 am	Registration	
8:30 am	Introduction, Begin Silent Auction	
9:00 - 9:45 am	Secrets to Successful Feline Fiction Panel Amy Shojai, Mollie Hunt, Jody Wallace, Robert Smith	
10:00 – 10:45 am	Poetry Party: A Generative Workshop Mary Kane	Swipe Right on Fluffy, Writing Adoption Profiles that Get Pets Adopted Dusty Rainbolt, Mel. White, Teresa Patterson, Shado Wiley
11:00 – 11:45 am	Introduction to Cat First Aid Arden Moore & Safety Cat Casey	
12:15 - 1:00 pm	Lunch (provided) – Fur Real Advances: The Latest on How EveryCat is Changing Feline Medicine Steve Dale	
1:00 - 1:30 pm	The Steve Dale EveryCat Health Foundation Communications Award Presentation	

The EveryCat Health Foundation Communications Award

Steve Dale will present the EveryCat Health Foundation Communications Award, awarded annually to a person or group that supports communication about cat health, behavior in traditional media, social media, podcasting, and/or public speaking.

1:45 - 2:30 pm	Dare to be Bad: Strategies for Finally Finishing Your Work Amber Royer, Mel. White, Teresa Patterson, Beverly Garland	Do You Know How to Tell Ferals From Strays? Hailey Dearman
2:45 - 3:30 pm	Working with Agents & Editors Ruth Thaler-Carter	The Top Selling Points of Trap-Neuter-Return Programs Debbie Holzer
3:45 - 5:00 pm	What to Look For in a Winning Book Cover/Art Marketing R. Cat Conrad, Brad Foster, Teresa Patterson	
5:00 - 6:30 pm	Free time	
6:30 - 9:00 pm	Friday Fun Night: Play games! Earn tickets and prizes! Watch a special edition of CatVideoFest!	

The International Cat Association® (TICA®) is the world's largest genetic registry of pedigreed cats and the largest registry of household pet cats and kittens. TICA was the first and now the world's largest registry to allow household cats of unknown ancestry to compete for the same titles and awards as pedigreed cats. Visit the website to find out more: https://tica.org

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT A SILENT AUCTION?

CWA will be hosting a Silent Auction of many fine items, to raise funds for the conference, will take place Friday through Saturday at 12:30 pm. Bring your checkbooks and/or cash, or the hotel has an ATM in the lobby. And a big thanks to PetSafe and Barn Cats, Inc for their generous contributions to the auction.

Saturday, November 7, 2026

8:15 - 8:45	Check-in
9 - 9:45 am	Getting Down to Business: The Serious Side of What We Do Lynn Thompson
10:00 - 10:45 am	Substack and Beyond: How Writers and Artists Are Cutting Out the Middleman Dan Koller
11:00 - 11:45 am	Beyond Superheroes: Graphic Novels for Pet Lovers and Niche Interests Shado Wiley, Laurie Calcaterra, Hector Gonzalez Rodriguez III
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch (provided), Silent Auction finalized, door prize tickets drawn throughout the lunch hour - Grand Prize is a Sleepypod carrier!
1:15 - 2:00 pm	Writing Like Cats & Dogs: The Differences Between Cats & Dogs (and How to Include Believable Animal Characters in Fiction) Amy Shojai
2:15 – 3:00 pm	Are You Ready to Self-Publish? Amber Royer, Jake Royer
3:15 - 4:00 pm	Visibility is the New Bestseller List: How Authors Get Seen, Known & Remembered Jessica Spawn
4:15 - 5:00 pm	Every Feline Has a Story: The Art and Science of Seeing, Understanding and Evoking Empathy Tim Flach, Jonathan Losos
6:00 - 6:30 pm	Pre-Banquet Reception
6:30 - 9:30 pm	Awards Banquet & Ceremony, Keynote: The Art of Reinvention When You Don't Have Nine Lives Arden Moore

Dog Writers Association of America is the most recognized professional writing association devoted to dogs.

DWAA encompasses all aspects of the world of dogs – showing, performance, behavior, training, health, and the human animal bond. Find out more at the official website: www.dogwriters.org

Sunday, November 8, 2026

9:00 - 11:00 am	For CWA Members: Annual general meeting in the Executive Board Room, induction of the new board for 2027, and discussion of future organizational goals.

Monday, November 9 - ?

