



Spotted News

JULY - AUGUST 2008

- Reunion
- Dally Update
- Spot SOS
- AWARDS

6TH ANNUAL SOS DALMATIAN REUNION Saturday July 26th

The Reunion hit the Jackpot! The weather was great and everyone had a lot of fun visiting and watching the dogs run around. Below are two links where Linda and Leslie want to share their pictures. Please let us know if you took pictures too, we would love to have them.

<http://picasaweb.google.com/sosdalrescue/SOSDalmatianRescueReunion>

<http://www.photoshow.com/watch/IF7Ue2WX>



DALLY UPDATE

NEEDING A HOME

POGO: Hi, my name is Pogo. Some nice people found me, took me to safety at a shelter, and then I came into rescue. I am 1 year old and very smart. It appears I had some training, because I know a lot of commands. I'm rather cute if I say so myself. My favorite activity is to play fetch outside where I can run and bring the ball back to you.

FOUND A HOME

Sarge: I know I finally found my forever home with SOS volunteers, Vicki and Mark in Grafton. I have an older sister, a greyhound, who has renewed energy since my entrance into the home. I know I will now be happy forever.

Felix: We are happy to report that Felix has found his permanent home with Jim and Deb in Germantown and their two sons. Yay for Felix!

George: We were not fostering him, but we were able to match him up with Sandy (who lost Lucky to cancer).

Catera: We were able to match her up with the Kelly's who recently lost Copper. We hope to see both George and Catera at the parade. (See details on next page)



“SPOT SOS”

September 13th, everyone is welcome to come and walk his or her Dalmatian(s) in a 9am Parade. The event is the Midwest Firefighter Combat Challenge in **Greenfield, WI**. At this same event last year, we had over 8 Dalmatians and we would love to triple that number this year. ESPN was filming the Challenge last year and maybe if we get enough Dals to walk, they will film the parade too. We would even be able to have a vehicle drive the route, if we have some that want to come with senior dogs and show them off without having to walk it. **Please call or email us for more details if you are interested in joining us.**

RAINBOW BRIDGE

We have been contacted by the Baumblatt family that Lady has gone to the bridge. She had been rescued back in February of 2004, and was 6 years old at that time. For the past 4 years, she has been treated like a queen!

Dog Treats for Wilson

Wilson was honored with the Spirit of Planetree award from Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center. The other two recipients were MD's. Below is what someone submitted with their nomination.

When MaryJo Cardenas, a nurse at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center, first met Wilson, he was a scared, homeless puppy. MaryJo adopted Wilson from a rescue group and together they earned handler/pet team accreditation through an organization called Pet's Helping People. Ironically, the dog that Mary Jo rescued is now helping to save the lives of patients by helping them through difficult recoveries.

Wilson has touched many lives at Aurora St. Luke's, but his role in the recovery of one particular patient was especially dramatic. A female patient had a ventricular assistive device and had spent several months in the ICU. When she arrived at St. Luke's, the patient was extremely depressed and her recovery was going very slowly. MaryJo suggested an order for pet therapy so Wilson could visit and work with the patient. The staff on the floor noticed an immediate change in the patient's mood once her therapy sessions with MaryJo and Wilson started, and her recovery started progressing much more quickly. The patient was eventually discharged and was very thankful for the visits from MaryJo and Wilson. Caregivers are doubtful that this patient would have done as well as she did had it not been for Wilson.

A Note from Sarge's new Family

He is a big cuddle bug that we both enjoy immensely. We are just blown away by how Sarge fits right in. It's as though he observed our household and routine for a few minutes after arriving, and concluded, "Yeah, I could live here."

Probably having had a previous dalmatian for 13 years gives us a head start to know what we are getting into. He is adorable. He lays on the bathmat outside the shower when I am taking a shower in the morning. When we are cooking in the kitchen, Sarge lays in his kennel (crate) with the door open, and relaxes calmly. He has never had a potty accident since the day we brought him home. One night when Mark stayed up later than me, I woke up at 12:30 that night to find Sarge sleeping next to me in bed, with his head on Mark's pillow. :o) How cute is that? We could never give him up. He is everything we wanted. And more!

Below is a picture of Sarge and his new sister Faith who is 14 years old. We were told that she has been acting much younger since he arrived.



