

to the RESCUE

ABRN News

WORKING TOGETHER TO RE-HOME PUREBRED DOGS SINCE 1989

Hoarding Horrors

Martha Smith, President

Last month around 150 Miniature Schnauzers and Schnauzer mixes were seized from a hoarding situation by the Colorado Bureau of Animal Protection and taken to the Dumb Friends League. The dogs were in deplorable condition, and many of us in ABRN devoted a great deal of time and energy helping DFL help these dogs by working with, fostering and placing some of them. They were not house-trained or used to being handled by people.

The Dumb Friends League did a great job caring for and treating them all, and we were able to help groom to get them into an adoptable condition. Many of the dogs were so matted and their fur so caked with their own filth that their coats were in dreadlocks. They were suffering from a variety of illnesses brought on by a lack of food, water, veterinary care, and living in squalid overcrowded conditions. A number of the dogs had to be euthanized because they were so ill or so lacking in socialization that their behavioral problems made them dangerous. Dogs in such large numbers will often fight, injure, and even kill one another. Some dogs were so hungry that they were eating the carcasses of other dogs that had died on the property.

Although hoarding is not defined as an illegal activity in Colorado, it is a form of extreme and prolonged animal cruelty, and animal cruelty is against the law everywhere in this country. Animals in these types of situations can suffer for months and years on end, and criminal animal cruelty charges are increasingly being filed in hoarding cases. Even though hoarding is linked to mental illness, arrest and prosecution are often the only way to get the hoarder under control and into treatment. It is certainly the only way to get the animals out of

dangerous and often brutal conditions.

The Humane Society of the United States defines an animal hoarder as "a person who has more animals than he or she can properly care for". Another defining characteristic is "the hoarder's denial of his inability to care for the animals and his failure to grasp the impact his neglect has on the animals, the household, and the human occupants of the dwelling"

Many people think of hoarders as normal people who mean well but "got in over their heads". In fact, they are sick, sad exploiters who use helpless creatures to fill up the emotional holes in their own lives. True compassion is beyond them. What's more, hoarders are typically well-educated and possess excellent communication skills. Many of them have an uncanny ability to attract sympathy for themselves, no matter how abused their animals may be, and they often manage to fool others into thinking they are benevolent caregivers deserving of support. One of the reasons All Breed Rescue Network was formed was to develop and communicate standards that would enable animal care and control agencies to differentiate between bona fide rescues and hoarders.

You can make sure that suspected hoarders are properly dealt with by notifying the State Veterinarian's office at 303-239-4161 if you believe that someone is hoarding animals. There are commissioned agents of the Bureau of Animal Protection all over the state who can be called upon to launch an investigation.

A hoarder will tell you that she "loves animals". As we know from seeing so many of these horrific cases, it really is possible to love animals to death.



Before the grooming



"Many of the dogs were so matted and their fur so caked with their own filth that their coats were in dreadlocks"

saying NO to Potential Adopters

Susan Heidicker Brown

How do Rescue groups handle rejecting applicants? We sent out an inquiry, and these are some of the responses we received:

From Sally Terroux, Flat Coated Retriever Rescue

"I interview people as they apply and don't put them on a waiting list unless I feel that this breed is an appropriate choice for them and that they qualify in their dedication,



Cody the Great Dane

living circumstances and family circumstances for a dog of this breed. If I feel that I would not place a dog of this breed with them, I tell them why, and whether their situation would be better for a dog of another breed, or a cat or other pet.

I tell them that I do not go down a list and give the next person on the list the next dog or puppy available. I evaluate the puppy or the dog's behavior and place him or her where I feel he or she will

have the best chance of being successful. I try to give them an idea of how difficult (or easy) it might be to find a puppy or dog that will do well with their circumstances. I tell them that they and the dog will both have a better chance to succeed if the dog is matched to their family situation. No one should be in a hurry to choose a pet they are going to live with for many years. They can let me know if they do not wish to wait.

