



# The Peppertree POST

2009 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.

## Remembering a Founder

By Elizabeth Sommers

Peppertree recently lost one of our founding Board members, one of the five people who gathered, on a very snowy day, late in 1998 to brainstorm this quirky, multi-purpose rescue organization.

On February 1st, Karolyn Buttle lost her long, and fiercely fought, battle with cancer. She was so very young (only 51) and beautiful, both in person and in spirit. It's hard to process, even though we all knew that her time was imminent.

In addition to helping tremendously with the work and organization of Peppertree, Karolyn's "enchanted cottage" on Beebe Pond, in Caanan, New York, welcomed many foster dogs and significantly became one of the very vital stops along the road of recovery for a series of super-shy intakes. We learned by accident that it helped these very wary dogs to go to a series of homes, in each of which they were treated with love and laughter. Eventually, with the help of secure resident dogs, they would learn that it was safe to trust people. Many miracles of emotional "birth" took place out on Beebe Pond.

Karolyn also, very bravely, hosted several Peppertree picnics at The Pond, which were the best of our too-few social events and led to many wonderful memories. Specifically, barbequing under the umbrellas, a series of dogs deciding her flower beds were truly

meant to be \*beds,\* furry frisbee tournaments, and, one year, the best mud puddle ever!

Karolyn, with her ready smile and instant empathy, added immeasurably to our organization's spirit and to our vocabulary! The Peppertree word "Hee whack-ity" became, and still is, our cheer when something good happens. It's been touching and quite fun to watch new volunteers pick up that cry, having no idea of its origin, and probably carrying it over into other areas of their lives. I'm waiting for the day that it hits some dictionary of modern idiom and we will see to it that she's properly credited. There were many other verbal quirks and creations from her throughout the years. I wish I'd kept a list and perhaps we can compile one in her memory. Every one of her unique word-arrangements carried her whimsical, quirky, gentle and insightful spirit.

Karolyn even came up with the perfect term for that most astonishing, unnerving aspect of rescue work: something she christened the "rescue non-coincidence." Every rescuer knows those seemingly random, illogical series of events that occur, which turn out to be so fitting and right for the people and dogs involved that it's almost magical or, more accurately, convinces you that there truly is some greater power stepping in on occasion to intervene on behalf of these innocent and precious lives. As we should have expected, Karolyn's passing was marked by a genuine rescue non-coincidence.

For the last several years, she has had two dogs as her chief companions: Peyton, a sturdy, spirited survivor of early abuse who came to us in a slightly odd way (helping out a sister rescue). He was initially adopted by a wonderful man who also passed away far too early, and when he returned, there was a vacancy at Beebe Pond. I'll confess to a little maneuvering and

*continued on next page*

gentle arm-twisting to get him out there, and I never regretted it for an instant. And EmilyAnne, one of the “Bouvadors” (an accidental Bouvier/Labrador litter we got 10 years ago), a quirky giant whom Karolyn gentled and entranced.

Of course, Karolyn had made plans for them and each had a home waiting for them when the time came. During the last days of her illness, however, it became clear that they had come to rely on one another so much that we should really try to find them a home together. We were particularly concerned about EmilyAnne, as she had never lived anywhere else or with anyone else and seemed increasingly dependent on Peyton. Word went out and all sorts of options were being explored by a wide network of her friends. On the evening of January 31st, after Karolyn had gone to sleep for the evening, EmilyAnne took the

decision out of our hands. She collapsed at the house and, on being taken to the Animal Emergency Room, she was found to have liver cancer and massive internal bleeding. The decision was made to let her go to the Rainbow Bridge to end her suffering, but most of us knew that in truth EmilyAnne had simply gone ahead to be there to greet Karolyn, who followed less than 12 hours later. It was a gift to all of us as well, to know that neither of them would be alone.

Godspeed to a very special and unique person. It is so very hard to say goodbye.