Separation Anxiety

Many dogs are uncomfortable and fearful when separated from their "people", or in a dog's mind, their pack leaders since dogs are pack animals. There are a lot of social interactions that can play into a dog's ability to be content and peaceful when left alone. During a dog's life there are many times they can become susceptible to impressions. **One of the dog's critical learning times is around the age of 6 to 13 weeks of age when they make solid and lasting impressions of the world around them.** They learn about the environment and what happens in certain situations. For some pups this critical period of socialization is filled with all sorts of interesting stimuli, including having to be left alone for a time. If nothing stressful happens while alone, the pup will grow up accepting being alone as normal and "no big deal". In other cases, the pup may experience something fearful while left alone during the critical period of socialization. For example a thunder storm experienced while all alone during the critical period of socialization may imprint in the dog for life the fear of loud noises; if someone ring the door bell or knocks loudly on the door, the pup may grow up with excessive responses to anyone at any door.

The next question is, what can you do about a dog that experiences separation anxiety? If it is mild, you may be able to desensitize your dog on your own. If the anxiety is strong behavior, you would benefit most by finding a trained veterinary behaviorist to help you come up with a plan of behavior modification. This usually involves a veterinarian who has taken postgraduate training and specializes in the study and treatment of

animal behavior. They will examine your dog, take a good history, and talk with you and then come up with a method to desensitize your dog. Part of this plan will often incorporate the use of various anti-anxiety drugs along with methods of behavior modification created from this history. No matter what you do, it will take patience, persistence and some creativity to come up with a way that will work for each animal. **Remember, you are trying to change the dog's solid perception of cause and effect relationships.** Often when these dogs are secretly videotaped it has been found that they exhibit their anxiety within 30 minutes of the owners leaving and again within 30 minutes of the owners arriving back home again.

If you think your dog's separation anxiety is mild, there are some things that you can try on your own. A few of these things are: Having a room or area that is dedicated to a safe area for your dog while you are gone. It may help to have this be their special room at night as well. This is a time when they know you are there but they are still in their special room and they can learn to feel safe even if they are not in the same room with you. Decide what you think might work best and then start getting your dog used to this room or area. Many times leaving the TV or radio on at a good level will help them to not feel so alone. Also have the safe place in an area, if possible, that is more insulated from outside sounds. Dog's that are crate trained can be much easier to work with; it just depends on the dog. Most dogs initially become anxious in crates so you would need to crate train them first while you are at home, then move on to the separation anxiety. Some dogs become anxious at confinement if they are not used to it.

Once you decide where you would like your dog to stay, the next step is to come up with a plan. The goal is to get your dog comfortable in their safe room first. Then you begin leaving the room for short periods and return. Next is to leave the house, and come back in 5 minutes or so and slowly lengthen how long you are gone. The idea is to add reassurance that you are coming home and then slowly lengthen the time gone. It will take time, patience and reassurance to accomplish this desensitization to your absence. Some people have actually taken time off from work to get this problem corrected.

Sometimes the situation does not get better without help from an animal behaviorist's evaluation. Often an animal behaviorist will use a combination of specific behavior modification and the use of anti-anxiety medication. Talk to your veterinarian about consulting an animal behaviorist and using medication if the anxiety is severe. Some of the medications used for this behavior problem are Amitriptyline, Clomipramine and Buspirone. The desensitization process is complicated to explain and since every dog is a little different there is no one way that works. Your dog's history, breed, interaction with you, etc. are all taken into consideration... then a desensitization plan is created very specifically for your dog. Just like in people, animal behavior is quite complex and we may need help through it from a professional.

As a final note, some people recommend getting another pet to help solve the problem. It really depends on the circumstances. If it works according to plan, then you now have two happy, interactive pets that don't need you to "baby sit" them. Be aware, though, that if your first dog is so upset at you leaving, the new puppy may learn this behavior too! In some cases the new dog displays no anxiety but the anxiety of the other dog persists. Each case is unique. The goal is to find a way to modify, eliminate, or at least alleviate the anxiety. Begin your plan with your veterinarian, then consider the animal behaviorist. Most of the teaching veterinary schools have certified animal behaviorists on staff.



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