

# Happy Holidays & Thank You for Your Support!

**Though NYSHA is not a rescue organization, we sometimes find ourselves involved in a unique case that needs our help. So, we bring you a story of serendipity ending in love.**

An internet ad for free horse fencing at an upstate New York farm became the unlikely trigger for a big change in the life of a 12-year-old Golden Retriever named Stanley.

Colleen, a colleague of NYSHA's, went to retrieve the fencing for her horse rescue organization and came upon Stanley wandering aimlessly around the farm. She sensed he was a sweet dog when he ambled over to be petted. The farm owners were out of town, but the farm sitter said that Stanley had been used for stud services, but those days were over. The farm owners were looking for another home for him. The farm sitter also thought he usually lived outside.



*Stanley after his bath.*

Though Colleen thought about taking Stanley, she already had two big dogs, and despite the farm sitter's story, she felt he could not be removed without the owner's express permission. Back home, she was haunted by thoughts of this sad old guy, as he seemed so lonely for company. She also worried he might be left outside in cold weather. She texted the owners, but they did not respond. Troubled by Stanley's plight, she called NYSHA to see if we could help.

Since the owners weren't responding, two NYSHA representatives made the long trip to the farm. No one was home, but sure enough, there was Stanley wandering the property, his coat and tail dotted with burrs. He came over to them for some attention and dog biscuits. They left a note with a phone number, saying they heard that Stanley was in need of a new home.

Days passed with no response, but finally a week later, the owner called and said they had had Stanley for over a year but were looking for a new home for him. They were unable to give him enough attention, as they spent all their spare time fixing up the recently purchased farm. The owner then relayed Stanley's sorry saga.

On their vacation in Virginia the year before, the wife had seen an internet ad saying "Looking for a home for Golden Retriever." The advertiser was a breeder who said that Stanley was no longer able to be a stud dog, and he wanted to get rid of him. He led them to a garage where Stanley lived in a steel cage most of the time. He was let out to relieve himself and to perform stud duties, but not much else. This was where he had lived for over 10 years. He then told them that Stanley had periodic seizures. Yet, he had bred Stanley for ten years. The couple felt compelled by Stanley's story and took him back to upstate New York. Finally, he was liberated from his lonely cage to a setting where he could, at least, wander around a farmyard, but as time went on, they knew he yearned for more companionship than they could provide.

The NYSHA representatives arranged a time to pick up Stanley. He readily climbed into the back seat for the trip back. He traveled well and seemed happy to be with his newfound travel buddies.

Though one of the NYSHA representatives wanted to give him a home, she had to go out of town for a few days, so Stanley was brought directly to the Wag Inn boarding facility in Accord. When Lena the manager met Stanley and heard his story, she cleaned him up and decided to keep him in her home with her own dogs, instead of placing him in the kennel. The rest, as they say, is history. Stanley fell in love — with the manager and with her two wonderful dogs who welcomed him to the pack. The feelings were mutual, and for the first time in his life, Stanley was surrounded by loving canines and a caring human. When the NYSHA volunteer returned, she saw that this was the home Stanley needed and agreed he should stay there.

A couple months have passed and these days Stanley runs in the yard and through the house with Gordo, an English Setter mix, and Bernie, a Lab mix. Stanley is still learning to play with other dogs and conquering abandonment issues, but he is doing well. His latest trick is to poke his nose into the toy box, grab toy after toy, chew each one and then drop it to the floor to form a line of toys. He has not yet mastered the art of replacing them back in the box, but hey, you can't have everything. When he first arrived, he did not know what a toy was, what a ball was for, or how to play with other dogs. Mastering these small steps to dog hood are terrific for a guy who was never played with and who was never really treated like a companion animal.

You never know where a chance encounter on the internet may lead. And though things may be tough, never give up hope. Stanley waited 12 years for his forever home and though he may not have many years left, they will all be filled with joy.



*Stanley with Gordo and Bernie.*

**We thank you for your continued support and wish you joy and hope during this holiday season and all year through!**

*The Board and Staff of the New York State Humane Association*

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