



"The Kennel of Hope"

# Tails of Hope

The Newsletter of Animals in Distress | P.O. Box 609 Coopersburg, PA 18036  
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Vol. XXIX No. 7 December 2022 Editor: Lois Gadek

## *Home: A Place of Peace and Love*

Have you been watching any of those "home" shows where people are looking for a new home because their old home is too small, doesn't have an "open" design concept, doesn't provide enough entertainment area...the reasons go on and on for getting rid of the old and getting the new "home."

What is a real home? It's a place where you feel wanted and loved and safe...you know you belong there. A home can be one room, or it can be a mansion; it can be decorated with priceless antiques or with thrift store treasures. Regardless of its monetary value, or its decorations, it is a place where you can go to bed and sleep at night, without fear or watchfulness. You are at peace there.

For many animals at Animals in Distress, our Kennel of Hope is the first, the only "real" home many of its residents have known. Here, they know that they have food, shelter, and most importantly kindness, very day, every night, for as long as they need to be here.

When new animals arrive at our doors, they often reflect their lack of a real "home"—they don't trust anyone...they grab food as if they will never get fed again...and they cringe at the prospect of being hit when a human hand reaches toward them.

For such animals, Animals in Distress is a wonderful place—once they realize that they are safe, and loved, and cared for.

As you share holiday festivities with those you love, take a moment to reflect on Animals in Distress, a home for hundreds of animals who would have no joy, no holiday, and no future without our Kennel of Hope.

May the blessings of the season be yours in abundance. Thank you for caring about those forgotten by others. Thank you for your support over the past years. Without YOU, thousands of animals would never have known what a home is and would have perished alone, in fear and pain. As we count our blessing this holiday season, we say a special prayer for all our friends and supporters; although you may not be physically present in our shelter on Christmas Eve, or any other day of the year for that matter, you are there—in every heart that breathes, in every animal that sleeps in peace, in every act of love and kindness that is offered countless times each day to the over 300 animals who call Animals in Distress their "home."

Nothing sold in stores could be as precious or more reflective of the true spirit of this holiday season than the wonderful second chance that you have given to animals whose faces you may never see in person, but whose welfare you care about in your heart.

*When we think about the holidays at Animals in Distress, we find ourselves returning to the same thought: there is no difference between the animals in our sanctuary and the animals in a home except for the fact that our shelter residents don't have a home of their own. Instead, they have a home with us.*

These animals have fallen on hard times, in most cases because humans have failed them. These animals now have a second chance because humans have helped them. So, when we think about the holidays at this time of year, we are always reminded that the best gift we can give to anyone, whether animal or human, is a place where they feel safe and loved. Nothing we purchase in a store will ever replace the gift of peace and kindness.

Throughout the year, you have helped us rescue animals without hope. Some of their stories, and the pictures that go with them, are horrible to see. However, the “after” story is almost always very positive and happy.

So, our gift to all of our friends this holiday season will not be calendars, mailing labels, mugs, t-shirts, and all the other expensive items that bombard us from many larger charities who are hoping to get one more donation before the year ends. We will not spend money we desperately need to save lives on such material things.

On the next few pages, you will see bits and pieces of what the holidays at Animals in Distress are like. We hope you enjoy your holiday “tour”! ***This and the lives of our shelter residents are our holiday “gift” to YOU!***



Our dog kennel is colorful and festive with stockings displayed on each run of every dog resident. Plus stockings of dogs who have passed away but never got adopted, who basically ended their final days with us, are also hung as a remembrance. Those dogs were ‘family’ to us, and we weep silent tears as we think of how precious they were to all of us.



Cinna all settled down for a long winter's nap

Our loving staff makes each animal feel special, and Diana, who has a site on etsy (she's very creative), makes each stocking by hand. No two stockings are the same. Also, if a dog gets adopted, then its stocking, along with favorite toys, beds, clothing, etc., goes ‘home’ to its new family. These dogs aren't just dogs; they are family to us—and you are too!



This year, we lost one of our longtime residents, a shepherd mix named Duchess. We rescued her and her 9 puppies, plus several dying cats, from a terrible home. All the puppies got adopted, but Duchess never did.

