

AMAL TALES

May 2025



PLEASE PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES!!!

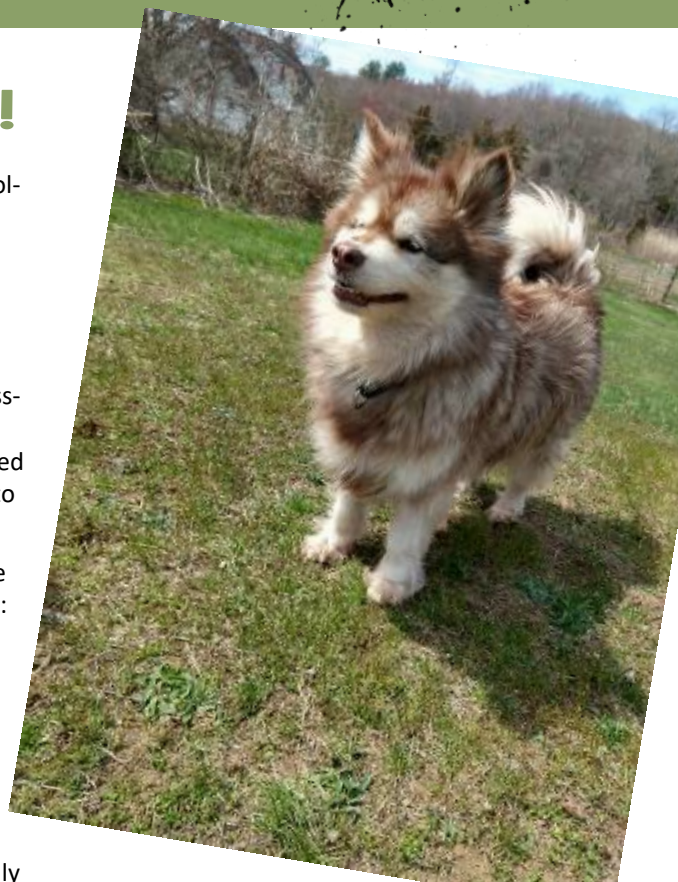
It's that time again! Your dues expire at the end of June, so we hope you will follow the directions on page 2 and commit to another year.

DO YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR DOG?

The June 2025 issue of *National Geographic* has published an article that discusses the theory that people often look—and behave—like their dogs. The story includes pictures of people and their dogs that support the notion. What prompted such a story? Researchers from Germany recently published a study that tried to prove or disprove this assumption.

Lo and behold, the study found that dogs and their owners do tend to resemble each other in looks and demeanor. This research raises some interesting points:

- Humans who partner with similar humans tend to have relationships that endure with less conflict than human pairs who are dissimilar. Wouldn't the same be true of the human-canine bond?
- Human-canine similarities might be because of the way that humans choose dogs at first or because they grow to be similar over time.
- Given a set of pictures of dogs and another of people, judges were very often able to match the dogs to the owners, even if they could only see the eye regions of the participants.
- People who own purebred dogs are more likely to look like their dogs than people who own mixed breeds.
- Overweight people tend to have overweight dogs.
- Women with short hair tend to prefer dogs with short hair and ears. In many dog-human pairs, body shape is similar.
- Dogs and their owners become more similar over time—it's an environmental issue.
- Personalities were also similar. When owners of breeds generally considered "vicious" rated their own tendencies, they tended to rate themselves high in sensation seeking and psychopathy.
- Dogs owned by chatty people who give too much verbal information when training dogs learn commands slower than other dogs.



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Alaskan Malamute Assistance League

..... *We Pull For Them*

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Membership

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Mike Ulman

secretary@malamuterescue.org

General Information

contact@malamuterescue.org

P.O. Box 7161

Golden, CO 80403

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/shop/pingcart?flowlogging_id=9f42ed13149d5&mfid=1622130830814_9f42ed13149d5#/checkout/openButton



AMAL Membership Application/Renewal

July 2025 - June 2026



You can easily renew online, too!

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

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Hint: use an address label

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Choose a Membership and/or Subscription

- ☐ \$25 **Individual/Family** (includes AMAL Tales digital quarterly newsletter)
- ☐ \$100 **Benefactor** (includes AMAL Tales digital quarterly newsletter, 4-year membership, Pedigree Database access with updates)
- ☐ \$25 **Benefactor** (includes 1-year renewal with updates)
- ☐ \$30 **Pedigree Database Annual Subscription** only (includes online access for 1-year (no AMAL membership required))

I'd like to make a DONATION



Please find \$ _____ enclosed to help the Mals.
(optional)

- ☐ IN **HONOR** of _____
- ☐ IN **MEMORY** of _____
- ☐ Yes, I'd like to be contacted about helping Alaskan Malamutes in need of assistance
- ☐ My employer will match my donation

\$ _____ **Total amount enclosed (membership + CD subscription + donation (can all be included in 1 check))**

Please make check or money orders payable to the "Alaskan Malamute Assistance League" - no abbreviations, please. Also, please note, international money orders must state "US Dollars".

