

# Darling Dog

For Dog Lovers, By Dog Lovers

MARCH 2025

## My Best Friend Was A Cat.

**DON'T HAVE A COW.**

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INSTAGRAM-WORTHY

## VACATION IDEAS

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FOR DOG LOVERS



If you're seeing this issue, chances are you're a kindred spirit—someone who knows that life is infinitely better with a dog by your side. Whether they greet you with boundless energy or gentle, knowing eyes, our dogs remind us daily of what truly matters: love, loyalty, and the joy of living in the moment.

As we continue to grow this wonderful community of dog lovers, I want to extend a simple request: Share *Darling Dog*. If you've ever found comfort, laughter, or even a tear in these pages, consider passing your copy along to a friend, a neighbor, or even that fellow dog enthusiast you always run into at the park. Word of mouth is the heartbeat of our magazine, and with your help, we can reach even more people who cherish their four-legged companions as much as we do.

Beyond sharing the magazine, I'd love for you to contribute your own stories and memories. One of the most cherished sections of *Darling Dog* is Tails of Remembrance, where we honor the dogs who have left paw prints on our

hearts. If you've ever had to say goodbye to a beloved friend, you know the deep, unspoken bond that never fades. Sharing their story—whether it's a funny anecdote, a touching tribute, or simply a favorite photo—keeps their spirit alive and allows others to find solace in knowing they are not alone in their grief.

Likewise, we're always on the lookout for joyful snapshots of your dogs—whether they're napping in a sunbeam, splashing through the waves, or simply giving you that look before mischief ensues. Your pictures bring this magazine to life and remind us all why we celebrate dogs in the first place.

So, as you turn the pages of this issue, I hope you feel a sense of connection—to your dog, to this community, and to the beautiful, fleeting moments that make life with dogs so special. Please, share *Darling Dog*, send us your stories, and keep the love going.

With warmest wishes (and a few happy tail wags),

**Beau Boyd**  
Editor, **DarlingDog.com**

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# Instagram-Worthy Vacation Ideas For Dog Lovers



**L**et's face it, leaving our furry family members behind while we jet off to exotic destinations just feels wrong—like eating a salad at a barbecue wrong. Why settle for sending postcards to your pooch when you can bring them along for the ride? Whether you're dreaming of bounding along beachy shorelines or exploring pet-friendly city streets, there's a perfect vacation waiting for both you and your four-legged friend. So, grab your dog's leash and their snazziest bandana, because we're diving into the best vacation ideas that are sure to get tails wagging and human hearts happy!

## 1. BEACH GETAWAYS

Imagine the joy of watching your dog chase waves and dig giant holes in the sand. Beach destinations are fantastic for dogs who love to swim or simply frolic along the shoreline. Pack a doggy sunscreen for their sensitive noses, and don't forget an umbrella for shade. Post-beach naps are essential for both of you after a day under the sun. Opt for beaches known for their pet-friendliness, where leash laws are relaxed and the surf is just right.

## 2. MOUNTAIN RETREATS

Escape to the mountains where the trails are plentiful and the views are breathtaking.

This is the perfect setting for active dogs (and owners) who relish long hikes and crisp air. Ensure you have the right gear for both cold and warmer weather, as mountain temperatures can vary. A cozy cabin at the end of the day will be the perfect spot for your dog to snooze by your feet, tired but blissfully happy.

## 3. URBAN ADVENTURES

Explore a bustling city with your canine companion. Many cities are now boasting dog-friendly amenities, including parks, restaurants with dog menus, and even pet boutiques. Walk the streets and take in the urban scenery, allowing your dog to experience new smells and sights. Remember, keeping them on a leash in busy areas is crucial for their safety and for the comfort of others.

## 4. CAMPING TRIPS

Connect with nature by camping in the great outdoors. Whether it's a lakeside spot or deep in the forest, camping provides a unique bonding opportunity for you and your pet. Bring a durable leash, tick prevention, and maybe even a portable fence to create a safe hangout spot at your campsite. At night, enjoy the glow of a campfire as your dog curls up close, naturally keeping watch.

## 5. ROAD TRIPS

Tailor a road trip itinerary with plenty of pet-friendly stops. Research dog parks and attractions along the way, and make sure to schedule regular stops to let your dog stretch and relieve themselves. A well-planned road trip can be the ultimate adventure, allowing for spontaneous detours and discoveries that are enjoyable for both you and your pup.

## 6. CANINE CRUISES

Some cruise lines cater specifically to pet owners, offering activities and accommodations that allow you to enjoy the sea with your furry friend. These cruises might include pet care facilities, play areas, and even special dining options for dogs. It's a unique way to see new places while ensuring your pet is not only welcome but celebrated.

## 7. VINEYARD VISITS

Many vineyards welcome dogs and provide a scenic backdrop that is perfect for a leisurely day of wine tasting and picnicking. These spots often have vast areas where your dog can roam freely under your supervision. Enjoy the local produce as your pet enjoys the outdoors, making for a relaxing day out for everyone involved.

