

A Day In The Life Of Zelda And Monti- as told by Mary Britton Clouse From OpenSanctuary.org

Slide 1:

Choosing the right handling, cushions, fabrics, bedding, dishes, foods, environments, hygiene, stimulation, and daily routines is vital to supportive care for residents with impaired mobility, **but companionship is what makes the difference between just living or loving life.**

Photo A

Description- A thick Serta dog bed.

Photo B

Description- A soft Snoozzy basket dog bed/ carrier. The Snoozzy is made of soft fabric with a cushioned dog bed bottom and soft fabric that come up the sides and over the top to create both a wide handle for carrying and a tunnel-effect for the animal inside. A folded fleece blanket covers the inside bed surface.

Slide 2:

Chickens are flock animals and are hardwired to live with others for their world to make sense. Some birds, like some people, are perfectly happy with trans-species relationships, but when a bond develops between special needs birds, there is no thrill and satisfaction like seeing them nurture each other. **CRR's residents Zelda and Monti are just such a pair.**

Photo A

Caption- Zelda (left) and Monti (right).

Description- Zelda and Monti sit side-by-side on a soft green blanket.

Slide 3:

The common denominator for special needs residents is that they somehow survived something really awful before they were rescued. Zelda and Monti are no exceptions, so a little background on their particular challenges is in order...

Slide 4:

Zelda and her brother, Skokie, were purchased as chicks from a Texas hatchery, Ideal Poultry, and mailed to Minnesota in October, 2016. By the next month, the first snowstorm had already arrived. Minnesota's climate is famously extreme for cold and snow. They were month old babies kept in an unheated shelter in a backyard in a very affluent neighborhood. Both lost limbs to frostbite. Skokie lost both feet. Zelda lost both legs. **They were not brought to CRR until the following April.**

Photo A

Caption- Zelda arrives with Skokie.

Description- A smiling woman holds two chickens who are both missing their feet.

Photo B

Caption- Unheated shelter in a backyard with nothing but hardware cloth and straw for cushion.

Description- Close up of a small wooden door to a chicken coop. The walls are made of hardware cloth rather than solid walls and bedding consists of a thin layer of straw on top of a wood floor.

Slide 5:

Their surrender form stated they had never been seen by a vet, so the excruciating death of their limbs went untreated. Necrotic tissue and bone rotted and fell off, and their painful residual limbs had nothing but hardware cloth and straw for a cushion. Despite this, their former guardian rated their physical condition as a 4 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being excellent. Reason for surrender: "I unfortunately don't have the time for legless chickens."

Photo A

Caption- Necrotic tissue and bone rotted and fell off.

Description- Closeup of Zelda's residual limb after her arrival. The bottom portion is covered in a thick scab and the surrounding skin is inflamed.

Photo B

Caption- Zelda's residual limbs.

Description- Zelda's residual limbs after they healed. The bottom portion is healthy pink skin now.

Photo C

Caption- Zelda's x-ray.

Slide 6:

Zelda and Skokie remained bonded until they both hit puberty and needed to make new friends at CRR. Personalities and abilities play an important role in matchmaking.

Slide 7:

Zelda was born an old soul. She growls when she's bothered. She barks when she wants something. She looks fabulous in Cheetah Plush. She has abided but mothered 4 disabled companions- Skokie (10/1/16- 5/10/17), Hershey (5/11/17- 7/31/18), then Squashblossom (5/16/19- 11/25/19). Hershey and Squashblossom each passed away. Zelda adapted beautifully each time and grieved deeply each time. Then came Monti (9/28/20- present). Monti makes Zelda roll her eyes with her antics, but Zelda secretly enjoys them.

Photo A

Caption- Zelda in her Snoozzy with her signature Cheetah fleece.

Slide 8:

Monti is the kind of girl who finds a corn chip in her hair and eats it, makes best friends instantly, cannot contain her excitement about sketti or taco night, knows rules are meant to be broken, sees obstacles as dares, sees what she wants and makes it happen, loves her big sister with all her heart, and knows she can do anything.

