

Ho Ho HOWL!

Puppy Pawlidays to our dear friends!



We hope you will excuse the lateness of our annual holiday letter. You know how Jan usually likes to get these out before the turkey carcass has even cooled - ha ha! It has been all too exciting (see: **dramatic!**) of a holiday season (or should we say “pawliday” season - woof!) for us in the Clements household recently. More on that in a moment, but **first!** I realize that we should probably update you on all the goodness that this year brings (because as mother always says, “Francis, if people wanted to cry in their soup they would just turn on the news instead!”)

Mitsy, Winston, and Churchill continue to enrich our lives (and their travels and booking requests continue to both enrich and dramatically deplete our bank account! Ha ha!) If you recently saw three very attractive canines on a golf cart with Al Roker at the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade’s national broadcast on NBC, you can now proudly tell all your friends, “I know those Shetlands!” (No **paw**-tographs, please! Ha ha!) While this was an unpaid opportunity - for now! - it paid richly in memories (unfortunately, they did not accept ‘memories’ as a form of currency at the Waldorf when it was time to leave! Ha ha!) Earlier in the year, Churchy and Winston were also proudly featured in the Purina brand on-demand 4th of July Spectacular. We knew Mitzy’s big brothers were skilled and well trained. But who knew that our shelts could catch lit sparklers in their mouths while standing on their hind legs and dancing to The Stars and Stripes Forever? John Philip Sousa’s most famous march for the world’s most famous dogs - we couldn’t imagine a better fit!



Earlier this spring, mother and I were delighted to take John up on his offer of an extended stay at his beachside property - “furbaby” friendly, of course!



The pups and Jan enjoyed some lakeside frolics, while I enjoyed John’s Dish Network programming and maybe caught a nap or two - shhh! I know, I

know - it isn’t fair to leave mother at the mercy of our 3 hooligans, but when in Rome you MUST take a nap! Ha ha! As you can see, another exciting event from this vacation was Mitzy’s discovery of her new pink sunnies! What a diva - hee hee! All in all, it was a perfect holiday away from the grunt and grind of full time mutt-managing! As the sign on John’s kitchen wall says, “**Life is short - buy the beach house!**” And to that I add - “*And if you don’t have the liquid assets to purchase it, just borrow it from John during the off-season!*” Ha ha!

Now, I suppose it cannot be put off any longer - so please get comfortable while I update you on the recent drama surrounding our sweet Mitsy and her poor tummy! As anyone is well aware, one of our favorite traditions is decorating our first gingerbread house the morning after Thanksgiving! As tradition goes, mother also gives our pups their own special canine biscuits - ones that are made locally with canine safe ingredients by Happy Dog Barkery. Well, as we were spending a far-flung holiday at the Waldorf Astoria (still hoping for a check, NBC! Ha!) our traditions were thrown into total CHAOS this year.

This is why, on Thanksgiving afternoon, I found myself at the checkout of the Duane Reade at the corner of 41st and Third Avenue (for those local, it’s like a Walgreens except in the belly of Manhattan) purchasing a DIY



gingerbread kit made from entirely questionable ingredients. What was thought to be a sweet gesture for Jan in an attempt to create a little 'home away from home' turned out to be one of my worst decisions ever made in New York - and a person can make many bad decisions in New York! Ask my wife! Ha ha!

I will spare you all the gritty details, but the short version of this story involves an unexpected trip to an emergency vet (New York City prices - YEOW!) and one very sweet Sheltie named Mitsy who has not had a solid stool since before sitting next to Al Roker! After many offers of canned pumpkin and attempts to make rice in a hotel coffee maker (the glamorous life of canine handlers on the road - that's showbiz, right?!), it was time to get on our flight back home. I will stop here to offer you one small bit of advice: **never, under any circumstances, stay in a hotel or get on an airplane alongside a sheltie with loose stools.** This advice is emphasized by myself, my traumatized Mitsy baby, as well as the fine personnel of the Waldorf Astoria and Southwest Airlines (both of which we now hold a great deal of gratitude towards, as well as a large balance related to outstanding cleaning fees and assorted damages).



Unfortunately, in order to defray the recent damages from our New York adventure, rather than treats, dog toys, or new outfits for our pups (sorry Mitsy, we know you like fashion, ha ha!) - this year, we ask that you consider sending us the gift of CASH. Mr. Washington (or even better, Mr Benjamin!) are welcome guests at our home. We will roll out and de-fur the dog beds for as many that would like to cross our merry threshold! Additionally, as a one-year-only (maybe! hopefully!) offer, we have created a fundraiser where you can purchase a personalized Churchill, Winston, and Mitsy ornament (you will note that Mitsy is "tied up" in lights - an attempt to try and keep her from her taste for gingerbread - ha ha!) If ornaments aren't your thing (because we recognize that not everyone trims the ol' tree!) please consider buying a "sheltiebread" dog, made by yours truly, Mr. Francis Clements! (A little irony and dark humor always goes a long way, wouldn't you say?!)

Regardless, no matter where or how this finds you, we all send you furry hugs, slobbery kisses, and wishes for regular bowels, now and in the new year to come.

Hope your holidays are 'Dog-gone' fantastic,

Francis & Jan Clements (and Mitsy and Churchy and Winny, too! Woof!)