

UNIQUELY AKITA

Serving the Mid-Atlantic states since 1984 through education, support, and rescuing wonderful Akitas that would otherwise be euthanized in area shelters.



SUMMER 2022

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ARMAC Contacts

Puller Lanigan
(301) 680-0788
puller@akitarescue.org

Jodi Marcus
(703) 730-0844
jodi@akitarescue.org

Betty McDade
(703) 524-9163

Lisa Gray
(571) 237-7335
lisa@akitarescue.org

Newsletter
annette@akitarescue.org

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Meet ARMAC's Newest Orphan



Kyla

Kyla is approximately a year and a half old. She came from a puppy mill in Coatesville, Pa. She was described as being dominant, good with kids and other dogs. Being dominant likely meant she would not let the males breed her. Big surprise on arrival...she has one eye. They said she was born without it, but it could be microphthalmia. Microphthalmia is recessive like dwarfism, so it may be a good thing she did not want to be bred. Both sets of transporters fell in love with her and said she did very well riding in the car. Stay tuned for more info as we get to know her better. MANY THANKS to the Goods for the first part of the transport, and to the Haydens for the second part.

Heroes of Rescue, Part II

By Jodi Marcus

In this issue, I would like to acknowledge some long time foster parents.

Years ago, Bill and Lynne Loewy adopted a lovely Akita, Nyla, from ARMAC. After a while, they decided to foster and have been a wonderful foster home for many years. Most recently, they agreed to foster seniors, allowing ARMAC to help several senior dogs whom we may not have been able help without Lynn and Bill stepping forward. They knew that these dogs were probably "permanent" fosters since not too many people adopt seniors. But they took them on none the less, giving several seniors wonderful last years. Bill's biggest contribution not just to Akitas, but all big dogs is his bloat video. Bill likes to video new dogs as they arrive. One of the seniors he took in, Roscoe, had been a stray in Baltimore. A very kind lady took him in, bathed him, had him vetted and contacted us. Once Bill and Lynn agreed to foster, Roscoe's savior brought him to them. Bill continued his tradition of making a video. Partway through the video, they realized something was terribly wrong. Roscoe was in the middle stages of bloat. None of them had seen or dealt with this before. They rushed him to the vet where he was deflated and survived to live out the rest of his life with them. Bill kindly gave us permission to use this video so other owners could actually see a bloating dog and the symptoms. We have received many messages from dog owners who, because they watched the video, were able to recognize bloat and get their dogs to the vet quickly enough to save their lives.

Another long time volunteer is Dave Fenstermacher. He contacted Betty McDade many years ago for information on the breed. He had his own Akita but also became a foster home for years. Dave married and had a baby girl, Sara. He took

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Available Orphans



Gloria

Gloria is around 5 years old. She was turned over to the shelter by her owner for fence fighting with the neighbor's dog. She ignored other dogs at the shelter and passed her food aggression test. Gloria was a staff favorite at the shelter, spending time in their offices. She rides well in a car. Our kennel owner loves her and says she is very

sweet and easy to care for. She has exhibited no aggression toward other dogs at the kennel so far.

Bear

Bear is approximately two years old. He has been with us for awhile. He is friendly, outgoing, attentive, food oriented and has an irrepressible joy for life. He is still in need of leash training (you could work it in to your daily workout), and some manners. The best thing is there does not appear to be a mean bone in his body. He was surrendered to a shelter at ~7 mos. of age due to 'allergies'. We suspect that he turned out to be more of a handful than they imagined. He needs a home with some breed experience and no small children.



Kumo

Kumo is around 5 years old. He is fairly standard for an adult male Akita. He was polite and came up to sniff our volunteer and allowed a pet and then it was time to move off. He has a

fabulously thick coat and nice bear head. He was surrendered to a rural shelter in Kentucky because his owner was 'moving'. He had a moment of silliness during his photo shoot and did 'The Bear Dance'.

Cassie

Cassie is a 2 year old female. She lived with a homeless owner who signed her over to the shelter. Initially she was fearful and wary of the staff. After a few weeks she warmed up and was friendly with them. When our volunteer went to meet her, she warmed up quickly and really wanted to be petted. Our volunteer said she would have taken her home if she did not already have a female. She has not been with us for very long, so she probably needs a bit more time to de-stress and 'come back to earth'. We will provide updates as we get to know her.



Heroes of Rescue Cont

Continued from page 1

a hiatus from fostering while she grew up. He and his wife divorced, but he had Sara with him frequently. Once Sara turned 12, he contacted us again to foster. He and Sara have fostered ever since and done an outstanding job!

Dogs who are in foster homes have a much better chance at finding a forever home more quickly than dogs in kennels. If you have ever thought about fostering, please contact us!

