



Quill
&
Ink

FALL
2015

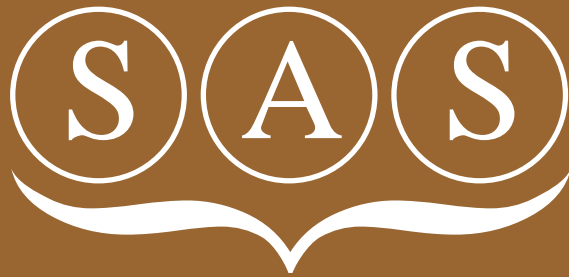
Quill & Ink

Quill & Ink (quill-ink.com) is written, photographed, designed, and published seasonally by ScriptAcuity Studio.

Behind the Name

The quill represents creativity and self-expression, in the written word and also beyond it. Because the inky octopus utilizes a wide variety of tools in the course of its day and is associated with such attributes as adaptability, flexibility, diversity, focus, intuition, and transformation—among others—it thus seemed a fitting symbol for ScriptAcuity Studio.

A little disclaimer: all thoughts, opinions, expressions, and comments are simply our perspectives.



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Contrast, Change, and Difference

It feels like the transition from summer to fall is the most stark, marked by both the nearly imperceptible and the manifest—the color and shedding of leaves, the frost crisp on unmowed lawns, and our own billowing breaths. Sometimes we welcome it with hesitation and relief; at other times, we sigh deeply for different reasons. This is a time of transformation, when we seek shelter, warmth, and comfort but also beaver away for the onset of changing weather and changing times.

We recently said good-bye to our beloved Maltese, Chloe, shortly after her twentieth birthday. We could never have fathomed how the fingerprints of her absence, even months later, would ambush us and leave us emotionally inert at some hours, uncomprehending and tempestuous in others. We don't move on; we just move in a different direction ...

And that's what all of us do every day, constantly engaging change and deciding on how to work with or against it, choosing in one way or another how these details fit into our lives. Of course there

will be setbacks, struggles, and hardships; but there are also joys, achievements, and victories.

Every moment we experience is different from every other—no two moments *can* be alike. We head into harder seasons, but this year won't be the same as the last; it's impossible for it to be. That's okay, and it's better that way. While we can seek comfort and solace in routine and the familiar, think about times when taking a chance has led to an extraordinary and unanticipated outcome.

Now is a time for adaptation and preparation, because change is the only certainty. As for us, we will huddle closer and ride out the cold season together, much in the same way we move through our lives, looking for the brightness in shorter days, the vibrant blue skies offsetting the leaves' conflagrant colors, the piquant scents on cool mornings. We will make these good days. ▪

S&C

—Sara and Chris



Remembering Chloe

In Sara's words ...

We recently had to help Chloe leave this world.

A month before that desperately sad day not long ago, we celebrated her twentieth birthday, and we were blessed to have thirteen amazing years with her.

Chloe and I had an instant bond, a love story, from the moment we met all those years ago following her dramatic rescue—during a drug raid!—when she needed some love and I had plenty of love to give ... or was it the other way around?

Chloe and I understood and looked out for each other, and though I delighted in her and doted on her, she gave so much more than she received throughout our extraordinary years together. She was my adventurous companion on thousands of miles of road trips, my trusted middle-of-the-night confidante on sleepless nights before Chris came into our lives, my joyous and prancing welcoming committee after a wearisome day, and the shivering little being who made me feel brave and strong when she crawled into my arms for comfort when some scary noise frightened her. She gave attentive audience to my piano- and violin-playing forays, bravely taste-tested my assorted culinary experiments, obligingly modeled untold numbers of outfits and struck poses for subsequent photo shoots, eagerly snuggled up for popcorn and a movie on countless nights, enthusiastically hiked by my side along innumerable trails on sturdy little legs, provided nearly ceaseless amusement with her own collection of personality quirks and personal habits, and charmed absolutely everyone she met.

Chloe was amazing.

When the time came to leave the body that was unequivocally and irreparably failing her, she gazed up at me calmly, reassuringly, and though my heart shattered when at last hers stopped and she drifted off in my arms, I also feel certain she slipped into a warm, comforting, well-deserved peace and that she was content at the end.

Her life has ended, and our new life without her has begun.

We're trying to get used to empty laps, empty arms. We're trying to remember that we don't need to do all the dozens of little things we did throughout every day to take care of her. Her "Life Is Good" food and water bowls are packed away; they don't need to be filled with her favorite tasty treats. Her treasured blanket is gone; we buried her in it—our own buried treasure. Where is the happy clicking of her nails on the tiles? Where are her restful little sighs as she settles in for a cozy afternoon snooze in a pool of sunshine?

