

Hollywood Mogul Saves Dogs

“The Simpsons” creator turned passion for dogs into a rewarding foundation.

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High in the hills of Malibu, in the same zip code that is home to stars like Britney Spears and Pamela Anderson, sits the Sam Simon Foundation, a luxury dog shelter founded by Sam Simon, one of the creators of “The Simpsons.”

The veteran TV producer, who spoke with “60 Minutes” correspondent Morley Safer, freely admits to being a “dog nut.”

“I used to deny that I was a dog nut and people would ask me, ‘Well, what is a dog nut?’ And I would say, ‘Well, to me the line was when you start dressing up your dogs.’ And then I had to qualify that I don’t do that except on, you know, Halloween or special occasions.”

Simon, who made millions from one of TV’s longest-running comedies, is deadly serious when it comes to his foundation, which rescues abandoned dogs and trains them to be service dogs.

Barb Velasquez, Simon’s chief dog trainer, scouts Southern California shelters for the lucky candidates. “The hardest part of all this is looking at a dog that you know is not at all suitable for our program. And just having to walk away,” she admits.

The Sam Simon Foundation is entirely funded by Simon himself – to the tune of millions of dollars a year. “It’s well spent just for the pleasure it gives me, honestly.”

And despite a shelf full of Emmys, Simon says the satisfaction he gets from helping dogs will sustain him for life. “There’s an hour a week when I come here and they bring out some little dogs that we’ve adopted from the shelter. It’s the best hour of my week. It makes me really happy.

To learn more about the Sam Simon Foundation, visit <http://www.samsimonfoundation.com/>