

Dogs We Love

Eighteen literary dog lovers put pen to paper about the best parts of dogness.

Posted: April 14, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Sometimes we just can't put how we feel about our beloved dogs into the right words. Fortunately, some of America's best writers now have.

"Dogs We Love," edited by Michael Rosen, is a collection of tributes by 18 literary dog lovers, ranging from New Yorker cartoonist Danny Shanahan to former GQ columnist Bob Shacochis.

Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jane Smiley writes about her clever dog's never-ending pursuit of tennis balls. "Amber and her genius possess each other – we have often noticed that a willing ball thrower can drive her to exhaustion," Smiley remarks. "We have to stop for her sake because she will not stop for her own."

Playwright Edward Albee describes the consciousness of Irish Wolfhounds, and his own late dog Harry's habit of sighing as if in reflection. "When we would be sitting together looking out at the ocean and I would say 'Aren't those great waves?!' and he would lean against me a little and just...sigh," Albee recounts.

Writer Ann Beattie weighs the significance of becoming a full-time dog owner in "Considerations (in middle age) concerning getting a dog." Beattie takes random situations – such as talking to herself and dealing with writer's block – and explores how a dog would improve them. Perks include snagging free dinners and getting hired to write freelance articles about her dog. Cons: none.

"Dogs We Love" is on sale now.