



The Peppertree POST

2013 Volume 1

What do we do? Rescue dogs of good temperament who need new homes • Cooperate with and assist other rescues, shelters, and animal control • Educate the public about how to obtain a companion animal.

Mother and child reunion

By Mary Ellen Grimaldi

While Peppertree's top priority is to help local dogs at risk of euthanasia due to loss of their homes, we do reserve a small number of spots for southern dogs. Typically they come from a shelter in Georgia where we have a trusted associate handpick dogs based on their temperaments. The state of shelters down south is usually dismal, often overcrowded with high euthanasia rates. Many times the dogs are in poor condition or are heartworm positive, or both.

Sweet Pea and Jack are mother and son who were two of the lucky ones; they made it out and they headed north to Peppertree! Jack, whose original Peppertree name was Paddington, came to us in mid-August 2011. He was approximately three years old and was very shy and timid. At his first adoption clinic he stayed out of the hubbub as much as possible and simply observed things. Paddington's coat was matted and dull and there was a large area on his back that needed to be shaved and treated due to a nasty skin infection. On September 8, 2011, volunteer Rick Hartt and his wife Julia MacDonald took their new family member home and dubbed him Jack. With a healthy diet and lots of love, Jack has become one happy and handsome boy. His breed mix is a guess but he very much resembles the type of dog referred to as a "farm shepherd" or "farm collie."

A little less than six months later Peppertree took another dog from the same shelter, again a dog recommended by our fellow rescuer Chrissy. She mentioned that the dog, called Charlotte at that time, was believed to be Jack's mother. Charlotte came north and into a foster home where she was christened Sweet Pea after the 2 year old daughter's favorite Bath and Body Works fragrance. It was obvious that in her four or so years Sweet Pea had had a few litters. It was also clear that she loved human children as well as the canine variety. At first glance she didn't seem to resemble Jack much. We speculated a great deal about her breed mix but



settled on Blackmouth Cur/Feist, both southern hunting type dogs.

Sweet Pea is not a flashy dog; she is very much what Peppertree refers to as "plain brown wrapper," a look of which we are quite fond. At adoption clinics she was quiet and well-behaved, but always very glad to leave! Her three foster homes all quickly learned what an endearing dog she is and how strongly she bonds with her people. In February Sweet Pea and Jack met for the first time since coming north, and it was immediately obvious that this was a reunion! Side by side the resemblance was striking; Jack looked like a long-haired version of Sweet Pea. The two dogs romped and clearly were happy to see each other again. Since their adoptive and foster homes were in the same area, mother and son started having occasional play dates. Both dogs enrolled in basic obedience with Cydney Cross, then went on to earn their Canine Good Citizen certification. In December, once again together "paw in paw", Sweet Pea and Jack were certified as Therapy Dogs by the AKC-approved organization Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs, Inc. They visit a local school and listen as first and second graders read to them, and call on nursing homes and libraries.

After a few months, Sweet Pea's foster parents Charlene and Howard came to realize what Sweet Pea had known for a while - she was already home. Her adoption was finalized exactly one year after Jack went home with Rick and Julia: September 8, 2012.

The Doggy Diet

By Peggy Frezon, Rensselaer, New York

The numbers on the scale bounced up and down as my spaniel, Kelly, wiggled: 36, 34, 38...my eyes grew wide when the screen finally read 41. “She’s up three pounds since her last visit,” the vet said, turning to me and my husband, Mike. “For a small dog like her, that isn’t good. It’s like 15 pounds on a person.”

“I’m feeding her less,” I said.

“Are you measuring it?” the vet asked. She held up a small plastic cup and pointed to a line on it. “She should only get half a cup twice a day.” Our scoop at home definitely held more than that. “And no table scraps,” the vet continued.

Mike shot me a look. Just last night I’d given Kelly pizza crusts during dinner. “She shouldn’t beg,” Mike had scolded. I knew I shouldn’t feed her from the table, but one look at her big brown pleading eyes and I’d given in. A little bit won’t hurt her, I’d told myself.

The vet ran her stethoscope over Kelly’s chest and abdomen. “If she doesn’t lose weight, she’ll be at risk for joint, skin and heart problems, even diabetes and cancer.”

