



THE KODIAK TAILS

saving lives, one dog at a time



Lunar survives high-risk pregnancy, with help from KodiakCare

Like many rescue dogs, Lunar gave her new owner more than she bargained for, along with a lot of love, too.

Lunar came to Terry Schy of Chicago from a friend who worked at a shelter. “She needed adoption, but she was skin and bones,” Schy recalled. Beyond that, unknown to Schy at the time of the adoption, the emaciated dog was expecting a very large litter of as many as 10 or 11 puppies, which represented a serious health threat.

Schy was overwhelmed at the prospect of Lunar’s high-risk pregnancy, and financially unprepared to care for all those dogs. Within a few weeks, however, seven live puppies arrived, with three stillborn. That’s when Lunar’s most difficult struggle began.

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“On the fourth day after, Lunar was in clear distress,” panting continuously and showing signs of pain, recalled Dr. Drew Sullivan, medical director at the University of Illinois’ Medical District Veterinary Clinic, who supervised Lunar’s care.

His immediate suspicion was that Lunar had retained a fetus, which would be fatal if left untreated. X-rays were needed but were too costly for Schy. “Some owners choose to wait and see because of costs but it could prove deadly for the dog,” Sullivan explained. “Post-pregnancy challenges can be very serious and need to be handled immediately.”

Fortunately, KodiakCare stepped in, and Lunar got the help she needed. X-rays and other diagnostic tools uncovered a range of issues that could be treated with antibiotics, calcium supplements and supportive care. No costly surgery was required. KodiakCare funding helped to “turn a worst-case scenario into a successful best-case scenario,” Sullivan said.

Others helped as well, including friends and total strangers who heard about Lunar and donated blankets, food and pep talks, Schy said. “People were giving me help that I didn’t even ask for.”

Among those was a receptionist at Sullivan’s veterinary office who took a special interest in helping Schy, providing her cell phone number and telling her to call anytime. She is now adopting one of the puppies.

Schy is planning to keep one as well, in addition to Lunar, and has found homes for the remaining siblings. Apart from one puppy that didn’t survive despite financial support from KodiakCare for post-birth treatment, “The dogs are doing wonderfully,” Schy said. “They’re very big and boisterous.”

Schy said she is grateful for the help from KodiakCare. “It is wonderful, and when I’m back on my feet, I’ll make a donation to repay the kindness.”

Sullivan said KodiakCare’s help turned a near-disaster into a mostly happy ending. “Education and finances from KodiakCare were so important in scenarios like this one,” Sullivan said. “Our staff helped prepare the owner with essential education for a birth at home, what to look for, when to intervene. Having KodiakCare as a partner, we knew we could get the financial help for the owner when Lunar needed vital supportive care.”

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