



DRU News

Adopt a Senior Pet Month...



REX (10 yrs old; In shelter 2 years) ... Rex turned 10 years old in September 2019, making him the oldest senior at the shelter. He has been in shelter two years as of this September. Rex loves playing the clicker touch game with his wellbeing person and going for short walks. You can often find Rex chilling out on his bed while his minions bring him toys. Unfortunately, Rex has recently been diagnosed with early stage DCM and a mass on his lung and masses in his abdomen. The whole staff love and enjoy this older gentleman and are thrilled to know that he has finally found his forever home in which to relax and spend the rest of his life. One of our previous adopters recently lost her dog and she wanted to give an older dog in need a loving place to call home. We couldn't have asked for a better home. She has gone above and beyond to make all the necessary accommodations to bring Rex home. All dogs, especially seniors, who have come into our care through no fault of their own, deserve a place to rest their head for the holidays.



Hugger

HUGGER (7 yrs old; In shelter 3 months) ... This sweet senior gent wants nothing more than to spend all his time with his person, playing with his toys or coaxing his person to give him a pat on the head or engage in playtime. He almost purrs with joy. Hugger is definitely not a fan of being in the yard alone and will let you and everyone within earshot know that humans and dogs were meant to be together even at potty break. Hugger is not shy about vocalizing and loves to serenade you with his howling ritual. Diagnosed with a heart condition, Hugger has been responding well to his medications. Like most animals, Hugger lives life to the fullest and doesn't let physical limitations get in his way. He might be a big red senior boy but he is confident enough to occasionally sport a pink dress, fondly called the Huggerella dress. Just goes to show, even seniors know how to have a good time.



Twizz

TWIZZLER (7 yrs old; In shelter over 3 years) ... At 7 years old, Twizz has been at DRU for nearly half of his life and could really use a home of his own in a quiet household with one or two people to be the fair and confident leaders he deserves. When showing Twizzler the leash he knows it's training time. Working his mind daily is great for him! One of his favorite things is being in the pool on a hot day. He's super happy, on the go, and knows exactly what he wants. Twizz may be in his senior years, but he hasn't quite realized it yet.

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Adopt a Senior Pet Month..... continued from page one



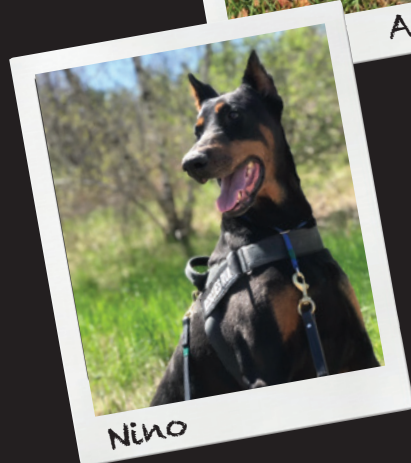
DOZER (7 yrs old; In shelter 5 years) ... All dogs are special. But there's a special kind of special when you adopt a Senior dog. This is the case with 7 year old Dozer, whom my husband and I recently adopted from DRU. He may not be as physically robust as he was when he was in his younger years, and he may be graying in his muzzle and slowing down, but the acceptance and appreciation of the simplest things in life abound in him. I've adopted many seniors over the years and have found this to be a constant in every one of them. While their senior years may present health challenges, big or small, for us, knowing Dozer has a comfortable, loving home in which to spend the rest of his senior years and declining health brings an overwhelming sense of gratitude in our hearts. We are grateful for the fortitude to take on the challenges of a senior dog, with or without declining health (Dozer was recently diagnosed with DCM; this is in addition to a few other existing physical ailments). Choosing to live in the moment as our animal companions teach us, we are enjoying watching Dozer blossom in his new home with his new DRU Sister, 10 year old Skye.



STEEL (8 yrs old; In shelter over two years) ... Steel is a handsome 8 year old blue Doberman. Although he is older, he certainly doesn't act like a senior. Steel has boundless energy and loves to play fetch in the yard. He also enjoys training and going for his walks. While he is not a fan of other dogs, he loves his people. Typical of a blue Doberman, he has a very sparse coat and some skin issues. He loves his baths, and is good when he needs his nails trimmed. His favorite toy is a squeaky gorilla.



