

The Journal

of the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers

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Bruce Wedlock

Eli Terry Clock

In Memory of a Most Memorable Companion



by Mike Korsak
mikekorsak.com

I am a dog person, which is to say that I generally prefer the company of my dog to the company of people, my wife excepted. Our dog, Livvie, seemed to mirror that preference in that she really had no interest in other dogs or humans, besides my wife and I, and made her aversion for others abundantly clear. One hundred twenty pounds of barking, growling beast is not subtle. Livvie's defensive maneuvers seemed to be an exception to the rule, though, as Newfoundland's are generally known to be friendly and outgoing.

Livvie was the exception to the rule in a lot of other ways. One of those ways is that she really had no interest in rules. We adopted her when she was two years old. Her first set of parents wanted her gone after a divisive event that involved some combination of Livvie, a Great Dane and a toddler. This "event" was never mentioned specifically, but alluded to in our conversations with her owners.

What was clear the first time we met Livvie was that she didn't believe in window screens or leashes. I clearly recall arriving at Livvie's house to discuss adoption and noticing that every window screen had been shredded, and that the intact slivers were waving in the light breeze. I also recall thinking to myself that there's no way the screens could

have been ripped out by the dog we were thinking about taking home. The fault in that thinking was immediately made evident as we entered Livvie's world and were greeted by a barking, jumping, tail-wagging force of nature. My wife and I were instantly smitten.

With the deal done, we attempted to use a leash to move her from house to car. I'm not much of a rodeo spectator, but I suspect that most of the moves she used to try to throw that leash were gleaned from many hours studying bull riding, presumably on television, as there was not much of a bull-riding scene in that part of New Hampshire.

Fortunately, Livvie made it to the back of our Subaru uninjured, and embarked on the first trip of what would become her ten and a half year odyssey as a shop dog, larger than life personality and commanding member of our small family.

Shop Dog

Initially, Livvie didn't take to the role of shop dog. For some reason she didn't like being in my first shop in New Hampshire, a small, dungeon-like space in the basement of our house. When we moved to Pittsburgh and my shop was in a separate building, she was more open to joining me and

eventually tolerated spending a good portion of most days in my company. There were times when she'd had enough, and would sit by the door panting and staring intently to let me know she wanted to return to the quiet of the house.

Over time Livvie discovered the benefits of being a shop dog. First, there were more opportunities for her to implement defensive maneuvers. Delivery drivers learned not to knock on the door and unannounced visitors realized the wisdom in making appointments.

By far the greatest benefit to shop time was increased access to treats. At some point I brought out a bag of treats to persuade her to cooperate in the grooming sessions needed to remove the sawdust and plane shavings that infiltrated her thick coat. The existence of treats became a major attraction, to the point that Livvie would often try to take me to the shop even if that's not where I was headed.

While it took some time (and bribes) for Livvie to fully appreciate shop time, I needed no convincing that working with Livvie was better than working alone. Even though

she could be grumpy and demanding, she was my constant and faithful companion. Throughout our days together, I talked to her, rubbed her belly (her favorite) and attended to her numerous "breaks"—bathroom breaks, water breaks, snack breaks and lunch breaks.

Livvie's health had been in a slow decline for a little over a year, and that decline was hastened by post-surgery pneumonia in January of 2018 that took weeks for her to recover from. In fact, she never did fully recover and was noticeably weaker and less able to get around afterwards. In October of 2018, at twelve and a half years old, Livvie again became very sick with pneumonia. Because of her already weakened state and other health issues, my wife and I made the devastating decision to put her to sleep.

The loss of Livvie is still very raw to me, and the change in our life is noticeable in almost everything we do. Especially shop time, for me. I work alone now, and I'm okay with that. But some days all I really want to do is rub a "Newf" belly. ■

Hands Employed Aright—continued from page 23

There was no evidence in his bench of these being used. He did have an uncommon layout of holes in his bench. Klein found (as I also found in trying it) that a couple of wooden pins in the holes provides a stable and quick method of work holding.

Similar to Charles Hummel's *With Hammer in Hand: The Dominy Craftsmen of East Hampton, New York*, this book gives a full display to Fisher's surviving tools and furniture. It is a remarkable survival and an impressive amount in what has survived. This is a great book and a good read with insights into the methods of the past.

Further readings in the use of 18th century tools and techniques can be found in the books of Zachary Dillinger. *With Saw, Plane and Chisel* was published a couple of years ago and *On Woodworking* has just come out. ■

Joe Barry lurks in the hills of Vermont and only surfaces for food, lumber, books and tools. An aficionado of puns, Lewis Carroll, and Monty Python, he is to be approached with care.

