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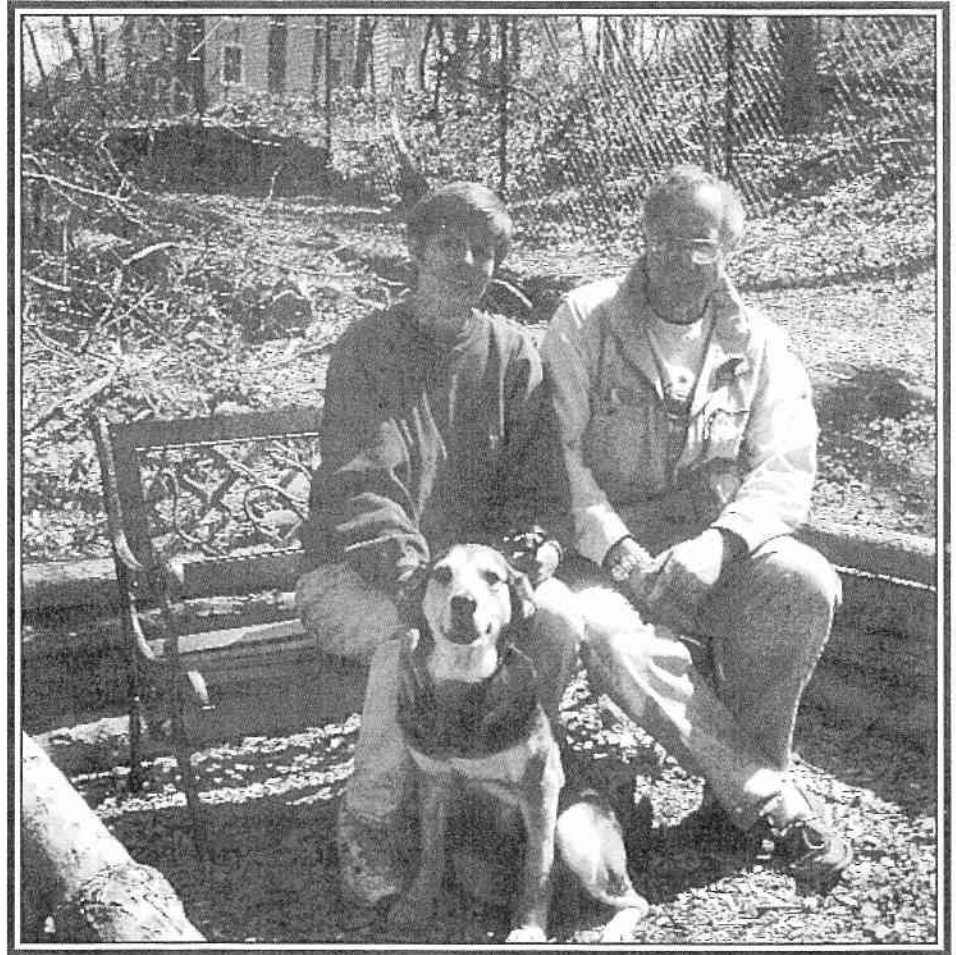
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GO TAKE A HIKE

"A true labor of love"

Gladly! and most definitely with a dog in tow!. After years of dreaming and planning and hoping and praying and fundraising, our nature trail is finally a reality. With perseverance and a whole lot of back breaking labor our dogs have a place to safely walk in the woods.

The entire project was funded through donations made to The Shelter Connection. The creation of the trail only took two months to complete after the ground breaking, but it was years in the planning. In May of 2005 Sal Masulo, of Ireland Gannon Associates, donated his



Volunteers Louise Murphy and Bob Slifkin take a break with Ruby

time to draw up the blueprints needed for town approval. The plans were approved in January 2006 and we got started. A large portion of the shelter property was designated for the trail. We hired a landscaper to come in and cut the

trails. Now it was time for the real work to begin. Tons of woodchips were dumped at the top of the hill and with Shelter worker Scott Halleran behind the wheel of the Bobcat, were trucked to different parts of the trail to be spread.