When I do place a dog, I do so with careful instructions to supervise the dog closely and to confine the dog in their absence. I stay in touch. I tell them to consider themselves a foster home and if the dog doesn't become an appropriate dog for them, then they are not the appropriate home for the dog either. If things cannot be worked out, I tell them to bring the dog back to me because I have a better chance than they do of finding a more appropriate home."

**From Ted Terroux, Owner & Trainer,
Sage Valley Pet Center**

"Informing rejected applicants? That is a real dilemma. How do you tell someone to take a hike and do it so well that they look forward to the trip?"

**From Lori Wersinger,
Rocky Mountain Great Dane Rescue, Inc.**

"We have a couple of different form letters that we send via e-mail or regular mail. One just states that we base the applications on a number of points, and their score was not adequate. The letter states "we have certain criteria we require of adoptive families in order to fulfill our purpose and mission for the sake of Danes. We have established and use a scoring basis. When the scores were added up from all sections of your application, we are sorry to tell you that you do not meet the criteria and minimal scoring requirements. We regret to inform you that we cannot place a Great Dane in your care at this time. The decision to deny the application was one made by the Adoption committee and Board of directors and is binding. If you have any questions, please e-mail or call us."

We also have a form letter for people with kids under 5. We do adopt to people with kids under the age of 5 in certain circumstances, but often the "bad family" also has young kids and this makes the "perfect reason". We add the following to our standard:" After reviewing your application for adoption, we regret to inform you that we cannot place a Great Dane in your care at this time. The reason for your denial is that you have children under 5 and since we do not always know the history of the Danes in our care, we feel it is best to not place them with small children." We also have one for those that do not have complete fences for their yards. We find that very few, maybe one in ten, even bother to ask why they were rejected. If they ask, we will usually tell them the reason, such as their current pets are not up-to-date on shots, bad reports from references, even that they lied on their application. We do not have the resources to send letters to each individual with the specific reason and just answer if they bother to ask."

From Leslie Brown, Safe Harbor Lab Rescue

"We respond to every application by e-mail or US mail, initially, whether approved or not. If they're approved, I tell them our adoption coordinator will be contacting them within a week to interview them. If they're not approved, I tell them why. Reasons we would decline an application are: If they will be using a tie-out, cable-runner, or chain; if their family pets are not neutered; or if they're renters and cannot provide written permission

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saying NO, continued from page 3

from their landlord to have a Lab. We have found that responding to each application, although a little time-consuming, greatly reduces the number of phone calls to our hotline and inquiries through the website.

I'm glad we have the luxury of choosing our adopters for the dogs' sakes. And I'm happy to report that we have the luxury of having many times the number of applicants as the number of dogs."

From Nina Washington, Colorado St Bernard Rescue

"We get people who think that Saints are wonderful guard dogs when in fact, they are not, and we will not adopt to anyone who is looking to use them for such a purpose. I did have an applicant recently whom we denied because the dog would simply spend too much time alone. They seemed like really great people otherwise. When they inquired as to why (and did so in a respectful fashion), I told them the real reason. It made sense to them, and they were actually happy to know that this breed really would not fit into their lifestyle. Unfortunately, for other people, no matter what we tell them, they are going to get bent out of shape over it. That is why we have a generic letter and a no tell policy." If they are truly persistent, we tell them that the board does not give out denial reasons to anyone. The vote must be unanimous and that any member can deny for any reason at all.

I know of a couple of rescues that simply tell people that they don't have a dog that would match. I personally feel it is a better use of time to simply send them on their way instead of stringing them along. I don't want people calling me 6 or 8 weeks down the road asking about new dogs listed on the website."