A website has been established at [www.caringbridge.org/visit/karolynbottle](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/karolynbottle) where friends can leave their thoughts and all can enjoy the photo gallery, with several images of our beautiful friend.



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

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## A Supermodel and a Squirrel Hunter

### ~Part 1~

By Constance Burke

*A note from the editor about this story.* Since I am included in this story, I should say that in all my years of rescue Carly is a dog I know I truly saved. She came to Peppertree from the New York City shelter system, clearly a case of the cute puppy with too much attitude for the average adopter, and not a city/apartment girl when it comes to energy level. She lived with me and my husband for five long months, with multiple placements, and many a tear shed over the failure of her placements. Connie made me believe there truly is a match, and a “right” home for every dog.

It was a Fall evening three years ago when it happened – I fell in love with my first Peppertree dog, not that it’s even right to refer to Carly as just a dog. She’s so much more. She’s a supermodel for heaven’s sake!

Friends Lucia and Tim Perfetti Clark had been fostering Carly for a number of months. I had heard lots of stories about Carly from Lucia – there was always a Monday morning debrief on Carly. The stories ranged from their dog Cassie’s management of Miss Mouthy or yet another placement that lasted a mere few hours. Carly sounded like a piece of work, no doubt. So, at long last that Fall night I had a chance to meet the bane of Lucia’s existence, the Peppertree foster who always guaranteed to provide me with a Monday morning tale of another clinic with not a nibble of interest, or another placement that lasted even less time than the last. I couldn’t imagine what it was about with this dog that made no one want to adopt her, or keep her once the trial period had started. Okay, it’s not like I didn’t know she had some idiosyncrasies, but I knew if anyone would bring Carly along, help her come down from her superstar ego and temper her mouth (for both its vocal and gentle mauling tendencies – she is a corgi/collie mix with herding tendencies) it would be Lucia and Tim so what was the story with this dog?



Well, there I was that fall evening meeting Miss Fabulous, Supermodel Carly as Tim tried to contain her with new people in the apartment one of whom was my son, a small boy eager to pet this grumbling dog. Needless to say, she was as pretty as can be while vocalizing her ‘it’s all about me’ attitude. Yep, Carly was showing us her very best qualities in an attempt to win us over, and it worked!! I liked her right away, as did Powell, while at the same time I understood how people could easily find her not-so-fabulous in a lot of ways.

The next day I told Lucia that I wanted to take Carly for a weekend and try her out at my house. I may have had to say it a few times for Lucia to take me seriously. I think Lucia and Tim had both resigned themselves to the possibility that they would be Carly’s forever home by default. My only concern was that my 11 year old German Shepherd dog William be okay with having her in the house. I didn’t want her to stress him out or for her to become a nuisance to him. I also thought if any other dog could gently convey appropriate dog behavior to Carly it would be William.

Carly was already prepared to go to a clinic the following weekend so Lucia and I agreed if nothing came of that, I would take her. I did actually worry that somehow the stars would line up and some wonderful person would come along and realize what a treasure Carly really was and adopt her on the spot. I told you she had me at hello that first night, didn’t I? Lucky for me that did not happen at the clinic that weekend. I would like to think it was lucky for Carly too.

William and Carly lived together for four months. I was amazed at how patient William was with her, and she was respectful of him in turn. She knew who was in charge and he tolerated her overwhelming neediness. I remember the morning William died saying to him, “No, you can’t leave me with her. I need you to help me train her. We aren’t done.” I guess he thought she and I would figure it out...and we did.

In short order we added another dog – a German Shepherd puppy to the household named Weston. Carly assumed the position of the reluctant alpha when Weston joined the family and then happily handed it over once Weston was bigger than her. Neither was qualified for the position, but one of them had to take it.

So what of the Squirrel Hunter? That would be the second Peppertree girl that I fell in love with, Ella’s story as part two in the next newsletter.

