



# kingpin growl

vol. 2 no. 1

october 2001

## imps spotlight alumnus of the month

by joy haig and theresa vogel

### Joy's Part 1

I was on my way back from South Carolina where I had just picked up my newest addition to my family from Emily. I had received a message from Sue Mohr before I left Emily's house that there was a dog in Joplin, MO that I needed to pick up. When I got to the shelter, the cutest little guy was brought out to me. He was black and rust with a docked tail and cropped ears.

Physically, he looked healthy with the exception of a missing eye—an old injury that was healed—and a serious rear leg wound. The shelter said they had been flushing the wound out for three weeks, but it just wasn't healing. They turned him over to me without charging anything.

I was having a difficult time coming up with the right name and turned to my regional, Sue Mohr, for suggestions. She suggested Scamp, from the Disney movie *Lady and the Tramp 2*. It really seemed to fit.

When I took him to the vet after I had gotten home, they determined he had little to no feeling in his leg and that the joint was frozen, so even if he wanted to put his leg down, there was no way he would be able to. The vet said the best option was to amputate, that he would get along better without it. The surgery was scheduled for a Thursday. When I went to the vet to pick him up on the next day, my vet called me into a treatment room. I knew this had to be bad news, but didn't understand because when I talked to him earlier in the day, Scamp had come through the surgery fine.

The vet then told me that they had failed to do a heartworm test before surgery and that Scamp was positive for heartworm. I took Scamp home and gave him a couple of weeks to recoup from surgery, then took him back in to start treatment. Scamp flew through treatment with no problems, got around a hundred times better without his leg and is the most happy-go-lucky little Min Pin I have ever known.

Before his surgery, I listed him on the Web site and had many people inquire about him. Once I mentioned he had to go through heartworm treatment before adoption, I did not hear back from many of the inquiries. Theresa Vogel had expressed an interest and from the start I felt she was a good home. She researched heartworm on the Internet, asked questions and even talked to her vet about Scamp's condition. In my opinion, I



Scamp and Gabby snuggle.



Scamp and Meghan take a break.



Scamp relaxes in the sunlight.

couldn't have found a better home.

I agreed to let Scamp go to her, and we made arrangements for us to meet at her mom's home in Missouri.

As the time drew closer to letting Scamp go, I was feeling more and more depressed. Scamp was such a special dog who loved people and other animals. I wanted something special with him. I wanted to keep him and turn him into a therapy dog, but I had already committed him to Theresa. I knew I couldn't back out, and went ahead and met her at her mom's. She had her two children with her and Scamp took right to them. Theresa's mom even begged to let her have Scamp but, of course, Theresa said "no way."

Theresa and I have kept in touch since Scamp's adoption and to my utter amazement and surprise, I found out after the adoption that Theresa's youngest daughter, Gabby, has a therapist that comes to her home to work with her daughter, and Scamp assists with Gabby's therapy.

So, Lister's paw was in this from the very start, from putting me in a position to pick Scamp up early, finding the perfect home for Scamp and using Scamp to help a special little girl with therapy sessions.

### Theresa's Part 2

**Fate:** Destiny; inevitable necessity; meant to be.

This one word describes best my feelings about Scamp. The story of how Scamp came into my life goes back about ten years. Sometimes fate takes its time.

Ten years ago, I became the proud momma of a black miniature poodle that I named Jeremy. Poodle-Boy, as he was affectionately called, was born into a litter of a friend of mine. I was there the day he was conceived (not on purpose, mind you) and spoiled his mother all through her pregnancy. I also slept on the floor next to his mother all night when she was having the puppies. Jeremy came home with me and was my constant companion for nine and a half years. We were very bonded and where I went, he went. He was my shadow.

He was also the product of poor breeding practices and, as a result, had grand mal seizures for the last seven years of his life. Medication helped, but could never really control his seizures. I found out after he started his seizures that both his mother and father had occasional seizures. I was

continued, page 3

The International Council of Veterinary Medicine labels the incidence of diabetes in domestic animals as significant, the figure is somewhere around 16 percent. I tend to place somewhat heavier adjectives like staggering, appalling, unacceptable and tragic on these statistics.

