

The Lizzie Blessing

Description

Lizzie's TikTok Debut! Check Her Out!!! [My published piece contained Lizzie's TIKTok video debut.
Find it here: https://mancosmusings.com/the-lizzie-blessing/](https://mancosmusings.com/the-lizzie-blessing/)

Lizzie is a 10-year-old Golden Retriever who came into my life in October of 2019, about a month after I had to have Chip put down due to an inoperable (We tried.) tumor in his chest. That decision was excruciatingly painful to make and his loss from my life created that proverbial “hole” that in just a few weeks I HAD to fill.



Chipperdoodle

The Search is on...

When I began checking websites for available dogs I felt very guilty – it seemed I wasn't being loyal to Chip. But I made myself look. A life without a dog isn't a life, in my opinion. I wanted an older dog and I knew I would adopt from some type of shelter.

Stephanie, from my vet's office, had suggested I check Annie's Orphans, a no-kill shelter just outside Durango. Annie's was in the back of my mind but I first looked online at the shelters in Cortez, Durango, and Farmington. My thinking was Annie's was a no-kill shelter and I didn't think the others were.

As I began my search I thought there would be lots of the type of dog I was looking for and I was already anticipating feeling bad for the ones I didn't choose. (I have a big heart, especially for dogs waiting for their forever homes.) I was surprised and a bit saddened by the fact that I didn't locate any that fit the "profile" I had in mind.

So I checked the Annie's Orphans website <https://www.anniesk9orphans.org/> and there I came across an older Golden Retriever, Lizbug. I still remember the pic, (It wasn't the most flattering dog pic I've ever seen...) she was sitting down looking up at the camera and on her face was a look that I interpreted as saying, "I'm a good girl and I REALLY need someone to love."

Over the next couple of days, I continued to check the other websites along with Annie's. Each time I found myself staying longer and longer on Lizbug's page. I felt a connection to her so I called Annie's and was disappointed that I had to leave a message asking for a callback.

Later that night I was at work and Annie returned my call. She was very friendly. I told her about me, my home environment, and why I wanted (needed) to adopt, and without mentioning Lizbug specifically, I described the type of dog I was looking for. Annie described her "mission," the adoption process, and asked me several questions. I could tell she really was devoted to her "orphans" and that finding the right forever home was a priority.

Happily... On the Same Page

Annie went on to tell me that she had a dog that might be a good match for me, a Golden Retriever named Lizbug. I laughed and told her that as a matter of fact, Lizbug was the dog I was interested in!

Annie's suggestion of a potential match without her knowing I had zeroed in on Lizbug, was very cool. I told several of my co-workers about it.

We set up a meeting for the upcoming Saturday morning and I was thrilled. On the drive over to Annie's place, I was nervous about meeting Lizbug; I was afraid she wouldn't like me. I kept telling myself if that happened it just wasn't meant to be. As I drove up the winding driveway to Annie's I

repeated a prayer asking for God's guidance on finding/being the right "match." A match made in Heaven?

When I pulled up I was met by Annie's husband, who told me that she had to take one of their charges to the vet unexpectedly. He walked me through a complex of outside dog runs, each with an igloo type of dog house. I was impressed with the size of the runs. Some had a couple of dogs in them and some just housed one.

Love at First Wag...

We came upon a run to my left and standing at the fence was Lizbug, wagging her tail. I greeted her through the fence and our first impression of each other seemed to be one of mutual attraction. Of course, in that situation, I knew that most friendly dogs would be happy for the attention of anyone...

He slipped a lead over her head and we headed over to a large play area and I "officially" met Lizbug. During our meeting, Lizbug ran around like a crazy dog and several times jumped up on me seeking my attention, as dogs do.

We hung out for about 45 minutes. During that time my fears about her not liking me vanished and she stole my heart completely. I told Annie's husband that I wanted to adopt Lizbug and he said that we seemed to be a good match. He told me he'd let Annie know of my intentions when she returned and that she'd give me a call.

When we walked Lizbug back to her run I felt so bad because I didn't want her to think I was just going away, never to be seen again. I told her several times that I wanted her to come live with me and that I was going to do whatever I had to do to make that happen. I did not look back as I walked away because I didn't want to see the look on her face.

Annie called me back and I completed the adoption forms which I dropped off at Creature Comforts, a most excellent pet supply, grooming, and training store in Durango. Now I was worried about her being adopted out from under me, a worry that Annie quashed quickly. But still...

Eventually (It wasn't long, but it seemed like an eternity.) Annie called me back and gave me the news I was waiting for, my adoption of Lizbug was a "go!"

I was elated!

A Forever Home but a Wait That Seemed Like Forever...

Annie personally delivers any dog adopted from Annie's Orphans (She recons your home as the final screening step.) and she told me she could bring Lizbug by on the upcoming Saturday. I'm pretty darn sure this conversation was on Tuesday, and I'll admit I was disappointed in having to wait so long. My disappointment was really with Lizbug in mind. I just didn't want her to have to wait any longer to have a forever home. (Author's comment: She lived through it...)

So the big day finally arrived. It was a very warm October day. Annie called me a few minutes before

her arrival and I took up my position on my front porch. When I saw the white van with Annie's Orphans on its side my heart began the melting process, one that has continued each and every day since.

I hadn't met Annie yet but I introduced myself and gave her a hug. She opened the van's back doors and opened the transport cage that Lizbug had been riding in. Lizbug jumped out and I welcomed her and told her she was "home." (I'm 61 years old and was a cop for darned-near 30 years and writing this brings tear to my eyes.)

