

WOULD YOU CONSIDER ADOPTING A PITBULL

by Cheryl Wicks, Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter

Recent information indicates that Pitbulls are becoming less maligned than they have been in recent years. Why might this be true? As people in the dog adoption world have gotten to know these dogs and help to demystify them through education some people have been willing to give a try and those that do often believe that the Pitbulls have been a well kept secret buried under all kinds of negative press.

Awhile back a family came to the shelter with the idea they did not want a pitbull. Ultimately they took a pitbull, with reluctance, because they felt it was the nicest dog in the shelter. This went against a solid belief they held. Within two months they came back to the shelter looking for a second pitbull, saying the first one was the best dog they had ever had. They are now the happy guardians of two happy pits.

Another lady with two daughters, against her better judgment, adopted a pit mix. With two children she wasn't sure it was a good idea. After a month she wrote to say "We love our dog, we're having so much fun, thank you for letting us have him."

Why are these dogs that, were once called "the little nannies", so maligned? Less than reputable people desire this breed and then tie them up and have them guard their illicit activities. There is absolutely no better way to make a dog mean than to tie them up (which is against the law) and never let them loose. They become very territorial and can be dangerous.

The media reports what they think people will read or listen to (let's jump on the bandwagon). A front page story about a pitbull attack coincided with three even more serious offenses by three other breeds, (a Mastiff nearly ripping an arm off, an Aussie putting its owner in the hospital for several days, a yellow lab biting a child in the face). These latter three incidents were not reported in the media at all - not one word. A prejudice against a breed of dogs is no different than racial prejudice and does a lot of damage.

There are 74.5 million dogs in the United States and there are 32 deaths per year caused by dog attacks by dogs of many different breeds. 95% of these attacks are by un-neutered male dogs. 2,000 children are killed every year by their parents through abuse and neglect. A child is 800 times more likely

to be killed by their own adult caretaker than by a pitbull. 50 people are murdered every day by other people. Does that make humans the most dangerous species of all? Should we be banned or euthanized?

We invite you to come to Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter and meet our wonderful Pitbulls. We have other breeds of dogs too and plenty of cats.

Pitbulls are not for everyone. They are strong in body, spirit, mind and need leadership, direction and your affection. If you provide this you will have the most loyal, funniest, happiest, fun dog you could ever imagine.