



The Peppertree POST



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.

FALL/WINTER 2002 ISSUE

Shelters and Rescues: Working For The Same End

Contrary to what many people think, shelters and rescues are partners in the goal to re-home animals in need. Peppertree Rescue often receives a call from an owner wanting to surrender a dog because he or she cannot bring it to a shelter where it might "get put down."



Peppertree, like shelters, does not automatically assume all dogs are adoptable and tries to evaluate their suitability for placement in a new home. Many dogs exhibit serious medical or behavioral problems such as extreme aggression or poor socialization for which euthanasia is the only realistic option because the quality of life for the dog would be very low or non-existent. Good shelters and good rescue groups are not mutually exclusive but complementary.

Peppertree Rescue tries to collaborate with shelters wherever possible. A particularly close relationship has been established with the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society (Menands Shelter) in Menands, New York, just north of Albany. Our volunteers work with the shelter in trying to find homes for dogs that are turned into the shelter. The Menands Shelter has been very receptive to working with established rescue groups such as Peppertree Rescue, which was formed in 1999. Since that time, Peppertree Rescue has assisted the shelter in finding homes for 78 dogs that would have otherwise been euthanized because of space constraints at the shelter.

The Menands Shelter has a long history of serving abused and unwanted creatures, but did not start out as a shelter for animals. The shelter, which was created in 1887, actually began as a humane society for abused and unwanted children. In 1942, the shelter was modified to serve children and animals, with children in one wing and animals in the other. In the late 1950s, the shelter was converted entirely to a humane society for animals. According to

Executive Director Robert Guyer, "Unlike some shelters, at the Mohawk & Hudson River Shelter we keep our doors open to all animals and do not turn any of them away if an owner wishes to surrender one. Otherwise the animal may end up on the street. People put their trust in us to take care of their pet humanely, and that is what we do." The shelter is supported primarily through generous public donations, municipal contracts and adoption fees.

Guyer has seen tremendous changes at the shelter since he began working there in 1988. At that time, the shelter took in approximately 22,000 animals annually and had 16 municipal contracts. He remembers one particularly discouraging point when nearly 200 animals arrived in a single day, nearly all of whom were surrendered by owners. The shelter handles fewer animals now than in the past, taking in roughly 13,000 animals a year while serving 22 municipalities. The shelter adopts out approximately 5,000 animals annually, of which nearly sixty percent are cats. Guyer believes that the shelter handles fewer animals now because of the efforts of many shelters and rescue groups to educate the public about the importance of spaying and neutering their pets. Fewer owners seem to be surrendering their animals today than in prior years, but the growing number of strays handled by the shelter suggests an increase in irresponsible pet owners. On average, 32 animals a day are turned over to the shelter by owners or are brought in as strays.

The shelter's policies have become increasingly proactive in the last five years. The shelter has instituted a firm spay and neuter policy for all animals that are adopted. The only exceptions are for animals deemed too young or too ill to undergo the procedure, and then arrangements must be made for the operation once the animal is healthy or old enough. Pregnant animals also are handled differently than they were fifteen years ago. At that time pregnant cats usually were euthanized to reduce overcrowding. The shelter recently ended that policy and now actively seeks foster homes to care for the pregnant cats and their kittens until they can be adopted.

We believe that the Menands Shelter's receptiveness to rescue groups is one of the most positive policies that the shelter administration has made, one that has markedly increased the opportunity for an animal to get adopted. Collaboration between a shelter and a rescue group takes a great deal of work on the part of both parties. Mutual

(Continued on page 2)

{Continued from page 1}

respect is critical. Shelter employees and rescue group volunteers must understand that they are working toward the shared goals of saving as many adoptable animals as possible, promoting spay and neuter programs, and educating the public about caring for a companion animal, while acknowledging that each organization needs to operate within its own corporate structure and available resources. Currently the Menands Shelter collaborates with Peppertree Rescue, the Companion Animal Placement Program (CAPP), and Doggie Haven Rescue. Guyer encourages other established rescue groups with similar goals to contact him at the shelter.

