People, Their Pets and Pet Peeves

March 1, 1999

Sean Strub, *POZ* founder
Pets: “I’m very close to Willy because he was my constant companion when I was ill. He was at my side 24/7. He’s affectionate, smart and has a wicked sense of humor. Olive is a bit of a lost soul. She arrived from France last summer. She’s more aloof, definitely more French and, while appreciative of affection, she’s not dependent.”
Pet peeve: “People who think they know all the treatment answers and activists who never change their minds.”

River Huston, poet and *POZ* columnist
Pet: “Buddy means everything to me. I no longer have to kill myself, and I can eat as much chocolate as I want.”
Pet peeve: “Having intravenous needles stuck in me every week and not being able to taste semen.”

Brian Heater, Indiana farmer
Pet: “Linwood’s my 1,525-pound baby. When he’s out in the pasture lying down, I go out, lie on top of him and look up at the stars. I’m getting 18 head of cattle this spring, but Linwood will always be special. I won’t spoil them like I do him.”
Pet peeve: “When I’d see someone I liked, and someone else would tell me to stay away from that person because they have HIV. I’d hate it if someone said that about me.”

Greg Lugliani, GMHC director of communications
Pet: “Rose is my life. She was an alley cat I got when I moved to New York 14 years ago. Rose reminds me of many people who are no longer around—and also of Joe, her companion cat, who’s gone. Rose is my roaring 20s and my subdued 30s.”
Pet peeve: “Drug compliance. If you’re a working person, and you try to eat, take pills and a nasty liquid within a two-hour period while rushing to meetings, it’s a catch-22.”

Susan Rodriguez, coordinator of New York’s SMART (Sisterhood Mobilized for AIDS Resources and Treatment) and *POZ* December ’97 covergirl
Pets: “Iago is my older daughter’s bird. My husband always wanted to get one for our younger daughter, too, but he died the day before her fifth birthday, so I got her Jasmine to fulfill his wish. Now my son wants a bird, and he has been hoping because Jasmine’s laying eggs—but the birds don’t get along, so the eggs haven’t been fertilized. As my daughter so eloquently put it, ‘Iago has not kissed the eggs.’”

Pet peeve: “New York City School Chancellor Rudy Crew’s ban on condom demonstration in city schools and lack of enforcement of mandatory HIV lessons in classes.”

Stephen Gendin, Community Prescription Service president and POZ columnist
Pet: “Zoom is my constant companion. I spend more time with him than any other living being. He comes to work and travels with me. I’m an expert at being sneaky, so Zoom goes everywhere I go.”
Pet peeve: “People who think the current therapies are wonder drugs.”

Jennifer Jako, Portland filmmaker
Pet: “Sal was the neighborhood stray cat. At first he was wild and wouldn’t stay still, but now he’s a total lap slut. He’s an example of how a being can change when given love. He has a penchant for lying down on top of whatever I’m working on and demanding love. Sal makes me take time out from what I’m doing to pet kitty.”
Pet peeve: “The media-encouraged idea that there’s a morning-after pill for HIV. The hype has made our jobs as activists a lot harder by tainting the young minds of America.”

PET SMART

Our pet peeve at *POZ*? Being mistaken for PAWS, one of many nonprofits that understand the special bond between PWAs and their pets, and strive to keep clients and their comfort creatures together by caring for, grooming, nurturing and feeding our furry—and not so furry—friends. For more info on similar groups across the country, paw your way onto the PAWS/SF website at www.pawssf.org/chapters.html or over to the P.A.L.S. site
(listed below).

PAWS/LA (Pets Are Wonderful Support)
7327 Santa Monica Blvd.
West Hollywood, CA
90046-6615
213.876.PAWS
www.lexiweb.com/lexiweb/paws/

P.A.L.S. (Pets Are Loving Support)
P.O. Box 1539
Guerneville, CA 95446
707.887.2729
www.sonic.net/~pals/

PETS–Washington, DC
2001 “O” St. NW
Washington, DC 20036-5955
202.234.PETS

www.petsdc.org

WAGS (Wonderful Animals Giving Support)
420 Livernois St.
Ferndale, MI 48220
888.ACONDOM
www.wwnet.net/~mapp

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