



THE SHOGUN CHRONICLES

The life and
times of the
newest member
of the Marks
family

INU TSUKIHI AKI *(the dog days of autumn)*

Thanksgiving in the Shenandoah Valley was beautiful this year. As the trees held tenaciously to the fading wisps of autumn's colors, the blue skies retained what will likely be the last traces of summer warmth. And what better way to relish such days than to take your best buddy to the park. We have been going every day of the holiday and it has been nothing short of glorious!

While still a ball of explosive puppy energy, Shogun is already showing some of the majestic dog that he will one day become. Everybody, and I mean eeeeeverybody greets him with huge smiles and wistful "awwws." He continues to amaze us with how well he reacts to everybody.

Aside from the running, chasing toys and gazing up at the skies, the days have been great bouts of exploration for Shogun. He met his first creek, a babbling brook that would have made Norman Rockwell break out paint and canvas, and responded by leaping in, romping, splashing and chasing the leaves stirred up in his wake. He also met his first flock of ducks at pretty much eye-level, curious but not so much as to chase them down. At the end of his creekside antics he flopped down in the wet leaves with his prize, a choice stick.



A Dog's Life? Let me tell you, if this is any example, sign me up! Shogun sits in the grass, drying off in the sun after his romp in the creek. Strike up the band and play "Those Were the Days!"

BITE-SIZED NEWS

TWINS SEPARATED AT BIRTH...?

As different as night and day but yes, the photos left and right are the same guy. The groomed, sophisticated pup-about-town at right was spotted by the paparazzi touring Winchester in a blacked-out Dodge Ram, taking in the sights while pawing now and then for autographs. But off-screen at left, Shogun proves he really knows how to let down his fur and embrace his down-home southern roots, seen here enjoying a good chew, all wet and soggy after skinny-dipping in the creek.

VET REPORTS

Shogun continues to get an A+ on his health report card, having most recently cleared the big milestone of getting his rabies shot. He has sailed past the 46-lb marker but the vet says he is in superb shape, his weight appropriate for his considerable frame. Adding a portion of cottage cheese or yogurt to his diet seems to be helping his ears to stand up on their own naturally.



DER ÜBER-LAPDOG

Sure, he's got the good looks of a showdog, the brains of a Bomb Dog and hopefully the drive and discipline to get his own bubble-gum trading card as a Schutzhund superstar. But deep down inside, Shogun is a big old lapdog who's main goal at any given moment is to simply be as close to us as he can be. This week has brought what appears to be some big progress in housebreaking efforts and starting to manage "runaway puppy enthusiasm" at least a little bit. We've uped his exercise and playtime in frequency and intensity and the mix seems to be paying off. We're also looking at games to flex his problem solving ability and he takes to each new challenge with enthusiasm. But at the end of the day he is completely happy to find a warm lap where he can snuggle up with a sigh and a long scratch behind the ears.

