

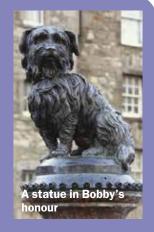


February 16 sees the start of the Year of the Dog in the Chinese calendar, but for dog lovers everywhere, every year is a dog year! From celebrities to shopping, dogs who help us, and people who help dogs, we have a world of dogs for you to enjoy!



CANINE CELEBRITIES!

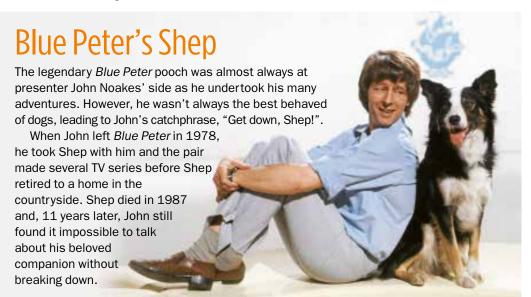
These well-known and loyal pooches from past and present have a very special place in our heart...

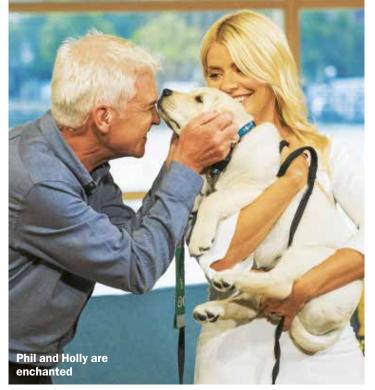


Greyfriar's Bobby

When Edinburgh gardener John Gray died in 1858, he was buried in the city's Greyfriar's Cemetery. After a brief ceremony at his graveside, the mourners drifted away – apart from Bobby, John Gray's faithful Skye terrier.

For the next 14 years, Bobby refused to leave his master's side. He had no home and no owner to feed him but the people of Edinburgh ensured he didn't go hungry and Bobby stood guard over his master's grave until he died in January 1873.





Digby

ITV's This Morning team currently includes a gorgeous Labrador retriever pup called Digby who is destined to undertake a very important role when he grows up.

Digby is a Dogs for Good puppy and, after spending his first 16 months being socialised and making television appearances with Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby, he'll undergo specialist training at Dogs for Good's headquarters.

"He'll help those with health issues, in hospital or with a disability," explained Phillip.





Toto, Wizard of Oz

Dorothy's beloved little dog in *The Wizard of Oz* was played by Terry, a black Cairn Terrier.

Terry was already a Hollywood regular when she stepped onto the Yellow Brick Road and she received a higher salary than many of the human actors on the film. During filming, Judy Garland became very attached to the terrier and, when one of the Wicked Witch of the West's guards stepped on Terry's foot and broke it, she nursed Terry back to health at her home.

Pudsey

Pudsey and his owner,
Ashleigh Butler, won
Britain's Got Talent in 2012
– and proved they were no
one-hit wonder by going on
to build a successful
showbiz career.

Pudsey, who was a cross between a Border collie, bichon frise and Chinese crested powderpuff, died last summer, leaving Ashleigh heartbroken. "My handsome man has gone and I don't know what to do without him," she said. "He was my one in a billion dog."





TV's Lassie

Lassie made her first appearance on the silver screen in the 1943 movie Lassie Come Home – and she was actually played by a lad! Pal was the star of the first seven Lassie films and when he retired, the role was handed over to his son, Lassie Junior.

The films were such a success, a TV series was launched – and when filming was underway, Pal would accompany his son to the set every day, watching from a special bed.



Finding Gobi

When Dion Leonard took on the challenge of running 77 miles across China's Gobi Desert, he didn't expect to be joined by a lovable mutt!

However, after crossing the finishing line, Gobi disappeared. Dion returned home to Edinburgh but soon returned to China, where he launched a search. Four months later, Dion found Gobi and, after a global fundraising campaign, was able to fly home with his running mate!



