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[Products & Services](#)

[Video Resources](#)



[Home](#) > [Living Forward](#) > [Service Animals & Disability](#) > Disabled Dog Dagnabit and His Canine Wheelchair Friends

Disabled Dog Dagnabit and His Canine Wheelchair Friends

by Misty Fauchaux

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Among the disarray, drama and decorum of New Orleans, a new sight has begun to catch people's eyes: disabled dog Dagnabit and other disabled dogs in wheelchairs. And, usually, Kim Dudek is somewhere close-by.

After a chance encounter with a dog behind her business, Dudek found a calling.

Unlikely Beginning

When Dudek found Dagnabit, his ears had been cut off, his body was scarred and he was aggressive toward other dogs. It also looked as if he had been forced into dog fighting. The canine's future didn't look very bright. But, slowly, the dog she named Dagnabit started to change, and he began getting along with other dogs.

Disability and Depression

Then a major setback took place. After Dagnabit was found sitting oddly cross-legged on the floor, he was taken to the vet; he had three ruptured discs in his back. Dagnabit had surgery done to fix his back, but the surgery had a bad after-effect. Dagnabit became depressed and disabled. He couldn't walk and lost a significant amount of weight.

Rehabilitation and Therapy

Dudek had been a children's rehabilitation counselor and decided to try the same therapy with Dagnabit. She brought in two canine massage practitioners, a veterinarian acupuncturist and a veterinarian who specialized in chiropractic and homeopathic medicine. Finally, disabled dog Dagnabit was able to stand and his depression lifted in the process.

Dagnabit Gets Wheelchair, Inspires Rehab Center

Dudek took classes to become a Certified Canine Rehabilitation Practitioner. She then founded [Doggon' Wheels](#) in order to create a wheelchair for Dagnabit. Dudek later created [Dag's House](#). This is a rehabilitation center for disabled dogs and includes a fitness center, an agility course and an outdoor recreation space.

And now, Dagnabit the disabled dog and his doggie friends walk and roll the streets of New Orleans with the assistance of wheelchairs created by Doggone Wheels. Dagnabit has even begun swimming.

Disabled Dog Dagnabit Wins Photo Contest

After submitting a photo of Dagnabit walking with his wheelchair, Dudek and her dog won the grand prize in the Judged Category for the Humane Society International's 2010 Spay Day Online Pet Photo Contest, proving that inspiration can come in the most unlikely candidates.

The photo was one of over 32,000 photographs submitted to the contest. The contest raised over \$500,000 for the Humane Society, and this money will go toward spay and neuter programs.

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