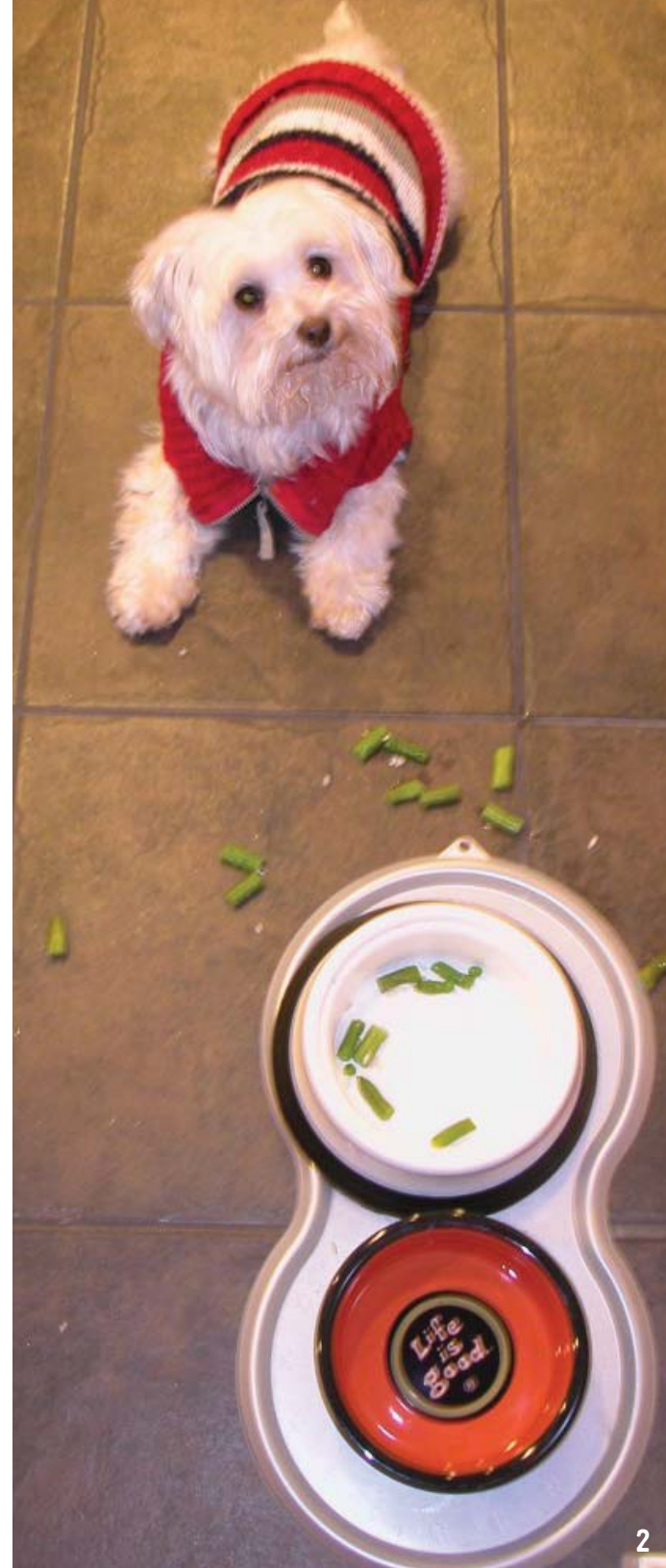
How did such a little being fill an entire house? Our entire lives?

We are trying to find a path forward. We will, of course, but it will take time.

If there is one thing I know beyond all doubt, it is this: Chloe was a blessing beyond measure or expression. I also know this: everyone should be so fortunate as to have a Chloe.

Sleep well, little girl. I love you. ▪

(Right) During a dog food recall, Chloe enjoys a home-made meal, but smugly protests against green beans.





Remembering Chloe

In Chris's words ...

We sometimes think about a loss as a hole in our lives that won't heal or can't be filled. Maybe it doesn't or shouldn't be.

The night before we lost Chloe, we sat with her, patting her while she snored heavily. We debated lengthily if we should take a photograph with her, asking ourselves many things. Would it seem strange to smile or not, and would it be morbid in either case? Would we look at the photos again?

