



Ike with his feline friends, Cooper & Parker



Slumber Party

## New Beginnings

**Ike** - Being my first foster dog, I was excited to help this big boy, find the home he so deserved. What I was not prepared for was how quickly he became a part of MY home! When Ike came to me on New Year's Eve he was extremely shy, very cautious and not too social. More than three years later Ike has overcome his shyness and is now known as the ambassador of the neighborhood as we walk down the street proudly while he carries a shoe or bone. He has a growing fan base of little girls who scream and come running whenever he steps paw out of the house, Ike LOVES the attention! And the roles are now reversed as Ike has recently become the foster big brother to twin kittens who think he is just the cat's meow!

**HILARY STASZAK - GUILDERLAND CENTER, NY (NOW TAMPA, FL)**  
**ADOPTED (BEGAN FOSTERING) DECEMBER 31, 2003**



Peppertree Rescue, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2396  
Albany, NY 12220

[www.peppertree.org](http://www.peppertree.org)

*A Rescue For Dogs Of Good Temperament*



# The Peppertree POST

SPRING 2007 ISSUE

**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.

## Extraordinary Foster Homes

**KAREN HARMON**

Peppertree Rescue relies on the kindness and generosity of volunteers who are willing to provide temporary foster homes for our dogs, reducing boarding costs and giving us invaluable insight into a dog's temperament. We have several regular foster homes and are fortunate to have not one, but two extraordinary couples who always are willing to lend a hand whenever needed. **Barbara and Chris Kucharczyk** of Gansevoort and **Katie Olds and Steve Muller** of Altamont have opened up their homes to countless foster dogs, particularly those with special needs, that we might not otherwise have been able to assist.

Barbara and Chris joined Peppertree Rescue three years ago when they moved back to New York State after a job stint in Alabama. Barbara, a chemical engineer who is earning her MBA at the Rensselaer Polytechnic

Institute (RPI), gives a lot of credit for their foster efforts to her husband Chris, a carpenter and graphic designer with a flexible schedule. "Chris," she says, "is the reason we are able to foster because he makes a lot of this happen and bears the brunt of the burden."

They became involved in dog rescue ten years ago after learning about the plight of racing greyhounds, roughly half of whom are either euthanized or sent into research after their racing days are over. They used some of their wedding money to adopt their first greyhound "Florida Casper" through a Buffalo, New York rescue. A year later they bought a house in Buffalo and adopted a second greyhound 'Legs Kizzie."

Barbara admits that they were "greyhound snobs" until they moved to Alabama and rescued a three- to four-day old puppy with a plastic bag tied over its head that had been left to die in a parking lot. Their veterinarian suggested putting him down because he was a chow/shepherd mix, but they refused so the veterinarian gave them a crash course in raising a baby. Four years later, Logan is still with them and their rescue efforts reach well beyond greyhounds.

They assist Peppertree Rescue by fostering shepherds, older



Barbara & Chris Kucharczyk with Atlas & Gracie

dogs and those with health problems such as epilepsy. Barbara explains, "We like to work with the problem dogs because we don't have kids." They are not afraid to help out even when they know that it may be a sad outcome. They recently fostered a 17-year-old shepherd mix named Molly whose distraught owner was forced to give her up because of hardship. Molly lived only a few weeks before succumbing to health problems, but they gave her unconditional love and attention in her final days, showing what special, generous people they are. We always will remember the adoption clinic where Barbara spent the majority of her time holding a contented



Katie Olds & Steve Muller with Asia & Daisy

**CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO**



**Extraordinary Foster Homes**  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Molly on her lap and petting her, despite the fact that she was too big to be a real lap dog.

In contrast to Barbara and Chris, Katie Olds and Steve Muller prefer to foster the young, high energy dogs and the ones who just need some security and good exercise. They became involved with Peppertree Rescue last year after Katie met some of our volunteers at Shaker Veterinary Hospital in Latham where many of our dogs receive medical care. It was their love for dogs that brought Katie and Steve together. They met at Shaker's doggie daycare two years ago and have been together ever since. Their wedding is scheduled for September 15, 2007.

Katie is an asset manager for Golub in Rotterdam who is pursuing her MBA at Union College. Steve is a system services manager at Davis Vision in Latham and is pursuing his MBA

at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Despite their busy schedules, they always seem to be able to pitch in whenever needed, volunteering not only with Peppertree Rescue, but also with German short-haired pointer Rescue and Labradoodle Rescue.

