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# GENTRY

## THE JEWELRY ISSUE

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Tilly and Iggy Clemons with their pups, Annie and Oscar.

# ANNIE'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Two sisters are determined to save the animal world, one pup at a time.

**P**oor little orphan Annie was a forgotten pup—a victim of an illegal backyard-breeding situation, suffering for years in a small wire cage with a cold stone floor. As a result of someone's total disregard for her health and well being, this sweet little 6-year-old silky Terrier is deaf and suffers from both neurological and emotional problems. Whereas many potential adopters might shy away from Annie's challenges, San Francisco's Tilly (11) and Iggy (9) Clemons were undeterred, adopting not only Annie, but also another troubled pup named Oscar, long before special-needs animal adoptions were trending.

Tilly and Iggy, both self-proclaimed animal fanatics, are living proof that you're never too young to make a difference. Each has

a resume that already includes spending summers at San Francisco's SPCA and creating multiple lemonade stands designed to benefit various animal organizations. "We chose Family Dog Rescue because they save dogs of all kinds who need extra loving care and attention," explains Tilly confidently. "This includes dogs who are sick or who have disabilities like Annie and Oscar." Both girls stay well rounded through sports and music lessons, along with fostering their budding art skills. But clearly, their special pups come first.

"Annie is a very 'unique' dog," Iggy explains. "She does many strange things because of her bad early life, but we understand she has been through a lot so we give her tons of extra love all the time." Sadly, Annie's years in a cold cage mean that she can't lay on a bare floor, not even on a rug, so the girls have placed eight dog beds strategically around the house to ensure her belly always stays warm and dry. The Clemons sisters' devotion doesn't stop there; they are learning sign language and teaching Annie as well in an effort to better communicate with their sweet new pet.

Annie's brother Oscar is a senior dog who suffers from Cushing's disease, which has resulted in hormonal and weight issues. Upon meeting the 11-year-old pooch, it's immediately clear that he lives up to his full name: Oscar the Grouch. He is intensely protective of his home and is known in the neighborhood as a bit of a bully. Fortunately, his bark is worse than his bite.

Tilly confides, "Deep down, he is a complete softy who just wants to cuddle and eat." Oscar is also the perfect watchdog, barking loudly at strangers and sleeping in the girls' rooms every night. "Oscar likes to bark a lot," says Iggy, laughing. "He's a perfect brother for Annie because she can't hear all the noise he makes!"

With the holiday season in full swing, Annie and Oscar continue to bring joy and happiness to the Clemons home. After all little Annie has endured, one can bet she's eager to enjoy her first Christmas with her newfound family. Tilly shares, "It is exciting to have Annie here for the first time and see her new stocking added to our fireplace."

And as always, it seems Oscar will be singularly focused on delicious holiday goodies. "He just loves the holidays because of all the food!" Iggy adds with a giggle. "And he puts his mark on every Christmas tree that is outside on the street waiting to be recycled after the holidays!" Santa always knows who's naughty and nice. ♦ —CORY COOK

*Tilly and Iggy invite you to make a difference in a perfectly imperfect pet's life this holiday season. Please visit [www.wearefamilydog.com](http://www.wearefamilydog.com).*

PHOTO: JACK HUTCHESON