

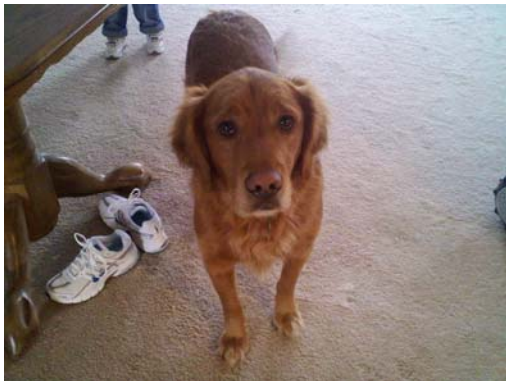
## Hogan's Story: A Family's Point of View

by: Cheryl Cummins

As my husband and I went through our normal morning routine one August morning in 2009, we were devastated to be informed that a woman had hit our dog when he ran into the road chasing some varmint. I scrambled outside to find both our dogs out on the front porch. I was momentarily confused to see both of them facing the woman's van prancing, barking, and alerting us to the arrival of a guest. As I called them, I instantly saw Hogan's face was damaged and bleeding. I panicked and screamed for my husband. We collected Hogan and transported him to our local vet in Perry, New York. On the way there, I told my husband



I thought his jaw was broken. There was a gap, a true hole in the tooth pattern; he had lost a piece of his front jaw. The brief exam by the on-call vet was disheartening and heart-breaking. The vet actually took opposite sides of his jaw and wriggled them in opposite directions. He looked at us sympathetically and informed us this situation was way beyond his skills and any chance to help Hogan could only be done at the veterinary hospital in Rochester. The vet gave him drugs to comfort him and we brought him to the emergency center of Veterinary Specialists of Rochester.



The details of the damage done are better explained by Dr. Mehler, Hogan's surgeon. He simply told us when he looked at him the damage was severe, one of the worst he had seen. We were told he basically crushed his snout and lower jaw accordion style when he collided with the van. There would be surgery, a hospital stay of 4-5 days and extensive at-home care required. The good news was he had done no damage to his internal organs, eyes or spine.

A necessary side bar to the story was the cost of the treatment. It was expensive. The damage was worse than they thought. The hospital stay was longer than they thought. We have been challenged a number of times with comments like "He's not a show dog" or simply "it's just a dog." HE IS NOT JUST A DOG. He is truly the sweetest, warmest cuddle-bug of a dog I have EVER had the fortune of owning. He has the kindest soul and eyes that make you melt. He makes you feel as if you are sincerely the only person he has ever loved. He is so sensitive to our family that in times of crisis when has seen me cry, he will come and put his head on my lap and stay there until I send him away. It was a blessing to have this dog in our family. I still to this day thank god for Dr. Mehler and the staff of VSR. Their care and concern for Hogan, the sensitivity in crisis time for my family and the concern of aftercare was un-paralleled. I cannot thank them enough. Hogan's beautiful broken smile lights up our family every day.