## 8. DOG FESTIVALS

Attend a dog festival where pets and owners alike can enjoy festivities. These events often feature games, competitions, and vendors selling unique pet products. It's a wonderful opportunity for socialization and to be part of a community that celebrates dogs in all their glory.

## 9. SPA RETREATS

For a truly indulgent experience, book a stay

at a spa resort that offers pet-friendly services. While you unwind with a spa treatment, your dog can enjoy grooming services. Some places even offer yoga sessions with your dog, known as "doga," which can be a fun and relaxing experience for both.

## 10. FARM STAYS

A farm stay can provide a fascinating experience for city dogs. They'll have the chance to meet different animals and enjoy a safe, enclosed space to run around. It's a great way for them to interact with nature and for you to unwind in a rustic setting, away from the buzz of city life.

And there we have it. Vacationing with your dog doesn't have to be a far-fetched dream! From sandy paws at the beach to new sniffs around a bustling city park, these getaway ideas are designed to ensure that you and your furry sidekick have a howling good time. So, pack your bags, slip on the doggy sunscreen, and prepare for a barrage of selfie opportunities with your best bud. Remember, the best memories are the ones made together, and with these dog-friendly vacation ideas, the world's your oyster—or in this case, your dog's favorite chew toy. 🐾



### MEET NATALIE SMITH

Hey there! I'm Natalie Smith, a 24-year-old born in Crescent City, California, who now calls Bend, Oregon, home. If you've never been to Bend, let me tell you—it's basically the dog capital of Oregon. I'm pretty sure dogs outnumber people here! My love for animals (especially dogs) and writing has been with me since I was a kid, and now I get to share that passion through my articles. Oh, and I just became a mom to a baby boy named Milo, which means my hands are officially full—with diapers, dog treats, and coffee! Life feels complete, and a little chaotic, but I wouldn't have it any other way. Stick around for some helpful dog tips and maybe a few parenthood laughs along the way!

# MY DOG IS MY CO-PILOT

## The Cat

I have always been a dog person. I've never had anything against cats. I just grew up with dogs, and they seemed easier to understand. Winnie Lew and I have been a family of two since she adopted me four-and-a-half years ago, and we both kind of like it that way. Several months ago, my neighbor took in a kitten that found its way up to their home. Actually, my neighbor was walking Winnie Lew and the kitten started following them. Winnie Lew and my neighbor's previous cat, Flo (rest in peace), tolerated each other. Flo was definitely the alpha in the relationship, and Winnie Lew seemed okay with that. All it took was one claw-stretched paw swipe to establish who was in charge of that relationship.

But, enter the kitten. We kept the two apart because the kitten was so tiny. Winnie Lew had chew toys bigger than that, and even in that small package, the kitten was trying to establish dominance. The kitten is a story for

another day because during that separation trial, another feline showed up outside my door and began to go on our daily morning walks.

This cat, a sleek black beauty with emerald-green eyes that seemed to glow, appeared to materialize out of nowhere. At first, I thought it was just a coincidence, but day after day, there it was, waiting patiently by my screened-in porch door as if it knew our schedule. I told a friend who lives not far from me about the cat. She wondered if it was a cat she had been feeding named Midnight. Midnight had been displaced during a house fire, and the neighborhood took to feeding her. So, of course, I started calling her Midnight. I thought it was a fitting name, conveying a sense of elegance and intrigue.

Winnie Lew was initially wary of Midnight, eyeing her suspiciously as we set out on our walks. But the cat kept a respectful distance, trailing behind us like a furry guardian. As the days





passed, Winnie Lew's curiosity got the better of her. She'd slow down, allowing Midnight to catch up, and they'd exchange cautious sniffs. Winnie Lew would look at me as if to say, that is the funniest looking and smelling dog I have ever encountered. Fortunately for both of us, Midnight seemed to be a pretty chill cat. But also very playful. She and my neighbor's (now full-size) kitten have become best buds—frolicking and tumbling all over each other. Winnie Lew was not a participant in these games. She is clearly not a frolicker.

Before I knew it, our morning duo had become a trio. Midnight seamlessly integrated into our routine, matching our pace on every walk. Of course, being the softie that I am, I began to feed her, insuring that a cat would now be a part of our lives. I found myself looking forward to our walks, eager to see how the dynamic between Winnie Lew and Midnight would evolve. As weeks turned into months, their relationship blossomed into an unlikely coexistence if not friendship. Winnie Lew, once the sole recipient of my attention, now had to share some of the spotlight.

