

## Vick's pitbull given second chance as therapy dog

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A pit bull rescued from former NFL quarterback Michael Vick's infamous dogfighting stable has found a new life in California.

Leo was rescued by "Our Pack", a San Francisco area group that rescues pit bulls. Leo loves to play ball, but if the pit bull had a choice, he'd rather be working as a therapy dog.

What's amazing is Leo made his transformation from Vick dog to therapy dog in just five weeks thanks to a lot of love and leadership from his new owner, dog trainer Marthina McClay. "He was a little like a caveman at a tea party. He didn't have a lot of training," she recalled.

Leo has said goodbye to his heavy chains and happily wears a clown collar as he makes the rounds at the Camino Infusion Center in Mountain View, California. Despite his strength, he's ever so gentle as he greets patients undergoing chemo. "He is wonderful and all the patients love Leo. They really love his eyes and gentleness," said Paula Reed, director of Oncology and Infusion Services.

His favorite thing to do is put his head on a patient's lap and bat his big brown eyes. He has the power to inspire a smile in seconds.

Leo also touches young people on probation at the Alternative Placement Academy in San Jose. The young men seem to identify with this former tough guy. Of course Leo receives just as much love as he gives. He's not only making a name for himself, he's helping people embrace pit bulls. "Leo is definitely an ambassador to the breed. They meet him and say, 'I will never see pit bulls the same again'," Marthina McClay said.

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