

Boomer

Boomer, Boomie, Boom-Boom, Boo-Boo....Whatever you called her, she would come prancing; especially if you had a treat or a piece of chicken. She loved chicken! Especially our neighbors chickens who would come over to our side through a hole in the fence – never to return! But the chicken stories were more of a midlife issue, much different than Boomer's very early days.

Donna had decided she wanted a mini-aussie. We were living in San Diego at the time and she found a breeder on the outskirts of town. We visited the breeder and met Rosie (red merle) and Millie (black tri), both about to have a litter. When the puppies arrived we returned and picked out a sturdy looking tri color little girl, we named Boomer. A week or so before we were to bring Boomer home Rosie was tragically killed by a neighbor dog and the puppies were within eye sight and ear shot of the event. We always wondered if that had any impact on Boomer. Though always friendly, she was somewhat aloof with other dogs. Independent, smart as a whip, lovable with people, but independent from other dogs in her life.

What I remembered most was Boomer as a puppy, jumping up on the bed and snuggling between us laying her head in the nape of your neck waiting for you to wake up. When you did, she was right there with a kiss on the lips and then some!

We did have another dog at the time (Bailey) and the two of them would have so much fun chasing each other. Boomer's technique was herding Bailey, using angles and cutting off the yard to try to catch her but Bailey was too fast for mini-Boomer. After all Boomer was built more like a linebacker than a lean herding dog. But we thought there might be some herding potential so at a big San Diego dog sport event, we tested Boomer first with ducks and then with sheep. She didn't care about the ducks and Donna went in to assist with the sheep. Well, it turned out that Donna was a better sheep herder than Boomer would ever be.

For a six year period during Boomer's life she had an unexpected friend. My 92 year old mother came to live with us. My mother was not a pet lover but Boomer adopted her anyway. Boomer slept right outside her bedroom door every night waiting to escort her to the breakfast table each morning. No doubt to get the crumbs and treats my mother refused to admit that she gave Boomer under the table. Boomer did have a weight problem during those years. When my mother passed at age 98 Boomer remained faithful sleeping in the same spot by the door for quite some time.

Boomer was smart. She figured out agility quickly. She was never the fastest, but she was accurate. She earned championship titles in 3 major agility organizations and visited a national championship in each one as well.

Boomer's agility career was all with Donna. After an early trial at the Caldwell Fairgrounds, I was no longer invited. I sat up in the stands and just when Boomer and Donna started I yelled out, Go Boomer! She abruptly turned towards my voice, ran out of the ring and up the stairs into the viewing stands and into my lap. That was it, I was banned for life!

If you ever visit our house, Donna will be proud to show you Boomer's room. It is the room with the rarely used treadmill and the walls filled with Boomer pictures, championship bars and ribbons. All those events, triumphs and disappointments will be around forever in Donna's heart and memories.

For me, it now seems that my relationship with our dogs always seems to come at the end. For years Boomer ... the daily routine from getting up, food, morning walk-about, treats for whatever she did and of course all the nap times we took together. But the last couple of the months were special.

We took her to the vet to check a lump about 3 months before we lost her. Boomer was not complaining about anything. She never did – except if we were late for dinner time. It was diagnosed as a mast cell tumor. We got a second opinion and concluded at 12.5 years old, surgery and rehab with the tumor possibly impacting muscle or bone, was not worth the discomfort she would go thru with a high possibility of no upside. For about 6 weeks, as the tumor grew, Boomer acted as if it was not even there. Then things started to change.

We began hearing her moan because of pain and discomfort. We could see she was having trouble pooping. Before we knew it 10 – 11 weeks had gone by. Days were spent keeping an eye on her every move. On the 4th of July, she had her first seizure. We knew the end was near but we would take it day by day. July 5th had another mild episode. July 6 was a good day, but July 7th was the end. Boomer had a bad seizure at 8am that day. I called Donna at work and she agreed to call the vet and a 5:30 appointment was made for that day. In the meantime Boomer and I had quality time together but she could not do what she loved to do the most – EAT! She didn't show any interest in treats or Frosty Paws. Then at 2pm and again at 4pm, she experienced two more seizures. By that time, it was time to wrap her up and meet Donna at the vet. By 5:30 Boomer was gone.

It was then that I came to realize what all those years of agility shared by Donna and Boomer truly meant, a special relationship between special friends. In a way, I regret not being part of it. But in reality, maybe it was better that Boomer be the tale of three relationships in this

household. Donna and agility, Helen and her buddy and me with Boomer and the daily routine!
She was the best behaved dog, a cute bundle of fur and a unique personality.

She will be missed by many!

Be at Peace Boomer at Rainbow Bridge.....