



Bonita, the Vickory Dog, Passes on at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary

KANAB, Utah—Bonita, one of the pit bulls rescued from the Michael Vick dog fighting case, has died at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary after complications from anesthesia during a dental surgery.

One of the 22 “Vickory Dogs” that came to Best Friends in January of 2007, the jet black, slightly built Bonita was shy when she first came to Best Friends. But in recent months she had making steady progress in her rehabilitative training and was scheduled to be the next Vickory dog to take Canine Good Citizen classes, a step toward the adoption process.

Despite her progress during her 14 months at Best Friends, Bonita had trouble with canine bloat, a potentially life-threatening condition. Additionally, the dog had not been able to put on weight despite changes in diet, portions and frequency of feedings.

Bonita’s teeth had been filed down during her dog fighting years and her gums were in poor shape. The Best Friends medical staff continued to manage her dental situation in an effort to improve her overall health.

“Dentals are part of our diligence for complete health care at Best Friends,” said Animal Care Director Patty Hegwood. “There is always the possibility of problems whenever an animal goes under anesthesia, no matter how many precautions you take.”

A necropsy performed this week was inconclusive, but Hegwood said tissue samples were sent for analysis to see if the cause of death can be determined.

Hegwood said clinic staff performed a blood test prior to surgery and Bonita was considered in good health prior to the dental procedure. “But in the end, Bonita’s body responded adversely to the anesthesia,” she said.

“We are all very saddened by the loss of Bonita,” Hegwood added. “The staff here will miss her very much as she had made great progress and enjoyed a very happy life during the time she was with us.”

There are 20 remaining Vickory dogs living at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary. Another dog, Halle, recently graduated from Best Friends training and has been placed with a foster family, one of the steps toward adoption.

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