From Cathy sands, High Country Newfoundland Club

"We don't send out rejection letters. What we do send out with applications is a cover letter stating our policies, like not normally placing dogs out of our service area. We really stress that we can't 'match' everyone with one of our rescues in a timely manner. We never reject an application (we'll take any and all of them); however, we don't usually find a dog for those that aren't good applications for our breed either. Note that we ask them to check back with us if they have been waiting more than 6 months—that is because I find that most folks won't wait more than a month or so before they go out and get something somewhere else."

From Jennifer Munch, Pueblo Collie/Sheltie Rescue

"When I get an e-mail from someone asking about a dog, I tell them to first go to our website and read our Adoption Information page and the Adoption Contract so they know our policies and requirements.

I tell them that after reading that information if they choose to pursue applying for a dog, they can fill out the application on our website and send it to us. If our director gets a phone call about a dog prior to our hearing from them via e-mail (she handles the phone side of things; I handle the e-mail), she will talk to them a bit if they seem like a good prospect and also tell them they need to go to the website, read the information page and send us an application. (The bottom line is that we want them to know what our policies are, what our adoption fee is, and see if they want to pursue a dog. We want folks to take time to do all this before we get an application from them.) Also, our Adoption Application states, "We have the right to refuse any prospective adopter."

I have phrased the section of our Adoption Information section in such a way that hopefully folks realize that not everyone will be contacted. If folks WANT to e-mail again or call Hope, that is fine. I know some people are disappointed that they are not considered for a dog or aren't the "chosen ones" to adopt—but we are here for the dogs. We have to do right by them.

I would say that out of every 20 applications or inquiries we get, we find one suitable adopter. When folks do indeed complete the application, as opposed to just asking about a dog in a brief e-mail, they are more promising.



Casey, a mix of smooth collie, German shepherd and yellow lab, was adopted a couple weeks ago.



Cinnamon

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saying NO, continued from page 3

From Jeanne Phipers,
Poodle Rescue of the Rockies, Inc.:

"My feelings on this are ambivalent. I do things differently that most people because I do a telephone interview and



Tommy Hilfiger the red toy Poodle

tell them at that time whether they might be a good candidate for the RIGHT dog. I also explain my concerns with their situation up front in the interview. When they visit my house, if I feel it is not a good match, I say, "You know, I don't think this is a good dog for your situation. Let's wait for another one to come along". It is always a match game and sometimes it is not a good match, looking at it from our prospective. Our application also says "we reserve the right to refuse any adoption".

From Carolyn Peterson,
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Rescue

"Cavaliers get way more calls and applications than we do rescue dogs (at least so far). Last year, we only had one dog to place the entire year. Often when we do go through applications, many have given up and gotten something else. Personally, I would hate to tell people they're not getting a dog because they were honest enough to say the dog is going to be living in the backyard. I don't know if they would reconsider how they care for their dog or if they would just answer the question "correctly" on the next application they fill out."

From Linda Fredericks, Colorado Elkhound Rescue

"As the person who coordinates Norwegian Elkhound Rescue, I can say that most people who contact us are

familiar with the breed and have had elkhounds in the past. So the great majority of potential adopters are in fact very qualified to own rescue dogs and provide stable, loving homes. And thankfully, we do not have to deal with anything close to the number of rescue dogs or inquiries as do rescue groups dealing with more popular breeds, such as Golden Retrievers. The most common reason for us rejecting a potential owner is the fact that s/he wants the dog to live outdoors at all times. In that case, I simply tell them (yes, I do answer all telephone calls or e-mail inquiries) that it is the policy of the rescue organization not to place elkhounds in outdoor-only situations, as elkhounds are very social creatures and do not do well if excluded from the home. Some people complain ("I had an elkhound as a kid who really didn't like coming into the house and was happier being outside all the time.") However, since this is the policy and is applied equally to everyone, they all accept it. Of course, they can still go to a pet store or animal shelter or breeder and get an elkhound from there, but I will have no part in depriving naturally social dogs of the human contact they need."

