

Northwoods Humane Society – Melissa Spero, Guest Writer

Ruff, ruff! It's Pepper. My mom has probably told you about me. A German Shepherd/black lab mix with a luxurious fur coat containing various shades of red, brown, white and gray. The cuddliest dog, especially in the mornings. My favorite hobby is playing in water of any form, particularly mud puddles. And I'm definitely my Mama's favorite baby, just don't tell my sisters or brother.

It's finally *my* turn to write an article and it's the best week ever! Happy Father's Day to all the fur dad's out there, especially mine! Mama calls him, "Babe" or "Joshua" when she's serious, but I call him, "Daddy."

Don't get me wrong. Mama did a good job. She kept me alive for 7 years! Then came the man who changed our lives. The person who was meant to share peanut butter toast with me every morning. The Daddy who was going to gently wake me from my nightmares and hold me until I fell back asleep. The parent who would run through the sprinkler with me and laugh when I tried to "catch" the water in my mouth with each wave. The awesome human who decided to discreetly sneak me snacks behind Mama's back.

It took some time for me to adjust. It was hard to share my mama with Daddy at first. We were a girl's only club—my mama, sisters and me! After many walks, trips to the ocean, car rides and tug of war games, it was clear Daddy was the missing piece to our family. On Christmas, I gave Daddy his first body slam snuggles—my trademark cuddle move. Mama took a picture of the moment and framed it for Daddy. Something wet got in his eyes when he opened the present. I made sure to give him lots of kisses to help dry them.

Now Daddy is my favorite person! If Mama mentions "Daddy", I run to the front door. My tail eagerly wags as I wait for him to cross the threshold. I lounge in bed every morning until Daddy wakes up just so I can give him wet, sloppy kisses. When strangers get too close, I give them a low growl to remind them Daddy's constantly protected by me. Also, if you want to hug my daddy, you're hugging me as well. I like to wedge myself between him and any other human or animal he tries to interact with that isn't me.

A part of me will always be a Mama's girl, but I'm definitely more of a Daddy's girl these days. You would be too! He's the most loving, cuddly, playful, compassionate, soothing, energetic, handsome and special Daddy *EVER!* I promise I'm not only saying this because Daddy spoils me and gives me whatever I want. My daddy is truly amazing. Although I am truly his little princess, my daddy is the King of our family and I'll love and be loyal to him forever.

Maybe he didn't create me, but my Daddy is the most important man in my life. Part of my Father's Day gift to Daddy was a donation to the Northwood's Humane Society so another dog gets a chance at a doting Daddy and unconditional love like I was lucky to find. My daddy keeps me safe, constantly plays with me and lets me hog the entire bed every single night by sleeping horizontally. Mama loves it even though she says it in that stern "Joshua" tone. Thank you for all the hugs, walks, and kisses, but mostly, the snacks. Happy Father's Day, Daddy. You'll always be my favorite person to lick.

Love your baby girl, Pepper Princess.

P.S. Pepper wants to remind you that she just lucked out! Fortunately, she found us after she was abandoned, but Pepper wants everyone to remember that isn't always the case for strays. Please support your Northwood's Humane Society as volunteers, fosters, adopters and donors are always needed and welcomed.

Hope to see you Thursday, June 15 at Art For Animals beginning at 6:30 at Flat Creek Inn – champagne appetizers, silent and live auction and lots of animal lovers!