

Our Four-Legged Hero Angel

Striker was our first puppy in about 14 years. We were excited about having him as part of our family. We did all the things to get ready for his arrival.....buying out PetCo's stock of toys and chewies [or so it seemed], leashes, collars, dishes, and crate. We puppy proofed the house removing anything that we thought to be a danger. I remember how excited we were when we picked him up from Sue's. He rode quietly in my arms from Sue's to our house, all snuggled in a towel. That was the last quiet moment we experienced with him for a **LONG, LONG** time. Striker was energetic and inquisitive. He reminded us about how exhausting life with a puppy could be and how wonderfully exciting as well. He gave us a reason to get up and go. He made us laugh.

Because of Striker we met new people, learned and remembered training skills. He became our constant companion on walks, errands and camping adventures. At 7 months of age we were finally seeing the change from puppyhood to older dog. We knew that we would enjoy the adult dog that he was becoming.

Unfortunately we were not given that opportunity. On a fateful day in December, Striker died from injuries that resulted when he licked our paper shredder. The action caused the mechanism, which was on automatic setting, to start. It was, needless to say, devastating to us. We never imagined, when we were safeguarding the house, that our shredder posed a danger to him.

After his death, I discovered that his was not a single "freak accident". I launched a campaign to bring awareness to the [local] public. My hope was that people would spread the word after seeing informational posters which local veterinarians and businesses were kind enough to post. I was contacted by Denise Flaim, the animal columnist for "Newsday", to tell Striker's story. After his story was published, I began to get requests for his fliers from all over the U.S. and beyond (Europe and Australia for example). Four years later, I still get them. Each and every person has told others, who have, in turn, told even more people. Word has spread far beyond my wildest expectations.

He didn't pull us from a burning building, keep us warm in the wilderness or save us from a thief. But he is our hero. I know in my heart of hearts that he has saved lives. It is why I can continue to find some reason to believe that he did not die in vain.