

# FOSTER MOM ENJOYS REWARDS OF FOSTERING

BY JOSEPHINE MCMULLEN

WHEN I TOLD JERRY THAT I WANTED TO FOSTER A STAFFIE, HIS FACE FILLED WITH WORRY. WE HAD NEVER FOSTERED A DOG BEFORE, AND THE PROSPECT OF DOING SO SEEMED FRAUGHT WITH DISASTER. BUT WE ALSO HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN A DOG'S LIFE, WHICH IS WHY WE FINALLY DECIDED TO BRING ATTICUS INTO OUR HOME.

THESE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN EASY. BUT THEY HAVE BEEN SOME OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE AND REWARDING IN MY LIFE.

BEFORE HE CAME TO US, ATTICUS HAD SPENT THE FIRST YEAR OF HIS LIFE CRATED ALMOST 24 HOURS A DAY. HE WAS UNDERWEIGHT. HE WASN'T HOUSE TRAINED. HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO WALK UP STAIRS. AND HE WAS STARVED FOR AFFECTION.

OUR CHALLENGE WAS TO GET HIM READY FOR ADOPTION. OUR TEMPORARY TENANT NEEDED A LOT OF TRAINING BEFORE HE WOULD BE READY TO GO TO HIS FOREVER HOME. THE FIRST TWO WEEKS WERE THE HARDEST. IN MANY WAYS, TAKING CARE OF ATTICUS WAS LIKE HAVING A YOUNG PUPPY. HE HAD NO EXPERIENCE LIVING AMONG HUMANS AND NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE OF HIS DOG CRATE.

FORTUNATELY FOR US, ATTICUS WAS VERY INTELLIGENT AND A VORACIOUS LEARNER. WE HAD HIM HOUSETRAINED IN TWO WEEKS. HE LEARNED TO SIT IN ONLY 30 MINUTES. AND, HE GREW CALMER AND MORE SECURE WITH HIMSELF WITH EACH PASSING DAY.

OUR INITIAL CONCERNS ABOUT FOSTERING A DOG QUICKLY DISSIPATED. THEY WERE REPLACED BY OUR JOY AT SEEING THIS ONCE COWERING, TIMID PUPPY TURN INTO A WELL-BEHAVED, SELF-CONFIDENT ADULT DOG. ATTICUS FILLED OUR HOME WITH HIS BOUNDLESS LOVE. HIS EXUBERANT ENERGY PERMEATED EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES. IT DIDN'T TAKE US LONG TO CONCLUDE THAT THE BENEFITS OF FOSTERING HIM FAR OUTWEIGHED THE COSTS.

OUR 32-POUND BUNDLE OF JOY IS NOW READY FOR HIS FOREVER HOME. KNOWING THAT HE WILL SOON LEAVE US FILLS ME WITH BOTH PRIDE AND SADNESS. HE QUICKLY STOLE OUR HEARTS AND EACH TIME I THINK ABOUT HIM LEAVING US, I HAVE TO CHOKE BACK THE TEARS. BUT I ALSO TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN KNOWING WE PLAYED SUCH A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THIS DOG'S LIFE. HE WILL BE LOVED. HE WILL BE CARED FOR. HE HAS A SECOND CHANCE AT A GREAT LIFE. AND HE WILL MAKE SOME FAMILY VERY, VERY HAPPY.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ADOPTING ATTICUS, PLEASE CONTACT JOSEPHINE MCMULLEN AT 864-561-7979 OR [JMCMULLEN@PRATTLEON.COM](mailto:JMCMULLEN@PRATTLEON.COM).



Atticus (now called Spud) shows off his beautiful brown eyes.

**FLASH - Since the writing of this article Atticus has been adopted!**