

Rescue dog Albie arrives at his new home after a long journey

After the longest, slowest weekend in the Zheutlin household, their rescue dog Albie finally arrives. The 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix is as gentle and sweet as the family could have hoped.

By Peter Zheutlin, *Correspondent* / July 13, 2012



Albie, the 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix rescued by the Zheutlin family is as gentle and sweet as the family could have hoped.

Courtesy of Peter Zheutlin

As readers of this blog know, we adopted a 3-year-old Yellow Lab-Golden Retriever mix named Albie, and last Monday, after the longest, slowest weekend ever recorded in our house, Albie arrived after a tiring journey from Louisiana.

Now, there are two things you need to know straight away. First, I am not, repeat *not*, going to be one of those obnoxious pet owners convinced that everyone with an Internet connection is interested in seeing pictures of my dog or reading about every cute thing he does or listening to me brag about what a great dog he is. Second, this is by far the greatest, cutest, smartest dog in the world and I have the pictures to prove it. (I had one of Albie doing the [New York Times](#) crossword puzzle, but accidentally deleted it.)

To be honest, the term “rescue dog” was completely unfamiliar to me just two weeks ago. When my wife Judy began talking about adopting a “rescue” I thought she meant one of those dogs that locates wayward Swiss skiers in the Alps, or finds earthquake victims in the rubble. I had no idea that we were the ones doing the rescuing.

You never really know what you’re in for when a new dog arrives and we had fallen for Albie based on a [twenty-second video](#) posted on the [Labs4Rescue](#) website. For all we knew those were the happiest, most adorable, heart warming twenty seconds of his life. Off camera he could have been the reincarnation of Cujo.

Well, I’m happy to report the video did not lie. He was cuddly and affectionate from the ‘git go (when you pet him he always rests his paw, or both of them, on your arms), and is as gentle and sweet as you can possibly imagine.

Albie was a stray so we find ourselves speculating about the life he led before March when he was found in central [Louisiana](#). Was he let go? Hard to imagine anyone parting with a dog this affectionate. But many dogs in the south are abandoned when they don’t prove to be good hunting dogs, and Albie surely seems to lack the temperament or the instinct for the hunt. We even had a little trouble getting him to chase a tennis ball. Getting in the car and going up and down stairs seem unfamiliar to him. Did he live in a one-story house? Or any house at all? Had he never been in a car? We’ll likely never know anything about the first three years of his life, but our goal is to make the next ten or twelve happy ones.

Being a dog owner for all of 24 hours I have a sense already about what it is that binds people to their dogs and why people get such *nachus* (that’s Yiddish for satisfaction, pleasure, and contentment) from them. In our first long walk together, around the lake at [Wellesley College](#), Albie got plenty of compliments and admiration from passers-by. We thanked them as if his adorability and sunny disposition somehow reflected on us, which, of course, it doesn’t. And when you get all that uncomplicated affection from your pup it’s easy to feel virtuous and flatter yourself, as if the dog has reserved all that love just for you because you are so darned wonderful. But the truth is Albie could have been plunked down in any one of a million homes and he’d have been just as trusting and just as sweet. So, we feel very lucky indeed that he fell in with us.

Still, at the risk of sounding self-serving, he’s really lucky to be with us, too. He could just as easily have landed with the [Kardashians](#).