



SIMON

Though he favors a bright pink construction helmet, Simon wears many hats, including gourmand, job-site overseer and reality television star. But he doesn't let his multiple talents or celebrity encounters inflate his ego. Simon, a handsome cocker spaniel/poodle mix with a refined sprinkling of gray around the muzzle, remains as humble now as he was the day his "mother" brought him home from the Jefferson SPCA.

"He's definitely got a personality," says Simone Bruni, Simon's owner and namesake. Bruni is the owner and founder of The Demo Diva (908-8833; www.thedemodiva.com), a demolition contracting company known for its iconic pink Dumpsters. "Simon got me my largest contact in demolition. He ran up to these guys, and they ended up putting me in touch with the biggest demolition company in the area, who I've now partnered with."

When he's not networking for The Demo Diva, Simon rides alongside Bruni through storm-affected neighborhoods as she bids for demolition jobs. He's a fixture at the Ninth Ward's Make It Right construction site, where he can be found overseeing the site, riding in the Bobcat tractor, and sniffing around the Demo Diva's hot pink Dumpsters.

"He's a very hard worker," says Site Director Bill Lawton. "He's an excellent cleanup dog." Simon promptly disposes of any lunch leftovers, such as tacos and chicken bones, which the workers may have dropped. "He's definitely a food ie," laughs Bruni. "He hounds people who are eating and becomes their best friend."

Like many gastronomes, Simon pays a digestive price for his epicurean adventures. "His gas would gag me out of a deep sleep," Bruni says. "I could hear his stomach rumbling while I was at my desk. The organic dog food was a godsend."

It's also a fittingly urbane dish for a budding reality television star. Last spring, Simon was featured in a six-part Canadian documentary, *Holmes and Make It Right*, which chronicles craftsman Mike Holmes' efforts to rebuild the Ninth Ward. Simon is also on a first-name basis with Brad Pitt, who makes frequent appearances at the Tennessee Street site.

Simon won't be trading his construction site trailer for a Hollywood set trailer any time soon, however. "His heart is for New Orleans," Bruni explains. "He goes with me to Chalmette, the Ninth Ward, Old Metairie and Gentilly, and he gets a little sniff of them. [Demolition contracting] is a lonely job. A lot of times I will be stressed out -like if someone doesn't want to pay - and Simon calms me down. I feel like he has improved my health. He changed the shape of my heart."