Katie and Steve seem to have more than their share of madcap foster adventures. Last fall they transported two extremely shy yellow Labrador sisters to their home in Altamont only to have the sisters scale their seemingly impenetrable six-foot fence within minutes of arriving. They located them in a ravine nearby and were able to corner and tackle one of them, Izzie, before she could get away. Mia, on the other hand, proved more elusive and it took several weeks of searches and posted flyers before she was located safely and returned to them. They ultimately decided not to part with Izzie who made tremendous progress in their home. They recently announced that she had become a permanent member of their family.

Perhaps most memorable, however, is their more recent experience with a female German short-haired pointer that they brought in to foster for a few days. Katie almost immediately became suspicious that the dog might be pregnant so she made a Saturday appointment with a veterinarian to have the dog checked out. The morning of the appointment, Katie and Steve awoke to find four newborn German short-haired pointer/Lab mix puppies on their carpeted living room floor with another three soon to follow. Needless to say, they took it all in stride, joked about needing a new carpet anyway and borrowed an X-pen to raise the pups themselves. It was a crash course in parenthood, but they nurtured the pups and mom for seven weeks reporting with great pride on the puppies' progress. Once

the puppies were ready to go, they personally oversaw their placements, including a new home for mom. One female pup, Abby (nicknamed Chubs), remains at their home because she has a deformed leg that is being evaluated by orthopedic specialists.

Fostering has made life very hectic, but rewarding for both couples. Barbara explains, "We are very thankful to be working with Peppertree Rescue because it is such a great group of people and they respect what we do. We are very fortunate to be in a position to help out." Always modest, Barbara prefers to give Katie and Steve Muller "a lot of credit for taking the young, active dogs that need fostering." Katie adds, "Steve and I have had a wonderful experience with Peppertree Rescue – that's why we continue to help out the way we have."

Foster homes are critical in providing a temporary safe haven for a puppy or dog to await placement and in allowing us to get to know a dog's temperament better. As foster parents, Katie, Steve, Barbara and Chris have given many dogs the second chance that they need to find a new home and we all admire and marvel at their efforts. Peppertree Rescue is enriched by their contributions and has been able to assist many dogs that we would not otherwise have been able to accommodate in our program. We feel honored to have them working alongside us.

Foster homes always are needed. Sometimes as little as a week or two can make the difference between whether or not a dog gets a second chance at life. Individuals interested in fostering can go online at [www.peppertree.org](http://www.peppertree.org) to submit a foster application or can call (518) 435-7425 for further information.

In light of the recent contaminated dog food scares, Peppertree thought that our readers would be interested in knowing how to make their own wet food. Spoiling your canine companion with this delicious treat has never been so easy.

**Wet Dog Food Recipe from Peppertree's Own Leda Kim:**

Start with either a whole chicken or a large beef chuck roast. If using the chicken cover with water and poach. If using the beef, first brown both sides using olive oil. Then cover the beef with water as you would for a stew. Cook the meat for several hours, let it cool and then remove the chicken meat from the bones or break up the beef into small pieces.

Add to the broth a pound or so of chopped carrots and celery. Then add either brown rice, barley, oatmeal or even a combination of a couple of those and cook until the vegetables and grains are cooked, common amounts used are 1-2 boxes of quick cooking barley, 1lb of rice or several cups of oats. For a special treat you can roast sweet potatoes and add them or add hardboiled eggs, shells and all. If you have a dog with skin dryness you can also add a tsp of flaxseed oil when serving the food.

Place your dog's high quality dry kibble in the bowl and top it with this mixture. You can also add other leftover vegetables from your fridge such as broccoli, and green beans. The mixture is very thick it can be thinned with warm water when added to the kibble. The mixture freezes well and this quantity serves 2 very large dogs and one small dog for a weeks worth of meals.

For additional calcium and nutrients, you can add the following supplement to the food once a day (1 TBSP for a large dog, 60 lbs or more, 1 tsp for a small dog). This recipe can be made up monthly and it must be kept refrigerated, simply mix together the following ingredients:

- 2 c nutritional yeast
- 1 c lecithin granules
- ¼ c kelp powder
- ¼ c bonemeal or 5 tsps eggshell powder
- 1,000 milligrams vitamin C (ground)

For more recipes for dog food check out these websites:  
[www.healthrecipes.com/pet\\_supply.htm](http://www.healthrecipes.com/pet_supply.htm)  
[www.cooksrecipes.com/category/pet-recipes.html](http://www.cooksrecipes.com/category/pet-recipes.html)  
[www.globalpaw.com/dogtreats/dogmeals/veggievittles.php](http://www.globalpaw.com/dogtreats/dogmeals/veggievittles.php)

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

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**Dog Books For Summer Reading**

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protocols, I recommend the following books Brenda Aloff's Aggression in Dogs: Practical Management, Prevention and Behavior Modification which is a good supplement to her training sessions on this topic, Karen Overall's Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals, and lastly Steven Linday's three volume set, The Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training. The last three authors' work would most likely appeal to an audience who is seriously interested in the intricacies of dog behaviors and professional trainers.

