

## **Finesse All Jazzed Up (Río), CDX RAE JH MJP MXP ThD VCX WC WCX**

March 9, 2001 – July 24, 2012

We lost our sweet Río yesterday. I had been doing evaluation for our therapy dog program all day a couple of hours north. Kevin came home from work and found her. She looked like she was resting peacefully. She had trained with me the night before and was feeling great that morning active and happy. Both of her vets agree that it was probably her heart. I guess if they have to leave us, peacefully in their sleep is the way to do it. It doesn't make the loss any easier, but knowing she didn't have a lengthy illness and was happy and active until the end is a small comfort. Hug your babies

Full of life and free of spirit, Río always enthusiastically attacked every task. She started her career in the obedience ring and earned her CDX title. We began agility and she quickly earned her MXP and MJP titles with over 38 1<sup>st</sup> placements. She also excelled at Rally. She earned her RAE title in a very short time and had 8 legs towards her RAE2. In 2006 she was the #2 Poodle in Rally according to Front & Finish accumulating 306 First and Foremost Points. These points are given based on number of dogs defeated in competition.

She loved hunt work and quickly earned her Junior Hunter Title. She earned her WC (Working Certificate) and WCX (Working Certificate Excellent) and was awarded her Bronze, Silver and Gold Medallions by the Poodle Club of America. She had earned the titles in agility, obedience, rally and hunt tests prior to her Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) diagnosis, which proved her dogged determination.

Regardless how hard we worked, she never relented. After her diagnosis in June of 2006, thanks to the PCA Foundation who offered free ASD screening at the 2006 National Specialty, and cardiologist, Dr Sonya Gordon, of Texas A & M University Veterinary Teaching Hospital, who repaired her defect, Río was able to continue doing the things she loved so much. In 2009 Río began to show signs of stiffness in her rear end. After a complete orthopedic workup at the University of Tennessee Veterinary Teaching Hospital showed nothing, she began chiropractic and acupuncture therapy at UT under the magic touch of Dr Donna Raditic. Thanks to Dr. Donna, Río was able resume the activities she enjoyed and not need drugs. She had made remarkable progress and with regular therapy, showed no signs of the stiffness.

Río was actively involved in some sort of pet therapy program her whole life. She was active in the University of Tennessee H.A.B.I.T. program where she worked at Seymour Primary School in the Ruff Read Program and at Wellington Place Assisted Living Facility. She was most recently involved in the specialty commands program at Patricia

Neal Rehabilitation Center working with stroke and head trauma patients. Late last year Ríó began to show signs of slowing down and loss of appetite. After a thorough workup at UT, she was diagnosed with a heart arrhythmia. After starting her on a heart medication her appetite returned. She seemed to have newfound energy and actually seemed years younger, so her sudden loss came as quite a shock to us. Ríó attacked all she did with enthusiasm and unbridled energy. She loved to train and was eager to please. Watching her work you would swear she was smiling. She never knew a stranger and continued to be a great ambassador for the therapy programs she was involved in until just before her death. Though it betrayed her in the end, Ríó truly had a heart of gold.

