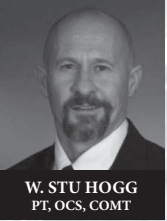


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Pet Tips 'n' Tales
by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

"Tea for Two!"

Question:
What is as inseparable as "Pepper" and salt?

Answer:
Two-year-old, Black German Shepherd, Pepper and her partner, Dene.

"I have 130 contracts to distribute city phone books across Canada," said Dene. "While working 2000 miles from home, I 'found' Pepper. Her breeder arrived at the warehouse where my staff and I store thousands of books."

Apparently, three of Pepper's litter were to become police dogs, but after a budget cut the department only paw-chased two. So the breeder was carrying the 'left over' four-month-old female puppy to ask his friend, the warehouse owner, to help him find her a good home.

It was as if Dene had read the 'script', entered 'stage right', and bought Pepper on the spot. Absolutely on the 'lines' of a miracle because a week earlier he had decided on a German Shepherd for a walking companion, and discovered it was not easy to find one. Then, here he was handed one! The universe's laws of attraction united them.

Dene delivered books for the next month, up and down streets, with that healthy, leashed puppy enthusiastically walking beside him. Imagine Pepper's joy of having a pet parent who walks you all day!

And some months there is, "LOTS of snow!" added Dene. "Pepper loves snow! We work when it is three feet deep! This job definitely keeps us healthy."

On the delivery routes, Pepper insists on walking the 14-hour days from house to house. She won't leave my side, and I dare not leave her in the truck! If I do, even for a few homes,

she is devastated and cries and wails."

And what does all this physical exercise amount to?

"Pepper leaps fences, as if she has springs for bones and trampoline feet," said Dene.

Now that Dene is 40 years old, he invented a way to cut down on book delivery times.

"By using a three-wheeled tri-scooter," said Dene, "I've cut time by 60 percent."

Then he thought, "What if Pepper could pull the scooter!?"

"She loves the scooter," laughs Dene, "But, the problem is that she won't stop at each house. She wants to go-go-go. So on our days off, I hook her up to the scooter. On our first time out, I was confident that I would not kill myself, but I had no idea of her zest for running. Now, when she sees the harness she freaks out, barking and jumping, like an entire team of sled dogs! She loves 'scooting' and can't wait to start. The first two minutes of our ride is always a white knuckle ride!"

She pulls me, at a full clip, 6 1/2 miles around Vancouver's Stanley Park, while I enjoy the ocean and forest views. It is awesome! Here I am ripping around with my two-year-old dog, like a happy eight-year-old!

Our lives together are filled with joy and love. The breeder must have sensed that we would be a perfect match."

Dene is also a movie industry film technician, who sets up the set's lighting. Even though they live on an acre property, "Pepper is happier when I take her to work," said Dene.

Pepper loves truck rides and paw-furs to be cooped up in its cab, rather than being at home, so she and Dene can play during breaks.

One January his film crew was sent to northern Canada.

"It was freezing," explained Dene, "and even with the heat blasting in our RV, which is



Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Pepper and Dene share a "cup of friendship" at an outside café. Pepper is Dene's companion and partner, even when Dene is setting up the technical lighting for movie sets.

about the size of a dog house, there was no way to keep warm. Pepper sleeps at my feet, so it was nice having a 'dog heater' on my bed. She is worth her weight in gold in so many ways."

During the week 'fur' their relaxation, they stop at coffee shops. When they are half a mile from their favorite one, Pepper starts spinning in the vehicle's seat whining and squealing. By the time Dene parks, he is worried that she will explode!

"I try holding her back," explains Dene, "but she runs and dives into one of the cafe's outside chairs. I once showed her how to jump up onto a chair and she was hooked. She sits with me, just like any good friend, while I sip my tea and she enjoys her treats."

Pepper is such a goofball that she would have never made a serious police dog. On the movie sets, I have to keep Pepper 'under wraps'. The only 'shooting' she sees is with cameras. The producers and actors bring their pets on set, but I have a few rungs of the ladder to climb yet before she can join the crew. Until then, she is my *star*."

TIPS

"Pepper is on a raw food diet," explained Dene. "She eats the warmed thawed frozen food because it gives her more energy, her coat is luxurious, her eyes glisten and she has a healthier powerful presence."

Reader's Comment
"I love your column! It has layers of value, warmth, and love. Thanks for all you do for animals and for teaching and uplifting us," Beckie.

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Blakely's new book honors legendary Drain semipro baseball team

Author Joe R. Blakely recently announced the publication of his 11th book, entitled "The Drain Black Sox of Oregon vs The Alpine Cowboys of Texas". (The Glory Days of Semi-Pro Baseball, 1930-1960). All of Blakely's books are about Oregon, and a listing of those books can be found at joelblakelyauthor.wordpress.com. The book tells the story of

how the small town of Drain, Oregon, sponsored a baseball team in 1958 that played in the world series of semi-pro baseball at Wichita, Kansas. In the championship game, Drain had to play against the millionaire sponsored team from Alpine, Texas. According to sports writers in Wichita, and everywhere else for that matter, Drain didn't stand a chance.

Drain was the tournament's dark horse. The final game produced one of the most rip-roaring games ever played in semi-pro baseball history. Blakely will be selling and signing his new book at the Florence Bookfest on Sept. 24, and they'll be available at the Bookmine in Cottage Grove.

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