

# The Wobbly World of Allagash

"A dog can express more with his tail in minutes than his owner can express with his tongue in hours."

-Anonymous



## Everyone Needs A Hero

Currently, nationwide there is an animal blood product shortage. This means that if your pet ever needed to have a blood transfusion they might not be able to get one in a timely manner if the vet didn't have the product on hand. To help alleviate this shortage some hospitals have their own blood banks. At Northstar VETS we enroll, screen, and have a database of potential donors that we can call upon to donate when needed. We will then split whole blood into its components (plasma & packed red blood cells). I am excited to say that Allagash has been given the green light to enroll in NorthStar VETS blood donor program. I hope that he can save a life one day. This is exciting because we had to talk about if his condition made it unsafe for him to donate (it does not nor is his blood inferior).

To read more about the program and see if your four legged friend (dogs and cats!) could be eligible to become a HERO go to <http://northstarvets.com/blood-bank>. There you can find what the program entails as well as some stories of patients that have benefitted from receiving a blood donation. If you are reading this and do not live in the New Jersey area, call your local specialty vet hospital to see if they have a similar program. If you are in the NJ area, please consider allowing your pet to enroll and become a blood donor – it does save lives.

It was a pleasure to assist you. Your chat session has enc



## Time Flies....Or I Just Lost Track Of It

Where has the time gone? Just yesterday (actually 4 months ago) I was taking home this little 24-pound butterball of energy not knowing what was to come. With a lot of time, effort (more than just me), and of course falls – we have reached 9 months of age at a whopping 63-pounds. Yeah, I said 63. Not too shabby for the lil' monster who going to be euthanized at 8 weeks of age. I am happy to say Allagash has exceeded many people's expectations in how well he has progressed. He is normal in every way – especially being a mischievous lab puppy. His latest antic is to find ways to break out of the baby gates placed to keep him contained when not supervised. He essentially bum rushes them, or jumps up and leans his body so it shifts and falls over. Loves taking things outta purses left within reach, and my favorite is trying to find the weak points in the fence to push through (seriously, he tests until he finds a slat that shifts and pushes through – you can see him calculating it in his mind).

We have had an eventful first summer together – many new places, people, and experiences. From visiting the shooting range, to beach days, sleepovers, and everything in between Allagash has continued to wag his tail and meet every new challenge with a wiggle butt and zest for life. I wish every person could take a page out of his book and just enjoy the moment.

Rehabilitation wise we still have weekly treadmill, cavaletti rails, and dancing sessions. Some newer exercises are combining more precise movements/adjustments. Weave poles, and also having Allagash determine inclines and declines. He is still very 'front loaded' as in he tends to shift all weight or lean forward. Trying to get him to get down steps hasn't been very successful so strategies have been adjusted. How? Three-legged stance. I will hold a front leg up and it makes him shift weight to his hind legs. He dislikes this. But as with most labs – he is very food motivated so treats help.

As this update is overdue (putting it mildly), personally I have been

Juggling long work hours, Allagash, finishing a 3-year process to specialize in veterinary oncology, speaking/presenting at conferences... Yes- this is my mea culpa for not updating Allagash's post (insert sad face emoticon here!).

We still garner a lot of gasp's and looks of sympathy or pity when I am out in public with Allagash. We recently visited Asbury's Wonderbar for YAPPY HOUR (<http://www.wonderbarasburypark.com>) and it was a blast. This is an outdoor bar that allows dogs – the humans are extemporaneous! Once most of the patrons met/heard Allagash's story or saw how happy he is, even when he falls – there was less looks of dismay and more acceptance of 'oh that's Allagash – don't worry he falls but he was born that way – look how happy he is' – cue punch line of 'Allagash has been flagged – get that puppy a barkalyzer'. It was also great socialization for Allagash on a larger level. I am always very aware that Allagash's abnormal movements are hard for other animals to read.

There was a time that only a handful of dogs would tolerate/interact with Allagash when I first took him to park/beach. Most, who were great with all dogs, would show signs of fear aggression towards him. Now that Allagash is more 'normal' or steady on his legs, we have had more success with making friends. YAPPY HOUR was a success because not only did he have fun, but even in 'pack mentality' he wasn't attacked (something I was fearful of). He was probably lowest on the proverbial totem pole, but not signaled out as the weakest link and eliminated. I saw this as one of the biggest milestones because Allagash loves other animals and little people (kids). I would have this complete emotional reaction when dogs would growl because he wouldn't understand and just wanted to play.

What is next? I don't know as I consider Allagash (like myself) a work in progress. I would love to get him certified as a therapy dog though that might be far off in the future. The dreaded (males -if reading make grimace face now) neuter procedure is soon and I plan on tacking his stomach to the abdominal wall

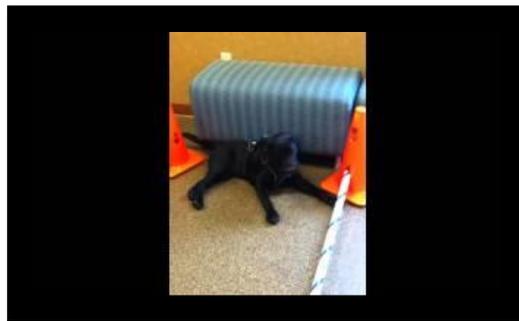
<http://veterinarymedicine.dvm360.com/have-you-heard-fast-and-effective-gastropexy-alternative-gdv-prevention-script?rel=canonical>

I see the worst of the worst because of what I do, and combined with Allagash's penchant for eating way to fast, falling, and whatnot - my gut says to do this (pun not intended).

So long for now - next update in about two weeks. Promise.



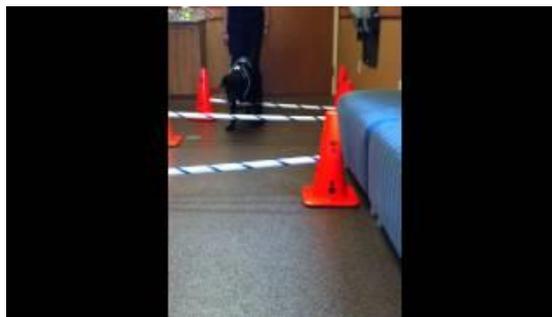
Click to watch - the culmination of many months of rehab is seeing him canter.



Rehab in beginning...



6 Months old - treadmill



Recent Cavaletti Rails