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News

Shelter loses special friend

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By Carrie Chaffee, Journal Register News Service

The Oakland County Pet Adoption Center and its staff have suffered a great loss.

Roxie, their 9-year-old mascot, passed away.

Roxie was not the average dog that comes through the doors of Oakland Pet Adoption Center, the staff said.

The boxer was first brought to the center in Auburn Hills in February 2007. Her owners were moving and unable to take her with them, so instead of abandoning her, they brought her to the center. She was seven years old.

Roxie was examined and found to have a heart murmur.

Normally, when there is a health problem found and the dog is older, the center finds the best option is to end its suffering and put the dog to sleep. But something about that wasn't right for Roxie. She still had some life to live. The center gave her a home in their offices.

It started with letting Roxie out during the day, letting her wander the offices. She was everyone's pet and became the center's mascot. She would stay at the center at night in a cage but soon her separation anxiety became too much. One of the staff members started to take her home. Roxie rarely spent the night at the center after that. She bounced from one staff member's house to the next, becoming a member of their family and making the staff into a community that cared for her.

If you have been in the center in the last two years, you have probably seen Roxie.

She was the dog wandering around in back by the staff and the front by the customers. She probably nudged you to give her some loving or looked at you with her big eyes, drawing you in for a sympathy scratch. Either way, Roxie was an ever-present personality not just for the staff, but for the new pet owners, the volunteers and anyone who entered the doors at 1700 Brown Road, Auburn Hills.

Roxie loved to eat McDonald's. She would sometimes grunt loudly or stare at you for a long time. She was nosey, demanding and sometimes pushy. Her personality had a chance to blossom and bloom at the Oakland Pet Adoption Center and the staff was witness to it.

Administrative Supervisor Joanie Toole said, "There was just something special about her, you just looked in her big eyes and saw it."

Roxie never turned down affection, she always wanted to be around people and she was spoiled rotten by everyone that worked at the center.

On June 22, after a visit to the local animal hospital, they found out that she was suffering. They brought Roxie home and all of the staff had a chance to say good-bye to her. With tears in their eyes, the staff gathered together to wish her well as her suffering stopped.

Roxie's legacy will live on in the hearts of many volunteers, all the staff and those who were lucky enough to be a part of her life.

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