

A NEW LEASH ON LIFE

Second Chance Animal Rescue provides loving foster homes for abandoned dogs and cats awaiting adoption.

SCENES OF CARTOON DOGCATCHERS USED TO MAKE CHILDREN CHUCKLE.

But ownerless pets are no laughing matter. Many dogs and cats detained by animal control facilities would face grim circumstances if not for the efforts of organizations like Second Chance Animal Rescue in White Bear Lake. The goal of this organization, established in 1994, is to rescue strays from animal control impound centers and find them homes with loving and responsible families. Until those adoptions occur, however, ani-

mals are placed with equally loving foster families.

Nancy Minion is the beating heart at the center of Second Chance Animal Rescue. Since she co-founded the organization, Second Chance Animal Rescue has rescued more than 8,700 dogs and cats. "Stray animals can be killed if not placed after five to seven days at many impound facilities," says Minion. "Shelters also get a lot of animals coming out of reported breeder facilities. We place as many of these animals as we have foster volunteers to care for them. There is so much need."

Foster caregivers for Second Chance Animal Rescue come from all over the metro area and western Wisconsin. Second Chance Animal Rescue interviews potential foster candidates to determine if their lifestyle is suitable for fostering pets. "We are hesitant to place animals we know nothing about into homes with newborn babies or crawling infants," says Minion. "People with long work hours are also not good candidates." Selected foster volunteers are trained and set up with supplies before receiving their foster pet.

BY ANGELA JOHNSON
PHOTOS BY EMILY J. DAVIS

Aww ...
Darby, one of
Second Chance
Animal Rescue's
foster dogs, is
looking to find his
forever home.
Are you his soft
place to fall?

Breed: Yellow
Labrador retriever
Size: Large
Age: Adult
Petfinder Pet ID:
8785



“I SPEND EXTRA TIME WITH DOGS THAT HAVE PROBLEMS.”

A dog may have been hit by a car, have a gimpy leg, scars, broken teeth or brain damage. I get attached to those animals, because I put so much effort into helping them get better and get adopted.”

—Joan Styve, animal foster mom

Second Chance Animal Rescue sends a dog or cat coordinator to see the animals held at impound; they attempt to select animals that will work well in the foster homes they have available. “If a foster home already has pets, we try to position animals based on personalities for that home to foster,” says Minion. “We also won’t place shy or fearful animals into foster homes where children are present.”

But before any animal is placed into foster care, it is first sent directly to a veterinarian for a checkup. Every unaltered animal is spayed or neutered. It receives a heartworm check, flea treatment, is dewormed and vaccinated. After placement, foster families are asked to provide personality profiles and pictures of their foster pet to post for adoption on the Second Chance Animal Rescue website.

Joan Styve of White Bear Township has been fostering dogs for Second Chance Animal Rescue since 2005. “I thought I would be an ideal dog foster volunteer since I have a big fenced yard,” says Styve. “I wasn’t sure how my own dog would react, but decided to give it a go.”

Styve’s first foster dog was a yellow Labrador retriever from a puppy mill. “It had been ignored and not well-fed,” Styve says. “It had also never been inside a house. It had to learn how to be part of a family.” The foster dog and Styve’s own black Labrador retriever would often lie on the floor with their paws touching. Styve believes that first foster dog learned a lot from her own dog before being adopted.

When Styve’s black Lab died, she adopted a rescue dog, a yellow lab she named Zeus. “Zeus is laid-back. That works well with foster dogs that are recovering from surgery,” Styve says. In addition to teaching foster dogs to coexist with another dog and within a family, Styve enjoys the challenge of figuring out what makes each foster dog tick. “Labs are often people-oriented,” she says. “For other breeds, I need to figure out how they think so I can help them get adopted.”

Styve doesn’t focus on obedience training; she wants the pet’s forever family to do that. She mostly concerns herself with potty training her foster dogs, teaching them not to eat another dog’s food and getting them used to the scheduled routine of a household. She has kept copious records of the 86 dogs she’s fostered. Fifty-three of them have been Labradors or some type of Labrador mix. “Some rescue groups specialize in certain breeds,” says Styve. “Second Chance Animal Rescue will take any breed. And for whatever reason, we get lots of Labs.”

Asked if she’s ever gotten particularly attached to an animal she has fostered, Styve says, “I spend extra time with dogs that have problems. A dog may have been hit by a car, have a gimpy leg, scars, broken teeth or brain damage. I get attached to those animals, because I put so much effort into helping them get better and get adopted.”

Styve begins to choke up as she tells of a dog she once fostered that was a biter. “I tried everything to help her stop biting,” Styve says. “But she wouldn’t. And a biter can’t be adopted.” Styve would have kept the

dog, but her work with people precluded it and the dog had to be put down. “That was really hard,” she says.

