

# Life With “Honey”

by Sherry Rady

*In the second article of our series about PES, Sherry Rady shares some bittersweet moments of life with a dog with PES. We get a glimpse of the widespread neurological and skeletal effects of this syndrome, underscoring that this condition manifests itself throughout the dog, not just in small eye or limited vision. The cluster of symptoms illustrates the difficulties in designing research into PES.*

— Carol Mattingley  
Chair, Neonatal Committee

**W**e brought home our little girl in November and the adventure began. The blind PES pup, soon to be 8 months old, entered our life with a bang. I had no track record with a blind, special needs pup but was sure we could handle the situation.

The first days with Honey, we were much too overprotective. All she wanted was to run around with our other six dogs. Not all of them liked her, they sensed she was different.

Our almost three year old boy Skip has taken her under his wing. He plays with her for hours, which is what she craves. Honey is very active and plays with toys like none of my other dogs.

Honey is hypersensitive to noise and new surroundings, probably due to the blindness. We have incorporated massage to calm her down. I use the Tellington Touch Method of massage each day; she improves and settles down.

Food is a source of hyperactivity and we attempt to get her fed ASAP morning and evening. Honey has a insatiable appetite. She remains thin but is well proportioned and has a nice curly coat.

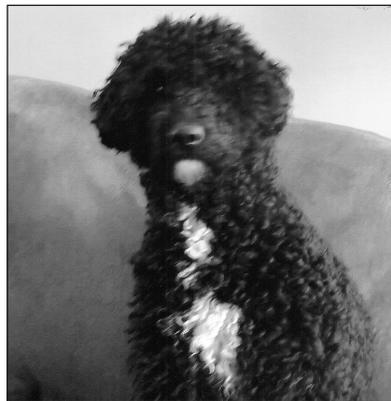
Urine and fecal control seems to be totally lacking and it is the biggest hardship we face right now with Honey. She is not incontinent as she postures to urinate and defecate. She currently has a bladder infection and we are on our second round of antibiotics for it. Honey defecates 4-6 times a day. We sometimes can get her out in time but she wears pants in the house when I cannot watch her to take her out. Each and every morning we must clean her crate and give her a bath. This winter has been very cold and I do not leave her out

long, or myself to watch if she goes. Sometimes she will circle for as long as 20 minutes before she is able to go.

Her weight has improved, gaining about 5 lbs, and she looks good. The other dogs are becoming more tolerant of Honey at our insistence. She loves their company but she is definitely a special needs girl. She understands the growl “you have gone too far” and has learned to back off when the others think she is too much in their face.

Her head is very small for her size. She exhibits quite different behaviors and activity levels. She cannot settle down enough to learn or even remember a lot of commands. She is reactive to noises that are new and now barks when someone comes to the door.

We took Honey to the University of Wisconsin, Madison for a complete workup in December. They were happy to



see her and of course confirmed many things we already knew. Microphthalmia, Microphakia, bilateral cataracts, suspected microcephaly. Honey had low platelets from birth; they are now in the normal ranges. We will follow up for a neurological exam and also dental exam. Her teeth are shedding the enamel from the tips on down toward the gum line.

Honey has been a challenge for us but we love her presence in the house and are so impressed with her confidence and bravery around the other dogs.

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*“Some people come in our life  
as blessings. Some come in your life  
as lessons.”*  
— Mother Theresa

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Honey exploring

I love this quote and feel it applies to our companions as well. Honey has come into our lives as a blessing -- as she snuggles up on the couch, learned “wait,” and also as a lesson that others might use in the future study of PES. 🐾

**Microphthalmia:** abnormally small eyes  
**Micophakia:** small eye lens  
**Bilateral cataracts:** cataracts in both eyes  
**Microcephaly:** abnormally small head