**Mail to: AMAL Membership
c/o Treasurer
PO Box 7161
Golden, CO 80403**



AMAL at the 2025 AMCA Regional & National Specialty Show

The **AMCA 2025 Regional & National Specialty Show** is scheduled to take place **October 25 through November 1, 2025**, in the Southern Region (AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV) in **Kingsport, TN**. AMCA Co-Chairs are Dru Ann Martin-Nutzell and Jay Zandt. Make your hotel reservations a.s.a.p. online: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1729095349285&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true&app=resvlink>. Rooms are going quickly! We will provide more show scheduling details we receive them.

AMAL participates in several of the show events: pre-sales of AMAL wines, week-long fundraising at the AMAL Table, the Rescue Showcase activities and signs displayed to honor our AMAL rescue affiliates and sales at the AMCA Auction. We thank all donors who contribute items and/or volunteer efforts towards table and auction sales, provide transportation services, shipment delivery collection and materials preparation. Special thanks goes to AMCA supporters and the donating AMAL affiliates for their support in making this such a success.

AMAL honors our regional rescue affiliates' adopters at the Rescue Showcase. Their dog stories are quite heartwarming and the dogs are wonderful to watch in the show ring. The 2025 Christenson Award will be presented there as well. Thanks go out to our attendees who watched the event.

We will need donations for this next event! Be sure and be thinking about some breed treasures that you can part with for sales at the AMAL Table and/or at auction. Details will follow later in 2025 ...

*Hope to see you there...
Sharon Nichols*

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Submit articles, stories and/or letters to the editor to:

Jeannette Wick

Email: jywickrph@aol.com

Phone: (703) 629-6259

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Jeannette,
You put out a great newsletter and I thoroughly enjoy it BUT the article on "Words we Toss Around" regarding malamute coats (November, 2024) has bothered me since I read it months ago. I've adopted malamutes for almost 20 years and have never read your exact description of long and short coats. I hope this isn't too long for you to print. To my mind, it is vital information.

From *Alaskan Malamute Yesterday and Today*, the description of a long coat is definitely more descriptive than your description. It reads:

"The malamute has a thick coarse guard hair, NEVER long and soft. The undercoat is dense, from one to two inches in depth, oily and woolly. The coarse guard hair varies in length as does the undercoat. The undercoat is relatively short to medium along the sides of the body neck with the length of coat increasing around the shoulders and neck, down the back, over the rump and in the breaching and plume.

Malamutes usually have a shorter and less dense coat during the summer months. The malamute is shown naturally. Trimming is not acceptable except to provide a clean-cut appearance of feet."

A comment on the side of the page reads:

"The texture, composition and quality of the coat are critical to the malamute's survival. The outer coat is comparatively harsh with a soft woolly undercoat. Too harsh a guard coat will result in a coat that stands off, opening the undercoat to weather, while a too soft guard coat, regardless of length, allows penetration by ice, snow and water. A soft coat that is too long (woolly) is doubly undesirable and a dog with no undercoat unless the result of seasoning shed, it unthinkable.

Along the sides, the coat is about one and a half inches long, but on the back, rump and tail, this increases to three to four inches, although females usually have less coat than males.

Any attempt to texturize a too soft coat or to disguise a too long coat by trimming is unacceptable. Trimming is only allowed to neaten the feet."

It then shows a picture of a woolly adult and a woolly puppy coat showing the obvious signs of both.

This book is out of print and is treasured by those who have it. It is the most comprehensive book malamutes and worth its weight in gold. It covers all aspects of the breed, its history, history, training, activities, genetics, diseases and general knowledge of the breed and is by Barbara A. Brooks and Sherry E. Willis. If you can ever acquire a copy, it is now worth a fortune.

Holly Levinter



Janet Moret Clifton

Lisa King

Janet Moret Clifton of Brooklyn, Michigan, passed away on Thursday, February 13, 2025, after a lengthy illness. She was an active member of Alaskan Malamute Rescue and Closer to Home Animal Advocates. In addition to her passion for rescuing dogs and other animals, Janet loved playing cards, being on the lake, spending time with friends and taking random road trips.

