

meet Marcus Bock, the luckiest dog

By Suzie Bock

Family member names: Suzie, Brian, Josh and Brandon

Pet's name: Marcus
Type of animal/breed: Boxer/Staf-fordshire Terrier mix

Male or female: Male

Pet's age: 1 year

Marcus's story is somewhat of a drama that includes love, happiness, tragedy, heartbreak, but has a very happy ending.

Our 20-year-old son, Brandon, attends SFSU and decided to get a dog with his then, girlfriend. Though we tried to talk him out of it, as college isn't the best time to take on a puppy, once they saw Marcus, they fell in love and had to have him.

When Marcus was about 5 months old, he was crashed into by a very large dog at a San Francisco dog park and his hip was badly injured. Being college students, the kids didn't have the money for an MRI or X-rays to see exactly what happened, so the vet put Marcus on anti-inflammation medication and sent them on their way.

About a month later, Brandon's girlfriend became unable to care for Marcus and Brandon lived in housing that couldn't accommodate pets, so he called Brian and I. We knew that if we couldn't find a place for Marcus, he

would have to go to the pound, so we took him in.

I decided that he needed a well-dog checkup - not realizing the extent of his injury. The vet noticed it and took an x-ray showing how badly his hip was out of whack. He told us he would need surgery, though not sure exactly what type. He surmised a full hip replacement, but sent us to a wonderful surgeon in Ventura. Dr. Holsworth of Vetsurg, examined Marcus and determined that he couldn't wait until he was 18 months old (the minimum age for a hip replacement due to growing bones). He suggested FHO surgery, which basically cuts off the ball of the hip joint and the body naturally 'builds' a 'faux' hip.

We figured we would foster Marcus until he recovered from his surgery because we already have two dogs and three dogs was just too much and our home and backyard were not really set up for him! Marcus was just 10 months old, full of energy and very strong. Brandon was very sad, but understood the situation.

Over the four months that Marcus has been with us, we have grown to love him. He is intelligent, sweet, playful and loves to cuddle. There is not an aggressive or mean bone in his body. We knew we had a GREAT DOG and though it is difficult now, due to his rehab and energy level, we felt that over time he would mellow and things would get easier.



I could swear that Marcus understands English, as he heard me many, many times tell people that we were fostering him and looking for a good home. He knew his care rested heavily on my shoulders and that it was hard for me to have two other dogs and a home business. So, it should not have surprised me that when I told Brandon we had decided to keep Marcus that Marcus got right up, came over to me and, I'm sure if he could have, he would have stood up and hugged me.

Last month *Lake Sherwood Life* featured our other two dogs, Pearl (a 13-year-old Goldendoodle) and Sammi (a 2-year-old Maltipoo). Both dogs were hesitant initially when Marcus arrived, but are warming up to him and we all feel they will be great friends in the future. Right now, Pearl merely tolerates him (as any old woman would an energetic, annoying toddler). Sammi, however, still very young herself and wants to play, but Marcus's idea of playing is batting Sammi around like a toy - not in a mean way, but that's how he plays! They'll figure it out, as Marcus is taking to training extremely well.

So, the story of the Luckiest Dog in the World, has a very happy ending. Not only did he get the surgery he needed to live a full life, he also has the family he needs to ensure he lives it!



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