She was much loved by the staff and volunteers, and her sponsors in the Take-A-Pet-To-Dinner Program, and passed away peacefully in her sleep, just a few days after Queen Elizabeth passed the same way. Both were just worn out after a long life. Diana made a special tribute to Duchess, a shadow box with pictures of Duchess at various points in her life with us. The box also contains several momentos, like Duchess's scarf, collar, and leash. Duchess, and all of the other animals here, have gone through miserable experiences, BUT once they are at Animals in Distress, they know only love.



Bob Johnson hugs Duchess



***The holidays—and every day—is a celebration in the cat wing.*** Although most of the

cats we have rescued have tales of pain and fear to share, once they get to Animals in Distress, their bad memories fade and they start to be happy and fun loving, as they should be if humans had not betrayed them.

Because of the overflow of baskets for the Holiday Open House Basket Social that we recently hosted, several tables had to be set up in the front half of the cat kennel. This arrangement provided lots of entertainment for the cats as they watched dozens of visitors walk through, depositing their tickets in the baskets they hope to win.

We think the visitors enjoyed being surrounded by hundreds of cats, and, of course, the whole event was an opportunity for our friends to come together as well as raise much needed funds for saving animals.

Thanks to Anita Sergent for capturing Santa's visit to our cats. As you can tell, the cats were totally enjoying Santa Paws and his red velour outfit (cat hair sticks very well to that kind of fabric).



Our **Holiday Open House**, one of our favorite events of the year, was wonderful. The weather was purrfect, and we had record turnout. Kelly Hartnett, Linda Hoffert, and many other volunteers made sure that there were delicious foods and desserts for all. The Basket Social was so big, thanks to the many people who donated fabulous and creative baskets, that several additional tables for the social had to be set up in the cat kennel. The cats supervised everything and made certain that visitors felt welcome.



Music was again provided by internationally known musician Mary Faith Rhodes-Lewis and friends. As a very special treat, Mary Faith performed a song she had just written, reflecting on those who have died and become ghosts in our lives. As we get older, and experience loss of loved ones—

whether human or animal, we become increasingly aware that those loved ones are gone in a physical sense but they remain with us. Love never dies, you see, so those memories are everlasting—and ever precious.

Many tributes of poinsettias, ornaments and wreaths reflected the fact that loved ones were being honored or remembered with these special mementos of love. We are so appreciative that people share their feelings about loved ones with us and with our shelter animals.

Best of all, this event is like a big family gathering for the holidays. Old friends, volunteers, people who have adopted from us, new friends—it really was a ‘love fest,’ as one former volunteer used to call it.



**Some recent rescues will be spending this holiday season with us, safe and loved at our Kennel of Hope. When we walk through our sanctuary, looking at the hundreds of lives we have saved and are responsible for, it is a very humbling experience. Knowing that most, if not all, of them would be dead by now gives us a sense of relief that they are safe and well cared for. Of course, we are ever mindful that many animals need help, so our work will never be done. That's one of the reasons we wanted to share the stories of a few recent rescues, to remind YOU that they are alive and safe today because you care. Your support pays medical bills, provides food and care, and keeps our mission alive. Your support means the difference between life and death for hundreds of animals.**

Imagine if you can a heart so cold and insensitive that a person can take a pet who trusts and loves him or her and then abandon it to endure whatever fate happens to it. There is no greater sin that betraying trust and betraying those to whom you have a responsibility. Those of us in rescue have seen abandoned animals near death because of injury and disease. The rescue we are going to tell you about is a little dog who was seen being pushed out of a car in a country area. As the car sped away, the dog didn't know what to do or where to go. Alone and afraid, the dog panicked and started to run. It didn't go in a specific direction but darted around in a panic, despite the efforts of some kind people who saw what happened and tried to get the dog to safety.

Days went by, and the dog was seen darting in and out of traffic. It was only a matter of time until it either got hit by a car or suffered another horrible fate. We decided to connect with a group of people who are experienced trappers of such animals. Working together, we were able to determine the best place for the traps to be set, and we waited. In a relatively short time, the scared dog was in the trap and inside at our sanctuary. We all breathed a sigh of relief—another life is saved.



