

Dog that touched hearts of many dies

Published Monday, June 25, 2007 11:47:18 PM Central Time

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MENOMINEE -- A dog's life that captured the hearts of animal welfare groups in the upper Midwest has ended.

Persy, the name given to the collie by the Menominee Animal Shelter in recognition of its amazing perseverance, died June 16 in Minnesota after having what veterinarians termed a mild stroke the day before.

He suffered a more severe stroke the day he died, according to Andi Wulff of the Minnesota Wisconsin Collie Rescue.

Persy was brought into the Menominee Animal Shelter in June 2002 in very poor shape after he had reportedly been living near Marinette for as long as three months.

The male collie weighed only 40 pounds. The normal weight for a male collie is about 70 pounds. His coat was matted, and he had many open sores, bites and wounds. He was covered with wood and deer ticks.

"There are very few animals who come into our shelter as bad off as Persy, yet through everything that needed to be done to help him he was such a good boy," shelter president Julie Derusha said in 2002. "He must have been in agony and had suffered so much, but was remarkably gentle."

One of the first things shelter volunteers noticed was that Persy's jaw had an odd shape, which made it difficult for him to eat. X-rays suggested Persy's injuries were caused by a gunshot to the face.

His jaws were full of shrapnel and bullet fragments, and the gunshot broke his jaw.

The shelter contacted the Minnesota Wisconsin Collie Rescue organization, which has volunteers throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin who foster homeless purebred collies and help them find new homes.



Persy

"He had to go through five surgeries to help correct various complications from the bullet that shattered his jaw," said Wulff. "He was always so stoic through all of it and never showed any sign of pain."

"He was truly one of the most memorable success stories and the true meaning to second chance ever," Derusha said earlier this month.

"Persy was a very gentle trusting soul and having Persy in my life has always been a gift to me," said Wulff, who adopted Persy and cared for him with her other dogs. "He has epitomized the purpose of rescue."

He very well could have been fearful of people given what had happened, she said, but instead he was a dog that craved attention.

The Menominee Animal Shelter is located at N6197 Haggerson Court in Menominee. For more information about the shelter, adopting a pet or volunteering, people may call 864-7297.