

**Sunday Column – Maximus**  
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Helping large breed dogs is the last frontier for animal welfare in Columbus, Georgia. Especially the bully breeds. These tend to be smart, strong and spirited animals. It is not the winning combination for the faint of heart.

It takes a REAL dog person to take on an animal like this. However, if you are man or woman enough to bring one of these dogs into your life, the rewards are boundless. We call it “BIG LOVE” in our marketing campaigns.

Lately, I’ve been sharing my office with Maximus, a 60 plus pound Labrador mix. His big blocky head gets him labeled, rightly or wrongly, as a bully breed mix. This combination can be a tough sell for renters and he was returned 3 days after being adopted for this reason.

Maximus has lived at PAWS Humane for over 260 days. He is precious to staff members in every department and has become the special project of our behaviorist and some of our more advanced volunteer dog trainers. He knows look, sit and down and walks politely in an easy walk harness. He will hold a down-stay for over a minute.

Intelligent large breed dogs need regular mental stimulation and exercise. With 120 animals in our care every day it is a challenge to give individuals this level of attention. Our volunteers are invaluable to our enrichment programs but even then it is not the same as a home with a loving family. We do our best, is all I can say.

Maximus is also doing his best but this week we decided to go the extra mile and give him the most homelike setting possible. Several rooms comprise our administrative offices and I have furnished mine with a small sofa and over-stuffed chair. Maximus didn’t waste any time making himself at home and availing himself of the amenities. With ambient music playing softly in the background all he is missing is a hearth.

Maximus spends his days with the admin staff now and it suits him. I just wish Mr. and Mrs. Right would see what a great dog Maximus is and take him home for keeps.

He likes some dogs and not others. I think most of us could say the same about our relations with others of our kind, so I don’t consider this to be any particular defect. It is simply the nature of most humans and dogs. His prey drive would probably eliminate most cats as desirable housemates. Given his size and energy level he is a bit much for most children.

Maximus is a little over 2 years old. He is a good boy and he deserves to have a great life with a loving family. We post Maximus to our Facebook page often. Please “like us” and share his posts with your friends. Let’s get Maximus adopted!

And don't forget...October is "Adopt a Shelter Dog" month and many shelters will be running specials!!!

*Bobbi Yeo lives in Opelika, AL. She is the CEO of PAWS Humane in Columbus, GA, an animal shelter and veterinary clinic offering low-cost spay/neuter and other services to the public. Email her at [byeo@pawshumane.org](mailto:byeo@pawshumane.org) with your comments and story ideas.*