

DISABLED COLLIE, NORMAL LIFE

Our precious treasure

By Lin Davies

A few months ago I happened to check the SWCR website, saw the photo of Sima (then called Precious), and fell in love. My amazing husband, Gary, agreed we could give a deaf, mostly blind collie a good and happy home.

We met her on Labor Day weekend and took her home to Los Lunas, NM. She met her four new sisters with a bit of welcoming sniffing and joined the crew.

Chloe and Gwynny are our border collie mixes, 13+ years old. Lucy, a Lab-Weimaraner mix, is almost 4. Sassy, a collie, is almost 2. Sima also met Milo and Juni Pearl, our two cats, whom she chases just for fun but occasionally cuddles up with at night.

As we had hoped, she has bonded beautifully with Sassy. Sima follows her, and Sassy watches out for Sima. Sassy isn't a cuddler, though, so Sima usually sleeps

with Chloe or Gwynny.

Sima likes being in touch — literally. She wants to feel someone near her, even just someone's foot. She loves to be petted, and now gives us precious collie kisses. Wherever we are, she's nearby; she does not like to be alone.

She also loves treats, and has learned how to ask for them by just grabbing our hand and sitting. She is learning basic hand-signals — so far, "come," "no," "stay," and "follow-me."

She also has a signal of her own. One morning at 4 a.m. I woke up to find her staring at me. She led me to her food bowl. She wanted an early breakfast!

We take Sima shopping, and we'll be taking her to our science club at school. She behaves beautifully and likes people and attention. We'd like her to be an example of how a disabled dog can lead a normal life, and be as unconditionally loving and loyal a companion as any normal dog.



Sima loves to play. Her favorite game is tug-of-war. She also loves to run. She, Sassy, and Lucy are the Three Musketeers: They race and tumble and chase around the yard and in the house. She's also a master at untying shoes and playing in mud puddles.

Sima is truly a delight. She's happy, she's playful, she's sweet, she's loving, she's interested in what's happening around her, she's cautious but not fearful. She's given an added dimension to our lives. To have a dog like Sima is very special; we have a mentally disabled daughter, and she taught



Above left, **Sima**, a Hebrew/Aramaic name meaning "treasure," loves being close to her dad, **Gary**. Sima also loves playing with best friend **Sassy**, a collie who almost was put down by her breeder because of a heart condition. Lin and Gary found out and adopted her. After major heart surgery, Sassy is healthy and able to live a normal, active life. One of Sima's favorite sleeping companions is **Chloe**, also deaf.

us so much. Now Sima is teaching us, also. We are privileged to be her Mom and Dad.

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