

Canine Conundrums

Written by L.A. Plume
Tuesday, 06 July 2010 15:59



Recently, I've received a number of challenging questions about dog etiquette – not my specialty! I've gathered them together here and am hoping you readers can help me out. – L.A. Plume

Dear LAP,

My mother wants to come to visit for ten days. First of all, that's too long. But she lives far away and wants to “make the drive worth her while.” However, the real problem is that she refuses to travel without her dogs – two Newfoundlands. When she gets here and we want to go anywhere, she will insist that the dogs have to go with us; they cannot be left at home alone. As you can imagine, this creates havoc with invitations. . . . Not everyone likes dogs, and few in their right mind want two big dogs coming to dinner. My sister and I have tried to discuss this with her over the years but she just won't listen. As you might suspect, we have good reason to believe that she favors the dogs over us, but that is another story. She hasn't ever been to this part of the country, so she will want to sightsee and visit and meet my friends. If we try to explain that she needs to leave the dogs for a little while, she will just pout and say she never should have come. And she will probably be right. How can I handle this situation?

Cinee

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Dear L. A. Plume,

I was raised with the theory that “guests come first” and should always be accommodated. Two old friends are on a road trip and asked to spend a couple of nights with me along their way. However, one of them is terrified of dogs. When I said I would love to have them visit, I explained that I do have two dogs. The one said, “Well, you'll just have to get rid of them while we are there.” I love this couple dearly, but there just isn't any reasonable or economical way to “get rid of” the dogs for two nights. What do I do?

Marianne

Dear Ms. Plume,

We have the only swimming pool in the area and are happy to have the neighbors and their children come over to swim, with supervision, whenever they want. The problem is that a couple of them also bring their dogs. We like dogs as much as the next guy, but the pool service, which comes once a week, explained to me that one dog will deplete the chemicals in the pool nine times faster than one person and their fur clogs up the pool filter. After two or three days the pool is cloudy and scummy and we've already had to replace the filter once this summer. The pool service is not available to come more than once a week, nor can we afford to have them do so. When we suggested to these people that their dogs shouldn't swim in the pool, they were unhappy. How can we make them understand without losing them as friends?

Dana

Dear L.A.,

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What is it about people with handbag-sized dogs who seem to think they are accessories like jewelry or a hat? I had a cocktail party for the neighbors a few weeks ago and someone brought a pint-sized dog in her handbag and put it down on the floor to run around. Not only did the other guests have to be vigilant about not stepping on it, but the dog, and the commotion it created, monopolized the conversation/attention. To make matters worse, the little bitty thing found its way into my bedroom closet and peed on the carpet, which had to be cleaned, and may have to be ripped out and replaced, as the smell and spot have not come out. When this was mentioned to the neighbor, her response was that her little baby would never do such a thing. I don't have a dog so there is very little doubt as to who/what did it, as I didn't see any of the neighbors wandering into my closet. Suggestions?

Sherry

Dear Readers,

I'm stumped! Do you have answers to the questions above? I'm turning this column over to you! Please send me your responses via my editor at editor@lcweekly.com (and put the title of this column in the subject line).

Many thanks,

L.A. Plume