Dog health is another area where there is a growing interest which in turn is generating a considerable number of new works. As I look at my bookshelves I have about 25 books on dog health with many of the newer ones leaning towards homeopathy and holistic approaches to health issues. A trip to your library should give you a sense of what is available on these topics. Recently I discovered a book which I'm finding very useful and fun to have Dog Anatomy, A Coloring Atlas by Robert Kainer and T. McCracken. Yes, it's a large soft covered coloring book! But it has nearly 90 plates of every part of dog

anatomy. In some cases there are brief overviews of diseases affecting specific plates. This is by far the best layman's reference for understanding the parts of a dog for anyone who has an interest in anatomy.

I can only begin to list all the good books out there as there are so many to choose from. In closing, I'd recommend a visit to libraries, bookstores or online at a site such as [www.dogwise.com](http://www.dogwise.com). Of course, physically having the book in your hands to review is the best way to decide if it's a book you need to have on your bookshelf. Your dog(s) will thank you for wanting to know as much about them as you can!



# The Puzzlement of Pica

ROBIN NAGENGAST

**Pica (or depraved appetite) is a potentially dangerous behavior in dogs that is described as any instance when he or she eats items that are not normally considered food.**

Affected dogs commonly have the tendency to eat food or candy wrappers, tissue, rubber, rocks, wood or socks, for example. Sometimes a dog will be tempted to eat feces; his own or that of other animals.

Dogs may demonstrate pica at any age and often initially while a puppy. It's natural for a young dog to explore everything with his mouth. Puppies who are teething are tempted to gnaw and chew constantly. Most dog owners anticipate this behavior in puppies. Sometimes the desire to eat unnatural objects is carried over into adolescence or adulthood.

Pica is a cause for concern because non-food items can generally be difficult to digest and can cause irritation, blockage or poisoning. Additionally, chewing on foreign objects can damage your dog's mouth and teeth. If your dog is prone to eating objects around the house or yard, watch for any of the symptoms of a blockage: not eating or passing waste, vomiting, dehydration or weight loss and consult your veterinarian immediately should any of these symptoms appear.

There are a couple of schools of thought in the veterinary community about the cause of pica. Some sources attribute pica to physical deficiencies, others regard it as purely psychological in nature. It is sometimes suggested the physiological cause for pica is a nutrient deficiency. In other words, the dog is craving something he is not getting in his diet. However, that theory has never been substantiated so treating with supplements may be beneficial for your dog, but may not extinguish the behavior.

What kind of psychological issue contributes to pica? Believe it or not, pica is sometimes characterized and treated as an obsessive compulsive act. As mentioned before, a particularly offensive manifestation of pica is coprophagy, the urge to eat feces. If your dog is eating his own stool, there are supplements available that will make his feces taste, well, yuckier. Some articles suggest sprinkling the stool with cayenne pepper as a training method, but most agree it makes just as much sense to keep the yard clean. Most commonly, pica can be caused by boredom and the desire for attention.

So although pica may not be curable, the good news is chances are you can control it by using your best responsible pet owner skills. For example:

- Allow your dog plenty of opportunity for exercise. He is less likely to seek out distractions when he is tired from playing with you.
- Monitor his environment and reduce his access to stuff he can pick up in his mouth. Treat items he is fond of consuming such as carpet and wood work with Bitter Apple. Make sure you train him with the taste and he sees you use it on the object of his chewing.
- When you catch your dog eating something he should not, don't call his name. His name from your mouth is reinforcement. Use a sharp "uh-ahhh" sound or shake a coffee can with a couple of pennies in it to distract him.
- Be sure to provide him with a safe, healthy alternative, such as a Kong stuffed with peanut butter and kibble or a Nylabone for chewing under your supervision.

With the joy of the unconditional love and companionship that a dog brings also comes the responsibility to see them through quirky and sometimes unpleasant behavior. However, with hard work and dedication pica can be extinguished, or at the very least modified to a safe level for your dog.

## Natural Bug Spray Recipe for Dogs, and People Too!

Start with a BIG fat lemon (the more rind the better) and slice it paper thin. Put in a bowl with a tablespoon of crushed rosemary leaves or a whole 6 inch sprig of fresh rosemary. Pour a quart of hot, near boiling water over the mixture, and let steep overnight. Strain the mixture and put it in a large spray bottle, and store in the refrigerator. Shake well before applying.