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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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Special Thanks to:

Castlerock Printing for their
contribution towards printing
The Shelter Connection newsletter

Contributions to this issue:

Denise Waters, Paula Kellner, Kathie
Rudy, DA Rice, Marianne Sikora and
all who sent in their quotes.

The Shelter Connection
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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.

Taking a Stand against animal cruelty in Nassau County

Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen M. Rice

News of animal abuse across Nassau County, including the arrest in February of a man for abusing pit bull puppies while training adult pit bulls for dog fights, is quite alarming to me. I have a great fondness for animals, whether it is my sister's Maltese, horses ridden at day camps across Long Island, or my neighbor's cats. As the newly elected District Attorney of Nassau County, my job is to be the top law enforcement official for the county and to protect the rights of citizens of Nassau County. This responsibility does not end with human beings. New York State has strict laws protecting the rights of animals and I will do everything in my power to enforce those laws and bring people who violate those laws to justice.

Laws protecting animals can be found in Article 26 of New York State's Agriculture and Markets Laws. It is important for the public to be informed about what constitutes abuse under New York State law so that people can report instances of abuse and save the lives of abused animals.

I will briefly explain New York State law as it pertains to animals, however, I urge anyone who reads this and has further questions to please contact Nassau County SPCA at 516-781-2052.

When referring to 'animals', New York State law includes all living creatures excluding human beings. 'Torture' or 'cruelty' includes every act, including neglect, where unjustifiable physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted to occur. Justifiable physical pain is also defined under the law and includes hunting, trapping, and fishing, the euthanizing of rabid or diseased animals and of animals posing a threat to human safety or other animals, or the use of living animals in any properly conducted scientific tests performed by approved laboratories or institutions. As long as people conduct themselves within the constraints of the law, including receiving any necessary permits or approvals, these aforementioned activities are legal.

An issue that comes to the forefront of everyone's minds when speaking about animal abuse is fighting, whether it is dog or bird fighting. Under New York State law, any fighting between animals or between animals and humans is illegal. Training animals to fight and permitting the animals to fight is considered a felony and is punishable by imprisonment of up to four years in jail, or a fine of up to \$25,000, or both. It is important to also be aware that being a spectator at an animal fight, having paid admission to attend or having made a wager on the fight, is considered a misdemeanor and is punishable by imprisonment of up to one year in jail or a fine of up to \$1,000, or both.

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Animals are also protected under the law from neglect and aggravated cruelty, which is defined by inflicting intentional physical pain on an animal with no justifiable purpose. If you see signs that an animal in your community has been deprived of food, water, a clean, dry shelter or has been abused, including abandonment or having been mutilated, such as the clipping of their ears by an unlicensed individual, please come forward and tell the proper authorities. These crimes are difficult to detect and investigate without individuals in the community playing an active role in identifying possible criminality.

By aggressively prosecuting these crimes, my hope is that other animal abuse cases may be prevented or deterred from occurring in the future. It is important to realize that humans are not the only citizens of New York State protected under the law and as I have briefly explained, there are serious consequences to those who choose to abuse and neglect vulnerable animals.

Thank you for taking a stand against these tragic crimes with me. Together we can save the lives of countless animals across Nassau County.

**For more information
about animal abuse and what can be
done to prevent it, please contact the**

Nassau County SPCA at 516-781-2052.

The laws exist to protect innocent and helpless animals, and now with the support of District Attorney Kathleen Rice we have someone willing to help enforce them. The Shelter Connection would like to thank DA Rice for taking the time out of her busy schedule to write the above for our newsletter.

If you suspect animal abuse, report it.

What I have learned from my dogs....

I believe that every animal we love touches our lives by teaching us some sort of lesson. I thought it would be inspiring to hear what our volunteers have learned from the special animals they have shared this earth with. You will find their thoughts throughout the newsletter.

"HENRY TAUGHT ME FOR SOME DOGS LIFE BEGINS AT 14. THERE IS SO MUCH WORK LEFT FOR ME TO DO BUT HE WILL WATCH OVER ME EVERY DAY. HE TAUGHT ME IT IS OK TO LET GO."

