

# Uniquely Akita

*Serving the Mid-Atlantic states for nearly 30 years through education, support, and rescuing wonderful Akitas that would otherwise be euthanized in area shelters.*

September/October 2015

**Featured Orphan**

*Snowball is a beautiful and affectionate dynamo in need of obedience training.*

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**It's Raining Dogs & Past Events**

*We have been inundated with phone calls and emails of Akitas in need.*

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**5 Years of Fostering**

*One of ARMAC's foster homes reflects on 5 years of fostering and shares highlights from his time with each former orphan.*

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**Donations Needed for Asami's Surgery & Recent Adoptions**

*Asami greatly needs surgery to correct luxating patellas.*

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*Have a space available in your heart and home? Consider adopting or fostering an orphan.*

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**In Appreciation & Rainbow Bridge**

*Several former ARMAC orphans have passed in recent months.*

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## Featured Orphan: Snowball

By Puller Lanigan

Snowball is ADORABLE! She has a glorious white coat; her tail looks like a Chrysanthemum pom pom sitting on her hip. She is a little pixie (like Tinker Bell) of a dog.

Snowball pulled like a steam engine initially on leash and would get displeased at how slow I was and do the fish thrash about, but after awhile she settled down.

Snowball LOVES to be patted and having her belly scratched; she loves to give kisses. She can lose the jumping on people, but responded well to my pushing her off.

Snowball knows how to sit (but not stay). Between her leash manners and limited knowledge of commands, Snowball will need obedience training. She was very non-reactive to the other dogs, other than one female Akita.

Her first family was not able to keep her, so she was surrendered to the animal shelter. Snowball was there a few days before being adopted. Her new family picked her up the day after she was spayed. Snowball was returned to the shelter only 24 hours later, with the family saying she snapped at the their children. We have not seen any signs of aggression in her thus far and would attribute her behavior to being in pain and on medication.



## It's Raining Dogs!

By Puller Lanigan & Jodi Marcus

We apologize for the delay in newsletters, but we have been particularly busy, especially during the weeks of October 3-20. While we normally receive dozens of calls, it is not possible to take in every dog. ARMAC took in 6 dogs during this time period. There are still more dogs we are being contacted on as this newsletter goes to print. MOST of these dogs are young, friendly, and ready for homes. It would be lovely if we could find some of them homes by Christmas. Some will have to stay with us longer for rehab (Gin for one, possibly Asami), but at least two we know can live with other dogs (Belles and Asami) if properly introduced. Please help us network these dogs!

**Gemma** was a 9 year old female who had been picked up by Animal Control on three separate occasions, which led to a succession of names (Dougie, Tulip, and Natasha). Sadly, shortly after Gemma arrived we made the difficult decision to euthanize her. We discovered she had cancer and the pain medication was not sufficient anymore.

**Snowball**, about 4 years old, is a little white bundle of energy. She was returned to the shelter the first time when, having been picked up early from the vet after her spay and groggy still from anesthesia; she grumped at the household children who were all over her. Her second home said she was wonderful. They were an older couple and she was a little too energetic for them. Snowball will do well in an Akita savvy home, with stability and boundaries, who won't fall victim to her charming efforts to rule the world.

**Cosmo**, somewhere between 9-12 months old, is another firecracker. He is full of bounce and vigor. Cosmo was so thrilled by the attention that he was literally doing somersaults across the lawn and soliciting belly rubs! He is BIG and handsome and a big mush of a boy. This guy is a cuddle bug. Cosmo was turned in by his owners, who said he got too big. They said he was good with dogs and cats. He rides well in a car, giving occasional kisses and is a favorite at the kennel.

**Lula**, about 2 years, is another lively young Akita who is very sweet and people oriented. She was given to a family whose wife did not want a big dog. They made the right decision and signed her over to rescue. She is another dog who rode very well in the car and loved giving occasional kisses during her ride to her new foster home. Early signs indicate that she probably would be best in a cat free home, but that is not conclusive yet.

**Echo**, approximately 9-12 months, is a favorite with the kennel staff. (They want to keep him.) He is very sweet and adores attention. He does not show any aggression to dogs in the adjoining play yard, but gives indications that he wants to play.

**Gin** was kept in a crate, living with someone who did not really want her. Gin had a skin condition that was left untreated and has left her hairless from her shoulders on back; she has sparse hair on her head and shoulders. After a very brief time at the kennel, Gin has little tufts of hair coming in on her back legs and there are some wisps beginning to appear on her tail. She will be a gorgeous fawn with heavy black overlay (sable) and white Boston markings. Gin is very aloof when

you first meet her, but she is very affectionate once she feels comfortable. She does pull on lead and will need some remedial training in a new home.