One of Janet's random road trips combined spending time with a friend and rescuing a special malamute, Magic. Janet's article about this rescue trip was published in the Winter 2010 issue of *AMAL Tales* - The Alaskan Malamute Assistance League's Quarterly Newsletter. Janet is pictured here with Magic at a rescue picnic after he was adopted.

Thanks to Janet's dedication to animal rescue, many dogs were saved and found their forever homes. Janet is fondly remembered and lives on in the hearts of her animal rescue colleagues.

Readers can find her full obituary here:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/janet-clifton-obituary?id=57602441>

Editor's Response

I see your point but will point out that the book you reference is on breed standards, or the ideal (showable) malamute. Many of the malamutes that come into rescue have been bred in someone's back yard or a puppy mill and do not conform to breed standards. Or, they come from breeders who breed for personality or beauty (as I noted in that piece). An example would be my current dog Faith, whose coat is very long (spots are roughly 8 inches) and extremely soft. She has negligible undercoat. Gorgeous malamute, absolutely not up to breed standard. She came from a Chinese meat market. I also took Charlotte from rescue. She was also 100% malamute and had a very, very soft and long coat. She, however, had an undercoat as the book describes.

See my piece on genetics on page 7.



AC Vernor

Mike Ulman

AC Vernor took over as the coordinator for Potomac Valley Alaskan Malamute Rescue (formerly Virginia Alaskan Malamute Rescue, now Chesapeake Area Alaskan Malamute Rescue) in 1999 and remained in that position until Lezlie Crosswhite took over in 2001. He had previously had German shepherds until he was looking to adopt a dog from Humi Winters and fell in love with Sophie, a sweet malamute but dedicated escape artist. He added a top to his pen with six-foot panels for her.

His personal dogs expanded to include Samoyeds after Dixie came into rescue with a malamute. She fit in so well with Sophie and Jackson, AC's male malamute, that AC ended up keeping her.

As coordinator, he developed a team of volunteers, many of whom are still involved in malamute rescue. I'd adopted malamutes from the previous coordinators, Denise Allen and Liz Vanderham, but my personal involvement in evaluating, transporting, and fostering dogs rescue began during AC's tenure.

AC grew up in Texas, later moving to Fairfax, Virginia for work. While in Virginia, he coordinated malamute rescue for the Maryland, Virginia, and DC area. Eventually, he retired to Alabama where he still had malamutes and/or Samoyeds until he died February 6, 2025, at age 80.

Readers can find his full obituary here:

<https://obits.al.com/us/obituaries/huntsville/name/alois-vernor-obituary?id=57848365>

What Your Dogs' Tails Could Be Telling You

Ava Landry

Dogs often develop lumps or bumps on their tails. Some of these growths cause no harm, while others need immediate veterinary attention. One of the most misunderstood conditions is stud tail, also called supracaudal gland hyperplasia. Although stud tail appears common, not every lump on a dog's tail fits this diagnosis. Owners who stay informed and watch closely can help their dogs get timely and proper care.

The supracaudal gland, located at the base of the tail, secretes oils that help dogs mark territory. This gland often becomes more visible and hairless with age, especially in male dogs. Many owners notice it for the first time and mistake it for an abnormal lump. When the gland becomes overactive, it produces excess sebum, which creates a greasy or swollen area. This buildup clogs pores and triggers stud tail. Although it may seem harmless at first, stud tail often leads to irritation, infection, and skin damage if untreated.

Veterinarians treat stud tail with antibacterial shampoos and ointments that clean the area and reduce oil buildup. When infection sets in, they prescribe oral or injectable antibiotics, and the specific antibiotic depends on the type of organism that is causing the infection. In addition, corticosteroids will be used to relieve inflammation and itching, while topical creams can support skin healing. In severe or recurring cases, veterinarians may recommend surgery to remove the gland, though they reserve this for last-resort situations.

Many tail lumps turn out to be normal anatomical features or benign growths. Cysts, skin tags, and warts usually cause no harm unless they become irritated or infected. If they grow rapidly or bother the dog, a veterinarian may recommend removal. Rarely, a lump may signal a cancerous tumor, which requires early diagnosis and treatment for the best outcome.

When a dog develops a new lump, owners should contact their veterinarian, especially if the lump persists for more than one or two weeks, grows quickly, bleeds, or causes discomfort. Vets may perform a fine needle aspiration to collect cells for lab analysis while the dog stays awake. If needed, they perform a biopsy under sedation for a more accurate diagnosis.

In simple cases, vets may offer advice through telemedicine. Clear photos or videos help identify cysts or warts, but more complex issues always need an in-person exam.