Anytime	Reach out to the new CWA Board and find out how you can get involved in the organization and in next year's conference! Also, if you continue to post conference shares, sponsor shout-outs, and pictures to social media, be sure to add hashtag #catwriters2026 and let the Board know so they can share with the members - president@catwriters.com

sturdi

Sturdi is more than a brand—it's a lifestyle of connection, care, and dependable companionship. Built to last. Designed for life. Trusted by a community that travels together. Visit the website to find out more:

https://sturdiproducts.com

cat stats

Statistics Show There Are 600 Million to 1 Billion Cats in the World (WorldoStats, World Population Review)

cat stats

The Number of Cats Owned Worldwide Is 373 Million. (Statista, World Atlas)

cat stats

The Number of Cats Adopted from US Shelters Are Higher Than the number of dogs (SAC)



At the 2025 conference booksigning, members were able to enjoy a local cat show while sharing their work with attendees. From left to right: Ruth E. Thaler-Carter, KJ McGlinn, Lynn Maria Thompson, Laurren Darr, Sucheta Rawal, Dusty Rainbolt, Kathy Finley

OUR SPONSORS

Below you will find a list of our sponsors who may have logos and ads in our program and goodies in our gift bags. Please consider getting selfies with our sponsors, at our photo stations, and with any of the products in our gift bags. As for our sponsors who were able to be in person at the conference, shower them with affection and cat hair!

All selfies, product reviews, and shares of our conference sponsors and their products receive a free entry ticket into our big Saturday night giveaway. Some items in our gift bags may be from additional donors who do not appear on the list, so be sure to give them some love, too. To have your social media post counted, include the #catwriters2026 hashtag and show our Ticket Master (Secretary Jody Wallace) your fine efforts.

cat years is a daily lickable treat that's clinically proven to boost hydration. Hydration supports kidney function, urinary tract health, and digestion. Chronic dehydration is one of the most common feline health issues, as many cats only drink about half of what they actually need (Kosmal et al., 2025).

cat years®
a hydrated cat is a healthy cat

Find out more at
https://catyears.com

Sponsor	Human to Thank	Their Specialty
EveryCat	Virginia Rud, Steve Dale	Grants for research that benefit every cats
DWAA (Dog Writers Association of America)	Su Ewing & Marsha Pugh	Writing about dogs with great skill and enjoyment
Sturdi Products	Alicia Seah, President	Trusted pet carriers for travel
TICA (The International Cat Association)	Vicki Jo Harrison, Frances Cardona	TICA is the world's largest cat registry and cat show organization
Cat Years	Sarah Zieman	Delicious cat hydration
Paw Prosper/Sleepypod	Kathryn Groenewold	Professional-grade, crash-tested travel safety equipment
Alley Cat Rescue	Debbie Holzer	Humane and compassionate care for ALL cats
Pioneer Pets	Shannon Supanich	Quality products for dogs and cats

okocat	Leslie Ellis (Healthy Pet)	A superior natural cat litter made from wood
Barn Cats	Peggy Atkerson	Giving ferals and strays a long life and job with benefits
Cornell Feline Health Center		Research, outreach & education about cats
Communication Central	Ruth E Thaler-Carter	Knowledge of all things purple and grammatical
Stupid Gravity Press	Dusty Rainbolt & Weems Hutto	Books, photos, working super hard
World's Best Cat Litter	Jean Broders	Sustainable high quality cat litter made from corn
Germinder & Associates	Lee-Ann Germinder	Pet PR & Goodnewsforpets.com
Ramona Marek	Ramona Marek	Shelter matchmaker and cat genius
Fran Pennock Shaw & Ray Shaw	Fran Pencock Shaw & Ray Shaw	Always being there for CWA
Mewla Young	Mewla Young	Being good at everything
Elyse Cregar	Elyse Cregar	Blogging about cats, librarianing
Allene Tartaglia	Allene Tartaglia	Being amazing
Mollie Hunt	Mollie Hunt, Cat Writer	Being organized and writing many, many great books
Kathy Finley	Kathy Finley	Stepping up when it really counts
Andrea Dorn	Andrea Dorn	Saying Yes to the Presidential Gavel Again!

sleepypod®

Find out more at
https://sleepypod.com

At Sleepypod, we believe pet travel safety should be held to the same high standard as every other member of the family. That's why we create innovative, rigorously tested travel safety systems built on quality data, purposeful design, and a commitment to continuous improvement.



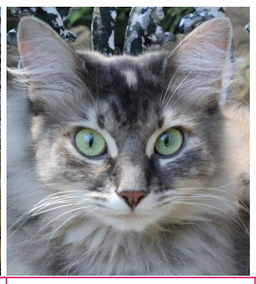
Hitchcock,
Kat McCarthy



Mr. Dill Pickles,
John Riddle



Aten,
Jonathan Losos



Aurora,
Cindy Vanous



Uli,
Mewla Young



Annabelle,
Jo Jeffries



Member Jody Wallace's cat Bobby Wasabi tests out the gift bag donated by Hartz to see if it can double as a bed.

cat stats

Cats have about 473 taste buds, which is far fewer than people (we have 9,000) or dogs (who have 1,700). Cats can taste savory, salty, bitter, and sour flavors, but they don't taste sweets.

cat stats

Even though a bear's brain is 10 times bigger than a cat brain, cats have about the same number of information processing cells. The cerebral cortex of a bear has 251 million cells, while the tabby has about 250 million cells.

cat stats

Although the number of whiskers will vary by breed, most cats have 12 whiskers arranged in four rows on each cheek.

