

AMAL TALES

August 2021

HELLO AMAL MEMBERS!

Already the last newsletter before the Alaskan Malamute National Specialty in Gettysburg, PA in October! AMAL will have a booth at the show with items available to purchase, raffle tickets, and an overview of our year in rescue. Plus our 20th Anniversary video will be playing at the booth. Come by to visit us. We would love to see you and your pups and answer any questions you may have. There are many fun activities scheduled for the week, with the AMAL rescue parade on Friday night. It's an event not to be missed and it sounds like we will have a ring full of dogs whose lives have been impacted positively by our gracious affiliates and their volunteers. You can find the schedule, hotel details and various other info here: <https://www.amcanational.com/information-package-forms>

As a reminder, if you plan to nominate any of your volunteers for the Christensen Award, please submit them ASAP. Please send nominations or questions to board@malamuterescue.org. Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our work so please take every opportunity you can to recognize them!

We have lost a prominent member of the malamute community. Dian McComb spent a large portion of her life loving the Alaskan Malamute. While most of her activities centered around showing and breeding, she was always a supporter of AMAL and our work. Thank you Dian!

On another sad note, Marilyn Kregal passed away in the spring, and she, too, will be sorely missed. Lynne Anderson has written a lovely tribute, and we've placed it on page 6.

I'll end with another nudge to share any ideas/articles etc. that you may have for newsletter content. If you have a story that you think would be good information to share, however you do not have the time to write it, please reach out. We may have someone one who can interview you and write the article for you.

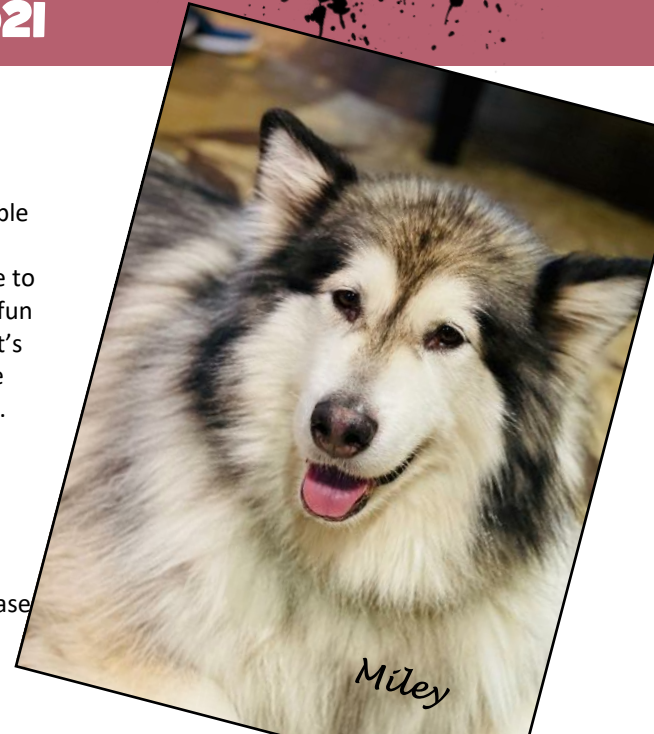
Enjoy the rest of your summer and I look forward to seeing some of you in Gettysburg!

*Andrea Allen
President*



Alaskan Malamute Assistance League

..... We Pull For Them



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Visit AMAL on the Internet at
www.malamuterescue.org

The Alaskan Malamute Assistance League is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and charitable organization recognized by the national breed club, the Alaskan Malamute Club of America. We are an all-volunteer national rescue network which includes state and local breed rescue groups, as well as individual members.

DONATE

AMAL is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and go directly to helping Alaskan Malamutes. For more information, visit

https://www.paypal.com/webapps/shoppingcart?flowlogging_id=9f42ed13149d5&mfid=1622130830814_9f42ed13149d5#/checkout/openButton



AMAL Membership Application/Renewal

July 2021 - June 2022

To renew online, go to

<https://www.malamuterescue.org/index.php/membership/>

Name/s: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

(HINT: Use a return address label)

Country: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

_____ \$25: Individual/Family who want to receive AMAL Tales, the quarterly AMAL newsletter.

_____ \$100: Benefactor

_____ \$25 Benefactor Renewal

Please note that the Alaskan Malamute Pedigree & Registry Program is currently being moved to an online program. The Compact Disk is no longer available.

