

Critters USA 2010 Editor's Note

A note from the editor of Critters USA 2010 magazine.

By Marylou Zarbock

The ingenuity of pet owners never ceases to impress me. Take the case of the skunk. Although non-traditional, pet skunks bring great joy to those they share their homes with. But say skunk to most people, and you'll no doubt get an adverse reaction.

Gaylene Ebling of Pennsylvania was determined to improve the skunk's image, so she took her case to no less a person than former President Clinton.

Ebling learned that Clinton was appearing at a St. Patrick's Day parade in her state while he was campaigning for his wife to be president. And that's when Ebling decided she was going to get a photo of her skunk, Penelope, with Clinton. She headed off to the parade with her boyfriend, her only goal being to get the photo. She got within earshot of Clinton and asked if he would take a photo with her pet skunk. His first response? "Is it de-skunked?"

Ebling replied that it was a skunk, but it had been descented. Clinton then walked right over and posed for the photo.

"He was really cool about it," Ebling said. She believes he would've posed even if Penelope hadn't been descented. "It's a huge step for all skunks everywhere."

In addition to being a great photo for skunks, it also fit nicely into one of this year's photo contest categories — Critters For Office. Check out Ebling's photo, along with the other entries, in our photo contest starting on Page 110.

Ebling's experience mirrors what many other owners of nontraditional pets sometimes face, the feeling that other people might believe only a dog or a cat can be wonderful pets.

We all know that's not true.

Part of the proof of that is this magazine. With this issue, Critters USA celebrates 15 years of publishing. We couldn't exist without pet owners like you seeking to better your pets' lives by learning more about them.

This issue includes information on 15 nontraditional pets. Each species article focuses on a single aspect, such as training for hamsters and playtime for rabbits. These articles also include information boxes that give basic statistics or care information. We also have general information articles that cover several pets. I hope you find lots of information to help both you and your pet enjoy happier lives together. Happy reading!

Pick up the 2010 issue of Critters USA or [click here](#) to buy the issue.