As the seasons changed, the days grew shorter and the nights grew colder. One particularly chilly morning, I stepped onto the porch to find Midnight curled up in a chair for warmth. She seemed perfectly happy and not the least bit intrigued by the cold air. But as winter approached, I began to worry about Midnight's living situation. Winnie Lew lives in luxury inside, but Midnight is definitely a cat who wants to be outside. This was fine with me because I am very allergic to cats. I, however, couldn't bear the thought of her braving the cold nights alone. I found myself leaving the porch door slightly ajar just in case she needed shelter. Attempting to be a good landlord, I went online and even purchased a heated cat house for her—which

she quickly turned her nose up at. But with frigid temperatures and the threat of snow on the way, I knew Midnight would need to come in at night until warmer temperatures returned.

One fateful evening, as the wind howled and temperatures dropped below freezing, I made a decision. I set up a cozy corner in the front room (the only room I could truly close off), complete with a soft bed (although Midnight clearly preferred the sofa), food, water, and a litter box. Taking a deep breath, I opened the porch door and called out to Midnight. To my surprise, she trotted in without hesitation, as if she'd been waiting for this invitation all along. Winnie Lew watched curiously from the kitchen as I led Midnight to her new temporary quarters. I held my breath, waiting for any sign of allergic reaction on my part, but surprisingly, with Midnight in a separate room, it was minimal and manageable. I also knew it was a short-term solution. That night, snuggled with Winnie Lew, I lay awake listening to the unfamiliar sounds of a cat in the house. Occasional meows mixed with Winnie Lew's soft snoring, creating a strange but comforting symphony. Of course, one night turned into one week, and then two weeks.

The colder nights will soon be passing, and Midnight will be back to being a full-time outdoor cat, but our household has settled into a new rhythm. Midnight spends her nights in the front room, emerging each morning eager for our walks. Winnie Lew, ever the gracious host, seems to accept this new arrangement with surprising ease. An unfortunate consequence of our new arrangement is that Winnie Lew has taken a particular interest in cat food (when I don't pick it up fast enough). This really isn't a problem, except the smells emitting from my dog at night could now melt your face. And my allergies, while not gone, remained manageable with a few simple precautions, although my eyes might disagree with me.

As spring approaches, I find myself in a quandary. Midnight has become such an integral part of our lives that the thought of her returning to a fully outdoor existence is tugging at my heartstrings. Yet, I know my allergies can't withstand her permanent indoor presence. So, as I watch Midnight and the kitten chase each other around the yard, I am wondering if I can come up with a compromise between indoor comfort and outdoor freedom. It looks like I might need to go into the construction business. Perhaps, I could build Midnight a proper outdoor shelter— something more substantial than the heated cat house she had rejected.

As I sketch out plans, I can't help but chuckle at the absurdity of it all. Here I am, a self-proclaimed dog person, designing a cat palace. But life has a funny way of surprising us, and Midnight has certainly done that. With a little hard work, and with Winnie Lew as a supervisor, Midnight Manor may become a reality before spring hits.

Dog is still my co-pilot, but it looks like now we have added a permanent feline passenger. 🐾



## MEET AMY GEORGE

Amy George is an Episcopal priest in Selma, Alabama, where she shares an office with her volunteer pastoral care assistant, Winnie Lew. When not doing God's work, you can find Amy doing Dog's work—vacuuming a never ending supply of dog hair, chauffeuring Winnie Lew, and being the provider of endless dog treats. Amy feels blessed to have no fear of ever being attacked by squirrels, UPS delivery people, or small lizards.





# LADY

## The Fierce Guardian of My Childhood

I live in Selma, Alabama, which is about 50 mile west of nowhere. My dad quit school in the eighth grade to help his dad on the farm. They were sharecroppers in South Carolina in the 1930s. My father picked cotton by hand for four years to help the family stay afloat. When he turned 18, he realized he had to move on because, in his words, picking cotton was “bull\*\*\*\*”. He joined the Air Force, and after basic training, he was stationed at Craig Air Force Base in Selma. I was born and bred in Selma, but my roots are in South Carolina. My parents lived outside of Anderson. My mom lived near Belton in a tiny

community called Honea Path (pronounced “Honey Path”). I didn’t say that right until I was about 30. My dad is from just down the road in Possum Kingdom. You can’t make this up.

My first memory on this earth is of being at my grandmother’s house in Honea Path. She lived in a little house with white panel siding and a cinder block base on a lot that can only be described as crooked. She lived next door to my great-uncle Clarence Lee, who robbed a bank in his hometown in the ‘50s. That’s not the smartest idea I ever heard of. The house had a concrete porch that was painted grey. You could tell because there was



chipping that revealed it was once painted green. This house is just down the road from where they hold the weekly goat sale (true story). If you've never been, you should go. I remember walking into that house and into the "No No" room: a formal living room that was reserved for funerals and naps. I would turn right and walk into the den and climb on the red velour couch with Lady.

Lady was an enormous German Shepard that would bite your face off. But not mine. I had zero fear of this dog. She loved me and I loved her. Every human I knew except for Nanny was deathly afraid of this dog. I recall my brother telling my uncle, "Don't mess with Markie when he's with that dog."