# SAVE THE DATE

## Garage Sale & Perennial Plant Sale

### SATURDAY June 13th

#### 8am - 3pm

19 Rolling Hills Road  
Niskayuna, NY 12300

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# Pesos For Peppertree

By Mary Ellen Grimaldi

On Sunday, March 1st a warm crowd of Friends of Peppertree – adopters, volunteers, animal lovers in general, and fans of great food and drink – gathered at Mexican Radio in Hudson, NY. Owners Lori Selden and Mark Young, who added lucky Peppertree dog Alma to their family last summer, very generously donated 25% of the day and evening’s proceeds to our cause. This amounted to a whopping \$2,000.00. For most of the month of February, colorful dog-themed cutouts were sold for \$1 each, personalized by the purchaser and then displayed on the bright walls of Mexican Radio. Heartfelt thanks, for which there really aren’t words, go to Lori and Mark, managers Miriam and Matt, and all the friendly and capable hostesses, servers and bartenders. Also, for helping produce the \$1 cutouts: volunteer Sandy Graves, the Zink Family, St. George Preschool and from Orenda Elementary in Clifton Park Ms Delmerico’s first grade class, and Ms Brosnan and Ms Gwiazdowski’s second grade classes.

If ever on Warren Street in Hudson or Cleveland Place in New York City, stop in at Mexican Radio and sample out-of-this-world meals and Margaritas!  
[www.mexrad.com](http://www.mexrad.com)





## Peppertree Volunteer Spotlight

### Meet:

Patrice O'Connor

### Occupation?

Management  
Analyst with NYS  
Department of Public  
Service

### Volunteer Location?

Clifton Park, NY

### How long have you been volunteering with Peppertree?

Four and a half years!



### What is/are your Volunteer Role (s) within Peppertree?

*I'm the volunteer coordinator helping new people come into the organization; I place the Times Union ads for clinics, and help out at clinics.*

### How/Why did you come to be a Peppertree

**Volunteer?** *My first contact with Peppertree was when we decided to add a second dog to our family to help our one year old Lab Teddy deal with his mild separation anxiety. We wanted an older Labrador Retriever and we found Bear on the Peppertree web site, met him and fell in love. I wanted to start doing some animal related volunteer work and decided it would be nice to give something back to the organization that gave us our wonderful rescue dog Bear. I really started volunteering in Bear's honor.*

**What surprised you the most about rescue once you became more involved?** *I was surprised at the number of senior dogs that are surrendered by their owners and how some families can walk away from their longtime pets so easily. I'm also surprised at how many dogs have medical issues such as heartworm, Lyme disease, and other chronic illnesses.*

**Name and Breed of dogs in your family? Any other animals in the home?** *We have one six year old Labrador Retriever named Teddy Bear. Teddy has a spinal cord injury and is partially paralyzed. Teddy lives with three fabulous felines--Jennyanydots a ten year old grey tabby, Little Nelson a three year old black male cat, and Jimmy The Kitten who is a white cat with a tabby tail and who is seven months old.*

**Do you have a favorite breed?** *If so, what is it? I'm a Labrador Retriever lover. I've had four wonderful Labs over the past thirty years. A yellow male named Jay Gatsby, a yellow female named Dreamgirl Jessica, our Peppertree black male, Bear, and our current Black Lab, Teddy Bear. They are just all around great family dogs, fun-loving, and always willing to please.*

**What is your favorite activity to do with your dog(s)?** *Before Teddy's spinal cord injury we used to walk two to three miles a day in a wooded park. Teddy also loved to play with his jolly balls in the yard and swim in the Mohawk River in the summer.*

**What is your favorite thing about Peppertree Rescue?** *I love the people! I think our volunteers are the best and some of the most caring and giving people I've ever met. We also have the best sense of humor which you need when you deal with animal rescue.*

## Holiday Appeal, A Raving Success!

By Lucia Perfetti Clark

It's no breaking news story that the US economy is not doing very well right now, and the effects of that are far reaching. Peppertree knows this first hand, as we have had some owner turn-ins related to people losing their jobs and not being able to afford to care for their dogs anymore. So as we began to draft the letter for this year's Holiday Appeal, we had realistic expectations that perhaps this year people would not be able to give as generously as they had in the past. However, upon the recommendation of our printer Karl Stewart at Gothic Printing, we did include a return slip, which he said may help increase our response rate.

