

LowcountryLife

Arts & Culture

Bop to the beats of yesteryear at arts center's 'Smokey Joe's Cafe' **the Guide**



FIVE MINUTES WITH

Author Julie Chalpan

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In the 12 years Julie and Keith Chalpan have had Titan, a Jack Russell terrier mix, he's given them plenty of stories to tell, whether it's how they met or how he eats just about anything he gets his paws on.



Chalpan and Titan

Julie decided it was time to tell Titan's tale, along with the stories of dogs like him. Her book, "Titan's Tales and Other Dog Adoption Love Stories," is a tribute to rescued dogs and their owners. Part of the proceeds from the book go to help local animal rescue groups.

Julie, a Hilton Head Island resident, tells Titan's tale.

Question. How did the idea for the book come about?

Answer. Titan was getting older. He's about 14 now. I was just thinking, "I need to write down his story." I had been volunteering with local shelters and thought, "Why not have other people tell their stories, too?" I talked to friends and friends of friends and shelters and put it on Facebook and ended up with more than 30 stories from owners about their rescued dogs.

Q. What is Titan's story?

A. We were living in a suburb outside of Atlanta and moved into a large house with a big backyard. I never had a dog growing up because I had cardiac asthma. I outgrew it, thank goodness. I couldn't even be around dogs as a kid.

We liked beagles. The Gwinnett Humane Society had adoptions at the PetSmart and I was constantly up there. I go in, and there's Titan. They rescued him on his "kill day" (when he was scheduled to be euthanized). They had gotten him from animal control earlier in the week. I thought I'd come in and the dog would run up to me. But Titan was just sitting there. I wasn't sure about a Jack Russell mix, but he was just so cute. I called my husband and said, "This is the one."

Q. Any surprises at first?

A. We got him on a Sunday. On Wednesday, he was just sitting in the middle of us gnawing on rawhide while we were watching TV. By the time we were done, he had devoured that rawhide. We thought, "Oh no, we just killed the dog after four days." We called the emergency vet number and they said he'd be OK, and it turned out fine. But that was a start of a long line of (incidents with) Titan and his eating.

I had gone up to Michigan to visit family once. This was maybe a year after we got him. My husband had gone off to a meeting and came home, and he swears that Titan opened the refrigerator, opened the meat and cheese drawer. There were all these empty cartons of cheese and lunch meat all over the kitchen. My husband cleaned it up, no big deal. Then he went to bed that night, pulled back the covers and there was a big block of cheese. I guess in case his daddy didn't come home, Titan thought he'd have food for the next day.

GET THE BOOK

Pick up a copy of "Titan's Tales and Other Dog Adoption Love Stories" at Red Rover, Pino Gelato, Burke's Pharmacy, Palmetto Animal League, Brooke's Bed and Biscuit and at the Ruff Life table at Shelter Cove's HarbourFest, or go to www.titanstales.com.