All three of these stats are from PetMd.

OUR SPEAKERS



ARDEN MOORE: KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Arden Moore happily wears many collars in the pet world. She is a best-selling pet author, an in-demand Fear Free certified speaker and host of the Oh Behave show, the longest-running pet podcast. Known as America's Pet Health and Safety Coach, Arden teaches thousands all over the world in her veterinarian-approved Pet First Aid 4U program as a master certified pet first aid/CPR instructor.



SAFETY CAT CASEY

Joining Arden at the conference once again is the confident, charming Pet Safety Cat Casey. This orange tabby is a proud shelter alum and a certified therapy cat who travels all over America with Arden. Learn more at www.ardenmoore.com and www.petfirstaid4u.com.



LAURIE CALCATERRA

Laurie Calcaterra started writing for a production company, Coattail Collective, based in Detroit in 2017. She wrote and starred in the short film "Catfish-ing" and wrote the web series titled "The Agency". The first issue of her graphic media project, "Path of the Pale Rider", was successfully funded on Kickstarter. Laurie has since added her name to other indie comics such as Psycho Sal by William Russell, anthologies by Big Dog Ink (BD14), and Cthulhu Invades Fairyland 2. She is a a lifelong martial artist practitioner and host of the weekly podcast "The Tuesday Morning Brew".



ROBERT CAT CONRAD

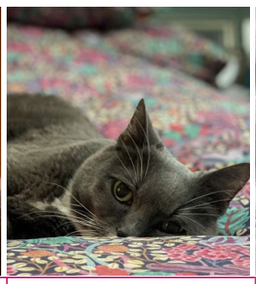
Brewed in Oklahoma and fully distilled in Texas, Robert Cat Conrad's rap sheet includes breaking into art, attempted acting, auctioneering without a license and writing under the influence! While never convicted of anything stronger than misdemeanor puns Cat has been accused of committing literary abuse and charged with grand artistry! His most frequent trial defense is pleading no contest to illustrating extra-terrestrial landscapes ... with documented aliens... and contributing to political mayhem, all of which places his work on the most wanted list for being framed and subject to hanging!



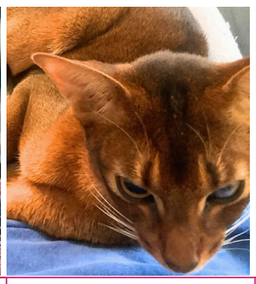
Miss Mudpie,
Melissa Lapierre



Poe,
B. Jean Melilli



Margo,
Katia Colitti



Augusta Valeria,
Diane Smart



Aiden the Maiden,
Terilynn Mitchell



Ms. Skeeter,
Terilynn Mitchell



STEVE DALE, CABC

Steve Dale is the author of a popular blog, www.stevedalepetworld.com, and is an international speaker at veterinary meetings, to pet parents, and for Royal Caribbean cruise line. For 25 years, he's hosted *Steve Dale's Pet World*, WGN Radio. His many TV appearances include Oprah to *National Geographic Explorer*. He was a contributing editor for *Decoding Your Dog* and authored the introduction for that book and *Decoding Your Cat*. He has contributed to numerous other books, including veterinary textbooks. His most recent book is *Ask the Dog*, his first children's book. Among his numerous awards are the AVMA named Steve Dale Excellence in Veterinary Media Award. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the EveryCat Health Foundation, Human Animal Bond Association, Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, and Anti Cruelty in Chicago.



HAILEY DEARMAN

Hailey Dearman took on the role of Programs Coordinator for Alley Cat Rescue last year, but she has always had a love and affinity for animals. Growing up, she was the go-to pet sitter for family and friends and has a full house of rescued animals of her own. Hailey graduated from CU Boulder in 2020 with a degree in Marketing, and her passion for non-profit work grew with her real-world experience. She is happy to put her marketing skills to work helping cats in her position at Alley Cat Rescue, playing a key role in the organization's social media strategy, web design, and promotion of adoptable cats. Hailey's dream is to spend her retirement caring for elderly chihuahuas and barn cats in her own private little sanctuary.

ALLEY CAT RESCUE

Alley Cat Rescue's (ACR) mission is to lead the way in humane care for all cats through lifesaving spay/neuter programs, rescue, education, and advocacy, while promoting nonlethal population control and the compassionate treatment of community cats through Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). https://www.saveacat.org



TIM FLACH

World-renowned for his meticulous, human-like close-up portraits of animals, photographer **Tim Flach** bridges the gap between humans and nature. His globally exhibited work and acclaimed books (including *Feline*, *Equus*, *Dogs, and Endangered*) challenge our perceptions of the natural world and advocate for its urgent protection.



BRAD FOSTER

Brad Foster is an artist/illustrator/cartoonist who lives to draw, and draws to live. He has created thousands of pieces of art, from cartoons to book covers, many of which featured cats of all shapes, sizes, and varieties.