Wait. Hadn’t I heard that before? Just a few weeks earlier my doctor had given me the same warnings. I weighed 171



pounds—way too much for my five-foot frame. Gyms, health books, diets—I’d tried them all. Nothing worked. Besides, I’d settled into a comfy routine. I worked from home, so during the day it was just Kelly and me. Only eight steps separated my office from the kitchen. How could I resist taking a break? I’d grab cookies for me and a treat for Kelly—she deserved it for keeping me company. And exercise? I sat at the computer while Kelly followed a patch of sunlight across the floor.

I looked at my chubby dog and the vet’s concerned expression. It hit me: My bad habits were hurting Kelly.

It was the beginning of a new year. The perfect time for a change, for me and my dog. First, I tackled our eating habits. At lunchtime the next day I carefully measured a half cup of Kelly’s food. It hardly filled the bottom of her bowl! I’ve really been overfeeding her, I thought guiltily. I looked from her bowl to my plate where I’d made a sandwich that was almost toppling over it was so laden with meat and cheese. I’ve been overfeeding myself too. I remade it with an ounce of turkey, a slice of low-fat cheese and a smear of mustard. I was surprised at how good it was.

By spring I’d learned to cook healthier. One night I was craving takeout. Instead, I made a salad with tomatoes from Mike’s garden and skinless chicken breasts with green beans. “Delicious,” Mike said.

I had to agree. But Kelly whined at my feet. “Can’t I just give her a little treat?” I asked Mike. He shot me that look again, so I tossed Kelly a carrot. Not yet convinced, she hid it under the coffee table.

Both of us lost weight just by eating better. Now that the weather was nice, adding exercise was next. One May afternoon I finished work early. I looked at Kelly. She was sprawled on the back of the couch. “Time for a walk, girl,” I called. Kelly barely raised her head. I tried again. “Let’s go, Kel!” Kelly plodded toward me, stopping to stretch. I snapped on her leash. As



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Doggy Diet, continued.

soon as I opened the door the fresh air hit us. I took a deep breath. How invigorating! Kelly's nose lifted too. She swung her head and broke into a trot.

We walked farther than I thought we would—or could. “We’ll get out every day,” I promised. And we did, if it was sunny.

Then the rainy days piled up that fall. We returned to our sedentary ways...and the pounds stopped coming off. One day I glanced up from the computer and saw Kelly flopped on the couch, her big eyes sad. Lord, Kelly trusts me and I’ve let her down. Myself too. Help me. Show me how to do the right thing for us.

A few days later, I saw an ad for a used elliptical machine. I wasn't looking for one, but there it was as if it were looking for me. “What do you think?” I asked Mike.

“Great idea!” he said. “Put it in the living room.” Perfect. On dismal days I’d hop on the elliptical and toss Kelly her ball. She’d run after it full tilt. Before long we were both full of energy. But it wasn't always easy. Once I pulled an all-nighter to meet a deadline. Tired and hungry, I went into the kitchen and opened the fridge. A friend had given Mike a chocolate cake; it

sat there, frosting gleaming. I’ve exercised all week, I thought. I deserve this. But Kelly looked up at me with those big eyes. Okay, Lord, I get it. I grabbed a yogurt and gave Kelly a baby carrot. She flipped it in the air with her mouth and ate it.

Turns out Kelly and I make a great team. In just a year I lost 41 pounds and Kelly's at her goal weight, down six pounds. These days we have a new routine: I'll work for a few hours then march those eight steps into the kitchen. Only now I grab us both a nutritious snack. Kelly deserves a mom who will keep her healthy and stay healthy herself. That's the best trick this person learned from her dog.

“The Doggy Diet” by Peggy Frezon is reprinted with permission from Guideposts magazine. Copyright © 2008 by Guideposts. All rights reserved. Guideposts.org

Peggy's books are available on Amazon.com:

Heart to Heart, Hand in Paw
InspiringVoices (c) 2012

And: *Dieting with my Dog*,
Hubble & Hattie
(c)2011



What we're reading...



Children's books:

Unlikely Friendships: 47 Remarkable Stories from the Animal Kingdom
by Jennifer S. Holland.

A collection of stories depicting the unlikely and warm friendships between species. Each story includes a color photo.

Because of Shoe: and other dog stories. Edited by Ann M. Martin
Adventures abound in this illustrated anthology of short stories from some of America's best-loved children's authors, including Mark Teague, Thacher Hurd, and Ann M. Martin.

Blogs:

The Other End of the Leash
<http://www.patriciamccconnell.com/theotherendoftheleash/>

Dr. Patricia McConnell's forum for people who are both intellectually and emotionally fascinated by the behavior of the animals at both ends of the leash.

