

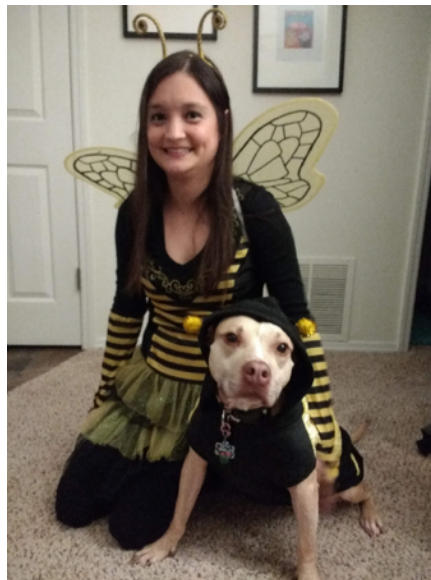
## Honey is “the Bee’s Knees”

Time, love, lots of patience, and the Wake County Animal Center (WCAC) staff help so many animals. I know firsthand. Honey, a Pit Bull mix, and me, a bird called Larry, are two grateful critters. The house I live in is sometimes like a miniature zoo because my “mom,” Diadra, a dedicated WCAC staff member, likes to foster all kinds of animals: dogs, cats, bunnies, hamsters, and even birds like me.



Larry and Honey

Have you ever heard the expression—she’s “the bee’s knees”? Honey, to me, exemplifies this phrase. Some synonyms for “the bee’s knees” are: a beauty, a sweetheart, and a dream. I’ll tell you why I think this of her.



Diadra and Honey

Honey is a truly fortunate dog. She was brought to the WCAC by some Animal Control Officers who used a control stick on her. Honey told me all about her harrowing experience. The officers use this tool when they want to keep an unfamiliar dog at a distance. Her owner had been arrested for participating in an illegal activity and the dogs, all four of them including Honey, needed a place to stay while the owner was in jail. (Fortunately, all four dogs were adopted to forever homes!) The WCAC staff did everything they could think of to try to transfer Honey to another rescue group. No one wanted her. That's when Diadra stepped in and changed Honey's life for the better and, best of all, permanently!



The permanent "crew"  
Darwin, Honey, and Madeline



Honey with foster hamster  
Prince Poofy-foof

When I first saw Honey, she arrived at our home malnourished, weighing only 42 pounds. I could see her ribcage and she had painful sores all over her body from lying only on hard surfaces. She also was pregnant and would soon give birth to SEVEN puppies. Honey told us that her owner used her for creating babies to sell. Oh, Faye and Scooter, who always tell people to spay and neuter their dogs and cats, were very saddened when they heard this news about Honey. As you know, they always preach: "The boy pets get neutered, the girl pets get spayed, this keeps our pets healthy the responsible way!" If only people WOULD LISTEN to Faye and Scooter! Following this simple recommendation would save so many lives! Once Honey was adopted into our family, she was spayed by a licensed veterinarian to prevent her from having another litter of puppies.



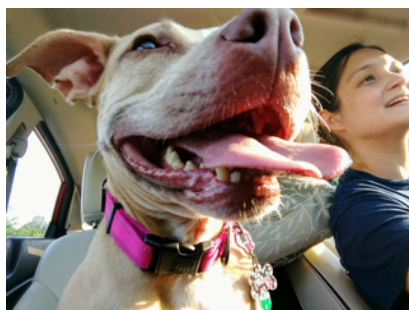
I remember one day in particular... Diadra left Honey for a very short period, perhaps 5 minutes. Honey started pacing and yowling—a frightening sound. She was screaming, “I am so worried. I know Diadra is not coming back and I’ll be left all alone, abandoned.” She became so agitated that she ate her harness and her collar, including the metal buckles. One of the buckles moved up into her nasal cavity. Then, Diadra had to rush her to the Emergency Clinic. You see, Honey suffers from “separation anxiety.” She has emotional problems when she is left alone and becomes fearful, acting in destructive ways. Some of her common symptoms of separation anxiety are: drooling; shaking; crying; chewing things she is not supposed to, such as doors and couches; and going potty in the house, which she ordinarily does not do.

