

Orville

(2007 - 2013)



“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.” Anatole France

Orville was the first pet **we** (Ruth and Glenn) ever had...all the others were either our own or shared with other family members. When we were little, Ruth had Peggy and Timothy Elmer Rossellini-Duke of Weaverville (Ruth’s maiden name was Weaver) and Glenn had Doc and Terry. As a family, we had Tawny (dachshund), Clyde (a beagle), Adam (a shepherd who ran away while with a dog-sitter) and Marvin (a cockapoo for which our flower garden, Marvin’s Garden, is named), but these dogs “belonged” to our kids, not us. We loved them and felt bad when we lost them.

Orville was the first pet, may we say family member, who was solely ours. Ruth, when asked what she wanted as a special gift for our fiftieth wedding anniversary six years ago, said without hesitation, “A miniature, wire-haired dachshund.” We had been searching for the right dog for several years...a dog that we might get when we could no longer travel...one to keep us company when we didn’t have such a busy life.

Glenn assumed that that day was far in the future, but while in Pensacola, Florida one winter, we visited the Pensacola dog show, and when a trainer placed a miniature, wire-haired-dachshund in Ruth’s arms, she said, “This is the kind of dog I want”...and our search for “a dog” ended and attempting to find the perfect miniature, wire-haired dachshund intensified. We found a breeder in Brewster, Ohio and with checkbook in hand, visited her one Saturday morning as she had told us that a litter with two wire-haired puppies was now nine weeks old and ready for adoption.

When we approached the small enclosure in which the breeder had placed the puppies for viewing...one raced to our side of the fence, licked Ruth’s hand... and Ruth was smitten. That was it! Orville and Ruth both seemed to know a match had been made, and a love at first sight affair was born. Grandson Andrew was with us and both he and Ruth held Orville all the way home. Ruth had promised that we would “cage train” our new family member, but when he cried that first night, she moved him to our bed, a place he has slept every night we have been together since. Glenn didn’t really want another dog, but grew to love Orville as

much as Ruth did...but Orville always loved Ruth the most! He always seemed to know who had selected him!

Orville, contracted liver cancer this spring and after repeated hospitalizations, we elected to let him go rather than keep him until his suffering increased. He was losing his energy and wanted to sleep, preferably while being held, rather than play or bark at passing "criminals," as he was wont to do.

Not having Orville around will make life much easier and much harder. Easier because: we won't have to take orders from him any longer; we won't step on Chews in the middle of the night; we won't have to get on our stomachs to pull him from under the bed when Ruth draws his bath water in the laundry room; we won't have carry plastic bags in the pockets of all of our jackets and shorts; we won't have to get up occasionally in the middle of the night to get him a drink or put him out; we won't be taking Orville to the VA Hospital in Cleveland every Wednesday to visit veterans as we were committed to do; we won't have to gather up nine toys each morning that have been strategically placed all over the house; we won't have to watch Orville chase Wilbur (our cat) thru the great room once every day, only to be put in his place by a cat bigger than him; we won't have to feed him or tell him to "hush" when he barks at potential burglars walking their dogs passed our house; Oh yes, life will be easier!

But not having Orville around will make life much harder too: we won't have that foot warmer in our bed; we won't have that guy to greet us at the back door on the rare occasion that he hadn't gone with us, as if he had missed us

(when we would leave without him, he would sit at the back door awaiting our return and would never eat the chew Ruth had given him until we were home); we won't get to see that tail almost wag off of his body every time he sees us; we won't get to watch him fetch, in slow motion; Glenn won't be able to take naps with his pal lying on his chest; Ruth won't have a foot warmer while she works on her computer; the walks and hikes won't be the same; we won't be able to say, "We have to go because we have a dog at home"; and we won't be as excited to open the back door when we come home, knowing that we are about to be engulfed in love each and every time; we won't be able to say, "Want to go bye-bye in the car?" and know that he will be waiting at the back door, ready for another adventure with us; and we won't be able to ride in the car again with his head firmly placed on the driver's arm or shoulder. We won't have those times any more.