Bringing Mayhem to Marley & Me

The hit film *Marley & Me* tells the story of a couple, played by Jennifer Anniston and Owen Wilson, who welcome a mischievous puppy – Marley, who is played by 22 different dogs – into their home.

Based on a true story, during the film, Marley goes from an incredibly cute golden Labrador puppy who specialises in mayhem to a 14-year-old, much loved family pet. A real tear-jerker!

FOUR-LEGGED HEROES

These faithful and talented companions have changed the lives of their owners with their loyal dedication

an's best friend is also man's bravest and most loyal friend, as dogs have proved time and time again over the centuries.

History is packed with tales of dogs who would do anything for their owner, from the loyal terrier who hid in Mary Queen of Scot's long skirts as she made her way to the executioner's block, to the fearless pit bull cross who was promoted to sergeant after sniffing out a German spy in World War 2.

Today's dogs are just as inspiring. The 2017 winner of the Dickin Medal - the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross - was Mali, a Belgian Malinois who served with the Special Boat Service in Afghanistan. Despite being wounded, Mali sniffed out explosives and enemy fighters during an eight-hour combat against the Taliban, saving lives and providing British forces with vital time to complete their operation.

"We felt that we had a guardian angel amongst us," said Mali's handler in Afghanistan. "Nothing was going to happen to us."

Staffordshire Bull Terrier Roxy is another dog whose speciality is saving lives. Roxy is a police explosives search dog with Wiltshire



Police but not so long ago, she was just another unwanted, abandoned dog. Roxy was being cared for at the RSPCA's West Hatch Animal Centre but with thousands of Staffies looking for a new home, her future was bleak – until

Crufts in 2017. "We adopted Bowser from Battersea Dogs & Cats Home because of his big character," explained Sally, who has multiple sclerosis.

"Three months after adopting Bowser, I relapsed and passed out on the sofa. My husband was in the garden but Bowser attracted his attention and he came inside and found me unconscious. This was the first time Bowser saved my life and he continues to do so by licking my hands and arms whenever I start to relapse.

"Bowser also gives me emotional support. Bowser makes me confident again, he gives me a focus when my brain is in a fog and he gives me a reason to get up in the morning when I'm in pain. Bowser is so special – he's a rescue dog with no medical training, no assistance training and no detection training. He's learnt this all himself."

Lynn Ratcliffe's seizure alert dog Simba gives her 24 minutes advance warning of a seizure, enabling her to get to a safe place.

"Simba has given me my life back," said Lynn. "Having a seizure alert dog doesn't just mean independence, privacy and assurance for me, it's had a life-changing impact on my family as they know I'm safe."

The natural connection

"Having a seizure alert dog has had a life-changing impact on my family"

Roxy's impressive talent for sniffing out tennis balls brought her to the attention of the local police force.

"Roxy really shone during her training," said police dog trainer Ian Partington. "Police dog Roxy may not have had the easiest start in life but she has a great career in front of her."

Sally Deegan's English bull terrier Bowser was awarded the Eukanuba Friends for Life award at







between dogs and children has led to an inspiring partnership between 14-year-old Ethan Dysan and his autism assistance dog Jay. Ethan has been autistic since he was two, when his behaviour became erratic and he would scream and run away when out with his mum, making it difficult to leave the house.

Seven years ago, autism support dog Jay joined Ethan's family and the pair bonded immediately. With Jay by his side, Ethan was calmer and able to attend a mainstream school. "I could not be prouder of Ethan," revealed Mandy, Ethan's mum. "Thanks to Jay, Ethan is able to go out normally and no longer has meltdowns – Support Dogs and Jay have played a massive part in Ethan's growing up.

"And Ethan and Jay are still best friends, which is wonderful."

To find out more about dogs such as Simba and Jay, visit supportdogs.org.uk.

