

Uniquely AKITA



Akita Rescue Mid-Atlantic Coast

ARMAC – May 2008

Puppies, Puppies, Puppies and More Puppies

By Jodi Marcus

Since last July ARMAC has been contacted on two moms with puppies born in the shelter, one with 9 mixed breed puppies and one with three pure bred. We took in both litters, although the little girl in the second litter died in the shelter, leaving only her two brothers. We found homes for 7 of the mixed breed puppies. We still have two, Asa and Tootie. We also still have the two boys from the second litter, Draco and Gryphon. At 4 ½ months, these guys weighed 65 and 56 lbs, respectively... big, big puppies. These guys were featured in the last newsletter. And the beat goes on.

In January, while I was out of town visiting with my sister-in-law, Charlie agreed to take in 3 more puppies once I returned home. (Thanks Charlie!!!!). These puppies had been given to person number three by person number two when he could not find a home for them and was going to take them to a shelter. Person number two got them from the breeder, who was going to turn them over to a shelter because she could not find homes for them. By the time I got home, 3 days after the third owner contacted us, there was only one puppy left, a little girl. The current owner had found homes for the other two. As I pulled into the development, I almost hit a little black dog who darted in front of my car. I pulled over and watched her dodge a second and third car. She ran back to the house where I had originally been headed. Well, that alone made me decide that this puppy was going with me no matter what. I finally got a good look at her and realized she was not a purebred puppy. I swear I will never have Charlie go look at any dog or puppy again. I love him, but his heart blinds him and all he sees are purebred puppies even if they are not. In this case it did not matter if she had been a Chihuahua, I would have taken her anyway; her situation was obviously dangerous. I told Charlie about her near misses and he said that all three had been running loose like that when he went over to see them. I guess that was part of his decision to commit to taking them and I truly cannot blame him. Sara was a nice, submissive dog who was woefully unsocialized. Everything was new to her. As we have been exposing her to more and more situations, her confidence is building. Interestingly, she loves playing with and hanging out with all the adult dogs, but is terrified of the other puppies. Perhaps it is because they are all so much bigger than her and clumsy in their play attempts.

February brought Phoenix aka Samantha. Phoenix was a pet store puppy, bred in a puppy mill in the Midwest, sold to a distributor, and then sold again to a puppy store: all this before she was 8 weeks old. Her original price was \$2350...one

of those rare Akitas, ya know. On January 2, she was bought by a young couple for \$1200...on sale. They had a one year old child and soon found that with both working full time, child and puppy were just too much for them. They contacted us Feb 7, having had her just over one month. We made arrangements for them to deliver Phoenix to Rachel, my "other" daughter. She kept her for a few days until I could drive down to Lanaxa (below Richmond) to get the puppy. In the meantime, we had taken Griffy and Draco in for their rabies shot...Neither of those two puppies ever turned



Phoenix

down food for any reason. When Griffy picked at his dinner, and then would not eat breakfast, and was VERY lethargic, back to the vet we went. Our vet suspected a delayed reaction to the shot. His general demeanor worried us enough that we cancelled all social activities for the weekend and settled in to watch and make sure he would be okay. He returned to his normal self within a few days, but somehow, somewhere had picked up kennel cough. Of course most of the young dogs in the house got a mild case of it; the adults were not bothered. Phoenix, who had been given the nasal version of the kennel cough vaccine, had the worst case. It morphed into an upper respiratory infection and she had fluid in her lungs. Phoenix is a "nudge", a busybody, who likes to poke her nose into everything. She went from being a very active pain in the tookus to a very lethargic, coughing, wheezing, sick puppy. Again, off to the vet we went. She got subcutaneous fluids, antibiotic pills, and anti-cough pills with a mild steroid for the inflammation. She was coughing so much and so hard that it triggered her gag reflex and she could keep nothing down; not water, food, or medication. If no meds were getting into her, the infection would not go away and would only get worse. Because she was not eating, she lost weight, and looked like a fur covered skeleton, truly pathetic. Once again we made another return

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“Dog Man” and My Trip to Japan

