

THE SHELTER CONNECTION



Bringing Pets & People Together

TELL TAILS

Holiday 2008

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Noelle

Lisa Lay

A Dog's Tale

Last November, a cold, scared, limping stray dog was picked up on the street in Port Washington by the North Hempstead Animal Shelter (NHAS) staff. Despite blindness in her left eye, and the favoring of her back right leg, this skinny pup was still able to give her rescuer a wag and a friendly lick.

Since Christmas was coming (and cold weather!) the shelter staff named her 'Noelle' and made her as warm and comfortable as possible until she could be seen by the



Noelle (our Christmas dog from last year) and volunteer Denise Waters snuggle

shelter vet. When the vet examined her she was found to have a seriously torn cruciate ligament, an old injury that surgery might or might not fix. But the shelter staff took the chance and, thanks to generous

donations from "Mend-a-Paw," an arm of the volunteer group "The Shelter Connection", Noelle had her \$1400 surgery.

Noelle is doing just fine now, thank

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The Shelter Connection is the volunteer organization at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. Our Mission, in partnership with the Town, is to improve the quality of life for dogs at the shelter and increase the adoptions through training and socialization. A secondary mission is public education to shift the public perception about shelters and dispel the myth that shelter dogs are "damaged goods."

The shelter is located at 75 Marino Avenue, Port Washington, NY 11050

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Lisa Lay, Bob Slifkin, Denise Waters,
Florence Scarinci, Esor Ben-Sorek,
Jim Palumbo, Paula Kellner and
Marianne Sikora

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The Shelter Connection is an all volunteer
nonprofit charitable organization. All
contributions are spent on programs and
services to improve the quality of life of dogs at
the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter.
All contributions are fully tax-deductible.

Letter From The Editor

Marianne Sikora

Welcome to the Holiday edition of our long overdue newsletter. I have to apologize to all the folks who have called looking for their missed issues. Unfortunately we are an all volunteer organization and sometimes things like paying our mortgage get in the way of the things we wished we could find time to prepare.

I have enlisted some help for future newsletters from volunteer Lisa Lay and Denise Waters who will be stepping in to help with the coordinating and compiling of newsletter stories. This will make it easier for me to make time for my editing and page layout duties.

*All the Staff, Volunteers
and Pups wish you a
Happy and Healthy 2009*



Noelle continued from page 1

you. But she is still at the shelter and really needs a loving home. She is walking well on all fours, rolling over for belly rubs and playing with anyone with a little time for her. Noelle is a mixed breed dog with a Boxer look to her. She is six to eight years old and is blind in her left eye. She has the sweetest, gentlest disposition and is often the 'show dog' when Girl Scouts or other groups come to visit. Noelle would do terrifically well in a home with or without kids just so long as there's plenty of time for love and petting. The staff feels she would fare best in a home with no other dogs. For more information on our beautiful Noelle and all the other wonderful dogs at the NHAS, call the shelter at 944-8220 or log onto www.theshelterconnection.com. The shelter is located at 75 Marino Avenue in Port Washington.

NYLA UPDATE: You have probably seen Nyla on our website forever. We have great news to share! After 18 months of waiting and intensive hard work and rehabilitation by staff & volunteers, Nyla HAS FOUND HER FOREVER HOME. Her new family informs us that she is WONDERFUL. We hope to have the full story with pictures to share with you next newsletter!

Welcome!

The Shelter Connection would like to welcome its newest volunteer Adoption Advisers, Anthony DeBiase, Esor Ben-Sorek, Laura Arendt, Gina Condera, Linda Dasilva, Emily Easton, Jill Easton, Joanne Giragosian, Sue Hitzig, Ben Hitzig, Carly Hitzig, Susan Shaw, Michelle Greenblatt, Adrienne Lorenzo, William Luca, Pat Lynch, Justin Merced, Eve Rigas, Gus Rigas, Paige Rigas, Stuart Rosenberg

We are proud to announce that we are now a group of 65 loyal, hard-working and dedicated volunteers. Great job everyone.

