

Faces of Kansas City: Ebenezer the donkey

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GRANDVIEW, MO (KCTV) -

Some call a 32-year-old donkey in Grandview who lives in a barn a rock star because of his huge following of fans.

And like any celebrity, he's a little eccentric - if he likes a person, he may lick them.

Right off the bat, this media hog showed some love for KCTV5's camera by licking the lens. This donkey has his own calendar, website and even his own street sign.

"Somebody said if you stop once, you'll stop again. That's exactly what happened - it's like an addiction. I can't stop," said Joe Dimino who helps support the donkey.

Years ago, Dimino was driving to work in Grandview when he noticed a donkey. Dimino stopped, walked up to the fence, and Ebenezer came up to greet him – the two have been friends, so to speak, ever since.

"The thing about Ebenezer, it's strange to see a donkey in a pasture off main street in a town like a Grandview. He has an infectious personality. When you stop and see him, the bray is the best thing," Dimino said.

Everybody from kids to adults love him.

"You can't hide the smile and the giggle. It's awesome," Dimino said.

Visitors drop by all the time. Linda DeGroot and a friend drove over from Lee's Summit to meet Ebenezer.

"I can't tell you, it's kind of peaceful out here. I guess it's the idea that this donkey is 32-years-old and just keeps going," said DeGroot when asked what it is about visiting the donkey she enjoys.

For a donkey, Ebenezer is a senior citizen.

"I don't know, I've just always loved animals and I hate to see them suffer," Shirley Phillips said.

Ebenezer's owners are facing health problems of their own and that's when people like Shirley and Randy Phillips decided to help the aging donkey.

"We found out from the vet he had been injured badly and his muscles have atrophied on the left side. It's a struggle for him to get up," Shirley said.

Every day the couple comes out to feed Ebenezer. They mash up food so it's easier for him to swallow and they even shred his carrots. They make sure he gets regular care from a vet and just recently they had Ebenezer's barn wired for electricity so he'll stay warm in the winter.

Some would even say the couple babies the donkey.

"We even put socks on Ebenezer. When it's really cold, we cut the toes out of socks we bought," Shirley said.

To help pay for the costs of taking care of Ebenezer his friends put together a calendar, which has since become a big seller.

"He is totally here because people love him, that's the coolest thing," Dimino said. "He was on the brink of leaving us a couple years ago."

Ebenezer's 2012 calendars have been quite the hit – so far, around 600 copies have been sold.

Anyone who would like to help an old donkey out can buy one through [his website](#).

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