

Our Pets

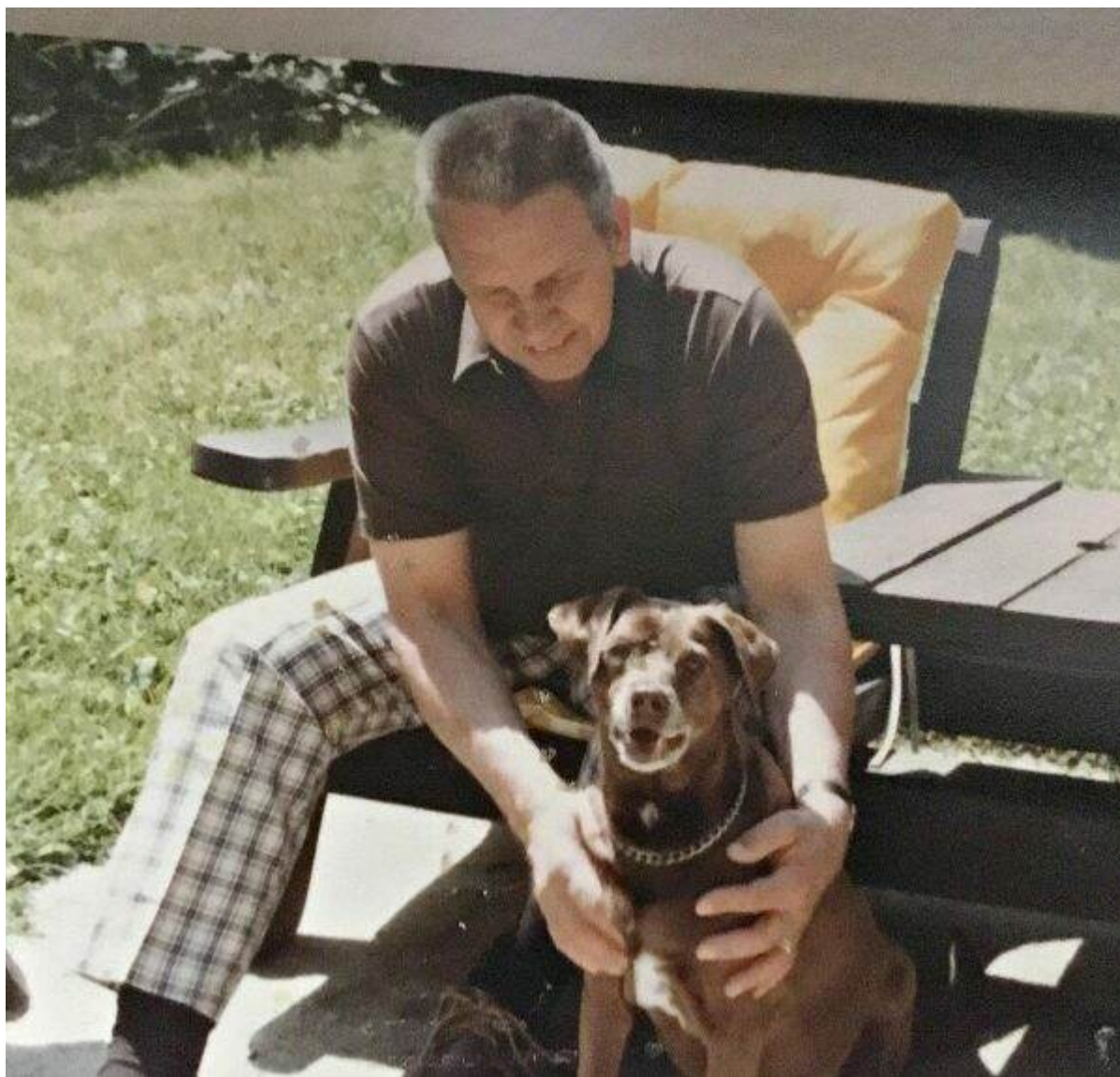
Until one has loved an animal a part of one's soul remains unawakened. Anatole France

I find it interesting that some people love animals and others not. Is that determined during childhood?

My very first dog was a beagle named Cocoa. When I was in 2nd grade, Cocoa went missing. While looking out the window of the yellow bus going to school, I saw a dead dog on the side of the road. It looked like Cocoa. Of course, I wanted to tell someone but we didn't have cell phones back then. I wasn't sure anyone from school would call my parents to share my suspicions.

