

LIMEY PASTOR Dogs and cats in a pastoral home: A moment

Our foster dog, Shorty, has established his dominance. The smallest of the animals in our menagerie, a poodle, he has shown himself to be the king of the animals in spirit and spunk.

Shorty belongs to a homeless friend who asked us to look after him for her, while she reformulated a few things in her life. He has a small body, a puffball for a tail, a top-knot and a dapper face with pink smiling lips. A circus dog in fact, with his panache and ability to project his bark — and a courageous heart inhabits all of him.

He has been the object of our neighbor dog's attention since he arrived. Oso, the Labrador next door, has seen Shorty as the ideal playmate, the Dog Robin for the Dog Batman, so to speak. Shorty is pretty adorable.

Oso, being a solo dog in his garden next door, has longed for the community of canines in our garden, Mushi the Pekingese and Samuel the Dachshund for whom, if he was in their company, along with Shorty, would give him a respectable posse.

Oso, a tall, sleek boy dog, with a good temperament and rippling musculature, has a scale that can surely intimidate other large animals, except for the one animal who has a much enlarged sense of self, the poodle — Shorty. A different story.

Shorty has become Oso's nemesis. Oso had been planning a break-in to our yard for some while and had seen a plank of wood in our common fence with a looseness that could be pried apart. I looked out of the corner of my eye one evening and saw that Oso had pushed out the slat onto the grass and was snaking his massive body from his yard into ours. Like a whale giving birth, the fence calved out some more slats and the big black Labrador tumbled on the veldt of our lawn. The Pekingese and the Dachshund, having a better eye for geometry and their odds, came belting back in through our kitchen door, and the two cats — Darko, the elephantine black cat and Gracy, our elderly wisp of a gray cat — streaked in on a second wave to enter the appropriately sized cat door in the kitchen.

Shorty, however, being unfazed by intelligent calculation, rippled with invaded anger and roared. Not a poodle's whimper, but a growling roar emanating from some atavistic cave in his belly. He fired himself from the pistol of his entire being, a canine "Wyatt Earp" in full lawman vengeance.

The poor, over-friendly Labrador examined his resources and found them to be wildly wanting. Panicking and squealing like a pup, the poor doggie hurred himself back in full retreat, back through the fence. But the fence did not flex in so convenient a way and poor Oso landed in the cleft of the fence, front paws wagging in space, with his hindquarters exposed to the savage poodle.

I was able to lunge forward and cup the poodle's quivering body, flush with rage, and lift him away from Oso's rear end, and took him back to the kitchen door vibrating with fury where I inserted him back into his holster and closed the dog door.

Oso hung in mid-air, and I helped him inch forward through the fence to get his paws back on his own safe grass and return to the shelter of his own house.

A lesson learned for that Labrador no doubt. But I do need to teach Shorty how to love his neighbor as our Lord has taught us, without biting his neighbor on the grass.
Amen.

Colin Brown is the former pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Boardman.



COLIN BROWN
Faith

Staunch conservative allies defend Moore

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — With Roy Moore's Republican U.S. Senate candidacy threatened by sexual misconduct claims, one of his closest aides recently stepped up to a microphone outside the state Capitol and jabbed at the air. Declaring that God has picked Alabama voters to decide the nation's future, he urged them not to be "tricked."

"All hell is coming to Alabama against Judge Roy Moore," said campaign strategist Dean Young, spreading his arms wide for effect.

Moore always has attracted fervent believers willing to cross state lines to support of his mix of far-right politics and conservative Christianity. But Moore also is surrounded by a circle of closer allies who have stood with him for years during culture wars that made him a darling to religious conservatives nationwide.

Decades-old accusations involving young women are now threatening Moore's political life in a race against Democrat Doug Jones, and his team is all in. They have different roles, like players on a football field. Here's a look at some of Moore's inner circle:

Dean Young

Young, a bombastic fighter with closely cropped hair, a goatee and glasses, is often seen near Moore in TV shots.

