

'Hooper Finds A Family' Author And Inspiration Visit Booth Library

"He's endearing. He's funny. He's a survivor," reads Easton resident and author Jane Paley's book *Hooper Finds a Family: A Hurricane Katrina Dog's Survival Tale's* description.

Ms Paley and Hooper, a yellow Labrador, sat surrounded by children in C.H. Booth Library's meeting room on Friday, July 22, as Ms Paley read an excerpt from the book, which was written from Hooper's perspective, "...after being left homeless in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and taking a daring trip from New Orleans to New York to meet his new family."

From squirrels to neighborhood dogs, Ms Paley narrated her book for attending students Friday, mimicking faces Hooper may make at each.

Ms Paley also explained Hooper's fear of water as a result of living through Hurricane Katrina, and read a part of her story that would eventually lead the main character to overcoming that fear in his new home.

"We all love our dogs and think they are the best-looking dogs," said Ms Paley in response to one child in the audience.

More than 250,000 pets were reportedly orphaned or abandoned after the hurricane, and Ms Paley found Hooper through LabsForRescue.com, according to the library. Ms Paley was also interviewed by Russ Mitchell of CBS's *The Early Show* on July 16 about her new book and her canine.



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Easton resident and author Jane Paley, right, read from her book *Hooper Finds a Family: A Hurricane Katrina Dog's Survival Tale* to local children in the C. H. Booth Library's meeting room on Friday, July 22, with Hooper, center, the Hurricane Katrina rescue dog who inspired the story. —Bee Photos, Hallabeck

Hooper Finds a Family: A Hurricane Katrina Dog's Survival Tale was published at the start of July, and Ms Paley said she hopes to attend more events at C.H. Booth Library with Hooper.

"I was delighted at the turnout and the kids seemed to enjoy Hooper very much," said Mr Paley after the event.

In the fall, Ms Paley said she plans to offer one-on-one reading lessons with Hooper for local young readers. Having Hooper there as a therapy dog, Ms Paley said, encourages struggling readers and students that excel at reading alike.

While she lives in Easton, Ms Paley said she enjoys attending and hosting events at C.H. Booth Library, and looks forward to meeting more of Newtown's young readers when her program starts in the fall.

Hooper is estimated to be roughly 7 years old, and was roughly 1 year old when he survived Hurricane Katrina.

Ms Paley said when Hooper first came to live with her family, he had a heartworm and other conditions. Once recuperated, Ms Paley began looking over a medical journal she had kept of Hooper's recovery and over correspondences the family had with www.labs4rescue.com, the agency that set Ms Paley's family up with Hooper.

Examining the information led Ms Paley to realize Hooper's story resembled one of childhood, with personal obstacles to overcome and triumphs along the way.

Being set up with Hooper was kismet, Ms Paley said.

"He is wonderfully patient with children," said Ms Paley, adding Hooper loves the work he does with the Reading Education Assistance Dogs (READ) program.