Having treated my last Min Pin (Pooter) through 5 1/2 years with this disease, people with diagnosed diabetes in their pet should be aware that it is no picnic and should go into this with their eyes wide open to all the problems, which can, and probably will, occur with this vicious malady. I don't condemn those who opt for euthanasia in lieu of treatment. It's a question of "quality of life" versus "right to life" for your pet. When Pooter was diagnosed with diabetes, the vet had only one question for me. He asked me if I wanted A dog or if I wanted THIS dog, there was no question as to the answer.

The 16 percent is only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. These figures are taken only from actual diagnosed cases of this dreaded disease. One can only speculate at the number of pets who die from hyperglycemic shock (too much sugar in the blood) because their owners do not understand that the animal is sick. Because the owners cannot deal with the massive physiological changes which take place in the animal, they send him to a kill shelter, let him loose in the woods far from home or just tie him out in the yard and take no further interest in him as he slowly dies in agony and loneliness. Fighting diabetes in your pet can be very expensive and takes a total commitment on your part to ensure your pet lives his remaining years in some semblance of comfort.

Diabetes occurs when the pancreas malfunctions. In my opinion, being overweight can contribute heavily to this condition as can feeding your pet high sugar foods and treats like ice cream and candy. These guys are very small and their pancreas can only handle so much sugar. With an overweight condition or the ingestion of candy or sweet products, the pancreas gets to a state where it cannot handle the sugar overflow anymore and just says "I Quit."

Diabetes occurs when the pancreas shuts down partially or completely and no longer produces insulin to combat and neutralize the sugar (glucose) buildup in the bloodstream. The symptoms are pretty easy to recognize: the pet will have a massive increase of water consumption (the animal can feel the buildup of sugar in its system and tries to cut and thin it with the water), he will lose control of his bladder as the sugar builds up and his ketones levels increase. Ketones are the by-product of the cells' inability to completely burn fats and proteins as secondary sources of energy when there is no or not enough insulin to allow the body's cells to use glucose for energy. Ketones build up in the body and can be measured. The pet will go into a state of Ketoacidosis—an acid condition in the body resulting from an increase in ketones. It is completely preventable—but is a serious threat to a person or pet with diabetes whose body does not produce insulin—and will cause excessive vomiting. The more they vomit, the more chemicals they lose. Dehydration sets in quickly.

There are two kinds of diabetes appropriately called Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 occurs when the pancreas still produces insulin but its chemical signature has been corrupted. The body then does not recognize the insulin and therefore does not combat the glucose buildup. A daily administration of a pill can reverse this genetic change and cause the insulin to do its normal work. A strict diet goes along with this as well as with type 2.

Type 2 is the killer. This type occurs when the pancreas produces little or no insulin and daily injections of either a pork- or human-based insulin is necessary. I estimate that I gave Pooter over 4,000 shots during her illness. Type 2 is where the catch-22 comes into play and the pocketbook can stay in a continual state of empty. The cost for insulin, disposable syringes, low sugar food, test strips and trips to the vet can really add up, as well as antibiotics to fight the infections which are prevalent as this disease progresses. There is no cure.

Min Pins are so small that it is virtually impossible to get a blood sample two or three times a day to test their glucose, so you have to depend on urine test strips to estimate their sugar level.

Following your Pin around in the yard with a small Dixie Cup may look strange to your neighbors but you have to check the urine just about each time he goes to even stay in the ball park of keeping him regulated.

When he hikes his leg or squats, you have to shove the cup under him really quickly to get a sample and you have to be aware of the fact that this usually startles him (i.e. if you have your face too close to the target area, you are liable to get a little wet and a lot embarrassed). You also have to remember that the urine you are collecting was created hours before and has been in the bladder so the reading you get from the strips will only be an estimate based on what he has eaten since the last test. You must then adjust the insulin amount accordingly.

Every little thing that he eats adds sugar to his system, so the days of table scraps and treats must come to an end. The longer the glucose in his system is high, the more damage it does. This point is where the catch-22 comes into play. (I used to give Pooter a piece of her diet kibble for a treat and this worked better than anything. I also always gave her a piece after her shot.)

The very first thing created at conception with any living animal (human or otherwise) is the sack in the eye, which contains the lens. Because this lens is in this sack, it is never subjected to the antibodies of the mother's immune system. The sack also makes the eye invisible to the baby's immune system.

