

## Rescue dog: After years of saying no, dad gladly yields for Albie

After years of family lobbying for a dog, Peter Zheutlin finally gives in to his wife and sons. Searching the Labs4Rescue website, he can't resist a 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix named Albie.

By Peter Zheutlin, Correspondent / July 6, 2012



Albie, the 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix, will join the Zheutlin family on Monday.

Courtesy of Labs4Rescue

My resistance, steadfast for nearly twenty years, finally succumbed the other day, much like a [glacier](#) calved into the sea. It started to yield a few weeks ago when our friends Ann Marie and Dave asked if we could take care of Riley, their [Black Lab](#), for the weekend.

Riley arrived, his signature red kerchief around his neck, with a bag of food, a box of treats and a very comfortable, but well-worn, bed. Labs are known for their high energy, but Riley is very mellow; he has the slightly aloof but genial temperament and disposition of [Alistair Cooke](#) who for years hosted [Masterpiece Theater on PBS](#). I felt like I was going to have to prove myself worthy of being his host, not the other way around.

So, for two days Riley occasionally chased a tennis ball (sometimes I had the feeling he'd rather be playing Bridge), watched with a pitiful look on his face at every morsel of food I put in my mouth, and walked leisurely around the lake at [Wellesley College](#) where my wife Judy and I took him to see if he might be interested in applying.

The visit was such a success that we and our 17-year-old son, Noah, invited Riley back, and back he came a couple of weeks later when Ann Marie and Dave went off to their son's college graduation. This time, feeling very much at home, Riley chilled in the TV room with us, took a few walks, and generally made himself part of the family. We were sad when it was time for him to go home.

Then the pressure started building again. Intermittently over the years, Judy and the boys (Noah has a 21-year-old brother, Dan) have lobbied hard for a dog, but I always resisted. Too much work. Too restrictive. Too allergic. Who's going to get up at 6 a.m. on a bone-chilling morning in February to walk a dog? Dad.

But when I [saw the video](#), I was hooked. After Riley's visits, Judy began perusing the profiles on the Labs4Rescue website and saw Albie, a 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix from [Louisiana](#). The video is all of twenty seconds, but when I saw it, it was game over. We were going to adopt Albie and I wasn't just going along for the ride, I was leading the parade.

Right now, Albie is on a special air-conditioned transport that makes two trips a month through the south picking up Labs for a trip to the northeast where they have found homes. And I feel like a father worried about his son driving back to college, coincidentally in Louisiana (Dan will be a senior at [Tulane](#)).

Albie will be home with us on Monday. There's lots to do between now and then. Buy bowls. Get a bed. Lay in a supply of dog food and fresh tennis balls. Re-read "Marley and Me." But it feels like Monday can't come fast enough.

I'll keep you posted as Albie makes his way into our lives and we make our way into his. That's a *good* boy.