According to Guyer, Peppertree Rescue plays a critical role for the shelter, particularly in the handling of strays. Many wonderful strays are overlooked for adoption because of their unknown background, and it can be difficult to predict how well a dog will adapt to a particular home setting based solely on behavior in the kennel environment. Peppertree Rescue's willingness to work with stray dogs increases their odds of being adopted. Our volunteers collaborate with shelter staff in selecting dogs that seem to have nice temperaments, regardless of whether or not they are strays. By working with a stray dog in our program, our volunteers can give potential adopters a realistic appraisal of how the dog interacted

in a home environment with people and other animals. Foster care enables us to learn more about the dog so that we can better determine what type of home would be most appropriate. The information increases the likelihood that a Peppertree adoption will be successful.

Peppertree Rescue attempts to be in regular contact with the shelter and we often confer with shelter staff and volunteers on how to improve our procedures for evaluating and assisting them with particular dogs. At least one of our volunteers tries to visit the shelter on a weekly basis to evaluate newly-arrived dogs and to see what dogs have been adopted. Our volunteers put a "Peppertree hold" on dogs that seem to have a nice temperament and appear adoptable based on their behavior and breeding. The dog remains available for adoption through the shelter, but if it does not get adopted, a staff member will contact us for assistance. At that point, our team of volunteers makes arrangements for space in our program and for veterinarian care. Space often is the most problematic issue because we always have a critical need for foster homes. A Peppertree volunteer will transport the dog to a foster care home or, if necessary, to a boarding kennel on a temporary basis until foster care can be arranged. Peppertree has used this system to put "holds" on 415 of the shelter's dogs since 1999. Fortunately most were ultimately adopted through the shelter without need for our intervention, but we provided a critical safety net for 78 adoptable dogs that otherwise would not have found homes.

The Mohawk & Hudson River Shelter has a growing volunteer program and Peppertree Rescue volunteers have become increasingly involved in helping out. One of our volunteers, Peg Boughton, also is a regular volunteer at the shelter and helps coordinate the shelter's Annual Paws & Pumpkins Fall Festival, which was held at the shelter on October 12. At any given event, Guyer can count on at least twenty of the shelter's volunteers showing up to assist wherever needed. Many of the shelter's volunteers work with the animals several times a week and they recently pooled their funds to purchase a new cat "get-acquainted" cage for the shelter. The enclosure enables potential adopters to learn more about a cat's personality by interacting with it in a secure location. Shelter volunteers are beginning to bring dogs from the shelter to weekend

Peppertree Rescue clinics to give the dogs more exposure to the public and increase their opportunity to be adopted. Guyer is proud of the shelter's volunteer program and encourages all interested individuals to join by contacting volunteer coordinator Tonia Guyer at (518) 434-8128.

Guyer and his employees are working on a number of initiatives to improve the Shelter's operations and to expand the number and types of programs offered. The plans include



expansion of the animal cruelty department and creation of a certified animal control officer training department. He also hopes to begin a capital campaign in the near future to raise funds for a new 6,000 square foot building that will include three new cat rooms and a large meeting room for educational seminars. The shelter offers occasional seminars now, but plans to offer more on a regular basis once the meeting room is available. The new building also will have temporary outside kennels to provide additional space for incoming dogs. The current reception area will become an isolation room for pregnant animals.

The shelter also recently reopened the pet cemetery by clearing an adjacent piece of land. It is a quiet spot for individuals to bury their pets, headstones are available, and they are welcome to visit anytime. It is a wonderful resting place for the pets of individuals who rent or move frequently. The shelter also provides a full array of services, including cremation, for individuals who must euthanize their pets because of illness or aggression. Owners are welcome to stay with their pets to comfort them during the procedure if they wish.

Peppertree Rescue looks forward to continuing our successful collaboration with the Mohawk & Hudson River Shelter. Individuals interested in learning more about animals available for adoption or about shelter services can contact the shelter at (518) 434-8128. The shelter welcomes visitors and is located at **3 Oakland Avenue, Menands, NY 12204.**

— Karen Harmon

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Kelly Person A Special Volunteer



Peppertree's volunteers include a young lady named Kelly Person. Kelly has been volunteering with us for the past year and is a student at Guilderland High School.

Recently WNYT-NewsChannel 13, in partnership with St. Peter's Health Care Services, sponsored it's annual '13 Kids Who Care' recognition program. This program selects 13 teenagers whose volunteer efforts make the region a better place to live. We are very proud to note that Kelly was selected as one of the 13 out of over 80 nominations.