However, this is okay because the sack surrounding the lens keeps the body from knowing it is there. But when the glucose level stays too high in the body for a period of time, this feeds the diabetes and causes it to attack the lens sack and start to eat it away. When the sack has been violated to the extent that it leaks, the body becomes aware that the lens is there and attacks it as it would any foreign object. This attack causes a clouding of the eyes called cataracts and is the direct result of the body's immune system trying to kill the lens, which it sees as not belonging there.

This clouding of the eye is infection and the more it progresses, the more blind the animal will become. Sooner or later the eyes become ulcerated and a surgical removal is your only option. If the cataracts are noticed soon enough, a lens replacement procedure can be done. But if let go too long, the sack is completely eaten away and trying to replace the lens is somewhat akin to trying to hang a picture in mid-air—there is nothing left on which to place the prosthetic lens.

Infection in a body always lessens the effectiveness of the insulin injection so the more infection there is, the more insulin is needed to fight the glucose buildup. The more insulin you give, the more chance you take on sending the animal in hypoglycemia (too little sugar in the blood), which is characterized by rapid breathing and a loss of consciousness due to all the sugar being neutralized. You must then get glucose into him immediately or he will go into a deep coma and die. White Kayro Syrup always worked best for Pooter. If he has lost consciousness, you can rub the syrup on his gums and under his tongue to get it into his system faster. But a trip to the vet is a given if he does pass out.

Dosing your pet up with too much pure sugar also causes high respiration and rapid breathing as the sugar hits the system all at once and will cause a case of the "Johnny Two-Step Shooting Squirts," which throws his ketones back out of whack. You then must make a trip to the vet for hydration of essential body chemicals like potassium and sodium, and re-stabilization of glucose level. Insulin injections also work on the appetite and the animal really will think he is starving to death and will eat anything he can find in the house or the yard. This behavior only adds sugar to the system and causes the glucose level to skyrocket. You are now back to square one with more insulin.

The progression of this disease seems to start slowly and pick up speed as time passes. This disease can cut the expected remaining years of your pet's life by as much as one-third or one-half as it wreaks havoc with the immune system and the internal organs. Eventually he will begin to shut down and you know that both you and your pet have fought long enough. It is time to let him go.

Honoring your oath and your bond to help him on to Rainbow Bridge is difficult at any time, more so when you are immersed in the guilt of not knowing if you could have done more for him or even if you made the right decision to try and help him in the first place. But rest assured that no matter what your decision is in a matter like this, although he will sleep forever in your world, he will be riding the Rainbow with Lister and they will be saving you a seat for when you join them.

furious when I found this out, but what could I do? I loved him and he was mine so we made the best of it.

Jeremy was a wonderful companion! He was great with the kids, didn't bark much and never met a stranger he didn't like. He never walked, but instead bounced from place to place with his beautiful, long black ears flying! When my first husband and I divorced and times were very tough for my daughter and me, he would curl up with me at night, snoring softly, and I knew things would be all right.

Things were all right. I met and married the man of my dreams and together we had another child. Through it all, Jeremy was there.

I knew that his time with me would likely be limited due to the severity of his seizures. I thought I would be ready to let him go when the time came. I was wrong. Jeremy passed to the Rainbow Bridge in February of this year. I was not ready. My heart was broken.

I swore that I was not going to get another dog. Jeremy could not be replaced. I had my husband and two girls to keep me busy. I did part-time daycare for three little boys and I had Chester, our black lab mix to keep me company, but I was still lonely.

I started looking at Min Pins because I was drawn to their big personalities and beautiful looks. I decided that maybe a Min Pin was for me. This time, however, I was going to do everything right. I was going to buy from a reputable breeder that bred for health and temperament. I was going to find the "perfect" dog. I contacted several breeders in our state. All of them had great references and showed their dogs. No puppy mill puppy or backyard breeder dog for me this time! None of the puppies they offered me seemed right though. Maybe I was being too fussy, or maybe I wasn't ready for another dog.