Stud tail, while treatable and common, reminds us to pay close attention to tail changes. By catching symptoms early and working with a vet, dog owners can ensure their pet gets proper treatment and stays healthy.



A Collection of Tall Tales from the Field Truth is Stranger than Fiction

When you've worked in rescue for a while, you start to develop a sense about potential adopters. We've all heard owners who want to give up a dog talk about the dog's spectacular attributes. These dogs are all friendly, house-broken, well trained, up-to-date on their shots, and certainly do not pull at the leash! And then...we learn that maybe much of that was wishful thinking. We've also heard all the "reasons" for giving up a dog: moving, pregnancy, too busy, too big. Our affiliates sent a few of their most memorable tales.

- A lady called and said someone gave her an 8-pound ham for Christmas that she froze. She took it out and put it on the counter to de-frost. I thought she was going to ask if the malamutes would like it. She said, "My 20-pound dog ate it, and all I have left is a bone." She said she called the vet, but they were closed. She asked if she could still make bean soup with the bone. (Not, "Is my dog going to be OK?") She said she'd asked friends, and they gasped and told her no, but "they weren't dog people." I told her yeah, go ahead and make your bean soup. Then I asked, "Do you have a crate for your dog?" She did. I told her to have it handy because that 20-pound dog would be "eliminating" eight pounds of ham. She said she hadn't thought of that.

- I asked a potential adopter, "Why do you want a malamute?" The reply: "I want him to be best friends with my 20-pound bunny...."

- Some years back, we were asked to take a dog from a county shelter. We were full, but asked if we could crosspost, network, etc. They said no, rescue had to pull the dog or she would be put down—they would not place her. We asked why. The shelter director said the dog was "too tall" to be adopted. We pressed for more information, asking what their maximum height for the adoption floor was, if they ever received other tall dogs like Danes, etc. After hemming and hawing (and no answer to the height question), they admitted the REAL reason. She was dog aggressive.....we had a long talk about how it is important for rescues to have accurate information, and that lying hurts the rescue and the dog(s). We evaluated and pulled the dog and placed her in a wonderful home where she was the only furry. She had a long, wonderful life!

- A guy who had an intact male Mastiff wanted to adopt a male malamute. I told him the two males would fight, and I would not adopt him a male. He wrote a bunch of blah, blah, blah and said, REALLY! you won't adopt to me? I replied, "Correct." Then he told me he hoped I went to jail so I would know what it's like to be a dog in a shelter.

- A guy pulled in in a beat-up Dodge Durango. He said, "I heard you have a shelter for huskies." Mind you, the dogs were outside where he could see them. I said, "No, these are malamutes. A rescue boards them with us, we don't own them, and we can't adopt them out." (I told everyone who stopped in this; I never said I was part of the rescue.) I asked, "Do you have any pets?" He stood a little taller, pushed out his chest and said, "I have a malamute and Arctic Wolf." I go un-hunh. (He owns a malamute but called these dogs huskies?) I replied, "The rescue requires an application, then there is a home visit." He sputters, "You're telling me I can't look at these dogs right now?" Yes, that's what I'm telling you. He yells, "I AM GOING TO REPORT YOU!" I replied, "You do that. And I imagine you have a license to own an Arctic Wolf legally in this state?" He left quickly.

- An owner wanted the rescue to take a two-year-old intact male malamute. He said, "He gets along great with other dogs. It's just humans he seems to have an issue with. He's bitten multiple times, and the vet feels he has neurological problems."

- A shelter took in a female malamute that was on the small side. The owner said the dog had lived with her two other dogs and three cats and had no issues. She described the dog as laid back, friendly, very easy, and up-to-date on her shots. So why was she giving the dog up? She said (rather unconvincingly) that she was going on vacation for a "long time." She wouldn't say what she was doing with her other dogs and cats while she planned to be away. She threatened to leave it in the parking lot unless the shelter took the dog immediately. They asked for the veterinarian's name and took the dog. When they called the vet, they learned the dog had not been seen in a couple of years. And the dog was horribly aggressive toward all animals and a total escape artist!

- A lovely male malamute landed in rescue. The reason? A young couple who had two children purchased the dog as an eight-week-old puppy because they were having marital problems. They thought a puppy would save the marriage—apparently having two children already did NOT save the marriage. The couple separated (not the dog's fault), and the wife got custody of the pup. He landed in rescue after endless relocations and before his first birthday.

- An adopter returned a female malamute on day 3 after the adoption. The reason? "She ate the knobs off my kitchen cabinets."