From one group preferring to remain nameless:

"I just tell people that we haven't gotten a dog in yet that suits their requirements. We are in the same happy boat as Golden Retriever Rescue, with more homes than dogs, so I tell people up front that we have more homes than dogs, they are welcome to send in an application, and we will call them if a dog comes in that is a good match for them. Very few people ever call me to check their status. Usually, if it's more than a few weeks and I call them with a prospect, they have gotten a dog elsewhere, often another breed."

I would like to thank everyone who responded to this question. If you have questions you would like to ask other rescue groups, please send your suggestions to mollybrown@pcisys.net or call me at (719) 748-5777.



Thank you to these generous ABRN Donors!

- Douglas K. Hawes
- Lu Horner
- Animal Assistance Foundation

ABRN Board News

Due to time constraints, Lauren Immel has resigned from the All Breed Rescue Network board. We are happy to report that two dynamic new board members have been selected. Each is a welcome addition, and we appreciate each of them, as we appreciate all of the board members.

Bonnie Guzman

Bonnie Guzman was one of the founders of ABRN (see "How It All Began", in the April, 2004, newsletter). She has been active in breed rescue since 1991 for Wire and Smooth Fox, Lakeland and Irish Terriers. She says, "I'm also a closet Chinese Crested person." Bonnie is a shelter liaison for the Denver Municipal Animal Shelter and is currently in charge of the breed rescue lists. If you're interested in being on All Breed's referral list or need to change information on an existing list, Bonnie is the person to call.

Bonnie has been a nurse for 33 years and currently works at the city jail. She's been married for 16 years to Rick, a Boulder police officer. They have two teenaged daughters, Whitney and Carly. Two Smooth Fox Terriers, Marble and Simon, as well as two courageous cats, Wazee and Guido, complete the family. Originally from Massachusetts, Bonnie has lived here since 1979. In addition to dogs, she enjoys traveling and gardening. When asked what advice she would offer people who are new to rescue, she says, "Set your parameters, decide what it is you really want to

accomplish, and then stick to it and don't deviate from it."

Debbie Main

Debbie Main also brings many talents to the board. She has a background in technology, project management, training, and sales. She says she "recently settled back home in Denver after years of excessive traveling. My passions are animal welfare, domestic violence, and working with children. I am currently doing consulting."

Debbie has known Martha Smith for years and came to All Breed Rescue Network just recently to keep up to date on its technology. She also volunteers with the

Colorado Federation of Animal Welfare Agencies and Denver University's The Bridge Project. She says, "I'm looking forward to this upcoming summer where I am putting together a few programs for kids in housing developments that enhance their bond with animals."



Annie the Lab

Homecoming for Clancy

Nancy Larrew

I'd like to share a good story from Sue Murphy, Irish Setter Rescue. "Recently one of our ABRN shelter liaisons called us about an old Irish Setter in the shelter she covers. I went to pick him up and gave him a bath when we got home. While I was working on him, I noticed he had a little red heart on his collar. It was a 2004 Rabies Tag from MWI Vet Supply. I phoned them and they gave me the number of the vet clinic they shipped the tag to. Then I phoned the vet. They were

delighted, as the owners had told them they thought he must have died when he got out of their yard. They had searched for days and couldn't find him. We phoned the owners, and after they got over the shock, they were very excited. They had visitors on Memorial Day, and unbeknownst to them, some children had left the gate open. The Setters's name is Clancy, he is 13 years old, and he's back home where he belongs. I sure wish more rescues had this type of ending."



Clancy, happily back home with his family

The Gold Standard

Janet Nelson

"A Golden Retriever Can Change Your Life". So states the motto of Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies. Golden? Sure, they're nice dogs, but I had no particular interest in the breed when I became a Golden Rescue volunteer. Because I had no special fondness for Golden Retrievers, I thought volunteering with Golden Rescue would be "safe" - no temptation to bring



Bronte

home dogs. After all, I have a Chihuahua, a Min Pin and a Borzoi. I certainly didn't need a fourth dog. No way. No how.