**Dakota**, a 2 year old brindle female, has both brains and beauty. This girl missed her calling in the show circuit, but could still wow people in agility. She has the energy and in the right home, the focus. Dakota came in to a shelter as a puppy and was adopted. Her owner then had things change with his job and she was returned to the shelter. She did not care for being crated at a temporary foster and also scaled a 10' fence and went on the lam for a couple of days from a vet hospital. Dakota might be okay with the "right" male dog, but definitely no cats.

If you ever have thought about fostering, please consider doing so now. With this many dogs in such a short time period, we will be running huge kennel bills and these guys need to be in a foster home.

## Past Events

A hearty thanks to the wonderful volunteers who helped us at recent events including: **Petoberfest**, **Fredericksburg Pet Expo**, and **Prince William County Animal Shelter Open House & 40th Anniversary Celebrations**. We couldn't have done this without you!



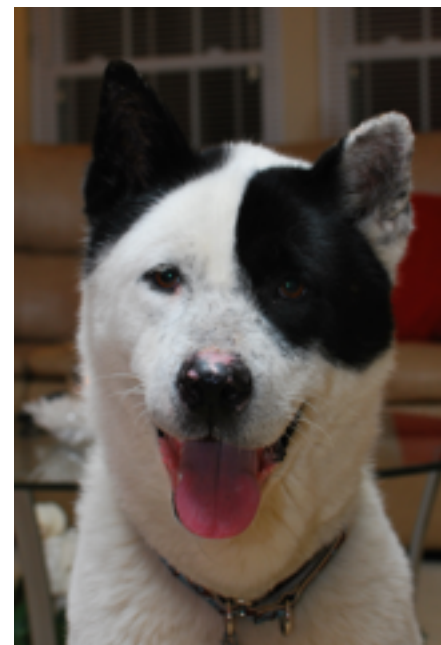
## 5 Years of Fostering

By Aaron Hoskins

This October marks my fifth anniversary as a foster home for ARMAC; as with many similar occasions it is a good occasion to look back and reflect on the past half-decade. There have been 13 fosters over the five years; the longest non-foster failure staying for 11 months and the shortest staying for three weeks. A wall in my house is dedicated to the dogs I have fostered, with one photo of each.

Below is a quick reflection on a memorable occasion with each of them.

**Colby** (pictured) was with us for Thanksgiving and my brother thought that it would be safe to leave a pumpkin pie on the counter to cool. Bad move! Colby only ate about a third of the pie before being discovered. **Malachi** earned his Canine Good Citizenship Award when I took him to obedience class and I was so proud of him. He was an old soul in a young body who died of cancer about a year ago. **Chino** could not stand to be crated or alone; his first night of solid sleep at the house was when he was able to sleep in the bedroom, after a month of sleepless nights. (He was the only foster allowed to do so.)



**Wyatt** had the longest tenure as a foster, so maybe he deserves two reflections. There was the time I was baking a cake and ran out of the kitchen to check on something. When I returned, a stick of butter was missing. Thankfully, it didn't seem to affect him overly much. One time I went out to the backyard and it appeared that he was stuck between the fence and the shed and I could not figure out how he got past the fence post; right as we were about to start removing boards from the fence, he turned around and went out the other side.

**Ronin** was the shortest tenure at the house, but when I took him to obedience class, he was so focused on getting a treat that a bomb might have been able to go off and he would not notice. **Roku** was the sixth foster and the first that I named (yes, I am that uncreative) and he was at the house the night of the derecho and even though he probably had to go outside, he decided that he did not want to go out in all of that. **Reh** had to be neutered and he was not ready to go when I arrived to take him home, so the vet kept him overnight and Jodi picked him up in the morning. Jodi assumed he would still be groggy, but he was just a bundle of energy. **Ranger** was only a few months old when he was pulled from the shelter and he was with us on the trip to the National Arboretum where I proposed to my wife. He also puked in the car on the way home from that trip.

**Cole** was at an event where there were free hot dogs and he got so excited about seeing them that he almost slipped his leash, but even if he had, he had no intention of going any further than the hot dogs. **Toban** had had a rough life and did not even know at first what he was supposed to do with toys; he figured it out very quickly.

**Trey** was a "foster failure" since we ended up adopting him. He came into rescue missing a leg and we do not know how it happened. However, a coworker of my Dad's was struggling with having his dog's leg amputated due to cancer and when Dad showed him a video of Trey running around and playing in the snow, it really put his mind at ease that his dog would still be able to enjoy life. There was also the time that he caught a mouse and carried it to his crate so that he could let it go, catch it, let it go ...

