

PASTIMES

THE DAY I FELL IN LOVE

AROUND THE TOWN



SASSY SWEITZER

I was in the Middleburg Humane Society for about two weeks before I found myself dressed up as a deer. Yeah, that's right, a deer. On December 8th, 2012, I was paraded down route 50 in Middleburg, Va., during the Middleburg Christmas Parade. There were thousands of humans, red and

green decorations, and music. I was honestly not in the mood. I was just taken out of a very abusive situation and still had some bite marks on my body from some mean dogs. But, I had to do what they said, so I put on my reindeer ears, and off I went to the parade. Oh, by the way, my name was NOT Hazel. It was Sassy. I know, Sassy Sweitzer sounds like I worked

at Hooters. Anyways...

I was trying to keep up with the other 30 dogs who were sadly on display. Cheers and hoots and hollers from the crowd filled the air. In front of me was a High School Marching Band and behind me was a camel. Camels are strange. I tried to talk to him, but he wanted nothing to do with me. So, I

was about 15 minutes into this very long parade when a man's voice in a microphone said, "Are you looking for someone new to love? You may find them in this group from Middleburg Humane Society" He was talking about us.

I realized I was adoptable. I had no home and wasn't feeling very loved. "All of these

dogs are up for adoption," the strange man said. I glanced over and saw him standing tall on a porch with tons of people around him. He had more wild hair than me, totally out of control.

Then...
"I'll Take that one?"
"What?"

"That one there!" The man said to my handler. He pointed to me.

Me? He wants me????!!!!

My handler looked confused and asked, "Are you serious?"

The man on the microphone said, "YES!"

He met us after the parade, and along with a boy named Kyle, they took me home.

That strange man was Tom - he became my dad that day. It seemed he needed my kind of love.

The boy was Kyle, a boy Tom helped. Kyle became my brother.

That was eight years ago today. I also fell in love with my town and all the people that live here love me because I am cute and know it.

I was ready to give up and had no idea love would come to me during a parade. I never can thank Tom enough for being my home and all the people that care for me. I am blessed!

All of us need a home, and just when you think that no one can love you, that might be the moment when you are most lovable.!

PEACE ON EARTH

SINCERELY ME



BRANDY GREENWELL

Happy Holidays everyone! With my whole heart, I wish you love, peace, and health as we close out in 2020. I generally share giving ideas on this issue, and this year will be no exception. It is most important this year over any other to SHOP LOCAL, support your small businesses, and thoughtfully give to those who need presents more than you do.

Some suggestions:

Share time with friends and family with an order of bacon pops and some local brews around a fire pit at Middleburg's new Lost Barrel Brewery or another local establishment of your choice. Time can also be shared merely as a long phone call to an old friend to catch up. Time is perhaps the most precious gift to give or receive.

Do something for yourself. Get a massage, walk in the woods even if, and especially if, you can see your breath, make time for that book you've wanted to read or take a hot bath with the fancy bubbles. You need to take care of yourself, too, to keep yourself together for those around you. Are you reading, moms?

With it being a masked world we live in, make sure your eyes are bright and can communicate for your covered face. You can do this by gifting your favorite mascara secret, eye cream from a variety of purveyors who would love to hook you up, or a gift certificate to your favorite med spa for a more involved solution—all excellent choices.

If you have some Covid fluff or holiday LBS to shed, contact me and join me on January 1 on a

program that works. Really. And if you are a regular reader, you know about my dog food diet, noshing on vodka-soaked cotton balls, and seeking out a professional to wire my jaw shut as weight loss methods over my 45 years in the chub club. I quickly and easily shed a ton this year and have maintained through the season of candy canes and cookies. Get a group together and gift yourselves health. Don't buy more oversized pants. Put that money into something that works. I promise you won't fail. esgreenwell@me.com

Recycle, repurpose, up-cycle. Buy used toys and clear out your toy box for others to make way. Make wreaths or decorations to share with braided bailing twine (a trick I learned from my mother). Or repurpose old tee shirts into memory blankets for a free, thoughtful, creative gift that can be made without sewing. Think outside the box, use resources you have on hand, and give from the heart.

And lastly and most importantly, give thanks. It is a soul-warming sentiment to give raw emotions of gratitude and thanks to those that make a difference in your life. Thank your spouse, thank the bank teller, thank the guy that held the door for you, thank a veteran, thank a health-care worker. Giving simple and genuine thanks will make a day brighter every time. This year, I want to publicly give thanks to my Mom, who always keeps the magic of Christmas alive for our family and brightens every single day. Priceless.

Merry Christmas, Friends.



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