



*“If you don’t own a dog, at least one,  
there is not necessarily anything  
wrong with you, but there may be  
something wrong with your life.”*

*ROGER CARAS  
A Celebration of Dogs*



# Introduction

In September 2012, Florida resident Steve Gustafson did something that brought tears to my eyes. Steve and his dog, Bounce, were out in their yard when Bounce was pounced on by a hungry, seven-foot alligator and dragged into a pond. Yelling, “You’re not going to get her!” the 66-year-old grandfather did a belly flop on top of the 130-pound alligator and managed to free his beloved dog from the beast’s jaws. They both escaped with minor injuries. What moved me was what he said to a reporter who suggested that what he did was a little dangerous. “What choice did I have?” he asked. “That’s my best friend. I didn’t think. You just react.” Such is the power of love. If you are a dog lover, you will understand.

Let me tell you about my dog, Sam.<sup>1</sup>

When our dog, Mandy, died, we decided that we would live dog-less for a time. I’m the dog lover in our family, and it wasn’t long before I

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<sup>1</sup> The following lengthy story is adapted from my book *The Beatles, God, and the Bible* (with kind permission from the publisher, WND Books).

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began using pictures of puppies to talk my wife, Sue, into getting another dog. Soon we located a litter of the cutest Bichon pups.

As we were looking at them, the owners asked if we wanted to meet the father of the litter. We said that we would. A door was opened and a fast-moving father ran around the room like a maniac then was quickly ushered into another room. We picked a pup, and as we were walking out the door, the owner commented, "Good luck." That seemed a little strange, but it was a statement that would come back to haunt us.

It wasn't long before Sam, the cutest little dog you have ever seen, was part of our family. It was a joy to once again hear the pitter-patter of little paws around the house. Knowing that Sue wasn't the type of person who would ever think of letting a dog lick her face (the sign of a true dog lover), I resolved to show my own appreciation for his place in our home by being quick to clean up after him.

Sam was the most wonderful-natured dog I have ever had. If he was chewing a bone and you got too close, he would stop eating, lick your hand, and then bring his bone closer to you so that you could be a guest at the table.

## 101 Things Dogs Do To Annoy Their Owners

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There was only one problem with him. He was an idiot. As he grew, he would run at you. Not to you. At you. If you were sitting on a couch, he would run across your shoulders, and even sit on your head. More than once, he ran at a portable table on which I had placed a full cup, and put his paws on the table. Each time, I would yell, "No!" at which point he would push away, sending the hot liquid flying.

Every night, for about two hours, he would go crazy—running around the house like a mad dog with the energy of a two-year-old on steroids, jumping on and off of Sue's lap, around her shoulders, down the hall, and back again. It was no exaggeration to say he was "bouncing off the walls." He used the couches to defy gravity as he bounded off of them. He chewed our furniture, gnawed windowsills, knocked pictures off the walls and chewed them, and ripped up any paper he could find.

He would go through the trash bin, open cupboard doors, and lift container lids to eat brownies (five at a time). He would wet the bed (not his—ours), burst out the front door onto the road if given half a chance, cry if he was left downstairs at night, whimper outside our bedroom door, drive

visitors crazy, scratch, lick, whine, and he would even get on top of the kitchen table after a meal and sneakily eat any leftovers. I guess he learned this after he discovered how to climb up onto the kitchen counter and eat any food he could find. Worst of all, he would take food off my plate while it was still on my lap! If I disciplined him, that was obviously a game, which sent him into more tail-wagging excitement.

A game he loved was staring you down, but if he thought you were winning, he changed the game to “lunge at the nose.” When he went to the groomers, they would graciously say he was “a handful.” The vet called him “feisty.” He once chewed the corner of my wallet, which he regularly emptied with vet fees. Often, Sue and I would lie awake at night and hear him get into the cupboard where we kept the pots and pans. I guess the cupboards reminded him of the chocolate cake he once ate in similar cupboards, which we had to secure with child-proof locks.

If I sat down to talk on the phone, he would get jealous and whine. If I tried to walk around during the conversation, he would wrap himself around my legs as I took a step. He did the same thing anytime I tried to walk downstairs. And he

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would throw himself against our bedroom door in the early hours of the morning and scare the living “nightlights” out of us.

