

Memories of Jack

by Kenita Gibbins

We didn't get a dog until our youngest child turned five years old. Seeing some of our friends children convinced us little ragamuffins just don't know how to be gentle with animals. I read about a little boy who was bitten by the family pet who got tired of his hair being pulled. I cried knowing the pet wasn't vicious and yet he lost his life. Yes, I know not all small children get into trouble. We just didn't want to take chances with our three children.

All five of us went to the Dumb Friends League to select a dog. The third dog brought out for us to see was a scruffy looking baby black Labrador Retriever mixed with who knows what. He licked Brock in the face and we all laughed just knowing this little guy found a home with us.

Soon everyone in the neighborhood knew Jack. I think the name popped into my head because my parents said I would've been named Jack if I'd been a boy! He learned quickly to sit or roll over on command. He never learned to heel when one of us was walking him. Our Jack wanted to lead and explore. One day he found a lop-ear rabbit down by Cherry Creek near the Four Mile House. We think the rabbit was abandoned after Easter. Jack cornered Baby which became her name. George carried her home, but Jack didn't take his eyes off her. We came to the conclusion Jack thought she was his.

We had never had a rabbit, but what the heck. We also did not eat rabbit ever again for dinner. We bought a cage for her and somehow potted trained her. She knew she couldn't get out of the cage until she had done her business. With freedom she would run into the living room, turn over a vase of artificial flowers and slew them all over the place. Jack didn't know what to do about that, but keep his eye on her. Believe it or not Jack would not let Baby chew on any cords. They were friends.

Jack gave us his all for fourteen years. We had Jack's body cremated and plan to have him with us in our burial plot in Oklahoma. The last time I was in Chandler, Oklahoma I verified the burial place was in my name. Foolishly, I mentioned what we want to do to the woman in charge. She keeps all of the information on index cards! She said, "Oh you can't have three boxes in one grave." We decided we will just mix Jack's cremains in the box with whoever dies first. Just think if and when someone digs up the boxes and chooses to test the ashes they will think they have discovered a whole new creature named Jack.