

The Good People of Albuquerque

Description

When times get tough, the kind of people you have around you matter. Especially when they are mostly strangers. And the good people of Albuquerque provided much needed support during some difficult situations.

A lot has happened after our brief respite in beautiful Taos. Island Girl is fine, but Angel is sick. I wish it were the reverse.

During our time in Taos, we found out that most of the parts for Island Girl's repair had arrived at Camping World. And the last and most important part, the fiberglass roof, was scheduled to arrive the following Wednesday. So we developed the perfect plan. We left Taos for Albuquerque on Monday and parked outside Camping World that night.



[ABQ_012](#) Image not found or type unknown First thing Tuesday morning we delivered Island Girl to the service department. We wanted them to complete the demolition in order to begin the installation work right after the roof arrived on the next day. There was a chance of our getting Island Girl back late Friday, so I booked a bed and breakfast.

["VEMLID=58629185"](#) Image not found or type unknown Since Angel's urinary tract infection was causing her to have pee accidents, I found a nice [Bed and Breakfast](#) that had a room with a doggie door to a fenced patio. Lovely. We'd never had a doggie door, but Angel quickly learned the ropes. And she loved her little patio.

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Then on Wednesday, Camping World called with bad news – the roof they received had a crack and was unusable. They needed to order another one. And it had to come via truck from Oregon.

With no roof, we couldn't stay in Island Girl. Oops.

[ABQ 015](#)



Unfortunately the B and B was not available and I couldn't

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find another like it. But the good news was that there are a lot of hotels that allow dogs in town. We found a La Quinta that had just been renovated and was in a pretty good location. And Angel had been on antibiotics a few days and was now able to go the night without an accident.

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Russ the Service Manager and Jennifer our

advisor at Camping World took good care of us

Camping World expedited the roof to arrive in a few days instead of the usual two weeks. It was scheduled to arrive the following Tuesday or Wednesday. We weren't pleased to spend all that time in a hotel but I have to say that Camping World was communicative and supportive and treated us in that special way that made us feel that they really cared.

We entertained ourselves by doing some house hunting, just to figure out what kind of house we might be able to afford in Albuquerque. And we saw a couple of lovely homes that we would have been happy to buy.



Angel traveled around with us in the car, and we spent a lot of time at the dog park.

And we visited with our hilarious and dear friends Sharon and Norman who gave us lots of insight into Albuquerque and surrounds.

Meanwhile, Angel finished her antibiotics and we took her in for more tests. The calcium in her blood was still high, and she still had an infection. Something else was going on.

Our new roof arrived on Wednesday undamaged. And Camping World confirmed that we'd have Island Girl back on Friday.



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Rueben the master mechanic

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Rueben the master mechanic

We picked up Island Girl with her new hat on Friday, she looked lovely. She had a new fiberglass roof, new main awning, new 140-watt trickle charge solar panel, new skylight, new a/c shrouds, three new slide toppers and new seals on everything. It was a > \$10,000 repair and all was covered by our insurance. Yay!

After ten nights in hotels, we were all three happy to be home again. And we stayed in Albuquerque another week to check all systems on Island Girl, and take Angel back to the veterinarian.



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Angel had more tests done at the VCA. Dr. Russman was very

nice and followed-up consistently to check on Angel's progress. But when we checked around we discovered that the VCA charged between 50% and 66% higher for several of those tests than some other veterinarians, including our own in Denver. So we decided to take her to a different veterinarian.

He had been recommended by our veterinarian earlier in the month but hadn't been available at that time. But we weren't willing nor able to continue paying exorbitant fees for more tests and Dr. Russman understood.

The new veterinarian, Dr. Riegger, started an abdominal ultrasound but had to cut it short because Angel was crying apparently due to pain in her hips/back. She has had arthritis for a while but it had gotten much worse than we realized. We took her back the next day and they sedated her in order to complete the ultrasound.

standing of



why she was having pain.



It was bad news. Angel has masses in her bladder, very

likely cancer. She also has a condition called caudia equina syndrome – the nerve roots in her lower spine are compressed causing severe back pain – a progression of her arthritis. We are devastated by the news.

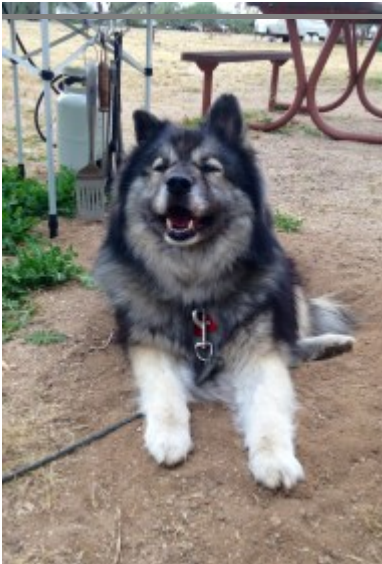
After the ultrasound she could not walk all night nor the morning after. It was frightening and we took her back in to Dr. Riegger. By the time we arrived she was walking and doing much better. Apparently she was recovering a bit slowly from soreness caused by the previous day's tests. After all, she is over 12 years old.



The dedicated Dr. Michael Riegger

Dr. Riegger finally could see us at 6:30. He calmly reviewed options once more with us and wrote everything up. When we discussed surgery, he mentioned that he usually sleeps at the practice after performing surgery, apparently quite often. I'd never heard of a veterinarian doing this. Dr. Riegger is someone who has found his calling. He was very thoughtful and caring like so many people we encountered in Albuquerque.

But after seeing Angel's tough recovery from a simple ultrasound and x-rays, we want to avoid any



ate her back pain.

So Angel is on pain meds for her back issue and on antibiotics for the

infection and is doing much better. We've moved on to Tucson, where we got a second opinion from an oncologist, who says there is a 90+% chance that what Angel has is cancer but we have opted not to do a biopsy. After reviewing a few other options for treatment we chose a non-invasive treatment plan that should "improve symptoms and prolong survival time".

While here in Tucson, I found an old clipping with New Year's wishes that was very timely as we deal with the news about Angel. It said:

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright

I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun more

I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive

I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in life appear much bigger

I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting

I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess

I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final goodbye

Take time to live

We don't know how much longer Angel is going to be with us. For now she seems happy and herself or her as long as she has good quality of life.



we've received from so many. Thank you.

We are so grateful for having found Angel, for sharing our journey with her and for the rest of the time that she will be with us. And the three of us will continue to take time to live.

~ Brenda

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Date Created

November 2014

Author

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