About this time, I found a flyer posted in a local grocery store about Gemini Rottweiler Rescue and K-9 Sanctuary that was located in our area. While I wasn't interested in a large dog, my curiosity got the best of me and I checked out the Web site. Jen Wold has a wonderful site ([www.geocities.com/foxygt2000/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/foxygt2000/index.html)). On her site, she has a picture of her Min Pin, Lexus. I contacted her to tell her how much I liked her site and to ask her about Lexy. She told me about Min Pin rescue and gave me the web address of IMPS. I immediately went to the IMPS site and looked at the Min Pins that were available. When I got down to Scamp in Kansas I swear I heard an audible click! There was MY DOG!

#### **Scamp: SPECIAL HOME NEEDED**

3-4 yr. old black/tan male, docked tail and cropped ears. Scamp is a very special boy. He was found as a stray and turned over to rescue. Sometime in his young life, he had injury to his eyes and as a result, one eye was removed. His other eye has scarring on it, but it does not affect his vision in any way. When found, he had a terrible wound on his rear leg. The leg was so badly damaged that amputation was necessary. The surgery took place on 3/29. Scamp has had a very rough start in life, but is the sweetest most loving little dog. He is 10 pounds and 12 inches tall and loves to curl up on the bed and couch and run up and down stairs as well as the other resident Min Pins. The vet said now that his leg is removed, he will probably get around even better. Scamp gets along with other dogs, both large and small and is crate trained. We are working on his housebreaking, which is going well and will improve even more once he is neutered and his tendency to mark subsides. Can you find it in your heart to give this boy the love and royal treatment he so very much deserves?



Scamp surveys his yard.



Yes! I immediately read all the information on the IMPS page and filled out a potential home questionnaire. I e-mailed Joy Haig on April 5 and asked her to please consider me as Scamp's new home. She told me that he was also heartworm positive and would be beginning treatment on April 9. After a flurry of e-mails back and forth discussing his health, Joy told me on April 6 that he was mine! I swear I could've danced on the ceiling that day. I was so happy! I immediately sat down and crocheted him a blankie to use while he was on bed rest from his heartworm treatment. This, mind you, is no small undertaking for me as I don't particularly like to crochet and in turn, am not very good at it. I sent it off and tried to relax while I waited for Scamp's time to come home.

I told everybody about Scamp. Oh, the looks and questions I got! *"You mean you are going to drive all the way to Missouri [from Minnesota] to get an adult dog that you found on the Internet? ...And this dog only has three legs? ...And one eye? ...And heartworms? ...Why?"* Because...he's mine.

On May 30, the girls and I loaded up in the van for our trip to Missouri to pick up Scamp. I have to admit that during the long drive many thoughts went through my mind. Would he like me? What if Joy changes her mind and keeps him? Was this a huge mistake? We arrived at his mom and stepdad's house that evening and began the longest wait for Joy to come the next day with Scamp.

Finally, the moment arrived! Joy pulled up in front of the house! I nervously walked outside to meet her and out of the pickup popped Scamp. My very first thought...he is so beautiful! He ran right up to me for attention and kisses. I knew right then that this was no mistake. I was right. He was my dog!

Scamp totally charmed Mom and Arlyn and I began to seriously consider sneaking him out of there in the middle of the night before they refused to let me leave with him! The next day we did manage to leave (with Scamp) for the long drive home. He was an angel! He slept almost the whole way and didn't utter a peep.

Once we got home, he checked out every nook and cranny then settled in like he had always lived here. He picked a few favorite spots, which, oddly enough, were Jeremy's favorite spots, too. It felt good not to see empty places in my house again.

My definition of "perfect" has been changed. Scamp is perfect for me even though physically he is not perfect. Was he bred for health and temperament like I insisted I wanted? Not likely, but we will never really know. Judging from his scars, injuries and location where he was found (Joplin, MO), he was likely from a puppy mill. Seeing the way that he mistrusted men in general, especially when they were standing up, I would say he was likely mistreated in his past. But this little dog is something special. He does not let his handicaps get in his way. He runs, climbs and jumps with the best of them. He is very intelligent and is always thinking of things to do. He has learned that men can be trusted. He loves the kids and likes to steal their toys, throw them around and pounce on them. My youngest daughter receives therapy in our home once a week and Scamp joins right in. He is on the therapist's lap and stealing the toys with which they are working. He curls up on my lap when I watch TV or read e-mail. When I wear my sundress, he walks along behind me tugging on the hem to get my attention. And he has never met a stranger he didn't like.

