



Dawkins heads for her studio with her baby, James and dogs.

Dogkins' Life with Dogs

Dog portraitor-Amy Dawkins



Dawkins draws a new portrait of Buddy that died the last October. She seems to feel the presence of Buddy as she is drawing a new portrait.

Dogs are my family, not pets

Amy Dawkins is a real canine lover. She calls herself Dogkins and the domain name of her website is Dogkins.com. Her passion for dogs led her into her unique business-dog portraits. Her 54" x 36" charcoal drawings are price at \$1,000. Dog adoration pays the bills and paves the way for doing the real art she wants patrons and pundits to remember. However, not many customers call her for portraits of their pet.

Her studio is near Sturgeon, past serene countryside. Her property is densely wooded. A sinuous gravel road draws you deeper into the trees until it gives way to her home and a happy garden where flowers, tomatoes and green beans grow. Predictably, dogs abound. Bear-bear. Rosie. Rupus and Kashish (love in Arabic). They appear indistinguishable from one another with their black coats splashed with patches of brown. But Dawkins easily identifies each.

For her, dogs are not pets but her family. Before she got married last year, dogs ate with her, played with her, and slept with her. Now, dogs stay outside of house because Dawkins also has to care about her husband and new-born baby James. Only Rupus is sometimes allowed to stay inside.

Actually, Dawkins used to take care of more dogs. Until she decided to send her dogs to new owners, the number of her dogs was fourteen. Under tight financial situation, she could not afford all of her dogs. Furthermore, she lost her favorite dog, Buddy. Seventeen year-old Buddy was so old and one of her legs broke last October. She had to put Buddy into the eternal sleep by herself. Buddy died after Dawkins gave an injection at the living room of her home.

Buddy was buried in the backyard of



Dawkins hinders her favorite dog, Rupus, from approaching her son, James.

Dawkins' home. Everyday, Dawkins tries to stop by Buddy's grave to say hello. Recently, she decided to draw new portrait of Buddy even though she already has a lot of portraits of Buddy. She seems to feel the presence of Buddy as she is drawing new portrait.

Dawkins reverses the dog-eat-dog mentality of our growling universe. Her zeal for dogs is evangelistic with a slightly aggressive bent. She hopes to procure enough funds one day to confiscate dogs from abusive owners and build them a safe haven.

Photos by Yung Soo Kim

Story by Columbia Missourian



Dawkins enjoys time with Rupus.