"Theo will forever be curled up next to Liam"

"My son, Liam Tasker, was a dog handler in the British Army," said Jane Duffy. "Liam lost his life to a sniper's bullet when on patrol in Afghanistan – and his dog Theo died of a broken heart a few hours later.

"Theo was exceptionally good at finding explosives and looked after my son all the time he was in Afghanistan. It helps me so much to know Theo was with him at the end.

"Liam is buried with Theo at his feet. Theo will forever be curled up next to Liam, just as he was in his favourite spot in his sleeping bag."

Liam and Theo's story features in Isabel George's best-selling book *Dog Soldiers* (£12.99, published in hardback by Harper Collins).



Dogs can transform lives with their special abilities, and it seems these faithful companions are only too happy to help...



Dementia Dogs

Dogs for Good and Alzheimer Scotland are currently piloting a project which provides people with dementia with a canine carer. These specially-trained dogs help reduce the impact of dementia in a variety of ways, including reminding the person affected to take their medication, encouraging them to remain active and providing reassurance and companionship.

Ken Will received one of the first Dementia Dogs, Kaspa. "Ken can't help but smile when he sees Kaspa waiting for him at the bottom of the stairs in the morning, his wagging tail hitting off the wall," says Glenys, Ken's wife. "When I go out, I no longer worry as I know Ken's in safe hands." www.dementiadog.org

Leading The Way

Since Muriel Crooke and Rosamunde Bond started training dogs to guide people with vision loss in a tiny Merseyside garage in 1931, over 29,000 people with sight loss living in the UK have benefitted from guide dogs' life-changing skills.

Guide dogs enable people who are blind or partially sighted to move around safely, confidently and independently, enabling them to live life to the full. There are currently over 5,000 guide dog owners in the UK, with ownership available to anyone who has sight loss – there's no upper age limit and the lower age limit has now also been removed so children can also experience the difference a guide dog can make.

www.guidedogs.org.uk







The Gift of Friendship

Best Friends is an innovative project funded by the Big Lottery Fund Wales which helps young unemployed people, rescued greyhounds and older people.

The young people involved help the dogs recover from their past while also fostering their affectionate nature so they can become pet therapy dogs, which they then take to care homes in the Swansea area. This project provides young people with skills that increase their chances of finding a job, while the care home residents benefit from the dogs' boundless supplies of love – and the greyhounds enjoy lots a wonderful new life. www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/wales; http://greyhoundrescuewales.co.uk/



Dogs For Health

Research has found that dogs not only increase happiness but also lower stress, anxiety and blood pressure. As a result, around 6,300 specially-trained dogs can now be found in clinics, hospitals, residential nursing homes and schools across the UK, encouraging conversations, breaking down barriers and generally being everyone's best friend.

"Patients don't feel judged by a dog," explains Daniel Fryer, who is a psychotherapist at Priory's Hospital in Bristol, where patients can pat, hug or groom his Staffordshire bull terrier Lara while participating in therapy. "A lot of my therapy sessions are conducted with the patient sitting happily on the floor stroking Lara, who always enjoys a cuddle."

www.petsastherapy.org; www.priorygroup.com

A Helping Hand

Dogs' love of helping has been harnessed by several organisations and a wide range of assistance dogs now provide support to people of all ages with physical disabilities, medical conditions and developmental disorders.

Robin Jones adopted collie/Labrador cross Charlie from Dogs Trust Loughborough two years ago and now can't imagine life without his faithful companion.

"I often find it difficult to face the day ahead but Mum and I have trained Charlie to drag the covers off me every morning and nudge me until I get up," says Robin, who has Asperger Syndrome. "Seeing Charlie makes me happy anyway but removing the covers gives me no option but to get out of bed and ready for work."

www.dogstrust.org.uk





"Casper, my medical detection dog, uses his amazing sense of smell to alert me when my blood glucose levels drop to dangerous levels, which puts me at risk of losing consciousness," explains Sue Surbey, who has type 1 diabetes.