My dad and brother were both scared of her. And with good reason. I saw a man come into the yard one day and raise his voice to Nanny, and Lady systematically removed his pants from his body. Everyone was scared she was gonna kill him. I remember laughing. If I was at Nanny's house, Lady was going to be very close to, if not actually touching, me. I would lie on top of her and pull her ears, play with her big teeth and tongue, and run my fingers between her toepads. I recall her climbing onto the big red couch with me and laying her paws across my lap. Her rough paws would scratch my skin, but I didn't mind. To me, that was love. I welcomed that pain and missed it when I wasn't there.

I would feed her popcorn, and I'm sure someone will tell me that popcorn is bad for dogs. But I saw this dog eat a whole pan of brownies, so I think she was OK with a little popcorn. I would sit down with a bowl of Nanny's pan-fried popcorn and Lady would start drooling. She knew Markie was gonna give her 90% of it.

I remember sitting in my kitchen in Selma one day, and the yellow wall phone rang. It was Nanny. Well, Momma and Nanny talked

for a short time, and then Momma hung up, which I remember thinking was odd because they could yap for hours about nothing. Momma came and pulled up a chair next to me and said, "Markie." There was a pause. Long enough that I stopped what I was doing. My mother was not attached to Lady, but she knew that I was. This was difficult for her. She continued, "Lady passed away this morning." I think this was the first time I cried without making a sound. Tears poured down my face as I stared blankly at my mother. I remember the feeling of my shirt being wet against my skin from crying. I couldn't believe it. I had never known a world where Lady didn't exist. So long as Lady was alive, I knew there was somebody that loved me and would do anything to protect me. That spirit had left this world, and there was a void in my heart.

My grandfather had died several years earlier, but at that age, the only thought that came to my mind was "Who's gonna give me Star Crunch cakes now???" Now I was faced with true loss. I stayed home from school the next day. I haven't thought about that dog in several years. Now that I do, it makes me smile. But why is my shirt wet? 🐾



## MEET MARK WOODSON

Born in Selma, AL, in 1973, Mark is the owner of a local restaurant living alone with a Lab/Catahoula mix named Lucy, a Great Dane named Otis, and 3 cats...Sam, Charlie, and Eddie B. He claims to hunt and fish as his hobby, but he mostly scrolls through reels on his phone and binge drinks in his free time. His favorite pastime is developing disorders his physicians have to Google. He has 2 daughters, Bonnie and Molly, who enjoy volleyball and spending their inheritance early.

# The Allergy Epidemic

## HELPING YOUR DOG BEAT THE ITCH



**S**pring is just around the corner, and while we welcome blooming flowers and longer days, for many dogs, this season also brings itchy skin, red eyes, and constant scratching. Allergies are one of the most common health issues in dogs, affecting up to 20% of our furry friends. In this edition of Dogter's Corner, we'll explore how to recognize, manage, and treat allergies so your pup can enjoy the season itch-free.

### UNDERSTANDING CANINE ALLERGIES

Dogs can suffer from three primary types of allergies:

1. **Environmental Allergies (Atopy):** These are triggered by airborne allergens like pollen, dust mites, or mold. Symptoms often flare up in spring and fall.
2. **Food Allergies:** Caused by an adverse reaction to certain proteins or ingredients in your dog's diet.
3. **Flea Allergy Dermatitis:** An allergic reaction to flea saliva, which can cause intense itching, even from a single bite.

### SIGNS YOUR DOG MAY HAVE ALLERGIES

Allergy symptoms can vary, but common signs include:

- Excessive licking, chewing, or scratching (especially paws, ears, and belly).
- Red, inflamed, or flaky skin.
- Chronic ear infections.
- Sneezing, coughing, or watery eyes.
- Gastrointestinal issues like vomiting or diarrhea (common with food allergies).

If your dog shows any of these signs, it's time to consult your veterinarian for a proper diagnosis.

### DIAGNOSING THE CAUSE

Pinpointing the source of your dog's allergies often requires a combination of observation, testing, and trial-and-error. Your veterinarian may recommend the following:

- **Allergy Testing:** Skin or blood tests to identify environmental allergens.

## “Pinpointing the source of your dog’s allergies often requires a combination of observation, testing, and trial-and-error.”

- **Elimination Diet:** A carefully controlled diet to identify food triggers.
- **Flea Prevention:** Ensuring your dog is protected with regular flea treatments.

### TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT

While there’s no cure for allergies, the right management plan can greatly improve your dog’s quality of life:

#### 1. Medications:

- Antihistamines can provide mild relief for some dogs.
- Prescription medications like Apoquel or Cytopoint target itch at the source.
- Steroids may be used short-term for severe flare-ups.

#### 2. Bathing and Skin Care:

- Frequent baths with hypoallergenic or medicated shampoos can soothe itchy skin and wash away allergens.
- Keep your dog’s coat clean and well-groomed.

#### 3. Environmental Control:

- Wash your dog’s bedding regularly.
- Use air purifiers to reduce allergens in your home.
- Wipe your dog’s paws and coat after walks to remove pollen.