Our mom, Diadra, explained to us that some dogs who suffer from this condition need to see a doctor, called a behavioralist, to try to help the dog. Separation anxiety is quite common in dogs, and especially in dogs who have been removed or rescued from dreadful situations. Unfortunately, these mental states can often have devastating physical effects on an animal: for example, their heart may begin to beat too rapidly. Diadra tried everything to help Honey: the herbal treatment of lavender to calm her, soft music, a Thundershirt,\* medications, therapy, and even training,\*\* but nothing aided Honey satisfactorily.



Honey in her Thundershirt and with Zeta

So, my mom decided on taking Honey to work with her at the Wake County Animal Center. She has a bed in the front office where she feels safe and can see her “mom.” She knows now that she is safe and is loved. I’ve heard that Honey greets clients to the Center by wagging her tail and whole body to welcome them. She told me she only grumbles when the Raleigh Animal Control Officers pass by. Remember, they were the ones who brought her to the Center on a control stick. Funny thing though, she does not grumble at the Wake County Animal Control Officers. She really does recognize how diligently all the Animal Control Officers work.



I promised to tell you why I consider Honey “the bee’s knees.” Well, like the product, Honey is a sweetener. She makes everyone who meets her feel happy. One might think she is always worried since her ears are always back, but she now is calm, quiet, and loves to give kisses. She wears a light pink collar with designs of fancy, tall glass dishes filled with milk shakes on it. Her soft coat is the color of honey, a rich caramel brown. She has a streak of white that runs down from the top of her head towards her nose. Her eyes are almond shaped and those of a wise dog who has seen the good and the bad in life.



Even Thomas Jefferson likes Honey! (Charlottesville, VA)

When she visits our grandma, (I never get to go there!), Honey tells me that grandma allows her to get up on the furniture even though she does not allow her own dog to do so. When Honey jumps up on the sofa with grandma, she gets as close as she can and cuddles with her. Of course, grandma loves this.



I have observed that Honey is very encouraging with kittens who have not been around dogs. Honey senses that they are frightened and she will just lie down, which I have seen calms them. She waits patiently for the kittens to approach and permits them to sniff her and explore. On the other hand, with puppies, Honey sometimes softly grumbles at them, letting them know, "I'm the boss! We're not playing until I say so."



Honey with kittens

Honey adored a foster rabbit named Frank. Frank was a girl, and the two of them would run circles around one another. Honey did not understand why Frank would sometimes nibble on her, but that's just part of bunny play. Honey never snapped at Frank. (A small imperfection in Honey's personality that I have witnessed is that she does become jealous when animals around her get the attention she feels is due only to her. She is the Queen Bee!)



Honey and Frank

The only animal Honey acts a bit bizarrely around is, believe it or not, me. Maybe because I'm in a cage above her, I don't know. Honey just stares at me and her whole body begins to vibrate, moving like a bee. Or maybe it is because she is trying to lift herself off the ground to fly up to see me...

Despite this quirk, Honey is a gem. I was eavesdropping one evening when I overheard Diadra tell a friend, "Living with Honey has helped me understand dogs much better, especially emotionally damaged dogs." Diadra has been around so many Pit Bulls and Pit Bull mixes at the WCAC that she has come to know them well. "I have learned that they are real 'people pleasers.'" Diadra added, "It is just in their nature to trust...it just takes a while to come out. You just have to take each animal as they are."



Darwin, Honey, and Scooby (a foster dog)

Honey and I and the other foster animals in our house are so thankful for all the compassionate and caring staff at the Wake County Animal Center for doing every day the best they can for each animal who enters their doors. We also thank all the people in our community who look for and find loving companion animals there."

\* Thunder Shirt is a product for dogs who are fearful of thunderstorms.

\*\* Honey has earned the Canine Good Citizenship certificate from the American Kennel Club proving that she is a well-behaved dog. She also attended therapy dog classes. Honey sometimes visits schools to engage with children. She also helps out at the WCAC, like Mister Peters, our Kids 4 Critters mascot, in “reading” dogs’ personalities.