"Before Casper joined my family six years ago, I was collapsing about five times a month and had to have someone with me at all times. However, with my loyal and constant companion by my side, I no longer need someone with me 24 hours a day, which has helped my husband and my children – and given me back my life."

www.medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk

Teddy is a remarkable dog, saving owner Wendy's life over and over again

he first time I saw Teddy he was a little snowball on legs, with jet black eyes and nose. He snuggled in beside me and fell asleep and I promptly fell in love with this gorgeous nineweek-old puppy who had been selected by Canine Partners to help someone with a disability. How I hoped that person would be me.

I have recessive dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa, a rare skin condition which means that my skin is as fragile as a butterfly's wings and makes every movement painful.

This condition affects every aspect of my life, including breathing, eating, walking and sleeping - even turning over in bed can cause blisters on my arms.

My previous Canine Partner was about to retire and I needed much more help than I used to.

I was nervous of meeting people, I didn't like going anywhere and I struggled to do everyday tasks as the slightest impact could result in a layer of skin being torn off. So, when Canine Partners offered me a Golden Retriever pup to be my new assistance dog, I was delighted - and I was over the moon when I discovered it was Teddy!

Teddy moved in with my husband, Peter, and I in January 2007 and, over the last 11 years, he's transformed my life!

Teddy is a loveable, lively, happy dog and everything's a game to him. He's so desperate to help me, it's almost as though he's saying 'I can do it, I can do it!'

Teddy helps me dress and undress, he picks things up,

people banging into me, he picks up anything I drop and he even pays for my shopping, using the purse I give him when we're at the checkout.

I used to be very conscious of my disability but now everyone just sees my incredibly clever dog. In fact, with Teddy by my side, I no longer think of myself as having a disability. Teddy and cheese in my mouth without thinking and swallowed it. I started choking so Teddy let himself out of the house and fetched help, which resulted in my wonderful dog being awarded a commendation by the PDSA.

I'm prone to stopping breathing when I'm asleep

Teddy goes to the phone and hits the button to call an ambulance

he loads and empties the washing machine, he opens doors, he gets me ready to go out and, as I can't lock doors, if I go to the loo, he guards the door.

When I'm out on my mobility scooter or wheelchair, Teddy stops I are a team and, together, we make an able-bodied person.

In addition, Teddy has saved my life over and over again.

My skin condition has narrowed my throat and one day I popped a piece of

but Teddy keeps an eye on me during the night and wakens Peter if there's a problem. Peter can usually restart my breathing by turning me over but if that doesn't work, Teddy goes to the phone, which is at dog-height on the bedroom









Helping with the shopping...



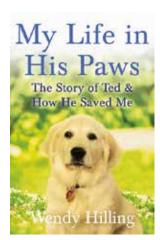
wall, and hits the special button to call an ambulance. Teddy's a dog in a million.

I'm not the only person Teddy helps, either. Teddy's also a Pets For Therapy dog and we regularly visit hospitals, nursing homes, nurseries and schools, where he works out who needs him most and sits beside them.

He's a very sensitive soul who knows just when to be quiet and calm and when to be fun.

Teddy makes it worth getting up in the morning as every day is exciting – the more serious I am, the dafter he gets. This adorable dog has brought so much to my life. He's my whole world.

I hold Teddy's lead – but Teddy holds my heart.



My Life In His Paws by Wendy Hilling is published by Coronet and available at book shops, Amazon and www.mylifeinhispaws.co.uk.

For more information about epidermolysis bullosa, visit www.debra.org; for more information about Canine Partners, visit www.caninepartners.org.uk.

HELPING DOGS IN NEED

Not all dogs have a great start in life, but there are so many ways you can help – and they will love you for it!



