

Local couple has fostered over 80 dogs

🕒 October 9, 2020 👤 Monique Roth



Doug and Mendi LeBoeuf with Dexter and Cooper.

As far as Doug and Mendi LeBoeuf are concerned, there's always room for one more.

The couple has fostered 83 dogs since 2012, and Mendi said there is no end in sight to the number of animals they are willing to help.

"It's something that we really enjoy, and I think it brings an element of fun to our household," she said. "There's just an element of satisfaction and they give us unconditional love."

Mendi – a teacher, coach and athletic director at Hahnville High School – said the couple started fostering when she and Doug were interested in adding another dog to their own family.

"Actually we weren't really planning on fostering dogs, but we had a lab mix of our own who we thought needed a companion," she said. "He's a friendly guy."

A friend suggested to Mendi that she and Doug make sure their dog Dexter would get along well with another dog, and that's where the idea of fostering came into play.

"Before we knew it we were not adopting, but fostering," Mendi said. "We found it to be super rewarding to know we were helping another dog."

Mendi and Doug foster the labs and lab mixes – all animals who have been abused, neglected, abandoned or mistreated in some way – and take care of them until they are healthy enough to be adopted. The couple works with the organization **Labs4rescue**, which coordinates all fostering and adoption details.

"It just kept going on," Mendi said of the fostering. "But we could not let number 61 leave the house ... there was just something about him."

Foster dog number 61 is Cooper, who now resides with the LeBoeufs and Dexter at their home in Bayou Gauche.

Mendi said placement length of the foster dogs can vary between a week to up to eight weeks. Once a dog is deemed healthy enough for adoption, they are placed into a new, permanent family.

"We get them healthy and then they're adopted out," Mendi said. "We get the pleasure of caring for them."

Tim Allen, a neighbor of the LeBoeufs, said he has the pleasure of seeing the couple care for the animals.

"What you have to appreciate here is that to do this – to allow yourself to become attached to these precious souls, to invest your time and lives into seeing that they heal and can learn to trust and love again – and then have to turn them over to a loving family, is often a gut and heart-wrenching process," Allen said. "It takes someone very, very special that can let their heart be broken over and over for the greater good. It's truly, truly a vocation, and frankly, is just one of the most selfless and beautiful things one can do."
