



Rueben

August 19, 2002 - April 17, 2015

He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion.

—Unknown



Running in the sawgrass along Lake Superior.

Once I moved into my first home, I knew I was ready to welcome a dog. I found seven year-old Rueben through Basset Buddies and felt a connection just reading his bio on the website. By the time my application process was completed, Rueben had been adopted by a couple in Wisconsin, and I was heart-broken. Imagine my surprise and relief when I got a call a couple of weeks later informing me that the adoption was not a good match, and wondering if I was still interested in Rueben. “YES!!!”, I said immediately, and a few days later I was driving to Milwaukee to meet this little hound that already melted my heart.

Fortunately, we hit it off during our first walk together and we took a return trip back to his native Minnesota a week later. He got to training me immediately on how things were going to go—from treat distribution to the sleeping arrangements. Over the next few months, I got to know my neighborhood and neighbors better

than ever due to our daily and nightly walks. Rueben taught me how to slow down and “smell the roses” (or whatever else might need a sniff).



Rueben lovin' 9 inches of snow with 4 inches of leg.

February 2013 / Mpls., MN

One of my favorite memories with Rueben happened during the winter of 2010. There had been over 16 inches of snow that fell in Minneapolis on December 11 (the day that the Metrodome's roof collapsed) and I had made it home from work that night to be greeted by two hours of snow removal just to get my car down the driveway and into the garage. Rueben barked encouragement the whole time, and once the car was safely stowed, we went for a late night walk. The snow had stopped falling, the clouds had parted to reveal a starry sky, and we were the only crazy souls to be out. There were no cars and it was so peaceful and pretty that I had to stop in my tracks to take it all in. Rueben was going berserk sticking his snout and backside into every snowdrift on our route, and leaping down the sidewalk with unbridled joy. I often think that I would have never known that restorative night with its knee-deep snow and frost-tipped trees without Rueben's influence. Without the gift of this dog, I would have simply gone inside to warm up after shoveling snow, and would have been blithely unaware of winter's tranquility and fun just outside my door.

Oh, the places we've gone, the people we've seen.



Climbing the rock stairs at Lake Sylvan after having surgery on his posterior.

September 2013 / Custer State Park, South Dakota

Rueben loved his people (and food) first, and fellow canines second. My friends and family were instantly his friends and family. He played the perfect host to all visitors to the house. People he met along his walks would simply smile, lean down to pet him and often ask “what is he”? After letting him know that he was a Basset Hound/Dachshund mix, they would generally chuckle and comment on how cute/handsome/chubby/smiley he was and would leave uplifted. From the highways of Wisconsin, to the shores of Lake Superior, to the trails of South Dakota's Black Hills—Rueben has always been a terrific travel companion. As long as we were together and there was a promise of food, Rueben was up for any adventure.

Thank you, Rueben!

Thank you for greeting me at the back door with enthusiasm and love EVERY time I came home—from work, from shopping, from an evening out or just from taking the trash to the curb. Thank you for teaching me and reminding me how to love. Thank you for showing me that a simple walk around the neighborhood can be a journey of discovery. Thank you for keeping the kitchen floor crumb-free, and for helping with the dishes at the end of the day. Thank you for making me feel better when I was sick, sad or frustrated with many a smooch. Thank you for helping me realize that almost everything is washable, and that muddy paw prints on fresh bedding looks cool. Thank you for alerting me with howls and barks that the kitchen timer had gone off and that whatever was in the oven was ready (and needed to be sampled immediately!). Thank you for warming-up my side of the bed before I got in. Thank you for being your wonderful dog-self—from your cool wet nose to the furry tip of your tail.

I love you and miss you already, Rueben. But, I know that you are comfortable and at such a well-deserved peace. I'm so glad that we met, and that we got to spoil each other for five years. May your food dish always be full, your walks long and leash-free, and the rubs and scratches behind your ears never-ending.



Helping with spring planting.

May 2014 / Minneapolis, MN