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EDITOR'S PICK

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## Healing wheels and warm hearts

By Nancy Radcliff Chief Photographer Apr 6, 2019



John and Noel Lizotte came to the Pickaway County Dog Shelter Friday to fit Rex with a wheelchair but that wasn't all that happened. Rex found himself in the backseat of the couple's pickup on his way to a new home.

NANCY RADCLIFF/CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

CIRCLEVILLE — A couple who came to the Pickaway County Dog Shelter on Friday to help a dog, fell in love with it and agreed that Rex needed them.

John and Noel Lizotte didn't have plans of taking a dog back home with them to Galion when they came to the shelter Friday to help a German Shepherd named Rex walk again with the assistance of a wheelchair. John and Noel are founders of Rescued Rollers, a non-profit charity that helps dogs in need of wheelchairs.

Rex's story goes back to March 25 when he was found by a couple in a field near Elsea's Mobile Village, in the northern part of Circleville. Pickaway County Chief Dog Warden Sherri Rarey said they were contacted and took the dog to North Court Animal Clinic where it was examined.

"The dog had hurt an L7 vertebrae, possibly from an old injury that may have been traumatized," Rarey said. "Being that the dog was estimated to be around 10-years-old, he didn't seem to be a candidate for surgery."

While the dog was at the shelter, Rarey found Rescued Rollers on Facebook and gave them a call. John and Noel came to the shelter Friday to fit Rex with his own wheelchair.

Before getting Rex into his new wheels, he warmed up to John after receiving a few treats. Once Rex figured John was there to help him, the two hit it off.

John got Rex all fixed up with his new wheels and out they went for a walk. Rex did quite well and even took off for a little run. John was quite amazed at how well Rex adapted to his wheelchair and could tell he was a happy dog.

"The purpose of us coming was to fit him with a wheelchair to get him ready for adoption," said Noel. "We didn't plan on adopting him."

John said this was a special case and something clicked with him and the dog. "He needed to come home with us," said John.

John and Noel said they have another dog at home with a wheelchair and know how to take care of them. "I've been given a gift to work with dogs," said John.

Noel said they help nearly 30 to 50 dogs a year. They help shelters and rescuers fit the dogs for free. "It's our way to help them get adopted," Noel said.

They take donated wheelchairs and refurbish them, adding missing parts to make them useable again. The wheelchairs are a lifetime loan but when they are done being used, they ask that they be returned so another dog gets a chance.

For more on Rescued Rollers, visit [www.RescuedRollers.com](http://www.RescuedRollers.com) or visit them on Facebook.