We are very bonded and where I go, he goes. He is my shadow. And at night, when he sleeps with his head on my arm, snoring softly, I know everything is going to be all right. Thanks Poodle-Boy for bringing Scamp to me. And thanks IMPS and Joy for making it all possible.



contacting imp

www.minpinrescue.org  
877-minpin1



Murray in KY shows off for the camera. Check out that smile. Thanks, Connie!



I couldn't resist! Addie's first picture!



Jackson relaxes and shows off his lazy side. Jackson is owned by Jennifer in CA.

IMPS would like to send a big "THANK YOU" out to all the troops of the Girl Scouts : Lenni-Lenape Council, of Riverdale, New Jersey. They have crocheted and knitted over 50 blankets for our foster Pins, which I have been sending out to different volunteers statewide. I just want them to know how much we appreciate all they have done for our organization. GREAT JOB !  
-Michelle Greco, IMPS NJ

## my name is moonbeam “butkus” episode 3, parts 1-2

by i. z. sakaal

With the lunge forward of the noisy tail, Moonbeam instinctively jumped upwards and backwards. The fangs flashed by her right front leg, missing by a hair and the extended snake flopped its head on the ground while Moonbeam was tumbling backwards.

Before the snake could recover to recoil and strike again, a large, furry mass landed on its back and with a howling, yowling battle cry, sunk its fangs into the back of the snake’s neck. It was a cat—it was the biggest cat Moonbeam had ever seen. It could have passed for two large cats in a cat suit it was so big. It was at least three times her size and must have weighed thirty pounds or more.

The snake thrashed and hissed and lashed its body in all directions but to no avail. The cat’s fangs were sunk deep into the back of its neck and the cat was battering and flogging the snake’s head against the ground, the rocks and the trees around it.

In a matter of a minute or so, the snake lay limp and dead in the cat’s jaws. Moonbeam stood looking at the cat completely stunned. The cat stared back at her, what looked like the remains of a tail stub twitching and positioned in somewhat of a half crouch.

The world of animal communication is as alien to humans as modern science would be to an amoeba. It’s a language of sounds and body movements and is universally understood between all the species. It’s a system of alpha, beta and omega; predator and prey or domination and submission; but most of all, it’s a method of survival.

Moonbeam felt no fear as the big male cat eyed her with the snake dangling limply from his jaws. She could sense curiosity, but also friendliness. When the cat turned away and started walking deeper into the woods, somehow she knew it was all right to follow him, and it would be better for her if she did.

Moonbeam followed the cat through the woods for a while and finally they came to the edge of the trees, on a small ridge overlooking an almost dry streambed. A small trickle of water flowed sluggishly down the middle. The cat turned and followed the stream for a while until he came to a large hole in the ground and stepped down into it. Moonbeam followed and there was a slight down slope, which opened up into a good-sized den.

The cat kept going through the den into a tunnel on the other side, which led right down to an area beside the little stream. Moonbeam watched as the cat devoured about two thirds of the snake. Then he went over to the far end of the little space and lay down cleaning his paws and face.

Moonbeam carefully approached the carcass and when there was no response from the big cat, hunkered down and started eating. By the time she was full, there was nothing left but some skin and bones scattered around. After getting a big drink of water, she lay down to relax.

His name was Butkus and he had been living here in this streambed den for a long time. He had belonged to a family in the town not far away and one day they had left and never come back. He had hung around the house for a few days and finally wandered off and ended up here. He didn’t mind the little dog staying with him; in fact it might even make life a little easier, especially when it came to hunting.

Butkus looked like he had been in more than his share of battles of one kind or another. One ear was shredded into three distinct flaps of skin, one eye was scarred and his tail had been bitten off almost up to the rump.

Turns out he was sitting casually by one of the inland canals one afternoon when an alligator came up behind him and took the tail off with one bite. From that time on he never sat with his back to the water.

Moonbeam slept in the warm and dry den that night lying up against the big cat’s back. She knew that she was safe and that she and Butkus would become great friends. For the first week or so, Moonbeam just followed everywhere Butkus went.

