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## Stressed? Help Yourself and Your Pets

### PET HEALTH

Faye Pietrokowsky

It is just around the corner. Close your eyes and smell that turkey, roast beef or favorite family dish at your holiday table. Is that taste of buttery mashed potatoes, or Christmas cookies that brings back memories?

The holiday season is a time for reflecting about the year and our lives. Did you accomplish your goals? Have you made a written list or one in your head about what you hope and wish for next in the coming year? Are you focusing on your perceived failures and lamenting about what you might have done differently? It is also a time of year when we think of those who are not longer with us and those who we have lost contacted with for reasons both good

and bad.

As stressful as the holidays are for humans, they are also difficult for our pets too. This comes as no surprise because many pet lovers and animal fans are completely unaware of how their behavior impacts our furry and feathery friends.

Know that animals feel our tension and it can make them sick. Because so many of us are busy during this time of year, pets get less attention from us.

Visiting company can easily overwhelm animals with their

loud voices and efforts to be close to them. Their routines are changed with some being restricted to certain rooms. Furthermore, holiday travel means that some animals are left in the care of non-family members.

What can you do to minimize the “fallout” for your pets? There are several things that can help.

—Do some planning so that you aren't so stressed out.

—If at all possible, avoid rushing.

—If you are hosting a party, make sure that your pets are safe and ask your guests to let the animals approach them if they want attention.

—When traveling without them, leave your furry and feathery

friends in the care of someone who knows and likes them.

—Some animals prefer to stay in their own home. Respect their wishes. You aren't the only one that needs to feel good about their care when you are gone.

—Above all, talk to your animals. Your voice is assuring and comforting to them. Remember, they understand more than you realize.

*Faye Pietrokowsky is owner of Inner-Design-Applied Intuition-coach, teacher, consultant. For more information go to [www.inner-design.net](http://www.inner-design.net)*

## Remembering Ron Walters at Christmas

### THE CURRY REPORT

George E. Curry



Around this time every year, shortly before I leave to visit my mother in Augusta, Ga. for Christmas, I attend a party at the home of Pat and Ron Walters in Silver Spring, Md. I attended the annual party Saturday night with one noticeable difference – it was held without Ron, an enormously talented strategist and political scientist.

Ron died of cancer Sept. 10, 2010 and to her credit, Pat decided to hold the party this year because she knew that's what her Ronnie, as she calls him, would have wanted. It's also what his friends wanted. We wanted to let Pat know that although her Ronnie has passed from this earth, we still feel his presence.

I wrote shortly after Ron died that he was a one-man civil rights movement. And he was. More than that, the distinguished professor who served at Howard University and the University of Maryland taught us how to use our professional skills to improve the plight of our people. In that respect, he was very much like W.E.B. DuBois, who like Ron, did his undergraduate work at Fisk University in Nashville.

Ron was quoted more than any other political scientist of his time. He could have opted to teach his university classes and be a talking

Those of us who covered that first campaign witnessed how Ron prepared Jesse Jackson for TV debates. Ron would be hovering above and Jackson, outstretched on the floor in blue jeans, would listen to Professor Walters, process the information, and then restate it in his own unique way. Those prep sessions were so detailed that Jackson never had a Rick Perry-like oops moment in any debate.

Unlike some public intellectuals, he was not enamored with rap. He didn't record a rap CD, like Cornel West, or teach a course on Jay-Z, like Michael Eric Dyson. When it came to the empowerment of African-Americans, Ron Walters was serious. Very serious.

Above all else, Ron Walters was consistent. It didn't matter if Bill Clinton, George W. Bush or

His take-home tests for political leaders, Black and White, usually covered 10 subjects: health disparities, police brutality, equal access to education, voting rights enforcement, racial profiling, housing, equal employment, ex-offenders' voting rights, access to credit, and economic justice.

And Ron didn't believe President Obama should be allowed to skip the test or be judged any differently from anyone else who occupied the White House.

As serious as Ron was, he was also a person who enjoyed a good laugh.

I thought about him Saturday night as I was replaying a Dick

Returning the favor, Joe had me laughing uncontrollably after he proposed that we start our own mega-church in Prince George's County, Md. and I would be the pastor. I think Joe was joking. He had it all figured out down to the big rings I should wear on my pinky finger, the type of limo I would be chauffeured in, and carefully demonstrated how my cape would be removed.

He even told me about a church in his native Detroit that had such divided loyalties that two pastors preached on Sundays at the same time, one addressing his followers on one side of the church and the other preaching to his supporters on the other side. I don't know if Joe was telling the truth, as he

He felt obligated to do more, which explains why he quietly advised the Congressional Black Caucus on a variety of issues.

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head on national TV, but he didn't. He felt obligated to do more, which explains why he quietly advised the Congressional Black Caucus on a variety of issues. It explains why he served as Jesse Jackson's presidential issues adviser in 1984 and 1988.

Barack Obama was in the White House. You could count on Ron holding them all to one standard: What have you done for Black people? And he wasn't content with words, he wanted to measure how well policies had helped – or harmed – people of African descent.

Gregory joke for my friend Joe Madison, the activist and talk show host. Joe and his wife, Sharon, were sitting on kitchen stools when I asked Joe if he had heard what Dick Gregory had said at Troy Davis' funeral. As you know, protesters objecting to Davis being put to death in Georgia carried signs and wore T-shirts proclaiming, “I am Troy Davis.”

Dick Gregory being Dick Gregory said at the funeral service for Davis that a bill collector had telephoned his house and asked for Dick Gregory. When asked if he was Gregory, Dick claimed to have replied, “I am Troy Davis.”

Joe buckled in laughter. We both agreed that only Dick Gregory could come up with that joke.

claimed. But when you're laughing hard and having a good time at the Walters residence, it doesn't matter whether it was true or a product of Joe's fertile imagination.

When we finished laughing, we kissed Pat goodnight, and headed for the door. We had carried on just as if Ron were still there. And we pledged to not only continue laughing like we did when Ron was around but to be as serious about advancing the cause of our people as Ron was. If we can contribute half as much as he did, we will not betray his legacy.

*George E. Curr is former editor-in-chief of Emerge magazine and the NNPA News Service*



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