ASHLEY (7 yrs old; In shelter for almost 2 months) ... Ashley is a sweet 7 year old girl. She is very friendly with people who are introduced to her properly and loves attention. She may be older but she LOVES play time and is very motivated by a ball and anything that squeaks. She's fairly new to us so we don't know much about her and other pets, but she has lived with another dog in her previous home. This senior girl does display a high prey drive and like many Dobes, loves the thrill of chasing the woodland animals. Her incontinence issues are improving with her new medication and consistent potty breaks. She knows a couple basic commands and is currently enrolled in our in-house obedience class to work on her skills! She has a ton of personality and anyone that meets this spunky senior girl will immediately fall in love.



NINO (8+ yrs old; In shelter over 2 years) ... This sweet senior boy isn't so steady on his feet anymore, but his mind remains sharp as ever. Nino is 8+ years old but is still a happy, active boy. He displays symptoms of Wobblers and some days are better than others. Nino would love to have a special home that can accommodate his medical needs. Like many Dobes, he is on thyroid meds and responding well to liver meds, in addition to pain meds. Nino knows exactly how to get what he wants and will take advantage of you if you let him. This senior is a fun dog to work with. He is extremely food motivated and loves to train. His all-time favorite toy is his Benebone wishbone, and we have to keep a private stash on hand just for him. Not overly fond of touch, he does enjoy sitting quietly with his person taking in the world around him ... a very nice companion.



THE OTHER BRIDGE

Julia V. McDonough

Those of us who love our pets are all too familiar with the expression “crossed The Rainbow Bridge”. It is a beautiful but ultimately heartbreaking euphemism for when one of our companions passes over. But there is another bridge that we don't hear enough about.

This bridge is not made of rainbows. This one might be short or long and sometimes it may even connect to that other one. But it is very much made of this world, and it is built by humans, not angels...or maybe they are angels! This bridge is a foster home.

A foster home is a safe place for a dog from our shelter to remember what it's like to live in a regular house, not a kennel run. It's where a stray from the street can let us know if he is familiar with stairs and televisions and linoleum floors or if these things are as alien to him as the contents of a spaceship. It's where a young dog can have a safe yard of his own to stretch his legs as he learns his limits with a consistent handler or two. And it's where an old dog who's lost his owners can find a soft and quiet place to land that might be a new location but provides a much-missed sense of peace and belonging.

There is no doubt that DRU provides top-notch, individualized care for the Dobermans who live with us at our shelter. Our collective experience with the breed means that we are able to meet the unique veterinary and behavioral needs of our residents. Our Well-Being program ensures that each dog has a small team of kennel techs specifically devoted to his daily care, and our DRU University training program gives the enrolled dogs the skills and manners to make them more adoptable and the mental activity their brilliant minds require. But the one thing we can't provide is a true home. While some of our dogs seem to thrive in the very predictable environment that shelter life affords, others would do much better in a setting where they are one of two or three dogs rather than thirty, and where life might be just a tad more spontaneous while still secure. This is especially true of older dogs or those who might be having a hard time with kennel stress. And it definitely applies to some of the wild young Dober-boys who can turn an entire wing of the building into Juvie Hall.

So how can you help? You can apply to be a DRU Foster Home.

**Would you like to be a foster home for one of our
Dobermans?**



**Contact us at
adoptioncoordinator@dru.org**

The dogs of DRU thank you!

Foster caregivers are subject to all of the screening a permanent adopter undergoes: vet references, a home visit, and an interview with our Adoption Counselor are all part of the process. Unless there is a specific contradiction to it, you must be willing to use a crate and to follow our directives about off-leash activity and interactions with new people and dogs. Even though he is just a short-term guest, we want to provide continuity for your DRU foster, making his transition to a permanent home much smoother. Once you're approved, we will help place a dog with you who would benefit from your particular experience. DRU will cover the costs of any veterinary needs as well as medications and/or prescription foods. We often have loaner crates that we can make available. While we look for an appropriate permanent home for your foster Dobe, we will keep in contact with you to see how he is doing in his new situation. How is his appetite? How does he ride in the car? Is he quiet overnight? Does he chew his bedding now that he's out of the kennel or has he calmed down? If you take on one of our behavioral fosters, we will ask that you be willing to travel to the shelter occasionally so that you can continue his training with our DRU U team. The DRU U trainers will be available for online coaching whenever you need it, too.