#### 4. Dietary Adjustments:

- If food allergies are suspected, your

vet may recommend a hypoallergenic diet or novel protein diet.

- Omega-3 fatty acids can help reduce inflammation and improve skin health.

#### 5. Flea Control:

- Year-round flea prevention is essential, even in colder months.

### WHEN TO SEEK VETERINARY HELP

If your dog’s symptoms persist despite home care, or if they develop open sores, hair loss, or recurrent infections, it’s time to visit the vet. Chronic allergies can lead to secondary issues like skin infections that require medical treatment.

### A COMFORTABLE SPRING FOR YOUR PUP

With the right approach, you can help your dog thrive during allergy season and beyond. Whether it’s a tailored diet, regular grooming, or advanced medical treatments, relief is within reach. After all, every scratch-free tail wag is worth it!

If you have specific questions about your dog’s allergies or would like help developing a treatment plan, don’t hesitate to reach out to your veterinarian. Together, we’ll help your pup enjoy the season in comfort and health. 🐾

#### MEET DR. MAX HARPER, DVM

Dr. Max Harper, DVM, is a practicing veterinarian with a passion for educating pet parents about all things canine. He believes every dog deserves a long, happy, and healthy life.





# Choosing The Perfect Paw-adise

## ALEX, SOPHIE, AND THE FAMILY VACATION PLAN

In the cozy living room of their Willow Creek home, Alex and Sophie sprawled out with maps, brochures, and a laptop, their excitement bubbling as they embarked on a special mission: to plan a family summer vacation where Charlie, their beloved golden retriever, could join. With their parents entrusting

them with the task, they were determined to find the best dog-friendly destination.

### RESEARCHING THE OPTIONS

The siblings began their planning by listing key criteria: the destination had to be fun for the whole family, offer plenty of outdoor activities, and most importantly, be welcoming to dogs.

They divided their research tasks. Alex took on exploring online forums and pet travel blogs for reviews and recommendations, while Sophie collected brochures and guidebooks from the local travel agency. They gathered around the dining table, spreading out their findings. Each option was discussed with enthusiasm, considering the potential for fun and relaxation for both humans and Charlie.

### THE MOUNTAIN LODGE

The first option was a mountain lodge with trails for hiking and biking, known for its breathtaking views and pet-friendly policies. Alex showed pictures of sprawling landscapes and cozy cabins where dogs were not just allowed but welcomed with beds and treats. However, Sophie noted the distance—it was a long drive, which might be uncomfortable for Charlie.

### THE COASTAL CAMPGROUND

Next, they considered a coastal campground offering cottages and plenty of beach space. Sophie was excited about the prospect of watching Charlie play in the waves and dig in the sand. They read testimonials from other dog owners who praised the campground's on-site dog wash stations and leash-free zones. Alex, however, was concerned about the lack of nearby medical facilities, as the area was somewhat remote.

### THE LAKESIDE RETREAT

When they came across the lakeside retreat, everything seemed to click. It was a well-rounded option with a variety of outdoor activities, including swimming, boating, and hiking. The retreat featured pet-friendly accommodations with special amenities for dogs, such as a fenced play area and a pet concierge who could arrange for doggy day trips. Both siblings were impressed with the glowing reviews from

families who appreciated the balance of pet accommodations and human luxuries.

### PREPARING THE PRESENTATION

Convinced they had found the perfect spot, Alex and Sophie prepared a presentation to show their parents. They created a slideshow detailing the amenities, activities, and the travel plan, emphasizing how Charlie would enjoy the trip as much as they would. They even included a budget breakdown to show their parents they had thought of everything.

### THE FAMILY MEETING

That evening, with the living room transformed into their presentation space, Alex and Sophie excitedly unveiled their plan. They walked their parents through each slide, showcasing the beautiful lakeside retreat and explaining their thoughtful consideration for Charlie's needs.

Their parents listened intently, clearly impressed by the thoroughness and thought the siblings had put into the planning. They smiled at each other, nodding in agreement when the presentation concluded.

### THE FINAL APPROVAL

Their mother was the first to speak, praising their effort and consideration: "You two have really outdone yourselves. It looks like a wonderful place for all of us, Charlie included."

Their father added, "It's great to see you taking the initiative and thinking about the whole family. Let's book the lakeside retreat for our summer vacation!"

With their parents' approval secured, Alex and Sophie exchanged high-fives, thrilled that their research and hard work had paid off. They looked forward to creating lasting memories with their family and Charlie, knowing they had chosen the perfect destination where everyone could relax and enjoy. 🐾



# BITCH, PLEASE My Best Friend Was A Cat. Don't Have A Cow.

INSTALLMENT IV



**A**morous greetings, doggo-loving reader. Like most people, my human cringes at the mere thought of the word lover. I am a lover of much in life, even the fatso that is my manservant. Food, treats, toys, and walks rank right up there in my list of loves. Almost all people who encounter me fall in love with my adorable, if mischievous, self, as well. That admission should come as no shocker! Interestingly, most dogs, and all animals for that matter, do not fully embrace the wonderfulness that is moi! Go figure. It must be my energy level. I have to admit that I can be a bit much. My spare human says that I have two modes—on and off. When this bitch is on, she is on full throttle. Yes, I can see how that might overwhelm those not accustomed to me. My reputation must precede me for I have no close animal friends. My dearest friend was a cat named Holstein.