Sponsor A Dog

If you love dogs but can't have one of your own, why not sponsor a dog? "Dogs Trust's sponsor dogs are usually unlikely to be rehomed as they require a very specific family who would be able to put in months of hard work," explains Amy Woolridge of Dogs Trust. "But we never say never!"

Amy explains that sponsoring a dog provides Dogs Trust with vital donations which are used to help the dogs that are sponsored and other dogs in the charity's care.

"Sponsorship helps to cover the cost of running our Rehoming Centres, where 15,000 dogs are cared for every year," continues Amy.

"When someone signs up, they receive a welcome pack, including an ID card for their sponsor dog, and three updates a year about their sponsor dog and how their donation is helping to give this dog the best possible life."

To find out more, visit www.dogstrust. org.uk/sponsor/.

Help Every Dog Have Its Day!

There are many different ways to help dogs who are ill, homeless, unloved or hungry.

Why not volunteer at your local dog rescue centre? By helping to clean out kennels and feed, groom and exercise the centre's residents, you'll make a real difference to the staff – and the dogs.

Alternatively, you can help dogs who are living on the streets with their owners by donating a few tins of dog food to your local food bank – or give dog food as well as loose change.

As the cost of living continues to increase, many families are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for veterinary care for their pets, leading to increased demand for the services provided by the PDSA. The PDSA website, www.pdsa.org.uk, has lots of fundraising ideas, including holding a foreign coin collection and taking part in an obstacle race.





Foster A Dog

Many dog rescue charities, including Hope Rescue in South Wales, place dogs with foster families while they're waiting for their forever home.

"Some dogs really benefit from being in a home environment rather than kennels, including the very young, old, unwell or those recovering from operations," says Sara Rosser of Hope Rescue. "Also, having a dog in a foster home frees up much needed kennel space so we're able to help more dogs.

"Our foster carers are given full support and the cost of any veterinary care is covered,"



Rescue A Dog

Giving an abandoned dog a new and loving home can be incredibly fulfilling but it's important to check your family has the time, the means and the inclination to look after a dog for the rest of its life.

"Also, think about what type of dog would best suit your family," advises Lisa Hens, RSPCA dog welfare expert. "There are dogs in our centres of all different sizes, types and personalities and our staff can help match you with the right one. Take time to explain your lifestyle, experience and expectations – and listen to the details provided about a dog's background and personality before making a decision.

"Introducing a new dog to your home will be exciting, rewarding and, at times, quite challenging. With so many new people, smells, sights and sounds, your rescue dog is likely to feel a little unsettled so help him by creating a safe haven where he can retreat if he's worried, stressed or scared."

To find your nearest RSPCA rescue centre, visit www.rspca. org.uk/findapet/rehomeapet.

continues Sara, who adds that, once a dog is settled, the foster carer completes an assessment form containing useful information for potential adopters.

"Ideally, we like our foster carers to have some dog experience and each foster home is checked to ensure the environment is suitable. And having dogs, cats and/or children isn't a barrier to fostering as we assess each dog to determine which foster home they'd be suitable for."

To find out more about becoming a foster carer for Hope Rescue, visit www.hoperescue.org.uk or call 01443 226659.

"Time, patience and kindness did the trick"

"Our collie cross Eva was rescued from a puppy farm by Hope Rescue, who placed her with a foster carer, where she had her final litter of pups and was coaxed back to health," says Marlene Jones.

"When Eva came to live with my family five months later, she was still very nervous. She didn't know how to walk on a lead, how to play with other dogs or how to react when we were nice to her.

"However, time, patience and kindness did the trick and Eva's now a lovely dog who brings us so much joy – and who loves being cuddled by my son, Jack. And every year, we have a birthday party for the nine puppies Eva had when she was in foster care. That's always a fun-filled, if slightly boisterous, occasion!" www.hoperescue.org.uk



Handy gifts for that special dog in your life...



