

Bob Worley and his dog Max cruise around town in their motorcycle



Max the Motorcycle Riding Dog

Rescue Dog Lives the Good Life and Spreads Joy Across Sugar Land

*Written by Brenda Thompson
Photos by Lisa Mangos*

If you've seen him and his owner, you've likely not forgotten him! It's not every day that you see a dog riding in a sidecar of a motorcycle with the wind in his fur and a smile on his face. For one lucky Sugar Land dog, Max, he'll take the chance whenever he can.

A Sad Beginning

Bob Worley, Max's owner says that he came to him through the Golden Retriever Club of Greater Los Angeles in early 2006. "He had lived at several homes and apparently was mistreated at times during his youth," says Worley. "He was very underweight, his canine teeth were broken, and he had a very submissive posture at all times. He had no coordination, could not play ball, and seemed to not know what fun and games were. Through it all, Max has remained the sweetest and most gentle dog I've ever known," adds Worley.

Determining Max's age was another puzzle. Several veterinarians all estimate his age at about seven or eight years. "No one even knew his name when he came to live with me," says Worley. "Because the poor dog was now in another stranger's home, couldn't speak the language, and seemed so unaccustomed to love and attention, I made an effort to check back through vet records to find out his name."

After numerous failed attempts and dead-ends, they found a collar that had the name "Maximus" on it. "I had tried earlier calling him several different names but he would simply look at me without any particular reaction. When I called him Max, he jumped up and started wagging his tail, ears up and I would swear he had a smile on his face."

Hitting the Road

At first Max was apprehensive about riding in the sidecar, but then it just happened. Worley has been riding motorcycles for 40 years. "I wanted to do things with Max and happened to see an ad for a motorcycle with a sidecar," he says. Developing a restraint system for Max proved to be a bit of a challenge. But with a few trials and errors later, a simple collar attachment was the answer. Starting with short rides on quiet neighborhood streets, the distances gradually increased. Max now rides in an attached Steib S500 sidecar that was designed in the 1930's and 1940's.

Sugar Land residents can catch a glimpse of the duo just about daily, weather permitting. "In the summer with the hot sun and heat, we usually wait until about 8 p.m. to ride out to play ball. On weekends we take somewhat longer trips. We go just for fun, sightseeing, or to the dog park to let him swim," he says. They've ridden through Sugar Land, Houston, Galveston, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and many places in-between.



Max was underweight, had broken teeth and had been mistreated in his past homes. Now he and owner Bob Worley are inseparable



Max always gets a doubletake from spectators as he rides around town

Bob and Max have taken road trips to Galveston, Baton Rouge, New Orleans and many places in between



A Star is Born

Worley jokes that he's just the driver and that Max is the real star of the rides. "He is rather indifferent about the attention he receives," he says. "He simply takes a casual glance at the admirer, maybe gives a slight smile, and then is ready to ride again."

One of their more memorable rides was in Galveston. "We had a police escort all through town with red lights flashing and siren, the whole works, just because the policeman liked seeing Max in the sidecar."

"Another time, while coming to a stop at a traffic signal, Max saw someone dressed up in a full-size chicken suit in front of the KFC on Hwy. 6 here in Sugar Land and Max loves chicken with his

meals. He gave a quick and steady stare, turning his head as we passed, and when we stopped, he would not take his attention off this giant chicken. I don't know what he was thinking, but I'd pay a lot to know what it was!" exclaims Worley.

Spreading Smiles

"Max is the ambassador of smiles and goodwill everywhere he goes," says Worley. "People who see him immediately smile, wave, alert those near them, or want his picture. Every time we go out to ride, people are taking his picture with their cell phones or cameras, even while they are driving.

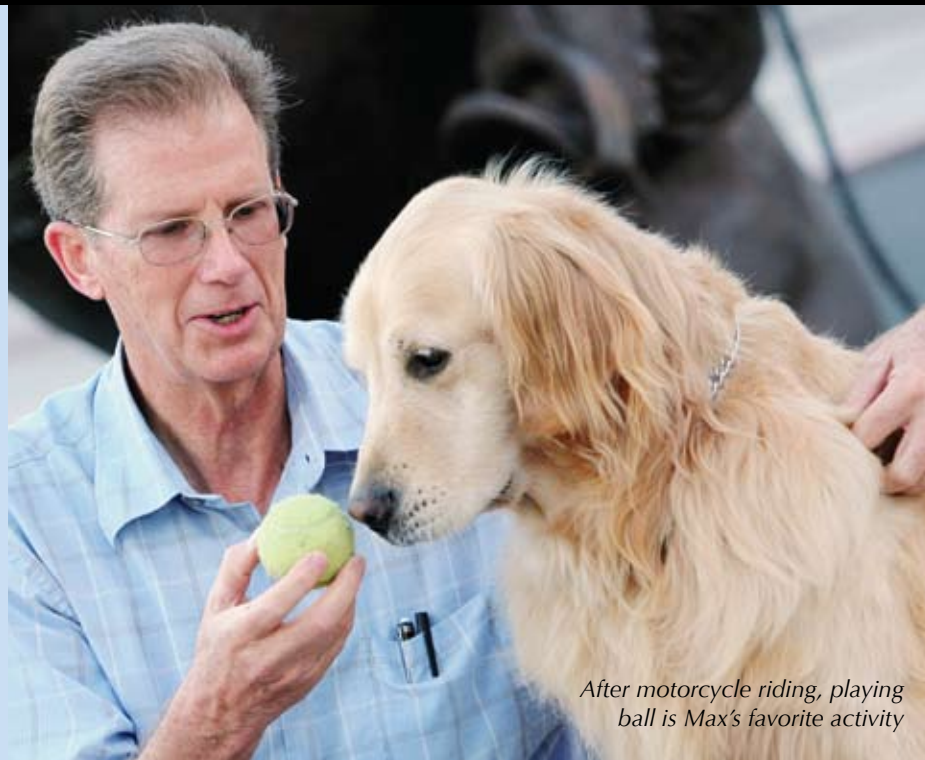
Lucky onlookers may get the chance to pet Max and say hello when they make a stop as time allows. Worley even had social cards made

for Max that include his name, email address, and a request to send any pictures. The back of the card includes some brief comments about Max.

Lifelong Friends

Max is Worley's only pet and the only dog he's ever owned. "Max loves to play ball, walk the beach, and NEVER lets me out of his sight." Worley, a retired attorney and engineer, says plans for the future include someday returning to Lake Arrowhead, California and of course many more memorable rides with Max. Be on the lookout in Sugar Land for this special duo. They may just help make your day a little brighter! **SLM**

BRENDA THOMPSON is a freelance writer, volunteer, and mother living in Sugar Land. She is also a big dog lover and has been lucky enough to see Max riding around town!



After motorcycle riding, playing ball is Max's favorite activity

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