Kelly's volunteer effort for Peppertree includes attendance at adoption clinics where she helps with the dogs that are being presented for adoption. She sees to it that they are walked, that the water bowls are full, and often chooses a particular dog as a companion for the day. On occasion she also takes a dog home to foster between clinics.

Peppertree is pleased to have a young individual take an interest in our work and we are most grateful that she selected us to share in the award given for her recognition. Kelly is truly someone who is taking positive steps to make the world better. She gives freely of her time on weekends when she helps at clinics. And she's making a difference in the lives of the dogs with whom we work.

— Leda Kim

Second Hand Dog

It's come to my attention that some people don't know about us second-hand dogs. Being that I AM one, I thought I'd tell you a little about me and about us. My sisters, Cali and Mira, said they'd help me out when and if I get stuck form ideas or need help spelling something. They came to our house when they were puppies and my Mom had been waiting for them since before they were born. That's not how it happened with me. I got here all grown up and had been waiting for her! She'd been waiting for me too, actually, but she just didn't know it. Sometimes two-legs aren't as smart about things as they think.

I'm a second hand dog, but I've got first rate love. I wag my tail just for you. I practiced for the others that got to me before you, but there's a special wag and a little noise I make just specially for when I see you and you've come home to me after being out for a while.

I'm a second hand dog. Sometimes we second hand dogs get to you because somebody who loved us died. Sometimes we get to you because somebody we loved left us. Sometimes we never had anybody before we got you. Sometimes we lived forever in a cage until we don't know how to do anything except spin in circles. We made puppies for people who walk into pet stores to pick up a book or some fishfood but want to be able to leave with a puppy besides. Mom says dogs aren't meant to be impulse buys, but so far America doesn't know that. She wants to tell people to look me in the eye, both the good one and the one that got ripped open in the puppy mill, and tell me why it's important they have the choice to walk into a store to buy a dog without a plan the way some folks buy a magazine or a pair of socks. But Mom says that isn't very nice of her so she tries to say it in a better way.

We second hand dogs often have old eyes even when we're babies. I think it's because we're used to looking at

people who don't see us. Once you DO see us though our old eyes are sparkly (even if you've got a blind one, like me) while also being soft with love. It can take a long time for the sad to drain out of them though, or the scaredness. You might have to wait a while for that to go away for good. But most of the time, you'll get the soft and cushy love like something you can just rest in. The first time we fall asleep on you, my Mom says it's like somebody gave you the best present ever.

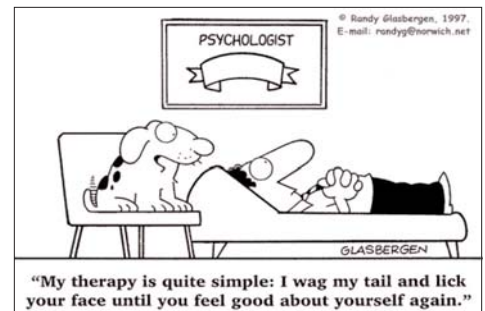
We second hand dogs come with things we know, but there's plenty we don't, so we need you to help us learn what's important in our family. Can I go on the furniture? Where do I eat? How do you want me to let you know when I need to go outside? Can I chase the cats? How should I say hello to people who come to visit? Will you leave me when you take me on a care ride? What if I eat your slippers (because you left them where I found them)? I'll learn the things I need to know, but I need you to figure out the lessons and help me practice the homework. I love the sound of that HOMEwork. Second hand dogs love practicing their HOMEwork.

So if there's ever a time when you think there might be room for a second hand dog in your family, don't be afraid to bring us home. In fact, you can try it for a while and be a foster mom or dad. If you help us practice our HOMEwork, then one day we'll be ready for a family of our own. And for us second hand dogs, just like the dogs that got waited for before they got born, a family is the best thing ever.

Your Truly

Tansy I got a home now Pansy Pants

— Copyright 2002 Lu Wyland



Arvie and Mom

I have just returned from a long walk with Arvie, an almost 2 year old Belgian Shepherd mix. He has sat beautifully while I communicated with my neighbors, even lay down and waited. And when he gets to any house (and he remembers every one) where there are children, he sits expectantly and waits for any of them to come out. And when they do, he is in his element. He sits quietly and lets them pet him. He never jumps up but lies down, so happily, they talk to him totally unafraid and they are completely unaware of the year of development that he has gone thru to get to this calm point.