I would continually tell Sue that it was just a matter of time until he matured. We could wait it out. Meanwhile, I diligently taught him to sit, lie down, jump, roll over, and shake hands. The only command he didn’t obey was “Stay.” And that was the one that mattered. It drove our stress levels off the charts. An elephant doing cartwheels each evening in the living room would have been less disruptive.

In an effort to keep the peace between Sue and Sam, I would make excuses for him: he’s tired; he’s young; he’s still learning. But one evening, I was left excuseless. That was the time Sue was feeling really exhausted after a hard day. She dropped herself down on her favorite place to sit—our soft leather couch. Unfortunately, Sam had deposited Lake Superior on her seat. She sat in it and was coldly soaked to the skin. He had the whole house to use as a bathroom (not that he should have), and he chose that spot! I couldn’t justify it. I should have known better. *Sam had to go.*

I offered Sam as a gift to one friend who loved him. When he was seated, he would let Sam run all over him and even sit on his head. My friend, actor Kirk Cameron, who starred in the TV sitcom “Growing Pains” and movies like *Fireproof* and *Monumental*, said he would talk it over with his wife. A couple of days later, he graciously said she wanted a larger dog. I then offered Sam—plus five hundred dollars cash for dog food—to my buddy Mark Spence. Mark politely turned me down. I next offered him to another friend, Brad Snow, with a thousand dollars for dog food. He said he would give it some thought and talk it over with his wife. Soon, though, he respectfully rejected my offer. It looked like Sam was staying.

By his first birthday, believe it or not, there had been some real improvement. However, one day I was working in my garage/workshop when I heard a sound that’s familiar to dog owners everywhere. This was about a month after Sam pulled the lid off the glue and ate half of the contents. Fortunately, it congealed and came back up as a rubber ball about the size of a small child’s fist. This day, Sam was again making the now familiar “I’m getting ready to give dinner back to you” sound. I yelled, “No! Sam, *don’t*. Go outside,



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now! Onto the lawn. *Now!* Go!” He didn’t even look at me. He completely understood that I didn’t want him throwing up in the garage, and quickly headed toward the door. He was being obedient, even in the middle of his suffering. How I love obedience. What a good dog. He ran through the garage door, turned a sharp left when he hit the lawn, charged up the steps, through the little doggy door, into the house—and threw up on our living room carpet!

But the worst came about a week after his first birthday. I had spent hours filming in Santa Monica in Southern California. It was even worth the three hours on the freeway to get there and back. I had one great interview that was good enough to make it onto the TV program I cohost. These are few and far between. Returning home, I left the MiniDV on my desk in my home office, planning to “log” it the next day. It *really* was a great interview.

When I arrived home that day, I found, to my horror, that Sam had chewed the cassette. I decided to try to save the tape, and put it into a new casing. After two to three hours of meticulous work, I finally did it. I slipped it into the camera to see if it would rewind, and it jammed the

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camera! I now had no tape, and it cost \$250 to get it removed from the camera.

As time has passed, Sam has calmed down. Sort of. He still acts a little crazy now and then and sometimes plays a little dumb when I tell him to do things. But, like most dogs, if there is any meat in my hand he jumps through hoops for me faster than a hawk in a dive. Despite this small character weakness, he's a good dog. We hug, wrestle, chase cats together, have stare-downs, and really enjoy each other's company. He is forever trying to lick my face, and he's never so content as when he's sitting at my feet. When I get home in the evenings he almost breaks the door down he's so excited to see me. I have tried to train Sue to be like him. I can't tell you how much I love him. He inspired this book.

In the following pages, you will notice that all the annoying things dogs do are presented in the *male* gender. There are three reasons for this: 1) It would become tiresome to say "He or she..." 101 times. 2) The dog whose antics inspired this book is a male. And 3) I also wrote a book called *101 Things Husbands Do to Annoy Their Wives* (which Sue helped me write in ten minutes). That was in the male gender also...

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He whines at the door to get out.



