



The Peppertree POST

2015 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.

Combat Buddy

By Peggy Frezon

Military Working Dog Bino earned the American Humane Association Hero Dog Award in 2011. The medal was awarded not only for saving lives on the battlefield, but also for helping returning soldiers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and traumatic brain injuries.

“I don’t want to go on with life anymore,” a brawny soldier named Russell told Bino’s handler, Debbie Kandoll. “I used to enjoy my family. Riding my motorcycle.” Russell’s voice was low. “Not anymore.”

Debbie had heard the tale many times—soldiers returning from service with panic attacks, nightmares, irritability, anger, and depression. “Give us two weeks,” she replied, patting the side of her Dutch shepherd, Bino. “We can help.”

In combat, soldiers know that someone has their back at all times. They often lose that security when they return home. With Debbie’s help, a trained dog becomes their new combat buddy. He always has their back.

Debbie connected Russell with a representative at the local animal shelter to search for his new partner. They met a young black Labrador retriever with bright, intelligent eyes. Russell noted the dog’s calm demeanor. It helped him feel calm, too. “Want to come home with me?” he asked. The dog wagged his tail.

Russell named the dog Harley. For the first two weeks they bonded at home. Caring for the dog helped Russell focus on something other than his own emotions.

After learning basic obedience skills, Russell and Harley were ready to work together with Debbie and Bino. They met at a busy mall. He usually tensed up and felt as if danger was lurking around every corner. “Harley’s got your back,” Debbie told him. “Trust Harley.”

Russell clutched the wide webbed leash. His heart pounded.

“Watch Bino,” Debbie and her dog navigated around a quiet part of the mall.

Russell and Harley sat quietly watching. Now it was their turn. Harley moved forward. Russell focused on his dog. Harley seemed confident, so Russell felt confident.

One time he lost concentration, and the panic rose.



“Kneel down next to your dog and start petting him,” Debbie explained.

Russell leaned in close and ran his hands over the dog’s sleek black fur. As he did, he felt the panic ebb.

“After a while, Harley will sense when you’re anxious. Soon he’ll respond to you before you even realize it yourself.” Harley looked up and wagged. “He’s here for you. You can do this.”

Once, Russell started to feel anxious while standing in a line, insecure about what he couldn’t see behind him. Debbie and Bino demonstrated a maneuver called *Cover my Back*. Bino circled around behind Debbie and sat, pressing against her.

After watching and practicing, Harley and Russell learned *Cover my Back*.

Over two weeks, Debbie and Bino demonstrated how to feel safe in grocery stores, movie theaters and airports. On one of their last sessions, Russell’s wife arrived, and took Debbie aside. She held Debbie’s hands and, with tears in her eyes said, “You’ve given me my husband back. Thank you.”

Russell found the joy in living return. He loved riding his motorcycle again. He even bought a sidecar. Although he and his wife resumed doing many things together, the side car was not for his wife. Harley rode in it.

Together, Bino and Debbie helped more than 50 soldiers with PTSD regain their lives.

Peggy Frezon is a writer for Guideposts magazine and author of books about dogs, including *Heart to Heart*, *Hand in Paw*, and *Dieting with my Dog*. Her new book, *Faithfully Yours*, will be available this fall. Peggy and her husband Mike adopt senior dogs, and feel blessed to have adopted Peppertree goldens Brooks (formerly Parker) and Ike (formerly Burghley). They also rescued 13-year old spaniel-mix, Kelly. Connect with Peggy on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PeggyFrezonBooks>, and at Fetch! the newsletter <http://peggyfrezon.blogspot.com/p/pawsitively-pets.html>.