MAKE A DONATION

Please find \$_____ enclosed. Is this in memory of or in honor of someone? Tell us here:

Yes, I'd like to be contacted about helping Alaskan malamutes in need of assistance: _____

Membership / Donation Payment

Total Amount Enclosed (membership + donations):

\$_____

* Include AMAL Memberships and other donations all in one check --- simply designate the amounts on this form.

Please make your Check or Money Order (International Money Orders must state "US Dollars") payable to the Alaskan Malamute Assistance League (No abbreviations please!).

Mail to:

AMAL Membership
C/o Treasurer
P.O. Box 7161
Golden, CO 80403

PLEASE PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES!

(Mail the form, or pay online)



Alaskan Malamute Assistance League

We Pull For Them

Gettysburg, PA

AMCA REGIONAL & NATIONAL SPECIALTIES 2021

The 2021 AMCA Regional and National Specialties will be held in Gettysburg, PA October 10-16, 2021! Join us for a week of activities while soaking up the beautiful autumn foliage!

*Save the dates! Ask for the AMCA special rate at the beautiful Eisenhower Hotel & Conference Center.
More info & schedule: <https://www.amcanational.com/>.*

AMAL volunteers will host the annual table sales during the week. AMAL will also host the Rescue Showcase on Friday, October 15 to honor the efforts of the regional affiliates' adopters and to highlight advancements the dogs have made since finding their forever homes. It's always a moving experience to hear their stories, The Silent Auction on Friday will also have some AMAL items for consideration.

How can you help? People who have items to donate for resale at the AMAL table (during the week) or auction items for the end of the week, please bring them to the AMAL Table as you attend the Show, or if you prefer mailing/shipping the items, mail them to the address at the right between September 7 and October 7. Best selling or auction items from prior events include malamute-related items, Alaskan crafts, dog sleds, handcrafts that are malamute themed, snow gear, clothing items, children's dog toys, gift baskets, quilts and other good ideas that you may have!

Attn: AMAL
c/o Granite Title Associates, Inc.
1615 York Rd., Suite 303
Lutherville, MD 21093

If you have questions, please contact Sharon Nichols at: snichols@nurdog.com.
Hope to see you at the National!



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Submit articles, stories and/or letters to the editor to:
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Email: jywickrph@aol.com
Phone: (703) 629-6259

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MALICK: A BITE OF REALITY AND A LABOR OF LOVE

Brie and Adam Pirkle

Malick is not our first malamute, but he is our most challenging. Malick was surrendered to a shelter and spent his first birthday there. He was adopted once but was returned. He had a meet and greet the day we were set to meet different WAMAL malamutes. That adopter passed on him. The malamutes we went to see weren't quite the right fit for us. Knowing Malick was now a free agent, we had him meet our other dog. Duke and Malick hit it off, he needed a home, and we needed a malamute. We took him home July 21, 2019.

Within the first two weeks, Malick displayed defensive behavior to both his humans. We don't know what happened in his first home but it wasn't good. He had some serious issues. We got to work, hiring a trainer to help us.

For the next few months, life was great. Then it all changed.

Shortly before his second birthday, his reactive and defensive behavior returned but more severely than before. And then he bit Adam. What changed? We knew that we needed to rule out health issue as the cause of the sudden behavior change. His vet referred him to a neurologist; something wasn't quite right. The neurologist recommended an MRI and administered a lovely cocktail of sedatives that made him compliant. The veterinary team was able to safely get close enough for a complete assessment for the first time in his life. They found a very severe heart murmur. Scratch the MRI! He suddenly needed an emergency ECG. The news was not good. We were referred to the cardiology department at Carlson School of Veterinary Medicine at Oregon State University.

This diagnosis came two months into the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown. Vet clinics were running on skeleton crews, appointments were hard to get, and, when you could get an appointment, it was weeks to months out. While we waited for his appointment, Malick's health went downhill quickly. He could walk three blocks, but would need to turn around and return home. Malick was coughing and exhausted, sleeping up to 20 hours a day. He was only two! Would he even see three?

