

A True Story of Puppy Love Inspired by Friendly Coyote

by
Jennie Z.
Rose

Skunks, rabbits, gophers, red-tailed hawks, owls, raccoons and the two coyotes spotted this summer and fall call Glen Canyon Park home. We all generally coexist without interacting. The arrangement seems to work out fine: We go inside at night, and the wildlife has the decency to stay out of sight during the day.

But when a gorgeous coyote pup kangaroo-hopped into Janet Kessler's life at dawn last summer on Twin Peaks, it was the beginning of an unusual kind of courtship—one that has spawned a very local best-seller.

Over the course of many months, the animal, looking like a "skinny little dog," made playful overtures to Kessler

and her own dog by bounding toward them, then scooting away as if to invite chase. She then hunkered down about 50 feet away on the trail with rear raised in the universal sign for "Let's play!"

"She never came right up to me; she stayed a certain distance, but she did stay around," observed Kessler, who named the animal "Myca," short for "my coyote."

"When we sat down on the ground, she sat down too. She wanted to get to know us. My opinion is that this was a child coyote, a pup, and her curiosity overcame her judgment."

Kessler was so taken with Myca that she signed up for a photo class so she could catch the essence of the coyote's personality on film. She has now pro-

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She'll work as hard for your Glen Park house as she did for this one.

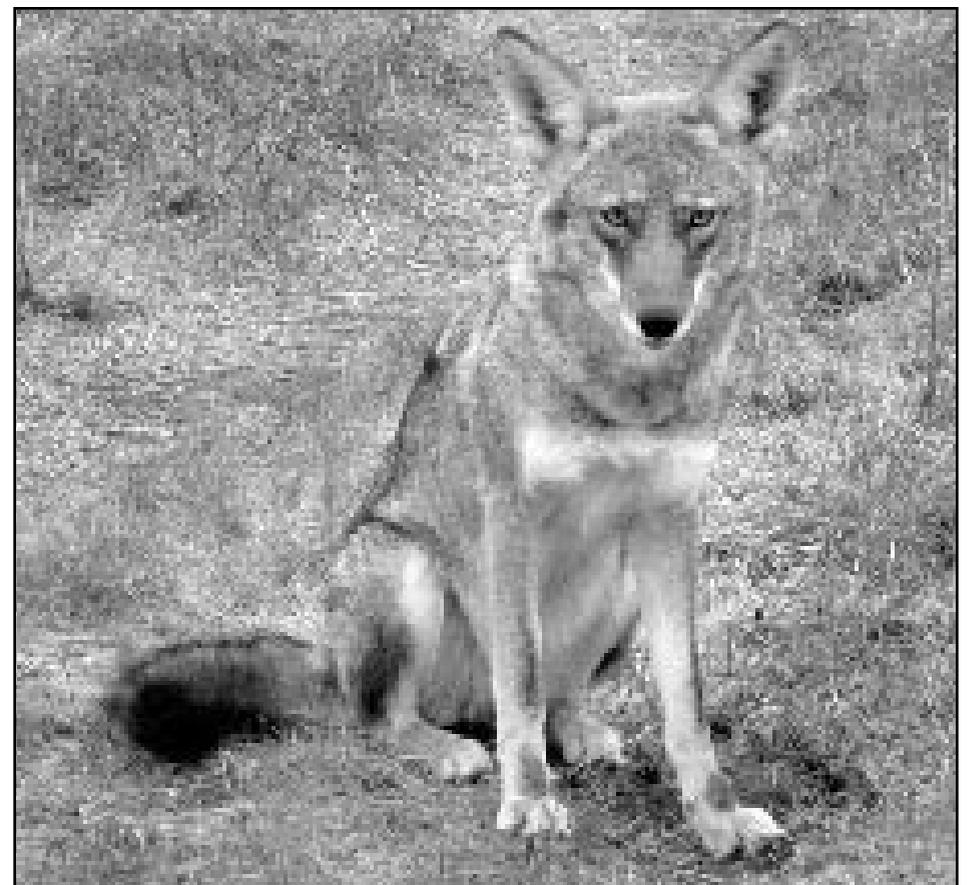
Sara's professional background includes time at The White House, where she was selected to serve as an intern in 1994. Her stellar career path brought her back to San Francisco, where she worked as a paralegal for the Office of the District Attorney and for several civil law firms.

Over the years she has developed a knack for research, problem solving, and sifting through complex issues. Now, she is committed to working hard for you, and for your home. Call her today for truly empathetic real estate advice backed by solid research and expertise.



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Myca, the Twin Peaks coyote.

Photo by Janet Kessler

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Glen Park Association Meeting

SFPD Capt. Denis O'Leary, the commanding officer of the Ingleside Police Station, gave his inside phone number out at the fall Glen Park Association meeting. "If it's an emergency, call 911," he told the crowd of 40 or so neighbors who filled the eighth-grade classroom at St. John's Elementary.

"If it's not an emergency, call 553-0123. If it's a nagging concern, something that won't go away—call me," said O'Leary, whose jurisdiction includes Glen Park. His number is 404-4030.

O'Leary, a 26-year SFPD veteran, came to us from Southern Station as part of a habit the force has of rotating its captains every few years. Ingleside is O'Leary's third posting as captain.