The Grady Report
<http://thegradyreport.wordpress.com/>

The story of our own Grady, beautiful blind Golden who was adopted by writer Betty Sleep of New Brunswick, Canada.

Nonfiction:

Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home by Rupert Sheldrake.

A groundbreaking exploration of animal behavior that proves that there is a strong connection between humans and animals that lies beyond scientific understanding.

Merle's Door by Ted Kerasote

Using the latest in wolf research and exploring issues of animal consciousness and leadership, Ted Kerasote takes us on the journey he and Merle shared. A love story, a story of independence and partnership.

Fiction:

Hannah's Dream by Diane Hammond.

The well-crafted, heartfelt story of a 41-year love affair--between an elephant named Hannah and her long-time keeper. A beautifully told tale rich in heart, humor, and intelligence.

A Dog's Journey by W. Bruce Cameron.

Buddy has searched for his purpose through several eventful lives, and is sure that he has found and fulfilled it. Then he meets curious baby Clarity, and realizes this little girl very much needs him.

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Run alone or with your favorite four-legged friend! Dogs are welcome at this 5K, as long as they get along with others.

Registration starts at 8 am and the race kicks off at 9:15 am!

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To Register or for more
information. Questions?
Call 518-435-7425 or e-mail
rescue@peppertree.org.



Peppertree Volunteer Spotlight

Meet: Rick Hartt

Occupation: Retired after 33 years at RPI - 28 years as Director of the Student Union.

How long have you been volunteering with Peppertree, and what are your roles?

I started volunteering in August 2011. I have handled dogs at clinics, transported older Golden Retrievers because Peppertree is so good at placing the elders, driven dogs to the vet, sent out press releases, and am a back-up driver for Peppertree's van, the Toppermobile.



Name and breed of dogs in your family?

Jack, who was Peppertree's Paddington, is our only dog. He looks like a southern farm dog – an English Shepherd/Farm Collie mix. [Ed. note: You can read much more about Jack in our cover article, "Mother and Child Reunion".]

Any other animals in the home?

Julie and I have always had cats. This generation is now 17½ years old.

How or why did you come to be a Peppertree volunteer?

I would stop at the dog clinics at Capital Agway. I especially liked the Peppertree volunteers.

What surprised you the most about rescue once you became more involved?

When I think of one Peppertree volunteer, I think of ten and then another ten people who do so much on a daily basis. This level of devotion is above and beyond.

Do you have a favorite breed? If so what is it?

My grandparents had a collie, Sandy. When my grandpa died, my grandmother didn't feel that she could care for Sandy and gave him to a farmer in Vermont, over 50 miles away. 3 months later, Sandy found his way back to my grandmother never to be surrendered again.

What is your favorite activity to do with your dog(s)?

I really enjoy the work that Jack does as a therapy dog.

Does one Peppertree Dog stick out in your mind?

There are many fun dogs such as Bluto and Jeter, but the one I remember most was ultimately my saddest Peppertree time. I handled Holly, a young mixed breed who had been found as a stray, at an adoption clinic. She seemed like a sweetheart in her kerchief, cuddled up to me. But once she was settled in a foster home, she exhibited serious territorial aggression. Peppertree volunteers concluded that they would not feel safe with her in their own homes and therefore did not attempt to place her in an adoptive home. Even though I understood this intellectually, emotionally, losing Holly made me cry. I will never forget Holly. It taught me that no matter how much I want something to work, sometimes it just doesn't.

What is your favorite thing about Peppertree?

My favorite thing is that Mary Ellen and David recommended that Julie and I adopt Jack.

Have you ever been or considered becoming a foster failure? Why or why not?

I joke with Julie about fostering or adopting a second dog. However, as long as we have our two 17½ year old cats, Midnight and Madeline, no more dogs or cats are in our future.

Pose a question for the next volunteer in the spotlight.

What was your first volunteer activity and why did you get involved?

THE WONDERFUL RECALL

by Patrice O'Connor

If you teach your dog nothing else, the recall (“come to me”) is a command that could be crucial or even life-saving for your dog. We’ve all probably been in a situation where your dog darts out the front door into the street, spies a squirrel in the park, or finds something smelly to roll in while out in the yard. There are many reasons why you might need your dog to come to you reliably and without hesitation.

What’s In a Name?

