



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"



MOVING UP HIGHER

with Joyce Meyer

"Itsy Bitsy" Employee!

Roger was so heartbroken when his best friend, his 18-year-old dog, died that he could not bare the thought of ever going through a loss like that again — so he firmly decided to never have another dog.

After 18 years without his constant canine companion, Roger went to work at Roger's Fine Antiques and Collectibles, located at 2625 E. Main Street.

One day a Seattle customer entered his store carrying the "cutest chihuahua puppy in the world" in her purse.

Roger fell madly in love — with the dog, that is! As Roger cooed over the dog, the woman explained that she knew the breeder and all the puppies were homed.

A few weeks later, the same woman arrived back in his shop surprising Roger. This time she was carrying another itsy bitsy puppy.

"I never forgot you," she said. "Your love for your dog and mine touched my heart. One of the puppy adopters returned her tiny puppy because she was afraid that it would be stepped on by her bigger dog."

"I about fell over," said Roger, "because, in her next breath she offered Itsy Bitsy to me — for FREE! Of course, I took the puppy because I was head over heels in love with her. I tell you, that woman rescued both Itsy and me! I was so deep in grief at the loss of my furry business partner that Itsy lifted my spirits and made me smile again. Itsy is the best dog. She is such a blessing, loves to welcome 'our' customers, and she has never given me a problem, only her love and devotion."

Roger is known amongst his friends for throwing Itsy wonderful birthday parties. "It is so fun!" said Roger, "I email friends and customers and they show up with their dogs and gifts for Itsy."

As a shop employee, Itsy earns \$20 for greeting customers and as the "guard dog" at the Estate Sales they do.

"When her piggy bank is full," confesses Roger, "we head to the pet store to add onto her extensive wardrobe. Because of her thin puppy fur, Itsy wears jackets and sweaters to keep her warm."

Her wardrobe also includes Halloween costumes, pajamas, dresses and Seahawks T-shirts. Once a month, she is pampered to a spa treatment where her nails are painted the

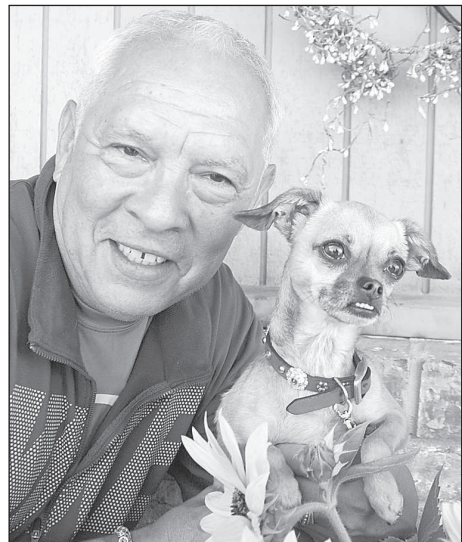


Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"
Roger and his "Itsy Bitsy" employee!

colors that match the Ducks and Seahawks, because she enjoys watching football games with Roger.

This year her Halloween costume had a little devil on it that said, "I am adorable, but watch out!"

Roger is careful that Itsy does not become a shop-a-holic. For a treat, he lets her 'paw' pick a biscuit out of their low bin for tiny dogs.

Itsy is so well known in our small town that when his friend was pup-sitting for a day, the friend was all but accused of dog-napping! When he walked into a store holding her, the staff recognized her and asked, "Where did you get that dog?"

Itsy is also apparently mystical or just a darn good shopper!

"When I was scrolling on the internet for a bike to take Itsy bike riding," said Roger, "I stood up to get coffee and left my I-pad on the bed. She walked onto the I-pad and it clicked onto a bike that said, 'Buy now!' So I did, after all Itsy picked it out, and we love the bike!"

After our bike tipped over at a yard sale, with her harnessed in the front basket, I was worried that she might, one day, hurt her head. So, I ordered a tiny-safety dog helmet. She is so cute in it, and it makes as much sense for her to wear one as I do for our brain safety!"

Itsy moonlights over at Cottage Grove Professional Grooming, which is located next to Roger's store. When they have a

new dog arrive that is anxious, they come and get Itsy to calm the dog, because she is not threatening and promptly shows them the ropes.

"After a busy work week," said Roger, "Itsy and I make Sundays 'our day'. We spend the time together walking, going for coffee, watching movies or shopping — for her.

As a single person, it is wonderful having her companionship. I often ask myself, 'What did I do to deserve a sweet little dog like her?'

She chooses to sleep under my covers, even though she has a bed and blankets (and toys) on the bed.

The only show we can't watch together is "The Dog Whisperer". Whenever she sees a dog, she runs to the TV barking at it. Maybe I better give Cesar Millan a call! I could use his help that he gives on his show to learn dog behavior tips. Itsy is not spoiled, she is loved, and there is a big difference. I feel loved, too."

TIPS

"Itsy is one of the treasures in my shop," said Roger. "When she was a baby, she wore a small cat collar with a bell so we could hear where she was and not step on her."

Fun Fact! This year's, Chicken Soup for the Soul: THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS, has two of Mary Ellen's stories! This is "Angel Scribes" fourth appearance, and sixth story, in the Chicken Soup series!

Tell us about your "helpful" pet! angelscribe@msn.com

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I Believe' is just the beginning

Faith in God is an amazing gift. It starts the moment your heart says: I believe Jesus is God's Son and that He came to rescue me. That alone is an incredible truth. But I wonder how many Christians decide that's where their faith ends, when the truth is, there's so much more to believe for in this life!

One of the reasons I think this happens is because many Christians feel they don't measure up to what they think they should be. They get stuck focusing on their weaknesses and mistakes, rather than focusing on who God is and what He's doing in and around them.

John 3:17 (AMPC) tells us, "God did not send the Son into the world in order to judge (to reject, to condemn, to pass sentence on) the world, but that the world might find salvation and be made safe and sound through Him."

Jesus is not only your Savior; He's your advocate. And He wants you to start believing God for much more than a trip to heaven.

Faith is the answer to every problem you face

The Bible says the just shall live by faith (Hebrews 10:38). In other words, faith is an attitude that can become your way of life—and there is no better way I can think of to live.

Faith replaces fear and worry with peace and joy. It purifies the heart, fills us with the Holy Spirit, brings blessing and hope, receives provision, produces all kinds of positive results and quenches all the fiery darts of the enemy.

The Bible says that faith is

a shield (Ephesians 6:16). So when the enemy starts to fire off darts of fear and insecurity, you can get behind your shield of faith and keep going forward with God.

But here's the thing: A shield won't do you any good unless it's lifted up. You need to raise up your shield by praying, saying and doing things that line up with God's Word.

Second Peter 1:5 (AMPC) says to "employ every effort in exercising your faith to develop virtue (excellence, resolution, Christian energy)."

If you will exercise your faith to become more like Christ Himself, the way you think will change. The things you say will change. You will begin to live with greater love and compassion. And it will become very natural for you to encourage others in their faith.

I encourage you to put your faith into action in a practical way. Make a habit of getting up in the morning and thanking God for what He's done in your life. Praise Him for what He's going to do. Release your faith for what you know you need from Him that day. And ask Him to prepare you for whatever challenges may come your way.

Please see JOYCE, Page 10A

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