

MARTIE

When I retired, I had been art teacher at first. It was a silence, and the quiet and everything was, was really nice. Uh, after a while it got a little too quiet, little too still. I miss the people that I taught with. I miss the kids. So, uh, I wanted a dog. And I guess with all the emptiness, the empty time that the pandemic came along, I, I could tell that this was going to be a long time by myself, without being able to go to the store and, uh, go to church, and go see friends and things like that. And I had thought about the kind of dog that I wanted, the kind of dogs that I'd had in the past. And so I thought, well, this'll be a good time. I'll, you know, I'll make a list. What do I want the dog? And I, uh, I decided I wanted a puppy and wanted a girl. I have a small car, and so I wanted a dog that would top out at about 30 pounds.

But anyway, I was on the site for the Atlanta Humane Society, and there was her picture, and it was really, really cute. So they put me in, uh, contact with the, uh, young man who was fostering her. And we met in one of the Cobb County parks. And she was as cute as her pictures. She was everything that her picture showed and a third bigger than I had already wanted. She was about 40 pounds and about four months. And, you know, we walked her around and talked with her, and he had already taught her sit and, and she was pretty calm. And I just was shaking my head though. And I, I said, "Brian, she's just, she's so big." And he said, "Well, I tell you what. I won't let them take her off the list yet. Why don't you think about her?" So I did, and I think that that, that visit was like a Tuesday and about Friday I called him and said, "I think I want her."

And, uh, so we arranged to meet that Sunday, and the visit was great. And I had just decided, yeah, she's big, and at four months, she's probably going to get bigger. But I do want her, and my kids, they were really happy to find out that she was a big dog because my daughter said, "Mom, a Cocker Spaniel isn't going to protect you." So they think I need protecting, my kids do, so they were really glad that I got a bigger dog. And now at age two, I guess she's about, she's about 60 pounds, I think.

Through this, you know, pandemic, she has been with me everywhere, almost every minute. I'll either take her with me when I go places. And now that the world is opening back up, I can't do that anymore. I can't take her to a meeting at church. I can't, when I need to run an errand to the library or whatever, I can't take her with me. And that's really become odd to me to have to leave her. But every time I have, something calls to take me away from home, my first thought is her, and it's really kind of strange to have to think about leaving her here.

I grew up with dogs. I think we got our first dog when I was about six or seven, and there was always a dog in the house. When my children were small, we got a dog. I think that the, it's different with Poppit because I'm her only human and she's

mine. I don't share her with anybody, and, uh, nobody shares her with me. It's, it's just she and I, me and her, two girls. Like at night when we're here, even if I'm watching TV, you know, she's right there. She loves being in the studio, and she's got a bed in there. And so she'll hang out when I'm trimming pots or making pots. And when I think about now, two years into this, finally coming out of this pandemic, everybody's a little loopy and a little crazy and a little cranky, and I'd have not done nearly as well through this pandemic if I had not had her. I don't believe in coincidences. I think that things happen for a reason. I think that's why we have each other is because it just turned out the right fit at the right time. So yeah, she, she rescued me as much as I rescued her, you.