Big, Black Dog Syndrome

Florence Scarinci

Twenty children lined up outside the activities room of the public library eager to participate in the evening's program of reading to a dog. Inside four dogs, all registered with a national therapy dog association, all freshly groomed and veterinarian checked eagerly awaited the children. There was a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named Chuck; a goofy Golden named Lefty; a bouncy, white all-American that looked like a cross between a Bichon Frise and a Jack Russell called Lucky; and a mostly black Border Collie/Labrador mix who was appropriately dubbed Tux. Tux was positioned by the door and could hardly sit still, his tail was thumping furiously, and his Border Collie eyes were fixed on the door. The children, who were allowed to pick the dog they would read to, rushed in. The first to be selected was Chuck, followed by Lefty, then Lucky. The fourth child, having courteously deferred to the others, looked around and with a sigh of resignation, sat next to Tux. This scene was repeated four more times that evening. Each time, the last child settled on Tux. What was Tux doing wrong? He was a champion agility dog and had his Canine Good Citizen award and a herding title as well. In his therapy dog capacity he had been visiting nursing homes and a school for handicapped children for the eight years of his entire life and was a much valued member of the rehabilitation team there. He had been selected by a national dog club as its Therapy Dog of the Year. He knew his manners. He sat still and waited to be approached. The answer: Tux suffered from "Big Black Dog Syndrome."



Apache - Available for Adoption



Hondu - ADOPTED

It is a truism that in those purebreds where coat color can be varied, a black dog, no matter how impeccable his conformation, or how correct his gait and attitude, will have difficulty being selected as Best of Breed. If this fact is true in the purebred dog world, what can be said for big, black dogs, both purebred and mixed breeds, in municipal shelters? Although no statistics are kept on the coat colors of dogs either adopted or euthanized, shelter workers such as Rhonda Dibasilio, manager of Animal Services in Rogers, Arkansas, or ASPCA executive vice president Stephen Musso, will state that big, black dogs are almost always in the majority of those euthanized and the last to get adopted (Zuegner).

What are the causes of this Big, Black Dog Phenomenon? The answers are both psychological and physical. Black, evil, and death are intimately linked. Consider the phrase "black magic." Consider the color of mourning. Mythology of the ancient Greeks and Egyptians associated dogs and the underworld. Hecate, the Greek death goddess, had a pet dog, Cerberus who guarded the entrance to Hades. Anubis, the dog or jackal-headed god of the Egyptians was the leader of souls to the after-life. British folklore is full of stories of phantom black dogs wandering alone or in packs on the foggy heaths of England, Scotland, and Wales. (Trubshaw) Fairy tales perpetuate the myth of the wolf or its descendent, the dog, as dark and evil. Think of the color of the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood or Peter and the Wolf. Modern literature continues the association. The dog in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was black. Harry Potter's friend Hagrid had a "boarhound" played by a Neapolitan Mastiff. With centuries of linking black and death or evil, it can be no surprise that the black dog is stigmatized.

But what about the physical characteristics? Here are the second and third strikes against the black dog. Labradors, Rottweilers, Newfoundlands and their mixes tend to have large litters. There are just more of them being born that need to find homes. Add to their numbers the fact that black dogs are difficult to photograph. Their faces do not appear expressive when viewed on internet sites such as Petfinder, and

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“Justy” Brings Joy

Esor Ben-Sorek

In a previous lifetime I'm convinced that I was born a dog. My affinity to dogs is unique. I cherish their loyalty and affection, sometimes more devoted than humans.

Many years ago, I travelled to a monastery in upstate New York. The Monks of New Skete were renowned for breeding and raising purebred champion German Shepherds.

As I walked through the open-air kennels, dozens of yipping puppies greeted me. One, in particular, followed me as I walked on trails. His tiny legs hopped from step to step. When I stopped, he stopped and lay down at my feet. In the monastery's dining room, he lay under my chair while I ate. At night, he slept beside my bed. It was a love affair at first sight. I bought little “Ouzi” for a fantastically high price in those days and brought him home to a loving family. My three children adored him and as he grew, his protection and devotion to all of us knew no bounds.

We had “Ouzi” for almost thirteen years when illness finally ended his life. Bereft of a loyal friend and companion, our lives emptied of our cherished dog, we soon made the decision to buy another dog. This time, we opted for an eight-week old Doberman puppy whom we named “Moco”. Like “Ouzi” before him, “Moco” was the new love of our life. Nothing



Justy and her “Grand-Paw” enjoying an ice cream treat

could separate us from one another, only his untimely and sudden death ten years later.

A dog is like a child that never grows up and we mourned “Moco’s” death with bitter tears. We were unconsolable in our grief. Soon after, our co-op made a ruling that residents could no longer have dogs. It was a heartache for us. Our home had always been filled with barks, tail wagers, and luscious wet kisses.

