

Goodbye Gunner

The knarly, arthritic toes and cracked, worn pads revealed a glimpse into the life of a black Lab with 15 years of serious fun behind her. Recently, the maladies of aging began to slow her down, robbing her of energy and her usual zeal for all things fun and exciting. Sleeping became her pastime. She began to exhibit signs that told us that the end of her cherished place in our family life was coming to a close. In the course of two days, we watched her become confused and unable to stand. When her fever would not subside, we headed to DoveLewis and the inevitable discussion with Dr. Katherine Earl regarding palliative care and euthanasia. This Lab had lived her life well, happy and content with all of her people, fully and unendingly dedicated to pleasing us all with her presence. What a dog! A bird hunter she was not, but she wiggled into our hearts with eyes that promised us her loyalty forever. And now it was time... we gathered in the Comfort Room and watched her tail wag one last time as those loving Techs wheeled her into this quiet, peaceful sanctuary. We said goodbye a thousand times and then left her with our tears...

Gunner had the dubious opportunity of visiting DoveLewis on five different occasions throughout her lifetime. From a puncture wound to her belly to ingestion of Claritin D and various fruit pits (she was a true Lab!), our experiences with Dove from the moment we walked in the door to the happy departure with our recovered case study of "how-much-trouble-can-a-Lab-get-into" have been nothing less than phenomenal every time. Compassionate, empathetic, knowledgeable, able to communicate are just a few of the words that describe the people who kindly work so hard to save the lives of animals every day.

Thank you Dr. Earl for talking us through symptoms, probable diagnosis, prognosis, and helping us find the courage to let her go. Thank you to the gentle hands that lifted Gunner from the car. Thank you Dr. Kelly Flaminio. Thank you for kind words. Thank you for knowing the meaning of Dog Love.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Jan Lindsay