

# "YAPPY HOURS"

## HELPING DOG LOVERS LOVE VODKA EVEN MORE

By Doug Mace

**F**rom a farm dog at an Austin, Texas brewery to a brand that self-identifies as Vodka for dog lovers, Tito's brand Vodka exemplifies a pair of passions becoming a national favorite. Furthermore, Tito's shows how successful people can contribute so positively in a variety of different mediums.

One of the he fastest growing Vodkas in the United States for several years also possesses a smaller, shaggier and more cuddly side. The brand proudly distinguished themselves as THE vodka for dog lovers after their owner's history and a successful period of growth allowed them to build their own philanthropic following.

The company's owner, Bert 'Tito' Butler, has gone so far as to promote the hashtag "#vodkafordoglovers". Now, Tito's sponsors hundreds of "Yappier Hours" around the United States which donate to a variety of charities related to animal rescue and adoption services. A recent "Yappy Hour" promotion was held at a new restaurant in Canton named Gunther & Co. (named for the warehouse nearby).



**Katie Murphy** (pictured with Daisy), on-premise sales manager for Tito's, excitedly explained where the brand slogan came from and how the company's love of animals began. "Bertito (or just Tito for short) always had his dog with him and he would leave out feed for, which, led to more dogs showing up and he would let them eat too." She continued, "There are still dogs that roam around the distillery." (BTW ... "Bertito" is the affectionate nickname given Bert based on his Latino upbringing and childhood.)

Emancipet and the ASPCA are just a couple of the beneficiaries of the support raised by Tito's, "Our partnership with the ASPCA has led to donations of \$150,000 ." A leading source for donations such as this? Events and promotions like "Yappier Hours".

When asked about how she felt about the company she worked for, Katie couldn't have been anymore enthused, "We work for an events company that also sells Vodka".

On the Tito's website you can purchase toys, leashes, and other pet products by PrideBites. If that name sounds familiar you may be a fan of the NBC show 'Shark Tank'. The pet company was featured on the



show previously.

Katie continued by explaining why she loves working at Tito's almost as much as her own dog Daisy, "I love the idea that I can bring my dog and I would love to rescue another dog and it's so great that he's so passionate."

In speaking about the dedication to the cause Katie mentioned that "He's so passionate about so many things and Tito says, 'whatever it is you're passionate about we'll find a way to give, and give, and give.'" Dog, cat, animal, human, or rock it seems that Tito's is passionate if anyone else is passionate.

As the flurry of fluffy friends rolled in, one popular face in Baltimore popped up as well. Boh, the rescued dog of Steve and Laura Hazan has become a Canton neighborhood celebrity. The small white dog is unfortunately missing one eye. But, fortunately, lives in a city with the utmost affection for an icon with a similar condition ...Natty Boh.

The winking sign that sits atop the tower that formerly held the brewery is located just blocks down the street from where the family calls home. The combination of location and injury made Boh one of the most famous dogs in Baltimore.

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BOH, THE RESCUED DOG OF STEVE AND LAURA HAZAN HAS BECOME A CANTON NEIGHBORHOOD CELEBRITY. THE SMALL WHITE DOG IS UNFORTUNATELY MISSING ONE EYE, BUT VERY FORTUNATELY LIVES IN A CITY WITH THE UTMOST AFFECTION FOR AN ICON WITH THE SAME CONDITION. BOH IS PICTURED HERE WITH STEVE AND HIS SON PAUL.

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# VODKA FOR DOG PEOPLE

Laura explains how Boh was rescued and became so affectionately named, "He became a Canton celebrity because an AARF foster "parent" put his picture on the well-used Canton Neighbors FB page and said "someone in this neighborhood needs to adopt this dog - he looks like Natty Boh's dog!" I saw the post and immediately fell in love."

When asked if the fame or constant recognition is bothersome, Laura replied very simply, "It's like being famous but having anonymity at the same time. People always tell us it's a great thing we did adopting a dog with only one eye - and it's sweet people

think that."

A quote that was so evident of the care and love shared by Boh's family and many of the others as well was from Laura, "He's sweet and mellow and my best guess is he was well-loved - I know he is now."

To further confirm the benefit of adopt-

ing a pet and the loving attitude of so many rescue-owners Laura said, "I'd strongly urge anyone considering becoming a pet owner to rescue an animal. There are so many in need of homes. I understand some rescue animals come with challenges, but help is available if that is the case."

An excellent company, an excellent event, and an excellent cause. Tito's brand vodka using man's best friend - and other friends - to make the world a better place. Who would've thought vodka and pets matched so well? ■