I was "safe" for about the first nine months that I was involved in the organization.

I am the dog walking coordinator for all the devoted volunteers who come to walk, play and visit those rescued Golden Retrievers that are temporarily housed at Sage Valley Pet Center. While at Sage Valley in May, I succumbed to the wiles of a captivating, engaging, cheerful 9-week old female Golden. She was one of a litter of five captivating, engaging and cheerful puppies, so why is this girl different?

She is handicapped. Bronte was born with a deformed right foreleg and has no right forepaw. It is probable that these birth defects were due to the fact that her mother was only eight months old - way too young to have had a litter. Her underdeveloped leg, which is about four inches shorter than it should be, terminates in a stump that has a paw pad on its underside. This puppy, along with her littermates, was the result of backyard breeding. Bronte's mother died after giving birth, another casualty of the myth that breeding dogs is a simple and easy way to make money.

When I began volunteering with Golden Rescue, I told them that I was not interested in fostering, since I already had a full house. I'm a sucker for a hard luck story, though, as any of my friends can attest. All the puppies needed a foster home, so I agreed to foster the little deformed girl, provided I had the blessing of my husband. Kevin, who is just as much of a softie as I am, consented immediately.

I had been home with the puppy for about three hours when Kevin came in from work. Upon spying him coming through the door, the puppy raced over to him as fast as her three little legs could carry her and literally threw herself into his lap. Kevin looked at me, and I saw that "let's keep her" look in his eyes. Happily, in the three hours I had already spent with her, I was thinking along those very same lines!

We discussed all that would be involved in keeping a handicapped puppy. We realized that she would slow us down. She would not be able to go on the brisk long walks we take with our other dogs. She would cost us time, energy, money, and possibly heartache. I told Kevin that I want to have her evaluated as a candidate for a prosthesis, and that it would be expensive, especially if we got her started on a prosthetic limb now. She most likely would go through several of them before she was fitted for a permanent one in adulthood. I told him that if she cannot use a prosthesis, we may have to amputate the deformed leg. These considerations were acknowledged and carefully pondered.

Yes, she slows us down, but we need slowing down! Yes, she costs us time, but because of her, we've learned to be more efficient with our time. Taking her to be evaluated and fitted for prosthetics, as well as follow-up visits, will cost us energy and money. Thankfully, energy and money are renewable resources.

Heartache? That is yet to be seen. I am hoping with every fiber of my being that a prosthesis will work, and she can keep her leg. I am also hoping there are no internal deformities that will manifest later in her life.

Whatever lies ahead, we are determined to rejoice in what exists, not be saddened by what is lost. What exists, leg or no leg, normal internal organs or defective ones, is a happy-go-lucky, intelligent, gentle, creature who has caused me many smiles in the short time I've known her; a loving being who is lavish in her display of affection; a flash of red-blond hair that streaks across my field of vision as she hurls herself towards some new discovery!

"A Golden Retriever Can Change Your Life". So states the motto of Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies. Golden? They're GREAT dogs! I now have a very special interest in them. I also now have a Chihuahua, a Min Pin, a Borzoi and a Golden. Did I need this fourth dog? Absolutely. Without a doubt!

Editor's Note: In addition to volunteering with GRRR, Janet is also a shelter liaison for Table Mountain Animal Center.

ABRN Board Members

President: Martha Smith (303) 338-0878

Vice President: Karen Brown (303) 841-6052

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Secretary: Jeanne Phipers (303) 985-2811

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Member-at-Large: Sandy Moore (303) 751-6704

ABRN HOTLINE VOLUNTEERS

Susan Brown, Hotline Coordinator (719) 748-5777

Lisa Adams Michelle Bartz

Jacky Eckard Carol Farina

Lu Horner Dorothy Kent

Susan Lummanick Peggy Shifflet

Lois Williams Holly Wolfe

STAY IN TOUCH!

