

Philly native Boggs publishes Spike the Wonder Dog

By **Mark Zimmario** - May 13, 2020



Contributed photo

By Tom Waring

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Philadelphia native Bill Boggs has done a lot in the entertainment field in his long career, including hosting a syndicated television show called Southern Exposure, based in High Point, North Carolina.

A staple of that show was Spike, Boggs' English bull terrier who often received fan mail.

Sadly, Spike was killed by a speeding car.

Boggs would go on to host a daily TV show in New York as part of many decades in the industry.

Some have suggested Boggs write a memoir, but he had another thought.

"What if Spike hadn't been killed, and came with me to New York?" Boggs said.

Now we know what would have happened, as Boggs is publishing his third book, *The Adventures of Spike the Wonder Dog*.

The 288-page book, with illustrations by Jacob Below, is a mix of social commentary and satire, and is a light memoir.

"Much of it is inspired by my life," Boggs said.

Boggs grew up in Northeast Philadelphia. He graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in January 1959, and has bachelor's and master's degrees from Penn.

He spoke about his book last week in a phone interview from his home in Palm Beach, Florida, where he lives with his girlfriend, "Lady Jane." His son, Trevor, lives in Philadelphia.

Normally, Boggs would be spending the spring in Manhattan, but he and Jane feel safer in Florida, as New York is the hotspot of the coronavirus.

The author is doing his best to promote the book, but public appearances are off-limits due to the coronavirus.

Boggs' career has included an Off-Broadway play, newspaper and magazine articles, stints as a game show host, TV news anchor and executive producer of the Morton Downey Jr. Show and programs on Fox, the Food Network and many other networks.

In 2016, he was inducted into the Northeast Philadelphia Hall of Fame.

Looking back, Boggs said going to Lincoln and growing up in the Northeast had a positive influence on him. He often wears his high school ring.

The book includes a comment written by classmate Howard Higman in Boggs' yearbook: "Never lose your sense of humor, it's the most valued possession you have."

The book also has the following quote from Doris Day, who died last May as Boggs was writing the book: "I have found that when you are deeply troubled, there are things you get from the silent, devoted companionship of your pets that you can get from no other source. I have never found in a human being loyalty comparable to that of any pet."

Spike was a devoted, loyal companion to Boggs, and that comes through in the book.

In the book, Spike's master, Bud, follows the same career path as Boggs, working on a morning show in North Carolina, then a daytime program in New York.

The comedic novel centers around a politically incorrect, 70-pound, large white dog.

"My goal is to have him entertain the folks, to be a new voice in comedy," Boggs said of Spike.

Bud and Spike appear on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon, visit Bud's mom in Philadelphia for Christmas and mingle with an A-list crowd of celebrities throughout the book, even coming across a very alive Andy Kaufman.

Philly native Chris Matthews is seen on TV excited about recently discovered DNA that may lead to the cloning of his former boss, House Speaker Tip O'Neill.

Bryce Harper and Jerry Blavat also get mentions.

"I told the Geator, 'You're in the book.' He was happy," Boggs said.

Bud and Spike visit Las Vegas for a big fight card, and Spike later has some harrowing experiences at an animal clinic, in a freezer and as part of a dog-fighting ring.

No matter the serious content, the author interjects a lighter tone.

"It's designed to make you laugh on every page," he said. "If you like sitcoms and comedy, you'll like this book."

We haven't heard the last of Spike the Wonder Dog.

"I want to write a sequel to the book. I have an overview," said Boggs, promising an action-packed book that will include a focus on Spike's relationship with his girlfriend, Daisy. ••

The Adventures of Spike the Wonder Dog is available on Amazon by going to www.orderspike.com. The cost is \$25, or \$9.99 on Kindle. Follow Spike's adventures on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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