FOSTER HOMES NEEDED!!!

Ever thought of fostering? If you can find it in your heart, we urge you to complete the paperwork now. For more information, please visit: www.AkitaRescue.org

Understanding Your Dog's Body Language

By Jacqueline Brister, DVM

Body language in dogs is all about communication. Since dogs can't form words, they use body language to "talk" to us. This includes different body postures, facial expressions, movements, and types of barks. These communication behaviors are used to respond to their surroundings, convey messages about ongoing situations, or to respond to someone else's body language. A dog's body language is often instinctive and happens naturally, such as trying to settle down a tense environment through actions or responding to an invitation to play. This form of communication can be used between dogs, during dog and human interactions, or between dogs and other animals. Knowing what your dog is communicating can help you understand his needs better and keep him comfortable in any given situation.

Below are some common types of body language that dogs use. It is important to recognize that many of these types of body language can mean different things in different settings and should be used in context of whatever is happening in the moment. A common example of this is panting, which could mean "I am nervous," or "Gosh, it's hot out," or even "I'm tired."

Diffusive Behaviors

These are types of body languages that dogs use to avoid conflict, help diffuse a potentially intense or threatening situation, and keep interactions from getting out of hand. Some refer to these behaviors as calming signals because, in a way, they signal to others things like "everything is ok," "things have gotten a little too tense," or "I am not a threat." That being said, these types of behaviors indicate more than just calming; they communicate both how the dog is feeling and her ability to react and interact with others.

Be aware that some of these behaviors can be misinterpreted as signs of guilt, such as the slow, creeping walk towards or away from you when you correct your dog for doing something wrong. This behavior does not mean your dog is acting guilty for getting into the trash. It means she is trying to diffuse the situation and lessen the intensity of your correction. She honestly may have no clue at all why you are upset with her, and she just wants you to stop yelling.

Happy/Relaxed

- Keeping the mouth open, often with the tongue lolling out, is typically a very relaxed posture for a dog.
- Bowing down on the front legs, often known as a play bow, can be an invitation to play or a diffusive tool indicating that the dog is not a threat to someone or something else.
- Tail wagging can often be content, happy, or excited body language. In certain settings, it's important to know that tail wagging can indicate nervousness, anxiety, or an effort to diffuse a tense situation. Be mindful of what else is happening in the dog's environment and remember that a wagging tail does not always mean a happy dog.

Anxiety/Fear/Worry

- Cowering or making the body small, and crouching low to the ground can be a sign of fear.
- Yawning frequently, especially when not obviously tired can be a sign of stress, fear, or anxiety. It can be a way to diffuse a tense situation the dog either finds himself in the middle of or in his immediate surroundings (e.g., other dogs fighting, intense talking amongst a dog's owners, or being spoken to harshly by an owner).
- Licking the lips or nose, even when no food or water is around, can be a sign of anxiety or fear. This is frequently used as a diffusive behavior.
- Panting but not interested in water, or hot, can be a sign of fear, anxiety, or stress.
- Combination of the ears positioned low and out to the side and the pet's brows down or furrowed can be seen with anxiety or worry. This can often occur with other postures such as lowering the head



Photo courtesy of Dr. Teri Ann Oursler

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Body Language (cont)

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and neck, and keeping the mouth closed. Be aware that lowering the head, neck, and ears can also be a sign of assertiveness or aggression in really tense situations, so assess what else is happening in the environment.

- Creeping around or moving slowly when walking can be a sign of fear or anxiety. It is frequently a diffusive signal. This type of walking can also be a hunting maneuver, such as if a dog has spotted potential prey. Moving away quickly and darting around is also a sign of anxiety or fear.
- Appearing on alert and trying to look around at everything quickly is a sign of anxiety or fear.
- Unwillingness to eat or take a treat during a potentially stressful situation is a common sign a dog is anxious or afraid.
- Pacing around and unwillingness to settle down in one place can be a sign of anxiety. It can also be a sign of excitement and happiness.
- Averting the eyes, turning the head away or to the side can be a sign of anxiety. This can also be a diffusive tool as well, to avoid conflict or help diffuse a situation.
- Pausing, holding position, or freezing can be a hunting behavior (sometimes called pointing), a sign of anxiety or uncertainty, or a diffusive behavior.
- Tail tucked between the legs is often a sign of fear or anxiety and can occasionally be a diffusive behavior
- Sniffing or snuffling along the ground can mean a great deal; it is often a way for dogs to get a feel for the environment, follow the trail of a recent inhabitant, discover signals left behind by other dogs or animals, or just enjoy the delights of nature. It can also be a sign of anxiety and a diffusive tool, such as when being approached by someone or something that may be a potential threat.
- Raising a front paw can be a diffusive behavior or indicate anxiety/stress.
- Rolling onto the back is often a sign of fear, although the occasional very confident dog may have learned to do so in order to get tummy rubs.
- Barking or whining could be due to fear, anxiety, or excited/worked up. Growling could be assertiveness and/or aggression, or fear. High-pitched barking often means the dog is too excited and vocalizing to try to calm themselves down. Barking can also serve as a warning that the dog is too scared or too aggressive and a bite may come next.

