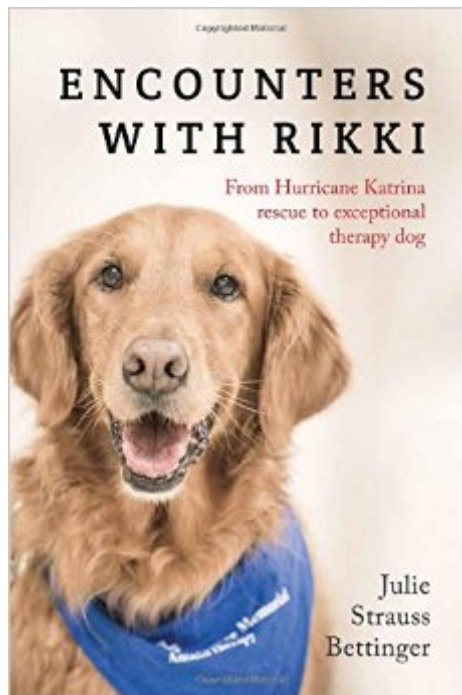


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# Encounters With Rikki: From Hurricane Katrina Rescue To Exceptional Therapy Dog



## Synopsis

Encounters with Rikki tells the true story of the incredible partnership between Chuck and Rikki, a very special rescue dog. Rikki first found her home with Chuck and Patty Mitchell in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Even though the golden retriever was a shy, shell-shocked puppy still adapting to the stress of displacement, Chuck recognized her innate abilities as a therapy dog. Together they bring healing and hope to recovering patients, accident victims, and the mentally ill. Soon Rikki's quiet confidence attracts the attention of advocates of child victims. Called upon to testify in court, child witnesses must recall horrific memories in the presence of their abusers; the tireless work of Chuck and Rikki allows these children to do so with a therapy dog by their side. Inspiring and heartfelt, Rikki's story illustrates the far-reaching effects of the human-animal bond.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Inkshares (January 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1941758533

ISBN-13: 978-1941758533

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.6 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #156,780 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in [Books > Law > Family Law > Child Advocacy](#) #180 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Essays](#) #837 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Dogs](#)

## Customer Reviews

Who could ever have imagined that along with the thousands of frightened, trapped, lost and displaced animals that one special puppy would emerge from Hurricane Katrina. So special, that this extraordinary, beautifully written book about rescue and recovery not only tells her story but the story of Chuck and Patty Mitchell and their experiences with Rikki the Golden Retriever. Chuck, who took over her training, found very early on that Rikki had the ability to read body language, respond to humans with empathy, engage visually. Because of Chuck Mitchell, a law was passed that allowed dogs in the court house and courtrooms-never before allowed. He was able to bring Rikki into the courtroom where the frightened, traumatized children waited to tell the tragic stories of the horrors surrounding their lives. The children could reach down below the table and touch Rikki; her

neck, her ears, the softness of her face, and they would be calmed. Chuck also took Rikki to visit accident victims and those with mental illness who responded to her, and she to them. This story of rescue, recovery and a puppy who is "...an angel in a dog body..." and the Mitchell's, who believed in her, will touch your soul.

When you come across a book that is well-written, a great story, AND an important read for all of us, you want to sing its praises. "Encounters with Rikki" is such a book. And there's a really wide market for it. If you love dogs, if you care about and/or work with abused children, if you believe the judicial system can be kinder to the most vulnerable who must enter its courts: read this book. Rikki was rescued as a puppy from the mess in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. A sweet-tempered and intuitive (if one can use that word about an animal) dog, Rikki has a marvelous sense about people. Most importantly and most touchingly, about hurt or handicapped children. It's truly a wonderful read, and a book you will want to give to friends and family as gifts.

This is the wonderful story of a dog who was rescued and has gone on to "rescue" humans who are in need of comfort. Rikki's human partners, Chuck and Patty Mitchell, accompany her on therapy visits to hospitals, schools and even into the criminal justice system; where they have blazed trails to allow dogs to accompany crime victims into the courtroom when they testify. I'm proud of their accomplishments and that this book allows the world to learn about the wonders of animal assisted therapy.

An incredible story! This amazing story about a rescued dog that rescues others is so well written that I literally could not put it down. It is a compelling tale about the power of this great therapy dog and what she does for the traumatized. I have sent copies to my friends. A warm story that uplifts and inspires; you will be glad you read this book!

Without any doubt, this is one book that is difficult to "put down." We've all heard that phrase before, but it is absolutely true for this true story of "Rikki," and all those who have been helped by this remarkable therapy dog and the animal-assisted therapy team who works with her. This account is far more than a story of an animal, for we learn how victims of crime are helped along the path to healing by a loving touch of a paw or nose. Having been a member of an active book club for many years, I will recommend "Encounters with Rikki" as our next selection.

Rikki proved again that dogs are one of God's greatest creations. No matter what people put them through, given love and training they rise to levels of caring even dog people sometimes are surprised by. They can understand on an intuitive level far above their instincts.

Read this and be moved by the love and perseverance that arise from disaster, both natural and born of human depravity. It is a story of how an exceptional animal coupled with exceptional people can make a difference in so many lives by allowing those struggling with extreme internal stress to connect with their self expression to help themselves heal and seek justice. It also tells how Rikki, Chuck, and Patty have helped to pave a path for others to follow in their ongoing quest to help those who are dependent on and betrayed by those they need and trust.

What an incredible story told by Julie Strauss Bettinger. She takes the reader into the deposition room, the courtroom, the classroom and beyond, and makes you really feel the difference being made in so many lives by this special dog Rikki. The story touches the reader in a deep way, bringing out the details of each child's story, as painful as they are, and shows how very important "outside the box" thinking can be. Kudos to Chuck Mitchell for barreling through the roadblocks and making this important program a reality! This is a game-changer!

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