Would you like to feature a dog on ABRN's website, www.allbreedrescuenetwork.com? Jenni McKernan is the liaison with the Webmaster, Becki Hahn. Contact Jenni at (303) 783-5772 or at colosheltierescue@prodigy.net to highlight a rescue dog on the website. Please follow up with Jenni when that dog has been adopted. If you are interested in being on our rescue referral list or if you are on the list and have changes you need to make, please contact Bonnie Guzman at (303) 733-4220 or terrierlvr@comcast.net. If you have a temporary change, such as a vacation, please contact the hotline coordinator, Susan Brown, at (719) 748-5777 or mollybrown@pcisys.net. We need you to stay in touch - and besides, we enjoy hearing from you!



Zeus

ABRN Shelter Liaison List

Adams County Animal Shelter (Brighton, CO):
Amy Jones (303) 487-0930

Aurora Animal Care Center (Aurora, CO):
None at this time.

Denver Municipal Animal Shelter (Denver, CO):
Laurie Janak (303) 746-1570
Bonnie Guzman (303) 733-5446
Martha Smith (303) 338-0878

Dumb Friends League (Denver, CO):
Martha Smith (303) 338-0878
Sandy Moore (303) 751-6704

DFL Buddy Center (Castle Rock, CO):
Karen Brown (303) 841-6052
Diane Sutherland (720) 876-0945

Humane Society of Weld County (Greeley, CO)
None at this time.

Larimer County Humane Society (Ft. Collins, CO):
Michelle Bartz (970) 407-9011 or (970) 988-5957

Longmont Humane Society (Longmont, CO):
Neil Davis (303) 485-6159

Mesa County Animal Shelter & Roice-Hurst Humane Society
(Mesa County Humane) (Grand Junction, CO):
Ken Cox (970) 243-4567

Table Mountain Animal Care Center (Golden, CO):
Susan Lummanick (303) 948-2526
Nancy Larrew (303) 932-0461
Janet Nelson (303) 466-2459

To The Rescue, ABRN News, published quarterly.
Susan Brown, Editor, Debbie Davis, Designer.

To submit articles for the newsletter, please call Susan Brown at (719) 748-5777 or e-mail mollybrown@pcisys.net. Photographs of rescued dogs are always welcome. If photos are digital, please set your camera at the highest resolution (300 dpi at about 3X4" needed). Regular snapshots preferred. Deadline for submissions for the next issue is August 25, 2004.

Like to Help?

Please help rescue dogs where most needed with a tax deductible donation.

A donation of just \$10 will fund the printing and mailing of your newsletter for one year.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Please mail to: All Breed Rescue Network, P.O. Box 150803, Lakewood, CO 80215-0803.

Thank you for your support!

Maverick • Our Hero Lab

by Vince Kumagai

Recently, I got a call from one of my neighbors, who said there was an attempted break-in at my house. I immediately went home to check. My next-door neighbor met me as I arrived and said she had observed a car with three individuals acting very suspiciously. The suspects were seen ringing doorbells. When they got to my neighbor's house she did not answer because she was home alone. From her upstairs window she saw two of the suspects put on some gloves and enter my backyard through the gate. She called 911 to report a burglary in progress. It was 70 plus degrees that day, so Maverick the Lab (AKA Daisy - Safe Harbor Lab Rescue Alumni), and Bruno, the Newfie, were lounging in the backyard. My neighbor said that a few seconds after entering my yard, the two suspects were seen running out with Maverick barking in hot pursuit. The suspects were gone by the time the police arrived, but several of my neighbors were able to get a description and license of the car and suspects. The police officers recommended a steak for dinner for the Hero Lab. Maverick has been with us for about 6 months now. We love her very much, and we have nicknamed her "Trailer Park Dog" and "Alpha Bitch" for some of her traits. She is a very sweet dog, and on that day she showed us how much she loves her new home.



Maverick the Protector



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