SUE HASSETT

If I hadn't adopted a senior dog with issues..

Kathie Rudy

Last year I was sent to evaluate a dog for admission into a breed specific rescue program. He was a senior dog with "issues". He was still active and playful and had years to go, but, in numbers, he was a senior. I was sure that this rescue would accept him as they accept all but the most hopeless of cases, but still, he needed evaluation.

I had NO intention of adopting a dog on that day and certainly not a senior dog with issues. It had only been 6 weeks since we had lost the dog of our lifetime and we were still in deep mourning. I was currently fostering a dog and had been with other dogs in need of a home so it was not one of those "I have to help this poor boy" kind of things. It was, instead, one of those "chemical" things. From 25 feet away we knew we were meant for each other and on January 8, 2005 Spanky came to live at my home.

Things have progressed since that fateful day. We attended to his medical problems and are working on behavioral ones. Spanky is, indeed, a work in progress and probably will be for the rest of his life. And that is just fine. We are committed to his well being but never had a clue how committed he was to ours.

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Volunteers together with family and friends began the long hard process of spreading woodchips along the trails. Thanks to a couple of big winter storms together and with the help of town workers we had an endless supply of wood chips to work with. Weeks of dedicated work found all our trails covered in a nice soft protective covering for the shelter dogs. The wood chips would also help prevent wet muddy trails. After the trails were completed it was time for the fence to go up. The entire area is completely closed in should one of the dogs prove to be a Houdini.

With all the basics in place it was now time for the trimmings. With the unending dedication of Roc Waters we had two bench areas created and steps put in. Benches were donated by Barbara Seixas and Jeff Rosen to provide a nice peaceful place for volunteers to sit and let the dogs sniff the air and watch the birds. There will be plenty of birdwatching going on as Denise Waters and Louise Murphy put the final touches on the bird sanctuary. In the upper trail there will be bird feeders, bird baths and wind chimes to add even more beauty to our outdoor paradise.

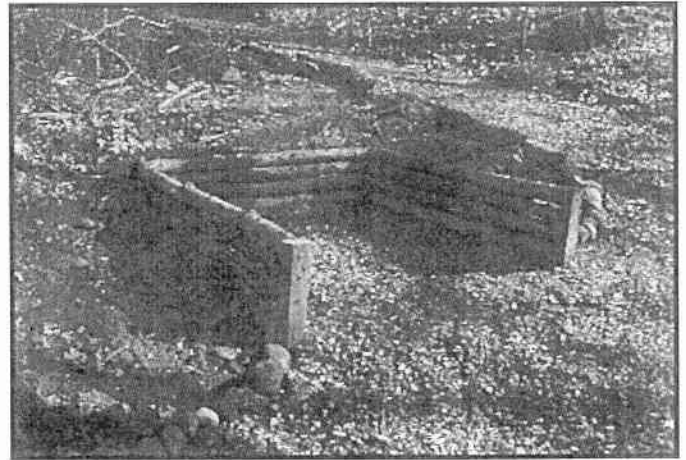
We will have some of the happiest shelter dogs on earth. They will get all the exercise they need plus a good dose of fresh clean air and dirt beneath their feet, all provided in a safe protective environment. For years we have all watched the shelter dogs look longingly at the wooded area wondering why they couldn't just go "over there" to play. Well now due to generous donations and dedicated volunteers their wish is our command.

What else could our dogs want? Well that's an easy one. Forever homes of their owns. Come meet some of the happiest & healthiest furkids at the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. Heh, who knows, if you adopt one of our dogs they might even introduce you to the joys of hiking!

Special thanks to Dr. Richard Milan for his very generous donation towards our project.