He had a few favorite hunting grounds and Moonbeam discovered that in most of these there were numerous wood mice. She could hear them scurrying through their underground tunnels and—taking advantage of her natural bred-in talent of rodent control—she would pounce on the spot, dig like crazy and either she would get the mouse before it could scamper out the tunnel opening or it would make it to the opening where Butkus would be waiting to scoop it up.

The mice were small, but at least they were plentiful.

For a change of diet, there was an old farmhouse nearby with a chicken coop with lots of fresh eggs and even some chicks. This adventure could be very dangerous, however, because the farmer really had no sense of humor when it came to his chicks and eggs being raided.

They had to be very fast. The chicken house was locked up at night and, during the day, there was a guardian for the barnyard. The guardian was a big brown dog who didn’t like cats anyway and Moonbeam was with the cat so she was fair game also.

The plan was to catch the dog off-guard or trick

## moonbeam continued

---

him. Catching him asleep or off guard was a rarity, so tricking him was usually their tactic. They would take turns running into the barnyard and getting the big brown dog to chase one of them while the other one raced in and grabbed a bite from the henhouse. They would alternate doing this for three or four times until they ran out of steam and were too tired to chance it farther.

After two or three forays the farmer would usually be on the spot with his shotgun and that was pushing their luck way too far.

The town of Tyron, Florida was a small quaint coastal village of about five thousand people most of the year whose population swelled to around six thousand five hundred during the citrus harvest months from April to November. Being on the gulf coast about one hundred miles north of Tampa, the little city enjoyed good weather most of the year.

Moonbeam and Butkus would wander into Tyron in the evenings sometimes for another type of their food forays.

Bob and Regina were going on a car run. Actually, they were driving to Disney world and the foster they had at present (Clovis, a red bitch about five or six) needed a ride to her forever home in Naples, Florida.

Clovis had been rescued from a puppy mill bust outside of Memphis six months previously. She had been in pretty bad shape when they got her. She was way overweight at eighteen pounds, there was absolutely no muscle anywhere on her body from never getting any exercise, her nails had grown so long they curved under her paws almost to the ankle joint, her teeth were encrusted with filth as was her mange-ridden coat, she was heartworm positive and her right eye was severely swollen and matted shut. All things considered, she was really a mess.

Clovis had been on the pumpkin diet for most of the six months and her weight was down to twelve pounds. Her heartworm had been treated effectively, she was now negative and on a monthly increment of heartworm preventative. She had been spayed and her nails cut way back and cauterized at the same time. It was discovered that she had what appeared to be a small piece of eggshell caught up under her right inside eyelid, which accounted for the edema and infection. She had also been brought up to date on all her shots.

Standing on a chicken wire flooring had caused her feet to misshape a little and a very aggressive fungus had entrenched itself in her nails.

They would grow out at all angles and break off right at the knuckle a lot of times. There was never any bleeding, but it was painful for her at these times.

She was a happy little dog now and with the exception of her nail problem was in pretty good shape. Being a long-term puppy mill resident she was very submissive and would cringe when reached for but Bob and Regina had high hopes that her new family would continue to show her that all humans weren't bad and going to beat her all the time. Being loved was something she would have to learn over a long time period.

They decided they would take the RV and stay at convenient campgrounds for their trip. This way they would not have to worry about motels and their anti-pet policies and camping out with the whole family and Clovis would be a lot more fun.

They would leave in mid-September and planned their route to leave Telford and make their first overnighter in Ashville, North Carolina. From there they would make stops in Atlanta, Georgia; Suwanee Springs, Florida; Tyron, Florida and finally Weki-Watchee, Florida where they would meet the new owners of Clovis.

The new owners were an elderly couple and didn't like driving long distances so Weki-Watchee was about as far as they could handle a round-trip from Naples and it was almost a straight shot across Florida to Disney World from there so it worked out fine.

After leaving Disney World, they would travel straight up Interstate 95 and spend a few days with Linda and her family in Maryland before heading back to Telford.

Main Street in Tyron, Florida ran right through the center of town. Most of the businesses were on Main Street with a few on connecting side streets and the residences were built up all around the town center. A few farms dotted the surrounding area but mostly there were a number of citrus orchards.

