



PHOTO: Parker Rosenberger

TOP Dog

Monty is remarkably agile and fast, a nationally renowned athlete. He uses his extraordinary abilities to earn his ... dog food?

Monty is a Shetland sheepdog and one of the top dogs on the agility circuit in the United States, along with his owner, Viveka Rosenberger. Monty, following Viveka's cues, leaps over obstacles, jumps through hoops, rips through tunnels, and runs up and down moving teeter-totter-like planks. He's grace in motion—so quick to turn, swift afoot, and smooth in his moves—that he makes an agility course look easy.

Viveka is fast, too. She has to be, to stay even with Monty and to signal where to go next. The two are a well-coordinated team, always contenders in whatever competition they enter. And they enter many of them, all over the United States,

By Lisa Ballard

The team hangs around the Airstream's table: Rascal, Monty, Cowboy, Viveka, and Sadie.



ABOVE: Monty floats seamlessly over a 16" jump at Huntsville, Alabama.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Sadie pops out of the "puppy cannon" in the middle of her run in Huntsville.

MIDDLE: Cowboy tells jokes at dinner with the team.

BOTTOM: Breathing Montana's fresh air.

but especially around the southeastern and southcentral parts of the country—places as far flung as Fellesmere, Florida; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Watertown, Tennessee. One weekend they might be in Indiana or Ohio, and the next in Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, or Georgia.

Viveka's husband, Parker, their three children—ages 6, 3 and 1—and three other dogs are also typically along for the ride in the family's Suburban, pulling an Airstream travel trailer. They are all part of the successful dog agility crew, competing and teaching others how to do their sport. Their Airstream plays an important role in Viveka's and Monty's quest to be the best.

"When we traveled to competitions, we needed a cool way to get there and a place to stay," says Parker Rosenberger. "I grew up seeing Airstreams in my family. A cousin of mine refurbished a 70s model, and my great aunt had them. We bought our first one in 2019, a 23-foot Globetrotter, but when we had our third child last year, we needed something bigger. We bought a 30-foot Flying Cloud in April. It had 18,000 miles on it by early September."

In addition to its size, another reason why Parker and Viveka love their Flying Cloud is its manageability on the road. When Parker is unable to accompany Viveka to a competition, he knows she can pull it alone with the kids and the dogs.

"It's a trailer, so much easier than a fifth wheel," he says.

It takes a lot of coordination to travel long distances from their home in Birmingham, Alabama with three young kids and four dogs ... and then to be successful at weekly competitions. Parker is in charge of the Airstream. He turns on the refrigerator, puts the crib inside, loads it up with whatever else they need, and hooks it up to their vehicle. Viveka handles the competition details and buys the groceries before they leave home, then once they are at a site, she settles the kids and sets up what the dogs need.

"We go to competitions year-round, but now that our oldest is in kindergarten—we call it 'big boy school'—we try to pick competitions that aren't more than nine hours away," says Parker. "Sometimes we pick my son up at school with the Airstream on our way out of town, which is pretty funny to see in the school's carpool lane, but it's ready to go, with pizza in the fridge. Later, when we pull into a campground, a horse arena or an ag center, we eat pizza and get ready for the competition."

RVs are a common way for dog agility competitors to travel. In 2014, when Viveka first entered the dog agility world, the Rosenbergers did not have one. She was constantly looking for pet-friendly hotels, packing and repacking.

"It was so much work, so we bought a small Jayco," recalls Parker. "It didn't hold up with the mileage we put on it. I would get a call from Viveka, who was expecting our second child, asking how to fix something. I couldn't afford for her to be alone at a competition and not have the RV work, so we switched to an Airstream. They're reliable, and we wanted to stand out."

In truth, Viveka already stood out among her peers. At age 33, she's young for a dog agility competitor. Most are much older or retired and don't travel with three young children. It's not unusual for her to walk around a course with a couple of her kids holding each other's hands.

She has also risen quickly to the top of her game. In 2021, she and Monty placed in the top 10 at the national championships, earning an invitation to the prestigious AKC Premier Cup in Florida, where she placed sixth. The event was televised on ESPN. In January 2022, Viveka appeared at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show at Madison Square Garden, New York.

Their Airstream trailer is an eye-catcher, too. "Thirty feet just pops!" says Parker, "I've had more people at gas stations talk to me about it, let alone competitions. Airstream represents a premium brand, like we're creating with our team."