**Aja** was the first female foster, but her other claim to fame is that she was able to figure out how to get out of a locked crate without unlocking it (twice!). She then helped herself to some dog food that was being stored nearby, but managed to get herself trapped in that room. Currently there is **Asami**. She was taken to be spayed because she did not have a scar and all of the vets that examined her thought that she was unaltered, but when she was opened up, it turned out that she was already spayed.

## 5 Years of Fostering Continued

In many senses, Colby was the hardest of all of the fosters to give up because he was the first, but it is rarely easy to let them go. However, for all of the loss that I feel with each of them, there are the major positives that greatly outweigh the loss. Colby's Mom was almost in tears when he got there because the house had seemed so empty since their last dog had passed and Colby was filling such a big void for them (almost the exact same thing happened with Aja's Dad.) The child in Toban's family was willing to give up all of his Christmas gifts if he could have a dog and how often does anyone have a chance to be a part in giving a child the one thing that they so desperately want for Christmas. On top of that, there is always another Akita waiting at the shelter because ARMAC just does not have the foster space to take the dog in. It has been a fantastic first five years filled with so many wonderful memories. Maybe you could volunteer to foster and create some memories of your own.

## Donations Needed for Asami's Surgery

Asami suffers from two luxating patellas, which means that her knee caps get dislocated on a regular basis. Her left rear leg is the worst and Asami has increasingly been favoring that leg when she walks. Asami almost never puts weight on her left rear leg when going to the bathroom and her other rear leg trembles. She *needs* this surgery. Even with our rescue discount, it will cost between \$2,700 and \$3,000 to surgically correct the issue, and that's just for one leg. Your donations are much needed and appreciated.

## Recent Adoptions

Congratulations to the former orphans who have found their forever homes and their families on the newest addition. **Left:** Chase with his former foster mom and now forever mom Lisa. **Top:** Zen lounging on the couch with his new dad. **Bottom:** Betty and Sammo. **Right:** Marley begging his dad for food.





*Taz*

Giving Mom sad eyes as she leaves for work.



*Ginger and Raiden*

Playing tug of war during their annual beach vacation.



*Cole*

Mooching on his first trip to Cape Cod.

## Winter Pet Care

By Jodi Marcus

Fall is such a short season and it's winding to a close. Here's a refresher on ways to safeguard your dogs in winter:

- **Senior dogs and puppies are the least able to regulate body temperature and the most affected by the cold.** Make sure seniors with arthritis have a warm, cushy bed to lay on and if necessary, get medication from the vet to help with arthritis pain.
- **Watch those feet!** If your dog will tolerate it, consider foot protection booties. This can protect your dog's feet from salt or objects hidden by the snow and help give your dog a better grip to prevent slipping on ice. If your dog will not tolerate booties, some petroleum jelly rubbed on his pads will help prevent issues from salt and de-icers. Always wash the feet with a warm washrag or footbath after walking on treated roads and sidewalks. Cutting the long hair between the pads will help keep iceballs to a minimum.
- **When walking your dog near ice, use extra caution to avoid slipping.** Do not allow your dog to run across frozen bodies of water - he or she could fall into icy water if the ice is too thin!
- **If you use an indoor or outdoor fireplace, always keep a safety guard around it in order to protect your dog away from the flames and soot.** Do not leave a fire unattended.
- **If your dog is in the cold and begins excessively shaking or shivering, get him back to warm shelter as soon as possible.** If you suspect your dog is developing hypothermia, bring him to a vet immediately.
- **Avoid letting your dog eat snow or anything else on the ground.** Dangerous objects or chemicals may be hidden in the snow. Also, eating snow can cause stomach upset and even hypothermia.
- **Beware antifreeze - it is highly toxic!** Antifreeze tastes good to pets, but even a small amount can kill your dog. Though exposure to antifreeze is a risk all year, the risk is especially high during the colder months. Keep your eyes on your dog at all times and keep antifreeze out of reach. **If you suspect your dog has had ANY exposure to antifreeze, get to a vet right away.** Symptoms that appear in the first 12 hours are: stumbling as if drunk, vomiting, and/or depression. Antifreeze attacks the kidneys. Even if you get your pet to the vet quickly, the damage may still kill them.
- **With the holidays coming up watch where you put the chocolates.** The darker the chocolate, the more toxic it is to your dog. Too much (amount of chocolate compared to body weight) will kill them.
- **Make sure you are prepared for being shut in for several days by having sufficient pet food, and prescription medications on hand.** If you have a well that will not work without electricity, stock up on fresh water for your family and your pets.

