

Remembering Maude

Written by Katie Moyer, Maude's foster mom and best ever friend.

There are hardly any words worthy to describe sweet little Maude. She was smiley, sweet, brave and soulful. She found herself at a crowded Sacramento shelter about 3 weeks ago, where her fate wasn't too great. The strong arms of Donna and Tim scooped her up, out of harm's way, right before her time was up. They could tell she had just had puppies not too long ago, and most likely lived her life having puppies over and over. It's beyond me how someone could look into eyes like those and walk away. She probably lived in a yard, used for breeding and most likely wasn't a beloved family pet. But, she never let that get to her. Her cheerful, spunky, sassy little personality won her a ticket to a new life, out of the shelter, out of harm's way.

She spent her first few nights with Linda, who took her on fun walks out to the local water side. She wanted to get to know her a little, since she was a new dog to the program. They had one particularly nice outing where Maude got to roll around in the grass and go on a leisurely fun walk. Looking back, I am so glad she spent that time with Linda enjoying life. I wound up with her the next day. I was told that she was a great little dog, both sensitive and sassy. She was well this week, with just a little cough, so normal for a fresh out of the shelter dog. She was so cute and had so much fun on walks. When I asked her to "sit", her front feet would prance back in forth because she was so enthusiastic and excited to be learning new things and so hopeful to get a treat. She wanted so badly to connect and have my approval. She got that approval right away. She tried to sit on our laps when she could. She just wanted to snuggle.

About 5 days later, her cough was getting better. It was so strange because then one night it all changed. When we woke on Friday morning she was very very sick. We knew something was really wrong, but the vet just wasn't quite sure. Distemper is an incredibly rare virus these days. The "D" in DHPP stands for distemper. DHPP is a standard vaccine that all dogs should have. All the vets at the office had never even seen a case of distemper, even after practicing animal medicine for 30 years. But this particular young vet wanted to test her, just to be on the safe side although it was "highly highly unlikely". Unfortunately, the test results would take 5 days to come back from the lab.

She came back home with me that night with antibiotics and a thermometer. After countless calls to Linda, Donna, and Tim (including hysterical 5am calls) we came up with a plan. I called Deassa, my vet tech friend and long time bad rap volunteer, and asked for advice. She offered her services and her employee discount at her veterinary hospital. We jumped at the chance and arrived there Monday afternoon. Maude started feeling better after only hours of being on fluids. It was a great sign. Maybe it was just really bad kennel cough? Maybe it was pyometra? Pneumonia? She spent 2 days there on IV fluids and improved greatly. It was Wednesday morning when the call came in. The test results had come back. She tested positive for distemper. This was really bad news. The only humane thing to do was end her life peacefully before this virus got worse in her system.

All those who knew Maude were devastated. Where we took her for her last days she was adored by many. All the folks at Silverado Veterinary Hospital were devastated and they even tried hard to think of a way to save her. She touched many hearts in the 12 days she had been away from the shelter. Her big eyes looked so deeply into those she met. They were a beautiful rich dark brown. It was as if she held the answers to life's most challenging questions...all within those eyes. She melted many hearts with ease.

This society failed her. The person who let her end up in the shelter failed her. Getting your dog vaccinated is so easy and can cost as little as 15\$. This person failed her by not taking care of her. It would have taken *1 trip* to the vet. That's all.

She died like a princess. With three hours of snuggle time, ear rubs and belly scratches. She passed on the way every good soul should—quickly, painlessly, and in loving, adoring arms. She died with a full belly of donuts, dog treats, and doggie ice cream. We told her over and over again how much we love her. Thanks to Deassa, I was able to spend some really quality time with her at the end. I cannot thank Deassa enough for allowing me that time. Deassa was patient and kind. Maude licked away the tears on both of our faces right before the end.

Deassa was everything in this. She advocated for Maude and let her into her heart, only to have to let her go. I am so grateful for her time, energy and heart for Maude. We all wanted so badly to save this little dog.

It was so hard for all us to let her go. I am however so glad that she didn't die alone in the shelter in Sacramento. At least she got to experience love and happiness before she had to go. That is more than some dogs ever get.

Precious little Maude is one in a million and will never be forgotten.