BEVERLY GARLAND

Beverly Garland is a fine artist who has combined her lifelong love of art and animals via her award-winning cat portraits and "I Love To Draw Cats" YouTube channel. The channel features timelapse videos showing each of Beverly's colored-pencil portraits from start to finish. Additionally, each video contains a voiceover of the subject's life history, informed by interviews with the customers. Although she doesn't have a formal degree in Art, she entered the art profession 30 years ago as a computer animator and art director for video games. She and her husband have been adopted by 5 cats, whom they walk off-leash every night in rural Cedar Creek, Texas.

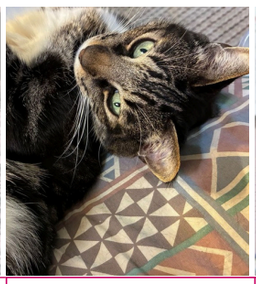


DEBBIE HOLZER

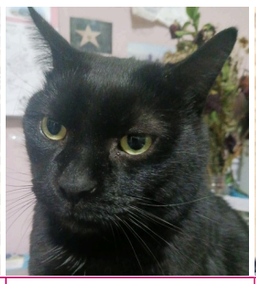
Debbie Holzer has been with Alley Cat Rescue since late 2020. She describes her role working on fundraising, communications, and cat care as a dream opportunity to spend every day doing something meaningful for animals. Before coming to Alley Cat Rescue, Debbie had volunteered extensively with different dog and cat rescues since her teenage years, while she worked professionally in nonprofit development and administration. She had never considered the possibility of a career in animal welfare, and now she can't imagine being happy doing anything else. Debbie lives with four special cats but considers all of the fosters and medical cases she cares for to be part of her family as well.



Empress Bella Rose,
Ellen M. Laura



Ziggy,
Judith Mathison



Joey,
Anne Leighton



Gypsy,
Annette McLachlan



Angel,
Petra Luna



Sugar,
Judy Snider



MOLLIE HUNT

Cat Writer Mollie Hunt is the award-winning author of two cozy series: the Crazy Cat Lady Mysteries featuring a sixty-something cat shelter volunteer who finds more trouble than a cat in catnip, and the Tenth Life Paranormal Mysteries involving a ghost cat. Her Cat Seasons Sci-Fantasy Tetralogy presents extraordinary cats saving the world. She also released a COVID memoir she calls, "an ode to the very real and healing presence of cats." Her cat health memoir, "Creating Comfort for Your Senior Cat: Stories, Poems, and Illustrations of Cats in Their Golden Years," recently won a Certificate of Excellence from the CWA. Mollie's cat writing has earned her various other honors, including CWA Muse Medallions and World's Best Litter-ary Awards. She is also the recipient of the prestigious Michael Brim Distinguished Service Award (CWA) and the Catalyst Council Connect to Care Award.



MARY CHRISTINE KANE

Mary Christine Kane is a CWA council member, has an MFA in writing, and has had a 30-year career in corporate and nonprofit communications. Her poetry and other writing have appeared widely in publications such as Chicken Soup for the Soul, HuffPost, Arkana, Cream City Review, Business Insider, and elsewhere. "Between the stars where you are lost" is the name of her poetry collection, which was published by Finishing Line Press. Mary teaches writing at the White Bear Center for the Arts in Minnesota and is a regular participant at live storytelling events. Since 2017, she has also served in various positions for cat rescues, including cat foster, mentor, blog writer and cat care volunteer.

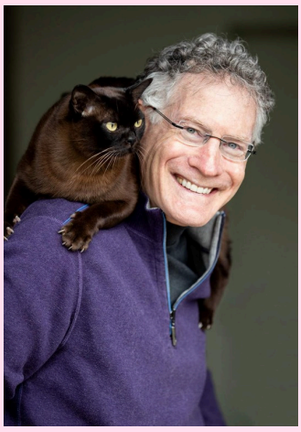


DAN KOLLER

Dan Koller has published the Coppell Chronicle, a weekly newsletter about a Dallas suburb, since 2021 via Substack. He will discuss the ins and outs of the free platform, which anyone can use to publish a newsletter about any topic.

gnfp good news for pets®

Goodnewsforpets is an independent, trusted source of veterinary-informed news, pet health information, and industry insight.



JONATHAN LOSOS

Jonathan Losos is an acclaimed biologist whose research has shaped our understanding of the evolutionary process. A gifted communicator as well, he vividly explains how we know what we know about evolution in books such as *The Cat's Meow: How Cats Evolved from the Savannah to Your Sofa*.



TERESA PATTERSON

Teresa Patterson is a writer, artist, musician, and outdoorswoman who has a house full of cats and a catio full of rescues. Known for the best-selling World of the Wheel of Time, based on the Robert Jordan series, she has also written history, mystery, and military works. She assists with the Tall Tails cat rescue in Fort Worth. As a fan she organized Science Fiction conventions, earned a Master rating in costuming, worked as a movie extra in films, and ran a jousting and horseback combat show. Teresa is currently working on a book called Trailer Trash.