It might seem strange that a dog and a cat could be friends. Holstein and I were just that. She was the only cat I have ever tolerated, more the less loved. Whenever I think of that saucy feline, I become sentimental. Our friendship lasted roughly two years. I remember vividly the day that our paths first crossed. It was my first visit to my current home.

Picture it—a hot and sunny Mobile summer's day. On that beautiful day in late June of 2022, my human closed on our cozy bungalow. After the closing, the first thing the tubs did was to go by the old house, pick me up, and take me to see our new abode. I love a car ride. As our vehicle was packed for a weekend up the country, I was pumped. My happy dance for the ride was not even over when we pulled up at this new house. I was confused. When the human opened the hatch of our crossover, I hopped out of that jalopy.



The Bungalow, at least what is our bungalow, did not immediately factor into my assessment of our surroundings. The sound and sight of two dogs in the bungalow opposite consumed my attention. I darted across the street. My human cussed me to a T. He was right in doing so. Do not tell him that, though. Doggos should not run across streets. I did so in this case. Not only did I run across the street but also across the new neighbor's yard and onto their front porch. I smooched the window separating me from my new canine neighbors. They became incensed. They have never forgiven my bad manners. Wanting to let them know how at home I was, I stole their bed from their porch. The aforementioned act might have been bad form. Well, if you frost a cake, a little icing does not hurt . . .

Other than my horribly embarrassed and angry human, a sight that never ceases to amuse me, there was only one other witness to this performance—a wiry black-and-white cat. I only saw her after my human had scooped me up in his arms. I am not a big fan about being picked up and carried. The scoop distracted me from my new friend. She saw me and I saw her, though. It was love and adoration, at least for me, at first sight. I knew I had to meet this creature.

Upon capturing me, my human deposited me on the porch of our bungalow. I was ticked. The dogs across the street at that other bungalow were still barking away. Guess what, they still are! I wanted to go back across the street, get that bed that I had to abandon, and introduce my bad self to that black-and-white cat. My human tried to maneuver me into what I was told was our new home. I was having none of that sh\*\*. I refused to trot over the threshold. After repeated attempts to usher me inside, all of which resulted in my turning my head to the fatso, I was scooped up once again and placed in said casa nueva.

I started to cry. Being told how great the house was only intensified my crying. My human scooped me up again. A grimace on account of being carried stopped my whining.

**“It was love and adoration, at least for me, at first sight. I knew I had to meet this creature.”**

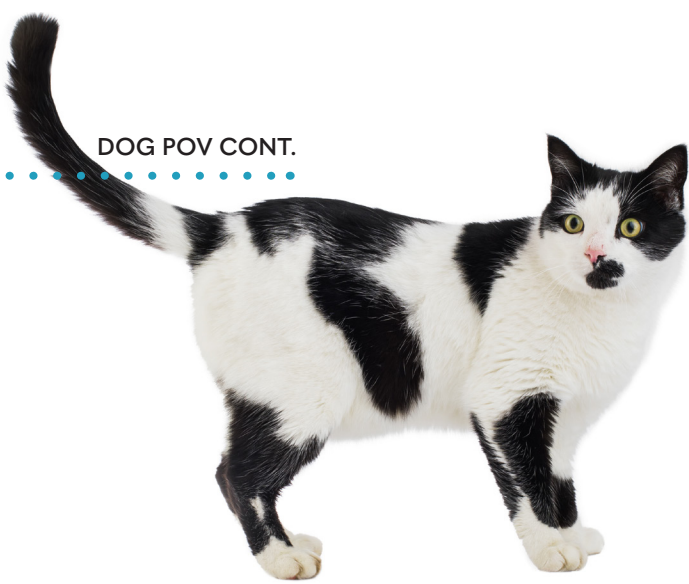
The human had the nerve to tell me that my sorry ass was going to love the place whether I liked it or not on account of the purchase price. Does not he know it is simply common to speak of money, especially to a lady?

That brute lugged me unceremoniously back to the car. As we were driving off, he continued to chastise me. I paid that jacka\*\* no mind whatsoever, as usual. My attentions were focused and my energies were returned by sight of that entrancing black-and-white cat.

By the time of our move, I was familiar with the new place. In fact, I transferred my address before my human did. Not only was the new house bigger but the digs were also nicer! It took the arrival of only a few familiar things to acclimate me to the Bungalow.

