
Local rescue dog visits Crockett students learning about pet ownership

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The idea behind the Book Munchers Club at Crockett Elementary is simple: to foster a love of reading. Book Munchers are recommended for the group by their teacher and participants rotate every six weeks, allowing several students to take part of the club during the year.

For Mrs. Garcia's 4th grade Book Munchers, the lesson went far beyond reading for this six weeks.

The group chose "Because of Winn Dixie" for their reading assignment. The book is about a young girl that finds a best friend in a stray dog.

On Thursday, Mrs. Garcia's Book Munchers were able to see how choosing adoption can change the life of a dog when they met Oakley, a Yorkie puppy.

Oakley was adopted by Sharon Prock, who is a volunteer for Panhandle Paws of Hope and Prock spoke to the students about pet adoption.

"Sharon does a ton of work here with our local pound and Panhandle area, providing homes for rescue dogs, or dogs that people no longer want. She will find new homes for them," explained Garcia to the group.

Prock held Oakley in her lap as she told the group about her work with rescue dogs.

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Pictured here is Mrs. Garcia's 4th grade Book Munchers, Mia Garcia, Deryk Sosa, Addison Vasquez, Arianna Barraza, Addison Lindley, Alyssa Camel, Leah Akens, Easton Holtzel, Molly Johnson, Kaleb Fisher, and Ashlynn Findley, Mrs. Garcia, and Sharon Prock with Oakley. (Photo by April Davis)

Rescue Dog

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"This is Oakley. He's eight months old and I rescued him from Berger Animal Control. His owner couldn't take care of him anymore and he was brought there. So I picked him up to give him a life like Opal did for Winn-Dixie," said Prock.

Prock explained that sometimes, owners can't fulfill the responsibility for the life of their pet and that's where she comes in.

"I go out and find the best homes that I possibility can. I look for the right fit for the dog and the owner. I have five rescue dogs," Prock informed.

Oakley shivered as he sat on Prock's lap and she explained to the students that, just like humans, dogs can be scared of new places.

"I take pictures of the dogs and I put them up on Facebook. That's a really good place to put pictures. If I can't find a home locally, I sometimes send them to another state where they don't have as many dogs as we do. They can get adopted faster," stated Prock.

She discussed with the students things they could do to help local dogs looking for permanent homes.

"Animal Control will let you come walk the dogs and pet them. Especially when the weather warms up. Sometimes, my organization does adoptions and we would be glad to have you come hang out with us and help us get the dogs into homes," suggested Prock.

Prock has helped approximately 300 dogs find new homes. The students agreed that Prock is a "doggie hero."

She also explained how important it is to microchip a pet.

"I suggest tags and a chip. Accidents happen and dogs get out. Having them chipped and tagged is the fastest way to get them home. If they are chipped, they can always make it home," she said.

Prock told the students that microchipping an animal is simple and Panhandle Paws of Hope has done fundraising events where they microchip dogs for a small fee.

"It's important that you know when you adopt a pet that you keep it and take care of it for the life of the pet. It can be a long time, too. It's a long term responsibility," she said.

After meeting Oakley and petting him, the students shared why they enjoy the Book Munchers Club.

Ashlynn Findley says she enjoys Book Munchers because she has more fun there than at recess.



Oakley, a rescued Yorkie, helped Crockett Book Munchers learn about rescue dogs and being responsible pet owners. (Photo by April Davis)

"I don't mind missing recess. I love reading books and talking about them," she said.

Easton Holtzer said he learned about dogs at Book Munchers.

"You can rescue a dog if you really care about animals and their health," he stated.

Deryk Sosa and Molly Johnson both enjoy Book Munchers more than recess because they enjoy reading.

Addison Lindley says "I didn't really like to read when I was in First grade, but when I read Winn-Dixie, it made me want to read more and I like to read now."

Addison Vasquez adds that she doesn't care about recess at all and enjoyed the book "because she rescued Winn-Dixie so she wouldn't go to the pound."

Leah Akens said she likes Book Munchers because she likes reading more than recess.

Arianna Barraza says Book Munchers is a good experience.

"It helps you get better at reading and helps you read more.

Alyssa Camel concluded by saying she "likes reading and the book was exciting."



Leah Akens greets Oakley on Thursday afternoon at Mrs. Garcia's 4th grade Book Munchers Club. (Photo by April Davis)