The first step to teaching the recall is to make sure your dog knows his/her name, especially an adopted dog. Names/words are just sounds to a dog. It doesn’t matter what you call your dog but it’s easier for a dog to learn a name with no more than two syllables and the long “e” sound at the end of the name (Sparky, Jessie, Buddy, Petey, etc) works best to get a dog’s attention. Say the dog’s name and then say “Watch Me!” Get him to make eye contact with you by holding a treat near your face. Immediately reward him if he responds to his name and looks at you. You can practice this by using a portion of your dog’s regular daily meal and during your regular routine around the house and on walks.

Getting Started

The goal of teaching the recall is for you to be the best thing in your dog’s life—better than chipmunks, other dogs, stray cats, and the road. For recall training use the best treats possible—something that your dog does not eat routinely like deli meat, microwaved hotdogs, cooked chicken or liver, or freeze-dried liver. Use these treat for recall training only. If your dog isn’t food motivated, use one of his favorite toys like a squeaker toy, tug toy or ball and only use those toys for recall training. You will also need a six foot leash and a 20-40 foot long line. You can buy a long leash at any pet supply store or you can use nylon roping or a clothesline.

Recall 101

For this article, we will be training a female rescue dog named Sally. Training sessions with Sally should be kept short—about 10-15 minutes two times a day. Start by putting Sally on the six foot leash. Try to get her to sit and “wait.” I like to teach “wait” which means sit still but “you will be moving soon.” Walk backwards to the end of the leash and say “Sally Come” or “Sally Here”. You should use a happy, high-pitched voice and only say the command once. Repeating a command over and over again really doesn’t get the dog’s attention and actually becomes background noise to the dog. If Sally doesn’t respond, gently lure her to you and reward her with a treat and praise. You can’t overdo the praise and excitement when you are teaching the recall!



Once Sally is coming reliably on the six foot leash, you will switch to the long lead for recalls outside. Let Sally roam around the yard. Use your “happy” voice and say “Sally, here!” If she comes right away, give her a yummy reward and tons of praise. If she doesn’t come, don’t repeat the command, and reel her in with the long lead. When you have her in front of you, treat her and praise her. You shouldn’t be discouraged if you have to lure her in. Keep the lessons positive and pile on the praise. The purpose of using the long line is to provide a scenario in which your dog is distracted and you want her to learn to listen to the command and respond no matter what she is doing. As with the leash training, keep these sessions short—about 10-15 minutes. Dogs have very short attention spans and you want to keep the lessons fun and interesting. Always keep the long lead on your dog as you practice the recall. You may think initially that your dog is 100% reliable, but it takes many months of practice. Try to practice this in areas where there are distractions. The more your dog comes to you in situations where she is distracted, the more reliable the recall will become.

A variation of the long lead training is to put Sally on the long lead, let her roam around and then run away from her (holding onto the end of the lead). Try to get Sally to chase you and call her name and the recall command. If she does “catch” you, praise her and give her lots of treats. This changes the training up a bit and can be a fun game for your dog.

Golden Rules of the Recall

- Never call your dog to you to punish her. The recall should always be positive. The goal is to teach your dog that coming to you is the best thing in his or her world!
- Always reserve the yummiest treats to reward your dog for coming to you.
- Practice every day and don’t get discouraged. The recall could save your dog’s life someday.
- Never call your dog to you from a “stay” command. “Stay” means “stay where you are until I come back to you.”

FOUR THINGS YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR DOG'S COMMERCIAL DIET

By Teresa Jurdy

If you've been feeding your dog a dry kibble and have been thinking about switching to a raw meat-based diet but aren't yet ready to make that change, even the best commercial diets can be improved with the addition of appropriate fresh foods. When and if you decide to feed your dog a raw meat-based diet, you should do some reading about the best way to incorporate this into your particular dog's life. It isn't super complicated but feeding raw does require some basic nutritional knowledge and there are plenty of well written articles about how to make the switch from commercial kibble to fresh foods.

In the meantime, here are some of the best foods you can add to your dog's diet to improve the nutrition and to add some variety. If you know your dog is allergic to any of these suggestions, of course you should avoid that food! And if you are concerned about your dog gaining weight, cut back a bit on the portion of kibble when adding fresh foods.

1. EGGS:

With their combination of high-quality protein and fat along with a wide variety of vitamins and minerals, eggs are inexpensive and very easy to feed. Egg whites are more easily digested when cooked, while yolks retain more nutritional value if fed raw. Most dogs have no trouble with bacteria in raw eggs, but it's fine to feed soft-cooked, hard-cooked or scrambled eggs. Do not feed the egg shell to your dog, as it contains more calcium than your dog probably needs.

