Pilots to the Rescue, for a Rescue

Peppertree Rescue got a little help from the sky in June when “Pilots N Paws,” a group of volunteer pilots, jumped in to help rescue a German Shorthaired Pointer (GSP) from a small Michigan shelter by transporting her to the Capital District.

Hershey, a nine-year-old female GSP, was turned into the shelter after her family felt that she was “no longer useful because her hunting days were over,” according to longtime Peppertree volunteer Katie Muller who also works closely with GSP Rescue. The Michigan shelter had been hit hard by the economy, was full of dogs and was going to have to euthanize Hershey because of space constraints. Fortunately for Hershey, the shelter staff really liked her and reached out to GSP Rescue in Michigan. The GSP rescue was inundated with dogs and had no room so a volunteer posted Hershey online to spread the word about her plight. Our volunteer Katie read about Hershey and asked Peppertree to get involved, but knew that out-of-state transports can be difficult to arrange. The shelter agreed to give Hershey a couple of extra days until arrangements could be made to get her out of the shelter and transport her to New York State.

Never one to give up easily, Katie got in touch with a GSP volunteer who also helps coordinate flights for Pilots N Paws. The GSP volunteer offered to post a request for assistance to the online forum to see if any pilots might be willing to help Hershey. Once two pilots offered assistance, she coordinated the flights needed to get Hershey to the Fulton County Airport in upstate New York. Katie said, “I have to say that was the easiest transport ever! Hershey flew to the little airport five minutes from my house. I brought the pilot’s wife over to Wendy’s to grab a hamburger and then we both headed home. I wasn’t even gone an hour!” It was Peppertree’s first experience with the Pilots N Paws program and coincidentally, it was also the pilots’ first experience with the program. It was a successful, rewarding venture for everyone involved in Hershey’s rescue.

Pilots N Paws, which was established in February 2008, recruits volunteer pilots to fly shelter animals to new homes to save them from euthanasia. The group estimates that it has rescued more than 2,000 animals since it began operations. Air transport can be much less stressful than ground transport on animals that are traveling a long distance. For more information about Pilots N Paws, visit www.pilotsnpaws.org
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 more foster home volunteers.

Won’t you show another dog or pup the same kindness?
Thanks to the over 40 people who braved the rainiest day of summer to come out and support Peppertree Rescue. The picnic made over $600.00! It was so great to see so many Peppertree Alumni strutting their new owners around. See you next summer!
Peppertree Volunteer Spotlight

Meet: Phyllis Cunningham

Occupation? Research Scientist

Volunteer Location? Albany, NY

How long have you been volunteering with Peppertree? About 5 yrs.

What are your volunteer roles? Fund-raising Committee member and foster home for one Peppertree dog.

How or Why did you get involved with volunteering for Peppertree? We first adopted a Peppertree dog who, through no fault of her own, could not stay with us. I felt very guilty that we had jeopardized this dog’s chances for a good home, and began to volunteer with Peppertree to make amends. All turned out well, the dog in question has the forever home she was meant to have and we became involved as volunteers!

Name and Breed of dogs in your family.

Felix – a Golden Doodle

A spot for one Peppertree foster dog.

Any other animals in the home? Just Jack – my husband!

Do you have a favorite breed? If so, what is it? I think it depends on what dog I currently have in front of me! I love many breeds and can even appreciate the characteristics of the breeds I would NEVER own.

What is your favorite activity to do with your dog(s)? Riding my bike with Felix on his WalkyDog® lead beside me is fun and exercise for both of us.

What is your favorite thing about Peppertree?

The people of Peppertree are the best thing about the organization. The variety of personalities, abilities and interests is vast, yet the group functions as a family, complete with all the “fun” of a standard dysfunctional group. Each of us brings our talents for use to better the lives of ‘our’ dogs, and each of us is respected for what we bring. I treasure all the friends I have found with Peppertree, and hope to continue to find more as I carry on as a volunteer.

Toppermobile; A Dream Come True – Mary Ellen Grimald

Peppertree is fortunate to have volunteers with varied talents and work experience. Not to mention volunteers with great generosity of spirit. A few months ago, Lynn Holcomb, who works for a GM dealer, was able to locate a beautiful white 2008 Chevrolet Express Van 1500 that was available for purchase. Peppertree Rescue was able to purchase it through the GMAC Smart auction, an online auction where GM dealers can purchase vehicles from other dealers, directly from GMAC, or from rental car companies without ever leaving the office. Drivers went to Pennsylvania to pick it up and brought it back to Randall Buick GMC in Canandaigua NY where Lynn works. Lynn assisted Peppertree with the insurance and paperwork and then personally delivered the van to Albany.

Peppertree has been dreaming of its own van for a very long time, instead of using volunteers’ personal vehicles some of which had over 200,000 miles, many of those miles accumulated during dog transport. The car manners of Peppertree dogs can be quite varied, and volunteers have been known to lose things like seatbelts, and sometimes whole seats to un-kenneled car riders. Additionally, for the money Peppertree could afford, finding a van in good enough condition was difficult until an anonymous donor, a long-time and steadfast friend of Peppertree, stepped forward.

The van is used to transport dogs to and from clinics at least twice a month and to schlep around the various supplies needed for these clinics. The van is still being outfitted, inside and out, which is also due to generous donations. Inside the van will be equipped with a Havaheart trap in the event that dogs get loose during a transport, and the outside is being decorated with a donated graphic so the van and the organization are easily identified and recognized.

The van has been christened the “Toppermobile” in memory of the son of Peppertree Rescue’s namesake Pepper, a Golden Retriever named Topper.

In addition to the anonymous donor, thank you to all who donate to Peppertree Rescue, as the general financial health of the organization also made this purchase possible without sacrificing the number of dogs Peppertree can assist, or the care they receive.

“A big Peppertree Rescue thanks to E.C. and his crew at Infamous Graphics in Albany for making the van legit with graphics.”