

Bella was originally purchased by people who loved her but were ill-equipped to handle a special-needs dog. At 6-months of age she developed epilepsy, including cluster seizures such that she would always have several over the course of 24-hours. After several years of inconsistent treatment for her epilepsy, both her seizures and her weight were out of control, so her owners contracted a local vet and asked to have their 4-yr old Collie put down. This vet offered them a different option and contacted Collie Rescue of Southeastern Pennsylvania. I had recently lost two older Collies within 2 ½ weeks of each other and was ready and able to take on a special-needs case. Within 2 days, Bella's life changed. She arrived weighing 130 lbs, so fat she was unable to get up on her own, with a skin infection, ear infection, UTI, sores on her elbows from spending too much time laying on a hard floor, and of course, with seizures that were out of control. We also discovered, after a week or two, that she was blind in one eye, and several months later, that she had most likely already torn one CCL.

Despite that, she had the sweetest disposition a Collie could have.

On the right diet, pounds started to fall off of her. With that, her energy level and stamina increased. It was some time before she could support herself enough to allow her knee to be repaired. Meanwhile, her epilepsy medication required ongoing monitoring and adjustments, first to get seizures under control, then to assure her levels weren't too high as she continued to lose weight.

Now, 5-yrs later, 48-lbs lighter, at the time of this publication she has gone 2 ½ years without a seizure, and she is able to enjoy life. While she may always have some residual issues from her early years, she is now living the right kind of "large." Her favorite game is to play catch with a giant ball in the front yard. She also enjoys a good game of bitey-face with her Collie brother, loves meeting people and dogs of all sizes, and is paying it forward with her new Sheltie brother who recently arrived with his own list of special needs.