Photo A

Caption- Monti, with Zelda in the background.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit side-by-side on a green blanket.

Slide 9:

Her story started with this email: "I have a crippled chicken. She has always been crippled, so she compensates for her issues. These normally don't make it to adulthood, but she did! However, my birds are not caged unless they have an injury- so she's getting picked on by the others." Monti's surrender form reads: "Purchased with our annual order of birds from Murray

McMurray. (We show at the fair.)" When asked how often they take their birds to the vet- "We do not. We never had a crippled bird make it to adulthood that couldn't fend for herself. Many of these questions wouldn't apply because she hasn't been a house pet for us and is one of many birds. If I put her with the rest or keep her over the winter, she won't survive... My 8 year old will be so happy to have her not in with the rest of the birds."

Photo A

Caption- Monti's first 7 months of her life on a filthy wire bottom cage in a windowless shed, alone.

Description- Monti laying on a piece of plywood. Her left foot is visible and her toes are curled. Her right hip is held lower than her left.

Slide 10:

Monti's legs were significantly deformed at birth but she was shipped from the hatchery anyway. She spent the first 7 months of her life on a filthy wire bottom cage in a windowless shed, alone- except for when she was picked on by others. Again, affluent property.

Photo A

Caption- Overgrown nails dug deep into her skin.

Description- Close up of her feet, which are twisted. Her right leg is bent so that her foot is held close to her thigh and her nails are so long they are growing into her leg.

Photo B

Caption- Monti's tangled legs.

Description- Monti is held on her back, showing the bend of her legs. Her right hock is bent at 90 degrees in the wrong direction and her foot is curled towards her abdomen. The toes on her left foot are curled.

Photo C

Caption- Monti's x-rays.

Description- X-ray shows the same bend of the hock and curling of the foot.

Slide 11:

Every inch of her tiny body was crawling with mites, even her eyelids. It took 3 successive baths for the water to run clear of them. Thank heavens that 8 year old girl knew what she saw was wrong. Once bathed and on soft, clean bedding, Monti took charge and communicated exactly what she expected of her life going forward.

Photo A

Caption- Crawling with mites from head to toes, even her eyelids.

Description- Monti, wrapped in a towel, with her eyes closed. Tiny mites cover her face and eyelid.

Photo B

Caption- Mites in bottom of bath.

Description- A deep sink of water filled with tiny black mites.

Photo C

Caption- Squeaky clean and ready for exam.

Description- Close-up of Monti's face with her body wrapped in a towel post-bath. Her eyes are open and she looks much brighter than pre-bath.

Slide 12:
Zelda and Monti now spend their days together...

Slide 13:
Good Morning!

Photo A

Caption- 7:30 am, wake up in Serta bed- "Not Just Sorta Comfortable."

Description- Monti and Zelda sit side-by-side on a thick Serta dog bed covered in a heavy fleece blanket. A rolled up blanket acts as a bolster dividing the bed in half widthwise. The other side is empty. Bed is on a wood floor inside a human dwelling.

Photo B

Caption- Romaine in treat holder.

Description- Zelda and Monti on the same dog bed, but now on the side that was previously empty. In front of them, propped up on a purple yoga block that sits on the wooden floor, is a clay log. A hollow in the top of the log holds an upright head of romaine lettuce. With Zelda and Monti facing the log and the added elevation of the block, the lettuce is within their reach.

Photo C

Caption- Breakfast buffet with others.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit in the same dog bed with the clay log/ lettuce setup, but this photo shows more of the surrounding space. To the left of the bed is a glass door. Three chickens stand on the wood floor in the area of the door, with one red hen looking outside. Directly to the right of the bed is a light therapy device that is turned on and aimed towards the bed. Further to the right, food and water dishes are set up on a large tray sitting on top of a rag rug. One chicken stands near a dish of water.

Slide 14:
Breakfast

Photo A

Caption- Couch outfitted with nursing pillows, plush Cheetah throws, and spill proof dishes.

