

'Charger' is Lydia's memory

Dogs never forget the smell of another dog they have known. And a good dog that is a long time companion remains in the memory of a dog that has been rescued. So it is for 'Lydia', one of thousands of dogs driven out by the Katrina hurricane, adopted, returned, safehoused for a year by an AARF volunteer, and finally found by a dedicated owner.

But before that best adoption day, there was a long while for Lydia with Charger at his home. Charger was Lydia's companion and his family loved and protected and advocated for Lydia. When the right person arrived by chance, Lydia was ready to be adopted and taken for basic training and loved.

Lydia's time is short from an incurable disease and soon enough she will be rejoined with Charger at the 'Rainbow Brdge', if such a place exists. Whether it is true or not, the Rainbow Bridge represents for people the freedom from loneliness and suffering endured by homeless and mistreated or neglected dogs.

Somewhere in Lydia's heart and mind there is a memory and recognition of Charger and his family. And whatever capacity a dog has to love will be awakened again for Lydia and Charger when they are reunited in companionship. Charger's family was lucky enough to have both Lydia and Charger. Both dogs were brought to safety and protection by the same family.

And I was at the right place at the right time to recognize the gift that fell into my hands and heart. I found Lydia as my own and briefly knew beautiful 'Charger' and his human family. And like Lydia... I will remember, too.

- Doug Henninger