By Puller Lanigan



Akita family in Odate



Akita Museum



Ando and model



Haichiko cast

There have been quite a few articles written by dog people about the Akita Museum in Odate, which I had the distinct pleasure of visiting this past summer when I visited Matthew and Stefanie Davis in Japan. Odate is about a 6 hour train ride from Kitakami. It is WAY out there; actually I guess that would be ‘over’ there as it is on the Northwest side of Honshu. Kitakami is on Northeast side of ‘Japan’. But the train trip was GORGEOUS!!! Actually, backing up a little, enroute to Kitakami from Tokyo, I passed through Ichinoseki province. This too was an area noted for their dogs. It is mostly rice fields with edgings of woods. It wasn’t too difficult to imagine Akitas enjoying pursuing birds and deer in this environment. But Akita prefecture was... MAGNIFICENT! If you have not had the opportunity to read, ‘Dog Man’ by Martha Sherrill, PLEASE DO! To me it was a simple story about a man, Morie Sawataishi who made Akitas his life’s work; this book is touched by sadness and quite beautiful. It was not candy coated and really described the *kisho* or spirit of the Akita and the man who passionately loves the breed. I also passed Kurikoma-Kogen, an intriguing village, where Mr. Sawataishi, his wife and family currently live. I’m sorry I didn’t know about the book as I would have tried to visit.

Anyway, Odate is still very dated. The day we arrived, it was damp, cool and dreary. One is greeted by a papier mache Hachiko statue (larger than life) in the Odate station; upon departing the station, you face a beautiful bronze statue of a young seated Hachiko. Behind this statue is a stunning bronze Akita family statue. Even in the rain, these statues took my breath away!

I would love to say it was ‘magical’ but Odate is a slumbering town. I was told the main industry there is the airport (what airport?) and it has the air of a dying town; all the shops and stores that have not closed are run by aging mom and pop teams. English is not a well spoken language in town. The town is not a highlight of the tourist circuit.

But it was nice to walk to the museum from the train station. The rain was a gentle drizzle to the point you couldn’t decide if you really needed an umbrella or not. The museum sits atop a hill, adjacent to an imposing bridge arching over the major artery to Odate and leading to a park. This museum sits like a sentry (kind of like our Akitas). You could easily walk past it and never know it was there. I’m glad I had a savvy guide!

The museum is also a hike up a steep hill. Standing forlornly outside the museum is a statue of the aging Hachiko, still waiting for his owner. Hachiko was born in Odate, hence he is the star canine child of the city. As you approach the building, there is a small kennel to the left housing an Akita dog. The Akita, a pretty red and white dog was present and sleeping. He/she couldn’t be bothered with greeting foreign visitors. I was informed that upon a previous visit, inquiries were made if the Akita actually lived at the museum. It was disclosed that the Akita spent much time there, but often also went home with staff. The museum is beautiful in an understated way. The main office is on the ground floor. Here is where the pedigrees and registration of all of Japan’s (and many foreign dogs) Akitas reside. It is maintained by a small staff consisting of primarily elderly caretakers. I presume these are Akita fanciers and possibly breeders. The one young woman in residence did not speak much English but kindly took Stefanie and me upstairs to the museum. It is a do it yourself type of museum. As per most displays in Japan, all articles are identified in Japanese kanji. The displays are very simple, yet poignant. There are the original plaster casts of the Akitas and young Hachiko that greet you. There are dioramas of Akitas as the original matagi dog and dioramas of famous Akitas, like Shiro, the white Akita who tried to save his owners life when the man was caught without his hunting license on a daimyo’s property. It’s a very sad story, but another case of Akita devotion. There is a bear skin of a Yezo (Moon Bear) on the wall as donated by Morie Sawataishi, one of the last Moon bears hunted in the North region of Honshu (this is reflected in the book, ‘Dog Man’). There are photos of many famous Akitas over the years, Kongo, Goromaru,

“Dog Man” and My Trip to Japan, continued from pg. 2

Dewa-Go, Chiyohime-go, etc. There are many beautiful Akita trophies (Akita statues) that were awarded to winning dogs over the many years of Akita shows that were donated to the museum, in addition to scrolls by famous Japanese artists depicting Akita puppies (many of these you have seen in catalogues reprinted). Then there is a wall of all the winning Akitas from late 1950's or early 1960's to present and you can see the dramatic change in the Akita to today's dog. There are also Akita pelts of presumably winning dogs from the past.

