

Great Things About Unk

His Name: Unk got his name when we went to pick him out at the Humane Society. The tag on his cage listed his name as 'unk' which we found out later meant 'unknown.' But by the time we got to checking out, we had played with him using the name, and it somehow seemed right. So he remained Unk.

My Bud: Unk was my buddy. He was the snuggler who always wanted to be close. There was a special connection between us even though he was originally supposed to be Josh's dog,

My Buddha: At times when I was frustrated or upset, Unk would be a calming presence.

People Dog: Unk never met a person he didn't like and who he wanted to be friends with. During the summer of 2007, he accompanied me to the Amazing Journey sessions we had in Tower Grove Park. Even though he was having problems with his back legs by that time, he would make sure that he got to greet each person in the group. If I didn't help him, he would drag himself over to them.

Spunky: His pit bull breeding was evident in his strength and determination. When he had his mind set on something, it was hard to change it, and his strength even for a medium sized dog (40 lbs) made curbing him a challenge. This helped him as his health declined. Even though his back legs were not working, as long as I supported his back legs, he used his front legs to get him where he wanted to go. And if I wasn't there to help, he would drag himself to where he wanted. I often called him Spunky Unky.

Adventurer: On walks he would always be ready to investigate everything, and the times that I would be able to let him off leash, his joy at being able to freely explore the area was evident. He always made sure that I was in sight or at least hearing distance though. When he was young, this caused a problem because he would dash out of the house to explore the neighborhood. Once he got hurt on one of these adventures and never ran off again. Even in his final days he was always ready for a walk.

Good Strategist: Unk could think things through and would delight in outsmarting us. When he would get out of the house and we would chase him, he quickly learned how not to get himself boxed in so we could corner him. If an area looked interesting to investigate, but had only one way out, he would pass it up.

Great Puller: He used his pit bull strength to pull. This was a problem when he was on a leash, but I was able to harness him to a small wagon which carried newspaper to the recycling bin on St. Elizabeth Academy's parking lot. Once when we were out at Purina Farms for an event, they harnessed him to a 100 lb. wagon which he pulled like there was nothing there!

Mole Hunter: One of the things he loved to do on our walks was hunt moles. He would sniff and dig furiously when he found the scent. His favorite hunting spots were Tower Grove Park and Cahokia Mounds. His hunting prowess also extended to our back yard where he would chase squirrels and even caught a rat once.



Unk as a young dog.



Unk and me at Innsbrook, Oct. 2007



Unk at Innsbrook

On the next page is a letter Unk wrote to his vets for Christmas 2007 a few weeks before he died.

Season's Greetings from Unk

December 24, 2007

Hi to all my friends!

As usual Mom is late in helping me get out my Christmas message, but things have been rather uncertain these last few months. Mom wasn't sure I'd be here for Christmas, and at times, maybe I wasn't sure either, but I've been doing well.



My appetite has improved so I'm eating more of a variety of things although chicken is still my favorite. Mom makes a chicken stew for me with chicken, rice and veggies which is awesome. She also makes a meatloaf with ground beef, vegetables, oatmeal, cheese, and egg. Also good, but not as good as the chicken. I still don't like taking my supplements, but Mom makes sure I get them.

Mom takes me for a walk every day unless the weather is really bad. And she's the one who is ready to go in before I am. She keeps saying her arm gets tired. I don't understand that. My front legs feel fine and they are doing the walking. She's just supporting my hind legs! I can easily go a half mile. I probably could go further, but Mom's the wimp.

At the top is a picture of me Mom took just today. I'm on my throne on top of Mom's bed. One thing about having been sick is that I'm being terribly spoiled. But don't tell Mom I said that.

At the bottom is a picture of me and Mom at Innsbruck in October. It was good therapy for both of us.

Thanks for all your help and support during my illness. That last acupuncture treatment seemed to be the beginning of the gradual return to better health. Maybe in a couple of weeks I'll need to stop by Animal Fitness for another treatment. I miss seeing all of you!

Have a great New Year and thanks again!

Love,

Unk