Several nights after our move, while on my late afternoon walk, I saw that black-and-white cat again. Pulling my human with my lead harder than I ever had before, I charged after her. My human almost dropped his cocktail. He cussed at me, yelling, “Leave that Holstein bitch of a cat alone.” She was black and white, like that breed of cattle. The kitty now had a name! The newly titled Holstein approached us, stopping just short of me. The now drink-covered-human pulled me back. He had to continue to do so, as Holstein kept approaching. My human started yelling at both us. Holstein sat, raised her front paws, and started to hiss at us. It was glorious!! She loved me back . . .

I kept my eye for Holstein all of the time. Our paths began to cross more and more frequently. She even began to sun in my yard. I would go bonkers whenever she graced us with her presence. When I say bonkers, I mean bat-sh\*\* nuts upon her invasion, however welcomed, into my kingdom. My human always



had that lead on me when we were outside, which prevented any meaningful encounter.

One day, I darted out the partially opened door. The human hit the ground, and I went sailing toward Holstein while laughing at the fallen fatso! Momentarily caught unawares, or maybe simply in temporary shock, Holstein looked horrified. Her fear turned on a dime to complete and utmost indignity. Before my barking bolt of a self could reach her, Holstein rebounded. She lunged right back at me and circled my confused self. I was like, What the f\*\*\*?! I was like, I am the dog.

Holstein, having established dominance from the get-go, reminded me of my place. That bitch penned me down and slapped me. My human chased her off. She hissed at us, again, I add. After checking me for scratch marks, my human started laughing. The entitled and so-not-mighty huntress had been put in her place—and by a cat, he thought. I 'hissed' at my human. My eyes turned to Holstein, sauntering her a\*\* away in the next yard. She had earned my respect.

Having understood the importance of boundaries and personal space for the first and for the only creature in my life, Holstein began to tolerate me. We would often sun ourselves in the front yard after my afternoon walks. The human would look down on us with a smile. I would return the smile. Holstein would hiss at both of us. Sometimes, I would forget my manners and charge Holstein. My friend would remind me of my place by slapping my snout, both sides of it, mind you. I would back off.

One time, I did not take the lesson to heart. Seeing her napping in our yard, I darted up to her. Bitch hopped on my back and rode me like some circus cowboy. I panicked. Running at the speed of light, I took off and jumped the hedge. Holstein and I both went flying. I ran across the block while she scratched off in the neighbor's yard as if she were a bull! My human made the mistake of laughing. Returning to the yard, dog joined cat in 'hissing' at the human!!

On one particular occasion, Holstein and I really got the human's goat. It was an exquisitely beautiful fall afternoon. My human left the front door open one afternoon so as to allow the crisp air to permeate the Bungalow. He positioned himself on the sofa in the living room with a book in his lap. He tuned me out. I busied myself by running around the room, on the porch, and into the yard. My human was consumed with whatever he was reading. When he realized I was not making my presence known, which is rare and scary, tubs called my name and made a beeline around that sofa. Turning toward me, the manservant stopped dead in his tracks. I had invited Holstein inside! We were sitting contentedly on the rug, minding our own business. My human started barking up a storm. We were both booted out of the house! I was disgusted by his complete loss of manners. What horrible form. Holstein and I hissed at the inconsiderate beast.

My dear friend would often disappear for a day or so. On occasion, she might withdraw herself for a week. As was always the case, I was always on the lookout for her. One early morning, I saw Holstein walking down our street. She was heading right toward me. I was so excited that I started jumping up on all fours. Knowing full well by now that I should not charge her, I kept on dancing like Snoopy on crack. Holstein walked right up to me. She sat down right in the middle of the street and positioned herself on her hind legs. I did not know what that ultimate of alpha cats was doing. Was I about to be slapped by

her paws? I stopped dancing and cocked my head. She gave me a smooch before darting off in a yard. I was on cloud nine!

In late spring of this past year, Holstein left and never returned. I keep looking for her. A few weeks ago, I thought that I saw her. A black-and-white kitty was walking down our street on a chilly morning. I started pogoing. Even my human cracked a smile. As the black-and-white cat got closer to us, we realized it was not my friend. I truly loved Holstein. When there is love, someone ultimately experiences loss. The aforementioned allowed, the losses love can deal are the beauty and tragedy of any winning hand.

The opposite of love is hate. While I do not hate, I have a few nemeses. The main target of my wrath is the back windshield wiper of my human's vehicle. In my next installment, you will be regaled by my battles with the wiper! 🐾