The Rosenbergers have become pros at Airstream camping as at dog agility events. They offer these tips to everyone who plans to spend time driving and camping with kids and pets:



PHOTO: Dean Lake Photography



PHOTO: Parker Rosenberger

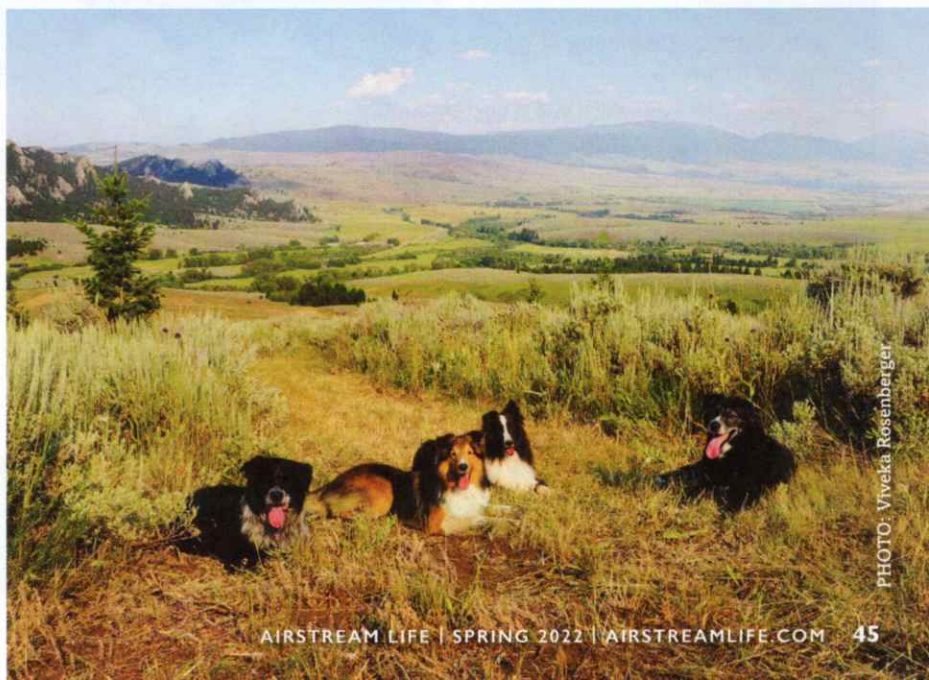


PHOTO: Viveka Rosenberger

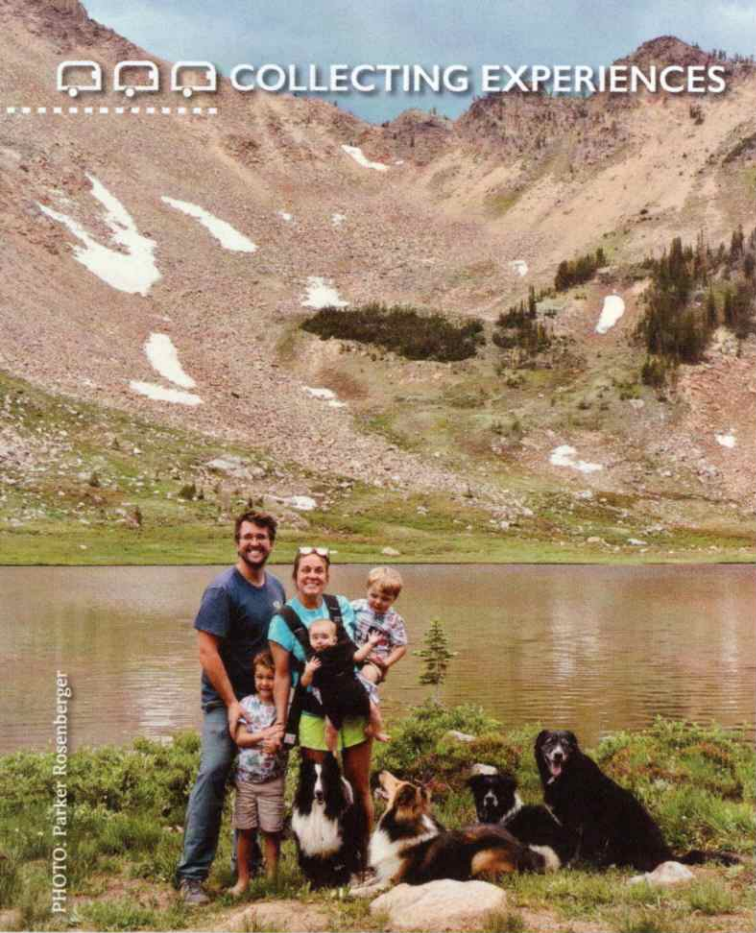


PHOTO: Parker Rosenberger

A cool dip waits at the end of a long trek up to Granite Lake, Montana for Parker, Viveka, Magnus, Torsten, Aili, Rascal, Monty, Sadie, and Cowboy.


Create a service punch list. If you don't have much downtime between trips, with a punch list, you can drop off your Airstream at a dealership and get any work done quickly and without forgetting something.

Keep your travel trailer clean. Kids and dogs constantly track in dust and mud. The Rosenbergs deep clean their trailer after every trip. While traveling, they wipe around, vacuum, pick up clothing, toys and personal items, and put away dishes every day.