And when we find that permanent home? Well, you'll probably be a little sad. After all, your foster dog has spent weeks or months with you. You may have been the first person to show him a warm woodstove, or a beach, or a doggie ice cream. You helped him get over his fear of the vacuum or maybe you introduced him to a horse. Maybe you discovered that he likes spinach or that he howls at fire engines. You and your foster Dobe are now good friends. And it will hurt to see him leave. But when you see the joy on the faces of his forever family when they meet him, when they hang on your words about his nicknames and his opinions about squirrels and his favorite treats, when he looks up at you and asks you without words “Can I go to them?” you will say yes. You built a bridge, not of rainbows, but of patience and commitment and the kind of love that is strong enough to let go. It's such a sturdy bridge that now others can follow where that first one walked with you, into forever homes of their own.

THE CODY CHRONICLE:

The power of love, determination, and second chances

By Leslie Bird Nuccio
November 1, 2019

Fostering an animal is one of the most rewarding gifts you can give the world. That's a strong statement, but one I feel comfortable making after being a part of Doberman rescue for 14 years. We've had dozens of dogs come through our home: adults, puppies, seniors, special needs and hospice cases, each giving me so much more than I ever gave them.

So when Cathy from Doberman Rescue Unlimited called me and asked if I would consider fostering a senior, mostly blind, emaciated, diabetic male named Cody who might not survive his condition, I immediately said yes. Well, after I conferred with my husband, I said yes. Little did I know just how sick Cody was, until I met him. Before I go on, let me back up and explain the miracle afforded Cody that landed him in Doberman Rescue Unlimited and on my front door.



Cody had been taken to his veterinarian to be euthanized. He was at least 30 pounds underweight, his blood sugar was crazy high, he was Lyme positive, and he'd been without insulin for so long his body was showing signs of shutting down. He was a very sick boy and the odds of him surviving were slim. But Cody had his first miracle that day, because the vet and the technicians fell in love with his sweet personality. They couldn't find it in their hearts to end his life without trying to find him a second chance.

So they called rescues, desperate to find Cody a place to go, until they spoke with Doberman Rescue Unlimited. After describing the situation, and with some quick calls by Debbie and Cathy, the decision was made to make Cody a part of the Doberman Rescue Unlimited family, to try and save his life, if it was even possible.

So that brings you back to my front door. The day Cody was picked up at the vet office, he was brought straight to my house. With his dire health issues, and weakness due to weight loss and lack of muscle, he was barely able to walk inside. His daily routine was exact: insulin shots twice a day, potty time every four hours, but it had to be on leash and only for as long as it took Cody to do his business. Then back to his exercise pen to rest.

For the first several weeks, that was all we could do with him. Eat, sleep, potty and repeat. He was too weak to do more, and we couldn't afford to have him burn any extra calories, not that Cody wanted to do more than our routine. As the days went by, we

began to see flashes of his personality, those moments of silliness that you live for when you foster a new dog.

The first time their eyes sparkle with joy, the first play bows, the first time they lean on you and you know they're finally comfortable where they are. Those precious moments happen fast with a foster dog who comes into your home healthy; usually it takes 2 days for a dog to start bonding (sorry to burst your bubble but you are feeding them and they are pragmatists), and it takes 2-3 weeks for you to see their personality more fully. With the sick dogs, it can take a lot longer to see those signs through the pain, or sickness, or fatigue associated with a special needs case.

One thing we knew right away though—Cody was Mr. Personality—even at the beginning when he was weakest, sickest. Our vet visits just confirmed what we saw at home. Cody was and is loved by everyone he meets. Nothing seems to faze him and he's always gentle with those handling him. And his kisses...oh, boy, does this boy love to give kisses!

Day by day, we waited and watched for signs that he was gaining weight. I've learned over the years that emaciated dogs are tricky and take a long time to make that turn toward health. You can't just pour the food to them without potentially deadly consequences. You have to go slow and steady (and hope your neighbors don't call Animal Control on you for abuse) while the dog's internal organs right themselves. Only then will you begin to see weight gain on the outside.

