

Breed First –Novice Draft Dog Title (NDD)



GCH/CH
Stoans Rupert of Oz
BN RN RA NDD

Patricia Wensman

By Pat Wensman

Rupert was born on October 14, 2007 in Auburn, WA. I first met him when he was 1 week old and fell in love with the little ball of fur. Over the course of the next six weeks I visited him often while he stayed with Joan and Stan Zielinski. When he was about six weeks old, I went to visit him. I walked into the puppy kennel and Rupert came across the kennel to me, paused in front of me, then turned around, sat on my feet and stared back at his brothers and sisters. I could almost hear him telling them "Back off, she's mine!" About a week later while I was visiting Rupert, Joan and Stan asked me if I would like to purchase Rupert. I think I wiggled with joy as I picked him up and snuggled him. Rupert responded by wagging his tail wildly and licking my face with his wonderful puppy kisses!

Rupert and I started puppy classes when he was about 4 months old. He seemed to learn very quickly, even though he would often take a nap halfway through class! We continued on with obedience and rally classes. We both enjoyed Rally as we got to do many different exercises, or stations. When we would go out for walks we would do all sorts of the exercises as we wove our way down the street. Rupert is a bit of a clown and loves to make people laugh. At one show during our Rally run, we came to the "Halt, Down, Walk Around Dog" sign. Rupert halted and sat, then, on command, he laid down. I told him to stay as I started to walk around him. As I started to walk he lay over on his side and rolled over to his other side as he kept watching me and as I went around his tail he rolled back over and into his original down position! The people watching laughed at my clown and it took me several weeks to "retrain" Rupert to down and stay!

When Rupert was about 1½ years old we tried weight pulling. He was very eager to please and was happy to pull whatever was put behind him. We then tried pulling a cart and, with his knowledge of all the various rally commands and having pulled the weight cart, Rupert took to draft work very quickly. As with learning Rally, we would go out carting all over the neighborhood, going straight, backing, practicing 90 degree right and left turns, going up and down steep hills, over all sorts of bumps, going by all sorts of obstacles and stopping and greeting people. It was fun and Rupert was always willing to do his best.

Rupert is very happy being together with me and me with him, whether it is in the show ring, out for a walk, a run through the woods, a swim in the lake, stretched out at my feet, rolling (and sleeping) in the snow, or pulling his dog food home in his cart (which he does do!). Rupert also delivers Christmas presents to children with his cart decorated for Christmas, Rupert also has his TDI certification and demonstrates his carting abilities when he goes on therapy visits. Rupert even helps me at the barn, where I work, by pulling a cart loaded with leaves and branches or bales of hay. All he ever asks for is a big hug and a belly rub! Rupert makes life good and he is my "bestest big buddy!"

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**First Saint Bernard to Earn the Novice Draft
Dog Title**

October 15, 2011