Then, in 2000, our daughter adopted a ten-month old Rotweiler-Doberman mix from the kennels of Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter and “Justy” became the newest member of our family...our “grand-dogger”. She is the love of our daughter’s life as well as ours. We look forward eagerly to her weekly visit with us from Friday evening until late Saturday night. “Justy” has filled the emptiness in our lives.

In January 2008, as I approached my 75th birthday, I made the decision to retire after 52 years in the pulpit and university

classroom. My daughter suggested that I fill the vacuum of leisure time by volunteering at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. She saw it as fulfilling my need to be of service and to be surrounded by the elements that were so important in my life.... dogs.

Now I spend two afternoons each week as a Volunteer Pet Adoption Advisor, helping families to select the right dog to fill their lives with light and joy. Working at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter has been a blessing for me in my retirement. Sue and her devoted staff are warm, caring, compassionate people who have translated their love for dogs into the dedicated care and attention they provide.

When I come home from a day at the Shelter, I hasten to visit “Justy” and to tell her how much I love her and to thank God for the happiness she has brought into my life. She doesn’t talk, but she just wags her long tail from side to side and smothers my hands and face with licks from a genuinely loving tongue.

The Spirit of Giving

We love to keep you posted on where your donations are utilized. With the economy taking a beating we understand that your donations are an even greater sacrifice on your part this year. We want to make sure you are aware how important your personal sacrifice is to these animals. Just a few facts to let you know the difference your donations made to shelter dogs to date in 2008:

Mend-a-Paw Fund (Medical Treatment):	\$14,769.31
Dog Food, Supplement and Treats:	\$ 3,266.26
Shelter improvements	\$ 1,000.60

Donations to The Shelter Connection, Inc. are tax deductible. An acknowledgement letter will be mailed to the donor. Please be sure to include your full name and address.

On the Horizon for 2009

We have not been as excited about a project since we sponsored the building of the nature trail behind the shelter in 2006. We are in the process of trying to get approval to build an isolation room for incoming animals who are ill. Having a separate area will help guarantee we can keep all the current residents healthy and ready for adoption when we treat the sick. We are also looking for approval to donate funds to build a fully equipped grooming room. Estimates are coming in at about \$20,000 for the isolation room and \$18,000 for the grooming room. Keep your eyes out for future fundraising events! Our goal is to have the healthiest best looking dogs on Long Island!.



Shop for the Shelter at iGive.com

When you shop the hundreds of stores available through iGive.com, a portion of each purchase is donated to charity. Just go to the iGive.com website and register (it's free and completely private.). Select The Shelter Connection from the list of charities and then shop at the stores you already prefer and a portion of every purchase will be donated to The Shelter Connection.

Please help us help the dogs at our local shelter

Yes, I want to help improve the quality of life for the dogs at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. Enclosed is my gift to support The Shelter Connection:

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$15 \$10 Other \$ _____

Please make checks payable to : The Shelter Connection and mail to: **The Shelter Connection
P.O.BOX 226
Greenvale, NY 11548**

If you wish to be notified about events please send your email address.
Your donation is fully tax-deductible and will be acknowledged with a receipt.
100% of your donation will be applied directly to program services



Climb Every Mountain



Search High and Low

“TWECK” aka “BEANS”

Can dogs smile? You bet they can! We love all our kids at the shelter but there are certain dogs who steal our hearts away. Beans was one of them and he changed our lives forever. He taught us that if we give our dogs more to do, they will do it. Challenge and enrich them and they will shine. Beans was a “clicker” genius. He was taught to climb on a chair and “say his prayers”. It looks to me like those prayers were answered, and then some. If you ever wondered how your donations help the dogs, Beans was one of the dogs The Shelter Connection sponsored from another shelter - and yes we did save his life.

