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Ill Woman Forced To Give Up Dogs

Shelter to care for pets during Mary Bower's last days

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It's never easy saying goodbye. A woman with a terminal illness is saying goodbye to her best friends who have been at her side through it all.



Sissy and Bubba have been constant and comforting passengers as 53-year-old Mary Bower travels life's roughest road. "I'm in the last stage of congestive heart failure." Unable to work and forced to sell her house, Mary has found a loving home for her companions. "Let's go find the toys. There you go. Good job."

Sissy and Bubba will now live at Hooves & Paws Animal Rescue near Glenwood, Iowa.

Caring for rescued dogs and horses costs \$75,000 a year, paid through donations and owner Genea Stoops' pocket. Many are eventually adopted, but Sissy and Bubba will stay at the shelter where Mary can always find them.

"These guys will be forever residents and we want to make it so that when Mary is ready go, these dogs will visit her," says Stoops. "We'll take the dogs to Mary."

Though love for her dogs is strong, Mary knows her heart is failing. "This is the beginning of a whole new adventure for you." And while she still has the strength, this is the best time for her to say goodbye. "You see me in your dreams, okay?"

Hooves & Paws has found homes for 75 horses and large dogs, but in these tough economic times, more pet owners cannot afford to care for large animals, so they call the shelter for help.

[Click here](#) for information about a Hooves & Paws fundraiser this summer.

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