

The Last Trip

Gone From my Sight
But Never my Memories
Gone From My Touch
But Never My Heart

I'm trying so very hard to make the right decision at the right time. Breanna has been failing rapidly these past four days. I have answered this question for many people but now it is mine to answer for me. How can we know when it is time to make that last trip to the vet? Scharf and Linde both had that look in their eyes that was easy to see. Breanna does not. Though she is not eating well and can hardly walk and loses control of her rear, if I throw a ball she will go for it. Today she is breathing heavily and her heart is fast and thready. She is anemic. She is bloated from blood leaking from her intestines. I think I'm kidding myself. Of course it is time. Why does it have to be so very hard?

All of my dogs are very much a part of me and loved each one for themselves. It's impossible to pick a favorite. But Breanna... she knows me the best. She understands my thoughts and feelings and reacts to words I am amazed she knows the meaning to. She loves to work with and for me and performs quickly and with style. Just a year ago she was still able to do retrieves over the jump though we lowered the jump for her.

When Breanna's litter was born over 12 years ago I couldn't decide which puppy to keep. Brinka was so pretty. Everyone said she was the best bitch in the litter. But the smile in Breanna's eyes kept me from being able to sell her. Then, as it was getting close to time for their adult teeth to come in Breanna's bite went undershot. That was it. No way could I sell her as a show puppy and I was not about to let her go strictly as a pet with her working ability evident. My husband said "Keep them both" one evening in answer to my dilemma. Now why didn't I think of that? So I did!

Breanna's top adult teeth came in in front of her puppy teeth. Her bottom adult teeth came in behind her puppy teeth. A perfect scissors bite resulted. Her championship was fairly easy for her junior handler to attain with 4 majors. We only needed one point when she finished with a major. We were too new at the game to know it is frowned upon to take a major when you don't need it.

Obedience classes were such a joy with Breanna. She learned so quickly I made lots of short cuts. She figured out the exercise and was raring to perform. People thought I was a good trainer. Certainly not. I just had a very smart and willing partner.

She did forge though. I never seemed able to get her in proper heel position. Maybe if I could have heeled for longer periods we could have established it. But it wasn't really a problem...just a half a point off here and there. I loved going in the ring with her. She was such a happy performer spectators couldn't take their eyes off her. Last year I received a phone call from a guy in Ohio who had watched her get a CDX leg at the Convention Center in Cleveland. He had kept

the catalog and looked me up when he acquired a Rottweiler asking if I would please train his dog to work like Breanna did. Of course I couldn't.



**Ch Nordike Breanna Gruppstark, A/C CDX,
MRC Hall of Fame
CRC Bronze Achievement
February 16, 1989 - May 25, 2001**

Breanna loved kleenex. She used to take them right out of the box when she was younger. I pulled a Kleenex out of my pocket in the vet's office today to wipe my tears. As I threw it in the wastebasket she tried to go after it but her body wouldn't let her.

Breanna always knew she was capable of anything. I had to teach her how to jump, as she would throw herself at any height I put in front of her. She never crashed them but she would leap at the last minute as she approached them and it was very scary so I used cavaletti to show her how to approach the jump to clear them with less effort. Even at the end she was looking for me to tell her to do something exciting. Linde and Scharf told me when it was time to go. I could see it in their eyes. Breanna had too much drive to let go of life. In some ways I feel like a murderer. She wasn't ready. The vet told me there was nothing they could do to prolong her life and I know he was right. She was bleeding internally. She was so anemic she could hardly breathe yet she jumped out of the van (fell) got up and went into the vet's office, waiting for me, as I had to stop and breathe every few steps, partly because I have poor lungs but mostly because I couldn't stop crying. She ate a treat from the bowl the vet keeps on the counter, though she hadn't been able to eat breakfast and went to the room they had set up for her.

When I got in the room they had a large cushion waiting for her. It broke me up. "It isn't time. We'll have to do x-rays first" I told my vet. "Maybe there is some simple thing we haven't thought of yet."

It's over. Breanna is at rest. Now it is my job to let her sleep in peace. My job to remember all of the good times we had.

Good-bye for now Breanna. I love you.