

A Ferret Family Rescue Story

A ferret family finds a second home after enduring terrible conditions before being rescued.

By Lisa Kaliski

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Mikey bit when he was bathed, so he was named after Mike Tyson.

Photos Courtesy Lisa Kaliski

George the ferret was interested in everything around him, and was named after Curious George.

On a cold, dreary November day in 2004, I rescued a family of nine ferrets — four girls and five boys. Their owner had passed away, and her husband called the ferret rescue asking for someone to pick up the ferret family.

The home was in deplorable condition. I smelled the odor of cigarettes and dirty litter boxes as I approached the front door. The ferrets were crammed into two large dog crates in a 10 by 12 foot room. My heart broke when I saw nine pairs of eyes staring at me through the crate doors, pleading with me to let them out.

I opened the crate doors, and the ferrets ran over each other trying to get out. When I saw inside the crates, I understood why they exited quickly. The crates were filthy. The food bowls and water bottles were empty. The contents of the litter boxes were overflowing onto the bedding. The ferret family slept on top of each other on the only sections not covered in feces. Click images to enlarge

Turner was named after Turner in the movie Turner And Hooch.

Photos Courtesy Lisa Kaliski

Molly the ferret just looked like a Molly, hence her name.

The neglect of this precious ferret family angered me. They were thin. Four of them looked sickly. One bald little girl barely had enough strength to crawl back into one of the crates after one of the other ferrets pushed her out. The husband claimed he did not know she was sick. I didn't believe him. My heart, however, went out to him when I realized he was grieving. The responsibilities for caring for both his wife and the ferrets must have overwhelmed him. Fortunately, he realized the family needed more care than he could give them and signed them over to the rescue without hesitation.

I left with the ferrets, driving with the windows open because their odor was so overwhelming. After I arrived at the ferret rescue, I bathed the ferrets and set them up in a large cage with clean bedding, full water bottles and full food bowls. Two had names; those without names I had fun naming. The ferret family was officially named Lottie, Sammie, Mikey, George, Jay, Turner, KK, Minnie and Molly. Their personalities were unique.

Mikey (aka Mike Tyson) bit me when I gave him a bath. George (aka Curious George) was interested in everything going on around him. KK was named after a friend of mine because they had the same ornery personality. Turner's name came from one of my favorite movies, Turner and Hooch. The little bald girl I named Minnie because she was petite. I named Jay after an acquaintance. Lastly, Molly just looked like a Molly.

Sadly, Minnie died less than 12 hours later in the arms of another volunteer. Jay, Sammie, and KK died in the months following their rescue. My husband and I adopted Turner, Mikey, Molly, George and Lottie.

Photo Courtesy Lisa Kaliski

Lottie the ferret was the last member of the ferret family to cross over the Rainbow Bridge.

Five years after this precious ferret family came into my life, Lottie, the last family member, crossed the Rainbow Bridge. She reunited with her ferret family two days before Christmas.

Lisa Kaliski and her husband live in Missouri and have been owned by ferrets for 7½ years. The couple either rescued them personally or adopted them from a ferret rescue. All of the ferrets have provided them with laughter, comfort and strength. Five rambunctious ferret girls currently own them — and their antics keep Kaliski and her husband on their toes!



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