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Nonprofits pledge assistance for Rottweiler's surgery

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A Rottweiler named Bruin and his owner, Vickie Stanley of Etowah, are a special pair.

The dog helped Stanley through the deaths of family members. Now Bruin is in need of surgery. The dog has tears in the ligaments of both rear legs and is in severe pain.

"I know that everyone loves their pet a lot," Stanley said. "But Bruin has seen me through the loss of my husband and my mom, all in one year."

At 9 a.m. today, Bruin will begin orthopedic surgery. Donations at the Orthodogs Silver Lining Foundation and IMOM, both nonprofit organizations that provide financial assistance to families who cannot afford medical care for the family dog, are paying for the surgery.

"I cannot believe this is happening," Stanley said. "Bruin just could not wait any longer and this is a miracle and I hope inspiration for others to not lose hope."

When Stanley got the dog, she was recovering from a kidney transplant.

"When I took her into my heart, I was ready for a challenge," Stanley said. "Bruin was a challenge. Rottweilers are aloof and strong-headed and very smart. I had my work cut out for me."

Bruin and Stanley volunteer at a hospital and the dog was working on training to become a therapy dog.

Then the Rottweiler ruptured the cranial ligaments in both back legs.

"Bruin is the sweetest baby in the word, but she is all Rottweiler," Stanley said. "She is very proud. So when she cries because she can't get on my bed anymore or limps across the lawn instead of walking, it must hurt more than anyone could imagine for her to react that way."



Vickie Stanley sits with her dog Bruin.
(MIKE DIRKS/TIMES-NEWS)

The recovery is going to be long and difficult on her pet, Stanley said.

The estimate to repair both knees was \$4,255. Stanley was first approved for a \$500 CareCredit loan.

Then Bruin was accepted for fundraising assistance by OSLF and IMOM. OSLF pledged \$1,500 towards Bruin's second knee surgery. Stanley managed to raise an additional \$200.

"I can't stop thanking them for making it possible for Bruin to live a pain-free life," Stanley said.

OSLF supports medical treatment for dogs with orthopedic needs, as well as service dogs with any medical need that assist disabled individuals, said Amy Mail, agency spokesperson.

"Many people rely on their dog for assistance, companionship, love and more, but if they are low income, they may not be able afford to pay for their dog's medical needs," Mail said.

Mail said OSLF has pledged to cover the remaining cost of Bruin's care, but the organizations' funds are limited. To make a donation, visit www.oslf.org.