

## Bojangles

Bojangles was an elderly Siberian Husky/Malamute mix with severe osteoarthritis and hip dysplasia and a lot to say about anything and everything. He was beyond verbal and vocalized constantly. I'm not certain if he was expressing his opinions or simply letting us know of his discomfort, discontentment or pain. Every once in awhile, he would woo-woo in gratitude and happiness. It would take us aback when he did that.

I'm not quite certain how my dear friend, Betty Christenson, Director of North Texas Alaskan Malamute Rescue came to find and save him, but he was at Betty's home as a "foster" for as long as I can remember. It was highly improbable that someone would ever adopt him which made me very sad. He was a handsome boy – gray and white with penetrating, intelligent, piercing brown eyes. He was very smart and wily and was best friends and playmates with our beautiful Innoko whom we rescued from a local shelter. Betty took care of our Innoko at her home while we concentrated on caring for our dog Spencer who had been stricken with Degenerative Myelopathy and suffered severe autoimmune disease. Innoko was seven or eight months when we rescued him, Bojangles was probably eight or nine years old when he moved to Betty's home. He had enormous difficulty getting up and walking. He often dragged his hind legs and moved slowly and unsteadily. He was on anti-inflammatory and pain meds, but they didn't seem to help much except for right after he took them. He was a sweet boy. His worst trait was his constant "whining" and howling. He would let you know his displeasure at the least little infraction or lack of attention on your part.

When Betty died in March, 2004, we adopted Bo and took our Innoko back. Both Bo and Innoko had been crated most of the time at Betty's. They were "liberated" and ran free in our house and back yard. I was astounded at how quickly and easily they adjusted to their new home, family and lifestyle. The transition had been so easy perhaps because Norm and I had visited Betty and her dogs so often – almost every weekend and the dogs already regarded us as "family".

Bojangles loved his freedom (not to mention his new, improved diet which consisted of a lot of my own homecooking). He loved playing outside with Innoko and the others and he loved the change of seasons with their representative seasonal foods and activities. Above all, he loved company and attention – he thoroughly enjoyed having visitors come and play with and admire him. He loved performing "tricks" for those who paid attention to him. I secretly think he also enjoyed showing off his new "digs" and newfound freedom.

We kept Bo for years until he could no longer get up and refused to eat or drink. He was probably about thirteen or fourteen years old. Although crotchety, he had a heart of gold. Until the end, his mind was razor sharp even as his body gave out. We dearly loved our Bojangles. We think of him often. We miss him...