GENES: The Story of Heritage

Jeannette Wick

Recently, two things occurred that made me think about genetic testing in dogs. The first, Holly's letter to the editor, made me think about how genetics affects the way malamutes look and how breeders have manipulated genetic traits to create dogs they think buyers will like. Then, a breeder saw my dog Faith and suggested she may be a Finnish Lapphund. This sent me digging to find the genetic testing we conducted on Faith when we got her. Because she is small compared to my previous 90-pounders and has such a long coat, I wondered if she actually was a malamute. Rereading the report that came from Embarkvet made me marvel at how well these tests predict size, color, and even personality.

I'll confess that I didn't read the entire report when I received it two years ago because its 22 pages were a bit much. Reading it more closely now, I learned more than I expected.

- Right off the bat, the test notified me that this dog is 80.1% Alaskan Malamute and 19.9% Siberian Husky. They also measured a factor called wolfiness. The higher the wolfiness score, the older the breed. In the summary, they report that the Alaskan malamute breed has been traced back to more than 4,000 years ago.
- Three pages of the report are devoted to the dog's coat color. It predicted significant quantities of brown in her coat and no dark mask or a saddle-shaped coloring. It also predicted that she did not have diluted color, which would describe a dog who was grayish or wolf colored.
- It suggested she probably had a distinct color pattern based on her agouti gene and that the pattern would include an off-white color and a sable. I first learned of agouti coloring while working on this newsletter; the malamute community uses this word to describe malamutes with a sooty look to their coats. It was interesting to learn that many animals carry the agouti gene, including humans. It directs melanin pigment distribution. (Every section includes a fun fact or two.)
- Three pages of the report covered coat traits. The genetic pattern indicated that it would be likely for Faith to shed heavily and seasonally. (What a surprise!) It also predicted a straight coat and a long coat—and she carries two copies of the recessive Lh FGF5 gene, so she would have a long coat. Because she carries an Ssp variation on the MITF gene, it predicted that she would have areas of white or off-white fur.
- In terms of body size, the test indicated that she would be a large dog (not a large malamute, but a large dog) and would have normal food motivation. To my surprise, the genetic test could identify a gene called POMC, which when it mutates in dogs, is often linked to excessive eating, higher body fat, and tendency toward obesity. It indicated she would have a medium-to-long snout.
- The report predicted that this dog's weight as an adult would be around 63 pounds.
- A fascinating page suggests how Faith came to be 80.1% malamute and 19.9% Siberian Husky. Blame it on her great grandparents. They postulate that one of her eight great grandparents was a Siberian Husky, while one was a Siberian Husky mix. The remainder of the great grandparents? All malamutes, but her grandparents and parents were consequently mixes.
- It provided tons of health information, and she was clear on all potential issues.

So, how did the test do? You tell me! Faith, pictured on the cover, is a (very) long-haired, 65-pound sable/brown dog with a medium snout. Her fur is soft and willowy. She has the typical malamute coloring and no dark mask. She eats when she's hungry and doesn't beg or counter surf. She has a lovely disposition, and we are very lucky to have her, regardless of her genetic makeup.

DOG ICE CREAM

Ingredients

- 2 ripe bananas
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt (or coconut milk for lactose-sensitive pups)
- ½ cup natural peanut butter (xylitol-free!)
- ¼ cup water

Optional Add-Ins

- Frozen blueberries
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tbsp pumpkin purée

Directions

- Blend bananas, yogurt, peanut butter, and water until smooth.
- Stir in optional add-ins like blueberries or pumpkin.
- Pour into molds or a container and freeze for 4+ hours.
- Let soften slightly before serving.



AMAL REMEMBRANCES

November 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

- In memory of Nancy Jordan, by Susan & Robert Shebelsky, of East Stroudsburg, PA
- In memory of Mary d'Alba, by John Fisher, Chelmsford, MA
- In Memory of Eleanor H. Condd, by Calmwater Advisors, LLC, Columbia, SC
- In Memory of Eleanor H. Condd, by George W. Smith, Jr., Madison, TN
- In memory of "Alfred" (Just Call Me Al!) Snobuc's I Ain't No Mini RN, RI -Big wooly boy, by Maria Dinwoodie, Corfu, NY

AMAL PROFIT & LOSS SUMMARY	
January 1 through March 31, 2025	
INCOME	
Donations in	
General	\$1555.00
Membership	\$3101.55
TOTAL INCOME	\$4656.55
EXPENSES	
Newsletter	\$328.82
Affiliate Support	\$4000.00
Annual Software Support	80
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4408.02
Quarterly Net Gain/Loss	(\$247.73)
Checkbook balance	\$119747.15
March 31, 2025)	

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AMAL Tales
C/o Jeannette Y. Wick, Editor
306 Preston Road
Griswold, CT 06351