Maesel the Boykin



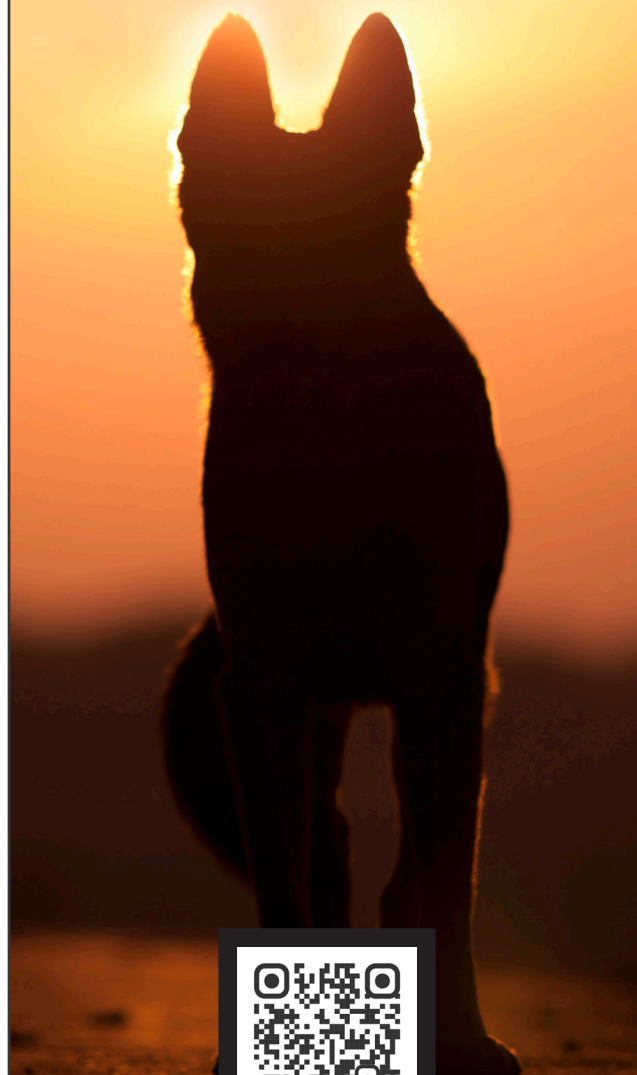
## MEET CART BLACKWELL

Cartledge Weeden Blackwell III, "Cart," is a historian and a curator. Blackwell was born in Selma, Alabama. He obtained an undergraduate degree from the College of Charleston and his graduate degree from the University of Virginia. He authored *Of People and Of Place: Portraiture in Alabama (1870-1945): Reconstruction to Modernism* for the Alabama Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America (NSCDA). His second book, *Of Color and Light: The Life and Art of Artist-Designer Clara Weaver Parrish*, is to be published by the University of Alabama Press in the winter of 2025.

Blackwell has penned scores of articles for magazines and numerous essays for exhibit catalogues. An eighth-generation Alabamian, Cart loves his native state. When not found on his family's farm in Wilcox County, he is on the Gulf Coast. Regardless of where he finds himself, Mae, his crafty spaniel, is always by his side!

# Honoring Your Beloved Companion's Memory

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# Tail- Wagging Treats

## Homemade Recipes For Happy Pup



**M**ake your furry friend's day extra special with these homemade dog treats. Each recipe is simple, healthy, and sure to get tails wagging! These widely shared, dog-friendly recipes are easy to prepare and use safe, wholesome ingredients.

### 1. APPLE & PEANUT BUTTER "PUPSICLES"

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 apple, cored and diced (seeds removed)
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt (unsweetened and unflavored)
- 1/4 cup natural peanut butter (xylitol-free)

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Blend the apple pieces, Greek yogurt, and peanut butter in a blender or food processor until smooth.
2. Pour the mixture into silicone molds (bone or paw shapes work great!) or ice cube trays.
3. Freeze for at least 4 hours or until solid.
4. Pop out the "pupsicles" and serve as a refreshing treat!

Storage: Keep in the freezer and serve as needed.





## 2. BLUEBERRY OAT MUFFINS

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup mashed banana
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/2 cup blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- 1 cup oat flour
- 1 egg

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a mini muffin tin with paper liners.
2. In a bowl, combine the mashed banana, applesauce, and egg. Stir in the oat flour until smooth.
3. Fold in the blueberries gently.
4. Spoon the batter into the muffin tin, filling each about 3/4 full.
5. Bake for 15–20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
6. Let the muffins cool completely before serving.

**Storage:** Store in the fridge for up to a week or freeze for longer storage.

## 3. CHEESY CARROT BITES

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup grated carrot
- 1/2 cup shredded low-fat cheddar cheese
- 1 cup oat flour (or whole wheat flour)
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. In a bowl, mix the grated carrot, cheddar cheese, flour, egg, and applesauce until combined.
3. Form small, bite-sized balls or flatten into disc shapes.
4. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake for 20–25 minutes, until golden brown.
5. Cool completely before serving to your dog.

**Storage:** Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 7 days.



### TIPS FOR PET PARENTS

- **Ingredient Safety:** Always avoid ingredients like chocolate, raisins, or artificial sweeteners (e.g., xylitol) that are toxic to dogs.
- **Portion Sizes:** Adjust treat sizes based on your dog's breed and dietary needs.
- **Silicone Mold:** These are a fun way to add creative shapes to treats, especially for frozen or baked recipes. 🐾



# Say TREATS!

**Hey Paw-Tographers!**



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