Other animals cannot be adopted because of incurable physical problems. “These animals have special needs but still have some quality of life left,” Minion says. Long-term foster volunteers sometimes fill the role of keeping a special needs pet for the remainder of its life. Second Chance Animal Rescue covers the pet’s food and medical expenses.

“Animals from neglect situations can also be in foster care for longer periods because they need to be rehabbed,” Minion says. “An animal that’s been left to die might need surgery, have mucky eyes, matted fur and require neutering. All of this takes time and money.”

The cost of rescuing these lovable animals makes donations as important as foster volunteers. Second Chance Animal Rescue spends hundreds on each animal it saves, sometimes more. The adoption fees it charges rarely recoup those costs. Adopting a pet through Second Chance Animal Rescue costs around \$110 for cats and \$95 to \$250 for dogs.

Trained screeners at Second Chance Animal Rescue screen potential adopters over the phone. Once a match is made, adopters can visit their animal at its foster home. Minion says, “We usually bring your adopted pet to you once you’re set up with supplies.”

To get their message out, Second Chance Animal Rescue seeks to educate the public about animal care and animal welfare issues at events like Petapalooza at the Minnesota State Fair, adoption events at Petco in Roseville, and through its newsletter and community events. “We can’t save animals without fosters, so please help get the word out,” says Minion. “Put up a flyer at work. Tell your friends. There are many animals in need of loving homes.” //

AT LEFT: Second Chance Animal Rescue dogs and cats available for adoption at time of print; please check the website for current availability. (1) Joan Styve with Darby: male, yellow Labrador retriever, 2 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8785 (2) Marty: male, domestic shorthair, 1.5 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8657 (3) Saffron: female, domestic shorthair-orange, approx. 2 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8564 (4) Pearl: female, domestic medium-hair, 1.5 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8676 (5) Logan: domestic shorthair, 7 mos.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8715 (6) Oscar: male, domestic shorthair, approx. 2 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8541 (7) Duke: male, Belgian shepherd-Malinois mix, 2 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8711 (8) Tyler: male, black Labrador retriever, 1.5 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8797 (9) Clover: male, Chihuahua-Pomeranian mix, 1.5 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8794 (10) Smokey: male, Chihuahua-pug mix, 5 yrs.; Petfinder Pet ID: 8765

SECOND CHANCE ANIMAL RESCUE
P.O. Box 10533, White Bear Lake
651.771.5662; secondchancerescue.org

ADOPTION EVENTS

11–2 p.m. at Petco in Roseville
May 18, June 15, July 13, August 10,
September 14, October 12,
November 16, December 14