To me it was like taking a walk through history!!

Newsweek review: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/120050>

Volunteers needed!

To review InfoDog.com

Staff exhibits and booths at Pet Expos

Help organize our participation in the Christmas Parade in Berryville, VA
(can't start too early!)

Following up on our Courtesy Listings on our web page

Research Grants that might be applicable to our organization

Potential breakthrough in VKH Research:

Mark Neff (UC-Davis) says they can begin DNA sequencing with blood samples from just 4 unrelated affected Akitas and 4 affected dogs of other breeds! Please, if you know anyone with a dog with VKH or know dogs of other breeds that are affected, see if they'll donate blood. Mark is also looking for some 'control' Akitas, these would be registered dogs who do not seem to have VKH (most likely >4 years of age). There is assistance available for shipping of the blood. Please contact Puller if you can participate!

Who Is Your Vet?? Akita Friendly Vets:

Singing Stones Animal Wellness Centre

Carol Lundquist, DVM, PC
2238-B Gallows Road
Vienna, VA 22182
703-206-0197
www.carollundquist.com

Mapleshade Animal Hospital

Christine Learman
5597 Mapledale Plz
Woodbridge, VA 22193
(703) 670-7668

Nebel Street Animal Hospital

Doug Hambright, DVM
Deb Weiss, DVM
12100 Nebel St
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 230-6595

Morgantown Veterinary Care

149 North Main Street
Star City, WV 26505
304/599-3111



Early dog show



Old dog shrine



Dog trophies



Papier mache Hachiko statue in the Odate station

Puppies, Puppies, Puppies and More Puppies, continued from cover

trip to the vet, who gave us several syringes with antibiotics, anti-cough meds, and several bags of fluid so we could administer them subcutaneously ourselves. We settled in for another weekend of cancelled activities and anxious watching over a very sick puppy. She started perking up in about 4 days and was shortly back to normal PIA self. Thank God !!!

The last weekend in February, on Sunday night, we received another call. This gentleman had a male akita, and female akita and since he "failed in his responsibility" to get them fixed, guess what happened. Yup, puppies. He had five out of nine left, and wanted to make arrangements for us to come now and pick them up along with mom. I told him we were full, and I would have to try to make arrangements for a place for them and would call him back. I would have been able to take one or two more puppies, but could not take five more. With the specter of those 4 already placed, unaltered puppies at the back of our minds, we finally made arrangements for them to go to a kennel temporarily, until we could find foster homes. I called the owner back (had a very hard time getting hold of him) and said we were trying to contact one of our people in Maryland to come out and meet mom and puppies, and would call him as soon as we did. Keith called back. I told him the story and he agreed to pick up the puppies and take them to the kennel for us. He left the owner a message saying he could come by Wednesday or Thursday to get the puppies and got no response. I called the owner Thursday night; his wife answered and said her husband was handling the puppy business, would be home in about 30 minutes and would call me back. No, he did not. He finally got in contact with Keith the following weekend, and they made arrangements for Keith come get mom and puppies on Wednesday or Thursday. The day finally agreed upon was Thursday. By the time Keith got there on Thursday, there were only two puppies left (Now there were three more unaltered puppies out there, ready to make more puppies when they get older) and the man decided to keep mom. Keith did offer to help arrange low cost spay neuters for the adults and the man seemed amenable. Will he get it done? Who knows? Or will he just have another "OOPS" and then call us when he cannot find homes for his puppies?

