



Kingston

In early December of 2006, we received a phone call from a gentleman seeking assistance for an abandoned dog that had been living in an alley behind his house. The gentleman, James, had been trying for weeks to gain the dog's trust and had made little progress as the dog was very skittish, probably meaning he had been on his own for most of his life. The best James could offer was to provide the dog with food and water and blankets, in the hopes that this brought the dog with some comfort. James suspected the dog was living under a car parked in the alley and according to neighbors, had shown up in the area at the start of the many snowstorms and frigid nights we endured.

On the morning that James contacted us, the dog was hit by a car speeding down the alley and then picked up by animal control. Animal control reported that they suspected the dog was a pit bull mix, and would thereby be euthanized after being held at the shelter for a certain number of days. James immediately contacted area rescue groups, hoping that someone would be able to save the dog from the fate that awaited him, due to his breed, and work with the dog while he learned to once again trust in people. Two rescue groups offered solace to this poor dog, and the dog was placed in foster care at a kenneling facility to await a foster home.

Three weeks following the dog's rescue, a fire broke out in the kenneling facility where the dog was being housed, and he died along with two other dogs. James had visited the dog, which he named Kingston, a number of times during his stay at the kennel, and was so relieved to finally see Kingston, finally safe, warm and cared for. It is beyond heartbreaking for all of us who knew, or had only heard of Kingston, to know what he suffered, only to meet such an end.

Unfortunately, too many animals experience horrible things as a result of the decisions made on their behalf. Kingston's story highlights so many areas where much work is left to be done. Please spay and neuter your animals, and encourage everyone you know to do the same. Every unwanted dog and cat pays the price of pet overpopulation and very, very few will find their way into forever homes. Question breed specific legislation and breed bans. Educate yourself about the breeds and breed mixes under fire right now and acknowledge that legislation proven to be ineffective is determining the fate of hundreds of thousands of dogs, based solely upon what they look like. Cultivate compassion for all creatures. Animals depend on us to make the right decisions for them. Care for them as you would want to be cared for, with kindness and respect.

We dedicate our 'In Memory of' page to Kingston, in the hopes that his life and death will bring us all closer to allowing our lives to be guided by compassion and giving.