I had, over the last 3 years, put down my two dogs - a rescued, black retriever mix named Jason who was 16, and never quite got over being abused before he came to us. He was so shy but very protective of my kids, and then the sudden shock with our beloved 10 year old Golden Retriever named Amber. I was so very sad yet felt I was not ready to begin again. Our whole family was grieving the losses.

I finally put my courage together and called the Golden Rescue association in New York; I did not want a purebred but rather a golden mixture. I spoke with a wonderful, healing administrator who suggested that I call a rescue foundation in Albany called Peppertree Rescue. The next part was quite emotional for me.

I called Peppertree Rescue and applied to be a potential adoptive parent. The questions they asked were very protective for any dog that would be adopted and I almost felt like I might not be a good prospective "parent". They suggested that I go online and see what doggies might be available. Well, I did, and the first dog I saw was Arvie. He was a black dog with a beautiful, furry coat. The photo was great. And I began to speak on the phone and through email to his foster mom - Cathy Plummer, who is a fabulous, healing person as well. Amazing. She forwarded photos of Arvie in his Halloween costume, of course as the Devil. I was sold. We decided to meet at a restaurant about 1/2 way to Albany. I drove with the administrator from New York who came along to help assess the situation and support me. I cannot remember a more nervous drive in my life. We arrived early and the wait was interminable. We ordered food but I couldn't eat a bite. Within 20 minutes a car drove in and I watched a lovely, blond woman take out a skinny, black beauty, named Arvie. I ran to him and he jumped up on me. I walked him and had already decided to take him home with me.

The drive home was uneventful. We drove into New York to take Gail back home. Arvie was peaceful in the back - he even slept. And I had no idea what would be waiting for me once I got him home. This was a dog that had spent time on the streets, had been in and out of shelters and finally had been carefully chosen and fostered with Cathy. But he didn't quite know how to accept and receive love. When I would walk him, (he had rarely been on a leash either) he would get very scared. And, instead, would turn on me and bite my arms and shoulders. When I gave him love and petted him, the same thing would happen. I have never experienced that with any dog I have had. He was going to need help to set limits and to be retrained. I called a wonderful trainer named Wes whom I had used with Amber years before. I also took Arvie to an animal hospital in New York where the vet there told me to immediately return the dog, that he would never be trained. (writer's note - HRUMPH!). That infuriated me. I just knew that love and training could really make a difference in this dog. As I have said, he really was a peaceful dog - a dog with personality - a dog that rarely ever barks.. but oh those ears are like radar. He says sooooo much.. I am so used to his singing. He actually voices a lot.. and I love it .. a kind of errrr when he needs to go out, and a stronger errrr if he needs attention. It's hysterical - very vocal and I am a singer. Perfect!

So, Wes came and we worked a few sessions with Arvie. He responded immediately and Peppertree was thrilled that their intuition about Arvie was substantiated. Wes said that Arvie was going to be a fabulous dog. But he said absolutely he needed to have limits set. Oh boy, like parenting?? I realized that if I had learned to parent this way, I might have saved myself years of learning. heh.

Even then it has taken months of reinforcing the rules and limits for him to get with the program. However, with kids and with other dogs he has always been marvelous. The first rule Wes taught him was sitting by the door to go out. And sitting at the top of the stairs on the porch. Whew! That makes it so much easier for me to get out of the house and down the stairs for a walk. Arvie looks so proud when he does well. Walking outside is a delight for both of us. I take him 3 times a day. One is a long walk the other two are shorter ones. Sometimes when I get back Arvie goes into a small dog run.. and runs circles.. that's how much energy he has in his gorgeous, sleek long body.

I brush him every day. He loves it. He never snaps or growls - he loves his bones and chew

toys.. especially a soft teddy bear which he cannot chew up. Given to me by a dear friend who works for the animal hospital in New York. She loved him on sight as well. And is amazed at his behavior already. The feeling of comfort as he fills this house with such gratitude and love permeates our entire house.