On March 5, I received a call from a vet in the Baltimore area. One of their clients had a 4-5 month old Akita puppy, who ran into the street and was hit by two cars. She had a dislocated hip and a fractured femur. The owner could not pay for surgery and could not borrow enough on the veterinary medical plan. Did we know of any organization that could help? I gave her what contacts I had and she vented a little further saying that every time this client had come in, the dog was off leash. Their clinic is on a very busy four lane road and they had discussed with him many times the reasons why his dog should be on leash...all to no avail. The dog was always allowed off leash in their front yard. This time she saw another dog and went running to greet it and was hit by one car, then another. They felt that if the owner were able to have the surgery done, they would see her again, injured or dead from a similar situation. I spoke with the orthopedic surgeon they had contacted. He said if we took custody of the dog, he would give us a significant discount on the surgery. I had to find a foster home before I could commit to taking the dog. I sent out emails, made phone calls and then waited. Hillary Parlow and George LaMay, a very nice couple who recently lost their Akita, Hachiko, to cancer had been coming to my house for an "Akita fix". They decided they wanted to help in rescue, and had already volunteered to help man the booth at the Pet Expo. When I sent out my plea for a foster home, they talked about this puppy and offered to be her foster home until she had recovered from surgery. YES !!! I called the vet clinic back. The puppy had been sent home with the owner, and plenty of pain meds. I called the owner and explained that if he would sign the dog over to us, we would have her surgery done and find her a good home once she was recovered. He was, to say the least, not happy with that solution. He wanted us to get her fixed, and return her to him, saying he would pay us back. I explained that any time a rescue group has a severely injured dog fixed, the dog is always signed over to the rescue group. He was very upset, saying just because of one mistake, they had to pay, that they were not bad owners, that our solution just "wasn't right". About that time, I lost patience and asked just one mistake? How many times had he let her out off leash, with no fence or restraints? His response: A lot of times but this was the first time she had run off his property. I pointed out that every time he let her out like that was leaving her open to being killed or injured. Her luck had run out and now she was paying the price for his irresponsibility. But he just did not see it that way. He decided to talk to the orthopedic surgeon to see if he could make payments for the surgery. That was shot down. He had some of the money, and decided to see if he could raise the rest. If he could not by the next day, he would sign the dog over to rescue. So we waited. Finally on Friday around noon, he called me back and said he was able to raise the money. He also apologized for his behavior the previous day and fervently swore that she would never be off leash again. All we can do is keep our fingers crossed.

Had we had enough foster homes, there would have been no delay in getting the mother dog and puppies. They all would have been spayed/neutered and placed in good homes. Had we had enough foster homes, more of the 20-30 dogs we are contacted about every week would be in rescue. Currently ARMAC has 4 functioning foster homes. Do the math. We are in dire need of foster homes. If you ever, ever thought of fostering, now is the time...before the next big emergency comes down the road and we have to scramble again, hoping that this won't be the time we fail another Akita in need.

In the meantime, Tootie and Asa are still looking for homes also. Tootie is a marvelous, sleekly black girl with a lovely wavy coat, very athletic and intelligent and very affectionate. She would make a wonderful obedience prospect or agility dog. Asa is a little more mellow, looks kind of like a medium sized, fawn with black mask akita. He has a sturdier build than Tootie, and is very attuned to what is going on in the household and loves people. They are both outstanding with children and have done well at all the adoption events they have attended.

In Memorium

SUKI CORZATT

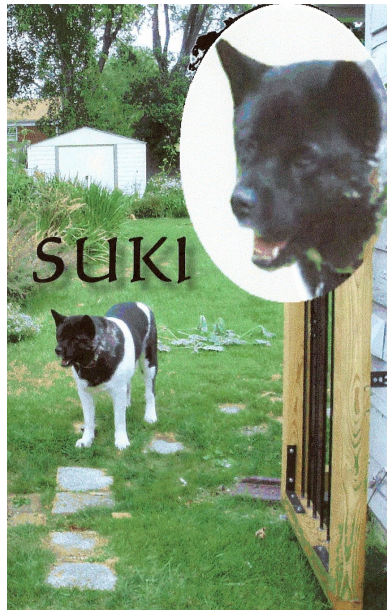
1994-2008

Loved by Jeff, Carol and Allison

MEMORIES

**“Not the least hard thing to bear when they go from us, these quiet friends, is that they carry away with them so many years of our lives. Yet, if they find warmth therein, who would begrudge them those years that they have so guarded?
And whatever they take, be sure they have deserved.”**

--- John Galsworthy ---



Jodi, Charlie, and Darrin:

It is with a heavy heart that I write to tell you that we had to put Suki down on Saturday. His arthritis had reached the point where his back legs could no longer support him. He was also incontinent at times. We knew the end was near when he started losing weight because you could always count on that big boy to EAT.

