

Children's author set to visit Pet Expo

Stanhope resident will read from, sign latest book

By ROBERTA FUGATE

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Diana Tuorto's passion for horses began when she was 8.

More than 20 years later, she still is passionate about them.

Tuorto, 29, of Stanhope, is a children's author who has been writing fiction, poetry and creative non-fiction since the age of 10.

Her novels, poetry and short stories often focus on issues like animal abuse and neglect, love and the struggle for freedom, and individuality in today's changing world. Her children's novels are told from the first person point of view of different horses.

At the Pet Expo Saturday, she will be sharing her passion with others as she reads from, and signs copies of, her recently released book, "My Desert Sun," the story of Cayuse, a young free-spirited mustang who lives in the desert and mountains of the American Southwest.

The book deals with various issues, including the plight of the diminishing herds of the American mustang, abuse and the endless fight for freedom, no matter what the cost.

Tuorto said she became interested in mustangs in particular after watching a television special about the horses on the Discovery Channel. "My Desert Sun" is a statement of their plight, she said.

Tuorto said her appearance at the expo also will be a chance for her to offer an overview of horse rescues and why people should help.

"It will be nice because I will get to talk about why I support rescues," she said. Personally, she said she does it because "neglected animals have so much more appreciation for you."

In addition to her writing career and full-time job as a Web designer and writer for the National Kitchen and Bath Association, Tuorto also is an active volunteer with various local and worldwide non-profit organizations.

She operates Horse Welfare Organizations, an online database of horse rescues worldwide.

If you want to go

Sponsored by the New Jersey Herald and 24 Seven Pet Avenue, the Northern New Jersey Pet Expo will open at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Shotwell Building at the Sussex County Fairgrounds. Events are scheduled throughout the day until 5. Admission is free.

Scheduled events include:

- 10:30 — Dog first aid demonstration
- 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Pet Adoption BARKS
- 11:30 a.m. — Book reading by local author Diana Tuorto
- Noon — Companion bird ownership
- 12:30 p.m. — Relinquishing Bird, A Time for Change
- 2-3 p.m. — Shira — Pet Communicator/Psychic
- 3 p.m. — Pet Fashion Show sponsored by Maxwell and Molly's Closet

For more information, visit www.nnjpetexpo.com, which also is accessible through www.njherald.com.