

Saving Those Most in Need of Love and Companionship

Imagine if you made it your life's mission to go out of your way to find elderly and terminally ill dogs who might otherwise never experience love & companionship. Our newest Game Changer, Karen Cole, is doing just that, and it all started with her rescuing Lizzy from a life on a chain for 13 years.

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

[Download Interview Transcript](#) | [Download my FREE Podcast](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Karen Cole founded Lizzy's Animal Hospice in Texas to provide a home environment to companion animals in need
- Nominated for a Healthy Pets Game Changer Award by Terry S., Lizzy's Hospice saves the most vulnerable animals they can find, including elderly and terminally ill dogs that may otherwise never experience love and companionship
- Lizzy's Animal Hospice is a very small organization by design, as it allows them to give personalized attention to each dog; they depend on volunteers and fosters to keep helping elderly and terminally ill dogs
- You can find out more about Lizzy's Hospice Care at their website, LizzysHospice.com, as well as on social media

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint. It was originally published October 23, 2021.

It takes a special person to save animals in need, but it's an especially unique "breed" when that person tries to save the most vulnerable animals they can find, including elderly and terminally ill dogs that may otherwise never experience love and companionship.

Karen Cole is one of those unique people. Nominated for a Healthy Pets Game Changer Award by Terry S., Karen founded Lizzy's Animal Hospice in Texas to provide a home environment to companion animals in need.

The inspiration for this remarkable organization was Lizzy, a dog who lived on a chain for 13 years, until Karen rescued her and gave her all the healthy food, veterinary care and, perhaps most importantly, love that she could ask for.

Giving 'Unadoptable' Dogs a Chance at Happiness

Since Lizzy, many other dogs have also benefitted from Lizzy's Animal Hospice, which is located in Texas. "I was with a rescue," Karen said, adding:

"... and I noticed that we didn't have any older dogs. And so I said, 'Let's, go the shelter and pull the 10 year old, the 8 year old, the 12 year old.' And they said, 'No, they're not adoptable and they're expensive. Keep walking.'

So I just say, 'OK, I'll do my own thing.' Because those are the only ones. When you walk into shelters, they're the ones that everybody walks by and they're great. They're already trained, they're happy. They have lived a good life and they have a good life to live further."

Lizzy's Animal Hospice depends on volunteers to act as foster homes and has also found a community of older people who don't necessarily want a dog for a decade or more. They're open to the two to five years that some of the dogs in Karen's care have left, and use that time to give the dogs a great life.

"We take dogs typically 10 years and older or younger dogs who are terminally ill or have mobility issues," Karen said. "Our goal is to get them as healthy as possible and find them great homes. And if they can't get healthy, then they stay with us. And we are foster based, so dogs live in a home environment; they're part of a family.

We don't have a shelter environment. We thought it was important for them to be a part of a family, be in a home."

Lizzy's Animal Hospice is a very small organization by design, as it allows them to give personalized attention to each dog. Because of their smaller size, it's difficult for them to get grants that are more easily attained by larger organizations with bigger platforms. In the times they need to raise money, such as a recent need for a \$4,000 surgery, Karen relies on her relationships with people willing to help out to get through.

Remarkable Success Stories

What keeps Karen going are the many cases where underdogs persevere and come out on top:

"I love the success stories. I love the dogs that were so down and out where you're like, 'I'm just not really sure, but we'll give it our best.' And then we can get them healthy. Sometimes it's just a few days, they just needed a couple of days to acclimate and they just were found on the side of the road and they just needed to be able to breathe. And then you find this fantastic home."

In one remarkable case, a small dog was placed in an adoptive home, but quickly took a turn for the worse — a veterinarian said he was in kidney failure, heart failure, renal failure and "everything failure." Karen offered to take him back to give him the care he needed in hospice, but the adopters wouldn't hear of it. Karen said:

"I told the adopters, 'I understand you didn't sign up for hospice, but this is a situation and you don't have to take him back. I'll keep him and I'll do hospice.' And they're like, 'No, we'll take him through hospice.' But he lived for another two years."

Karen feels honored to be able to help these animals. "Sometimes I have a dog through two or three days. Sometimes I have them for two weeks. And I think it's an honor to be able to take care of them."

More Respect for Senior Pets

If she could share one thing with the world, Karen said, "I would like people to respect their senior dogs. That's what I would like." While senior dogs are often the ones passed up at shelters, they offer many advantages, like typically already being potty trained and maybe even obedience trained.

Because so many senior dogs are in need, Karen said, "If you want to support a great cause I would love for you to support Lizzy's. We need all the help we can get because the seniors need all the help they can get."

You can find out more about Lizzy's Hospice Care at their website, LizzysHospice.com,¹ as well as on social media. In addition to looking for fosters and adopters, they're in need of volunteers for their events — even two hours a month can make a difference.

At Lizzy's Animal Hospice, they're spreading the word that whatever time an animal has remaining is of value and worthy of saving, and it's their mission to make that time full of companionship and love for all involved.

Sources and References

¹ LizzysHospice.com
