



The Peppertree POST

2016 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.

Joy to the World

It started with a late night phone call. An injured stray dog had been brought into an emergency vet, two of her legs were broken, and with no owner found she was in need of rescue. Would Peppertree Rescue take her?

Three Peppertree volunteers drove to the clinic to meet the dog. Not sure what to expect, they found a young dog half asleep with a teddy bear for comfort. One leg was splinted, one leg was swollen to three times its normal size. When they bent down to meet her, she kissed their hands.



The staff reassured them that though her injuries were great and she was in an unimaginable amount of pain, this dog remained stoic and sweet. She seemed to understand that these people were going to help her, and though she was unsure of her surroundings, she started to feel safe.

The volunteers made some phone calls and committed to taking her in and making her whole - in the days before Christmas they named her Joy, naming her not thinking of her past, but planning for her future.

A foster family stepped forward and the process of healing Joy began. Initially Peppertree Rescue was told that Joy would

need a splint on her front leg, and surgery on her hind leg, possibly amputation. Her X-rays left us staggered, how could a dog with these injuries be able to walk? And be so sweet? Clearly Joy was something special.

After consulting with a specialist it was found that surgery was needed for both of Joy's legs. Peppertree had to make some decisions - do we amputate the hind leg? Do we try to save it? What will be better for Joy? What will make her recovery easier? Can we afford these surgeries? Ultimately we decided that the best thing for a young dog with an active life ahead of her was to try to save both legs, so two surgeries were scheduled, and a generous donor (and former Peppertree adopter) offered to pay for one of them.

Joy continued to charm everyone she met and she was a real favorite with her surgical team. Her easy-going nature made her a wonderful patient - her fan club was growing. She came through her surgeries with flying colors, and headed home to recuperate.

It took six weeks, three casts (the patient thought she could remove them herself), two devoted fosters, two broken crates, one new nickname (Joyzilla), a lot of love, and countless hours of snuggling, but Joy has healed, and Joy is joyful.





From not being able to walk and being in too much pain to wag her tail, Joy is now running, playing, and wagging her tail a lot! She greets visitors with a happy bark, and is experiencing what every dog should experience.

We were happy we could be there for her. Joy rewarded us by showing her sweet spirit, and after four months, she found her forever home. She now has a canine brother and human siblings, and is a cherished family member. Joy is finally joyous, and is now spreading joy to the lives of others.



Peppertree Rescue, Inc.

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

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Old Dogs Bring New Joy



By Shay Harrison

Kota

The world is full of new stuff, the (perpetually) new iPhone, driver-less cars, Taco Bell breakfast burritos. Some, maybe most, of this vast array of new offerings, options, and items to fill your home are of dubious value and quality. The best new stuff is old stuff; in particular, an old dog.

Old dogs come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and temperaments, and unfortunately they are around in large numbers. The disposable nature of our consumer society somehow seems to extend to man and woman's best friend. Dogs (and cats, and rabbits, and birds, and....) are sentient creatures; they know a lot more than we humans give them credit for. They have complex social interactions and will look you in the eyes more directly than anyone other than your mother. And yet, dog rescues, particularly the haven of compassion that is Peppertree Rescue, continually see an influx of older dogs, apparently spoiled past their puppy and frisky use-by dates. I am here to tell you, old dogs are like Uncle Sam: they need you! And I am a sap, sucker, and bleeding-heart for dogs hitting their new prime. This is the story of the Harrison retirement home.

Patty the American Staffordshire Terrier is the actual owner of my house, other than paying the mortgage. I rescued her from Mohawk-Hudson Humane Society in 2006, which is when I first met many of the great folks that make up Peppertree. Patty is one tough customer who has a hard time introducing herself to fellow canines but I decided in 2008 that she might enjoy another presence in the house. And there appeared Balloo from the Peppertree stable, a 14 year old (?) with health issues and the most gentle demeanor you could ask from a 110 pound Rottie! Soon after, he appeared on the roof of my porch, much to the chagrin of the State Police and my neighbors, but thankfully the powers that be at Peppertree took it all in stride.