Winter Sun

Add a little brightness to your dog's day with a yellow rain jacket. From £60, www.fetchandfollow.com

Well Groomed

This Personalised Micro Fibre Pet Mitt is perfect for brushing dust and excess water from your dog's coat. £9.99, www.GettingPersonal.co.uk



Leading The Way

Matching collars and leads are a must-have for this year's most fashionable dogs! Blue polka dot lead (£8.95) and collar (from £6.95), www.dotcomgiftshop.com



Necks, Please!

This trendy bandana will ensure your dog is the cutest in town! £14, www.petspyjamas.com



Snuggle Up

Sammie

No dog could resist cuddling into this wonderfully soft, machine-washable faux fur blanket – it might even prove more inviting than a sneaky snooze on the sofa! From £70, www.charleychau.com



Take the strain out of walking two dogs with Mountain Paws' Double Dog Extension Lead, which has been cleverly designed to cope with two dogs of different sizes. £12.99, www.mountainpaws.co.uk





Keep Cosy

Fair Isle sweaters aren't just for humans - dogs love them, too! £45, www.leadthewalk.com



Stylish Serving

An attractive alternative to plastic dishes, your dog can eat in style with this set of 2 Granite Pet Bowls (large). £40, www.gardentrading.co.uk



Get Away From It All

The perfect gift for your favourite dog – and your favourite dog owner - a travel voucher for use in

more than 2,000 pet-welcoming hotels, holiday cottages, manor houses, pubs with rooms and B&Bs. Available in £25. £50 and £100 denominations. www.petspyjamas.com



Pawfect Peanut Butter!

Duerr's Peamutt Butter was specifically designed for dogs and is packed full of vitamins, healthy fats and protein. £2.79, Pets At

Home



Travel in Style

Holidaying with your pet? This Pet Travel Tote Bag has everything your dog needs, including an emergency lead, water bottle, collapsible bowls, chiller bag for fresh food and poop bags. £120, www.petspyjamas.com



The Great Canine Bake-Off



HEALTHY DOGGIE SNACKS FOR YOU TO MAKE AT HOME By Mungo & Tilly Trotter



Sock it To 'Em!

Keep your pooch's paws clean and warm with cosy, non-slip socks. £4.95, www.





Stay Bright

Be seen on dark winter walks by attaching a LED Dog Safety Light to your dog's collar. £16, www. leadthewalk.com

VALKIES!

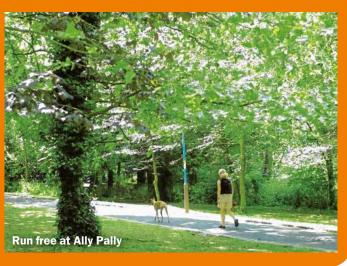
If you're looking for a route that's pet-friendly and very scenic, we've found some of the best locations around...



Alexandra Palace

Alexandra Palace is a fantastic stretch of green, open space in the centre of North London that's ideal for dog walking. There are so many places to wander with your dog, who can sniff out squirrels and rabbits, run freely without any worries about roads and play with the many other dogs enjoying an outing to Ally Pally. While your pooch is having fun, you can watch the boats on the lake, marvel at the views across London's skyline and gasp at the antics of the climbers high up in the park's magnificent trees.

And if you're at Alexandra Palace on a Sunday, you can treat yourself to delicious fresh produce at the farmer's market.



Mount Stewart is a spectacular mansion in Northern Ireland which was transformed by Edith, Lady Londonderry in the early 20th century. Lady Edith lived at Mount Stewart with her large family – and many, many dogs! In fact, Lady Edith was such a dog lover, her dogs had the run of the house and the dining room was designed so she could open the French windows after breakfast to let the dogs out to play!

Although dogs are no longer allowed in the mansion house, well-behaved dogs on short leads (and their owners!) are welcome to explore the breathtaking formal gardens and the beautiful seven-acre lake.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mount-stewart



Llangollen History Trail

This six-mile walk through the Welsh countryside starts with a stroll along the Llangollen Canal, where barges are still pulled along by horses and where there's lots happening in and around the water to keep your dog amused.