## Available Orphans



**ASAMI:** This long-legged girl is about 2-3 years old. She is sweet, affectionate, and fairly energetic. She can also be a bit skittish.



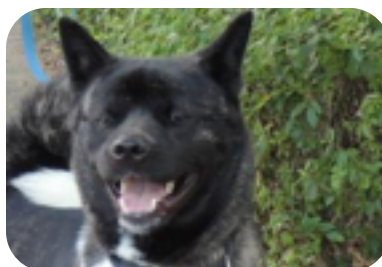
**BEAR:** A distinguished gentleman of 8 years, Bear is recommended as an only dog. He is sweet and well-mannered, neutered, vaccinated, and housebroken.



**BELLA/MOSHI:** About 5 years old enjoying life in a foster home after living on the streets. She is eager to please and food motivated.



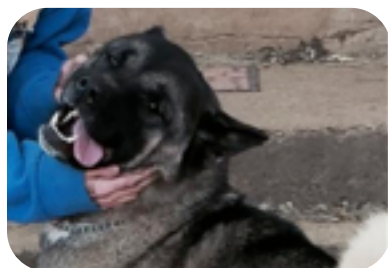
**COSMO:** An energetic pup of less than a year who is going to be a big boy when fully grown. Obedience training is needed.



**DAKOTA:** A very energetic, 2 year old female who is spayed, vaccinated, and microchipped. She may or may not do well with cats and dogs.



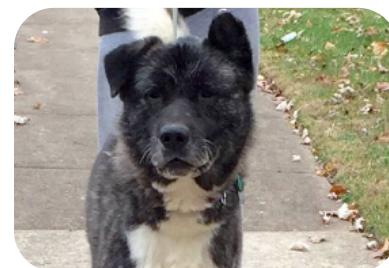
**ECHO:** This sweet and playful boy of 1 year is curious about dogs and scared of cats.



**LULA:** A little more than 2 years, energetic Lula is a people lover. Crate trained, although working on leash manners. She *might* be okay with cats.



**SNOWBALL:** A 4 year old dynamo who needs some work on manners (walking on leash, no jumping, etc.). Non-reactive to most dogs. Loves getting attention and giving kisses.



**SOBA:** Left in the yard by his family when they moved away, this 6 year old male is in need of fattening up. He loves getting attention and being a house dog. He needs work on his leash manners and cannot be placed with cats.

# In Appreciation

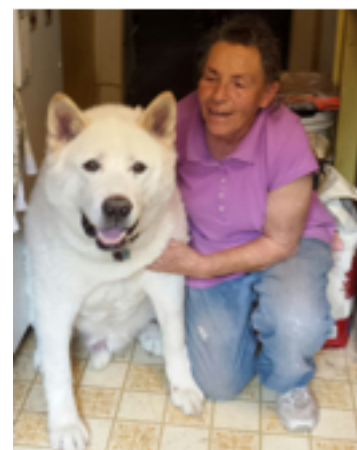
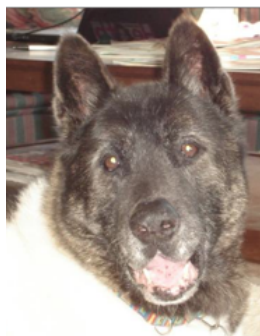
*Your donations aid the boarding, transportation, registration fees, and medical care (routine and emergency) for all rescued Akitas, along with supporting the continued operations of Akita Rescue Mid-Atlantic Coast. A hearty thank you from us all!*

- |  |  |  |                         |
|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| Aaron and Katie Hoskins (In memory of KC)    | Doug Masters                                     | Kathy DeWees (To help in some small way -- ARMAC does great rescue work!!) | Pam Cockrell            |
| Anonymous (Thank you, ARMAC, for all you do) | Doug Masters                                     | Keith Venezia  | Penny Nicholas          |
| Becky Heath                                  | Elaine Tretter                                   | Keith Venezia  | Polly Sack              |
| Candace Christopher & Cole                   | Eleanor Hipsley (Memorial - Robert Smith)        | Kevin Lanigan  | R. Lee Harvey           |
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|  |  |  | Tracy West              |
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|  |  |  | Witmer Family           |

## Rainbow Bridge

*Our deepest condolences to:*

- Rachel Peyton on the loss of Apollo
- Elizabeth Larson on the loss of Oso
- LaMay family on the loss of Zumo
- Jesse Running Bear on the loss of Baca
- Betty McDade on the loss of Mikey



*Dogs are not our whole life,  
but they make our lives whole.*

– Roger Caras

## ARMAC Board

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**Akita Rescue Mid-Atlantic Coast (ARMAC)**

**September/October 2015**

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