

Permanent Residents

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The "No-Kill" Aspect of Free To Live

Since Free To Live is a No-Kill animal sanctuary, there are dogs and cats who, due to some specific individual trait such as looks, personality, age, or health problem, become permanent residents at the sanctuary. Over time these animals age and their chances of being adopted into a family's home continue to diminish.

Free To Live is in its 19th year and as many as 100 dogs and cats have made our sanctuary their home for life. Technically speaking, all these animals in Free To Live's care are available for adoption, but from a practical view they are not adoptable unless they are matched with some very special person looking to reach out to an animal with special life-long needs. Some of these animals' needs are costly health related problems, some are difficult social factors, some just aren't "cute." There are a few extreme exceptions (dogs with a history of biting that might be considered dangerous) that we absolutely would never adopt. Regardless, their individual needs are all attended to at Free To Live.

Featured here are just a handful of those "permanent residents" currently at the sanctuary. All of these special-needs animals are part of our family at the sanctuary. Before we would adopt one of these special animals we would screen the potential adopter to make sure the dog or cat will receive the care and love they need to live comfortably.

Our doors are open to the public six days a week. We encourage any interested person to come out and just visit us and meet our animals and see how we care for our entire cat and dog family.

In Memory of Z.Z.

Z.Z. came to us when he was about 6 years old and lived the rest of his life at Free To Live. If we had a class clown, it would have been Z.Z. He had 7 wonderful years at Free To Live and provided us with many laughs and wonderful memories.

Here is one of the many funny stories that made this wonderful dog so dear to our heart.

ZZ And The Treat Box

By Ron Wingle

I named him ZZ after the rock group ZZ Top. He and I are a lot alike – both aging but still brutally handsome and lovable. Well, I’m aging anyway.

ZZ has become my traveling buddy, going almost everywhere with me in the Free To Live van. He "helps" me make vet runs, pick up supplies, and sometimes goes along to take the dogs and cats to PETS&MART for our adoption fairs. He’s always very good, sits on the floor beside me or hops up into the passenger seat. He never tries to get out when the doors are open and every time he hears the van start, he is barking and excited, waiting to go for his ride.

I started carrying a box of treats in the van for ZZ and he was very good not to get into them except when I offered him one – very good for a while at least. I started noticing that when I returned to the van after going into the vet’s office the treat box wasn’t as full as when I left. Well, we had a talk about it, and I was sure he understood that he was to leave the treats alone. On our next time, as I pulled up to the cattery I noticed that the treat box was nearly empty, only 7 or 8 treats way down in the bottom of the box. I said, "Now, ZZ, you stay out of the treat box." He gave me one of his innocent looks and I was sure that the treats were safe and confidently headed into the cattery. ZZ proceeds to stick his head into the box, getting it stuck all the way up to his ears. Now, he hears me coming back and knows he’s in trouble. When I get to the van I see this Alpo treat box looking desperately in every direction trying to figure out where I was and how he was going to get out of this one. Instead of getting in trouble, ZZ got a big hug (as soon as I could stop laughing), and I got him another box of treats – a full one.