Making a long-range plan for your pets



By Joan Trombini

Planning for your pets' care in the event of your death or debilitating illness is something that no one likes to think about, but failing to do so can be disastrous. Every year, nearly 100,000 pets face an uncertain future when they are forced into shelters due to the death of their owners. Pet trusts

can be set up with the help of an attorney. A Pet Protection Agreement is a much less expensive, yet effective alternative. Sample forms can be found online. Neither option is subject to probate, and both include instructions on how the designated Guardian should care for your pet. In either case, you must select individuals or organizations that you have spoken to and who have agreed to care for your pet in the event you are no longer able to. Pet care is expensive so it is advisable to provide funds for their care, ideally in a separate account set up so the Guardian can gain immediate access, if necessary. Keeping a card in your wallet that informs emergency personnel who to contact will help to ensure that your pets receive immediate attention when needed. Don't delay in establishing your formal plan and keeping it up to date. There is no greater sense of security than knowing that your beloved pets will be well provided for.

Doris Day Spotlight: JD



By Rich Rini

The dog's name was JD, a 10 year old Beagle mix. Peppertree volunteers Nicole and Alissa went to see JD and found a wonderful old fella in terrible condition, but his temperament shone through and they knew he was "Peppertree material", so JD became a part of our program.

First stop for JD was into a foster home. Tim and Phylisue, and their grown children Meaghan and Will, are former Peppertree adopters and agreed to foster. They and their dogs, Nessa and Blue, welcomed JD into their clan for what was thought to be a short stay.

Meaghan took a special interest in the little orphan and supervised care of the sick dog and the many trips to the vet that were to come.

JD had a number of health problems. He was overweight, had arthritis, liver disease and possibly Cushings's disease. There was also a sizable mass hanging off his back leg. Peppertree

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(A 501 (c) (3) Not-for-Profit Charity)

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stopped short of calling JD a hospice case, but it was close to that. However, thanks to help from the Doris Day Animal Foundation, Peppertree was able to pay for the treatments necessary to save JD. It took some time. Surgery to remove the mass. Meds for his other conditions. Trips to the vet for further testing and treatment. And TLC from his foster family.

His "short stay" with his foster family stretched into weeks and then months while JD healed and began to regain his health. In the beginning, son Will had objected to anything more than a few days as a foster. They didn't need another dog, he thought. As is sometimes the case, a foster dog will sense when one member of a family is not "on board" and show extra attention and devotion to that person. Such was the case with JD and Will. Soon Will was won over and pleading with his family to adopt JD. And so it was.

The adopters recently wrote to us:

"JD's warm personality and never-ending kisses are just some of the signs of affection that he shows to many. We can also happily report that JD has a much better bill of health than originally expected, thanks in part to the care and diet set in

place by Meaghan."

A happy ending for a wonderful family and a wonderful dog! We expect that JD's first holiday season with his new family was filled with warm sweaters, fun days in the snow, and snuggling in the blankets with his human family and two dog siblings.

JD Financials:
\$1,781 in vet bills



The Doris Day Animal Foundation supports animal welfare groups around the country. Financial assistance from DDAF allows local groups like Peppertree to accomplish their mission of helping our animal friends. Peppertree has been grateful to be a DDAF grantee since 2012.

Fluff's Training Corner

Canine Good Citizen

By Alissa Barnett

When Fluff entered into our home, two things were very, very clear - she was smart and she loved food. Since one of her adopters was a first time dog owner, signing up for an obedience class seemed like an obvious thing to do. It would teach her Dad about dog training, and give Fluff's very busy brain something to do. So we signed her up for Canine Good Citizen class, which focused on basic obedience and let us work towards a nationally recognized certification, which was important to us as renters. A Canine Good Citizen certification meant she was covered under more insurance policies, and was proof to our landlord of her good manners and solid temperament.

