

Remembering Resilient Danforth!



Danforth was a beautiful middle aged rooster who came to Joplin's Sanctuary approximately two years ago. As you can see by the photo Danforth was a victim of animal abuse. Someone had hit the lower portion of his head with either a rock or a stick which resulted in a total dislocation of his lower beak and jaw.

At first we were not sure whether he would be able to eat or drink. After visiting two veterinarians we were told that nothing could be done to align the beak and jaw back to its normal position. We were told to take Danforth back to the sanctuary and pray that he would be able to adapt to his disability.

To our pleasure and amazement Danforth quickly learned to use his upper beak as a scoop and then by tilting his head back he was able to swallow grain, cracked corn and water without a lot of difficulty. He didn't get the food into his beak every time but he was persistent in his efforts and became better at scooping his food as time went by.



Once we could see that he was able to feed himself we tried to put him in with our other rescued chickens and roosters. Unfortunately nature is not pretty at times. Once the other chickens realized that he was disabled they started to pick on him. Realizing that he potentially could be seriously hurt or even killed the sanctuary acquired a separate living quarters for him and then added an extended wire wall around a large area so that he could freely roam around and be a “chicken”.



Over the next twenty months Danforth thrived. He loved his enclosure. He became one of the sanctuary's favorites for visitors. Children who suffered from their own physical challenges often gravitated to Danforth. He loved their visits and would strut around his enclosure and often crow loudly when the children approached.

During his time at the sanctuary Danforth put on considerable weight and grew beautiful head and neck feathers which he would ruffle up as a form of greeting to volunteers when they came into his enclosure to clean and feed him. He became so comfortable with people that he allowed people to actually pet him on his back and neck. He was truly a gentle soul.



Then yesterday afternoon sadly we found Danforth in his normal mid-afternoon resting spot, midway up the ladder into his house. It appeared that he passed away in his sleep while sleeping on the ladder without any signs of distress or pain.

Danforth's body was buried in our memorial cemetery yesterday afternoon but his resilience and love for life will always be with us. We are thankful that we were able to help him live here in peace and we look forward to seeing him again when we too pass over the rainbow bridge.

Note: It is through our community of supporters that we are able to continue to do this type of rescue work. Thank you to everyone who helped us make Danforth's life better.