The lemon in this spray along with the rosemary oil will give your dog a beautiful shiny coat and keep fleas and other bugs (including mosquitoes) away. Use the spray at least twice a week to keep the scent on the coat to repel bugs and spray it around your doors and on the carpets, but be sure to test on a small area of carpet first. If you have a time when fleas are really bad, spray your dog's underbelly and feet daily. This spray also works for people too!

# June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2007 is Take Your Dog To Work Day!

LUCIA PERFETTI CLARK

**Originated by Pet Sitters International in 1999, Take Your Dog to Work Day happens every June, and this year will be taking place on Friday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007.**

While up until recently taking a dog to work was only considered normal for farmers, veterinarians, police, and firemen, it is slowly becoming a more frequent practice. A perk of being a business owner is that the rules are what you make them, and for dog lovers they can easily allow dogs to be part of the landscape of the office. For people who work in a more structured setting and have to report to a boss, this luxury can be difficult to come by. The dot com boom contributed to the rise in canines in the work place since competition for skilled labor was high, and because salary is only one benefit of having a job, many companies started offering non-traditional incentives, like being able to bring your dog to work. In particular, this incentive also has benefits to the employer. First of all, dog owning employees who bring their dogs to work are not constrained by needing to go home to care for their pets. Dogs also offer a welcome distraction which can reduce stress and boost morale in the work place. Who doesn't enjoy a five minute break to play ball with a dog?

Of course in order for this idea to work there need to be some "rules, boundaries, and limitations," to quote Cesar Milan. First of all dogs venturing into the work place need to be well groomed, up to date on all necessary vetting and vaccinations, trained, and socialized. All employees in the office must be considered when looking into adopting a dog-friendly protocol. Special considerations and accommodations need to be made for employees who have dog allergies or who may be afraid of dogs. A good compromise is to adopt dog policies which are highly structured; dogs may only be allowed in certain areas, on certain days, or when the office schedule is least likely to have outside visitors. Once the pooches get to work it is important that their owner be attentive to their needs, giving them a place where they can sleep undisturbed, have access to water, quiet toys, and an acceptable

outdoor place for potty breaks and the owner must be sure to clean up after their pet. Additionally, to help ensure a positive and safe experience for everyone, other workers should only interact with the dog when the owner is there.

For those of us in the rescue community, policies like this allow us to place more dogs because it increases the number of people who are able to accommodate a dog's needs. Many dogs suffer from separation anxiety and staying home the entire workday without any companionship can be stressful to the point of discomfort, and can lead to destructive behaviors. More than anything, dogs want to be with their people and this policy makes that possible.

**For more information and ways to institute Take Your Dog to Work Day at your office visit [www.petsit.com/dogday/about.asp](http://www.petsit.com/dogday/about.asp). It's the leash you can do!**





## Dog Books For Summer Reading

LEDA KIM

Let me begin by saying I'm addicted to books about dogs. I find dogs fascinating and I am continually filled with wonderment that I can be so in tune with and thoroughly communicate with another species. Due to my fascination with the dogs in my life, it is important to me to be able to understand them as best I can. That has resulted in the presence of a large library of dog related volumes in my personal library.

I am challenged to identify my favorite, top five or even top ten dog books. After much mulling, I find such identification to be impossible, mainly because of the different types of dog books available to us. There are books about the dog/human relationship, others about training dogs, dog behavior and dog health. There is also a large body of work to help people select the right breed for them and many books about bringing home puppies and how to work with them. Since there is so much on breed selection and puppy raising both in book form and on the internet, I'm not going to attempt to discuss those topics.

I have organized my favorite books by type and author. The first two of my absolute favorites, and which I re-read from time to time are Suzanne Clothier's Bones Would Rain From the Sky: Deepening Our Relationship with Dogs and Caroline Knapp's Pack of Two. Both books are about the magic of the human/dog bond and both are easy for dog lovers to identify with. They are not books about training or problem solving but books

that celebrate our relationship with these delightful companions. They are among the best of this type of book. While Ms. Knapp passed away a few years ago, I am always looking forward to reading more of Ms. Clothier's work.

Patricia McConnell's work has something of a bridging quality between the relationship based books and training volumes. Her first book, The Other End of The Leash and the recently published For the Love of a Dog: Understanding Emotion in You and Your Best Friend are wonderful reads that fill the reader with a sense of joy that we are able to share our lives with dogs. Dr. McConnell also adds some great training advice. She's published a number of booklets dealing with specific behavioral issues such as multiple dog households and separation anxiety. Some readers may recall that years ago she had a program on one of the local cable channels. I miss that show.

