

## **Pilgrim Berner-Garde #14951**

Pilgrim came to us November 98 as a biter named Tiger. We were fostering him and hoping he could be salvaged. We immediately gave him a new name - Pilgrim or later Pilly Graham. There were many challenges in those early days. We were fortunate to have support from many people.

We had some ridiculous offers of forever homes for him. I have learned that foster families have an important job as the dog's chief advocate. We were determined that he would not go any place that could not do at least as good as we were doing for him. On his second birthday, we told him we were no longer fostering him but that he was home. He has been such a wonderful addition to our family.

He never chewed up anything but he ate laundry and had a sockectomy. Our silver could be on the front porch but our laundry was under lock and key. To this day he loves to try to carry things, like blankets, outside. Once he had delusions of adequacy and tried to haul out a king sized mattress.

He has not been much of a counter-surfer with the spectacular exception of the Christmas turkey at my Mother's when he had been with us six weeks.

My Mother died a few days after we got back from the Gettysburg specialty. Pilgrim and I stayed in her apartment for three weeks. Every day different family members were there and the furniture changed as more and more things were taken out. He took it all in stride. Pilgrim was very popular in the retirement home. A special favorite for him was the "bird" bread that the residents threw out. He still pulls toward any light colored thing on the ground that might be bird bread.

He loves to ride elevators and got used to doors that open by magic for him. Some may remember that he took himself on a private elevator ride at 4 AM at Frankenmuth last year.

He is gray and declining. Adequan and thyroid are helping him. He gets acupuncture, massage, chiropractic, and supplements, including DPG. He has always had loose hocks and now his rear collapses when we walk too far. He struggles to get up on slick floors so we have the familiar trail of mats again.

He has been fed raw for about half of his life. He recently had his teeth cleaned for the first time ever and none were pulled. His hearing has gotten selective and his walks are shorter, but he still has a zest for adventure.

He is pictured here on his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. You may see pictures of him at Jean Cheesman's veterans page -- <http://www.angelfire.com/anime3/longlease/veteranPilgrim.htm> and at our website at [www.johnandnell.org](http://www.johnandnell.org).

We are looking forward to many more adventures with this funny dog.

Nell and John Ward  
New Bern, NC

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