Hello All at the Shelter,

I just wanted to send everyone an update on the beautiful boy

Follow Every Rainbow - 'Til You Find Your Dream



formerly known as “Beans”. Not so long after I adopted him his name became Tweek, which he is very well suited for. He has had many adventures in the past few months. We have gone camping twice in Vermont and climbed all the way to the top of Mount Mansfield, we are starting to believe that Tweek may be part mountain goat! He even carries his own pack with all his supplies so mom doesn't have to. In addition to this, he and I started swimming in the Sound everyday over the summer, he is a very strong swimmer and absolutely loves the water. In August life changed a bit as mom got a new job and we have moved to Connecticut, but no worries, we moved from a 1 bedroom apartment to a 3 bedroom house with a fenced in backyard to run

around in! There is also a fabulous kennel up here that does this great boarding program when I must be separated from my baby, they basically have a giant gymnasium that they let like 30 dogs (of the same size and temperament) loose in and let them go nuts basically. Tweek loves it! He is a gem to have in my life as he loves everyone, kids, adults, other dogs, and even my cats (as long as they don't get too much attention from me...). He sleeps curled up in bed with me every night, my heating blanket as I lovingly refer to him. I have included a couple of pictures for you guys to see what a great life he has and how he is living it to the fullest! I cannot thank you enough for saving this amazing boy from what was sure to be a death sentence and bringing him into my life.



Butch, the 3 legged squirrel hunter

Butch was brought to our shelter after being hit by an automobile. The long bone in his rear leg was shattered. Mend-A-Paw to the rescue! His leg was pinned and wired in an attempt to save the leg. Unfortunately it did not heal and the leg had to be amputated. Throughout this almost three month ordeal Butch remained friendly and sweet. He loved everyone and was at his happiest when someone was with him

Butch was adopted on April 12th. Butch's family says "We have now had Murphy (a.k.a. Butch) for one week and it would not be home without him! Thank you so much Lisa for introducing Murphy to us. He is so sweet, kind, and loving. He is walking better & looking stronger each day. Everyone in the neighborhood loves him, especially the kids at the bus stop."

The update from this week is that they can't even imagine a day in their lives that didn't include Murphy! Now that is a happy ending!



Butch and Tara Rose take a break from reading for a snuggle



Joe "hanging" at his forever home

I adopted Joe back in March. He is doing very well here in Connecticut and he gets along great with all people and dogs we come across. He has a two acre backyard to run in plus we take walks in the wooded trails a couple times a week. He does very well on a leash and I get compliments on his looks and behavior all the time. He is a wonderful addition to my family. Thank you all again for hooking us up. I'll try and give updates when I can. You all do great work. You guys are doing a great service for the dogs that you place in homes. Thank you for everything."



Roxie was born at the shelter on Sept 10 2007. My two dogs, Maple a Bloodhound and Shebabear an Akita, had recently passed away. I was undecided about getting another dog. I also couldn't decide if I wanted another Akita or a smaller dog or none at all. Along came Roxie. I was at the shelter the day she was born. I cried for 2 weeks trying to decide what to do. Then realized that fate had sent her to me. She is a small female Akita with a fun loving personality. She is a great companion, bringing joy and laughter to our home. We will be forever grateful to the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter staff and volunteers of The Shelter Connection for all they have done to help me adopt Roxie.

in fact can even appear menacing.(USA Today). They can have the sweetest disposition and be the easiest to train but they will be passed by in the shelter for a smaller, lighter, even yappier and bouncier dogs. Yet these are the very dogs renowned for their trainability and their desire to please their owners. Labradors have been the faithful guides for the blind and service dogs to people with disabilities. Rottweilers were the German farmers' all-around helpmates. Stories of the Newfoundlands' heroic water rescues abound.

What can be done to remedy this situation, to redeem the Big Black Dog's undeserved reputation and help find these deserving canines forever homes? Fortunately, the plight of these dogs is becoming widely known thanks in part to the efforts of a few dedicated people. Tamara Delaney has started a website, Black Pearls of the Dog World, www.blackpearldogs.com that educates the public about this syndrome and that serves as a clearinghouse for rescue groups and shelters with black dogs available for adoption. Recently television channels have

featured Ms. Delaney and the black dogs' dilemma.

Closer to home the Town of North Hempstead Shelter and its Shelter Connection have been addressing the problem through spay and neuter, training, screening programs, and its very reasonable adoption fee. Spaying and neutering reduces the number of potential black dogs that will wind up in shelters. To a person with a limited budget but a big heart and room and time for a dog, being able to adopt a dog who does not first need a costly trip to the veterinarian is quite an inducement. Mastering basic obedience skills makes these big dogs more appealing to the potential adopter. A big dog that can walk calmly on a leash and not jump up in greeting his potential adopter is quite desirable. Shelter workers and volunteers are well trained. They try to get the potential adopter to see past the size and color and notice that this particular dog would complement that person's life style. Who could resist a story like this: "This is Briggs. He was a hungry, scared stray. But he has been checked by our vet and well fed and now has a beautiful,

shiny coat. He is neutered and is up-to-date on all his shots. The volunteers at the Shelter Connection have taught him basic obedience and he now has good house manners. He is good with children and gentle with older people, and other dogs. With two square meals and a few short walks a day, a game of fetch, and a good belly rub once in a while, he will be your friend for life."

