

Public Lecture

"The U.S. and Europe During and After the Cold War"

...

Admiral Stansfield Turner

Director, Central Intelligence Agency, 1977-81

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**Thursday, November 4th
7:30 p.m.**

...

**Heritage Hall
Bowerman Family Building
University of Oregon**

Celebrity dog an inspiration

Local dog and owner travel to area hospitals to share their story of overcoming obstacles

By **Jeremy Lang**
Oregon Daily Emerald

There's an old Hollywood proverb that says you can never upstage a dog.

Eugene resident John Weaver knows first hand how true that is. His dog, Kuma, is a three-legged canine celebrity that is charming students on campus while he lives in Eugene.

That's right. Three legs — and one prosthetic limb.

Six years ago, a cement truck ran over Kuma's hind leg. Instead of having the dog put to sleep, Weaver convinced veterinarians to amputate the leg.

After the amputation, Weaver designed a prosthetic limb for the dog out of a plastic antifreeze bottle, a table leg and a rubber stopper.

Kuma quickly took to the idea of having a prosthetic leg and could soon lay down, sit up and run almost as fast as he could before. Weaver has since designed a new prosthesis out of titanium and aluminum with a shock absorber.

He soon came up with the idea that physically disabled children might want to see how this dog could do everything a four-legged dog can.

"I've always lived in the moment. And I'll put every cent I've got into Kuma after I've seen him go into hospitals and motivate kids to go through therapy and succeed. I'll risk everything for that reason," he said.

Weaver has also taken Kuma to schools throughout Oregon. Bob Rubinstein, a teacher at Roosevelt Middle School invited Weaver and Kuma to his seventh and



Jeffrey Stockton Emerald

Eugene resident John Weaver pets Kuma, his three-legged dog. The white akita lost its leg to a truck six years ago and has since had a prosthetic limb installed.

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eighth grade "Wild and Tame" class, which covers both wildlife and pet care.

"The kids seemed really interested in the fact that an animal can live with an artificial limb," Rubinstein said. "They've seen people with artificial limbs, but never a dog."

Weaver said he also wants to take Kuma to Sacred Heart Medical Center, but he said he has been very busy trying to raise money to cover the pressing costs of day-to-day expenses.

Weaver's currently looking for volunteers to improve the Kuma Web site, where people can buy Kuma merchandise, such as T-shirts, coloring books or posters.

Carol Titus, a member of the Eu-

gene Kennel Club, said that in Japan Kuma's breed, a Japanese white akita, is considered a national treasure.

"They typically belong to palace royalty and were protected from being exported out of Japan for a period of time," Titus said.

Weaver said he hopes to eventually find a private investor and manufacture the prosthetic limb he designed for Kuma for veterinary clinics.

Weaver added that Kuma is currently looking for a girlfriend.

"We hope to breed him and make a family. In the meantime, we'll survive," he said.

You can learn more about Kuma at www.kumabear.com.

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