Our brands are ones that pet parents have come to love and trust. Our mission, however, has never changed – to provide superior products that will improve the quality of life for pets and their guardians. All our products are designed by behavior experts, and each one is thoroughly tested and approved before reaching the market.

https://pioneerpet.com *
https://catsinternational.org



DUSTY RAINBOLT

Dusty Rainbolt is an award-winning journalist and prolific author who has written thousands of articles and columns during her decades-long career. Her books span feline health and behavior, humorous science fiction, fantasy, and horror. An in-the-trenches cat rescuer, she has rescued and re-homed more than 4,500 cats and kittens and has specialized for years in feline neonatal care and trauma recovery.



HECTOR GONZALEZ RODRIGUEZ III

Award-winning Comic Book Creator Hector Rodriguez III is a native of the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas. Hector is the creator of the El Peso Hero series and founder of Texas Latino Comic Con. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of Chispa Comics, the first direct-to-market Latino comic book publishing house in collaboration with Amp Comics. He serves as the Director of Development for Masked Republic, where he oversees the creative development of Masked Republic Lucha media properties. Hector's favorite cat is Godzilla.



Nelson,
Jonathan Losos



Karma,
Kat McCarthy



Neko,
Christine Booras



Jane,
Jonathan Losos



Shiloh,
Kat McCarthy



Clarence,
Mollie Hunt



AMBER ROYER

Amber Royer writes the Chocoverse comic telenovela-style foodie-inspired space opera series, and the Bean to Bar Mysteries. She is a hybrid-published author, with books published through Angry Robot Books and Joffe Books, as well as the personal imprint she co-runs with her husband Jake. Amber also teaches creative writing and is an author coach. Her workbook/textbook **Story Like a Journalist** and her **Thoughtful Journal** series allow her to connect with writers. Amber and Jake live in the DFW Area, where you can often find them at local coffee shops or taking landscape/architecture/wildlife photographs. They both love to travel, and Amber records her adventures on Instagram – along with pics of her pair of tuxedo cats, Sean and Addi, who were rescued by a member of Cat Writers' Association. Amber blogs about creative writing technique and all things chocolate at www.amberroyer.com.

The Cornell Feline Health Center is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of cats everywhere.

Cornell
Feline Health Center



JACOB ROYER

Jacob Royer produced the **Haiku Eki Stamp** book, and is the co-author of the **There Are Herbs in My Chocolate** cookbook. Jake's gardening blog Gardener's Watch has been going on for 18 years, and Jake has been blogging in general for over 21 years. He is the editor of and producer of Amber Royer's Story Like a Journalist radio podcast. He also produces his and Amber's personal imprint, Golden Tip Press, where he handles cover design, internal layout, and marketing. His day job is working with an environmental engineering firm helping with cleanup, restoration, and disaster prevention projects, often in wetland and coastal areas. Jake and Amber live in the DFW Area, with their two mischievous rescued tuxedo cats, Sean and Addi.



AMY SHOJAI, CABC

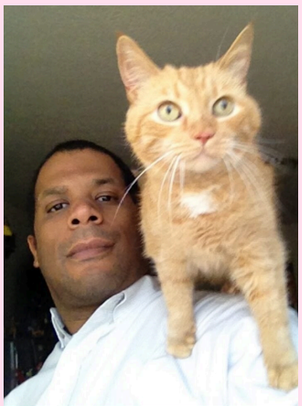
Amy Shojai, CABC, is a certified animal behavior consultant and nationally known authority on pet care and behavior. She began her career as a veterinary technician and is the award-winning author of more than 35 prescriptive nonfiction pet books and a pet-centric thriller series. Amy has written widely in the pet field on training, behavior, health care (both allopathic and holistic), and the health benefits of keeping cats and dogs, and has published more than 2000 articles and columns. Amy frequently lectures about writing as well as a variety of pet-related issues. She has been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, and in USA Weekend, The

Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Washington Post, Reader's Digest, Woman's Day, Family Circle, Woman's World, and many other leading newspapers and magazines.



JESSICA SPAWN

Jessica Spawn is an award-winning children's author, filmmaker, marketing strategist, and lifelong cat enthusiast who has built much of her creative career around storytelling, community, and, naturally, cats. She is the author of **The Christmas Kitten** and co-author of the award-winning **The Vacation Kitten**, a water-safety children's book that has reached thousands of families. As founder of Hungry Cat Media and host of Gal on the Prowl, Jessica helps businesses, creatives, and authors turn great ideas into brands people actually notice. With nearly a decade of experience in social media, content creation, video, events, and digital marketing, she brings a practical, playful approach to visibility, helping authors move beyond "buy my book" and build communities, partnerships, and opportunities around the stories they create.

