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PET GUIDE

SPRING/SUMMER 2017

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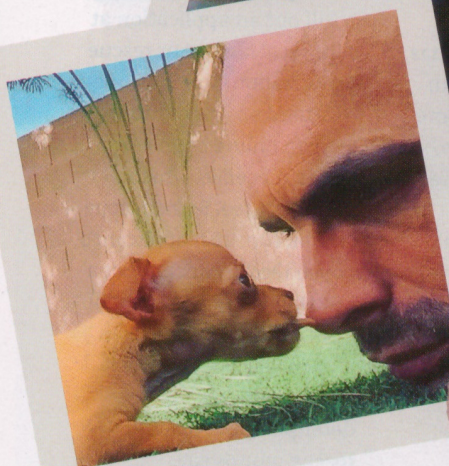
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Foster pet parents like Stevens work with rescue groups or shelters to provide temporary homes for dogs until they're ready for adoption. Some homeless animals are placed in foster care because a shelter is too crowded, or because they're too young, or they need medical attention, socialization or basic behavioral training. Some animals need temporary placement because of a family emergency or military deployment.

Many of them have one thing in common, Stevens says.

"These animals will love you unconditionally," she says. "They've been abused, they've been in the most horrific situations, and if you

give them just a cup of kindness, you have a friend for life."

About 3.3 million dogs end up in U.S. shelters each year and 670,000 of them will be euthanized, according to Alyssa Fleck, spokeswoman for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Put simply, foster parents help shelters save more dogs.

"Fostering a dog frees up critical space and resources to help other animals who may need them more," says Joey Teixeira, senior manager of customer relations and communications at the ASPCA Adoption Center in New York City. "The shelter also gets vital information about >

SEASONED SENIORS

Older dogs still have a lot of life, love to give

BY LISA A. BEACH

With an irresistible "cuteness factor," puppies easily draw in adoptive families. But what about a dog in his golden years? Elizabeth Berliner, director of shelter medicine at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine, highlights some benefits of adopting older dogs:

♥ Older dogs often come with training and socialization. They've acquired manners and a routine, so you're starting with a solid behavioral foundation.

♥ Generally, they tend to be less active, which might be a good option for pet owners with limited mobility.

♥ You've got a better sense of what you're getting in terms of behavior and personality. It takes the guesswork out of predicting what the dogs might be like "when they grow up."

♥ You often get some medical and behavioral history, which helps pets adjust to a new home.

Kimberly May, a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, knows firsthand about the joys of adopting older pets, having taken in several senior dogs over the years. Her advice? Don't focus on the quantity of time, focus on the quality.

As for the transition? "Seniors are plug and play. They adapt very well to a new home, and this speaks to their level of gratitude," she notes. "They seem more appreciative and are just so happy to be with you."



Want to learn more about adopting older pets? Check with your local shelter as well as these resources:

OLD FRIENDS SENIOR DOG SANCTUARY
Mount Juliet, Tenn.
ofsds.org

MUTTVILLE SENIOR DOG RESCUE
San Francisco
muttville.org

BONAPARTE'S RETREAT
Nashville
bonapartesretreat.org

OLD DOG HAVEN
Lake Stevens, Wash.
olddoghaven.org

THE GREY MUZZLE ORGANIZATION
Raleigh, N.C.
greymuzzle.org

THE SENIOR DOG PROJECT
operates in the U.S. and Canada
srdogs.com