A large egg is approximately 70 calories, which is fine for a medium or larger dog, but smaller dogs would do better with half an egg.

2. YOGURT:

A natural source of probiotics, look for brands that contain more than just *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, such as Stonyfield's unsweetened plain yogurt which is inexpensive and easy to

feed. Stick to low-fat or non-fat plain yogurt - you can add some banana or berries if you wish. Low fat yogurt has approximately 20 calories per ounce, so even small dogs can enjoy a spoonful without concern about reducing food portions.

3. SARDINES:

Fish supply omega 3 fatty acids EPA and DHA that are good for the skin, coat and help to regulate the immune system and reduce inflammation, which is beneficial for dogs with arthritis, allergies and autoimmune disease.

One small can of sardines provides about 175 mg. of omega



3 fatty acids. Use sardines packed in water and not oil. Other canned fish options, especially for larger dogs, are jack mackerel and pink salmon. The soft fine fish bones in canned fish pose no problem for most dogs.

4. VEGETABLES AND FRUITS:

Berries are packed with antioxidants, especially blueberries. Personally, I buy the bags of frozen organic mixed berries, thaw and add these to yogurt for my dogs. Shredded fresh apple, mashed banana and even melon are enjoyed by most dogs. Obviously, don't feed pits and avoid grapes and raisins which can cause kidney failure when eaten in large quantities.

Leafy greens are a better choice than starchy foods like grains and potatoes. Vegetables are more bio-available when fed cooked but some raw veggies such as carrots, zucchini slices and even frozen peas make great low calorie snacks.

Cruciferous vegetables like brussel sprouts and broccoli are best fed cooked and in small amounts to avoid gas.

Perhaps when you get comfortable offering your dog small amounts of fresh whole foods, the natural progression will be to want to learn more about adding raw meat/bone and cutting back on the amount of commercial kibble.

*Teresa Jurdy is not a canine nutritionist, but feeds her own dogs primarily a raw meat/bone diet, with the addition of other fresh foods.

*The information in this article has been compiled from an article featured in the Whole Dog Journal.





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Dear Jenny,

My guardian recently adopted a large, young active dog. I am not usually a skittish fellow but this new dog wants to "play" with me, chases me like I'm one of his squeaker toys, and grabs my tail. How can my people train this beast so that we can co-exist?

Sincerely, *Mr. Peepers*





Dear Mr. Peepers,

My condolences to you, gentle friend. Your guardians need to be educated as to the differences in how dogs and cats play. Dogs are rough and tumble and use a lot of body contact in their play. We felines are much more gentle and our play is directed at practicing prey skills. Dogs, especially large ones, should never be allowed to play in a physical way with cats because of the size difference. Your guardians can teach the dog the "Leave It" command. They should let the dog drag his leash around the house so they can quickly grab him if need be. When the beast lunges toward you, your folks should gently lure the dog away from you and say "leave it" and reward the dog with a delectable dog treat. This exercise will need to be repeated thousands of times because, needless to say, canines are not as quick to learn as we intelligent felines are. Most dogs will learn to associate "leave it" with a yummy treat and will eventually stop chasing you. However some dogs have a high prey drive and may not be able to overcome their primal need to "hunt" the gentle feline. Good luck, Mr. Peepers, and stay safe!

Sincerely, *Jennyanydots*

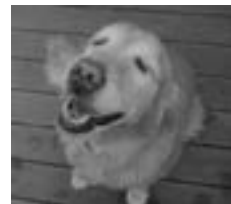
Jennyanydots is a 13 year old grey tabby who unfortunately has had to live with numerous large canines. She currently resides with Teddy the Lab, three male cats who she affectionately refers to as the Three Stooges, and Patrice and Marty O'Connor.

To subscribe to the Peppertree Post, visit <http://www.peppertree.org/newsletters>. To correct an address or unsubscribe, please email rescue@peppertree.org with "Peppertree Post correction" in the subject.

Foster Homes Needed

Please . . . consider opening up your heart and home to one of our dogs or puppies for a few days or weeks to give them a chance at a new life.



We have to turn away many animals in need because of a shortage of foster homes.

Most of our dogs are fostered before being placed, so if you own a Peppertree dog, your pet probably benefitted from the kindness of one or multiple foster home volunteers.

Won't you show another dog or pup the same kindness?