

PASTIMES

CONFUSION, FRUSTRATION AND EMPATHY AROUND THE TOWN



HAZEL SWEITZER

There is so much change in the world happening for all of you humans. I am sorry there is so much confusion and frustration, but I want to say some things I have learned about humans. There are many attributes that

make dogs and humans different and at the same time, very much the same.

You are all kinder and more loving than you allow yourselves to be. You have great depth and understanding when it comes to Empathy. We, dogs know this well about you, it's just you trust dogs more than

you trust other humans. It would be great if you could trust each other the way you trust us. When you're hurt you often have trouble moving past your pain because you allow your brain to limit your healing. As dogs, we never like humans to worry about us feeling pain or feeling hurt, and we don't lin-

ger with those feelings because we know it wouldn't make you feel very good. Humans have a tendency to want to feel bad much longer than we do and sometimes that leads to making others feel worse.

I learned you can forgive each other if you stop allowing your anger to be your main

emotion and replace it with love. You all need to take more walks! Exercise and explore! This is very important. Bushes, and flowers, and people are the reason we stop so often. You should do the same, even though you don't go to the bathroom outside. TREATS! You shouldn't worry so much when you eat a treat. Treats are good for everyone. Humans sometimes bark and whine too much for no good reason. Don't get me wrong I love all humans, but I think humans need to think a little more before they bark.

Humans love us with their true heart, the heart they don't often show other humans, but will show us dogs. That's why you are not afraid to cry or yell or feel stupid in front of us. We see everything and accept you no matter what. I think the world would be a better place if humans would show their true heart to other humans. Humans are great at laughing and seeing humor too and that can be very healing. Tom laughs at me all the time. And I know when he does, I have done my "job": making him happy. Maybe that's the biggest thing humans could learn from us. Our main job is to make humans happy and I think humans need to make other humans happy.

I think more than ever humans could learn a lot from dogs. I wish you all love and luck and I know things will get better and remember think before you BARK!



REFLECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS SINCERELY ME



BRANDY GREENWELL

My January article is always about reflections on the previous year. When I started to outline my 2020 submission, my thoughts became like a bowl of noodles. Jumbled and soggy. So much, yet so little happened and there is no denying it went super fast. To recap:

Though I thought my online shopping skills were fit and running with maximum efficiency, I learned there was room for improvement. My delivery people also know this and I feel like I need to put them in my will for how good they have been to me.

I realized that Rob Lowe is still a hunk that makes my inner 13 year old blush.

I came to the conclusion that my favorite things about songs are the hooks and harmonies. This is prolific coming from someone with zero musical inclination other than pounding out Chopsticks.

I recognized that my signature pink bathrobe had far exceeded its useful life only after I received a new one for Christmas. It was atrociously tattered, filthy and stained. To think that its main time of use was when I was my cleanest is, well, just plain gross.

I learned that there is genuine kindness out there walking our streets. Sadly at the same time, I learned there is true hatred among us as well.

In 2020, I learned that you cannot, in fact, teach an old dog a new trick.

I substantially increased my athleisure wardrobe and beauty product collection, yet my hair care arsenal significantly de-

creased. Translation: I rotate wearing an impressive collection of Costco leggings, put a ton of creams and potions on my face to turn back the hands of time (yet often over day old makeup), and sport a ponytail or ratty mom-bun of rooty, dirty hair. Cheers to you 2020!

I realized my heart is so full of love and gratitude, that sometimes it hurts. I mean real, physical pain.

I fell in love again with riding and introduced that love to my children. Extra bonus points to my husband for securing the most perfect first ponies for our children and thanks to our dear friend who trusted us with the magical, twin, fuzzy, Ewok-like equines who have lived in the same stall for 17 years. It makes my heart sing to think of riding as a family.

I have never been so happy to have my family reside in Middleburg than during 2020. We have a wonderful community, town, and leadership that pulled us through this devastating year. How lucky are all of us to call Middleburg and her surrounding areas home?

2021 Resolutions

Recycle more. So. Much. Waste.

Ride more (duh). And maybe get back into the show ring. Shh-hhhh.

Organize the house and strive to keep it that way.

Find my pre-preggo abs to help relieve my severe and long term back pain.

Get to the marrow of every, single, day.

Happy New Year! May your 2021 be bright, full of love and extra prosperous.



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