We are happy to report that not only did we collect the largest amount of money ever for the Holiday Appeal, our response rate was better than ever, six percent of those who were sent a letter returned it with a donation, where as most not for profits hope for a three to five percent return rate. This really speaks to the generosity of the network of people who keep Peppertree going. Donations that can be directly linked to the Holiday Appeal letter totaled at \$9,490, and the total amount of donations that occurred during the holiday period including ones related to the letter, December through January was approximately \$21,852. This money allowed Peppertree to once again settle the very large medical bill accumulated during the year at Shaker Veterinary Hospital. It also allows us to continue the important work of rescuing dogs in need, and being able to take in ones who have a good temperament, regardless of the cost of the care they may need prior to being adopted out.

To those who donated, Peppertree thanks you, and the dogs (past, present, and future) thank you. To those who wanted to donate but were unable to this year, we understand that it has been a difficult year for everyone, we appreciate your support in the past and we look forward to having it again in the future. Happy 2009 everyone!

## Tully's Many Talents

By Tully's Mom

Sniff sniff sigh. Huff... huff... .....(a few seconds later) poke... huff..... huff.... sigh ..... (a few seconds pass) slurp...slurp.... My mornings begin without a blaring alarm clock. Instead, a cool wet nose finds my ear, neck, or a bare arm or foot. If I am not quick enough, the licking begins. Ignoring him results in Tully pouncing onto the bed, cats hurtling in various directions of escape, bewildered by the invasion of the big red hound. If this maneuver doesn't wake the household, my husband's response does: "Tully! GET DOOW-WWN!" This is our life, post-adoption of Tully, the high-energy Peppertree hound.

My daughter Hannah, 2 ½, adores the foster dogs who spend days, weeks, or months with us. We teach these dogs home guidelines such as "leave the cats alone" and "do your business outside." Some of our furry visitors had never been hugged, loved, groomed or fed daily. Others are geographical victims – slated for euthanasia because they are southern-bred. Still others are victims of the sinking economy, given up by tearful owners who cannot afford veterinary costs and dog food. A few are picked up as strays and unclaimed by owners. Tully belonged to that group. All arrive in our house bewildered, wide-eyed, tentative; temporary guests until forever families are found.

We lavish them with love; feed, groom, and walk them. We also begin to teach them to live indoors with other animals and provide obedience training. Our house is one of many intermediate havens, halfway between shelter and permanency. Some of our foster dogs have never navigated stairs. Others haven't experienced the hazards of linoleum floors, or been exposed to a world without tie-out chains dragging behind them. Yet they still trust, love, and are affectionate to every kindness shown. Each dog slowly becomes confident in new surroundings.

Lucia, a longtime Peppertree volunteer, emailed the group about a possible Peppertree dog: a young, mixed-breed hound named Sherman of good temperament, housed at the Cortland County Humane Society in Central New York. He was an unclaimed wanderer who was frustrated in a kennel – no playmates, furiously guarding the entrance of his pen as other dogs were ushered by. Lucia's mom had met and played with Sherman. Committed to finding him a home, and sure that a kennel was the worst environment for him, they asked Peppertree to take him in.

Sherman couldn't be in a kennel at a worse time. It was right before the holidays, and most Peppertree foster homes were full. Lucia and her mom persisted. The emails drew me in; I had frequently passed through Cortland on my way to Ithaca. I couldn't bear the thought of the poor dog, penned and alone, suffering each additional hour in the shelter. I emailed a tentative reply: "if no one else would be able to... we could do a short-term foster.... although we were also scheduled to take in another pup in a few weeks.... plus dog-sit for friends we had met through Peppertree volunteering...." Lucia's response returned minutes later.

