

Dawg Days

By Jim Turner

You know it's summer in Beacon's Reach when the pooch population exceeds that of the two-legged critters on the other end of the leash. Now before you hang up on me, let me proclaim loudly that I don't dislike dogs! I even kinda' like them. Like most born and bred southern boys, my older brother and I always had a four-legged tongue dripper to roust about with when we were kids. Our dogs were never "paper holders," though. They were just plain, old, rescued fleabags. In the mid to late '40s, which is when I first remember having our dog Tab, pre-owned animals were more likely to be gotten rid of than rescued.

My wife, Jean, and her siblings had pets too. When we were dating in the early '60s, her furry friend, Chippy, didn't much like me. The feeling was mutual. My grievance with Chippy was mostly his penchant for notifying Jean's household when I'd bring her home a little later than scheduled.

Years later when our daughter Jami, at about age six, wanted her first dog, we thought it seemed like the natural course of events. Her first mutt was a cute handful of energy. The three of us could not think of a suitable name for the little tramp, so we called him J.P., short for Just Puppy. Sadly, it soon became evident that J.P. had been born with a severe learning disability for which there was no known treatment. He would stare blankly at me, tongue dangling, dripping bodily fluids on the carpet while I screamed for him to stop biting the fireplace hearth.

After J. P. had chewed up everything except my neighbor's lawn mower, we invited him to move his residence to a farm somewhere in deepest Durham County. We promptly moved too, in case he tried to find his way back to his old home. I hope he didn't grow up to be a hated chicken chaser.

By the time Jami was in junior high school, her tastes in most things had become more expensive. She had reached a dreaded mature young lady plateau, which required her to own only pets that came with credentials. We located a Norwegian elkhound breeder somewhere in Chatham County, selected the shy petite one of the litter and arranged for a mortgage to pay the asking "adoption fee." Registering a canine is a little like selecting a name for your new corporation in that most of the names you find interesting are already assigned in the dog czar's registry. We settled on the unlikely name "Jami's Rikki of Inverness." Inverness was the street where we lived in northern Durham County, and you can figure out the rest of it. Anyhow, that's quite a mouthful to shout when calling anybody for dinner, so our new royalty became Rikki. I'll admit that I, too, quickly became an admirer. Rikki really was a wonderful new family member. She was incredibly devoted to Jami until that fateful day when her dream love came along, and she ditched us for a life beneath the neighbor's deck.

There she shacked up with Banks (a Heinz 57 named for the Duke University basketball star Eugene Banks). She'd wander home from time to time to check messages and pick up mail, but for the most part, it was your basic Lady & the Tramp love story.

When Rikki finally moved on to doggie heaven, we all said we were through with pets. Too much trouble! Too much loss of freedom! Too much sadness when they were no longer beneath the dinner table! Then...when some fraternity friends at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro proved unworthy of pet-rearing responsibilities, Jami rescued a devil dog chow-shepherd mix and moved him into her condo.

His full name was Richie Damnit! After graduation, we helped move Jami and Richie Damnit to Kingsport, Tennessee, where devil dog began a reign of terror that has become part of East Tennessee folklore. In his final act of sadism, RD pulled Jami down

a flight of stairs, tearing her ACL and leaving her unable to care for him or to make her 4:00 a.m. T.V. reporting schedule. So Devil Dog RD was relocated to Durham to live with his grandparents. How lucky can two people be?

Life goes on. I'm told that things always change. To me, it seems that the more they change the more they stay the same. Our little girl grew up, married and now has two lively, beautiful children of her own. She also has ANOTHER DOG! A miniature schnauzer named Bert, as in Bert & Ernie. My grandchildren's dog is now my great granddog. HELP!

Bert likes to come to Beacon's Reach to visit his grandparents. He loves to romp on the beach and bring me sand just in case I don't already have enough for all the floors. Bert likes to bark. Bert loves to bark. Bert loves to bark at *me*. He barks at me five minutes after he saw me the last time! His memory is worse than mine. But most of all, Bert likes to sniff. He loves to track the evidence of every other doggie friend who has ever visited Beacon's Reach. Walk, sniff, turn, sniff, turn, walk, turn, sniff, turn, sniff, turn, turn sniff. Finally comes the grand finale of three complete circles.

AHA! This is it! I found it! Grab that blue doggie waste bag, Poppy!

Country Club of the Crystal Coast

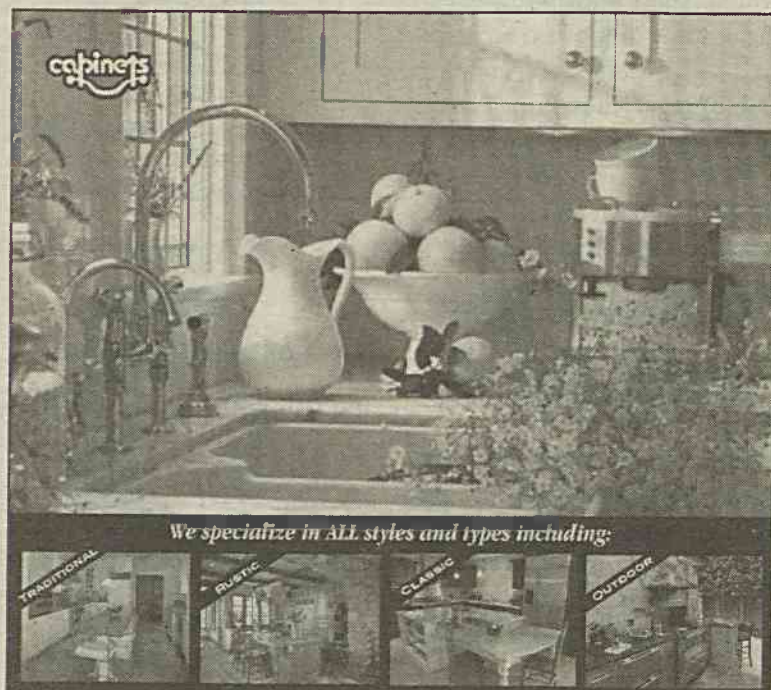
By Chip Chamberlin

The event of the year is coming up the first weekend of August right here in Pine Knoll Shores. The Tri-County Amateur Golf Championship will begin with a member party and live band on Friday August 5. The first round will be played on Saturday August 6, and the second round played on Sunday August 7. Tee times start at 10 a.m. on each day. Players must reside in Carteret, Craven or Onslow Counties to be eligible to play.

We are very pleased to be able to host this fine event and are looking forward to offering players a great time for 36 holes of play over our challenging course.

The Country Club of the Crystal Coast is also holding an open house on Friday August 19, at 7 p.m. Come take a look at our wonderful facility and stunning views. Let us share our hospitality and introduce you to some of our staff and board members. Reservations are not required.

The rest of our summer calendar, as well as the fall calendar, is packed with great activities available to members and to holders of the Pine Knoll Shores Recreation Card. Call town hall for information on the Recreation Program, or call the Country Club for details on activities at 726-1034.



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