

GOOD DEEDS

Why Rescue Groups do "Rehomes"

With the current economic conditions it is not surprising that rescue groups in many areas are overwhelmed with dogs. Rescue Volunteer "burn out" is always a concern, so sometimes rescue workers are asked why we take in dogs from individuals aka "rehomes" rather than just encouraging people to rehome these dogs themselves. The reasoning is that by doing this it would conserve some financial resources and volunteer hours. Some people feel that rescue groups should concern ourselves only with the "true" rescues, which to most people refers to dogs that are about to be euthanized at a shelter or confiscated by authorities in puppy mill raids. Restricting who we help sounds like an easy solution to the problem of too many dogs "in rescue", but the reality is that it really isn't quite that simple.

Living situations can change and sometimes the kindest thing an owner can do is to admit they can no longer provide the best home for their dog and take the necessary steps to find it the best home possible. In these cases, people often contact a rescue group because they feel rescue groups can do a better job of finding their dog a home than they could on their own. Rescue groups certainly have better access to a larger pool of people qualified to adopt a Bulldog than someone who just places an ad in their local paper and hopes for the best.

Before suggesting we turn away Bulldogs who are no longer wanted by their current families, you should be considering the answers to these questions – If rescue groups don't take these dogs, who ends up with them? Just how carefully will the current owners screen people in an effort to find a new home for their dog? And what about the dogs that need veterinary care, but the owners can't afford it? Will the new owners commit to spending the money or will they just dump the dog at a shelter when they realize the cost is more than they anticipated when they acquired their "bargain Bulldog"? And what about the dogs that were never spayed or neutered? These dogs can become easy prey for the many puppy millers out there to take advantage of.

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Owners can certainly drop their Bulldogs off at a shelter, and leave the rehoming to the "professionals", but what then? If they are fairly healthy, the shelter will adopt them out and not call rescue because the Bulldog is a popular breed right now and the shelter can turn a profit on a Bulldog. But just who ends up with these Bulldogs? The answer is – just about anybody who has enough money in his pocket to pay for the dog. There is no effort to find a good match for these dogs so that the dog doesn't end up at the shelter again in a few months when the new owner realizes his "status symbol" dog is more work or more expense than he bargained for. And a shelter worker certainly isn't going to offer advice to the new owner on the maintenance involved in caring for a Bulldog. If the dog is lucky, it might end up in a decent home, but the odds are not in its favor.

So what about the dogs that are advertised in the paper or on Craigslist? Once again, it is a gamble as to what kind of people the new owners will be. I can guarantee you that any person who has done any rescue work for any length of time will have dogs that come to rescue after being bounced around from home to home when careless owners let their dog leave with whomever was willing to take the dog off their hands.

All of these scenarios are stressful for the dogs involved; and it also increases the chances that the dogs will be permanently harmed, either physically or psychologically. These Bulldogs can easily then become "problem children" in these less than desirable circumstances. Getting Bulldogs into a rescue group that will work to get these dogs rehabilitated and find them homes that are best suited for each particular dog so that they can be a credit to the breed, rather than a black mark against it is a good outcome for the dogs themselves and the Bulldog breed. So anyone concerned about the image of the Bulldog breed should consider successful rehomes by a rescue group as a positive thing and not just a drain of resources. Odds are they'll end up in rescue sooner or later, and the sooner we get them, the less damage is done to the dogs. Bulldog Rescue should not be about doing what is easiest or cheapest; it should be about what is best for the Bulldogs...for those individual dogs that need our help and for the breed as a whole.

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Rescue Dogs Update:

The last edition of the Wrinkle Time newsletter mentioned three dogs – Helga, Pearl and Daisy. Helga has found a new home with a great family. She now lives on a farm (with a fenced yard) and has a 12 year old boy for a buddy. She gets to sleep on his bed and she likes that a lot. She has made friends with the other dogs in the family and likes to keep her new "mom" company when she goes out to garden. So far, all has been going well for Helga in her new home.

Pearl's owners decided not to surrender her to rescue, but gave her to a family friend instead and they are hoping that her behavioral issues will resolve themselves in her new home. Daisy is still with her current owner as her children are pressuring her not to give Daisy up. Hopefully, the owner is trying to find a new place to live with fewer stairs. Pearl and Daisy are good examples of how sometimes people think they want to surrender a dog, but when it comes down to the wire, they decide not to and find alternative solutions for their dogs. Sometimes they work out and sometimes we get a call a few months later. Hopefully, things will work out for the best for Pearl and Daisy.

UPCOMING SHOWS

Albert Lea, MN

August 8th, 8 am ring 2

August 9th, 8 am ring 3

Lake Elmo, MN August 22-23. For more information go to
www.onofrio.com

