

Mansfield News Journal

NEWS

Honey the dog up for 'America's Favorite Pet'

Mark Caudill Mansfield News Journal

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MANSFIELD - From broken to a beauty queen.

That's how John Lizotte, who runs a nonprofit called Rescued Rollers from his Galion home, describes Honey, a Labrador retriever-mix.

Last November, Honey was found at the side of a road. She had a total of seven breaks in her back legs.

Based on X-rays, the breaks happened three different times, indicating Honey was an abuse case. Her medical care cost \$13,000.

Lizotte thought she might be a candidate for wheelchairs he reconditions for dogs, but she ended up not needing one.

"She was able to keep both of her legs," he said. "She's doing fantastic."

Honey's story has touched people from all over the country. She is up for America's Favorite Pet, a contest that runs through Oct. 8.

As of last week, Honey was leading her group. She lives with Forest and Beth Dyer, who have a home on Mansfield's north side.

The Dyers discovered Honey through their volunteer work at Rescued Rollers. They agreed to foster Honey for a couple of weeks.

"We were really drawn to her," Beth Dyer said.

Two weeks turned into a month when they decided to continue fostering her after she was spayed.

"She just attached to both of us. She just took a place in our hearts," Beth said. "We could see the life and happiness come back in her eyes."

More: Galion Russian blue cat strong contender in 'America's Favorite Pet' contest

Beth and Forest decided to keep Honey, who has been with them since January. She joins their other two dogs, Daisy, a miniature pinscher-poodle mix, and Peanut, a Jack Russell-beagle mix.

Peanut can walk underneath Honey. Beth joked that Daisy is the size of Honey's head.

Honey enjoys running in the Dyers' fenced-in backyard.

"Unless she is having a hard day, you would never know there was anything wrong with her legs," Beth said.

Honey has bonded with Forest through their injuries. Forest was left with paralysis on his left side following a motorcycle crash in the 1980s.

"She kind of knows that. She understands when he's aching or hurting," Beth said. "She's a lot calmer with him than she is with me."

Forest helps transport dogs from Rescued Rollers to their new homes. He and Beth might open their own rescue operation if they get a bigger house.

"We want people to open their homes to dogs with disabilities," Forest said.

"Just because dogs have a special need doesn't mean they have to be put to sleep," Beth added.

Honey loves to play tug-of-war or go for car rides. Her favorite treat is peanut butter. She also won't turn down a belly rub.

A national audience is learning Honey's story through the America's Favorite Pet contest. If she wins, her owners will receive \$5,000, a portion of which they would donate to Rescued Rollers.

The area already has a contender for favorite cat, Luka, a Russian blue-mix featured in Tuesday's News Journal.

In addition to the cash prize, the winning dog and cat will be featured in "Dogster" and "Catster" magazines, respectively.

To vote for Honey, visit America's Favorite Pet contest's Facebook page or go to her link at americasfavpet.com/2020/honey-17.

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