

unconditional love

They never ask questions or make judgements. They always agree and never let us down. They're cuddly, loyal, and devoted to making us happy. And they're part of the family.

SPINELESS FUN

Curiosity gets the best of ferrets Lizzy and Leeanne as they sniff around their owner, senior Damien Coronado. "Lizzy's vision got worse as she got older," he said. "Now, she can only see about an inch and half in front of her. If she doesn't see you before you pick her up, she tries to bite you. It's okay to drop her though. They don't get hurt due to their lack of vertebrae." Coronado has owned Lizzy just over a year.

by *crisina tabler*

Emotions ranged from sadness to disgust for freshman Sebastian Nuñez as he noticed the skinny pit bull lying near the road on his way home from the grocery store. With sharp ribs ready to break its flesh at any moment, her weakness was visible. Nuñez began to tear up as he imagined his own dog in that situation and quickly pointed her out to his father. They were not going to turn their backs on the defenseless dog. They carefully picked her up and took her to the vet.

"The vet said she was malnourished," Nuñez said. "She stayed with us for a few nights, and we grew to love her. We kept her and named her Princess for the irony of it. Now, she's healthy and always wants to play. She gets along well with my other dogs. They all have had such a huge impact on my life. They're my companions. They make me feel at home."

Loneliness is something junior Juan Rodriguez has experienced often. It has been seven years since he owned a pet, and he often finds himself wishing for one. To him, there are a few things only a pet can offer.

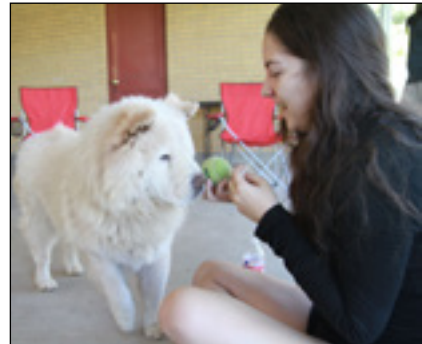
"My mom said that because of my lack of responsibility, we couldn't own a pet," Rodriguez said. "I owned a dog named Doggy when I was nine, and I had him for a week. He never left my side. Eventually, my mom had to give him away because my sister, who received the dog as a gift, never paid attention to him."

Unlike Rodriguez, sophomore Faith Torres was able to get the pet that she always wanted. Nine years had passed since she first met the tabby cat named Smokey.

"I always feed him in the morning and after school," Torres said. "My parents got him for mine and my brother's birthday because we wanted a cat. At times, I'd rather have a dog because they're more playful than Smokey is, but I'll always love him. I wouldn't give him up for anything."



genesis barraza



victoria brown



rudée valenciana



OUT OF HIS SHELL

With shifting eyes, Elmo the turtle scans the area while senior Olivia Fuentes does her best to keep Tiny, the other turtle, balanced on her head. "I got Elmo from a friend who was moving," Fuentes said. "I was the only one that could take Elmo in, and I wanted a 'piece' of my friend. I bought Tiny from the store. They generally nap all day and try to escape, but I still love them." Elmo is an aquatic turtle, and Tiny is a land turtle.

BIRD TALK

Reaching his arm out, junior Cruz Jacobo offers his 35-year-old parrot, Cookie, a place to rest. "She's been around since I was born," Jacobo said. "She's really loud and eats anything. When she's feeling interactive, she whistles and repeats a lot of words." After meals, Cookie walks around and eats the remaining food off their plates.



genesis barraza



jonathan castro

SCALY BUSINESS

Finished with school, senior Jorge Lozano does his homework while his Amel corn snake, Fanta, rests across his shoulders. "I got my first snake for my fourteenth birthday," Lozano said. "In sixth grade, we had to go to the library, and I chose a book about snakes. Since then, I've been interested in them. I had seven of them, but my mom made me sell four of them. She thought I had too many." Fanta's diet includes live rats.

victoria brown

