

Duke 1998 - 2010 (co-founder, Pets with Disabilities)



When Mike and I walked into the shelter March of 1999, we never imagined how much a shelter dog would change our lives forever! That day, a multi colored shepherd mix, made it quite clear he wanted to go home and get out of the shelter. We adopted him and discovered he was a dog with charisma and a joy for life. He was that way from the day we met him until the day he left us. On, Monday June 14, Duke passed away in our home, in both of our arms. He was surrounded by Tuzik, Kiri, and Maddie and other dogs we had rescued over the years because of Duke.

Duke broke his back 11 years ago puppy playing. That one accident changed our future and prompted us to establish an organization called Pets with Disabilities, a national and international rescue and educational organization to help animals with physical disabilities find forever homes. Because of Duke, hundreds if not thousands of dogs have found forever homes.

What can you say about a mutt from the shelter?? He wasn't only our companion, but a true partner in this journey to speak for disabled animals. He lived life to the fullest, everyday, on two legs and two wheels. Duke met and inspired disabled veterans, children, and 1000's of people he met at our Pet Expo's and speaking engagements. He even inspired a book to be written.

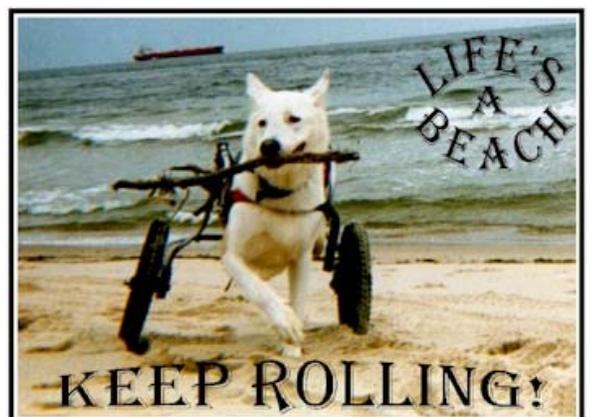


One look into his eyes - and it was very clear, the wheelchair didn't define who he was. Once you experienced his energy and love of life - the wheelchair was just something he used in his work. Duke also took on the role of welcoming every dog that came into the rescue and he let them know life was about to be good. Because of Duke, we found forever friends. People that heard his message and will continue to share his story.



When Duke was not working for his cause, his favorite activity was trail walking. Every afternoon, I would stop whatever I was doing, and take Duke for a walk on the trails. He brought balance into my life and helped me enjoy the simple pleasures and blessings on a daily basis. For anyone that had the opportunity to meet Duke, you remember an image of a confident, vibrant dog, that had charisma and alot of heart. He never looked for pity, he only asked you for an open heart to see "the spirit that wasn't broken" He became a great symbol for his cause.

Duke might not physically be here with us anymore and we will have many moments of tears, but we know Duke had a great life. He lived life large! He love us and trusted us. His spirit will abound and memories of him will keep us rolling. I can only hope you all find your "Duke" in your life, We were lucky! As Duke would say, "Life's a beach. Keep Rolling!" And we will, cause we know that is what Duke would want.



www.petswithdisabilities.org

We'll Miss you Duke!

Mike and Joyce