



Goodbye and Hello

Our 11 year old dog Kira passed away this June. Through her, we learned that Hungarian Vizslas are truly "Velcro" dogs (they never leave your side), can leap through high grasses like a gazelle, require Vizsla "crazies" regularly, and find a way deep into your heart. The newest Vizsla gaining our affection is our 6 month old puppy, Ruckus. This Saskatchewan born Vizsla came to us on a sunny August day and has been trying to live up to his name ever since. When Ruckus was about 3 months old, Joe came home and had a hard time finding the puppy in all the fluff. He had shredded the comfy mat in his kennel. Next, he pulled our comforter into his kennel and proceeded to defluff it. He gained the nickname Houdini when Rami came home to find him out of his kennel with the latches still closed. He escaped out the back of the kennel by popping the hooks holding it closed. What he will do next! Our 4 year old Vizsla, Bela, enjoys wrestling day and night with Ruckus who is now winning more often as he has passed Bela in height and weight. We

expect Ruckus to finish out at 65-75 pounds. Our cat, Odo, currently is tolerating the puppy and occasionally gives him a face wash when he is napping. Odo is now 14 years old and suffers from arthritis and mild kidney failure. He still likes to do "cat Olympics" (racing up and down the stairs) while we are sleeping.

Fundraising News

The Ilsa Mae Research Fund has now reached a whopping 46 thousand dollars!!! Most of the increase this year is due to the ongoing fundraising by Joe's company (ESAA). The ESAA golf tournament raised money again this summer through mulligan sales and a silent auction at *RemTech* (the premier remediation technology conference in Canada) in October pushed the fund to over \$44,000. Rami raised almost \$1000 by running 10k in the Elf Run at the beginning of November on a very slippery course. Rami's fundraising and awareness efforts on the behalf of Muscular Dystrophy Canada were recognized by Safeway this year when she received the Community Hero award. This award is \$1000 to be added to the Ilsa Mae Research Fund. Thank you Safeway!

Chowaniec Escapades

Our big trip this year was in May. We took a 2 week Royal Caribbean cruise from San Diego to Hawaii with 4 ports of call in the islands before sailing back to San Diego. Maui included snorkeling in an

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extinct volcanic crater called Molokini. Rami had a close up view of a moray eel that quickly convinced her to stay out of the shallows. In Hilo, we traversed black sand beaches created by lava and went spelunking through lava caves. The shiny, black cave walls had amazing designs from the boiling hot lava flow. Back on the ship at midnight, the captain drove the cruise ship within a few hundred feet of the lava flows from Mount Kilauea and spun it around so everyone could enjoy the view from their balconies. Watching the earth put on this fabulous show of raw power and beauty was awe-inspiring. In Honolulu, we visited the famous Waikiki beach where Rami tried boogie boarding while Joe relaxed in the white sand. On ship activities included scavenger hunts, trivia competitions, dodge ball and relaxing poolside. Our other trip this year was to Las Vegas to "visit our money" (a favorite saying of Joe's). The real reason for traveling to this wild town was to visit with Rami's grandparents, Uncle Jon and Aunt Linda. Vegas was also a nice break from the -20° C weather we were experiencing in Edmonton at that time.

Our concert experiences this year included The Police outside at Commonwealth Stadium with an amazing light show, Billy Joel and his rotating piano, and front row for Beyonce. Joe elected to stay at home with Ruckus

that night so Rami went with a friend (his loss!).

The Working Life

ESAA celebrated its 20th anniversary this year in style with a banquet and performance by Ian Tyson at *RemTech*. Joe has now been with ESAA for over 16 years (including his time as a summer student). Joe is currently organizing *WaterTech* to be held in Lake Louise in the spring which he hopes will be as successful as *RemTech*. ESAA will also be moving to a new home in the spring. An office condo has been purchased within walking/biking distance of our house. Joe even jokes he may take the dogs to work one day (pretty sure no work would get done)! Rami traveled extensively this year in her role as Certified Diabetes Educator Pharmacist for Safeway. In June, she flew to Yellowknife to give a presentation on behalf of Canadian Diabetes Association. Being so far north at that time of year, it

was still light outside at midnight. She found it so beautiful and peaceful; we may have to travel to visit it together. Other trips included Toronto, Vancouver, Fort McMurray, Lloydminster, Calgary and St. Louis. For the last year, Rami has been providing diabetes consultations in a family medical clinic. In January, she will begin offering consultations in 4 additional clinics.

In the Works

With a new puppy to train (or be trained by), we have postponed our trip to Australia until late February 2009. This year, Rami plans to tag along to Vancouver and Las Vegas to relax while Joe attends conferences. An Alaskan cruise in June is also a possibility.

Hope that this letter finds you warm, cozy, full, and enjoying the company of family and friends.

**Rami, JOE, Odo,
Ehod and Ruckus**