I had Balloo for almost 26 great months. Then Patty got a new Peppertree sugar daddy, Morrie, a blind and mostly deaf mutt up from NYC. Morrie could navigate both floors (including the stairs!) of my house better than I could if the house lost power and I tried doing it his way. Morrie had the same wonderful manner that Balloo did, and Patty snuggled up to him in the same way. Morrie had a happy 3 year, 3 month run with us. Jazz came along about 8 months later, this time from

H.O.P.E. in Saratoga, because Patty needed another old man in the house—Jazz was 11 years old, had the energy of a 3 year old, and the smarts of a drooling doofus. But what a great 60 pound lap dog. Jazz had 19 enjoyable months with Patty and me. You might think Patty is some kind of Black Widow, and there are times I think she will end up putting me in the ground, too—she is one tough customer.



Patty and Morrie

My point in all of this is to say older dogs are appreciative, they know what you are doing for them and with them. They come potty-trained and ready to take some long naps. Other than some visits to the vet and a complicated medication regime, they are not trying to be a bother, just looking to be near a human that wants to be near them, to be a mature companion. It's been 2 months since Jazz passed, 3½ years since Morrie passed, and almost 6 years since Balloo passed. I rarely can get through talking about their passing without tearing up, but I wouldn't take all the money in the U.S. Treasury in place of having those three old-timers as residents at the Harrison retirement community. Take in a well-aged dog, you will be paid back more than you can imagine!



Morrie

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Peppertree Volunteer Spotlight

Meet - Julie and Gary Urkevich

Occupation: Julie spent many years as a programmer analyst before raising daughters Marissa, Rosie, and Michelle. Her rescue work has led to her current position as receptionist for Brunswick Veterinary Hospital. Gary is an Executive Vice President for Berkshire Bank.

How long have you been volunteering with Peppertree, and what are your volunteering roles? We have been fostering dogs for Peppertree for four years. Julie is also a member of Peppertree's Intake Committee.

Names and breeds of dogs in your family? We have a Rat Terrier named Reilley who is also a therapy dog, Bella the Yorkie, and Buddy the Chihuahua.

Any other animals in the home? We also have a very fat cat named Olivia.

How or why did you come to be a Peppertree volunteer? When our old lab Gabe passed away, I decided our next dog would be a rescue. I researched all the local rescues online and was really drawn to Peppertree. We filled out an adoption application and were matched up with Buddy. I was so impressed with the way the entire adoption was handled and the support from Peppertree every step of the way, that I began to think of fostering myself. When I approached PT volunteers, they were very welcoming and extremely supportive. We have now fostered many dogs over the years and each one really does leave a mark on your heart. My only regret is that I didn't start fostering sooner!

What surprised you most about rescue once you became more involved? I realized there is a network of very caring people in the dog world who will go to great lengths to save a dog.

Do you have a favorite breed? If so what is it? Coming in contact with so many different breeds while fostering, it's hard to choose a favorite. A rescued dog is the best dog of all!

What is your favorite activity to do with your dogs? Snuggling on the couch with my pups.

Does one Peppertree dog stick out in your mind? PeeWee was a very old, blind Papillon. He was in rough shape when he came to Peppertree but we nursed him to health and he was doing well. Unfortunately, PeeWee was attacked by another dog and severely injured. He required surgery and almost daily veterinary care but he showed great spirit and slowly recovered. He never let his blindness or injuries stop him from living a full, happy life. He was adopted by a wonderful man and ended up spending happy years with him. I will always remember sweet PeeWee and his will to live and persevere in spite of the many obstacles he faced.

What has been your favorite Peppertree moment? A rescue non-coincidence, maybe a favorite adoption story? My favorite Peppertree moments are when the adopters of the dogs I have fostered contact me with updates to let me know how they are doing. It is wonderful to receive emails and pictures of my fosters enjoying their new lives. Knowing I had even a small part in making both the dogs' and the adopters' lives happier is a wonderful thing!

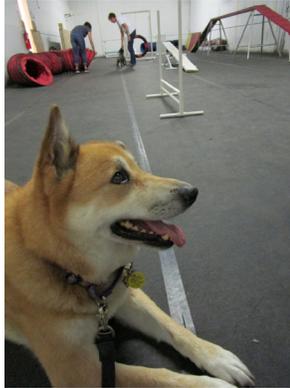
Have you successfully fostered a dog that initially looked like it would not be a good fit for your household, and how did you assist it in overcoming these hurdles? We have learned that is best to introduce our dogs to the new foster dog outside! Things go much smoother when we all come in the house together. Overall, our dogs are very accepting of the fosters we have as long as the first meeting is outside!