We didn't know what to expect from the dog, whom we named Chase for obvious reasons. Was he friendly? Would he trust us? These are the kinds of questions we ask when we rescue an animal who has been badly traumatized. It is very common for traumatized animals to act aggressively, when in actuality they are just terrified. They don't know who to trust, since the humans they did trust have betrayed them in the most cruel way. In our experience, given enough time and kindness, most animals begin to realize that they are safe and with people who can be trusted.

Such was the case with Chase. All of his desperate running around was not in any way a reflection of who he really is. These pictures of him in his holiday outfit show how happy he has become in a loving environment. ***He is alive because our friends chose to support our work, and chose life over death for hundreds of animals.***

**A Miracle Rescue** Someone was seen abandoning some pet bunny rabbits in a field near an old country store. Concerned people who witnessed this cruelty searched the fields for the bunnies and were amazed to discover a Siamese cat lying in the field. It didn't appear to be injured from what they could tell, but it was weak and lifeless. His ears were swollen and malformed, he was crawling with ticks sucking whatever blood he had left, and unable to get up. He has gotten to the point where struggling to stay alive had exhausted him, and he was left to die—alone and unloved—in a field.

When we rescued the cat, it seemed as if he had been a pet at one time. Most disturbing is that both its ears were deformed due to untreated cysts that must have been getting worse and worse, sort of crumpled up like a piece of paper thrown away by someone. One of our volunteers named the cat Miso. After a visit to our veterinarian, it was determined that the cat is about 9 years old and friendly. He is eating much better now, compared to when we first rescued him. It was almost as if he had given up trying to stay alive.



*Miso: From dying to living...thanks to all who help us do such rescues*

## **When Hurricane Ian Struck:**

Another recent rescue involves a little charcoal terrier mix named Rexie. Rexie's elderly owner lost his home as a result of the devastation in Florida caused by Hurricane Ian. His owner was moving to PA to live with his son and daughter-in-law since his wife was dead and his son was offering him a home. Sadly, there was one condition: Rexie was not welcome in his son's home. They tried unsuccessfully to find a place for the dog and were left with few options, most probably euthanizing him.

To be honest, Rexie didn't seem very friendly at our first meeting. Like some dogs who are stressed, he wasn't sure if he was going to have to defend himself by biting, or if he could accept new people. He had lived alone with his owner for 5 years after the wife died, and had not received even basic medical care, so he needed help both behaviorally and medically.

After a few months at Animals in Distress, Rexie is doing much better. He appears to have some separation issues and barks when left alone. We are working on that problem.

He has a chance to live, and to find a new home. He has hope because of all the kind people who support our work and believe in our mission.



.....Detach coupon here and return to: **Animals in Distress, P.O. Box 609, Coopersburg, PA 18036...**

*Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to keep Hope and Love alive at Animals in Distress, for pets like Chase, Miso, Rexie, Buggy, and so many others.*

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So many of the animals we rescue come to us broken in body and in spirit. They have no help—and no hope—without us. We shared a few of their stories through this holiday newsletter so you can understand what a difference you are making in the lives of some of the saddest and most friendless animals. Our final rescue story will be an update on a kitten rescued this summer with both eyes pasted shut due to infection. The kitten was unable to see and had serious infections and parasites.

Both eyes had to be removed. The infections were treated, but the disappointing news was that the kitten, named Buggy, was positive for feline leukemia. This disease weakens the immune system of cats and makes them susceptible to illnesses like cancer and upper respiratory problems.

As one of the first no kill shelters/sanctuaries in the United States, we have rescued thousands of cats, and a small percentage of them are leukemia positive. Most would be euthanized after such a diagnosis. However, we have

learned that some cats with leukemia can live several years after the diagnosis, IF they are kept away from risky and contagious exposure to other cat diseases. For example, two kittens we rescued years ago, one of whom had no eyes, lived for 9 and 13 years in our Feline Leukemia Room.



That lifespan is exceptional for leukemia cats diagnosed at kittens, but we know that leukemia positive cats, not to mention blind ones, can have a happy life and be quite comfortable with whatever time nature allows them to have.

When Buggy was first rescued, he looked like sometime from a horror movie, with both eyes bulging. After several months, this friendly fellow plays and romps with the other cats in the Feline Leukemia Room. This picture shows him just chilling out on a cat tree.

We are so grateful for being able to save his life and give him a chance to have a home.



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