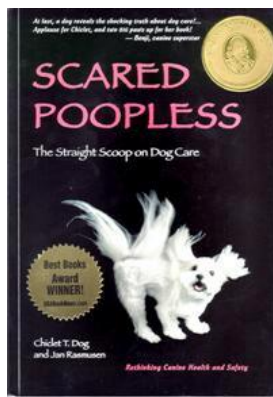


## Author's Corner

# Scared Poopless: The Straight Scoop on Dog Care

By Chiclet T. Dog and Jan Rasmussen



Chiclet isn't going to lie. This straight-taking four-pound Maltese wants you to know the good, the bad, and the ugly about canine healthcare. After her cousin Jiggy developed a severe liver disease, Chiclet and her human Jan Rasmussen set out to create this comprehensive wellness guide for pet guardians. Winner of two nationally recognized book awards, Scared Poopless examines all aspects of dog care, from vaccinations to pet foods and beyond, dispelling myths and exploring the different healthcare options that we have for our pets.

**Tails:** *What was your motivation for writing Scared Poopless?*

**Jan Rasmussen:** Jiggy suffers from immune-mediated hepatitis, a serious liver disease. Several years into his treatment I took him to a holistic veterinarian to try to wean him off the steroids and other drugs my conventional vet had prescribed, fearing the "cure" might kill him. What I learned from my new vet shocked and angered me and compelled me to share what I learned. Two years of research and interviews later, I'd written a book and was on a crusade.

**Tails:** *How does it feel to have won not just one, but two awards—the 2006 Ben Franklin Award for Best Health Care Book and the USA Book News.com Best Animal Health Book—for this book?*

**JR:** I feel so honored. And surprised—especially winning the Ben Franklin Award. They didn't have a "pet" category, and no animal book had never even been a finalist for Best Health Book, but I entered the health category anyway, fingers and paws crossed. When they announced my book had won, there was a gasp from the crowd. Was it because a dog book had beaten out the books on human health? Or that a book called Scared Poopless had won? I have my suspicions.

**Tails:** *Tell us about your dogs, Jiggy and Chiclet.*

**JR :** Jiggy , my book's cover boy and chief male model, is a cuddly 6-year-old Maltese. He's a real "momma's boy," my constant shadow. Twice his cousin Chiclet's size, he is amazingly gentle with her. They truly are best friends. Chiclet, also a 6-year-old Maltese, is my book's narrator. Chiclet is the world's biggest flirt, a spotlight seeker, a starlet always in search of a long red carpet. Conversely, at home she's the kind of dog who "pencils you in" for a hug— if she's not too busy. Her favorite pastime is barking at dog-food commercials.

**Tails:** *All author royalties from the book benefit animal causes. What are some of the groups that you support? What are some of the ways that you help?*

**JR :** We help rescue groups and no-kill shelters across the country. We've helped groups as diverse as a local spay/neuter project and Broadway Barks—Broadway stars raising money to help dogs. Nonprofit groups buy our books below wholesale and resell them. Others post the book on their website and get a large percentage of sales when people click through and buy. We sell wholesale to rescuers for their own use or for gifts. Sometimes we donate money—mostly to local groups we know. We also donate books to charity auctions.

**Tails:** *What, if anything, surprised you the most about canine healthcare while conducting research for this book?*

**JR :** There's a tie for biggest shocker. Most of what we know about canine nutrition and vaccination is myth or misinformation. For example, why do we think processed foods are bad for humans and yet magically good for dogs? And why do we think dogs should be vaccinated throughout their lives for puppyhood diseases when people receive lifetime immunity from our own "puppy" shots? Things are starting to change, but not nearly quickly enough.

**Tails:** *What's next for the Chiclet/Rasmussen writing team?*

**JR :** Forme, articles, audios, and soon, videos. I do a lot of radio and TV and try to interest print journalists in my "dog cause." Chiclet and I also write a fun and free dog health and safety newsletter. Helping dogs live longer, healthier lives has become a full-time job, for love rather than money. I can't bear to see dogs and the people who love them suffering from good intentions gone bad. What's next in Chiclet's life? TV, book signings, tummy tickles, and playtime with Jiggy. And working at her favorite sport: napping!

**Tails:** *Anything you'd like to add?*

**JR :** The pet industry estimates sales at \$38.4 billion for 2006. That's billion, with a "B." Vets make a quarter of that. With so much money at stake, persuasive advertising increases, so I urge everyone with a dog to question everything. Reputable businesses will thank you for doing so. If claims are made, ask, "Where's the proof?" If you feel fear, ask yourself, "Who profits from my fear?" If you hear commercials that brag, "Now with more real beef," ask yourself what kind of beef, human-quality or rendering-pant leftovers? And how much total beef is there? With our own healthcare, and our children's and our animals, we need knowledge and second opinions and must be skeptical of products and advice from everyone. And that includes me.