Off to class we went, armed with a martingale collar and lots of treats, and for 6 weeks Fluff worked on sit, stay, down and come. She had a blast! Fluff seemed to be able to tell when it was class day, and when the leash and treat pouch came out she would start to prance. It became pretty apparent that Fluff would jump through fire for those bits of cheese and hot dog, but we just asked her to heel, walk through a crowd, pass by other dogs politely, and wait calmly as strangers approached and said hello. Fluff got better and better each week, and our bond with her got stronger and stronger. Fluff soon learned that listening to us meant she got food, and she became an incredibly attentive dog at class, at home, and most importantly in public. Her favorite thing to do was the "touch" command, where she

has to touch her nose to our hand, and if she felt she was being ignored we would often find her poking our hands with her nose. This skill became very useful in public when we have been around some dogs who have been reactive to other dogs, and might growl or bark at her. We simply ask Fluff to "touch" and she is instantly focused on us and not the other dog, happy to concentrate on her work instead of the shenanigans going on around her. At the end of the class we took our test and Fluff received her Canine Good Citizen certification - we could not be prouder and many graduation pictures were taken. But the real benefit was that in that class we all became a real team and learned how to work best together while having fun.



Fluffy says:

Fellow dogs, sometimes our owners forget that we do not work for free, we need to get paid. Please be patient with them as they learn this! After all, they do not work for free - why should we? We work best when we get praise and lots and lots of treats, or maybe by being given our favorite toy for a quick game of tug. I like cheese myself but when my humans click that clicker or say "Good" or "Yes" in that silly, happy voice of theirs I admit I do tend to wag my tail and smile. They are just so cute sometimes. Angry voices tend to make me anxious and then I get stressed and stop listening. Just like humans, I learn so much better when things are fun. Stay positive!

Peppertree Dogs Earning Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Certificates

by Colleen Johnson

The Canine Good Citizen Program (CGC) is a training program that places an emphasis on responsible pet ownership and basic good manners for dogs. After completing the program, a dog that passes the 10-step test may receive a certificate from the American Kennel Club. Some of the tasks the dog must be able to perform are accepting handling from a “friendly stranger”, walking on a loose lead, basic commands such as Sit, Stay and Come, and behaving politely around other dogs.

With Peppertree, the CGC program has become a way to improve some of our dogs’ adoptability. Participating in a CGC class helps to build an adoptable dog’s confidence around other canines, allowing him to learn new skills (and get lots of treats) while in the company of canine companions.

Another great benefit of participating in the CGC program is that it may help in a situation where breed restrictions are in place. A Pit Bull or Rottweiler with a CGC certificate may be able to live in an apartment where they otherwise would not have been allowed without the certificate.

We hope that behaviors a dog learns while in the CGC program will help him find a successful placement in a new home.



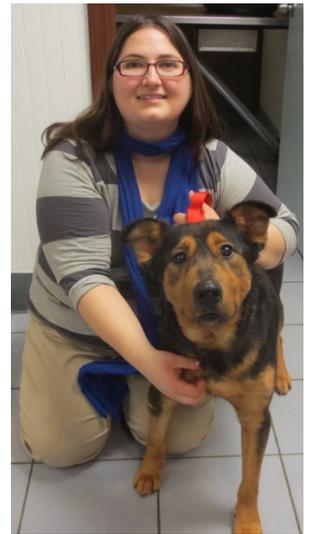
Yaddo was in a shelter that was not going to put him on the adoption floor because they thought he was too old to find a home. Getting him his CGC title validated that seniors come trained and still have value. It was just good, easy enrichment - got

him out of the house and tired him mentally without a lot of physical strain. Smart dogs need stimulation at any age.

Shelli was found abandoned, in horrible conditions, and then went into a kennel where she was treated well, but where life was very simple. She was scared in a lot of situations and when people approached her she seemed to expect them to yell at her, or worse. Going through class exposed her to people, and these people fed her cheese and petted her and told her she was a sweet girl. The class taught her that people are good, and being a Pit Bull, having the CGC opened the door to more homes. She was adopted and went on to be certified as a Therapy Dog, too.



Kylie arrived very sick and unsure of the world. She had been an only dog living with a family for years, and then she found herself at a shelter where she was competing for food, and didn’t know how to get along with other dogs. In CGC class we worked on helping her feel safe around them. It started with just playing and getting treats, and getting her to relax and have fun. In class we worked on getting Kylie to trust her handler and to focus on the handler instead of the other dogs, to get over that fear so her brain could focus on other things.