Small, somewhat sleepy and laid-back was the first impression anyone would get of this part of Americana until they had occasion to be in the downtown area around 7 p.m. in the spring, summer and fall months.

On the west side of the town was a rail station. Passenger trains on the north/south route stopped at Tyron twice a week (Tuesdays going north and Fridays going south), but there were freight trains at least once and sometimes twice a day.

These freight trains would be directed onto a siding where they would hook up the boxcars loaded with oranges, grapefruits, lemons or limes that were ready to be transported to the big warehouses where they were subsequently shipped to the supermarkets of the world.

Whenever Moonbeam and Butkus made their forays into town, Moonbeam would always stop by the rail yard and the loaded boxcars looking for traces of Mandy



## moonbeam continued

and Jake. She never picked up their scent but she always checked anyway.

A good portion of the Tyron citizenry was supported directly or indirectly by the citrus industry. They all put in a long day and around 7 p.m. during the best weather months would find them on their evening walks, working on their yards, gardens and flower beds or doing their marketing and miscellaneous shopping. At around 7 p.m., the streets of Tyron came alive with its residents scurrying hither and thither on their errands and neighborly visits.

There were a number of small, general merchandise stores on Main Street but the busiest two stores were the Gearhardson's Food and Miscellaneous Emporiums—one on each end of the town.

They were owned by a divorced couple who didn't like each other very much and would be more than happy to tell anyone who would listen just exactly how much they didn't like each other.

Originally, the north end store had been just a food emporium and the south end store a mercantile/general merchandise outlet. But when Sven and Gerda divorced, getting custody of one store each (Sven the north and Gerda the south), the stage was set for a highly competitive and antagonistic business arena.

The stores both carried a food line but each also catered to a particular clientele. Sven's store, Gearhardson's For Him, stocked hunting and camping supplies, fishing equipment, automotive items, plumbing/electrical particulars and menswear. Sven also loaded his magazine rack with *Outdoor Life*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Auto World*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Popular Science* and girly-girly periodicals.

Gerda's store, Gearhardson's For Her, stocked Jim Cracky's, Gee Jaws, fru frus, shiny beads, baubles, ridiculous hats, women's fashions, face paint, women's unmentionables, children's items such as toys and leashes and her magazine rack was amply supplied with *Woman's World*, *Home and Garden*, *Reader's Digest*, *Cosmopolitan* and other such trivial misprinted wasted paper products. Gearhardson's For Her also had the town's only pharmacy where prescriptions were filled. The over-the-counter medicine rack carried predominately female items such as memory rejuvenators, logic enhancers, anger suppressers, weight reducers and hearing aid batteries.

Moonbeam and Butkus would always get into town around 7 p.m. when the activity of the evening was gearing up. They would start their adventure by hanging around the park, looking pitiful and begging snacks. They could usually beg enough handouts of hot dogs, french fries, pizza, cookies and any number of items to fill their

bellies to bursting as long as they could stay out of the clutches of the Animal Control officer who patrolled every evening. By the time it got full dark and the park emptied, if they were not sated yet, part two of the town trip was put into action.

They would wander down to the south end of town and hang out in the parking lot of Gearhardson's For Her and wait for a victim. Trying their scam at Gearhardson's For Him was usually unproductive as mostly men shopped there and they usually came out of the store with only the basic men's survival items such as beer, a TV guide and remote control batteries.

When a woman customer would exit the store, Moonbeam would wander over to her as she was unloading the groceries from her shopping basket into the trunk of her car and go into her stump-wagging, ears up, spinning pirouette making little yipping sounds. More often than not the woman would kneel down and give her some pets with the usual "What a pretty dog, are you lost? Where are your people?" and so forth.

While the woman's attention was directed to Moonbeam, Butkus would sneak up behind her and in a flash he would be in the trunk, sniff out a package of hamburger, chops, steaks or some other meat product and be gone. This was Moonbeam's signal as he dashed towards the far side of the parking lot to make one or two final wiggles and run yapping after him.

By the time Moonbeam joined Butkus in the woods, he would have the packaging ripped off and they would share the spoils of their piracy.

The plan did not always work though. Sometimes the mark would hear the rustling behind her as Butkus sniffed out the booty and would go into paroxysms of shrieking hysteria, which would send both Moonbeam and Butkus scampering for their lives. There were also the times when the Animal Control officer would be hanging out in the vicinity and they would end up returning to the den empty-handed.

