

| Life

Pet book suggestions

With the biggest gift-giving holidays looming, I asked colleagues to suggest recent pet books for holiday gifts. Many of these authors have several books in print, so browse to find something you really want for yourself or other pet-loving folks. Prices listed are "discounted" as stated by amazon.com and may be higher elsewhere. You can order through your local bookstores. You'll find more titles listed at www.catwriters.org and www.dwaaw.org as well as my own at www.shojai.com where you'll find the *Chicken Soup for the Cat Lover's Soul*, *Chicken Soup for the Dog Lover's Soul* and many others available.

Hint: I'm sure the authors listed below would be delighted to provide autographs if requested. Happy shopping and reading!

Fiction

Gaits of Heaven: A Dog Lover's Mystery by Susan Conant (\$6.99 paperback, Berkely PrimeCrime). Dog writer Holly Winter, now married to her veterinarian love, psychoanalyzes dysfunctional owners to solve canine crimes with her Alaskan Malamutes. In *All Shots*, a second title (\$15.61 hardcover, Berkely PrimeCrime), mistaken identities abound with three Holly Hunters — one a dog hater, and another a corpse that the third Holly discovers while searching for a lost dog. Great doggy fun for mystery lovers!

Cries and Whiskers by Clea Simon (\$16.47 hardcover, Poisoned Pen Press), features music critic and cat lover Theda Krakow unraveling a hit-and-run death of an animal rights activist. Drugs, feral cats, quirky musicians, an ice storm, and a cat-napping set against the club scene make for a tense who-dunnit with deftly drawn characters and terrific plot.

Windrusher by Victor DiGenti (\$15.95, Ocean Publishing) offers a cats-eye-view of losing everything, and overcoming incredible odds to regain it. This epic fantasy quest of a lost cat's incredible journey home

P'ETiquette

Amy D. Shojai



will delight anyone who's ever loved a cat — and wondered what they were thinking.

The *Shelter Dog* written and illustrated by Christine Davis (\$9.37, Lighthearted Press) is a touching and deceptively simple story of an angel dog who comes back to earth. *Old Dog and the Christmas Wish*, another lovingly illustrated fable, is particularly timely. Both hardcover picture books will be loved by children but even more appreciated by adults.

Behavior books

The *Dog Behavior Answer Book* and *The Cat Behavior Answer Book* both by Arden Moore (\$10.17, Story Publishing) are published in a digest-size heavy cover to withstand lots of referencing. The Q & A format along with great pull-out boxes (including fun pet profiles) offer user-friendly information. These two books should be on every savvy owner's bookshelf.

Rover, Get Off Her Leg! by Darlene Arden (\$10.17, HCI Publications) is billed as the book "for the dog who pees on your rug, steals the roast, and poops in improper places." The book covers all the essentials you'd expect from such an expert, but with a deliciously wicked sense of humor. Interspersed are true tales of bad-acting dogs so readers realize they are not the only ones afflicted (although names have been changed to protect the guilty). You'll laugh while you learn.

Cat Wrangling Made Easy by Dusty Rainbolt (\$10.17, The Lyons Press) offers great information on cat psychology, understanding cat language, care tips, myth-busting, and helping keep the peace in your multicat home. Rainbolt writes with empathy and humor from

years of cat experience, and backs that up with research from a host of impressive expert sources.

Why Do Cats Always Land on their Feet? and *Why do Dogs Drink Out of the Toilet?* both by Marty Becker, and Gina Spadafori (\$10.36, HCI Publications) offer fun Q & A formats. These books cover everything from serious to silly questions with solid information that tickles your funny bone while you learn. What could be better?

Other pet nonfiction

Paws & Effect: The Healing Power of Dogs by Sharon Sakson (\$16.47, Alyson Books) confirms what dog lovers have always known in their heart and science now supports. Dogs detect cancer, relieve pain, warn of seizures, and so much more. Sakson provides true stories of everyday dogs and the people they love, along with the studies that verify this mystical connection. This is a book you'll treasure.

Parenting with Pets by Christine Hamer and Margaret Hevel (\$16.95, Book Publishing Network) is not only interesting, it's a needed book for any dog lover who wants to raise both 2- and 4-legged "kids" correctly with love and respect for each other. The mother-daughter writing team combines their expertise as a nurse health educator and canine behavior consultant into a must-have volume. This isn't simply a dog book, or a child-rearing text, it's a hybrid in the best sense of the word.

Bernese Mountain Dogs by Nikki Riggsbee (\$7.99, Barron's Educational Series) offers stunning photographs, and solid information on this gorgeous breed. The book includes step by step directions, check lists, and great advice on everything from finding a reputable breeder, choosing your Berner puppy, and caring for him. Barron's offers a series of books featuring various canine breeds. You'll surely find the dog of your dreams among them and Riggsbee's book makes a classy addition to this stellar list.

Just for fun

Ghost Cats: Human Encounters with Feline Spirits by Dusty Rainbolt (\$10.17, Lyons Press) is a tribute to the cats we have loved and lost. Filled with funny, shocking and touching true accounts, Rainbolt offers hope to any who yearn to be reunited with a furry love. A thoughtful gift for those mourning a pet or for anyone anticipating the inevitable loss of a beloved companion.

Salty Dogs by Jean M. Fogle (\$10.19, Howell Book House) is a gorgeous book of canine beach bums caught in the fun-filled moment by photographer extraordinaire, Fogle. A variety of breeds and personalities are represented, from German Shepherds and Golden Retrievers to mutts, cavorting, resting and sometimes posing. The photos are lovingly captioned with quotes — happy, humorous, haunting. The perfect gift-book for any dog lover.

Planet Cat—A Cat-alog by Sandra Choron, Harry Choron, and Arden Moore (\$10.17, Houghton Mifflin) contains virtually anything and everything you've ever wanted to know about cats. Broken into catnip-size bites, this is a great book for browsing in between catnaps. (I actually was honored to contribute a page in the book, "The Top 10 Cat Behavior Issues").

Funagle; The Board Game (\$35.50 from www.darfine.com) isn't a book but I couldn't resist including this creative board game you play with your dog. The object is to funagle (entice, finesse, bribe, etc) your dog into performing an activity (crawl, stick out his tongue, sit up) using treats, your voice and gestures. Any combination of 2-4 people aged 12 or older, and 1-4 dogs 12 weeks and older can play. For the owner who has everything! (Dog and treats not included.)

AMY D. SHOJAI, an IAABC Certified Animal Behavior Consultant, is a nationally known pet care specialist and author of more than a dozen pet books. She can be reached through her Web site — www.shojai.com.