After a nervous month of waiting, it was time for our appointment. The vet confirmed that Malick had both severe pulmonic stenosis and severe tricuspid valve dysplasia. He desperately needed surgery. The surgeon weaved two balloons into his heart to open the pulmonic valve. Due to the pandemic,

we couldn't be with him. We dropped him off, went home, and nervously waited to see if he would survive. Thankfully, the procedure was a success! Malick's pulmonic valve stenosis went from severe to mild. He's on lifelong medications to prevent any more damage to his tricuspid valve but there is no cure. If we are lucky, we will have a few good years with Malick before his heart fails completely.

Here is where we wish the story ended. We found his health issue, fixed his behavior, and we could ride off into the sunset with an ill, but happy dog.

That wasn't the case. His behavior worsened. He was more reactive and had severe, seemingly insurmountable behavioral challenges.

Things were bad. The mental anguish was awful. Where had we failed? After spending so much time, effort, and money fighting to save his heart, were we going to have to put him down because he was unsafe? We'd only had him a year! He was a happy, goofy, idiot 75% of the time, a typical stubborn malamute 20% of the time, and not easily managed 5% of the time. When he weighs more than one of his humans, that 5% is terrifying. But we LOVED him.

So, we again got to work. We found a behaviorist who specializes in behaviorally challenged dogs. She agreed to work with Malick, knowing this was his last chance. She told us the words we needed to hear: "You love Malick but you don't trust him. You shouldn't trust him. And for some reason he doesn't trust you either. But trust can be built." For months, we all worked hard. We made Malick's world small and safe, we built trust, we carefully pre-planned our interactions with him, we strictly followed his behavior protocol, we found medications that would help control his moods while not damaging his heart, we pushed through when he regressed, we muzzle-trained to work through the hard stuff, and we didn't give up. Our house mantra became "Only Good Things Happen to Malick." And slowly, he started to believe it. He's not perfect and will never be "normal." His behavior will always need managing. But he's still here.

There are no guarantees in rescue, be it behavioral or health. But I can guarantee that Malick is loved, enjoying life, and we will never give up on him. When he leans in for a snuggle the way that only a malamute can, we know it's all been worth it.

NO YOGURT FROSTY PAWS!

Ingredients

- 2 very ripe mashed bananas
- 2 cans of pumpkin puree
- ¾ cup of peanut butter
- 1 cup of milk
- 2 tablespoons of honey

My two malamutes, Leo and Miley, make tracks for the freezer every day at 5 PM. They have a calcium-rich, homemade frosty paw every day after their dinner. Usually, it's a yogurt and blueberry flavor. Recently, I ran out. Oh the howling! A quick Internet search identified a few recipes that require no yogurt. This one has become one of Leo's favorites, although he still likes the blueberry better.

No directions needed for these! Just blend the ingredients and freeze.



AMAL REMEMBRANCES

- In Memory of K. Dian McComb, friend of malamutes, her dogs were her passion
- In Memory of John Scott Leach, by Glen E. Gheesling
- In support of AMAL Christenson Award, by Dr. Norm Pomerance
- In Memory of Marilyn Kregal, a long time director of the AMAL Rescue Showcase, an accomplished show dog owner at Westminster, a clicker trainer for obedience, and a rescue support person. Her beloved dog, Kina, was a registered therapy dog and was on call for the local disaster response team for the families of the survivors of the crash of Flight 3407, near Buffalo, NY
- In Memory of James B. Kuehl, well loved member of the malamute community, AMCA Board member, trainer of malamutes for many show events, and a founder of the Dog Training Club of Champaign, IL



AMAL PROFIT & LOSS SUMMARY

April 1, 2021 through June 31, 2021

INCOME

Donations in	
General	\$182.45
Membership	\$725.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$907.45

EXPENSES

Newsletter	\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$0.00
Quarterly Net Income	\$907.45
Checkbook balance March 31, 2020)	\$107006.00



DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

Most Employee Donation Matching programs will match your donation to AMAL! Ask your Human Resources Department about your company's procedure. Questions? Please feel free to direct them to treasurer@malamuterescue.org.






Kina



Marilynn Kregal — West & Central New York

Kina was abandoned with seven other Malamutes. She was adopted by Marilyn Kregal, West/Central New York Rescue, who was looking for a dog to do therapy work. Kina quickly earned her Therapy Dogs International certification and, with Marilyn, is a member of CANINE THERAPY TEAMS OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK, a team of 13 dogs and handlers being prepared for Emergency Response. Kina is also enjoying working toward her Novice Obedience title.