*Q. How do you keep a dog from barking in the front yard?*

*A. You place him in the back yard.*



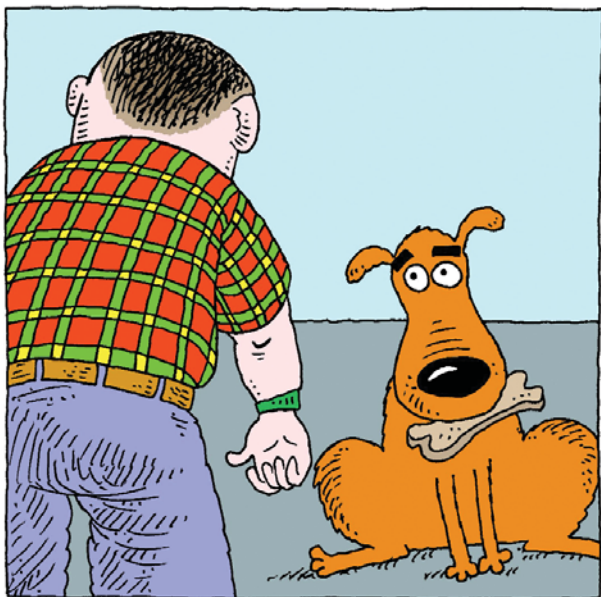
He whines at the door to get in, two seconds  
after whining to get out.





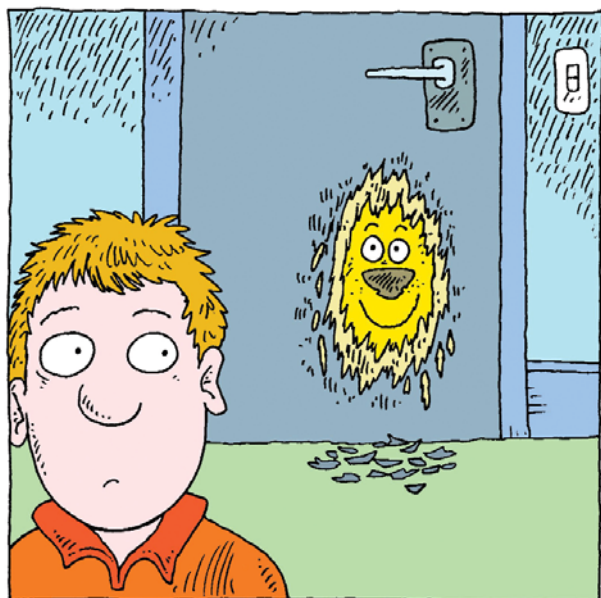
He runs toward you playfully dropping a dog biscuit at your feet, then picks it up and flings it in the air giving the impression he wants to play.

When you get down on all fours to play,  
he eats the biscuit.



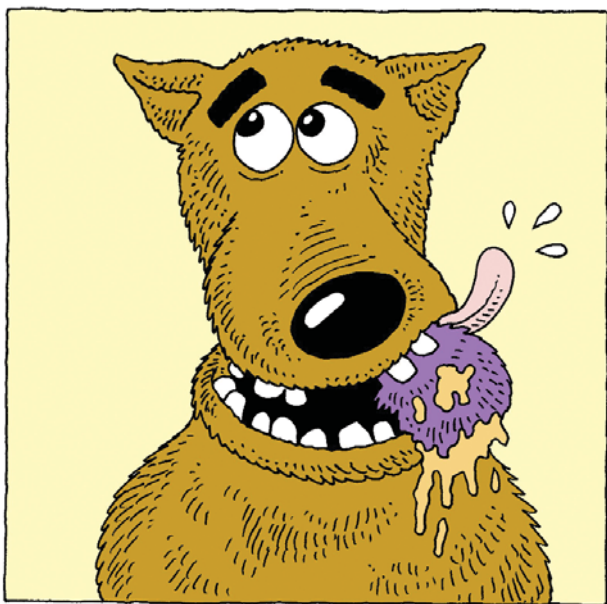


He scratches at the door until the paint is worn away.





He chews the nose off an expensive stuffed toy.



*“Rambunctious, rumbustious, delinquent dogs  
become angelic when sitting.”*

DR. IAN DUNBAR