Volunteers Denise Waters, Louise Murphy, Mary Pepper



One of the bench enclosures built by Roc Waters



Retaining wall built from logs (by Roc Waters)



Natural steps built by - you guessed it - Roc Waters



Rope markers are strung for the fence
THANK YOU to Vinnie Cannino of Cannino Fencing for special pricing



Paul Bunyan has nothing on volunteer Denise Waters



Mimi enjoys the nature trail with the Shelter's Liz DeCesare

Pssst - Heh guys - it's us - the dogs in the back. We can't believe how much you guys love us and how hard you work to make our stay here as pleasant as possible. Thanks to your generosity & dedication we get to walk in the woods, sharpen our agility skills, practice living life in the "real life room", learn the obedience skills we will need to fit into our forever homes and get more love than we ever thought possible. Thank you for making each and every one of us your dogs while we wait for our forever families.

"DUTCHESS TAUGHT ME THAT IT IS HER WALK, NOT MINE... I USED TO TRY TO STOP HER FROM STOPPING TO SNIFF AROUND & KEEP WALKING. NOW I REALIZE THAT SHE NEEDS AND ENJOYS THIS ASPECT OF OUR WALKS EVEN MORE THAN THE PHYSICAL EXERCISE SHE GETS. SOMETIMES HER SNIFFING IS SO FOCUSED THAT I SAY "SHE FOUND HOFFA!"

REGINA LAGRASTA

"HOPE TAUGHT ME I HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO LEARN WHILE TYE TAUGHT ME IT IS OK TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE PERFECT DOG!.."

MARIANNE SIKORA

"SHEBABEAR TAUGHT ME TO WORK HARD TO GET WHAT I WANT. MAPLE TAUGHT ME LIFE IS TOO SHORT NOT TO BE HAPPY & TRY NEW THINGS."

ROSANNE PALUMBO

The Shelter Connection would like to offer their deepest condolences to Rosanne & Butch on the recent loss of their beloved *Shebabeare*



One of our recently adopted "Ruff Drafts", Razzle, visited the photo exhibit with her proud new owner Zoe Weiss to pose under her shelter picture featured above.

"Ruff" Drafts: the look of love A "Dog Show" at the Port Washington Public Library

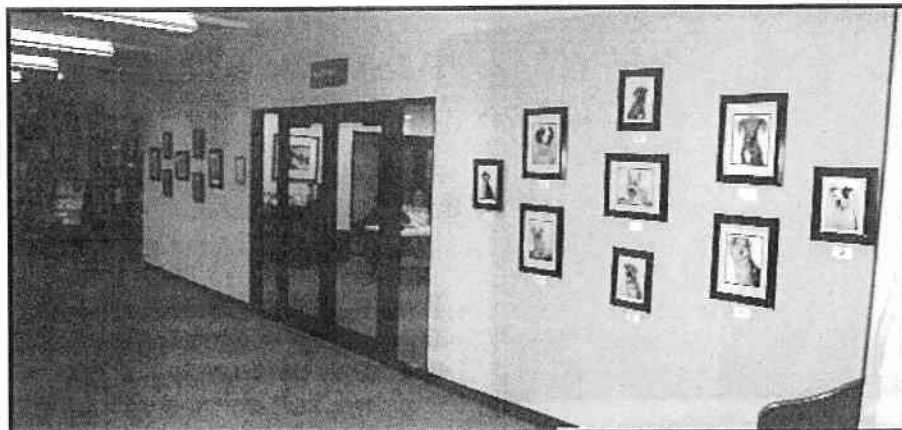
Paula Kellner

On their way to the kennel area of the shelter, visitors often stop to admire the framed photos of some of our former shelter dogs. These are the happy faces of once homeless dogs who have all found their forever families. These pictures are selected from hundreds of pictures taken over the past six years by Dr. Robert Slifkin, President of The Shelter Connection. These photos were originally posted on Petfinder.com, the internet animal adoption resource, which attracts many potential adopters to our shelter.

Thanks to the generosity of the Port Washington Public Library more people will be able to view the charming muzzles of just a few of our numerous success stories. Their furry faces will be on display through the month of April, as part of the Community Gallery display hosted by the Port library. The photo display entitled "Ruff" Drafts: the look of love, was mounted to help bring attention to "Tag day". April 1st is designated "Tag day" by the American Humane Society, and helps remind people to "License, Leash and Adopt".