Description- Two nursing pillows are placed on either side of the couch with the open ends facing the side of the couch. In between the nursing pillows is a large rectangular pillow laying flat. Both the nursing pillows and the rectangular pillow are covered in the same fleece. Within the hollow of each nursing pillow is a chicken, both facing towards the rectangular pillow. Monti, on the left, also has the same fleece draped over her back and over the sides of the nursing pillow. Nestled in the gap between the rectangular pillow and the nursing pillows is a blue oval shaped bowl holding two semicircle dishes- one containing food and one containing soaked crumble. These semicircle dishes are secured within the larger dish with metal hooks. Zelda's beak hovers above the food dish in front of her.

Photo B

Caption- Breakfast is Roudybush mush- food and water in one.

Description- Closer shot of Zelda and Monti in their nursing pillows for breakfast. Both can easily reach the food and water dishes that are tucked securely in the nook between the nursing pillow and the rectangular pillow.

Slide 15:

If the weather is bad...

Photo A

Caption- Soft baskets, tree top view, snacks. Despite the effort, Monti will often crawl out of her basket and join Zelda in hers.

Description- Zelda and Monti each sit inside their own Snoozzy positioned in front of a window. In front of them is a half tomato in a dish that sits on top of another dish to raise it up to a reachable height for Monti and Zelda.

Photo B

Caption- Indoor leaf yurt, snacks.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit inside a soft-sided dog playpen filled with dried leaves. In one area, near the wall of the playpen, a portion of rag rug can be seen under the leaves. The playpen has a zippered top that is currently wide open. The top 2/3rds of the walls of the playpen are a black mesh. The bottom third is a solid fabric. In front of Zelda and Monti is a small pile of treats including strips of romaine and seeds. The playpen sits on a wooden floor in a human dwelling.

Slide 16:

If the weather is good...

Photo A

Caption- Time in the grass, snacks.

Description- Monti and Zelda sit side-by-side outside in the grass close to the corner of the foundation of a house. In front of them are two chunks of watermelon.

Photo B

Caption- Outdoor dirt bath in protected area.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit and peck in a narrow strip of loose dirt that runs along the foundation of the house. Round logs are placed on two sides, one of them running parallel to the house, to create a contained space. On the 4th side sit their two snoozzy baskets.

Slide 17:

Bath Time

Photo A

Caption- Zelda soaks in cushioned dishpan- warm water, Epsom salts and gentle cleansing gel. Zelda needs a bath at least once a week, Monti less often.

Description- Zelda sits in a shallow dish tub that is covered with thick towels. The water level is low- maybe a few inches. Most of her body remains dry and out of the water. Behind her is a bottle of OxyFresh Cleansing Gelé and a bag of Epsoms salts.

Photo B

Caption- Blow drying is very pleasurable for Zelda- most chickens enjoy it. Monti likes to watch.

Description- Zelda sits in a rubber feed pan padded with thick towels. A hair dryer is held near her. Behind Zelda and her drying bowl sits Monti in her Snoozzy basket.

Slide 18:

Evening Activities

Photo A

Caption- Supper on the couch again.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit back in their nursing pillows. In front of them is the same dish setup that they had for breakfast time- they each have a dish of water and a dish of soaked crumble securely tucked into the nook in front of them.

Photo B

Caption- Bedtime snacks and a little TV.

Description- Zelda and Monti are back on their serta dog bed, which is covered with heavy blankets, but this time, they each have an entire side to themselves, with the rolled blanket bolster separating them and dividing the bed in half widthwise. In front of the bolster, and within the reach of both Monti and Zelda, sits a dish of treats.

Slide 19:

Monti and Zelda have been inseparable now for 6 months. Their bond was immediate. Greeting them first thing in the morning is what gets me out of bed every day and puts a smile on my face when the lights go out.

Photo A

Caption: Tucked in and ready to sleep.

Description- Zelda and Monti sit side-by-side in their serta dog bed with a cheetah plush blanket over their backs.