He's been at Moore's side since the 1990s, when Moore was a local judge fighting the American Civil Liberties Union after hanging a handmade wooden plaque of the Ten Commandments in a courtroom. As head of the Christian Family Association,



In this Tuesday, Nov. 21 photo, Ben DuPre, right, and Dean Young, left speaks at a news conference in Montgomery, Ala.

which he founded, Young became a spokesman for an embattled Moore when then-Gov. Fob James vowed to call out the Alabama National Guard to protect the plaque.

That fight made Moore a hero to the Christian right, propelling him — and Young — to bigger stages. Moore was elected chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court as Young continued supporting Moore, sometimes from a distance.

Young, 53, also got into politics eventually.

He unsuccessfully ran for lieutenant governor and a congressional seat in south Alabama, most recently last year. In a letter released by Young's congressional campaign in 2013, Moore wrote: "May God grant you favor and bless you as you seek to serve Him and the people of Alabama."

Phillip Jauregui

An attorney, Jauregui also has been a campaign surrogate to fend off questions about

Moore and teenage girls. Standing beside campaign chairman Bill Armistead, the 47-year-old Jauregui tried to discredit an accuser's story and praised Moore.

"I've probably been with him in probably over 100 meetings and been around probably in excess of 10,000 ladies in Judge Moore's presence. And not once, not one time, have I ever seen him act even remotely inappropriately against any woman," said Jauregui, 47.

Like Young, Jauregui's affiliation goes back to the '90s, when Jauregui worked as a deputy legal adviser for then-Gov. James. Jauregui later represented Moore as a private attorney and chaired his 2000 campaign for chief justice. Moore campaigned for Jauregui when Jauregui ran for Congress unsuccessfully in 2004.

Currently on leave from his suburban Birmingham law firm, Jauregui is president of Judicial Action Group, which advocates for a conservative

federal judiciary.

Ben DuPre

DuPre, Moore's former chief of staff at the Supreme Court, spoke along with Young outside the Capitol in Moore's defense. He's a staff attorney for Alabama Supreme Court Associate Justice Tom Parker, a one-time Moore aide who won statewide office on Moore's coattails.

In a move that could land him on late-night TV, DuPre positioned himself between Moore and a comic plant from Jimmy Kimmel's television show during a church service where Moore spoke Wednesday night in south Alabama.

Video showed DuPre attempting to remove the comic, Tony Barbieri from the front of the church before a pastor threatened to have any other disruptors arrested. DuPre's LinkedIn profile says he worked nearly a decade at the nonprofit Foundation for Moral Law, which Moore founded.

Rich Hobson

As chief justice, Moore tapped Hobson to lead the administrative agency that oversees Alabama's court system in 2000.

Moore was removed from office in 2003 for ignoring a federal court order to remove his Ten Commandments monument from the state's judicial building, and Hobson was fired by the other justices days later. He later went to work as executive director of the Foundation for Moral Law.

When about 20 religious leaders spoke on Moore's behalf at a recent event, one from rural Alabama mentioned being invited to the event by "Rich," a reference to Hobson.

BRIEFLY

Tours present biblical story of Christmas

HERMISTON — A bustling outdoor village offers the sights, sounds and smells of biblical times.

The story of Jesus' birth and beyond is portrayed during interactive tours presented during Journey to Bethlehem. The free 20-30 minute guided tours are Friday through Sunday from 5-8:30 p.m. behind the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church, 855 W. Highland Ave. While waiting for their tour to start, people are invited to wait in the warmth of the sanctuary and listen to music. Afterwards, people can enjoy cookies and refreshments.

In its 10th year, Journey to Bethlehem provides insight into the story of Jesus and the biblical significance of Christmas. It features more than 100 costumed characters and live animals help provide an authentic experience.

For more information, call 541-567-8241 or 541-289-3022.

Hymnspiration sings seasonal favorites

HERMISTON — The public is invited to sing fun and familiar Christmas carols during an old-fashioned special singing service.

The Hymnspiration is Sunday from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Victory Baptist Church, 193 E Main St., Hermiston. The gathering features food, fun and fellowship.

For more information, contact Chris Finley at johnchris_1@msn.com or 541-571-2516.



Larry and Darla Hanson put finishing touches on Herod's throne room prior to the 2015 Journey to Bethlehem. This year's interactive guided tours are Dec. 1-3 at the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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