Her rhythmic snores were broken by the sound of rain pouring heavily and briefly from partially clouded skies. We went to the windows to ensure that they were closed enough to keep the rain off the windowsills, but the ten seconds of rain had yielded, and a double rainbow divided the scattered gray clouds in the distance. It would be easy to think of this as some sort of omen, if we believed in omens. But an omen can be thought of as a hope for relief or release. Sometimes it portends hardships or tragedies, and then we can preempt or prepare or resign.

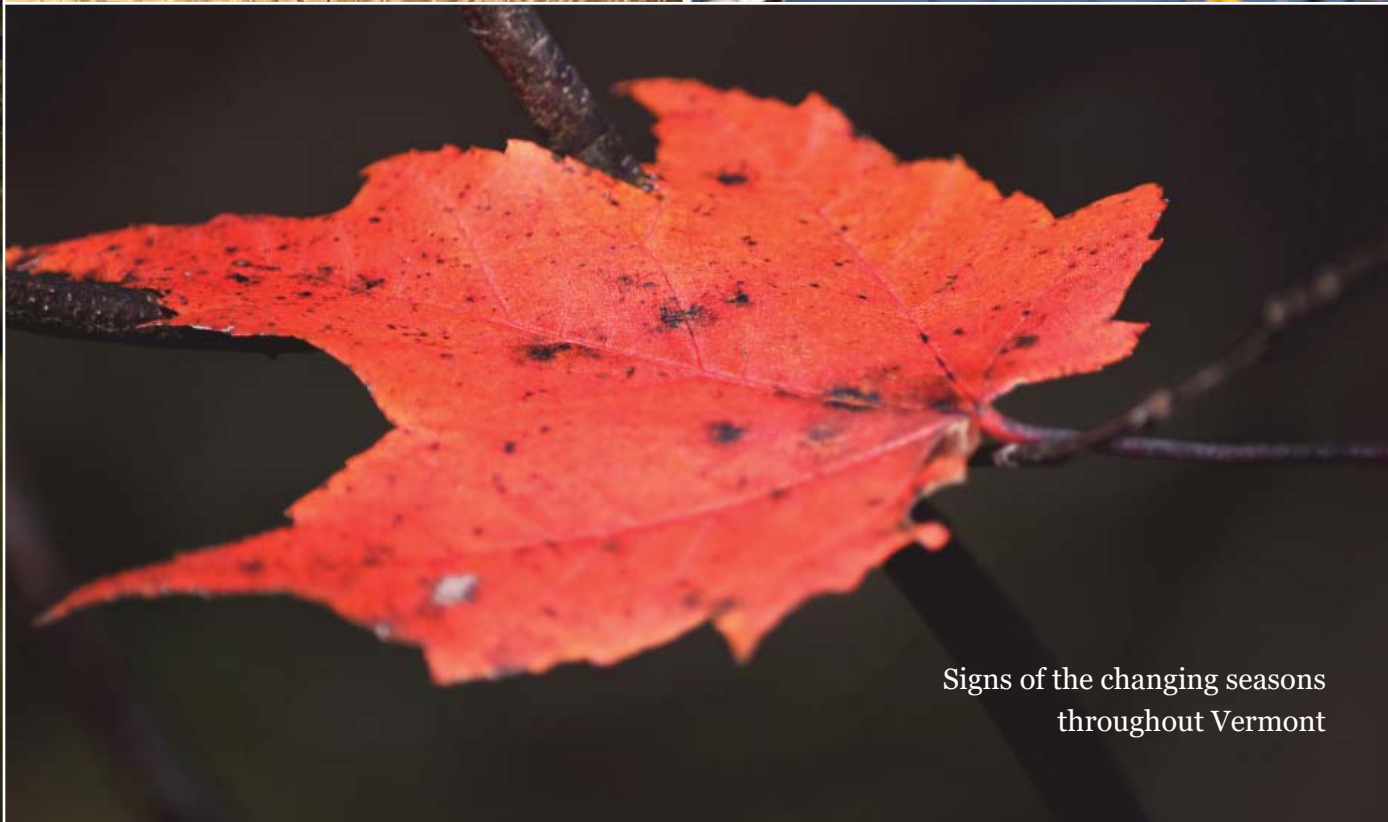
We'd been preparing for this for some time, at

(clockwise from top) Chloe enjoys a car ride to get a delicious treat on a fine August afternoon; on her fifteenth birthday, Chloe excitedly awaits her birthday surprise; Chloe prances down a boardwalk along a nature path in Corolla, North Carolina (photo courtesy of Brooke Mayo Photographers); the Valentine's Day blizzard of 2007 won't stop Chloe from getting out and having fun.

least in terms of our actions. We knew that if we had to assist her along, we'd make sure she was comfortable with both of us here at our home. We knew where we would bury her. We knew that we would miss her terribly and how guilty we would feel about any sense of relief we'd experience after she was gone. Over the last year, she was no longer who she had been. Were we selfish to make a decision, judging what she may have wanted? Were we selfish for not making a decision? But we made a choice from two difficult ones.