This summer I worked running a Young Artists Development Program in Windsor, CT. and of course there was never a doubt that I wouldn't bring Arves with me. Another of the music staff brought her dog as well and we shared a condo at the Marriott Hotel. Her dog's name is Teddy and they have a lot in common. He's a lot smaller than Arvie and very, very well trained. But the two of them had a ball playing together all month, never fighting once. Amazing. And I got to see Arvie acclimate to being walked in a strange place and happy just to be with me. Awwwww.

This September all the kids are out of the house. It was silent at first.. now the house is full of Arvie's personality and toys and his furry self about 1 foot away from me even now as I am writing. I have told him that I am writing this love letter, a real tribute to Peppertree Rescue for finding and saving this fabulous dog as well as Arvie, for being an absolutely beloved member of my family.

I just had to write this article as a tribute to an organization which saves lives and makes sure that dogs are placed with loving families as well as fostering them while they are waiting, with loving families as well. Thank you, Cathy Plummer, Peppertree Rescue and of course Arvie.

p.s. just returned from our morning walk. Arvie chose a new path today, absolute silence, birds chattering, squirrels running across his path, he looks up at me like "should I be interested?" heh, we met a wheaton/golden mix - what a gorgeous doggy, and the two dogs ran circles. Then we continued on our usual path and came home. He still drinks water from puddles on the street and would love to eat bread left for the birds. Right now he is sunning himself on the back deck after sitting on the picnic table like the King of the World.

—Connie Barnett

Holiday Greetings from Peppertree Rescue:

As you go about the holiday season, please remember those four-footed animals, like the one you adopted or are contemplating adopting from Peppertree Rescue, who still need a new loving home. Peppertree has established a "Peppertree Store" at our website <http://www.peppertree.org> and click on Peppertree Store in the menu.



Items that you purchase directly from Peppertree or via a link with a number of retailers we have established on the web site will generate funds that will go directly to our help our current and future dogs who are looking for a loving home. We are an all-volunteer operation and all of our funds go to the care and placement costs of our 4-footed friends.

In addition we will be participating on 12/14 & 12/15 from approximately noon to 6pm at Crossgates Mall in Guilderland, NY for both a holiday wrapping and general fund-raising event.

To top off the year's frenzy, we will also be at Petsmart in Latham Farms, Latham, NY on 12/22 from 11am-6pm for photos with Santa and your loved ones - 2 and 4 footed.

We hope that you can join us at one of these events as we would like to see how our Peppertree family has grown since we last saw them.

Peace to all of you and your family members this upcoming holiday season.

From all the volunteers and current cast of dogs at Peppertree Rescue!!!!

I Like It Here...

He woke with a start
Could not figure out where he was.
Why am I warm, why am I safe,
Why is the world suddenly soft?
Oh yes, the lady that talks so sweet
She rubs my ears and cooches my belly
I like it here
Wonder if she'll send me back?

It is quiet but I can hear life about me
It is a calm, safe feeling,
One I have never known
But have dreamt of.
I have only been here a day
Wonder if they'll let me stay

Maybe if I'm good and sweet
They won't put me on the street,
I'm so confused
The lady talks so nice all the time
I got my own dinner last night
Without a fight
I heard some noise
Wonder if she'll send me back?

She is calling my name
How sweet she sounds.
I am here, right here

Waiting for my ear rub.
Better wag my tail
Let her know I like her a lot.
There she is, she is so soft
Wonder if she'll let me stay?

Time to go out she says
Better not do it on the floor.
Outside with all the others
They seem happy here too.
I hope she lets me stay.

Wow food again
And all my own!
She just rubbed my head
And said 'what a good boy'
Me a good boy
Wow me a good boy!
Oh that smile of hers
Hope she lets me stay.

Looks like play time
Hey I can play too.
She is laughing
I remember that sound
They used to do that when
I was little and they liked me
You know the other people
Then they just stopped laughing
Please don't make me go back.

WANT TO HELP????

Here are ways Peppertree can use help:

Outright donations

- these are tax deductible

Volunteer

- we need people for fostering, transport, help at clinics

Merchandise donations

- we can always use fold up crates, leashes, collars, portable filing drawers, folding long tables for use at clinics

Please think of us. If you have any merchandise to donate please leave a message at **435-7425** and we will arrange to collect it.

Thank you.