Tannon came to Peppertree as a high-energy puppy, a Pit Bull mix. He was quite strong and needed to learn to how to act appropriately in his foster home, so off he went to a Canine

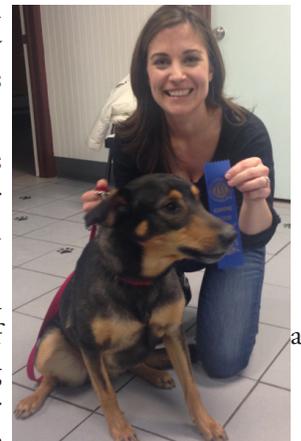


Good Citizen class where he learned commands like Wait, Down, and Leave it. The wonderful guidance he received helped him pass the test with flying colors. Shortly after becoming a Canine Good Citizen, this well-mannered boy moved on to his forever home.

Yaddo, Shelli, Tannon and Kylie completed the CGC course recently and benefited greatly. They have all found wonderful forever homes, and we strongly believe that completing CGC helped them with that. Severide (Sevvy) was our most recent adoptable dog to earn his CGC title. His confidence has grown and we know his forever home will be found soon.

Sevvy gained a lot from the positive interactions he had with the ‘friendly strangers’. Prior to coming to Peppertree, Sevvy hadn’t had much experience with humans, so it was a good way for him to associate good things (treats) with people.

The skills taught in CGC class lay a good foundation for future training ventures such as Therapy Dog certification. Even if CGC is the end of a dog’s training, the value of strengthened bond between dog and handler is immense. For anyone interested, Peppertree



recommends classes at District residents Shawna’s Dogs in Glenmont, the Animal Protective Foundation in Scotia, and Troy Veterinary in Troy, NY.

Sparky



Van



Bynx



Trevi



Sunjay



Foster Spotlight

Hazel



Gabriel



Lambert



Ducati

Maude



Teresa Jurdy and Sam Hamblet

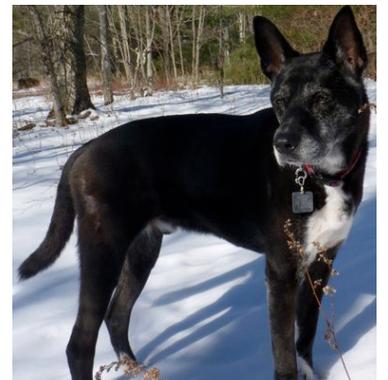


Cammie

Blaze

Jessel

Archimedes





A 5K Run/Walk for People and Dogs to benefit Peppertree Rescue

Saturday, April 18th

The Warming Hut at Saratoga State Park

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!

Questions? Visit Peppertree.org/events.php

Call 518-435-7425 or e-mail rescue@peppertree.org

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Giving Back by Fostering

by Fran Martino

**reprinted with permission from January 2015 issue of Animal Life, Pittsfield, MA.*

When I adopted my dog in 2009 from Peppertree Rescue, he was staying with a foster family comprised of a young mother with a newborn baby, her husband, two dogs, two cats and I'm not sure how many birds. In the midst of all this chaos sat a very calm and relaxed dog who is now known as Loki. Back then, he was called Gino, an unbecoming name for a Husky-mix I thought, and perhaps better suited for an Italian Greyhound. And so, Gino became Loki, and Loki became my best friend.

I recall feeling the pads of his feet thinking that this dog must only walk on plush carpet, or freshly-mown Kentucky bluegrass, as they were smooth and soft to the touch. He's more of a trail-blazer now, and enjoys long hikes in the woods. His mellow disposition makes him an excellent paddle partner in my kayak or canoe as he doesn't often rock the boat. We've paddled the Hudson River, and many lakes and streams in New York State. We've poked around the coast of Maine, the islands in Lake Champlain, and just this past summer, we did the Delaware Water Gap.