Our house is so empty now. We were lucky to have Suki as a part of our lives for the past seven years. By my calculations, he was 13 and 1/2...that's a lot of dog years!! As Jeff said, Suki represented everything that is good about the Akita breed. We couldn't have asked for a better companion. We fell in love with him when we first saw his picture online and when Darrin took us to meet him at the veterinary clinic in Richmond, well..... the deal was sealed. We want to thank the Richmond family again for giving him such a wonderful start in life. He came to us as a happy, well-adjusted pet who had been loved and cared for. One of my lasting memories will be Suki's reaction to my watching sports on TV. I tend to get excited when my teams are doing well (or upset when they are not) so I go a little crazy with my enthusiasm. Suki would slink over to the door thinking that someone was yelling at him. Clearly he was not used to ill treatment, verbal or otherwise. He gave us so much more than he asked for -- lots of food, lazy days in the backyard, and long walks in our neighborhood. He was a fixture in our subdivision; whenever I went for a power walk by myself, I would often be quizzed about Suki and why wasn't he with me. He spent his last days lying in the back yard, enjoying the sun, and hopefully not in too much pain. It's the hardest lesson of dog ownership but you let them go because you love them.

Of course we will adopt another Akita. Jeff is retiring the end of this month and we plan to move to North Carolina this fall. I know it would make more sense to wait until then to get another Akita, but I don't know if I want to be a dog-less family for all that time. We think of our Akitas as the second child we never had. Jeff has already showed me Griffy's picture from ARMAC. He's a cutie.

Thank you all for you do with Akita Rescue. Thank you also for the support you have given our family over the years.

Carol & Jeff

Memorials

*Each life is infinitely precious,
and we are richer for
having been touched by it.*

Pat Singstock in memory
of her daughter Elissa's
beloved Akita, Mikko

Donna McKenna over the loss
of her beloved Shay

Jeff and Carol Marek over the loss
of their beloved Suki

Jerry Burke for the loss of
his beloved Gretchen



Thank you!!!

Caralyn Bushey

Lorna Martin and Kevin Mack

Need To Know!

With prices going up everywhere, are there some of you who would prefer to receive your newsletter online? It kills less trees and is hopefully more 'green' than printing, copying and mailing hard copy issues. However, if receiving a newsletter the old fashioned way is desired, no worries, we are merely putting the choice to you.



YEAH! Mercury was adopted!!

CURRENT LIST OF AKITA RESCUE (ARMAC, Inc.) DOGS

The majority of these dogs came from animal shelters, therefore "owner surrender" does not necessarily mean they were received directly from a home.

DOGS LOOKING FOR HOMES:

Nakita – s/f, dob 9/02, Red fawn and white pinto with black mask. BIG GIRL. She has grown immensely in the 3 years we have had her. Very pretty! Very 'lovey' with people. Prefer home with children teenaged or older. Obedient, but still dog aggressive on lead. Needs experienced Akita owner. Calm and housebroken in the house. Needs to be ONLY pet!

Meiko (now Mikey) – a/m, dob 2/04, white with beige ticking on ears. What a character! This is a busy body from the letter 'B'. Housebroken, crate trained. Wants to investigate everything, gets along with other dogs but is VERY pushy and annoyingly 'puppy'. Too rambunctious for home with small children. No cats! Somewhat mouthy, but we feel this is an 'attention getting device'.

Maverick – a/m, dob 1998, red and white pinto with black mask and broken ears. This guy is a GEM! He lived with Silas, the intact 4 year old male Akita and together they escaped to locate their owner after she was evicted from her home of many years. Instead they were incarcerated by the county. Mavvy is housebroken, good with most dogs (certainly female), dog oriented, walks beautifully on lead, crate trained. Not quite the 'love bug' that Silas was, but I would say has more typical Akita temperament. Devoted but aloof. He's a bit of a garbage hound, but a nice guy who would also love to find his permanent and SECURE retirement home.

