

This monthly article highlights one of our branch members. We hope that you enjoy knowing a little more about your fellow members and the interesting life they have had. If you have someone you would like to nominate or if you would like to help author an article, please email the editor, Ron Nakamoto, at [ron.nakamoto\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:ron.nakamoto(at)yahoo.com).

The article this month takes a slight detour to highlight a few of our members' best buddies. Pets often become part of the family household during and after the kids are gone. They offer companionship and pure love without pre-conditions. We hope that you appreciate the article and will give your buddy a little more love today.

CHANEL by Ron Nakamoto



When the kids are gone and the house is empty you somehow become open to bringing a pet home. Chanel was a neglected mini-Yorkie. Her previous master was going through a divorce and she was often left inside the house with no one there. She laid in the dark, lonely and hoping for someone to come and care for her. My wife's daughter rescued this young, lonely and scared dog and introduced her to her mother. Her hair was matted and clumped and she was in need of a bath and a lot of grooming. She was cleaned up by a local groomer, after which my wife, who has never had a pet in her life, brought her home. Of course, I didn't want a pet because of the commitment we would have to train her and care for her and my extensive travel schedule. And of course, I was overruled. She has been part of our family for eleven wonderful years.

I recall she always waited all day for you to come home. When she heard the car pull in and the clatter of steps to the front door, she would go wild, with delight waiting for you to open the door. Chanel would run in circles and bark wildly for our attention. She displayed unconditional love to see her parents. These are some of the memories I can hold onto now that she is gone. When your pet loves you unconditionally, you cannot help but love her back, day in and day out. Over the years, you expect her to bark and stare at you every day, with her big expressive eyes, waiting patiently for some of your dinner.

A few years later we acquired another dog so they could keep each other company. They would play together, then ignore each other and wait for their mother to relax on the couch. The moment she did, one of the dogs would pounce on to the couch and lie next to her, waiting to be petted. If it were Miley, the Maltese you would soon see Chanel jump up and start backing into Miley, slowly but surely, until the Maltese had no room and had to jump off the couch.

These memories, remembered fondly when she was alive and now somewhat remorsefully now that she is gone, is all that we have left of her presence with us. We are sad, every day when she is not on the bed with us; when we can no longer take her out in the mornings; when we sit down to dinner and no longer see her sitting patiently with her bright eyes. Pets are family and we lost one of our family members. (Epilogue: A month ago, our daughter found a good Yorkie breeder in San Francisco and now we have a new addition to the family, Malea.)

BW by Creed Morgan



Her name was BW (Black and White were her colors). She first showed up in our back yard where we kept a tray of food for the various animals that would visit (cats, raccoons and skunks were the normal visitors). This stray cat was 2-3 years old and

soon became a regular visitor. She became comfortable in the area lounging around the table and chairs for an extended period of time as cats often do. Three months went by with her daily visits until one day we noticed when she arrived she was acting very sick. My wife, Patty said we needed to catch her to take her to our Veterinarian. Of course, I knew that “we” meant me, so I caught her in a trap and off we went to our Vet. After, examining her he said she needed surgery immediately to repair her from a bad pregnancy. We bundled her up and started to drive to the animal hospital. As we started to the hospital, I turned to ask Patty if we should try to save this stray kitty or put her to sleep. Without hesitation, she said “...we should do what we can to give this cat a chance at life...” and so began our eight plus year journey with BW, the little cat that changed our lives forever.

Her first surgery was a success to clean up the initial mess. Her veterinary visits and treatments continued on a regular basis but she was never unpleasant or mean. I think she understood that she needed to endure the prodding and handling to get better. In between the various surgeries we had to administer some eleven different medications, daily. During her second surgery to further clean up her uterus, the nerve controlling her ability to start urination was accidentally severed. From that day, BW could no longer urinate by herself. We continued to dedicate ourselves to help her. We developed a new daily regiment to take her at 7:30 am to the Veterinarian to have her bladder expressed and again at 5:30pm every night. This continued every day, 365 days a year for the next eight years. In that period we only missed four days to attend our grandson’s wedding in Maine.

We have had her at UC Davis School of Veterinarian Medicine for diagnostics to attempt to locate and “re-attach” her nerve; spent two years administering acupuncture treatments, and one year of cold laser treatments all to no avail. She eventually died from throat cancer in July 2014. We did everything we could to give her a chance to live a normal kitty life. And, she rewarded us with her love and companionship. As a member of our family, she shared every event in our lives with us. Without a doubt she was the sweetest little animal we have ever known. I do believe we will see her again at the Rainbow Bridge. (*Editor’s note: You can read about “the Rainbow Bridge” at www.rainbowbridge.com.*)

Since that time, we have continued to feed the strays and small wildlife in our area and to date have serviced 11 skunks, 3 possums, 4 raccoons and 11 cats which we have had neutered.

MOLLY by Bob Garten

“Dad, would you like a dog” my son said as he walked in the door holding a scared, dirty and wormy puppy in his arms. The puppy had been found under a bush on a cold, rainy evening in January 1998. Our family had never had a dog and was not looking for one. I decided to take Molly upstairs and give her a bath. She looked at me with those pitiful



but pleading brown eyes the entire time and it didn't take long for me to say, "You're not going anywhere." Several hundred dollars later for vet services we had a dog that added so much joy to our immediate family, my sister and my mother.

Molly would allow us to dress her in most any outfit. Sometimes, when we had guests she would put on a "fashion" show, allowing us to dress her in various outfits and then parade in front of the guests. She delighted in the attention. She loved to visit the former Five Paws Bakery in Los Altos because a treat would be forthcoming. The owners featured Molly in an ad in the Town Cryer with her sitting at the piano (picture) and the caption "Molly never cries the blues when she has Five Paw treats." Molly was a "joint custody" dog as we used to joke. She spent weekends with my sister who picked her up every Friday after school. Molly could tell time because

every Friday at about 2:30 PM she would perch on the steps by the front door waiting for my sister. Molly got "spa" treatment at my sister's and visited all the shopkeepers in Los Altos for treats so she looked forward to being spoiled every weekend.

Christmas season was special when my Mother always visited and we dressed Molly in her bells and antlers (picture). We would stroll around Stanford Shopping Center always visiting Nordstrom's where employees greeted and treated her.

When my Mother was injured and in rehab near Stanford, we were allowed to take Molly to visit her. Molly knew how to navigate the halls and find my Mother's room. Molly would jump on the bed and



lay down for a belly rub, which my Mother delighted in providing. Molly gave so much joy and comfort during those difficult times.

Molly was my daily walking companion, playing ball, visiting with friends and stopping at the local coffee shop where everyone greeted her. She always had a tail wag and some tricks to perform for the children. She could do addition and subtraction from hand signals and the children were always amazed asking, "How does she know that?"

I miss Molly each day when I take my walk. She was one of a kind and so special to our family. I often recall the line, "All dogs go to heaven." It would be very sad if there were no dogs in heaven. Perhaps there are only dogs in heaven because their inherent nature is unconditional love, joy and faithfulness.

CONCLUSION

Research studies have found that people who have a pet have healthier hearts, stay home sick less often, make fewer visits to the doctor, get more exercise, and are less depressed. Pets may also have a significant impact on allergies, asthma, social support, and social interactions with other people. Older individuals in a care-taker role enjoy a sense of responsibility and purpose that contributes to their overall well-being