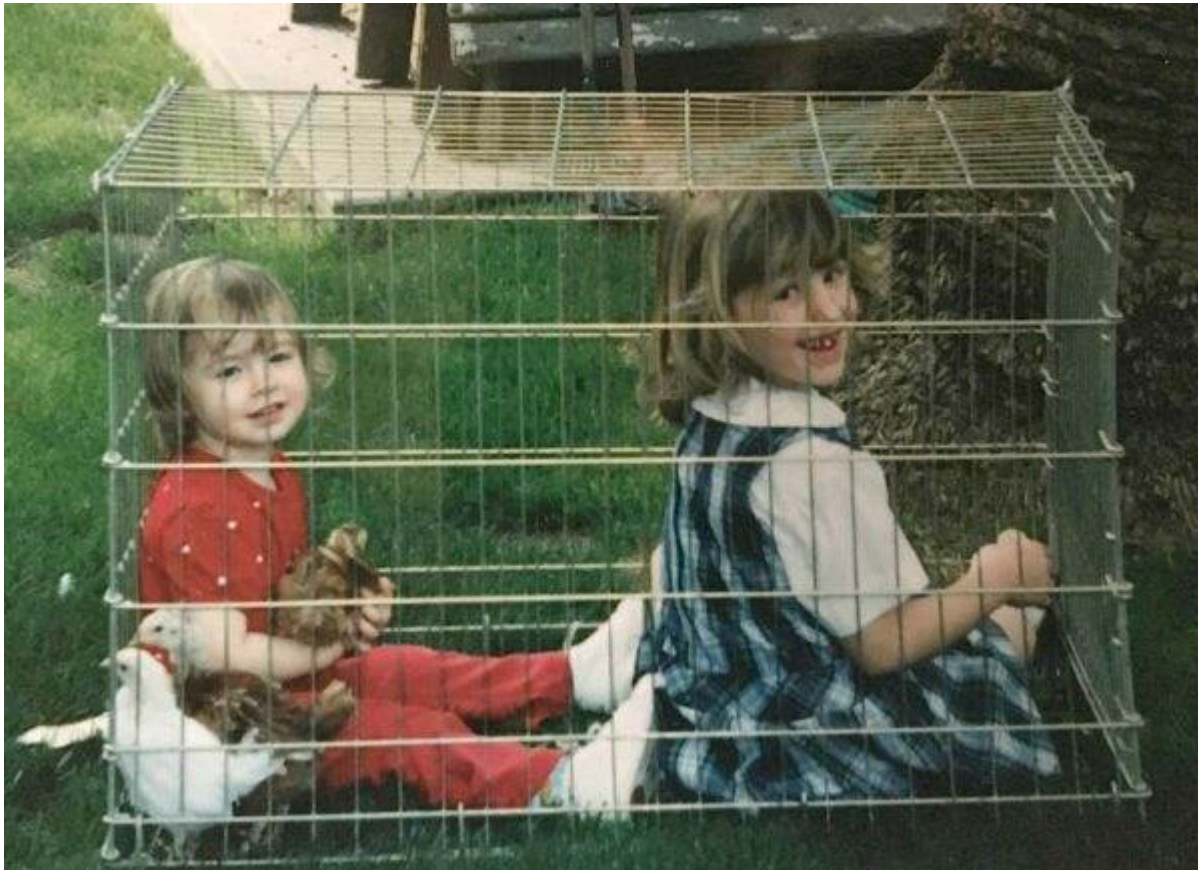
But it was Cocoa. We (my four siblings and I) had a proper funeral procession for him and he was buried in the backyard. We all cried and shared our favorite Cocoa stories. It was my first experience with death.

After Cocoa came Peanuts, a mutt. He shared my teenage years with me. Dad loved dogs; Mom not so much. Here is Dad and Peanuts. Peanuts was a GREAT dog.



Pets, especially dogs, are always happy to see you. Unlike people, they aren't judgmental or moody. They are unconditional in their love. They don't talk back. When I'm having a bad day, they just seem to know.

We introduced animals into our family when our children were young. Caring for something other than yourself is a good life lesson. I'm hoping no one at child protective services sees this next photo, but it was where the girls liked to play with the baby chicks.



Currently, we have dogs, cats and chickens. My mother did not like cats so I wasn't sure how I would feel about them. But my two daughters managed to catch both of our cats in the yard. Once wild, they now lead cushy lives. Meet Tippy and Donovan.



We have two dogs. Sox, is my youngest daughter's dog. She picked him out of a litter and their love for each other is boundless. We were told he was a pocket beagle, but he may have a little Basset hound in him.



As a pup...



And now...



Cooper, is the 2nd Anatolian shepherd we have owned. An Akbash

(the all white version of an Anatolian shepherd), he is a big boy, weighing in at 120 lbs. His head can graze the countertops in the kitchen. He has a hefty bark but is the sweetest dog.

He was irresistible when he was a puppy.



And today, he is the protector of our family.



Any chance he gets, he sits his back end down...in chairs, on ledges, the coffee table...doesn't matter.



We trained him to do this when he wants to come into the house.

http://bella-terra.moseke.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/IMG_7016.mp4

I can't imagine life without animals, but my husband is done

being a pet parent. Each animal, with their individual personalities, have provided us with warmth, love and funny memories. In my next life, I hope I come back as one of my pets.

Are you a lover of animals? If so, why? If not, why?

Mary