Autumn – s/f, dob 2002?, red fawn and white pinto with black mask. Wonderful with people, a total love bug! NEEDS TO BE ONLY PET!!! Housebroken.

Babe – s/f, dob 2002, white with brown mask and white blaze. A veritable POWDER PUFF of a girl!!! She is a longhair. Unfortunately, her coat was so badly matted after being left outside after a divorce, that she required shaving her lovely locks. But they should be coming back in shortly. She was surrendered with a female mixed Akita Lab. So she has had exposure to other dogs. She is currently in a foster home with cats, which she would dearly love to chase. Unknown if predatory or just overly curious. Loves all people!

Princess – UPDATE, s/f, dob 2005, fawn with black mask. Our beautiful 'Classic Beauty' has been stricken with Pemphigus. She is responding well to treatment, but will have to be maintained on Prednisone the rest of her life. She has graduated to being with her foster's dogs (several of different sizes). However, on the Pred she needs to be monitored VIGOROUSLY as pred makes dogs snappy. So sad, as she came to us a 'wild Indian' when first taken in, having been dumped by her breeder who admitted to having too many dogs and not enough time. She was not getting along with siblings or dam. But has settled in to a routine in her foster home with several smaller mixed breeds. Whereas she is still very pushy, she sits with 'the gang' for treats. She is still very bossy and dominant. We suspect she would do best as an only pet, but could be swayed to try a nice mellow boy pairing.

Cora – s/f, dob 2002, RED with white markings and black mask. If this girl doesn't scream 'Cadillac' (for all you older Akita fanciers), then nothing will. She is a classic 'old style' Akita with a very loving personality towards humans. Doesn't seem to give a whit about other dogs, but hasn't been tossed to the lions either after whelping 9 puppies in a shelter. She will NOT do cats (or will, but not in the fashion a cat owner wishes).

Tootie and Asa – dob 7/07, s/n. We believe these guys to be mixed with Belgian Shepherd (Tootie) and Malinois (Asa). They are about 45-50 lbs. and probably will not go over 75. They are smart as whips!!! Great pups!!!

Gryphon – dob 10-3-07, a/m, white with brown hood and spot on back, LONGCOAT. Very soft temperament.

Draco – dob 10-3-07, is a very affectionate guy. He is very playful, has loved all the people he has met so far, and has been interacting with the adult, adolescent and young dogs in the household. However, he is the epitome of Akita stubbornness and will require a strong willed owner who can calmly and gently "outstubborn" him.

Aniko – 16 mos., S/F, White with blackish brown ears and right face. She was a stray surrendered to the shelter. Aniko is very willing to learn and has responded quickly to commands. Aniko is an all around great puppy with lots of potential.

Mori – 18 mos. old., silver fawn with heavy black overlay and white markings. *Mori needs a foster home who will be willing to work with him and take him through obedience school.* Mori is a wonderful dog, but hasn't been trained. He is social with humans, but I am still unsure how he will be with other dogs.

All ARMAC orphans are vet checked, up to date on vaccinations, spayed/neutered and are heartworm and fecal negative.

ARMAC ORPHANS



Gryphon at 11 weeks old



Babe



Draco at 11 weeks old



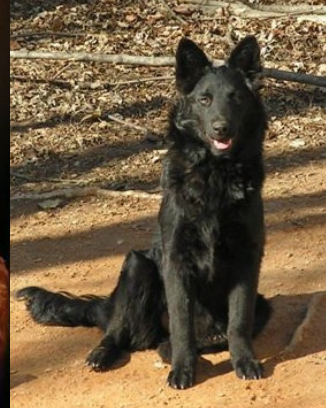
Princess



Cora



Asa



Tootie



Puller and Mavvy



Aniko



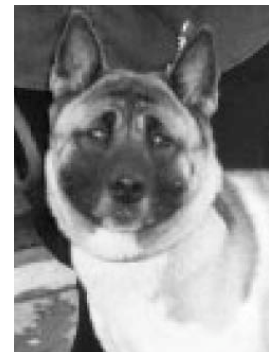
Mori



Autumn



Meiko



Nakita



ARMAC

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