I lead Lizbug into her new home and took off her leash. With tail a-waggin', she began checking out her new surroundings, and almost immediately she found Chip's just-filled water dish and began to get a big drink.

I showed Annie my house and fenced back yard and Lizbug checked it out also. I believe she approved.

Annie and I completed the final paperwork and I paid the adoption fee. Annie told me if for any reason the adoption didn't work out, she'd take Lizbug back. I remember her saying that once a dog is an Annie's Orphan, they're always an Annie's Orphan. She also offered, depending on space available, to watch Lizbug if I ever went out of town or otherwise needed temporary lodging for her.

With that, Annie said goodbye to Lizbug and returned to providing for her orphans, who, once accepted into the family, have a place to live for the rest of their lives if need be.

After giving Lizbug lots and lots of attention I promised that I would be the best possible dad I could be for her. We then headed out, commencing the first of our (by now) hundreds of walks around my little town of Mancos.

Oh, before we left the house I told Lizbug that I loved her for the first time, something she has heard thousands of times since.

On that first walk, I was most definitely the "proud papa" and our first stop was at the Fahrenheit, the best little coffee shop in the world. And where, I am the official dog water boy, having the responsibility of ensuring that Chip's (yes, it IS my late buddy Chip's) water dish is filled on a daily basis.

She left a "Lizbug," but Returned a "Lizzie."

While on the Fahrenheit's patio I introduced Lizbug to all who were working that day and it was there that she officially became known as "Lizzie."



Lizzie and I at Fahrenheit for the first time, in our very first picture together.

And what a Lizzie she is! Lizzie is the most obedient and patient BFF I've ever had. ALL of my past BFFs were lovers and they are all number one in that category as far as I'm concerned. (Math was never my strong suit.)

One thing I'll say about Lizzie, she has a sweet soul and she does love her dad. Where Chip would sometimes go lie down in another room, Lizzie stays with me, moving as needed, almost always keeping me in view. And yes, oftentimes even in the bathroom...

She and I share a bond, which doesn't take a lot of fancy words to explain, in fact, it can be easily explained with one word: LOVE.

Except for work, Lizzie goes everywhere with me. I can put on her hot pink leash, (Attached to her hot pink collar.) take her out onto our little front porch and say the word, "Jeep." She'll take off, tail swinging from side to side and head straight for the rear door of our conveyance and look back at me, that open-

mouthed dog smile of hers displayed with anticipation.



What a beautiful girl.

Lizzie's not a head-out-the-window type of dog though, she's a stretch-out-and-go-to-sleep type of passenger. And I mentioned her patience, I can go get my hair cut, go to Wally World, the doctor, whatever. Usually, she's snoozing away when I return. Almost always after such a wait though, our next stop, made very quickly, is a walk around downtown/the park in Bayfield, the Dog Park in Cortez, or along the River Trail/Doubletree Hotel/downtown Durango.

Lizzie Isn't Just a Hit – She's a Homerun!

She's also very well known in Mancos, and she knows where all the treat stops are located. We take at least two good walks a day, (3-4 if I'm off work.) and it's safe to say she's a hit with most of the Fahrenheit customers. A friendly Golden Retriever is hard to ignore, a fact that she uses to her advantage. She also invokes many a story from tourists about their dogs and from Golden Retriever humans especially.

But there's another treat stop that Lizzie has made her priority. We live less than a block as cow flies (Wait, that would be weird.) as the CROW flies, from Kilgore's American Indian Art shop in downtown Mancos. Kelly Kilgore is the proprietor and she always puts a dog treat out on one of the window sills at the entrance to her shop. When we go out for a walk Lizzie makes a bee-line for Kelly's, walking like she owns the town, ready to consume that treat as if she is starving to death. (Lizzie's not starving, in fact, she's on a diet...)

Hitting the Hay...

One of the cutest things is her reaction to my saying the words, "Let's go ni-nite." She can be sound asleep but when I say those words, her eyes open and she gets up, usually enjoys a BIG stretch, trots off to my bedside, and waits for her boost up. She then takes her place on her side of the bed and waits for our pre-slumber snuggles. And no matter how long I sleep, she's always there, awaiting our MORNING snuggle session.

"You Make Lovin' Fun"

The context may be off, but the title of the Fleetwood Mac song is appropriate anyway. Loving Lizzie is fun. And I have fun expressing it. Lizzie's been featured on Tik Tok, Instagram, and many times on Facebook. Anyone who knows me knows Lizzie. I'm a single guy and without her, I'd be lost, like I was when I lost Chip.

It's amazing how much love she gives, and it's truly unconditional.

You Too Can Experience Such Love

After going on and on about the positive impact Lizzie has had on me and my life, I would be remiss not to offer you a way to experience what I have.

If you need love and companionship, there are thousands and thousands and thousands of dogs (And cats if they better suite you.) available for adoption and all they want is a loving home.

If you're in the 4 Corners area, and the love of a dog is what you or your family is looking for, Annie's Orphans would be a great place to find it. Just click on the link below to start your search.

<https://www.annies9orphans.org/>

Lizzie is such a blessing and you too can be blessed in the same way.

Save a pet. You just might save yourself in the process. I believe that with all my heart.

As always, I appreciate your time and readership. Lizzie and I thank you.

CATEGORY

1. Love