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## Special Iowa animal shelter proves every...

by KCCI US

SHOW TRANSCRIPT

# Special Iowa animal shelter proves every pet is worth saving



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### Stacey Horst

Anchor

**DES MOINES, Iowa** — Employees at Animal Lifeline of Iowa are working to help a special dog put one foot in front of the other.

When Baxter arrived at Animal Lifeline of Iowa four and a half months ago, he was in trouble.

The 5-year-old Shihtzu could not walk and veterinarians didn't know why. Animal Lifeline of Iowa executive director Martha Wittkowski said his owner was desperate to save him.

"She took him to vets and everybody said the same thing, 'There's nothing we can do. It's probably best if you euthanized him,'" Wittkowski said.

Instead, the owner relinquished the Baxter to the special-needs, no-kill shelter.

"She had really done a lot, but physically she couldn't take care of Baxter because you needed to carry him everywhere," Wittkowski said.

Baxter now undergoes costly, rigorous therapy each day.

"If there's any way we can help them, we want to try it," Wittkowski said.

For the first time, the shelter is using an Alpha-Stim therapy through a device they had to lease.

"This is sending currents through the body and helping, hopefully, heal whatever is broken," Wittkowski said.

Baxter also does underwater treadmill therapy.

"He loves that," Wittkowski said. "I tell him that's his swim class, so he really does enjoy getting into the underwater treadmill."

Four and a half months after he began treatment, Baxter is showing tremendous improvement -- standing, walking and running away.

With help from Animal Lifeline of Iowa, Baxter is getting

closer to being a "normal dog" again.

The special-needs, no-kill shelter will host its [13th Annual Paws and Claws auction Saturday](#). The auction is the shelter's biggest fundraiser of the year, where they hope to raise a quarter of their operating budget.

Details can be found at the [Animal Lifeline of Iowa website](#).