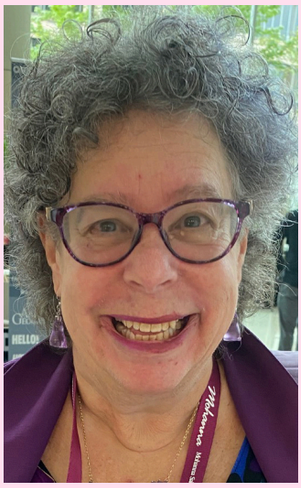


ROBERT J. SMITH

Robert J. Smith is the award-winning author of the Petectives mystery series, translating the adventures of his cats Yoshi and Gatsby into humorous, character-driven whodunits. His work has been recognized with the 2022 "World's Best Cat Litter-ary Award", a 2016 Watty Award, and both Yoshi and Gatsby were named runners-up for Most Distinctive Cat Character in the 2017 Stephen Memorial Book Awards. Since the release of his debut novel Petectives in 2012, Smith has expanded the series to include titles such as Petectives: Under Fire, Petectives: Stalking Horse, Petectives: Rainbow Bridge, and The Fourth Cat. His work has been recognized with numerous honors, including a 2016 Watty Award, the 2022 "World's Best Cat Litter-ary Award," and many Certificates of Excellence from the CWA.

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RUTH E. THALER-CARTER

Ruth E. "I can write about anything!"® Thaler-Carter (www.writerruth.com) is an award-winning writer/editor who is the Cat Writers' Association (CWA) blog chair and secretary. She's been writing and editing for pay since high school and freelancing full-time since 1984, and recently received almost two dozen awards for her writing and editing work from New Mexico Press Women, including one for the most awards! She owns the An American Editor blog; is the author/publisher of "Sometimes You Save the Cat"; and provides editing and proofreading for several outlets. Ruth is also active in New Mexico Press Women, SouthWest Writers, the National Association of Independent Writers & Editors, Society of Professional Journalists/Freelance Community, National Writers Union, and Editorial Freelancers Association. She shares her life with Skitter, the world's best cat.



LYNN MARIA THOMPSON

Lynn Maria Thompson helps entrepreneurial writers market their work and operate their businesses more effectively. In addition to her An Author's Guide to… series, she wrote The Feline CEO, which explores leadership principles through the lens of cat behavior. Also the CWA's immediate past president, Lynn has now been a self-employed writer and editor for as long as she worked in the corporate world…which is longer than she'd care to admit! She lives in Jacksonville, Florida with her three feline mentors, Captain Roughy, Gilligan, and Matilda Stormkitty. Learn more at her website, thompsonwriting.com.



JODY WALLACE

Jody Wallace's 30+ titles include sf/f romance and paranormal romance. Her fiction features diverse protagonists, action, adventure, and humor. When describing her methods, Jody says: "There are two sides to every story. I aim to tell the third. And I add cats regardless." Outside of her fiction career, Jody has employed her MFA in Creative Writing to work as a college English instructor, technical documents editor, market analyst, and all around pain in the butt. Jody is the creator of this digital program and wonders if anyone will read this and find out she's a crocheting, tap dancing fiend. You can learn more at https://jodywallace.com



MEL. WHITE

Mel. White writes science fiction and fantasy — her debut, "Mark Twain and the Notable Mare," appeared in DAW's Alternate Heroes — and draws it too, having co-written and illustrated the Duncan & Mallory graphic novels. She holds a PhD in Information Science, which mostly gets used to overthink how stories get told. Off the page, she needle felts cats, which checks out, since

her internet avatar has been a cat typing at a keyboard since roughly the dawn of the internet. She has always owned cats. She's currently owned by one Esme Chuffington, her paw-ditor-in-chief.



SHADO WILEY

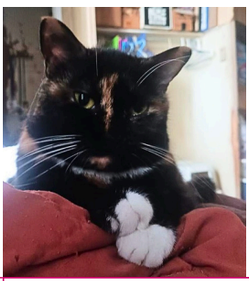
Shado Wiley is a 4th generation Oklahoman descended from a long line of roughnecks and determined at an early age such work was not for him. The blame for his belief that imaginary reality is better than actual reality falls squarely on the shoulders of George Lucas; the original Starbuck and Apollo; E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson; two weird uncles; the eternal struggle between Heroic Autobots and Evil Decepticons; and six years of owning a Friendly Local Comic Shop. Shado currently lives in Texas, funding his writing habit as an Assistant Store Manager for a national pet store chain. He and his wife have four cats and a small moose-dog.

BARNCATS INCORPORATED

Millions of feral cats and kittens are killed yearly in local municipal animal shelters. Cats are tested, had shots, are spayed/neutered. We find them safe barn homes after sterilization where they live out their lives.