Fluff's Training Corner - Therapy Dog

By Alissa Mosier

Once we conquered Canine Good Citizen, it was clear Fluff loved learning and going to class. She also loved kids and going places, so the next step seemed logical – Therapy Dog prep! Not only would benefit us as renters, but as a certified teacher, having a dog to participate in reading programs was very appealing. And it was another way to get Fluff out and keep her busy, which would offer a way to keep her active outside of training class. Our CGC Prep trainer, Cydney Cross from CrossRoads for Dogs, had a class enrolling and we moved right in, thinking it would be a breeze – after all it was similar to Canine Good Citizen, we had to do loose leash walking, show she can sit, stay, do a down, and be left by her handler. The only difference was they added distractions like wheel chairs, walkers, and running kids, oh, and she had to leave food when asked. This would be simple, right? Reality check! First, Fluff had done most of the work for Canine Good Citizen with her dad handling her leash, so working with Mom was new to her, and we had some growing pains. It took a lot of practice for her to adjust to my different body language, but, that was minor and settled out in a week. The real challenge was leaving food. Fluff saw no point



in refusing perfectly good food if it was being offered. Person with food trumped Mom with no food every time. It made me frustrated; my prior dog was an expert at 'leave it' and would not even look at food if he was told to leave it, but not Fluff. Everything else she was amazing at, but leaving food we had to practice and practice. Cydney had us start by walking over a plate, and then we hid food under the plate. It didn't fool Fluff, but it did buy me enough time to get her to focus on the treat in my hand that was being offered as an alternative. Eventually it reached the point where she would leave it long enough that I could call her away and keep her walking, or when it was being offered, put her into a down and a stay so she could not reach the treat. It was not traditional, but it worked. So when came time for the test we did it all, our obedience was spot on and Fluff even left the treat, but we failed. You see, I was stressed, so Fluff was stressed, and she was not her normal tail wagging self. The evaluator felt Fluff was not outgoing enough to be a Therapy Dog. I was devastated, and this is where having a trainer that takes the time to get to know you and your dog is so important, because Cydney did not let us give up. She knew Fluff was Therapy Dog material and that every dog can have a bad day, and she encouraged us to try again. And so we did some more work in public, did agility to build confidence (for me!) and we tried again. Fluff passed.

Fluffy says:

Mom says it is important to obey, but I think leaving or ignoring food that is being offered makes no sense! We had a few disagreements and it wasn't always easy for her to stay patient. Sometimes when the human gets stressed, that tension can go right down the leash to the dog. When Mom gets nervous I get worried and try to figure out why she is upset and make her feel better. I do not want to think about meeting other people when she needs me! But when Mom is happy and relaxed, I can relax too and have a blast making new friends. I love when she is happy!

Furry Fun Run 2016 - our best year ever!

Our 9th Annual Furry Fun Run on Saturday, April 16th, was a huge success for all - runners, walkers, dogs participating and the dogs who will be helped by the more than \$7,700 raised! All proceeds of this event go to benefit the dogs of Peppertree Rescue and support the work we do. Thank you to everyone who ran or walked, who helped with registration or parking, marked the course, fundraised, solicited or picked up donations, cheered on the runners, and helped in so many other ways. Participants said this event keeps getting better, and this was the best year yet, all thanks to all involved.

Murdock the Westie and his dad Eric Morse once again crossed the finish line first, at 17 minutes 10 seconds. Murdock, by the way, is 6 years old, and just had ACL surgery last October--wow! Second place male was Alexander Perry 17:56, and Alan Finder and Jack came in at 18:10.

Among women runners, Tracey Delaney and Dax were the

fastest, finishing in 21 minutes 46 seconds, followed by Jenifer Kehn and Justice at 23:42, and then Dana Wiwczar and Kya at 24:15.

Our fastest dogs were Murdock, followed by Jack, and Denali was third at 18:13.

