

Leader of the Pack – Nenani

My husband and I adopted the beautiful black and white Alaskan Malamute mix, Nenani from the SPCA of Texas where he and his biological brother, Kobuck, were being held until a breed identification could be made. It was believed that they were about seven months old. They had traveled together from Austin to Dallas. There was some thought that they might be wolf-hybrids and my husband were brought in through Texas Alaskan Malamute Rescue to identify them as adoptable domesticated Malamutes rather than undomesticated and unpredictable wolves or wolf-hybrids. It was not the SPCA's policy to adopt out wolves or wolf-hybrids. Norm and I met the two siblings and adopted them together on the spot. They were very friendly and animated. They were very attached to each other, and we did not, could not, with good conscience, separate them. We deemed them Alaskan Malamutes.

Both dogs were gorgeous! It was obvious from the very beginning, however, that Nenani was much more clever and resourceful than his brother. As we introduced the siblings to their new pack, it became immediately apparent that Nenani was the "Alpha" or pack leader. He was dominant and innately dignified. He ruled with a calm assurance and quiet demeanor. He was rarely, if ever, violent. He was never aggressive, but definitely assertive. He was confident and possessed an innate powerfulness. He ruled wisely and benevolently.

It has been a fascinating journey to live with and observe an "alpha". Nenani is "leader of the pack." All of the dogs defer or submit to him intuitively. He is not vocal or in any way forceful or mean-spirited. He becomes involved in an altercation – only to subdue those who are fighting or overly playful and attempts to calm them down. If he becomes involved in a family altercation, it is only to prevent it from escalating. He will pin the perpetrator down, but never harm him. He simply holds him in place until he has calmed the other down. All respect him. He displays no temper whatsoever, but with a stern glance or soft vocalization, keeps his pack members well-behaved and in line. He is the peacemaker and maintains pack harmony and hierarchy.

At almost twelve years old, Nenani remains mellow and athletic. He is keenly intelligent and rules wisely and well. He is calm and self-assured and accepts his position as pack leader with elegance and grace. As gentle and as beautiful as ever, Nenani is a noble and dignified figure and maintains a peaceable kingdom – one admired by everyone who is witness to it. He is a very special boy and a joy to live with...