Hopefully with the media giving attention to the plight of these big, black love machines, and the tireless efforts of shelter workers and volunteers, Big Black Dog Syndrome will be a thing of the past.



Buddy
ADOPTED

Come meet these wonderful dogs!



"Beyonce"



"Jackson"



"Merlin"

We're available too!



"Shane"



"Lucy"



"Domino"

The Shelter Dogs wanted to wag their tails in appreciation to the following folks...

To all the Merchants who have helped keep the funds coming for the animals at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. They're eating better, playing better and healing better thanks to the generosity of local businesses.

Please help us by patronizing the following "Pet friendly" merchants.

Merchants who helped The Shelter Connection with a special price for:

Printing the newsletter
CastleRock Printing & Graphics 516-883-9280

Merchants who made special donations.

Joanne's Gourmet Pizza, Roslyn
Pet Pantry, Roslyn
Main Street Wine & Spirits, Port Washington

Please shop at and look for The Shelter Connection collection boxes at the following merchants:

Diane's Place, Port Washington
Frank's Pizza, Port Washington
Joanne's Gourmet Pizza, Huntington
Joanne's Gourmet Pizza, Roslyn
Main Street Wine & Spirits, Port Washington
Manhasset Raindew, Manhasset
Munsey Dry Cleaners, Port Washington
Nassau Community College Bookstore
North Shore Farms, Port Washington
Petland Discount, Port Washington
Pet Pantry, Roslyn
Port Washington Animal Hospital, Port Washington
Port Washington Diner, Port Washington
Rosa's Pizza, Greenvale
Shield's Hardware, Port Washington
Unleashed Pet Boutique & Spa, Port Washington
Yogurt & Such, Greenvale

Popeye and Olive Oyl

A True Love Story

I am writing to you to thank you for the very best friend I have ever had. We adopted Popeye, a 4 month old Pug, from you around August 5th of 1994. We initially went to your area to look in the N.S.A.L., but we didn't see a pet there who grabbed our hearts. As luck would have it, I noticed your sign on the side of the road, and we turned down onto your street.

I went in, and asked for a small dog who could sit on my lap while we traveled. I was directed to this funny looking pup with two HUGE eyes which pointed out in different directions. He yanked my heart out of my chest, and when they told me I'd have to wait until Saturday, because he wasn't available yet, I was heartbroken. There were many people there on Saturday, some of whom wanted my dog! I was lucky enough to have



Popeye and Olive Oyl

gotten there first. I took him home, and it has been magical ever since.

He has been the laughter and the light in our home for all these years. We moved to Tennessee four months after we got our boy, and he has lived happily on our ten acres of land. We got him a girlfriend, Olive Oyl (Ollie), in October of 1995, because we thought he'd like to have his very own friend. It has been plain to see that they have loved each other. After a few years of declining

health, blindness, deafness, arthritis, and cancer, at the age of 14 years, 6 months, our beloved Popeye was laid to rest on Wednesday, October 22, 2008. My heart is irreparably broken, and my tears flow endlessly. Ollie is still here with me, and I love her incredibly, but my Popeye was the one!!! I wanted to thank you for my best friend, my companion, my shadow. He will always live in my heart. I never knew a human could love an animal like that.

Mambo

Jim Palumbo



Cesar, Roxanne & Mambo - 3 amigos!

The North Hempstead Animal Shelter.

After a Saturday seminar we are taken back to view the dogs, not a good idea.

He was in the second cage, brown tipped paws pressed against the mesh. I walked out followed by his smile. When it was his turn to play I went to watch. Another mistake. As he flung himself gleefully from one volunteer to another I could only think that here in this place of lost souls, all he saw was good.

Three days later he came home with me.

My old shepherd, Tango ignored the pup at first, but when Mambo brought him a fuzzy toy for a game of tug their friendship was cemented.

Our other housemate, a thirteen-year-old Siamese, voiced his displeasure and peed on my bed, obviously not happy with the new addition.

Weeks later, sitting on my stoop, Tango by my side, we watch as Mambo bounds joyfully after a butterfly, pink tongue punctuating his ever present smile.