Shortly thereafter, in a blinding snowstorm and sub-zero wind-chill, I drove to Utica to meet Leigh from the Cortland shelter. In the snow filled parking lot at Exit 31, I spotted an idling SPCA truck. Sherman clambered out of the back as Leigh and I shared last-minute notes on feeding and vaccinations in the bone-chilling wind and flurries. He stretched and wagged his tail, and I marveled at his long, floppy ears and beautiful red coat. "He's a redbone!" I exclaimed, and she paused to take a look. "Probably a mix of some sort," she replied. He licked my hand and wagged his whole behind. Shivering, he eagerly jumped into the back of my car, out of the cold. When I got in, he was sitting in the front passenger seat and quickly inched over to snuggle and lick me enthusiastically.

"Awww, man! Cut it out!" I told him, half joking. We stopped for gas and he intently watched me pump and head in to pay. Back at the car, I could see his agitation; nose pressed against the fogged window, deep, mournful hound bays. A little



uncertain, I paused before I opened the door - was he going to attack me? Pull another Houdini? I could imagine the headlines: "Foster Home Loses Dog in Less Than 10 Minutes!" That would be a Peppertree milestone I didn't want to meet. As I blocked his exit and pushed him back to the passenger side, he eagerly licked me and wagged his tail, relieved I had returned.

As we drove the snowy miles home, the heat and a tummy rub put him to sleep. But he refused to lie down. Head up high, eyes half-mast, his chin dipped as he struggled to stay awake and upright. I admired his resolve.

"Honey! Look what I brought you!" I called as the new foster pushed by my legs and galloped into the house like a gangly, leggy foal. I heard giggles as Hannah was greeted effusively by our wiggling visitor. I could see my husband sizing him up. A canine handler for a local police department, my husband had been talking about owning another dog –possibly a bloodhound or a redbone hound - for search and rescue. "What type of hound is he, a redbone? How old?" he asked.

"They weren't sure... he was found wandering in Cortland County, and he was left unclaimed for a few months. They mentioned one or two years old – I think he's probably closer to one?"

He immediately sat down on the steps, and our newest foster bounded into his arms, wiggling his butt excitedly. I took photos and prepared a brief biography for posting on the Peppertree website. In less than a day, I realized that posting Tully's adoption description would be futile – he was already home. Of the dozen dogs we had fostered during the past year, Tully had permanently won a place in our hearts.

Most hounds are talented sniffers, and Tully is no exception. He lets us know when squirrels have been at the birdfeeder, and when Hannah's diaper needs a change. He tracks us throughout the house and yard and eagerly accompanies us for walks in the

woods, where he finds all sorts of new scents to nose out.

Both his energy and enthusiasm surpass his focus – he's still a very young hound. Even though we have plenty of experience with dogs, we've concluded that Tully's cast from a different mold – he's a social butterfly, wrestling fanatic, and champion fence-hurdler all rolled into a sixty-pound, reddish-tan ball.

My husband recently started some basic training with Tully. His goal: to teach him to focus on following one scent to completion in order to become a search and rescue dog. No surprise that Tully has taken to it... enthusiastically. "He got from Point A to Point B," my husband admitted, "It wasn't perfect – he had to be redirected once or twice – but it was a good first track. And he loved it."

Not all dogs get to live the exciting life of Tully, the redbone hound who has found his calling in life. We continue to foster, providing each Peppertree foster a second chance at a loving home. Truth be known: it also works off some of that endless hound energy as Tully chases the new guys around the yard, defending his title as doggy world wrestling champion.



## *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 benefited from the kindness of one or multiple foster home volunteers.*

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

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*A Rescue For Dogs Of Good Temperament*