A Farewell to Marilyn Kregal

Lynne Anderson

Marilynn Kregal (pictured right, above) was my close friend for many years. She was a woman of many talents: a talented musician, a dedicated malamute rescuer, an excellent dog trainer, and a thoroughly decent human being. Marilyn made the AMAL Rescue Showcase at the National Specialty a "class act." Our dogs were impeccably groomed and rehearsed before entering the ring so that dog and "handler" (owner) knew and were comfortable with 'ring procedure'... and Marilyn even asked that the owner handlers dress appropriately as befitting a National Specialty ring performance. I remember with a smile her annoyance when Dan showed a dog in the showcase and did not wear a jacket and tie.

But what I remember most about Marilyn was her kindness. She was so affected by the catastrophe of 9/11 that she began training service dogs to comfort rescuers who were often emotionally devastated by the catastrophes that they encountered in their disaster rescue efforts.

So here's to my friend, who drove herself hard in every endeavor and left a legacy of kindness and respect for beauty in everything.

Until we meet again...

Cover Dog: Miley

Miley is your editor's female malamute. We have no real story to tell except this: For the last two Augusts, we've had to confess the sin of flea infestations and give some tips to prevent—and get rid of—fleas.

No fleas this year!

Got fleas? Find information in the August 2020 and August 2019 issues in the newsletter archives here:
<https://www.malamuterescue.org/index.php/newsletter/archi>



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One of my favorite photos is out-of-focus and poorly framed. It features our dog Gwen on her first day at our house, chasing our dog Owen in the backyard.

Her gait is awkward but her joy is radiant. She'd never run before. She'd seldom done or seen anything beyond the 10 foot circumference of the tree to which she'd been tied for virtually all of the five years before she was rescued.

Another favorite photo, somewhat better composed...Gwen is staring up at the sky, bits of snow on her nose, an expression on her face that can only be described as transcendent.

Malamutes don't typically exhibit patience. We don't know if the circumstances of Gwen's earlier life taught her its value or if having it in atypical abundance is what let her survive those years with her sweet nature intact. She was especially playful with Owen. One day she followed him but stopped where the bushes blocked his view. She stayed perfectly still until Owen passed her hiding place, then jumped at him, barked playfully, and ran.

This became her go-to game until Gwen was no longer able to move well on her own.

Gwen

Linda LeFauve

Gwen was eventually diagnosed with degenerative myelopathy. The paralysis was slow at first. One day, as I helped her cross the yard, she stopped suddenly. I panicked that her muscles had all stopped working simultaneously...until I realized that we were at her hiding place behind the bushes and Owen, blissfully unaware that the game was back on, was coming toward us. As he rounded the corner, Gwen pushed off her front legs as much as she was able and playfully nipped Owen's ear. I helped her "run" after him, my heart simultaneously broken by what she was no longer able to do and buoyed by her resiliency in doing what she could.

When we were building a new home, we lived in a hotel for two months waiting for it to be finished. We spent most evenings of what would be Gwen's last spring sitting under a tree on the hotel property, watching the geese on a nearby pond, explaining Gwen's pink diaper and special harness to other guests. Gwen had always done well traveling, her adaptable nature needing only a familiar dog bed to make any place home. But she was becoming more reluctant to go back inside at night and, on those nights when she was especially anxious, Craig and I would take turns wrapped in a blanket on a camp chair under that tree, Gwen sleeping in the grass nearby. For all the logistics required, that spring remains in my memory as one of the most peaceful times of our lives.

A photo from Gwen's last days...She is with Craig, following his gaze, confident that whatever has drawn his attention is worthy of hers. There is almost no evidence of the strength and stamina she once possessed, except in her eyes, where every ounce of her spirit is undiminished.

The confining bookends of Gwen's life—restrained by a rope tied to a tree, immobilized by illness—are heartbreaking in juxtaposition. But she was not her limitations. She was affection and humor and endearing determination. She was grace and courage.

She was a malamute.





*In Memory of K. Dian McComb, friend of malamutes
September 23, 1930 to May 19, 2021*