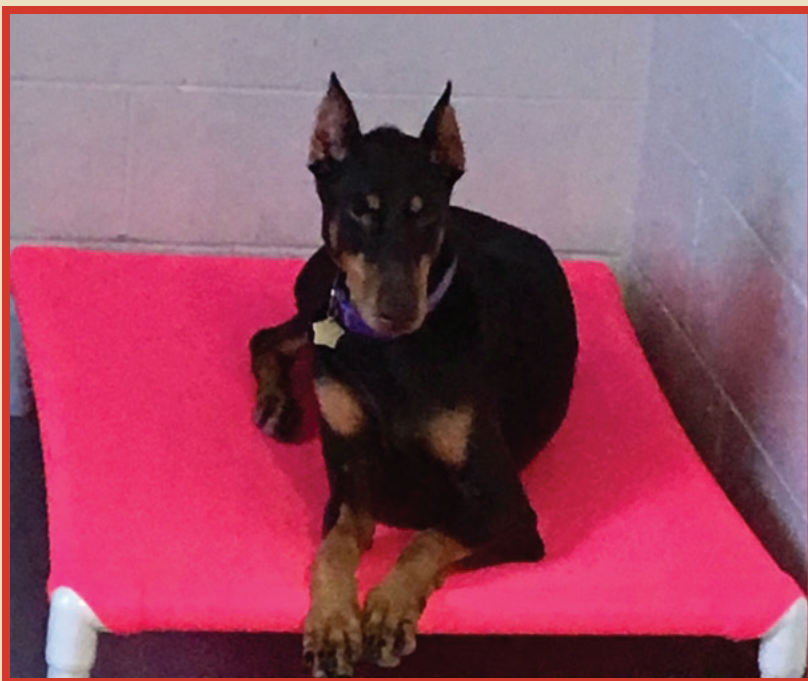
Though the waiting was tough, we finally began to see little signs that he was turning the corner. He was gaining weight, his blood sugar—though still not in the normal range—was not so dangerously high, and his zest for life burst forth like flower buds in spring. Cody had found his new beginning and his silly ways surprised us daily.

The best part has been his love for our pack. We've had plenty of dogs that were too reactive to be loose with another dog; it's just a life management issue that you learn to deal with. But Cody fit in the moment he was allowed to be loose in the house. Affectionate, playful, sassy, he blended in as if he'd always been here. That is just one more thing in a long list of Cody delights. We discovered he purrs when he's most content. He has the house and yard memorized, including the ramp we have for the back stairs leading to the patio. He trots and canters around the yard, sniffing for squirrels and even running the fence and barking at the turkeys on the other side.

Today, Cody has gained back 30 pounds, his blood glucose is close to being regulated, and he is free to run and play to his heart's content. He loves to play with the other two boys, loves to snuggle with us, and has proven to be a very smart boy. Cody's zest for life is boundless, and his capacity for giving love is unrivaled. He never stopped trying, he never lost faith in the humans around him, he was determined to live, and, now, with the right diet and medicine, we hope he has years of life ahead of him. This is the beauty of fostering; this is the power of second chances.

We are so enriched to have dogs like Cody in our lives. Their capacity for forgiveness, their ability to live life in the moment without the ego that hampers us, the love they give so unreservedly; these are lessons we should all remember.

Cody's glorious life hinged on the kindness of many people; had they not worked together, this amazing creature would not be alive. The vet office who couldn't bring themselves to euthanize him, his current vet office who worked hard to turn Cody's health around, and last, but most importantly, Doberman Rescue Unlimited stepping up to give him a second chance. Without each of these links, without all of these hearts working in concert, Cody would not be here and we all would have been worse for not having known him.