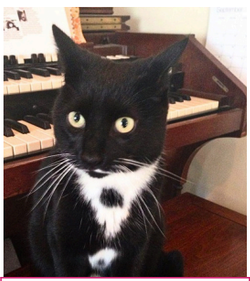
Sheena,
Christine Booras



Ellie,
Anne Leighton



Xander,
Stacy LeBaron



Tux,
Kathy Mandell



Jessie,
Christine Booras



Cuddles,
Elyse Cregar

WHO WE ARE

THE CAT WRITERS' ASSOCIATION IS A GLOBAL CAT-

On Saturday, November 21, 1992, four "cat journalists" met at the Cat Fanciers Association Invitational Cat Show in Fort Worth, Texas. They included Cat Fancy magazine editor Debbie Phillips-Donaldson and circulations specialist Suzanne Stowe; Cat Fanciers Association public

CENTRIC PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE IN WRITTEN, VISUAL AND AUDIO MEDIA.

relations expert Michael Brim; and freelance pet writer Amy Shojai. All wanted to help get "good information" about cats out to the general public, and support writers dedicated to that effort. The Cat Writers' Association, Inc. (CWA) was born that day and while writing remains the cornerstone of our organization, over the years we have evolved to embrace and embody so much more.

Stupid Gravity Press is the independent publishing imprint of award-winning author Dusty Rainbolt. Its books range from practical guides to feline health and behavior to humorous science fiction, fantasy and true tales of ghostly cats. Whether you're looking for useful advice or an entertaining escape, Stupid Gravity Press has a book for you.

The Cat Writers' Association is now a worldwide, 300 member plus organization comprised of a wide variety of talent, supporting evolving mediums and platforms such as Fine Arts, Journalism, Social Media, Graphic Design, Writing, Radio, Television, Videography, Podcasts, Websites, Blogs, Photography, Illustration, Cartoons, and so much more!

OUR FOUNDERS

Debbie Phillips–Donaldson, Cat Fancy magazine editor

Suzanne Stowe, circulations specialist

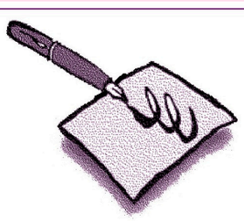
Michael Brim, Cat Fanciers Association public relations expert

Amy Shojai, freelance pet writer (and author and superstar)

That's who we are, and we welcome you to be a part of us. You can find out more at our website www.catwriters.com and our social media sites at Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



Ruth is aided in her endeavors by Skitter! Together they write articles, blog posts, newsletters and more.



I can write about anything!®

Ruth E. Thaler-Carter, Writer/Editor
www.writerruth.com • 505-503-7422

We are so honored that you have joined us this year to spend several days of informative and educational speaking sessions and then reward the outstanding work of so many cat creators across the world in our CWA Communications Contest. Both the conference and contest are made possible by dedicated CWA member volunteers and outstanding sponsors who support the CWA vision.

We set out to make a cat litter that's both natural and sustainable without sacrificing performance. Well, consider it mission accomplished. No wonder we're called World's Best Cat Litter®. Find out more at https://www.worldsbestcatlitter.com

WORLD'S BEST CAT LITTER™

cat stats

About 53 million U.S. households own a pet cat. (APPA)

cat stats

The earliest archaeological evidence of the relationship between humans and cats can be found in Cyprus- the burial of a man and a kitten, which dates back to... 7500 BC!

cat stats

In the latest AVMA study, dogs were found to be owned by 42.6% of households in the United States, while 32.6% were cat-owning households.

cat stats

People care about their pets and invest in good veterinary care. Over 118,624 vets were licensed in 2020, which increased to 127,131 in 2023.



USEFUL INFORMATION

Where am I?

Holiday Inn DFW Airport South
14320 Centre Station Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76155 United States

Where can I eat?

Conference attendees will be provided lunch on Friday and Saturday, substantial snacks Friday at Fun Night, and dinner at the banquet. The hotel restaurant is open from breakfast and dinner but not lunch. In addition the hotel is located in an area with many restaurants very close by, from inexpensive to much fancier.

Which sponsors can I meet at the conference?

We are thrilled to have a number of sponsors in attendance at the conference. Please be sure to say hello to the humans from Alley Cat Rescue, EveryCat Health Foundation, and Sturdi Products.

What's this stuff about tickets?

A number of very nice prizes will be given away at the Saturday night function. In order to win one of the prizes, you will be given a certain number of tickets just for attending the conference and can earn tickets playing games, helping the conference organizers with certain tasks, posting to social media with the hashtag #catwriters2026, especially if you do a shout out to any of our sponsors, and other ways. Ask the Ticket Master (Secretary Jody Wallace) for more information!

Can I get a ride to the airport?

The hotel actually provides a free airport shuttle!