Assertiveness and Aggression

These types of body language behaviors may occur in a dog attempting to use diffusive behavior that has been ignored, or may occur without initial signals such as in an overly excited/worked up or aggressive dog on high alert. Dogs that are too worked up or excited are said to be highly aroused. Assertive or aggressive

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Have a vet, trainer, or boarding kennel you really like and would recommend? Let us know, and we'll add it to the list! Send recommendations to annette@akitarescue.org

Obedience Training

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Rockville (301) 983-5913
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Baltimore (410) 889-9352
Bark Busters
Timonium (410) 308-3768
Capital Dog Training Club
Silver Spring (301) 587-5959

Virginia/West Virginia

Best Behaved Dogs
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Club Pet Int.
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Friendship Animal Hospital
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Park Circle Animal Hospital
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MapleShade Animal Hospital
Dale City (703) 670-7668
New Baltimore Animal Hospital
Warrenton (540) 347-0964
Regional Vet Referral Center
Springfield (703) 451-8900
Animal Medical Center of Cascades
Sterling (571) 434-0250
Morgantown Vet Care
Morgantown (304) 599-3111

Body Language (cont)

Continued from page 4

posturing can frequently be seen in dogs exhibiting these body languages. Often the more aroused the dog, the more intensely she will respond to perceived threats or issues in the environment.

- Direct eye contact is the most common initial body signal for displaying assertiveness or aggression, often when a dog is in a threatening situation. Assertiveness in combination with aggression is not always the case, of course, because your own dog may stare directly at you with his “sad, puppy dog eyes” when he wants something. Thus, other body signals or the situation itself should be evaluated (e.g., a new dog showing up) before determining if aggression is involved. In other words, a confident dog can be assertive, using body language to get what he wants, without demonstrating aggression, which involves behavior that can result in damage to someone else.
- Pulling the lips back and displaying teeth can also be a signal of assertiveness or aggression.
- As the dog’s perceived threat continues, holding the head, ears, and neck up initially may be seen (to make the dog appear bigger to the threat), but lowering the head and flattening the ears can be a signal that the dog feels the threat is worsening and the problem is escalating. This progression is an instinctive way to appear even larger and to protect important organs from attack.
- The tail held straight up or curved over the back can sometimes mean a high alert or a threatening situation is occurring. Slow tail movements or rapid wagging that looks more like vibrating (known as flagging) can also be a sign the dog is feeling threatened and responding in an assertive or aggressive manner.
- The dog’s weight may appear shifted toward the front of his body, which allows for quick action if needed.
- The hair along the dog’s back may be standing on end, sometimes referred to as raised hackles. This can be an unconscious way of making the dog appear larger and more threatening. Hair standing on end indicates high alert and increased arousal, so it can sometimes be seen during intense play without any aggression.

A Note about Snapping and Biting

Bites have different degrees of severity, but a bite is still a bite, even if skin is not broken. A dog may snap at something without making contact; this is generally the dog’s effort at communicating a more intense warning. In this case, anxiety, fear, or aggression have been occurring and the signals have gone unnoticed. It is important to understand that generally, the dog is the one who has decided not to make contact or cause harm. Dogs are fast and can bite hard when they feel it is necessary, so take this warning snap seriously.

When an actual bite occurs, again, degrees of severity exist. Dogs can bite without drawing blood, bite superficially, or in more highly aroused states, give multiple and/or deep bites. Bites that occur without drawing blood are likely inhibited by the dog, meaning she held herself back from inflicting damage. It is important to understand that these bites and other superficial ones are still bites without major harm. They are likely to result in worse bites in the future if the dog doesn’t receive the help needed to move past the cause for the biting. Multiple and/or deep bites, those with no inhibition from the dog, means the dog bit without thought, acting on reaction alone. Any snaps or bites require prompt assessment and assistance for the behavior issue.

Behavior changes in dogs can be blatant or subtle, although they are generally easier to read than cats. To learn more, see a [chart of dog body language](#) from Dr. Sophia Yin.

This article is reprinted with permission from Dr. Jacqueline Brister and the Veterinary Information Network (<https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/doc/?id=8790792&pid=19239>).

