

Where Are They Now?

Flash #1914 (Now Max)

by Judy Ballweg and Jay Esser

Max came to us in summer 2011. We had recently lost our beloved Homer #929, and decided that we were not ready to adopt another dog. However, our house was quiet with only one hound and we learned that there is always a waiting list for dogs to get into BBR, so we decided to try fostering. BBR called us and we agreed to meet the relinquishing owner at a truck stop in Windsor to pick him up. Having always had big (75+ pound), senior bassets with the jumping ability of a turtle, we were quite surprised when little Max leapt out of the cab of the pickup! He was a mad man. He ran in circles around the woman, his hair sticking out in all directions. Right before she handed over the leash she said, "Are you sure you can handle him?" (She must have noticed the look of fear on our faces.) "Uh-huh," we replied. And Max promptly rolled in the gravel.



Summer 2011

It was an interesting first couple of weeks, to say the least. We learned that Max could climb a baby gate. He could army-crawl back-and-forth under our bed, from one side to the other, when he wanted to avoid us. He could easily get on the furniture and immediately commandeered our favorite reading chair. He had a very loud, persistent bark. (We were tempted to re-name him 'Bob Barker.')

He also unintentionally humped everything in sight: Drake #1513, our arms and legs, the ottoman... (A couple snips later, though -- sorry, guys! -- he was a different boy.) Max was scared and adjusting to a new home. He was also in a lot of pain.

Max came into BBR with some bad dental problems. He had several teeth extracted. He also had such horrible pseudomonas in his left ear that the canal had actually calcified shut. Thanks to our very persistent vet, Dr. Collins at Sauk Point Veterinary Clinic in Madison, Max went through a series of medications and laser treatments to help his ear improve. He finally endured an ear ablation surgery to remove the ear canal and the infection. He was so cooperative throughout the entire process. Dr. Collins commented that Max knew we were all trying to help him and he was grateful. He returned that favor two years later when his brother Drake's health was declining. We believe that he knew Drake needed most of our attention and he willingly took a back seat for several months until Drake passed away.



Max after ear ablation surgery

We're pretty lucky to have a dog that is so selfless...and FAMOUS! When we picked Max up, the relinquishing owner, Judy, explained his history: Max was found chained to a pillar at a truck stop in

Pennsylvania. He was rescued by her husband, Dave (a truck driver), and a young man named Matt (a journalism student who managed the fuel island). Dave brought Max back to Wisconsin with him to their small dog rescue. He commented that Max was a good 'truck dog' (which explains why he always tries to take the passenger seat before we can get to it). They traveled together from Pennsylvania to St. Louis to Northern Wisconsin. What an adventure! Matt, who had named him Philly Phlash (after Flash from the Dukes of Hazzard), supplied Dave with dog food and then published an article about Max to help raise money for his upcoming medical costs and find him find a new forever home. Judy and Dave (Max's angels) took care of him briefly. They then called BBR for help.



I'm b-a-c-k! January 2012

Max stayed with us as a foster for several months. He was adopted in early January 2012 and returned to us about a week later. The family commented that he was homesick. When they brought him back, he walked in our house, sniffed Drake, and immediately fell asleep on the couch. That's when we knew he was meant to be ours. We officially adopted Max in February 2012...our first foster failure.

We have no idea how old Max really is. He has grayed considerably since we first met him at the truck stop in Windsor. His body is slowing down, and he occasionally sees a chiropractor to adjust his neck and back. He can no longer jump into our reading chair. He still enjoys walking in our neighborhood, stretching vigorously, soaking in the tub, napping by the patio door, eating chunks of bread at lunch time (a bad habit he learned from his former foster brother, Bailey #1966), and serving as back-up for his sister, Lulu #925, when she's barking at the neighbors' dogs.

We didn't know what to expect when we applied to foster. We were initially challenged by behaviors and medical issues that we didn't know how to deal with. But we stuck with it and, with support from BBR, we learned. When Max was ready to be adopted, we were lucky. He picked us.



Max 2014