Eagle Scout Project



The Shelter dogs had much to celebrate on Sunday, October 13, when Eagle Scout Dale Lavoie pulled up to the Shelter with his family to deliver 21 raised beds for our dogs. Dale is a member of a local Boy Scout Troop in Sandown, NH who had reached out to DRU in late March 2019 hoping to have the opportunity to do his Eagle Scout project for the rescue. Dale had noticed that we had listed a need for kuranda beds on our website and submitted a proposal to make a similar style bed for the dogs. We were happy to accept his generous offer. The Eagle Scout Project gives Scouts the opportunity to learn valuable skills as planning and development and showing leadership while helping the community. In addition, the Scouts learn how to raise money to support their projects through fundraising efforts. There was a lot of work that went into Dale's project. When early prototypes didn't withstand the rigors of our dogs, Dale set about the task of finding a suitable material that would be sturdy enough and located a company to supply the commercial grade material needed. We are grateful for Dale's passion for animals and his desire to help our shelter dogs.

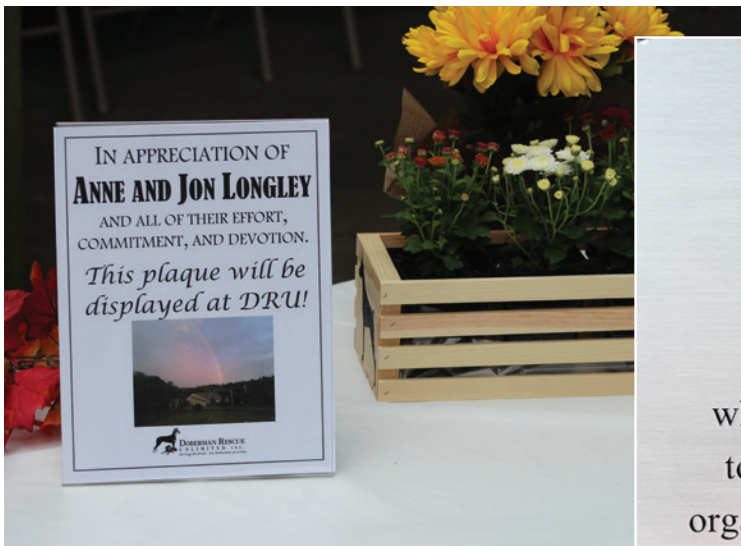
Cathy Sanchez
Kennel Operations



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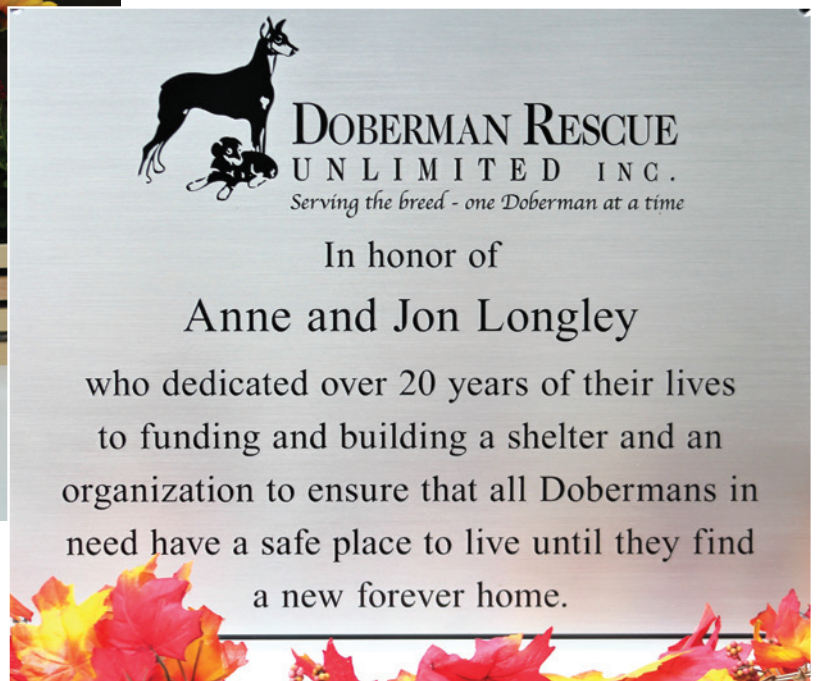
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Honoring Anne and Jon Longley



(above)

At the annual DRU Picnic in September, a plaque honoring Anne and Jon was presented. The plaque was created in recognition and appreciation of the Longley's efforts, commitment, and devotion to DRU and the Doberman breed.



(above)

The plaque now hangs outside the front entrance of the shelter to remind us each time we enter the building that DRU would not be possible without Anne and Jon.