

[Marcia James, October, and Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog Month](#)

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October is a month associated with dramatic fall foliage, Columbus Day sales, and Halloween trick-or-treaters. But the calendar's tenth month also calls attention to two important issues: breast cancer awareness and the plight of homeless animals.



Smokey, my Chinese crested hairless dog logo, proudly displays his breast cancer ribbon. Breast cancer has touched many families, including my own, and several friends are currently undergoing treatment for this terrible disease. Close to 200,000 people – men, as well as women – will develop breast cancer this year. In addition to supporting cancer research, we can all be vigilant for signs of cancer and get our annual mammograms.



Today's guest-blog isn't about breast cancer, however. I'm blogging about the millions of abandoned animals in the U.S. October is Adopt-A-Shelter-Dog Month, and Smokey urges everyone who has space in their homes and hearts to consider rescuing a dog or cat from your local shelter.



Here is a tongue-in-cheek look at some of the dog breeds available at the nation's shelters:

Collie + Lhasa Apso mix = **Collapso**, a dog that folds up for easy transport

Pointer + Setter mix = **Poinsetter**, a traditional Christmas pet

Great Pyrenees + Dachshund mix = **Pyradachs**, a puzzling breed

Pekingese + Lhasa Apso mix = **Peekasso**, an abstract dog

Labrador Retriever + Curly Coated Retriever mix = **Lab Coat Retriever**, the choice of research scientists

Newfoundland + Basset Hound mix = **Asset Hound**, a dog for financial advisors

Bloodhound + Labrador mix = **Blabador**, a dog that barks incessantly

Malamute + Pointer mix = **Moot Point**, owned by...oh well, it doesn't matter anyway

Deerhound + Terriermix = **Derriere**, a dog that's true to the end

Bull Terrier + ShihTzu mix = Uh, never mind....

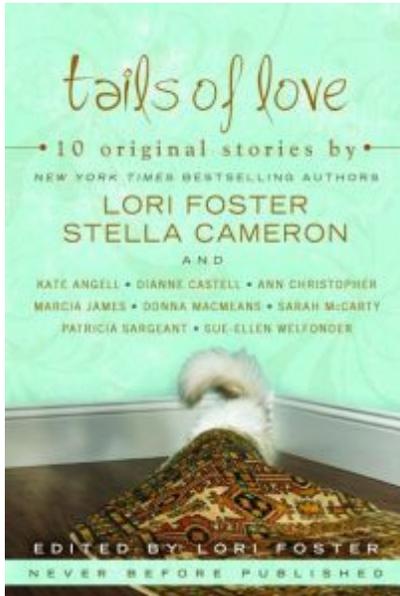
Smokey, who was himself a shelter dog, points out that many of the animals who act in television and film came from shelters. For example, Morris (aka Lucky), the spokescat for 9 Lives cat food — and his stunt doubles — were all shelter cats.



Here's Smokey's top ten list of canine actors, who were rescued from shelters:

1. Benji (aka Higgins), the Poodle, schnauzer, cocker spaniel mix star of the *Benji* movies
2. Old Yeller (aka Spike), the mixed breed whose breakthrough role was the lead in the movie *Old Yeller*
3. Sandy, the Airedale-Collie mix from *Little Orphan Annie*
4. Fang, the drooling Neapolitan Mastiff from the *Harry Potter* movies
5. Bruiser (aka Chico), the Chihuahua and Rufus (aka Chloe) the Bulldog, who star in Broadway's *Legally Blonde*
6. Kelly, Chip, Topsy, Stella, Zelda, and Bo, the 6 mixed breeds who played Max in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*
7. Lucky, the mixed breed from the *Dr. Dolittle* movies

8. Happy, the terrier mix on the TV show, *7th Heaven*
9. Papi, the tiny star of *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*
10. Most of the canine cast of the movie, *Hotel For Dogs*



Readers who can't adopt a shelter pet can still help the animals through donations or by volunteering at the shelters. I was honored to be one of ten authors who wrote stories for the Berkley benefit anthology, *Tails of Love*, which donates 100% of the author proceeds to a no-kill animal shelter in Hamilton County, OH. This anthology is the pet project (pun intended) of *New York Times* bestselling author Lori Foster, who contributes a story along with me and award-winning and bestselling authors Kate Angell, Stella Cameron, Dianne Castell, Anne Christopher, Donna MacMeans, Sarah McCarty, Patricia Sargeant, and Sue-Ellen Welfonder. *Tails of Love* has raised \$10,000 for the shelter since June.



I'd love to hear your favorite pet stories – rescued shelter animals, remembered childhood pets, funny animal anecdotes – and I'll draw a winner from those who comment on this blog to receive a free download of my first book, *At Her Command*, a comic romantic suspense featuring Smokey in a key role as an undercover DEA drug-sniffing dog. 😊

Thanks, Wendy, for welcoming me on your blog today! As my *Tails of Love* co-authors would say, “Go pets!”

Marcia James

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