

All Smiles

An American Foxhound mix wins over the man of the house.

By Michelle S. Lowe

I have always been a dog person. When my husband and I married eight years ago, I couldn't wait to go pick out our first dog together.

I was a little disappointed, however, when I realized my husband was not quite the dog person that I was. In fact, I had to work hard at talking him into acquiring a puppy. He had such little interest in going with me to look at dogs that my dad accompanied me that fateful Saturday when we picked up Charlotte.

I love hounds and hunting dogs. I will always remember letting out a gasp when I saw Charlotte's father, a purebred American Foxhound, standing regally on a hill. I had never seen a more beautiful dog. Then I met Charlotte's mother, a black Labrador Retriever.

I loved all the puppies there, but came home with the only girl in the litter. She is not the tricolor her father was (Charlotte is black and white), but she does possess mostly hound features and that characteristic howling bark that we love.

At first, I was dismayed when my husband paid little attention to Charlotte. "How could you not adore this beautiful puppy?" I remember thinking. However, my disappointment turned to amazement over the following weeks and months, as my husband grew fonder and fonder of our new addition.

Charlotte proved to be a smart dog and she learned many tricks in a short time. She also had a certain attachment to my husband; I remember Charlotte following him back and forth as he mowed the lawn. The bond strengthened.

Two years after bringing Charlotte home, our son Jake was born. Charlotte has been great with Jake, now 5 years old, weathering many afternoons of the near torment many toddlers lovingly dish out to their pets. Now, Charlotte loves to run with and be chased by Jake.

One of Charlotte's unique quirks is her uncanny way of smiling. She smiles at every visitor who comes to our home. She also loves to escort everyone in and out the door. We call her our official greeter. Our local FedEx driver gave her the nickname "Smiley."

This hound mix has managed to make a dog lover out of my husband and is a great friend and playmate to our little boy. She has indeed provided our family with many, many smiles and memories to cherish.

What's your story? Dog World would love to hear about you and your dog. If you believe you have a unique story about your working dog, show dog, performance dog or companion dog, please e-mail it (500-word maximum) to letters@dogworld.com

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