By Nancy Whitaker

JUST CALL HIM ROVER

It is always fun to get a new puppy or kitten. They become a vital part of our family and selecting a name for your pet may take some time.

A lot of thought goes into selecting just the right name for a much-anticipated new family member. When I was growing up, we always had a family dog. My grandpa, for some inane reason, always named our dogs “Rover.” We had three different Rovers that I can recall.

The first Rover met his demise when he was spotted killing the neighbor’s sheep. He was banished from our farmland and given to a city dweller.

Rover No. Two liked to bite and chase people and vehicles. He chased anything that moved, including anyone on a bicycle.

Rover No. Three was a Casanova, preferring to go along the highways and byways loving all the girl dogs. He was found on the other side of the county, but he preferred life on the prowl.

Now, I am sure that the name Rover had little to do with our dogs’ escapades, but there again, they were all trouble. I once believed that all dogs were named Rover.

Today, research has shown that we are naming our pets with more human-like monikers. The names of Charlie, Zoey, Lulu, Chloe, Milo, Louie and Max are all popular dog and cat names.

It turns out that these names say a lot about our culture and the fact that we have truly come to view our pets as indispensable members of our families.

It was reported that the more human-sounding names we give our pets, the more family-like role they tend to play. These names lend a feeling of warmth and personal attachment to our pets.

Sometimes we like naming our dog or cat after movie stars or famous people. We used to have a cat named Elvis and another one named Martin Luther.

In my own personal experience with pet cats, I tended to name them all after someone I knew. You could always bet if I liked you, I would probably name a cat after you.

I have compiled a top 10 list of names for dogs and cats. According to recent polls, the top names for a male dog are: Bentley, Diesel, Tank, Marley, Milo, Gunner, Louie, Thor, Cooper and Leo. (What? No Rovers?)

The most popular names for a female canine are: Lola, Stella, Luna, Nala, Izzy, Layla, Lulu, Ellie, Piper and Mia. (No Rovers?)

The top names for male cats are: Dexter, Cooper, Louie, Loki, Henry, Teddy, Marley, Tucker, Ziggy and Winston.

Female cats are getting names such as: Lola, Stella, Izzy, Zoey, Lulu, Luna, Nala, Penny, Ruby and Willow.

Cats do not seem to listen when you call them by name, so I will just stick with the ever-popular name of “Kitty, Kitty Kitty.”

My dogs, even though they know their names, do not come when I call them. So I am trying to learn to whistle. Perhaps that will get their attention.

Do you have pets? Do you name them and if so what are their names? Do you have any named Rover? Let me know and I’ll give you a Penny for Your Thoughts.