The walk includes several historic landmarks, including Horseshoe Falls, which is a remarkable weir designed by Thomas Telford, a pretty chapel overlooking the valley, the ruins of Dinas Bran Castle and Vallee Crucis Abbey, once one of the richest abbeys in Wales. But this walk isn't just about taking a step back in time – there are also lots of places where your dog can run about and sniff to his heart's content.

www.deevalleywalks.co.uk/llangollen.htm





Derwentwater

If you and your dog are feeling energetic, the 10-mile walk around Derwent Water in the Lake District will definitely tire one of you out – possibly the one with two legs rather than four!

This highly-enjoyable hike goes right around the lake so although it's a long walk, it's relatively flat. You can start anywhere but Keswick is a good choice as there's ample parking and there are lots of coffee shops to choose from at the end of your walk. And if you get tired or footsore, simply jump on a ferry and sail back to Keswick – dogs travel free on the boats that ferry passengers across Derwent Water.



Killerton Dog Walk

The stunning parklands around this National Trust property in the heart of the Devon countryside are very dog friendly.

There are several places in Killerton estate where dogs can run free, including an excellent 2.5 mile circular dog walk.

Killerton Dog Walk goes through ancient woodlands and up a steep hill which will definitely give you and your four-legged partner a workout – but the view when you leave the trees is worth all the panting! When you get back to Killerton House, you can treat yourself to a cup of tea and a slice of cake in the Dairy Café. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/killerton

PAWS FOR THOUGHT!



"The more boys I meet the more I love my dog."

Carrie Underwood, Country & Western singer

"Dogs are wise.
They crawl away
into a quiet corner
and lick their
wounds and do not
rejoin the world until
they are whole once
more."

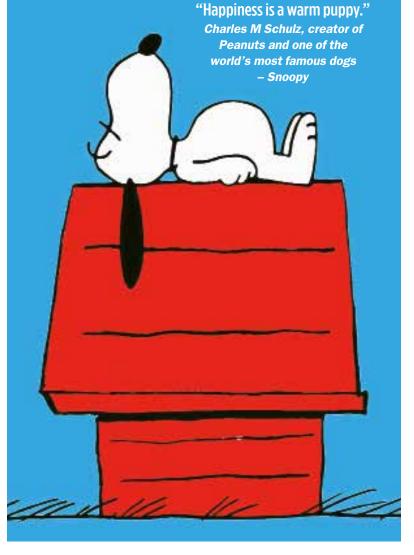
Agatha Christie, the world's bestselling novelist

"Dogs are for life. Not for show."

Ben Fogle, television presenter

"Some of my best leading men have been dogs and horses."

Elizabeth Taylor, actress



"I believe in integrity.
Dogs have it. Humans
are sometimes
lacking it."

Cesar Millan, "The Dog Whisperer"

"Whoever saw a frisky dog in a gloomy family, or a sad dog in a happy one? Snarling people have snarling dogs, dangerous people have dangerous ones."

Arthur Conan Doyle, author

"Almost all an Englishman's pleasures can be, and mostly are, shared by his dog."

George Bernard Shaw, playwright

"My little dog – a heartbeat at my feet."

Edith Wharton, novelist

"I have found that when you are deeply troubled, there are things you get from the silent devoted companionship of a dog that you can get from no other source."

Doris Day, actress

"Once you have had a wonderful dog, a life without one, is a life diminished."

Dean Koontz, author

"The only creatures that are evolved enough to convey pure love are dogs and infants."

Johnny Depp, actor

"If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and man."

Mark Twain, author

"It's hard not to immediately fall in love with a dog who has a good sense of humour."

Kate DiCamillo, author

"I have a dog and a son. A dog couldn't do anything to upset me and neither could my son."

Tom Hardy, actor