



Old Dogs

Anyone who has ever loved an old dog will love *Old Dogs*. In this collection of profiles and photographs, Gene Weingarten and Michael S. Williamson document the unique appeal of man's best friend in his or her last, and best years.

This book is a tribute to every dog who has made it to that time of life when hearing and eyesight begin to go, when the step becomes uncertain, but when other, richer traits ripen and coalesce. It is when a dog attains a special sort of dignity and a charm all his own.

Best friends should be remembered forever...

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Nicole, 11, and Sophie, 11 (top left)

Littermates Nicole and Sophie are part mirror images of each other and part photo opposites. They were abandoned as puppies at the door of a building superintendent in Manhattan's fashionable Murray Hill neighbourhood. The super game them to Susanna.

Among the dog owners of Murray Hill, there is a presumption of pedigree. In the street people would ask Susanna what breed her dogs are. After a while she got tired of telling the truth, which seemed to disappoint: Nicole and Sophie are "totally indeterminate."

"So I invented a breed," Susanna says. "I started telling people they were Latvian elkhounds."

We hereby declare Nicole and Sophie the finest examples of the breed we've ever encountered.

Chester, 11 (above)

Chester is a Pembroke Welsh corgi. He wants to herd sheep and cattle. His ancestry demands it. His genes compel it. Municipal statutes, alas, discourage the husbandry of livestock within city limits.

And so every morning when he awakens, Chester husbands his flock downstairs, eight of them, one at a time. There is a the smiley man, Santa, big gingerbread man, little gingerbread man, purple teddy bear, Mr. Dachshund, the little bull, and mousie. Chester deposits them under the coffee table and then ignores them for the remainder of the day.

At night when Chester goes to bed, he herds his flock back upstairs, one at a time. There is a the smiley man, Santa, big gingerbread man, little gingerbread man, purple teddy bear, Mr. Dachshund, the little bull, and mousie.

Junior, 11 (bottom left)

Rabbit Hash, Kentucky, has a population of three. But if you include Greater Rabbit Hash, you're all the way up to about two hundred people. That's Junior's constituency. He's the mayor.

Some years ago, the citizens of Greater Rabbit Hash hatched up an unusual stunt to raise money for renovation of the local general store. "We did it like a good ol'-fashioned Kentucky election," says Jane. "You pay a dollar a vote, and whoever gets the most money gets to be mayor."

Some humans declared their candidacy, but—since there's no campaigning required and no official municipal duties to speak of—other candidates including a pig, a parakeet, a donkey, and more than one dog. Jane and her husband Randy raised \$5,000 from friends and family, and their Junior got the job. It's a lifetime sinecure.

Is Hizzoner qualified?

"He's the most honest politician in the state," says Randy, "because he can't talk."

Extracted from *Old Dogs are the Best Dogs* by Gene Weingarten & Michael S. Williamson, \$24.95, published by Simon & Schuster Australia



Chester, 11



Jake, 16



Vipper, 11



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