

Wilson Hottle, a Very Special Little Fellow with a Remarkable Mom

By Maggi Hall, January 16th 2020

August 2015 Halifax Humane Society called to ask if I'd take a small dog, one of three they had that were in need of homes. I responded that I'd take all three sight unseen. I knew no matter what condition those dogs were in FloridaWild would accept them. They were fortunate enough to be heading to the best veterinary hospital around and because my daughter, Dr. Erin Holder, owned it, I knew her heart and soul.

Halifax was lowering its kill rate and rescue groups helped thank goodness. First two little ones were brought to my car, put in the back and placed in safety harnesses. Then the third marched out, attached to a leash though he was leading the way with determined pride. He pranced awkwardly across the gravel parking lot straight for my car. When he got to me he looked up as if to say, "So, what are you waiting for?" I picked him up, securing him in the front seat as he probably thought, "What took you so long?" The other little ones were playful and happy, safe in the back and ready for their adventure. The dirty stinky matted white one in the front stoically glared out the window.

As I drove back to DeLand all sat in silence while I pondered: "Did they know they were saved?" Do rescues and rejects have a special sense that tells them when they're in danger or that they're now protected? I think they do; I've seen too many instances of dramatic behavior change.

When we arrived at FloridaWild I took in the small ones, one under each arm, announcing "Incoming Rescues." Staff immediately went to work. Then back I went for the unnamed white one. I picked him up and carried him in. What a little darling and what a mess he was. His ear was huge, swollen, seeping poison, his little legs carried him so far but he was slow and had adapted to a new way of walking when tired, dragging his back legs and rear, similar to a seal. We called it the "seal walk." It was odd he didn't drag himself along when he came out of the shelter though. He marched boldly defiant and that was the way he lived from that moment on – bossy and in charge. Yes, he was a "hot mess" from top to bottom, inside and out – but he was NOT a candidate for euthanasia! Somewhere out there the perfect home would appear.

Over the next few weeks he received multiple treatments including acupuncture, laser, packing in his ear, several baths, and nutritious food. After a few weeks of treatment he was adopted by a loving family with three children. The kids adored him but Wilson, the name they gave him, nipped at one of the children so back he came. He didn't need to be with smaller kids. Another family was interested so I took Wilson to meet them, was not impressed with their situation, and decided he'll come live with me and my five rescues.

Wilson was an opinionated little creature who stayed to himself, expected to be spoiled, and enjoyed the pampering. I put him back on the website and September 29, 2015, the most perfect mom in the world came to call. Wilson was in the sunroom gnawing on a rawhide. Jan calmly approached him, put her purse on the sofa, then got down on the floor level with him – eye to eye. He kept gnawing - but didn't take his eyes off of her.

Jan then moved her fingers ever so slowly toward his bone. He growled but kept gnawing. She then touched his bone and he looked her straight in the eyes and growled again. Jan said, "That's good..." She got up, we talked for a few minutes, and I knew Wilson had found his forever home. References checked out and off Wilson went to paradise – literally.

Jan knew what she was getting into with him – vet bills, treatments of all kinds, water treadmill, chiropractic care, acupuncture, special foods – she didn't care. She was in love – told me that was the first pet she'd ever had on her own and chuckled when she warned her daughter, "Don't know if there'll be money left for you when I die because Wils comes first." And he did right up until January 16th 2020 when he just couldn't go on. He let Jan know it was time. With a heart full of love these two dear special ones said their last good-byes.

Wilson Hottle lived the richest, most spoiled fun-filled life thanks to his mom and FloridaWild's veterinarians. The photos prove it. From a little guy who was tossed out on an isolated road to find such love, peace, contentment and the best health possible Jan proved that infinite can transform another. Wils was spoiled rotten, demanded his mom's full attention and got it. In return he was completely devoted to her, trusted and adored her. Wils and Jan are my heroes. Every time I saw them at FloridaWild for yet another treatment he was stoic and proud and contented. Jan proved that proper care and devotion can truly transform an abandoned pet. She gave him four years of devotion. He finally got what he so deserved – a perfect life.

I told Jan I had an appointment to talk with a pet psychic next week and that I'd ask about Wils. She responded thus: *"Tell Wilson to think of me often and that I tried, not always patient saint, but that I loved him beyond belief...he was the reason I kept on after my husband's death....he rescued me too!...pray for the both of us and tell My Little Willy How Much I will always love him!! AND THAT I WILL SEE HIM, GENE, RAGE & BABE IN HEAVEN!"*

