

# True Love

By Anna Brown

Pets have an incredible impact on our lives. They give us someone to care for and someone to love. In return, they give us an ounce of sanity and their unconditional affection.

Getting up in the morning and seeing a smiling face on your pet, or coming home to this little being who thinks you are perfect, can turn a bad day into a great one.

Not only does having a pet warm your heart, taking care of an animal can help you mentally and physically.

Dog owners have to get up and out of the house to take their dog for a walk, giving them a chance to get some exercise, fresh air, and a little time to think – or not.

Dr. Kim Drysdale, a veterinarian at Belleway Animal Hospital said “multiple studies in humans show that pets lower our blood pressure, elevate our self-esteem, can give added longevity to seniors and help disabled persons either physically - guide dogs, or emotionally/mentally- therapy dogs.”

Loyalist College recognizes how animals can have a calming effect on people and reduce stress levels. In December 2013, the college brought therapy dogs to campus to help students relax during the exam season.

Whether it's training a dog, or teaching a parrot to talk, working together to learn something new can make a person feel special. Pets can help people feel more confident and more able to deal with the everyday trials of life.

Pets can also help their owners meet new friends. They can offer common ground in a conversation, or be the reason people get out to exercise and socialize.

Whether you're old, young, rich, poor, attractive, or not, your pet will love you no matter what.

As long as you are kind and caring towards them, they will trust you and treat you like you're their whole world.

Having an animal depend on you can bring so much joy and warmth. And that love is the reason why owning a pet is so special.



(Above) Pamela Murray and her labradoodle, Betsy, at their house in Belleville. “I’m the boss of the two, especially when it’s time to choose where to sit,” says Murray, who could not imagine herself without her best friend. Photo by Guillaume Nolet



(Left) Todd Moor adopted his bullmastiff, Kodachrome, 9, when he was a one-and-a-half years old. Moor is the fourth owner of Kodachrome and he adopted him from the Quinte Humane Society. Photo by Paulina Uy

(Below) Blake Moynes feeds a treat to his 11-year-old dog Sambo. Moynes has owned Sambo for 10 years. Moynes is a volunteer caretaker of the James Moore dog park at Zwick’s Park. Photo by Mitch Ward



(Left) John Moors and his wife Kay adopted Buddy just over three years ago. After learning that he was found starved and severely abused, they knew they had to adopt him. Kay unfortunately died last May. Buddy is John’s best friend. Photo by Brianne Ste Marie Lacroix

(Above) Peter Zamanis gestures to his seven-year-old cockatiel, Pipitro, in Zed’s Diner and Billiards. Zed’s has been owned and operated by Zamanis since 1972 and has been at its Front Street location for over 30 years. Photo by Jonathan King