As he sails past us for the seventh time, black coat shining in the sun, I remember what it was like to be five.

The Dasher Man

Paula Kellner



Dash and his new buddy Matt

Dash, aka Licorice, was found on the streets of Port Washington in October 2007. He was adopted out twice, but was returned to the shelter because his energy level was overwhelming. In August a small group of TSC dog handlers led by Marianne Sikora decided to try a training "intervention" in an effort to find ways for him to channel his exuberance. Positive training methods included using high end treats and clicker training to mark good behavior. Noise aversion and a gentle leader harness were used to discourage his pulling, jumping and mouthing. After three sessions and lots of practice in between, Dash's potential to learn how to manage himself began to be realized. He was adopted by the family of one of our volunteers, and remains a rewarding work in progress. Dash recently wrote to the shelter about his new home, and we'd like to share his letter with you.

To all my shelter mates and human friends from the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter,

It's me, Licorice, saying hello from my new home...Oh, yes, my new name is Dash. I dash around the house and yard, and I'm dashing – don't you think? I must be pretty good looking or something for everyone at the shelter to have been so patient with me and so caring. It's my one month anniversary with Peter, Paula, Nathan and Matt!

I have lots to keep me busy here. There are two cats that I like to chase whenever they pass me by. There's a shepherd mix named Cody, who I can usually boss around. Every once in a while he decides to let me have it, though, and gets me on the run. The border collie, Stormy, is pretty much of a snob to me. She is definitely the lady of the house. And then there's Lily, the basset hound. Don't let anyone tell you that bassets are all mushy and sweetness. When I get too close to Lily's food or couch or favorite person (the husband, Peter), she turns into a pitbull without lipstick – and not one of the nice ones I used to know at the shelter. She means business, so I always keep an eye out to see what kind of mood she's in!

I am really good in my crate, and sleep all night long with no complaining. I always do my business outside. Once, I found a secret way out of the backyard...but Paula and Nathan figured out where it was and fixed the fence. Nathan was covered in mosquito bites by

the time he had fixed it! He belongs to Cody who doesn't take a lot of attitude from me, so I respect him a lot.

Mostly I chew the rawhides and toys that are all over the place, but I managed to shred a whole roll of toilet paper and spread it all over the kitchen. I also found the wastepaper basket under the desk. That was fun because there was gum in it and I got to chew it from between my paw pads! I'm getting more training here, just like I got at the shelter. I have homework that I have to do every day. Life is so much fun. My tail is always wagging! Anyway, thanks to everyone and I'll make sure to keep in touch.

Pawsitively yours, Dash

From the folks at the shelter:

Dash has come so far. What the Kellners have accomplished didn't happen without patience and sacrifice on the part of Paula and her family. Dash is the equivalent of the tasmanian devil on speed but through love and patience and training he has begun to become a welcomed part of their family.

We are grateful to Paula for the time she spent with her special project during his rehabilitation at the shelter. She saw the diamond in the rough and we are humbled by the time she has invested in this dog who has so much love to give. He is a work in progress but he is on his way & he has found his forever family.



Mimi and her new man Sparky (Dal)

Mimi, 3 year resident of our shelter who was finally adopted in 2006 and is living a great life in Maine, has gotten a brother! Mimi had shown some dog aggression so her new owners knew they needed to socialize her so they enrolled her in dog obedience classes. Her owners spent at least a year in dog classes once a week every week. With this exposure she

learned to accept certain dogs.

The Humane Society of Knox County, had a deaf male Sparkymatian named Sparky. They had to go see him. He was a big beautiful boy. He was deaf and he had some serious health issues that would limit his adoptability.

Would Mimi accept him? When they returned home from the shelter they immediately e-mailed

the North Hempstead Shelter. where many of the shelter staff and volunteers offered their suggestions. Everyone was positive and said "try it". Following their advice they began an eight week introduction. Over a period of time they decreased the amount of space left between them on their walks until one day they allowed contact. There were no outbursts or signs of aggression on Mimi's part. Sparky became very good at reading Mimi by her body signals. He had the perfect temperament. Over the next eight weeks they had day visits to their home until one day Sparky came home with them. Mimi loves to run and Sparky has learned to gallop after her.

Their favorite spot is on the couch together. They thought that was a huge step when Mimi initially joined Sparky on the couch. Now they spend a lot of time there.

The Shelter Connection
P.O. BOX 226
Greenvale, NY 11548

**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!**