



Tiara was found wandering the streets of Chicago in approximately June 2010 when she was only eight weeks old. She was picked up and taken to a high kill shelter, but the staff felt she was too pretty to be put down so they contacted some rescues and a rescue in Wautoma, WI said they would take her. I had planned on adopting an adult Pittie, but on Petfinder one day I accidentally did not click on the age category and Tiara (then named "Peach") showed up. She was located an hour from me and it was love at first sight. Having two cats of my own and my mom having one cat plus a blind, diabetic Miniature Schnauzer and a mostly blind, Toy Fox Terrier which was born with a malformed front shoulder joint....well, let's just say I needed to find just the right dog for our household. Once I got to the rescue, there were plenty of cats all around and if a cat hissed at Tiara, she turned away so I knew she was right for me.

Fast-forward to puppy-training, beginner training, beginner training again, advanced training and her becoming my Service Dog. Her transformations from going into Petco and being a "Dog", whining, and pulling on her leash, and doing all the dog-like behaviors and then getting her service gear on and going into Wal-Mart where she would walk perfectly by my side, pay attention to me, remain quiet, and act completely prim and proper was quite the sight to see. I think if people would see her at one store then the next, they would think I changed dogs because the change was that dramatic.

Tiara was just as amazing at home. Everyone was the boss of her. My six-pound cat is probably her best friend....that cat can literally walk all over her. If the cat is laying on her arm, Tiara will not move a muscle until the cat leaves.

Things were great until September 2013 when I first noticed a small round mark on Tiara's inner right back leg. I kept an eye on it and a short time later, it changed to a reddish mark, then to a reddish bump...all within a month. I took Tiara to the vet and it was determined to be a Mast Cell Tumor. Surgery was scheduled as soon as possible and because Tiara had previously had some issues with seeming to not be able to walk for long distances without getting tired out or limping, the vet said he would take X-rays which he had her under anesthesia.

Well, the good news is that her tumor was removed with clean margins and has not returned. The bad news is that the vet did not sedate her for the X-rays and instead fought with her for over an hour to get one bad X-ray of her hips, which – after her surgery, she developed a HORRIBLE limp in her rear left leg. After an exhaustive search for a new vet, which happened to be about an hour away from my house, I found out that Tiara had a torn cranial cruciate ligament. This is not something she had prior to her tumor removal surgery.

To even deal with the pain of it, Tiara had to be put on Tramadol 50mg, twice a day, Rimadyl 100mg/day, and a glucosamine/MSM supplement twice a day. She also has lost her appetite and has become lethargic and lost her zest for life. She also has not been able to be my Service Dog, which is difficult for both of us. It is difficult for me to not have her working for me and for her, well, Tiara has lost that honorable confidence she had when she put her service gear on. She shows little interest in her toys, her food, or anything. The sparkle in her eyes is gone. Her Pittie smile is gone. She is only four years old and our relationship is a reciprocal one; we truly need each other. She saved my life as much, if not more than I saved hers. I need her to get her zest for life back again, partially for me, but for her as well. Through her four years of life she has been through so much, yet if she sees her service gear, even though she is in pain, she is ready and willing to get her gear on to work for me.

Tiara is an example of an exemplary dog, best friend, Pittie, and is basically a part of me. Her pain is my pain and vice versa; we need each other and I want to see her beautiful Pittie smile again.....