Although when we encountered an adult black bear while paddling at a lovely spot in the Catskills, he did stand up in my 10-foot Hornbeck canoe to take notice. We were about 30 feet from the shoreline when a huge black bear stood up on its hind legs to have a sniff at this strange two-some in a floating device of some sort. We all just kind of stared at each other as I decided to use my skill at paddling backwards to get the heck outta there!

Loki is a trained therapy dog with Therapy Dogs International (TDI) and we enjoy visits to adult rehabilitation homes, nursing homes, hospitals and also make at-home visits. We participate in TDI's "Tail-Waggin' Tutors" reading program where children read stories to Loki who listens intently, and never offers any criticism about mispronounced words. Loki accompanies me when I visit classrooms, or participates in school field trips to teach lessons about environmental education.

But enough about Loki. My real reason for writing this is to say thank you to all those who provide a foster home for dogs in need. Over the years, I've always donated some funds to Peppertree Rescue, the organization where I obtained Loki. It was my way of thanking them for what they do, and for giving me a truly best friend to share so many wonderful experiences. My way of giving back.

Instead of getting out the check book again this year, I decided to offer my time to foster a dog on their behalf. This has been my first time fostering, and the experience has been filled with laughter, worry, fun and sometimes frustration. Just when I think I can't do this any longer, I see the joy in the eyes of a new

adoptive family (and the newly adopted dog) as they walk out of one of the Peppertree-sponsored adoption clinics with their new best friend. Just when I think I may have to scream if the leashes of both dogs get tangled up one more time, I think back to that day when I sat in the living room of that foster home meeting Loki for the first time surrounded by a newborn baby, dogs, cats, birds, diapers, litter boxes, and two sleep-deprived parents. How unselfish these people were to bring an animal into their home when they already had so much going on! How happy I am that they were there for Loki. How happy I am that they were there for me, and I only hope I can live up to the words in Diane Morgan's poem:

A Poem for my Foster Dog

I am the bridge between what was and what can be.
I am the pathway to a new life.
I am made of mush,
Because my heart melted when I saw you,
Matted and sore, limping, depressed, lonely,
Unwanted, afraid to love.
For one little time you are mine.
I will feed you with my own hand.
I will love you with my whole heart.
I will make you whole.
I am made of steel, because when the time comes,
When you are well and sleek, when your eyes shine,
And your tail wags with joy,
Then comes the hard part.
I will let you go, not without a tear,
But without a regret.
For you are safe forever.
A new dog needs me now.

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Yaddo in the kitchen

Yaddo, Peppertree's resident gourmet, has spent most of his 13 years appreciating food. Many of his favorites are simple pleasures, like tissues, a "Scramby Egg" cooked by his grandmother or a can of unsalted sardines in water. But he has also perfected a few recipes, recipes he is happy to share!

Yaddo's favorite 3 Ingredient Dog Treats

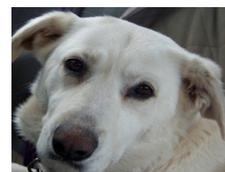
- ½ cup natural peanut butter (we recommend a salt-free version that contains only peanuts)
 - 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
 - 1 ¾ c brown rice flour (whole wheat flour can be used if you are not avoiding wheat, or even coconut flour)
1. Preheat oven to 350°. Stir together the peanut butter and pumpkin puree. Add the flour a little at a time until the dough is no longer sticky.
 2. Roll out the dough to ¼ inch (You can do this between two sheets of parchment paper if you would like. It can leave some oils on the surface you are rolling out on.)
 3. Cut the cookies using the cookie cutter of your choice and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Yaddo recommends using a handsome Norwegian Elkhound-shaped cookie cutter, but we find smaller shapes are better for portion control.
 4. Bake for 6-8 minutes. A shorter cooking time will yield a softer cookie. Cool before removing from the tray. They are very soft when warm.
 5. As these cookies do not have preservatives you will want to store them in an airtight container and let your pup enjoy them frequently. They freeze well and last at least 3 months in the freezer.



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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?