Colleen Johnson was our top fundraiser with \$490, Kate Lott from Saratoga Honda raised \$250, Bob Withers and Bella were third with \$100. Bella is 9 now and reportedly spends too much time on the couch, but she still managed to finish in 24 minutes, so we're having a hard time seeing her as a couch potato!

Full results are available here at the Greenleaf Racing site:
<http://www.greenleafracing.com/results/>

There were 213 registered runners and walkers, and we managed to photograph a lot of them. See page 4 for our annual photo collage, and <http://tinyurl.com/FFR2016photos>. Scroll down to view the Finish Line photo sub-album.

So Happy Together

by Julie Urkevich

Sometimes love finds you. Sometimes it walks through your door and into your heart. That is what happened to Dr. Nicole LaMora of Brunswick Veterinary Hospital when Roni the 13-year old Golden Retriever came to her office for medical care.

Roni was a stray from a NYC shelter, in poor physical condition when Peppertree took him in. Roni was obviously in pain, walking stiffly due to arthritis. He was thin, deaf, and had a mouthful of very painful teeth. They were in such poor condition, Dr. LaMora recommended extraction. Roni ended up having 16 teeth pulled!

When he first arrived at his foster home, he could barely handle the two steps to go outside, and had to be lifted back in after going out. Under Dr. LaMora's care, Roni slowly began to improve. Originally told that Roni had a potential adopter, Dr. LaMora could only wish him the best. But when his foster brought him in for follow up care and mentioned that the potential adopters had changed their minds, Dr. LaMora and her husband Brandon adopted Roni and have given him a life unimaginable to an old dog from a city shelter.

Living in a country setting complete with horses, Roni has improved so dramatically that he now runs around the horse paddock with abandon. He happily ignores Dr. LaMora's hand signals to come, playfully running close to her then spinning and running away! He has made himself quite at home, preferring the living room couch to his bed and Brandon's knee for a headrest. In a world of pain and fear, love found Roni in the form of Peppertree Rescue. For the LaMoras, love found them.



Yaddo in the kitchen

Yaddo's vet has reminded us that he is a bit on the chubby side, and we have to limit the goodies. To make treats last we like to put them into a toy and freeze them so they take a bit of time to eat. Yaddo's toy of preference is a Kong, he's into the classics. However, this recipe can be used to fill any kind of toy that you plan to freeze and give to your dog later – including a raw marrow bone (which Yaddo also loves are but not as kind on senior teeth.) And feel free to experiment with this recipe and make it your own – leftover roasted chicken? Throw it in! Turkey cold cuts? Throw them in! Blueberries about to go bad? Throw them in! Dog loves scrambled eggs? Ehhhh, maybe? We make no promises on that one, asked Yaddo what he thought and he said without the bacon, why bother...



Frozen Toy Stuffer

- 1 cup instant mashed potato flakes
- ½ cup water or low-sodium broth
- ½ cup canned dog food or ¼ cup natural peanut butter
- ⅓ cup Blueberries or other mix-in (optional)

Combine the mashed potato flakes with the liquid, add the dog food or peanut butter and stir. Add blueberries or other mix-in if desired, and you should get a thick meatball-esque paste. Stuff it in the toys and freeze.

This recipe should fill about 5 Kongs depending on size and how generously you stuff. If you only have one or two to fill, you may halve the recipe, although it can stay in the fridge for a day or so based on the freshness of ingredients. If you are using Kongs, Yaddo's mom highly recommends the Easy Freeze tray made by Kong. You can freeze the "stuffer" all at once and pop the cubes out of the freezer and into the Kong as needed, which helps when you forget to freeze the treat the night before!



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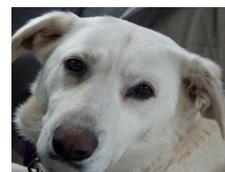
to all who contributed to our annual Holiday Appeal! We love receiving the pictures and notes of Peppertree alumni that often accompany the donations, and we mean it sincerely when we say we couldn't accomplish all we do without your steadfast support.



To subscribe to the Peppertree Post, visit www.peppertree.org/newsletters. To correct an address or unsubscribe, please email rescue@peppertree.org with "Peppertree Post correction" in the subject.

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?