

Dr. Oakley says...You can't always get what you want-or can you?

Fall is here and with it the cooler nights. I enjoy coming inside earlier these days and it gives me much time for reflection.

I've seen much love, joy, heartbreak but also sorrow at the Lebanon Veterinary Hospital and it got me thinking about a few things. The joy and love that I've seen have been from closely bonded pets and their people. The sorrow is seen as the pet's better days are behind him. Heartbreak though, seems to come in all forms.

We recently assisted the town in an animal seizure. Someone who kept more pets than manageable, passed away and left a home and yard full of neglected critters. Cats, dogs, pigs..the list goes on. Dr. Z and his daughter, Gabby, spent an evening bathing 25+ filthy cats and kittens (and may I add that the felines were none too appreciative) to ready them for their foster homes the following morning.

How do we avoid this? Certainly the person's heart was in the right place to want to help all of those animals in need, but it was more than they could handle.

Take Dr. Z, for example. Now, I've known him a long time and I know that I was not his first thought when he was ready to open his heart and home to another dog. If you know Dr. Z, then you will know that he is somewhat partial to the German breed dogs (go figure, right?) He adores German Shepherds, Standard Poodles, and Weimars. He probably doesn't know that I know this, but I see his face light up when they come in. Sure, he loves all breeds of dogs and cats, but I can tell he has his favorites.

I also have overheard him say that it wouldn't be fair to have a Shepherd live at our house and expect them to tolerate all the people and animals coming and going at our place. They are family protective and territorial and it wouldn't be right to ask that of the breed. The poodles, he groups with the Weimar's and that they need more exercise than he can provide right now because he is always so busy with everyone else's pet.

So, you probably feel like I'm thinking I'm the black sheep, right? Wrong! I was the right choice all along.... he just didn't know it initially. Mrs. Z started scouring PetFinder and she screened pets for temperament, sociability, and low energy breeds. (I don't call myself low energy, I prefer to say calm and reserved). I'm a proud Bloodhound/Great Pyrenees mix and tend to be low energy. Running with Dr. Z once or twice a week is perfect for me and I'll sleep for days. In general, I really like visitors to the practice and the house...though I do tend to bark at intact males, but nobody's perfect.

That's the point, maybe I wasn't the dog that popped in Dr. Z's mind when he was thinking about the dog that was right for him, but an honest search of what would work in their family at the time led them to me. I was the gift he didn't know he wanted, until he got me and now neither of us would change it for the world.

Moral of the story is that what you think you want, may not be what you really need.... someday Dr. Z will have his Shepherd or Poodle but not in my lifetime. Someday when he and Mrs. Z are old and in need of a watchdog, it will suit them then but for now as it turns out-I'm exactly what they want and need.

Check out other breeds, sizes, energy levels-our greatness comes in all sorts of packages and you may find you too get what you need!

Peace out!

Dr. O