There are many good training books to choose from. Among my 'must haves' are those that are grounded in understanding the dog and dog behavior. I am a follower of the 'positive' rather than 'aversive' dog training methods and the books that follow adhere to that philosophy as well starting with Jean Donaldson's Culture Clash. She has other helpful works such as Dogs are From Neptune for specific behaviors and Mine and Eight. Additionally, she co-authored The Power of Positive Dog Training with Pat Miller. Brenda Aloff's Positive Reinforcement: Training Dogs in the Real World, Karen Pryor's Don't Shoot the Dog and Pam Reid's Excel-Erated Learning: Explaining in Plain English How Dogs Learn and How Best to Teach Them are among the books that someone with an interest in

understanding the psyche of the dog, or at least trying to, would do well to seek out.

Those looking for books specific to reading dog body language and trying to pick up on the subtleties and nuances of the way dogs communicate will be interested in picking up Turid Rugaas' small volume, On Talking Terms with Dogs. It's a quick read and one I review every couple of years since I often feel the need for a refresher. In the same vein, Brenda Aloff recently published a fascinating book, Canine Body Language, A Photographic Guide Interpreting the Natural Language of the Domestic Dog. It's not a text, but rather a photographic volume with pictures of the full complement of dog emotions. Brenda has made good use of her training sessions and consults by using her camera to capture just what the dog is communicating.

Still there are other books that deal with specific problems and behaviors with practically an endless amount of choices. The following books are the ones I pass on to people asking for help or that I reach for when I want to research something. For folks wanting simple basic books for rescues I like Carol Lea Benjamin's Second Hand Dog and Mother Knows Best. Both books are easy to read, since they don't have a lot of clinical information or behavioral theory, yet they are straightforward and easy for the novice dog owner to use. I feel the same way about Nicole Wilde's Help For Your Fearful Dog. Nicole covers many behavioral issues, each as a chapter of its own. She makes it easy to understand and at the end of each chapter is a synopsis of what was covered. For those readers who want more in-depth information and identifying training

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## School Project Bears Fruit for Peppertree

LUCIA PERFETTI CLARK

Peppertree is an all volunteer organization that relies heavily on donations in order to make ends meet. These donations come in all forms, from cash to supplies and from all types of entities from corporate donations to school projects. What each donation has in common is that it is needed and greatly appreciated.

Peppertree was recently the proud recipient of a science class assignment called **Make-A-Difference**, by **Alexandria Smith** and **Anna Pickett** from Guilderland Middle School. The purpose of the project was for the kids to do something to help animals. Some children built bird houses or adopted animals online, but these girls chose Peppertree as their organization to help. Peppertree was chosen because Alex's grandparents, Bill and Barbara Hawkins adopted their dog, Bear, from Peppertree. Bear was abused and neglected before he came to the organization and clearly his recovery has affected the entire family.

Alex and Anna collected bottles and cans to raise money and were able to donate \$25 dollars to our organization. They presented Peppertree with their donation at one of our Saturday adoption clinics and took pictures at the clinic to include in their class presentation. Peppertree would like to give Alexandria and Anna an **A+** for their project.



Alexandria Smith and Anna Pickett with Hope

## East Greenbush Sunday School Makes Generous Donation to Peppertree

KEVIN WILCOX

Earlier this year, the various Sunday School classes at the **First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush** decided they wanted to help area charities by raising money and collecting items needed by the charities. Each class selected a charity that was close to their hearts and the fifth grade class selected Peppertree Rescue as their charity. On Sunday, January 21, Peppertree volunteer Kevin Wilcox, Peppertree foster dog Lorelei – a King Charles Spaniel mix, and one of Kevin's dogs – Declan the Sheltie, paid a visit to each of the classes at the First United Methodist Church. While Kevin explained what dog rescue was all about, discussed proper dog care to each of the classes, and answered their questions, Lorelei made herself right at home snuggling with the children. Meanwhile, the ever vigilant (and hungry) Declan patrolled the room and made repeated visits to the church kitchen to check on preparations for the coffee hour that follows each Sunday service and Sunday school classes. Both dogs and Kevin stayed for the coffee hour and mingled with the church members.

On April 22, Kevin returned to the church to accept the generous donation of money and items that had been collected by the Sunday school classes. Students filled Kevin's car with towels, blankets, sheets, treats and dog shampoo that are always in need by Peppertree foster homes, and during the church service Kevin was presented with a check for \$400 that will assist Peppertree with the various expenses that Peppertree incurs assisting dogs in need.

Words can not express how grateful Peppertree Rescue is to the First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush and their wonderful Sunday School classes for their thoughtfulness and hard work in partnering with Peppertree to find good homes for great dogs.