The sensation of loss isn't new, but it feels vastly different from four years ago, when we'd lost another of our companions, Joy, and one loss can never prepare you for another. We touch the scars, and the wounds don't hurt now, even though there is a memory of hurt. And it's possible it will always be that way, but the scars may simply be landmarks or monuments to the times we'd shared.

We chose to take photos with her our last night together, and we did smile, and we have looked at the photos since, just as we've gone through hundreds of other photos we have with her throughout the years. We wonder if those images are representative of her life with us and that someone who didn't know us or her might be able to assume—just as we hope—that her life was one marked not by an excess of anything but by an abundance of love, for she was and still is truly loved by us. ▀



Signs of the changing seasons
throughout Vermont

On Style, Guides, and Style Guides

There are a number of style guides and reference materials used in the world of editing; in the United States, for example, many book publishers defer to the standards set forth in *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS), which is currently in its sixteenth edition, and many also prefer *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (MWCD), currently in its eleventh edition, as the authority for spelling, hyphenation, and other considerations for term presentation.

But what happens when such standards conflict?

Consider, for example, that per CMS 8.41, terms denoting generations, such as *generation X*, are best lowercased. In MWCD, however, both *Generation X* and *Gen X* are capitalized.

In another example, per CMS 5.220, *run the gantlet* and *throw down the gauntlet* are treated as separate idioms, and *gantlet* and *gauntlet* have distinctive spellings. Per MWCD, *gauntlet* is the preferred spelling for both a glove worn with medieval armor and a double file of people between which a person must run.

Similarly, CMS 8.150 specifies that terms for electromagnetic radiations, such as *x-ray* (in noun, verb, or adjective form), are presented in lowercase. MWCD, however, presents *X-ray* (with a capital X) in virtually all instances.

In yet another example, CMS 5.220 strongly encourages writers and editors to avoid using the term *impact* as a verb (preferring *affect* or *influence* instead); MWCD, however, specifically lists it as a verb.

And aside from CMS and MWCD, there are a number of other resources to which an editor may have to adhere; consider that used by the Associated Press (called, unsurprisingly, *The Associated Press Stylebook*), which, for example, does not embrace the serial comma and generally only spells out the numbers one through nine. These and a host of other rules of the *AP Stylebook*—which itself is different from other style guides used by newspapers, such as the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*—concerning preferred spelling and capitalization; treatment of dates and times, abbreviations, punctuation, and numbers; presentation of cities and states; and much, much more are incongruous with CMS. Then, of course, there is *Oxford Style Manual*, generally used for books published in the United Kingdom, *MLA Handbook* and/or *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* frequently used for academic publications ... the list goes on and on and on. And did we mention that many publishers also create their own in-house style guides to which their materials should conform?

So if you've ever wondered why newspapers and books don't seem to follow many of the same style conventions, wonder no more.

What is a writer and/or editor to do?

The first cardinal rule to bear in mind is that the style guides themselves are just that—*guides*. As is clearly evidenced by the above examples, even the guides themselves are not always consistent, so writers and editors therefore cannot always be,

either. Ultimately, editors and authors must have liberty to make independent decisions with the best interest of the writing in mind.

Similarly, while consistent treatment of elements throughout a work is always advisable to the greatest extent possible, an editor's primary role is, in essence, to assist the readers with interpreting what is written. As long as editors are able to defend their decisions if questioned and are truly working with the authors' and the readers' best interest in mind, whether a grammarian hunched over a conference table at a symposium somewhere feels that *neither* should only be reserved for pairing with *nor* (because CMS 5.195 asserts that correlative conjunctions are used in pair to form a complete thought) is fundamentally of little consequence.

In describing the nature of our work to others, *we frequently explain that we partner with clients to help them create their best possible work*. We are not simply grammar police. We are not merely syntax enforcement professionals. And we certainly are not in the business of scoffing and sneering at writers' efforts and undermining their hard work with haughty denunciations. We team up with writers to help them achieve their best work and to facilitate their readers in the enjoyment of that work. We are all on the same side, and we all want the same end result: high-quality writing. By working with writers to increase their work's clarity, editors can help writers to present themselves and their message accurately and convey credibility. The bottom line is that editors help writers to create their best possible product. ■