Darby
1



Marty
2



Saffron
3



Pearl
4



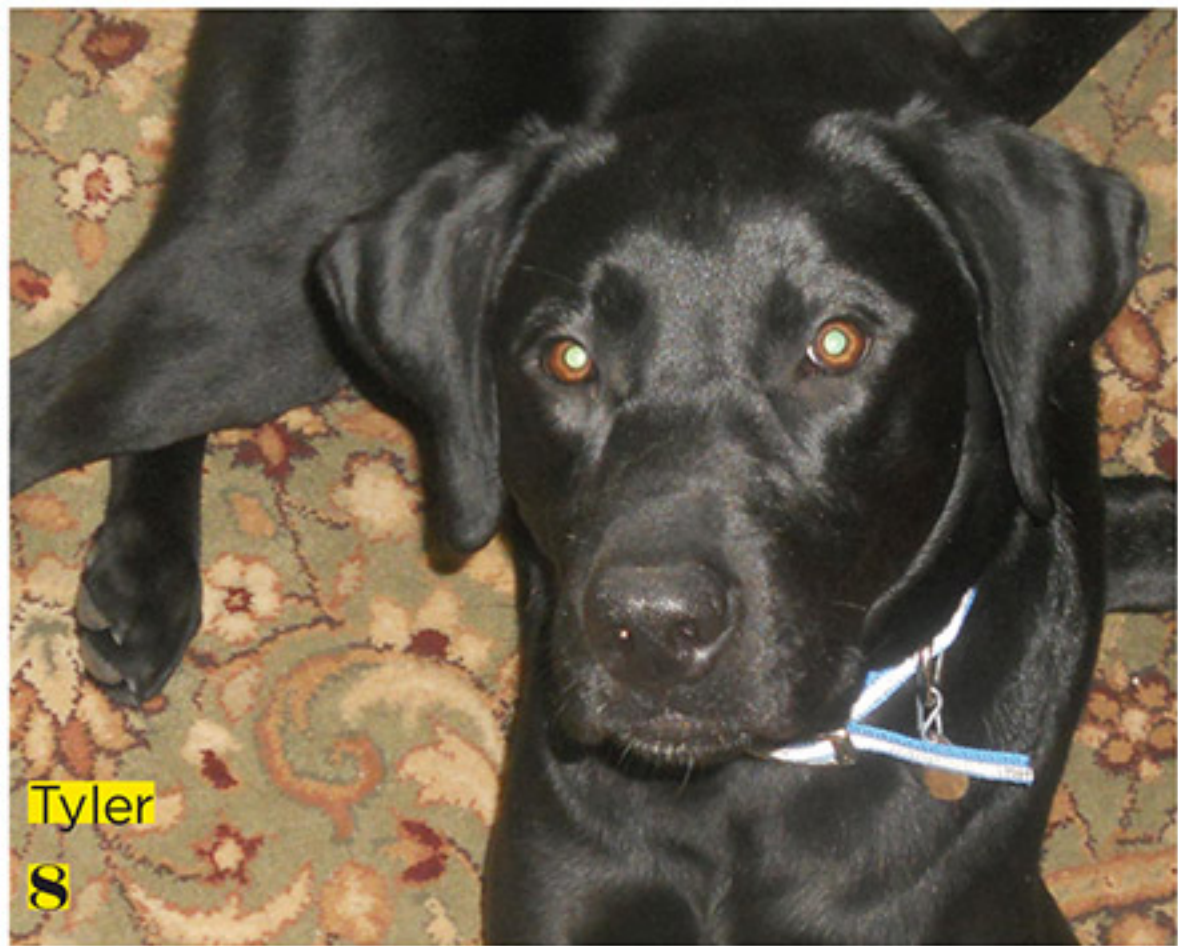
Logan
5



Oscar
6



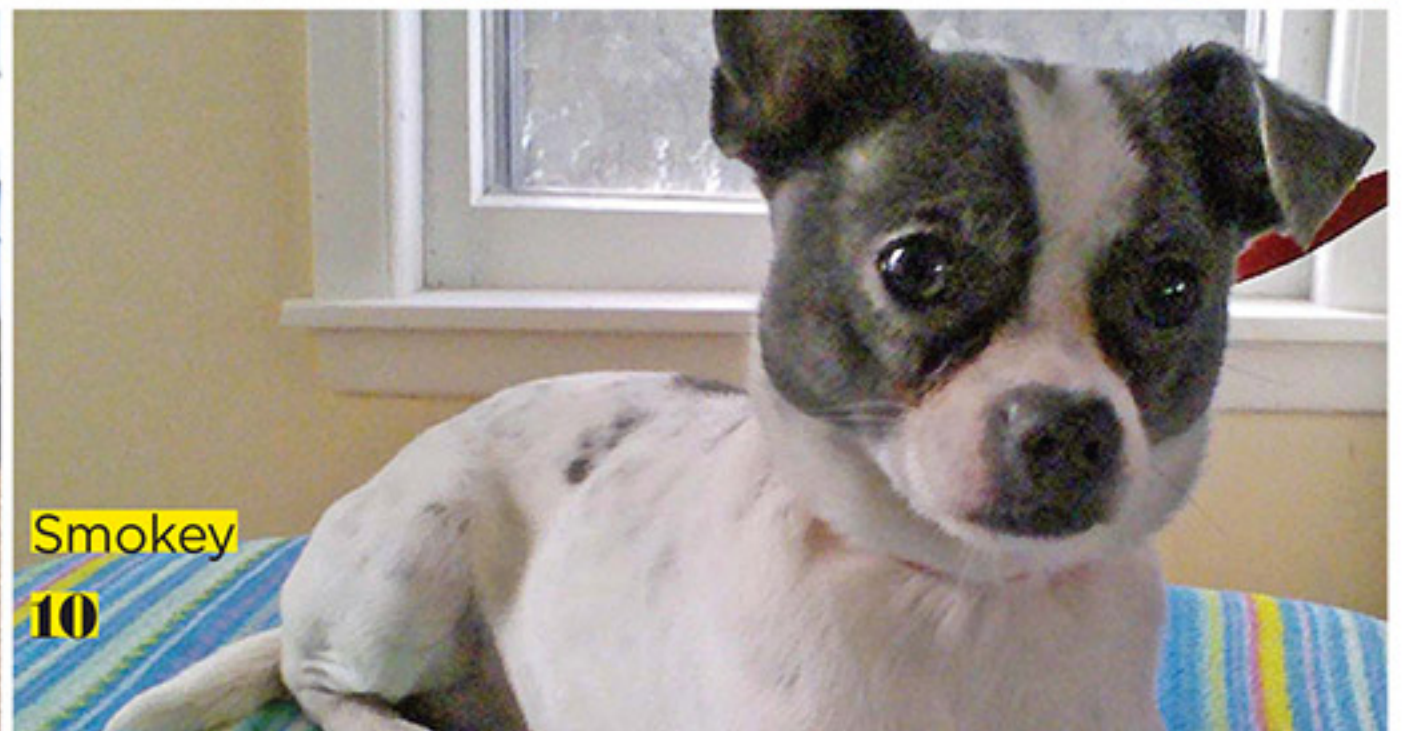
Duke
7



Tyler
8



Clover
9



Smokey
10