Get a portable fence. The Rosenbergs use a bike rack to transport their portable fence. When they arrive at their campsite, they set up a dog run with it. That way, they can let the dogs out while keeping them in a controlled area.

Use collapsible dog bowls. The Rosenbergs favor cloth, canvas-like, dog bowls, which fold up and store easily.

While Viveka's success in dog agility trials is the main reason for the Rosenbergs' exceptional amount of road-time, the couple feels it's also family bonding time.

"Airstreaming is as nice as our home, and we have moments like this at home, but here, we might be at a horse barn," relates Parker. "We had a date night in Tennessee last summer. We played jazz and put steaks on the grill while the kids played outside. You can't replace that with money. Our kids will talk about it with their grandkids. We're creating memories." 

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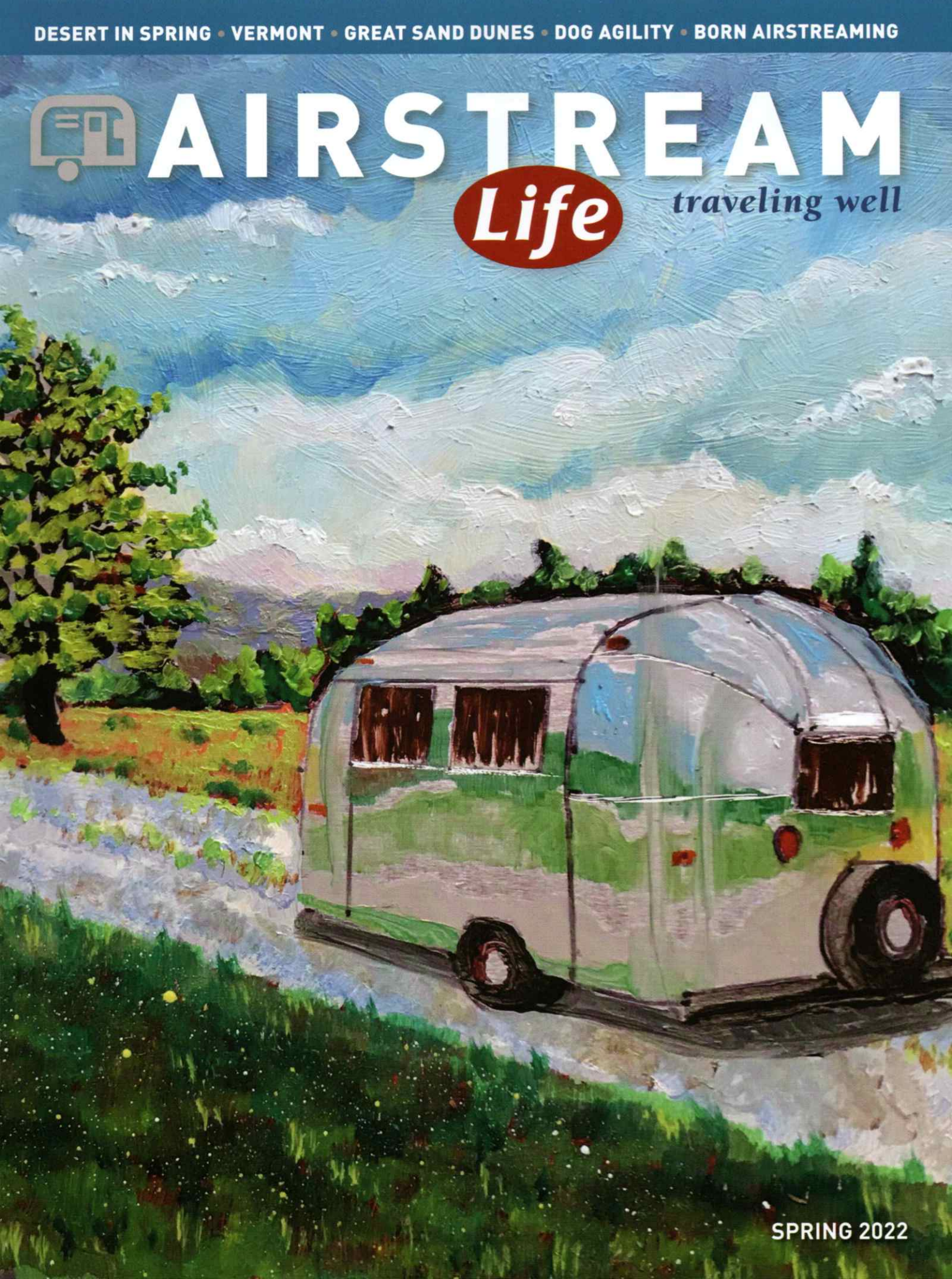
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