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19 Dog Training Mistakes

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MIDDLE Pooch Politics

Savita Iyer, Sep 15, 2004, 12.00am IST

Olive is a popular dog on Manhattan's chic Upper West Side, a fixture on the Central Park dog circuit. She loves to chase squirrels, hit people up for treats and lick clean cottage cheese containers.

She hates George W Bush.

On the Thursday of Convention Week — the very day GOP top dog George W Bush accepted the Republican Party's nomination for re-election as president of the United States — Olive and some of her Bush-hating, barking buddies got together in Central Park to express their dislike for the current US regime. Olive's brothers in arms came from every part of New York and included Upper West Siders Clancy, a terrier; Sierra, a ravenous Labrador retriever ready to devour anything edible in sight; Thornton, a black and white spaniel from the trendy downtown neighbourhood of Tribeca and an anonymous hot pink poodle. About 60-odd humans — including Betsy Gotbaum, New York City public advocate and another regular Central Park dog walker — accompanied them. Dogs (and their owners) wore T-shirts emblazoned with colourful anti-Bush slogans, and shared their views on US politics while bonding over Cafe Lattes and doggie treats.

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Olive and her canine comrades believe that America under Bush is going to the dogs. Indeed, many dogs across the nation feel the same way, just click on www.dogshatebush.com. This California-based organisation, which has even been cited by the Kerry campaign, continues to attract pooches from just about every state in the country, as it has given them a forum to express their opinions. There's George, who hates his namesake president more than the vacuum cleaner; Koots, who believes that Bushes have but one use; Whiskey, who would rather see a coyote in the White House and Kaiu, who claims that he speaks better English than Bush.

And then there are the felines: www.catshatebush.com has as many members as its doggy counterpart, including Tarzana who wants to eat W's house plants; Jerzey, who'd prefer to diet than see Bush re-elected and Twink, who has just one word to say: "Neuter".

Olive has no idea who will win the presidency but like other anti-GOP organisations that have sprung up in the past months, the Big Apple's chapter of Dogs Against Bush will be barking

louder in the coming months. After all, this is New York, where anyone and anything can say what they want to and get away with it. Woof, woof.

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