The O'Malley Alley Cat Organization

From Ramona Marek, MS Ed: Deepest thanks to all the rescue volunteers who foster, TNR, transport, and fulfill so many other vital roles. Thank you for your time, energy, and passion dedicated to helping cats. We could not do this lifesaving work without you. https://omalleyalleycatrescue.com



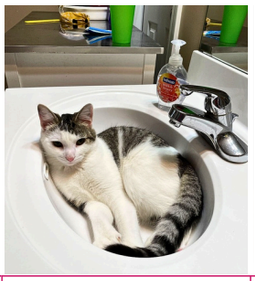
Thomas,
Marjorie Dawson



Jonty,
Marjorie Dawson



Tyler,
Mollie Hunt



Seven-Toed Steve,
Jody Wallace



Briga,
Petra Luna

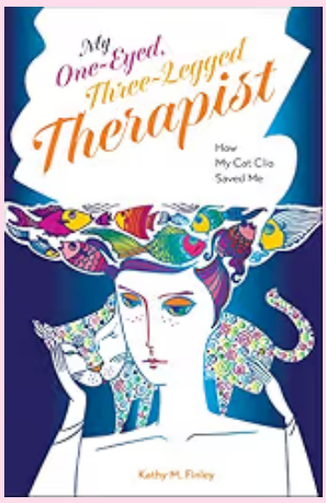


KitKat,
Kathy Finley

WHO WERE THOSE COOL CAT CREATORS AT THE SALES TABLES?



Mollie Hunt



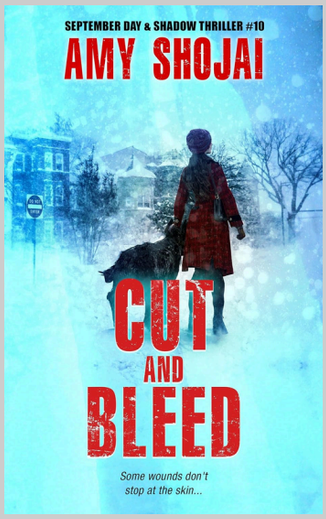
Kathy Finley



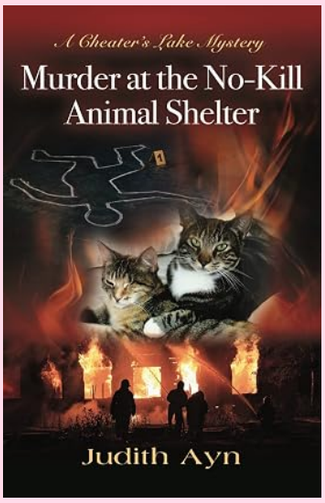
Jody Wallace



Robert J. Smith



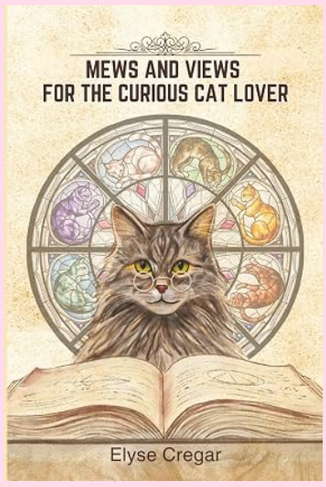
Amy Shojai



Judith Ayn



Amber Royer



Elyse Cregar



Dusty Rainbolt

WANT MORE CWA NETWORKING?

Paws for Inspiration: Come curious. Leave inspired.

2027 Cat Writers' Association Creativity Retreat

MARCH 5-7, 2027

Castle Farms • Near Fort Smith, Arkansas

Organizer: Dusty Rainbolt (dustycatwriter@verizon.net)

Escape the distractions of everyday life and spend a weekend surrounded by fellow cat-loving creatives! Whether you're a writer, photographer, artist, blogger or content creator, this is your chance to recharge your imagination, share ideas and find fresh inspiration.

Your registration includes:

- Two nights of shared accommodations
- Meals and snacks
- Creative activities
- Plenty of opportunities to connect with fellow CWA members

SPECIAL WELCOME-BACK RATE = $175!

Attended a previous CWA retreat or the 2026 CWA conference? You're eligible for our greatly reduced $175 registration rate, regardless of membership status! Welcome-Back discount ends November 30, 2026.

USE DISCOUNT CODE: RETURN27



Regular Early Bird Rates:

CWA members $195 / nonmembers $225

(Until December 31, 2026.)

Regular Late Bird Rates:

CWA members $225 / nonmembers $255

CONTACT INFORMATION

Be sure to high five the whole conference committee! Andrea Dorn, Dusty Rainbolt, Kathy Finley, Clark Greer, Mewla Young, Mollie Hunt, Ruth Thaler-Carter, and Jody Wallace.

Also in need of high fives: our amazing contest coordinator Arden Moore, who was helped by a lot of folks on the conference committee as well.

None of this could have happened without all these CWA members working in conjunction, across the world and at least one ocean, to bring everyone, and all the swag, together in the same time and place.



The 2025 Conference with Lynn Maria Thompson on the stage.

EMAIL	president@catwriters.com
WEBSITE	www.catwriters.com

THANK YOU!

We hope to rope you into the 2027 conference!

CWA
CAT WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
Written, Visual, & Audio Media Excellence