She is on the phone
Thought I hear my name.
She is looking at me
She is smiling
Better get over there and
Get one of those ear rubs.
She is talking about me
Please don't make me go back.

Still talking about me
Wonder what she meant.
She said 'looks like a keeper to me.'
I hope she'll let me stay.

I was never allowed to give kisses
Wonder what she would do?
Think I'll try.
Oh my, she's got tears in her eyes!
Oh what have I done?
A big hug, maybe she'll let me stay.

She said I'm home now
Talks to me a lot, real nice.
Wow, what a day and
It's only just begun!
Imagine having many days
Like this all together.
Oh, Please let me stay!

—Author Unknown

Peppertree Adoption Clinic Schedule

- December 7th — LC Smith, Delmar (11.00am - 3.00pm)
- December 14th and 15th — Peppertree Gift Wrapping at Crossgates Mall
- December 21st — Petsmart, Latham (10.00am - 2.00pm)
- December 22nd — Photos with Santa at Petsmart, Latham (11.00am - 6.00pm)
- January 4th — LC Smith, Delmar (11.00am - 3.00pm)
- January 18th — Petsmart, Latham (10.00am - 2.00pm)
- February 1st — LC Smith, Delmar (11.00am - 3.00pm)
- February 15th — Petsmart, Latham (10.00am - 2.00pm)

For locations of other Adoption Clinics:

Call our Voice-Mail 435-7425 or consult our web page (<http://www.peppertree.org>)



We're here to remind you to visit our website for the link to the new Peppertree Store at Cafe Press

Mugs - Tees - Sweats

<http://www.peppertree.org/store.htm>



PEPPERTREE POST 1 year (4 issues) \$10.00

PEPPERTREE RESCUE PINS _____ pins @ \$5.00 each

PEPPERTREE T-SHIRTS S M L XL XXXL (check one) \$12.00 + \$3.00 shipping
 \$15.00 + \$3.00 shipping

Donation (Tax-deductible). Written receipts will automatically be provided for donations of \$50 or more. If you wish a written receipt for audit purposes for amounts less than \$50, please note. Any donations of \$10 or more will automatically be subscribed for 1 year to the Peppertree Post, unless noted that the subscription is not wanted.

If you wish to foster, adopt or volunteer, check here and an Application will be mailed or e-mailed to you.

Name _____

E-mail Address _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone No. (with area code, please note if day or evening) (_____) _____

Send form & check to: Peppertree Rescue, PO Box 2396, Albany, NY 12220

Applications can also be downloaded from and or completed on our website. Woof!!!!

Have You Ever Wondered What Would Happen If You Called 911... For Your Dog?

When I met Jordan 7 years ago, he was in the process of being hired by the Danbury Fire Department. Naturally, I asked him if firemen really do rescue cats from trees. His response: "Have you ever seen a cat skeleton in a tree?" I think it was at that moment I realized I had met my match. He went on to explain that there is usually more risk to the firefighter in attempting to get the cat out of the tree than there is to the cat finding its own way down.

Up until that point, I don't think I really gave much thought to emergency pet care. I knew how to do basic first aid, to make an emergency muzzle from a belt and where my vet's phone number was located. But then I started wondering, What would happen if I was in a car accident and my dog was with me? Where would he go if I was taken to the hospital? What if there was a fire in my house and I got out, but my baby was still in there?

I started asking Jordan more and more on the subject. He would dutifully go back to work and try to find out the answer to all of my questions. He would come home from work with stories from the guys how one time they were at a car accident and the woman had a dog in the car and one of the police officers on scene took the dog home for the night and then reunited owner and pet the next day; the time they had to retrieve a dog for its owner; or when a car hit a stray dog and was trapped underneath the car they jacked up the car and the dog ran off unharmed.

What if the dog was injured in the accident was my next question. Off to work he would go in quest of the answer. After the scene is secured, the humans are attended to first and then pets are checked. If just a little bandaging was needed, the firefighters

would do it if they knew how. Oxygen? No problem. Broken bones? A call to the Animal Control Officer for a trip to the 24 hour emergency vet clinic.

