



The Peppertree POST

2010 Volume 2

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.

Peppertree Receives Reilly Salary Fund Grant for a Second Time

Mary Ellen Grimaldi

On February 17th Assemblyman Robert Reilly (D-Loudonville) announced the 2010 recipients of his salary fund. Since he began his tenure in the NYS Assembly, Mr. Reilly has donated his entire salary to local charities. Peppertree is pleased to announce that for the second time we are among the recipients. The Community Foundation of the Greater Capital Region review applications for the money and administers the fund on behalf of the Assemblyman.



The generous amount of \$2500 will aid greatly in our mission to help pets and their owners in crisis. The economy is forcing people to lose their jobs and sometimes their homes. One of the worst parts of this for many is that they also need to surrender their beloved dogs. Peppertree will be able to assist more pet owners by finding new homes for these pets, after ensuring they get necessary vetting that may have been overlooked by the former owners due to economic hardship.

We are most grateful for this affirmation of our mission. And we thank Assemblyman Reilly for his philosophy: "I've learned that when you give back to local programs, everybody wins."

Fifth Grade Class Assists Peppertree Rescue

 By Alissa Barnett

This January, Peppertree Rescue was honored to be invited to Ms. Domermuth's 5th grade class at Berne Knox Westerlo School. Peppertree was greeted by a classroom of friendly and curious students, as well as a pile of generous donations. After a short presentation about rescue and what Peppertree is about President Kevin Wilcox opened up the floor to questions, and let some furry friends take over the presentation. Corky the Sheltie and Packers the German Shepherd were honored to be the Peppertree ambassadors and accepted all the treats and attention with poise. The presentation and generous donation were not the only good thing to come from this visit. Packers was such a wonderful representative of a Peppertree dog that

an employee at the school decided they needed a Peppertree dog of their own and adopted the energetic and friendly Chase. Don't you just love a happy ending? A special thank you is in order for Ms. Domermuth and her 5th grade class.

Saying Goodbye to a Family Member

Karen Harmon

Losing a pet is a painful and inevitable part of long-term pet ownership. The grief can be so devastating and long-lasting that some people vow never to adopt a pet again, yet others find that adopting a new pet eases their sorrow and brings new joy to their life. The sudden death of a pet through accident or illness prompts a different period of adjustment than when we have time to prepare for the death of a terminally ill pet. The decision to euthanize may compound our sorrow and guilt. For many of us, our pets are an integral part of our family and daily lives so it is not surprising that individuals sometimes feel closer to their pets and grieve more for them than they do for extended family members who die. There is no right or wrong

way to grieve as it is an individual process, but there are many resources available to help us cope with our pet's death.

Each pet has a unique impact on an owner when it dies. Over the past two years, I had to euthanize all three of my old dogs, a collie mix and two golden retrievers, to alleviate their suffering. My 13-year-old collie mix Jenny had been having heart problems for a year, but took a turn for the worse one night when she suddenly lay down on the floor and refused to get up. We raced her to the emergency clinic where they diagnosed a large tumor in her heart. The veterinarian said that she was not in acute pain and we could take her home if we really wanted

to, but that the tumor might burst at any time, leaving her in agony. The decision was ours alone, but he seemed relieved when we decided to euthanize her rather than take her home. We sat by her side, stroked her head and talked to her while the veterinarian helped her go to sleep for one last time. She remained aware of all of us and when my husband and mother-in-law, her former owner, came into the room to say goodbye, I always will be comforted by the memory of how she raised her head off of the floor to look at them and greeted them with her paw as if she was saying goodbye. It was as if she was telling us that she was ready.

My two old golden retrievers,



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

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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?

14-year-old Oscar and 16-year-old Poco, also aged noticeably during the last year of their lives. Neither was in acute crisis so the decision to euthanize was far more difficult than in Jenny's case, which seemed so clear-cut. In retrospect, I wish that I had euthanized them a couple of days earlier than I did, but as luck would have it, both began failing precipitously on separate weekends when our veterinarian's office was closed. In both cases, I waited until Monday so that they could see their regular veterinarian because she knew them well and I wanted her opinion versus that of someone who did not know my dogs at all. The news was not good in either case, but I needed her to give me the extra reassurance and support that I needed to let them both go.

Helping Your Children Cope

I have heard parents say that they want to get a puppy or young dog so that their children will not have to experience the loss of a pet. I have three children myself and we have lost several animals. They adjusted much more quickly than I did and each episode was a learning experience for them. Children are very resilient and while they may experience sharp, immediate grief, they tend to move on more quickly than adults do, especially if the adults in the household encourage them to talk about their grief and help them understand that the animal is no longer in pain.

The death of a pet gives parents an opportunity to introduce children to the concept of death as an inevitable stage of life. Death is an unpleasant subject for parents to broach with children and sometimes they avoid discussing it at all, which makes it

more shocking when a loved person dies unexpectedly. It is easier to introduce the concept of death through the death of a pet than the death of a person close to the child later on. Encourage your child to share his or her feelings with you, other family members and friends. Perform a small ceremony of some type with them such as laying a painted stone on the ground where your pet is buried or saying a few words over your pet's grave. The Rainbow Bridge poem is comforting for children and adults alike and can be found at www.peppertree.org (click on Rainbow Bridge). Don't tell your child that the pet was "put to sleep" unless you help him or her understand what that means.

Other Pets In Your Home

Your remaining animals may show little reaction to the loss of your pet or may be deeply affected as some animals are very attached to each other. They may seem restless, anxious and depressed and you may notice changes in their sleep or eating behaviors. They also may seem to cling to you more than usual.

