

CRUISER'S STORY

On February 6, 2004, the BARC Rescuers came home with 19 dogs from a Wheaton, Missouri auction. We were looking for a boy, and there were lots of males from that auction. Amy said one particular boy, #69, really tugged at her heartstrings. She told me he was so afraid to come out of his crate that she actually had to hold the crate up to her waist and tip it to get him out. He walked with a bad limp and held his right rear leg up when he moved. She was afraid he had a hip problem, but after x-rays, found it was just poorly developed muscles. There's no way to develop puppy muscles when you're locked up in a crate day after day.

One week later, I flew to St. Louis to meet Gary & Penny Turner and drive our little boy home. Gary had given him a bath, but apologized that he still smelled bad; he explained that sometimes it takes a few weeks for the "puppy mill" smell to go away. He sat very still during the trip home, and didn't respond to gentle rubbing, even though I talked softly to him all the way back.

When we arrived home and took him to the yard, thinking he had to potty, he tried to run from us as fast and frantically as his pathetic little legs would wobble. It was such a desperate response; both sad and frightening – to think he would be so terrified. He was a skeletal 49 pounds, most of it feet. Once inside, he "shuffled" straight to Hugger & Scout; Hugger made him her little "charge" almost immediately.

As I write this, we are getting ready to celebrate our second anniversary with Cruiser. He is a constant source of amazement. Very rarely do our feet hit the floor in the morning without a good laugh first at his antics. I feel sure he's trying to speak our language. It comes out a yodel – in whole sentences! He speaks so earnestly, I feel sure he has great things on his mind. Cruiser is learning the value of morning snuggles and shows his pure joy at being alive in his smiling eyes and dancing feet. He is now the fastest of our three dogs, and watching him fly across the field after a four legged buddy is a reward all its own. He has kept his special bond with Hugger, and I feel sure they understand their shared BARC past. He still has not quite grown into his feet, although he's taller than either of his sisters. I believe he's going to develop into a beautiful dog. Watching his eagerness at mealtime (OH, the drooooo!) it's hard to remember why we ever worried.

We are very blessed to have this gentle, sweet soul in our lives, and especially grateful to all the people connected with BARC who have made this life possible for all the BARC pups, and the people who love them.

Patty & Al Tomaszewski, Cedarburg, WI

CRUISER

Patty & Al Tomaszewski



"so many toys, so little time..."

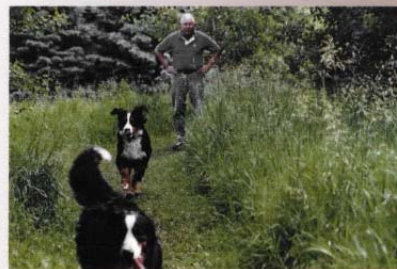
Cruiser



Cruiser & Hugger - Best friends



Cruiser's first day at home.



He's now the fastest of our dogs...