What about a fire? Would the firefighters rush into my house to save my four-footed kids? By the time this question arose, we were close to getting married and had added our second dog. Now Jordan was just as curious about these questions as I was. Off to work for more answers. The answer is a very simple yes. And no. Firefighters risk their lives every day. When there is a fire, they search the building for human occupants as long as it is "safe" to do so. (In my opinion, sane people run out of burning buildings, not in.) Safe is determined by the safety officer on scene. It's a balance of many factors. If the building is about to collapse, they do not haphazardly send guys into a building if it believed to be empty. If someone says "My son is in there!" The firefighters go in.

OK. "What if I said 'My DOG is in there!'" Well, the firefighters will go in to rescue pets after all the humans have been accounted for. One of my favorite stories from the firehouse is the story of Firefighter Maia a.k.a "Bugs". He was credited with a save at his very first fire. A pet bunny in a cage on the first floor. He made a little girl very happy that day. He also carried the nickname "Bugs" for the rest of his career.

What about those pet finder sticker? Like Find-a-Tot. Would those help the firefighters know how many pets I have? What if I'm not home to tell them? The answer, much to my relief was: we look anyway. The rationale made sense. What if you added a pet but forgot to change the sticker? What if the last owner or tenant put the sticker there and we searched for 5 pets when in reality there are no pets inside? OK, I'm starting to feel a little better about leaving my "kids" alone when I go to work. Then again, I never knew how much I had to worry about!

I was at work a few weeks ago when Jordan called. He asked: "Remember you always wondered what lengths the fire department would go to, to rescue a dog? Well have I got a story for you!"

A 911 emergency call came in for a drowning dog in his district. Jordan, his Lieutenant and his "backstepper" responded to the call. When they arrived at the reservoir, they saw a woman on the bank waving frantically with a dog at her side. All three men sighed with relief thinking that the dog had made its way out of the water. The woman was pointing to something in the water. About 120 yards out, all that was visible was the dog's head and thrashing water. Jordan asked his Lieutenant if he should attempt the rescue. Lieutenant Weidle told Jordan to "go for it" while he called for back-up.

Back-up consisted of 2 fire engines, the Chief's car, a police officer, an ambulance, the Animal Control officer and the rescue boat! Jordan reached "Demi", a seven year old, 45 pound Hungarian Visla, with no time to spare. He floated in the water holding on to her as the rescue boat was launched and made its way out to them. Both Jordan and Demi were loaded into the boat safely and brought to shore. Demi was taken to the Animal Control Officer's car to be checked while Jordan took off the flotation suit.

Last week, Jodi, Demi's mom, brought Demi by the fire house to meet her rescuers. Demi, I'm happy to say, is in wonderful shape. She won't go near the water anymore but Jodi, Demi and Demi's son "Junior" still walk by the same reservoir they've walked past for the last seven years.

From the time that Jodi had made the 911 call on her cell phone to the time that Jordan and Demi reached shore, 45 minutes had elapsed! Now I know what happens if I call 911 for my dog.

— Nicole Duda



HOMeward BOUND



FRANKLIN - Now Zack, and doing wonderfully in his new forever home. Cathy Plummer is the extremely proud foster mom, who refused to accept that a 3-legged, sensitive boy like Franklin, would be unable to find his place with a family who could understand his needs. Franklin always really loved the ladies and has now shown that, with his new loving and patient family, he can love them all.



BUDDY-LOVE - Evaluated at the Menands shelter and immediately recognised as a Peppertree dog. At the age of 6, Peppertree was informed that Buddy-Love was still not housebroken. A gentle, sweet, loving boy, Buddy-Love never even made it through the door of the Adoption Clinic and was snapped up by a lovely family who were more than happy to help him through his little problem. For Buddy-Love it was, literally, love at first sight.



FOLLY - And what a beauty. A Bouvier/Lab mix, Folly needed just that special family to come along who understood her terrier free-spirit, and allow her to be the wonderful loving girl that Peppertree knew her to be. Karolyn Buttle worked tirelessly to find that family for months. And then, one day a family contacted Peppertree and it was a perfect match. Folly is now living life to the full in her forever home.



THEO - Had returned to the program, following a placement that didn't quite work out. Lisa Shackleton was volunteering at the clinic that day, thought a friend might be interested in him and agreed to foster him at her home. But, what Lisa hadn't counted on was that she had fallen immediately in love with Theo, and he with her. It was one of the shortest trial placements ever. Theo and Lisa are now inseparable.



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A Rescue For Dogs Of Good Temperament