Her name was Dora. She had washed off the west coast of Africa rather drowsily as a barely noticed tropical low. As she swept westward across the Atlantic Ocean towards the Windward and Leeward Islands she slowly gathered strength turning into a tropical storm traveling at a sustained speed of thirty miles per hour. She had migrated to a force 2 hurricane by the time she bounced off of the western coast of Cuba, dropping 14 inches of rain in three hours and sped on past the Florida Keys and into the Gulf of Mexico.

Continuing to grow in size and strength as she fed off of the warm gulf waters, she officially became a force 5 hurricane headed straight for the east coast of

## moonbeam continued

---

Mexico when she suddenly turned northeast. Like an avenging angel from Mother Nature's personal bag of hell, she screamed towards the northwest Florida coast at sixty miles per hour packing sustained winds in the one hundred and sixty miles per hour range with gusts up to two hundred plus.

Moonbeam didn't understand why she was suddenly feeling nervous and why Butkus was the same. She sensed some danger but everything around her felt normal.

The sky was mostly clear and a beautiful blue with only a few clouds in sight. Butkus did not want to hunt, he just paced around and around in the den area and then outside by the stream.

It was early evening and Moonbeam decided to wander into town by herself and see if she could garner some goodies.

The town was very different. It had a vacant, hollow appearance to it. There were no people anywhere to be seen like there usually was. She wandered around the deserted town for a while and finally gave up and returned to the den.

She tried to sleep that night but the air was becoming heavy and oppressive to her. All her senses were screaming danger but she had no idea of what was happening.

When morning finally came, a steady, misty rain had started and the wind was up so Moonbeam climbed up the tunnel to the ridge overlooking the stream. She could see a solid black wall of clouds off in the distance and they were coming directly towards her. Her hackles up, she cowered down a bit as the intensity of the wind and rain increased, she was thoroughly soaked by the time she retreated back into the den.

Dora came ashore on the northwest coast of Florida at Tyron on September 20 at 9 in the morning. She dropped rain at the rate of five inches per hour and spawned a dozen tornadoes in her first 30 minutes of landfall.

Thunder and lightning were crashing all around them as Moonbeam and Butkus huddled terrified in the den. The stream level had risen to where the water was starting to seep into the den so they kept backing up the tunnel to the ridge to get away from it.

For hours the storm howled and screamed overhead and then suddenly there was quiet. The wind and the rain had stopped and blue sky had appeared. Moonbeam and Butkus had no way of knowing that this was the eye of the storm passing over them.

They climbed up to the ridge and all around them was total destruction. Big trees had been snapped off of their base like so much kindling wood and they could smell the acrid smoke of nearby fires.

Both of them heard the noise at the same time. It started out as a low dull roar and graduated into a thundering, crashing cacophony of sound in just a few seconds. Butkus snarled, fur standing up, and hurriedly climbed one of the few remaining trees still standing, looking at something and hissing.

Directing her attention to where Butkus was looking, Moonbeam saw the wall of water from the flash flood coming at her and there was no time to flee or run for cover. The 10 foot high mass hit her like an explosion and suddenly she was being tumbled and tossed in the bosom of its fury. She couldn't breathe and there was water in her lungs.

Fighting with every ounce of strength she possessed, she got her head above water and gulped a few breaths of air before she was unceremoniously pulled back under the churning and fast moving torrent once more. Breaking the surface again, she was bumping against something solid. Somehow she found the strength to pull herself up on an object floating beside her. Then suddenly, everything went black.

She came to lying on a large, rectangular-shaped piece of wood—probably the door from someone's house—half drowned, exhausted and freezing. She could barely lift her head to look around and all she could see was water in all directions. The tops of submerged houses dotted the landscape here and there but that was all. Dead, bloated animals floated by her at times and as the water current carried her along, she saw other animals adrift or stranded in large treetops.

She was an orphan, adrift on a sea of orphans, so she lay her head back down and welcomed the blissful blackness of sleep as it claimed her weary and battered body.

Coming In The Next Issue  
Moonbeam's Adventures  
"Charlie" Episode 4, Part 1