



# Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

## All American dog adventures

**N**avi is a four year old, beautiful Belgian Shepherd/Golden Retriever mutt-mix named after the Navajo Reservation in Arizona where he was born. He has an amazing "tail", errr "tale" with a rough beginning before his transfer to a shelter in the Rocky Mountains.

"When my husband, Rob, and I met Navi," said Lucy, "it was love at first sight. We learned that reservation dogs have a tough life and Navi was no exception. He has a BB lodged in his back right hip and one of his ear drums is burst."

As a result of his experiences, Navi lashes out by nibbling on peoples' hands or feet when he is scared. So their vet recommended the Colorado Correctional Prison Inmate Program where inmates train rescue dogs, giving both dogs and inmates a second chance.

Lucy enrolled Navi, and four weeks later he was a well behaved dog! He understood what was expected and, after a short human training session, Lucy and Rob also knew how to communicate with him.

Going from a feral dog to a family dog was a stunner for Navi. The first month he joined them for a three day backpacking trip. At night, after all day hiking, he crashed out exhausted but happy. He faithfully stayed right beside his pet parents the entire time.

Not to say that the dog did not have a few left over quirks from his earlier life! "When we first got him, he was a hoarder," confesses Lucy. "He'd find and collect sticks, shoes, and balls from our neighbors' yards. When our neighbor couldn't find one of the boy's shoes, she came over and asked if Navi had it--he did! You should have seen how crestfallen his face was when we

gave 'his' shoe back to them. It was like he was losing a very valuable treasure."

The dog is also paw-ticular who he plays with at the dog park. When he finds a dog he likes, he dances, pounces and nudges them with his head, for them to chase him, and then he excitedly runs around like a chicken with its head cut off. When he doesn't have anyone to play with, he sits down and howls.

Lucy and Rob are outdoor enthusiasts, who after selling their home, became nomads traveling in a 23-foot camper, looking for their perfect sailboat. Their furry companion sleeps during the long drives, but when they pull off of a freeway, Navi insists on his window being rolled down to sniff his new surroundings. So far she has sniffed 17 states and Canada.

The family is soon off onto a new adventure. They recently bought a sailboat and life jackets for everyone, even their dog.

"We are currently outfitting the boat," said Lucy, "to make it more dog-friendly before we explore the Pacific Northwest coast. I often think how extraordinary Navi's life is starting in a desert, going to the high Rocky Mountains, where it is winter eight months of the year, a stint in prison and now to the ocean. If he could only talk!"

We can look forward to hearing more about life with Navi as Lucy has promised to keep us informed of their feather-furry tailed troubadour's trips aboard ship.

**Humor**

"My parents had Dachshunds," emailed Pat in Chehalis, Washington, "who were always making us laugh for one reason or another. One of their dogs loved vegetables and he'd go out into their garden, lay on his tummy, pull up carrots, and snarf 'em all down. He was a cute little guy who loved everybody. Especially when they were picking carrots!"

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