Dr. Margaret Muns, a veterinarian who has written numerous Internet articles (www.petloss.com/muns.htm) has the following suggestions for pets who seem to be grieving:

- 1) Maintain the same routine for the surviving pet;
- 2) Try not to reinforce the pet's behavior changes such as changing the food to accommodate a newly picky eater;
- 3) Don't give the pet too much extra attention, which can backfire and lead to separation anxiety;
- 4) In multi-pet households, let the surviving animals work out the new dominance hierarchy themselves;

5) Don't get a new pet to help the grieving pet unless you feel ready yourself.

Taking Care of YOU

It is very difficult to euthanize a beloved pet, but it is important to try to recognize when you are holding on for your benefit rather than for the pet's benefit. They seem to know when it is time and their bodies begin shutting down. Our final gift to them is being strong enough to recognize that time and help them on their way to relieve their suffering. For individuals who know that the

If It Should Be

*If it should be that I grow frail and weak,
And pain should wake me from my sleep,
Then you must do what must be done,
For this battle can't be won.*

*You will be sad, I'll Understand,
Don't let your grief then stay your hand,
For this day more than all the rest,
Your love and friendship stand the test.*

*We've had so many happy years,
What is to come will hold no fears,
You'll not want me to suffer, so,
When the time comes, please let me go,*

*I know in time, you too will see,
It is kindness you do for me,
Although my tail its last has waved,
From pain and suffering, I have been saved.*

*Do not grieve that it should be you,
Who has to decide this thing to do,
We've been so close, we two, these years,
Don't let your heart hold any tears.*

Author Unknown

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Thank you to all the Peppertree supporters and sponsors who attended or donated to the Furry Fun Run! We hope you all had a wonderful time and are very thankful for your support and donations. Without people like you Peppertree would not be able to exist.

Regardless of the weather, a fun time was had by all. There were a lot of smiling faces and wagging tails. Congratulations go to our top runners and top fundraisers!

First Place with Dog: **Katie Jones and Truman**
Second Place with Dog: **Bill Ports and Piper**
Third Place with Dog: **Russell Hoyer and Mr. Bojangles**

First Place Male: **Scott Kahill**
Second Place Male: **Bill Ports**

First Place Female: **Katie Jones**
Second Place Female: **Alyssa Alex**

First Place Fundraiser: **Dell Langlois**
Second Place Fundraiser: **Katie Jones**
Third Place Fundraiser: **Danielle Murphy**

The grand fundraising total for the
Furry Fun Run
was a spectacular **\$10,031!**
We hope to see you next year!





Peppertree Volunteer Spotlight

Meet: Peg Boughton

Occupation? Insurance Broker

Volunteer Location? Schenectady, NY

How long have you been volunteering with Peppertree, and what are your Volunteer Roles? Since its inception, in fact even before that!

What are your volunteer roles?

I used to occasionally foster but sadly, not too much now. I assist with adoption clinics, intake, fundraising and anywhere else I may be of assistance.

How or Why did you get involved with volunteering for Peppertree? I had volunteered with other groups before finding Peppertree - what drew me to Peppertree is the philosophy and the incredible lack of human drama that many other groups have.

What surprised you the most about rescue once you became more involved?

The amount of great dogs in our shelter system that have no baggage, have nothing but love to give and really need little to no work to fit into a household. The amount of dogs like this that are put down day after day in this country is heartbreaking.

What are the names & breed of the animals you have? I am currently down to two dogs - Casey a 14 year old sheltie-x and Winston an approximately 9 year old French Bulldog



What is your favorite breed?

Plain brown wrapper dog

Does one Peppertree Dog stick out in your mind?

Akira - always has, always will.

What is your favorite thing about Peppertree Rescue?

The people and the continuous love and support they extend as individuals and an organization.

decision will have to be made in the near future, it is less stressful to begin making plans early as to whether or not you will be present when your animal is euthanized, whether or not you would like someone there with you, where it will take place and what you will do with the body afterward (burial, group or individual cremation). All of my beloved pets are cremated, for instance, and their ashes sit in individual boxes at the bottom of my nightstand so that I still feel that they are close to me.

According to Dr. Muns, we go through the same stages of grief when losing a pet that we suffer when losing a person in our lives. The grief process involves the five stages of shock and denial, anger,

bargaining, depression and finally acceptance, but the length of each stage varies with each individual. Give yourself time to grieve and recognize that your pet was an important part of your life and that your feelings are normal. Pamper yourself, share your feelings with friends and relatives who understand your attachment to your pet (not everyone does) and write your thoughts down on paper or your computer if that helps.

Don't be hard on yourself. You are going through a painful period and need to cut yourself some slack. Create a memorial for your pet or plant a tree or bush where you have buried the ashes. Don't be afraid to seek help if you do not feel like you

are getting over the death of your pet. Cornell University has a pet loss hotline and there also are pet loss support groups and grief counselors available to help.

I have assuaged my sadness by finding a new rescue dog to love, in fact, several dogs so that we again have a joyful house full of furry love. It comforts me to know that we have the capacity to love again and to give more deserving dogs a permanent home. Each of our new dogs has a unique personality that makes him or her special to our family, but we always will miss our old dogs that hold a special place in our hearts. I guess that means that we too have learned to accept and move on.



Thank YOU,

to everyone who contributes to Peppertree Rescue through the New York State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) campaign!

The 2009 donation totaled

\$10,493.33

We couldn't do it without you!



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A Rescue For Dogs Of Good Temperament

AND GRACIAS!

To Mexican Radio for another successful Pesos for Peppertree Event which resulted in **\$2,500** donation to our organization.

If you'd like to know more about our fundraising events check the following page on our website

<http://www.peppertree.org/events.php>