

1. What is your name?

Kristin Lumsden

2. From which agency do you foster dogs?

Happy Paws Haven Company

3. Do you have any experience fostering older dogs?

Not a lot but since my schedule is so busy, I usually have to foster puppies because I know they will most likely be adopted but I prefer to foster older dogs because they're easier to care for and live with in general than younger puppies.

4. If so, what challenges, or benefits did you experience?

Some benefits are they have less energy and just want to relax with you, they are potty trained, they have known personalities, and they're easier to care for because as an older dog, their personalities are fully developed and are typically calmer unlike puppies. The shelter environment is so uncomfortable for dogs, so a lot of the time their personalities and demeanor beforehand will be relaxed and calmer. With adopting younger puppies, it's a lot more stressful when it comes to training whereas older dogs already have these skills and don't need to be trained as much.

Some challenges are vet bills, getting medicine and figuring out what's wrong if something goes wrong and a lot of dogs get cancer. I think the best dogs to adopt aren't super elderly but around 5 years old so you have a lot more time with them and you don't have to put a lot of energy into training.

5. Does your foster agency have trouble placing older dogs in forever homes?

It's not hard getting them fostered because they're actually the easier Fosters but getting them adopted, yes because a lot of people want a puppy that they're then going to raise as part of their family so you have to find just the right person that wants a chill older dog.

6. Why do you foster older dogs?

They're easier and they're more relaxed. As a foster, I don't have to worry about what an adopter would worry about which is medical bills so I just provide a temporary home and love until I find them a forever home.. Foster homes are just like a real home, so we teach them how to live in a real home and prepare them for it. In a shelter because of the many other dogs there and their likelihood of being adopted, their lives could be cut short. There has to be more willing people to offer to foster dogs so they don't have to face this issue.

How did you get started fostering older dogs?

I'll be honest, I usually take puppies. I don't want to, but I have a limited amount of time and exactly like you're saying they get adopted faster so when I retire, I for sure will take older dogs because it's easier but the reason I got started fostering dogs is because we have another neighbor who is heavily involved with this rescue she was there when they started and so I saw her post for about a year two year and a half and then as my own children we're getting older and I have more time I just knew I wanted to help I knew we had the home for it we had a friendly dog we all love dogs and I thought how can we not be helping this situation so I started summer of 2021.

7. What is it like to foster dogs of all ages, especially older dogs?

It's busy because you need to take some time to figure out how each one is different but it's very rewarding because you're helping them

learn how to have the behavior that families want so that they'll get adopted. In the shelter, they're too stressed out so they might bark a lot or be really scared and they might look aggressive when really they're just uncomfortable and they just want to relax so once they're in a home they have a chance to decompress, get used to people, and learn how to play well with other dogs, they will calm down. You can help them learn as a foster how to stay off countertops and to stop taking food and you teach them the things that help them get adopted in general. I have usually only had my fosters a month or less and I'm sure they need to adjust, but we need to ask for veterinary references, ask about their home life, why they want a dog, why they chose this kind of dog and try to match them up with a dog to make sure it's a good fit for both them and the dog so that they don't end up abandoned or back in a shelter. So therefore, yes they will adjust but usually it's just a few weeks.

8. What are some challenges you have to face when fostering older dogs compared to younger ones?

You're probably going to be fostering longer because they're less likely to get adopted so you have to have the kind of schedule that you're going to be available until they get adopted you don't want to keep knocking on more like knocking them around I don't really want to say the health issue things because believe it or not it could be a three or four year old dog and that's considered an older dog so the health issues aren't usually till like 9 10 11 you know what I mean so it's more about knowing that you're in it for the long haul until they get adopted that's really the only one everything else about an older dog is actually easier so even the health like well that's it depends how old

but I'm I'm telling you older as far as dogs can be 4 years old oh for like older older dogs and the medicine it's like having to deal with like putting the medicine in their food and actually like getting them together primarily expense that's really it primarily expense.

9. Why is it important to adopt dogs of all ages, but especially older dogs?

see I mean I feel like that one's kind of obvious to everybody but you may not be prepared for a puppy and therefore you should really do your research about what they've learned about the dog the age of the dog the type of the dog the size of the dog the shedding of the dog there's so much more that goes into fitting your family that people read need to look more at what's going to fit in with their lifestyle and less about if it's a cute little puppy which is a lot of work.

10. Why would older dogs need to be adopted?

11. Why do older dogs end up in shelters or foster homes? Reasons?

Often times either somebody die or somebody went into a home and their family wasn't able to take them in if you're talking the older older dogs that's usually why either someone became too too elderly to take care of their dog themselves or they moved or they went into a home or they died

12. What other dog foster/ shelter agencies are there other than big places like Michigan Humane?

Of them are foster-based most of them don't have a shelter so aside from the Humane Society I think every Community has like like Oakland County animal shelter Detroit something like I don't know it's really the capabilities and the Manpower and whatever that if people end up

having a building or people end up doing like Happy Paws where they have to get Fosters like they can't take in a dog unless a Foster's already committed cuz they've nowhere to put them so I I feel like every municipality or or like county has one but I don't know I am not because my son is a senior and we have a very busy spring of baseball and golf season coming up I tend to do it in the summer since I still teach I just have more time and they really need you there to teach them the ropes and comfort them so and you've mostly had puppies for your phone mostly puppies just because of the fact that I have little Snippets of time I have like spring break or I have summer or I have you know the holidays where I'm only home for a short period of time so it's usually when I know we'll get adopted quickly but when my kids move away my youngest is now a senior so when my kids are both in college and especially when I retire I will do it more often and I will almost never take puppies but I just have to be available to know that they might not get adopted for like 3 months and do you think that like when you like end up fostering the older dogs you'll end up keeping some of them probably not I have fostered I think I've fostered about 13 now and I only kept two because if I don't keep them I have space to Foster more and not everybody can do that not everybody has the time or the want or whatever so if I keep adopting I won't have room or money she keep fostering

Fostering procedure:

3 weeks to Decompress that's where like they're not they're not as stress they're not as high strong they kind of you know can relax like okay I'm going to be here a while so 3 weeks to decompress 3 months

to learn all your routines and 3 years it could even be 3 years before they completely feel that that's their family. After getting passed decompression, they really get comfortable and get used to sights and smells.

Not usually a dog person but got used to loving them because of fostering older dogs.