He arrived at the Oct. 9 GPA meeting right on the dot and had clearly done his homework, giving the crowd a rundown of the crimes that had happened within Glen Park in the past month. It came to a total of 32 within a half-mile of 100 Bosworth St., which was his working definition of the neighborhood. Most were smaller property crimes, stolen cars, burglaries. There was one shooting, on Addison Street, a dispute over money. The person who was shot is OK, O'Leary said. Although the suspected shooter was identified, he ran and hadn't been caught at last report.

In general, "car break-ins are the No. 1 crime in this neighborhood," he reported.

Capt. O'Leary has created a free Yahoo electronic mailing list to update residents of the Ingleside Station territory about crimes in their neighborhood. To receive a copy of the Ingleside Station newsletter, send an e-mail to: InglesideStationNewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.com

One of the reasons O'Leary was transferred to Ingleside was to encourage the practice of officers walking beats. Currently there are two walking beats in the station's jurisdiction, both on Mission Street. One is centered at Geneva Avenue, the other at Cesar Chavez Street. Given Glen Park's extremely low crime rate compared with the rest of the area the station covers, it's highly unlikely that a beat officer will be assigned to Glen Park.

BART Update

Next on the meeting agenda was a presentation by BART Director Tom Radulovich, who represents Glen Park on the BART board. His topic: the BART parking lot at Bosworth and Arlington streets. He said it isn't actually a lot that BART planned for; it was

just excess land that the regional rail system owned.

BART is thinking of developing the lot. But, Radulovich was careful to point out, exactly what will be built there, if anything at all, will be the result of a very long, thoughtful process: "We're patient, we're looking at this over the long haul," he said.

After years of dealing with issues around development, BART has learned that it's much better to begin with the community and a developer working together. The idea "is not to get a developer who creates a plan which everyone hates, and then the knives come out," he said.

BART wants to turn the parking lot and the area around the Glen Park station into something that will benefit the whole area: "People have talked about a plaza, about open spaces. We're looking at affordable housing. But people don't want too many more cars, so senior housing is a possibility," he said.

But none of this will happen without a great deal of input and study from the neighborhood and various City and regional groups, including the City's Planning Department, which will do an Environmental Review, and a traffic study, he vowed.

Of course some people want no changes at all: "I've gotten letters telling me that replacing the parking lot with affordable senior housing is crazy," Radulovich said.

Another long-term BART plan is to help knit the Glen Park BART plaza into the community. "It really only touches the neighborhood now," Radulovich said.

And of course Radulovich acknowledged that that process can be an extremely slow one: "The glaciers may melt, we may run out of oil, before the City finishes their environmental review plan."

Handicapped Parking

The final portion of the meeting addressed the possible need for more handicapped parking in the village.

There are currently three blue spaces on Bosworth, and one in front of Citibank. Supervisor Bevan Dufty's office has received 15–20 calls requesting more spaces be reserved for people with disabilities. Bryan Wo from the City Department of Parking and Traffic said that there were only three possible options for additional handicap-only parking spaces:

- NW corner of Diamond and Chenery, in front of Tyger's.
- NW corner of Diamond and Kern, but the sidewalk is narrow.
- SE corner of Wilder and Dia-

Coyote

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duced a small, 40-page photo booklet, *Myca of Twin Peaks, our mild-natured neighbor*, which is flying off the shelves down at Bird and Beckett.

Coyotes usually run as loners or in loose packs when their food supply allows. They are notoriously shy of humans, while at the same time—as animal behaviorist Marc Bekoff of the University of Colorado notes—they are strikingly individualistic with adaptive behaviors that defy expectations.

Because of the innate individualism and flexibility of the coyote family, Myca's rapport with her human friend grew into a unique relationship. But eventually, Kessler and her dog started bumping right into the animal, "face to face," too often, she reports in the booklet. Myca was getting attached.

It's lucky for this animal that she befriended someone who views the separation between humans and the wild with respect. Kessler may have been smitten with the charismatic coyote, but entertains no delusions that she is some kind of "coyote whisperer." When she saw that the dividing line had inched toward her to a degree that seemed unwise, Kessler took several steps back.

In recent months as Myca has matured, her kangaroo bounces of "glee" are diminished, replaced by a more cautious aloofness. And though it's a kind of heartbreaking long goodbye, Myca's increasing distance from Kessler is exactly what she should be doing if this coyote is to survive. ■

Coyotes are re-colonizing San Francisco rapidly, according to a newly released film San Francisco—Still Wild At Heart. The one-hour natural history film chronicles the return of coyotes to San Francisco, and celebrates the wildlife that survives and thrives in our urban landscape. It is available for purchase at Bird & Beckett Books. A free screening will be held on Dec. 12 in Socha (cafe on Mission Street across from Valencia).

mond, but that would require removal of a tree.

Dufty's aide, Rachele McManus, said their office is working on getting the space in front of Citibank cleared of news racks, which currently pose access problems for people who use a wheelchair.

McManus said if neighborhood residents have thoughts or concerns about either the availability of handicapped parking, or handicapped spaces being blocked, they should contact her at Rachele.McManus@sfgov.org, or 554-6968. ■

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