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VeterinaryPartner.com is not affiliated with Akita Rescue Mid-Atlantic Coast.

Editor’s Note: I was not taken to a chart when selecting the link in the article. I found posters from Dr. Sophia Yin using the following links:

- <https://cattledogpublishing.com/blog/free-downloads-posters-handouts-and-more/>
- <https://www.greenacreskennel.com/blog/2016/04/04/body-language-of-fear-in-dogs-dr-sophia-yin/>

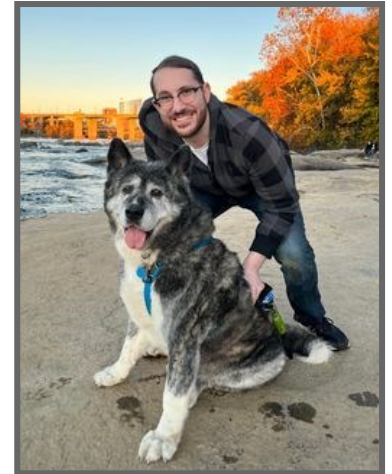
Adopted!



Maggie Mae

Adopted by adopted by
Travis, Teresa and Rio

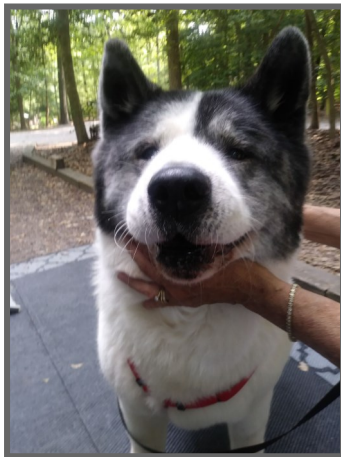
Postcards From Home



Caesar

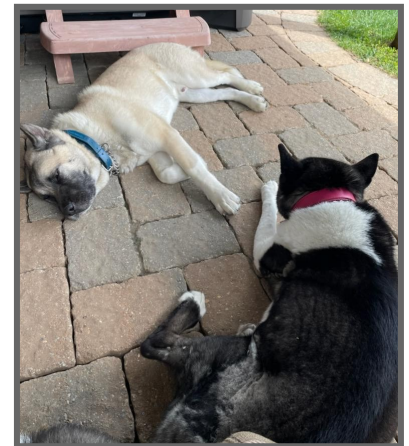
The Great Caesar with
his dad, Matt.

Rainbow Bridge



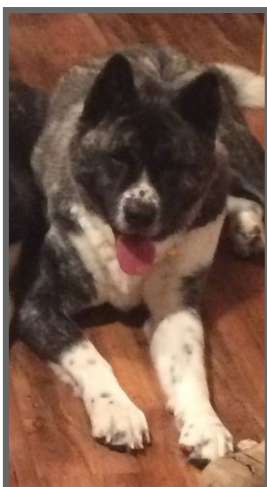
Makoto

Loved and missed by
Mike and Cheryl Mason.



Henry

Henry has won over
Mia



Lincoln

Loved and missed by Julie
Witmer

Duke

Duke (formerly Klondike)
celebrating his 10th
birthday



Thank You



Thank you to all the individuals and businesses who support us in so many ways: providing financial support or discounts, fostering, providing transportation, performing house checks, evaluating dogs, volunteering at events, etc.

We couldn't do this without all of our supporters!



A huge Thank You to the ARMAC volunteers who came out to help Stacy break down and transport updated runs from Rockville to her place in Myersville: Puller Lanigan, Mark and Sheri Geeza, and Chris Marcus.

Stacy, thank you for going out of your way to make sure all the Akitas under your care are up to date on shots and spayed/neutered and for managing to make room for "just one more" time and time again.

Thank you for your donations!

Pam Cockrell
 Doug Dziak
 Bunny Garrett
 V Glynn
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ARMAC

PO Box 4266

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www.akitarescue.org

Akita rescue Mid-Atlantic Coast, Inc. has been serving the eastern seaboard for over 25 years. We fulfill a wide variety of Akita needs in the greater Washington DC area. We help educate potential Akita owners; we offer support to Akita owners, not only those who adopt from us, but all Akita owners regardless of where they got their Akita. But most importantly, we save the lives of Akitas that would otherwise be euthanized in area shelters. All of our fostered Akitas are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, micro-chipped, and temperament evaluated prior to adoption. Potential adopters are screened carefully and thoroughly to ensure we have a perfect match between family and Akita. Our assistance doesn't stop at adoption. We offer support to our adoptive family-lives throughout the lifetime of their Akita.

ABOUT ARMAC

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