

A BELATED MEMORIAL DAY STORY

From the Web.

They told me the big black Lab's name was Reggie, as I looked at him lying in his pen. The shelter was clean and the people really friendly.

I had only been in the town for six months, but everywhere I went, in the small college town, people were welcoming and very open. Everyone waved when you passed them on the street.

But something was still missing in my life as I attempted to settle in to my new situation here, and I thought that maybe a dog couldn't hurt. It would give me someone to talk to and I had just seen Reggie's advertisement on the local news.

The shelter said they had received numerous calls right after the airing of Reggie's ad, but they said the people who had come to see him just did NOT look like 'Lab people', whatever that meant. However, they must have thought I did.

At first, I thought the shelter had misjudged me in giving me Reggie and his things, which consisted of a dog pad, his dishes, a sealed letter from his previous owner and a bag of toys, almost all of which were brand new tennis balls.

You see, See, Reggie and I didn't really hit it off when we got home. We struggled for two weeks, which is how long the shelter told me I should give him to adjust to his new home. . . .

Then, I saw the sealed envelope from the shelter. I had completely forgotten about it. I said out loud, "Okay, Reggie, let's see if your previous owner has any good advice for us." I opened the envelope and took out the note from inside.

"To Whomever Gets My Dog: Well, I can NOT say that I am happy that you are reading this letter. I told the shelter that it could only be opened by Reggie's new owner. I am not even happy writing it. Reggie even knew something

was different. So let me tell you about my Lab friend in the hopes that it will help you bond with him and he with you.

First, he loves tennis balls. The more the merrier. Sometimes I think he is part squirrel, the way he hoards them. He usually always has two in his mouth.



However, he tries to get a third in there also, but he has not done it yet. . . .

Next are commands. Reggie knows the obvious ones like; 'sit', 'stay', 'come', and 'heel'. . . . He really knows 'ball', 'food', 'bone' and 'treat' like nobody's business.

His feeding schedule is; Twice a day with regular store-bought stuff. . . .

He is current on his shots, but be forewarned, Reggie hates the vet! So, good luck getting him in the car when it is time to see the doctor. . . .

Finally, give him some time. It has only been Reggie and me for his whole life. He has gone everywhere with me, so please include him on your daily walks and car rides if you can. He rides well in the backseat, and he does not bark or complain. He just loves to be around people. And me most especially.

That is why I need to share one more bit of info with you.

His name is truly NOT Reggie. Oh, he is a smart dog and he will get used to it and will respond to it, of that I have no doubt. But I just couldn't bear to give the shelter his real name. But if someone is reading this note, well, it means that he has a new owner who should know his real name. His real name is 'Tank', because, that

is what I drive for a living. I told the shelter that they could NOT make 'Reggie' available for adoption until they received word from my company commander.

You see, my parents are gone, I had no siblings, no one I could have left Tank with, if something were to happen to me. It was my only real request of the Army upon my deployment to Iraq. They would make one phone call to the shelter, in the case of an 'event', to tell them that Tank could be put up for adoption. Luckily, my Commanding Officer was a dog-guy, too, and he knew where my platoon was headed in Iraq.

He said he would do it personally, and if you are reading this, then he made good on his word.

Tank has been my family for the last six years, almost as long as the Army has been my family. So, now I hope and pray that you make him part of your family, too, and that he will adjust and come to love you the same way he loved me. If I have to give up Tank to keep those terrible people from coming to the USA, I am glad to have done so. He is my example of service and of love. I hope that I will have honored him by my service to my country and my comrades.

All right, that is enough rambling. I deploy this evening and have to drop this letter off at the shelter. Maybe I will that some time to peek in on him and see if he finally got that third tennis ball in his mouth.

Good luck with Tank. Give him a good home, and give him an extra kiss goodnight, every night, from me."

Thank you, Paul Mallory

I folded the letter and slipped it back into the envelope. Yes, I had heard of Paul Mallory. Everyone in town knew him, even new people like me. A local young man, killed in Iraq a few months ago and posthumously earned the Silver Star for giving his life to save three buddies. The town flags had been



at half-mast all summer.

So, I leaned forward in my chair and rested my elbows on my knees, just staring at the dog. I said quietly, "Hey Tank" and the dog's head whipped up, his ears cocked and his eyes brightened. "Come here, boy." And he was instantly on his feet, his nails clicking on the hardwood floor.

Then he sat in front of me, his head tilted, searching for the name he had not heard in months.

"Tank," I whispered, and his tail swished. I kept whispering his name, over and over, and each time, his ears lowered, his eyes softened, and his posture relaxed as a wave of contentment just seemed to flood him. I stroked his ears, rubbed his shoulders, buried my face into his scruff and hugged him.

I said to him softly, "It is me now, Tank, just you and me. Your old pal gave you to me." Tank reached up and licked my cheek.

Then I said, "So what da ya say we play some BALL?"

Tank's ears perked up again.

I asked, "Yeah? BALL? You like that? BALL?"

Tank tore from my hands, disappeared into the next room, and when he came back, he had three tennis balls in his mouth.

That is the end of the story and now, if you can read this story without getting a lump in your throat or a tear in your eye, you just ain't quite right.

To ALL the veterans, I THANK YOU for your Service to our great County and as one of God's children, I love you as fellow brothers.

Linda Gammel

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ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

From the Web.

For months he had been her devoted admirer. Now, at long last, he had collected up sufficient courage to ask her the most momentous of all questions.

"There are quite a lot of advantages in being a bachelor," he began, "but there comes a time when we long for the companionship of another being--a being who will regard one as a perfect, as an idol; whom one can treat as one's absolute property; who will be kind and faithful when times are hard; who will share one's joys and sorrows."

To his delight he saw a sympathetic gleam in her eyes. Then she nodded in agreement.

"So you're thinking of buying a dog?" she said. "I think it's a fine idea. Do let me help you choose one!"

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

L.V. School Board Meeting

Thursday, June 13, starts at 5:30PM.
At the Alternative Education Center,
8560 Alianto Rd up Highway 18.

Household Hazardous Waste & E-Waste Collection

SATURDAY, June 22, 9A to Noon. Free disposal of household hazardous waste (Antifreeze, Batteries, Motor Oil & Oil Filters, latex paint only, medical needles, fluorescent, and all electronic wastes.) Behind LV Fire Station, 33269 Old Woman Springs Road. For info call 1-800-OILY CAT.

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LIMITS & MULTIPLE PRICING

Please, unless otherwise indicated, ON AD ITEMS NO MORE THAN 6 TOTAL (including all flavors or varieties) OF ANY ITEM, PER FAMILY, DURING THE AD PERIOD, AT THE SALE PRICE, except in produce and meat, which are limited to normal retail quantities, or which carry limits specifically stated. Sorry, we must reserve the right to further limit or refuse sales.

ON MULTIPLE PRICING, when purchasing items in quantities more or less than the multiple stated, the register is built automatically to charge the "each" price times the quantity. (Example: Price of item is 3/\$1. The price of: one = 34¢, two = 68¢, three = \$1, four = \$1.34, five = \$1.68, six = \$2.00).