



THE KODIAK TAILS

saving lives, one dog at a time

Leia gets an artificial leg – homemade! – with help from KodiakCare



When Chris Sung's beloved Australian Shepherd Leia needed her front leg amputated after a bone-cancer diagnosis, the Seattle resident got busy.

Unable to afford the treatment at his local veterinary clinic, Sung considered euthanizing the beloved pet, but decided instead to pour his energy into saving her, while also ensuring her quality of life. "She is a family member of mine," he explained. "I couldn't just not try."

Sung called dozens of clinics in Washington and Idaho seeking a vet with affordable rates. His search led him to Tieton Drive Animal Clinic in Yakima, a two-hour car ride away, and to KodiakCare, which helped to fund Leia's life-saving surgery.

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Chris Sung

That wasn't where the efforts ended for this dedicated owner. While most dogs with Leia's diagnosis do better with a complete amputation of the limb, Sung worked with Dr. Brian Kegley to leave a stump where Sung could attach a prosthetic he crafted himself using designs posted on the internet and a 3D printer. "I couldn't afford a custom-made one," he said.

Sung then worked patiently to adapt the artificial limb to the dog's new anatomy and, today, Leia is cancer-free and marching around on her homemade leg. "I spent pretty much every waking moment focused on that," Sung said. "I had to do my best."

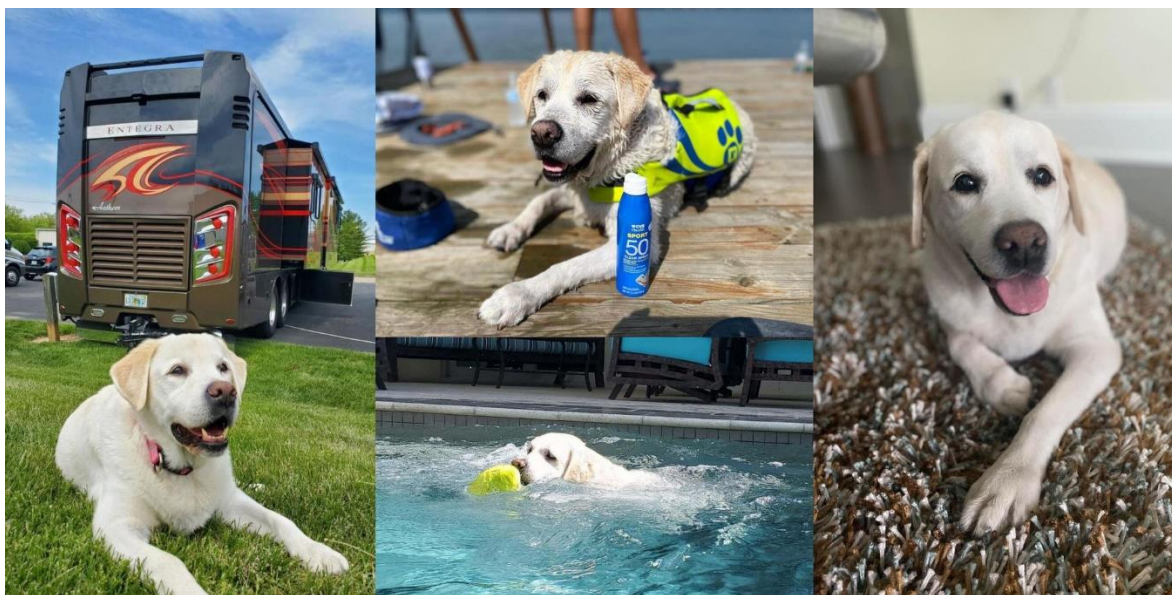
Dr. Kegley has previously performed full amputations, but this was his first partial, he said. "We needed to get the whole tumor and leave enough of a stump. Luckily, the tumor was right above the wrist," he said. "This was the first time I've done that."

Leia's surgery also marked the first time Kegley's clinic had worked with KodiakCare, and he said the financial support made it possible for him to tailor his services to the means available, as well as the best interests of the owner and pet. "We do what we can. We do offer discounts and things, but it's difficult," he explained, noting that performing vet care for free isn't sustainable: "That model has failed, repeatedly."

In this case, Kegley was able to save a "very, very sweet dog" who had a "palpable bond" with her owner, he said.

Sung was grateful for the financial help that has given Leia an extension on life: "I was so happy to hear ... that KodiakCare was able to give us this grant," he said. "It was a huge relief. We are very thankful, both myself and Leia."

Mutt Madness 2023 A Slam Dunk! Meet Jazz, KodiakCare's Big Winner



Neighbors and family members rallied together for Jazz in the last half hour of Mutt Madness to make the yellow labrador retriever KodiakCare's 2023 Mutt Madness champion. Jazz's owner, Doug, said, "My heart was beating hard," as his family made final donations to beat the clock.

While the 12 years and two month old lab might be on "borrowed time," as Doug would say, Jazz is living life to the fullest. She enjoys swimming in the family's backyard pool and traveling in their 45-foot motor coach. Jazz has roamed the country from the comfort of her dog bed and even made an international trip to Ottawa, Canada's capital.

Jazz's pet parents, Doug and Marvin, insist they are the lucky ones. They are grateful they have the resources to give Jazz and their past pups long, wonderful and healthy lives. Though Jazz tests them with a "naughty streak" that never left her, she wins them back every time with her kind eyes and a gentle paw. Even when she stole their precious toilet paper rolls during the height of the 2020 supply shortage, Doug and Marvin say they couldn't help loving her more. "Jazz has trained me," says Doug.

Jazz's fans joined Doug and Marvin to raise over \$5,000 for KodiakCare. Altogether, the Mutt Madness Championship raised nearly \$27,000 for dogs in need! More than 300 canine contenders, over twice as many as last year, made 2023's tournament KodiakCare's most successful.

Thank you to all participants for making this an incredibly impactful event. Thank you to our contestants and thank you to our donors for creating second chances and brighter futures for many dogs and their families.

Special thanks to our Presenting Sponsor, [Embrace Pet Insurance](#), for returning for the third time to support this important event. Thank you, Embrace Pet Insurance, for your dedication to KodiakCare's mission of Saving Lives, One Dog at a Time.

Thank You! KodiakCare Pupdate

KodiakCare donors have saved nearly 400 dogs in our first two years of existence.



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