

## *Jake Ryan*



Last November, I tried to trick my dad by telling him I was going to be a mom. After a long pause, he asked, "What kind of dog is it?"

I adopted Jake Ryan at the end of November 2008 but couldn't bring him home until Christmas Eve because he was receiving treatment for heartworms. I visited him daily after work and couldn't wait to bring him home. I even skipped going home for the holidays because it wasn't safe to have Jake around other dogs until I was sure his treatment worked. I've always believed that pets are members of the family, and Jakey truly is my baby. My nephew Dylan says that Jake Ryan is his favorite cousin! To my surprise, my dad doesn't scoff when I tell Jake, "Go with Grandpa!" Sometimes my dad calls me and says, "How's my boy?" It cracks me up that my family treats Jake Ryan like he's my child.

Before I adopted him, his name was Chewy. My favorite movie is Sixteen Candles, and I said I'd name either my first son or my first dog Jake Ryan, so that's how he got his name. I seldom ever call him Jake Ryan, though; I usually call him Jake or Jakey. Friends say he hit the jackpot when I adopted him because I let him roam around the apartment, get on the sofa, and sleep in my bed. He's housebroken and well-behaved, so I don't mind. I joke that the apartment belongs to him, I just pay the rent.

I almost didn't adopt him because I noticed that he was shedding a lot. I let another family play with him, but I was hoping they wouldn't adopt him because I was having second thoughts. He's an older dog and will celebrate his 9<sup>th</sup> birthday this month. I didn't care that he shed a lot, was older, or had

heartworms, though. I felt like he was a good fit for me, so I adopted him. He's content to lounge on the sofa all day and likes to cuddle. He's a loving dog and will lick your nose if you say "kiss kiss" to him. Jake rarely barks and loves children. He loves to be scratched just above his tail. He'll raise his head high, move it side to side, and lick his lips. He also likes to have his chest rubbed/scratched. If you stop too soon, he's not too shy to touch your hand with his paw and push it back toward his chest! When we go for walks, it's not uncommon for him to mimic a siren. He's just so cute!

Sometimes I have to travel for work, so I make sure he's in good company with friends who treat their pets the way I treat Jake. He usually stays with his good pals Dusty and Lucci, and he also enjoys playing with Halo and Atom. I love being able to provide a safe, loving home for Jakey. I don't want him to learn tricks; I want him to enjoy his life. I often wonder if he knows just how much I adore him. Deep down I believe that he understands. He's an excellent companion, and I absolutely love my Jakey!

