

Will HOBBS

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WHEN ROSE, WILL HOBBS' 8-MONTH-OLD RED HEN turned up with a broken leg, he discovered that unfortunately veterinarians don't typically treat chickens for injuries, leaving him no choice but to fix it himself. A combination of store-bought popsicle sticks, tape and foam, along with a cooperative chicken did the trick. "In about six weeks she was as good as new," he said.

Whether it was his love for Rose, or maybe the resourcefulness he gained in the Marine Corps working on helicopters, or in his decades in the hospitality business, Will's dedication to the individuals in his life—fowl or otherwise—is a through theme.

Will explained that Rose is one of seven chickens in total and one of four who are named after the other Golden Girls (Dorothy, Blanche, and Sophia) who he shares with his fiancé, Jordan. The other three chickens, Lilly, Dolly, and Jane are named for the actresses in the 1980's hit movie "9 to 5." In addition to being family members, Will noted that the hens are prolific layers. "Green eggs, blue eggs, brown eggs and speckled brown eggs," he said. "You know, a lot of eggs."

Alongside their flock, the couple shares three beloved terriers including a miniature 2½-pound Yorkie named Delilah, AKA Tiny, along with Nixon and Drama, plus a cat named Kitty Lemew, "because she's French," said Will.

But getting to where he is today—tending to a menagerie of pets and fixing up the 100-year-old Portland home he shares Jordan, as well as taking the helm of the Portland Paramount—was a long time in the making.

When he was just 17 years old, Will signed up for the Marines and left two weeks after high school for boot camp in San Diego. His work in electronic countermeasures saw him deployed overseas during wartime conflicts serving in the Marines from 1994 to 2000 and then in the Navy Reserves from 2003 to 2007. Understanding how the military helicopters' electronics worked, and then meticulously confirming their functionality and maintenance was a responsibility that kept Will's fellow Marines' lives squarely in his hands—and in the process, helped shape his worldview and character.

Will's interest in hotels and hospitality began after his military service while on a vacation to the Bahamas over New Year's. A conversation with a resort manager piqued his interest, inspiring him to take the first step. Will went on to earn degrees in hospitality, hotel, and recreation, and most recently a master's in hospitality and tourism management from the University of New Orleans in 2015. His career has taken him to hotels in Arizona, San Diego, Florida, and then to Portland in 2021. He started his current role as General Manager in May 2023, taking over for former GM, Norm Hwa who became the GM at the Maui Coast Hotel in Kihei.

Will says that he's "a people person. I always enjoyed working with guests and I think you can parlay that into working with your team. I'm really hands on. I like to talk to everybody, to make myself known and present, to treat them like family." Will said that although many companies espouse to that philosophy, most don't live by it. "Interacting with the team and long-term managers here, they're obviously treated like family because otherwise people wouldn't stay around for a decade or more," he observed.

Looking into the future, 25 years and beyond, Will thinks he and Jordan will likely still be in Portland, though probably not in the same home. He sees lots of runway ahead of them and for good reason as longevity runs in his genes. Will's mom is still alive, his grandmother is in her 90s, and his great grandmother lived into her 100s.

With stats like those, his story is just getting started.

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