The harder parts (above) of not having Orville around will be the hardest part! We have gone dog crazy (actually Orville crazy) in our advanced years! We are officially, "Dog People!" People who unashamedly treat their dogs as family members and are treated the same way in return. Orville has been there for us and us for him. We loved him and will never forget our car rides (three times to AZ and twice to FL, to mention a few), hikes, naps, daily trips, cuddles, sharing a bed, and so many good times. Life will be very different without him...but our life goes on...a good life...made far better for having had Orville in it.

April 22, 2013

Postscript

After Orville's death, we received over seventy emails, fifty Facebook comments, and lots of telephone calls and cards. Orville even received four flower arrangements from his human friends. Many loved Orville. Of the responses we received nearly seventy percent included stories of their own pet losses...and how they still had great memories of a particular pet. The following is a small sample of some of the responses we received.

From a Family Friend: Dear Glenn & Ruth, I read about Orville on Facebook and felt better sending condolences via email to share with you my story about Ginger, our collie. Gene and I drove all the way to Seville one day and this sweet little fluffy collie who looked like Lassie ran up, jumped on Gene's lap and licked him like there was no tomorrow. Oh yes, we took her home where she led a wonderful life. She went everywhere with us and even flew with us to Florida to visit Gene's high school buddy.

She was there watching over me when I was in labor with Ali and was so happy when we came home with a new little bundle who she played with and licked ever so gently. God bless her, she outlived Gene and passed away at 16 years old. It was the next worst thing that happened in my life losing my protector. A dear friend of mine sent me a copy of the "Rainbow Bridge" that I wanted to share with you (attached). It made me feel better and deal with her loss a

little bit easier. I hope this helps and I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers. Have a beautiful day. Love, Pam

From Orville's Veterinarian, Dr. Wood

Dear Ruth and Glenn:

Thank you so much for sharing. Your obituary was very touching to read, in between the tears. My thoughts and prayers are with you and Ruth at this difficult time, especially difficult for us "dog people". Orville was a special family member and I feel lucky to have known him. Sincerely,
Heather

From a Family Friend:

Dear Glenn and Ruth,

So sorry for your loss! I know that, although it is right, it is so hard to make the choice to let your furry buddy go with dignity. Thanks for sharing all the memories of having a retirement dog, it is a blessing only known by others holding a similar leash on life. Glenn, would you write MY obituary?

With love,

Karen.

From Our Breeder, Sandi McLain:

I was so sorry to hear about Orville. I can't stop crying. I lost his mother last year at 11. He died too young. I am not going to breed wires any more. It has been a decision that has been hard to make but I really need to cut down on my numbers. If you decide you want another wire dachshund I will be placing several older (7 months and 1 year old). I will give you one of them. Please accept my condolences on the passing of Orville. It hurts me so much that he was taken so soon.

Sandy

From a Family Friend:

Dear Ruth and Glenn:

I am so sorry. My dog Amaduke died last year and I was devastated. Our consolation is We gave them a wonderful life.

Take care,

Aurora

From a Family Friend:

Dear Glen and Ruth,

Oh dear friends, I am so so sorry to read this sad news. I know that the hole in your lives and hearts is huge and it is truly a pain like no other. The obituary is beautiful and says it all. The harder we love the harder we hurt and my thoughts and prayers are with you both.

With much love,

Ilona

From Our Friends:

Dear Ruth and Glenn,

We are SO very sorry to hear about Orville. We know how much that cute little dog means to you, and can only imagine how sad you are. Just wanted you to know that we're thinking of you, and wishing that we could give you a big hug, to let you know how much we care. We have fun memories of smuggling Orville hidden in a bag, into our FL condo.

With much love,

Carol and Dave

And so it goes...life goes on.