The Shelter Connection would like to thank the library and in particular, Jackie Kelly, who manages the gallery. The presentation provides us with another way to spread the word about responsible pet ownership as well as allowing us to proudly show off some of our terrific dogs.

Don't despair if you can't make it to the library by April 30th. "Ruff Drafts" is a traveling show! So far we will be on view at the Garden City Library in August and the Shelter Rock Library in December. You can check our website, www.theshelterconnection.com, for future dates for our "Best In Show".



Collage of photos now on display at the Port Washington Public Library through April 30th. Drop by and visit!

"TEX TAUGHT ME THAT WHEN I THOUGHT I WAS SAVING HIM - HE SAVED ME RIGHT BACK. ALL DOGS HAVE THEIR OWN SPECIAL LOVE TO GIVE".

SUE HASSETT

It makes a difference to this one..... Marianne Sikora

I can't tell you how many times I have been asked, "Doesn't it get sad being around that many homeless animals?". My answer is "sometimes". But here is the thing that gets me through the day. We are making a difference one dog at a time. Every time I see a dog walk out the front door with their new forever family my heart grows one more size. Every time I see a shelter dog staying physically and mentally healthy because he is walking on the nature trail or running through an agility course that The Shelter Connection raised funds for, my heart swells. The good gets us through the sad.

Recently friends of mine who adopted dogs from The Town of North Hempstead sent me the best gift ever. It was a framed picture of two old goldens romping on the beach. I had never heard the verse before nor will I ever forget it now. They could not have given me a more perfect gift.

THE STARFISH LEGEND

BY LAUREN EISELEY FROM "THE STAR THROWER"

AS THE OLD MAN WALKED ON THE BEACH AT DAWN, HE NOTICED A YOUNG MAN AHEAD OF HIM PICKING UP STARFISH AND FLINGING THEM INTO THE SEA. FINALLY CATCHING UP WITH THE YOUTH, HE ASKED HIM WHY HE WAS DOING THIS. THE ANSWER WAS THAT THE STRANDED STARFISH WOULD DIE IF LEFT IN THE MORNING SUN. "BUT THE BEACH GOES ON FOR MILES, AND THERE ARE MILLIONS OF STARFISH." COUNTERED THE OLD MAN. "HOW CAN YOUR EFFORT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?". THE YOUNG MAN LOOKED AT THE STARFISH IN HIS HAND AND THEN THREW IT TO SAFETY IN THE WAVES.

"IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO THIS ONE" HE SAID.

Make a difference today - adopt a shelter dog

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

“Happy Tails”

“Tucker”

How nice it is to receive thanks for such a small monetary gift. I only wish it could be more. After all I received something that you can't put a price on. My “Little Lord” Tucker.

I am one of the fortunate people who adopted one of the “Seven Lords and Ladies a leapin” who were found outside the shelter on a very bitter cold night in December of 2002. They were cared for and treated for ring worm until they were healthy enough to be adopted in February 2003.

It was by chance that I made a wrong turn and went down to the Town of North Hempstead Animal Shelter. I even turned around, but thought better of it. I now believe that God made me go that way for a special reason.

Once there I found myself being greeted by some of the friendliest and kindest people I have ever met. Once I told them that I was looking for a little bit older and bigger dog they proceeded to

introduce me to each and every member of the shelter. I was so impressed with their care and honesty that they showed for each and every dog.

But like many things in life you don't always get what you ask for. You sometimes get something much better and that's what happened to me and my three teenage children.

At the end of my introduction to the dogs of the shelter I spotted the seven lords and ladies. Each and everyone looked at me and said with their eyes, “ Please take me home”, but it was the biggest one with the crooked ear and passive expression who caught my attention. I took one look at him and I knew who I wanted to take home with me.

Two weeks later I did just that. Once Tucker was given a clean bill of health and was available for adoption I arrived at the shelter at 4:30am so that I'd be the first one in line to adopt one of these special puppies. It was the best early bird special I ever received.

Tucker has been with us

now for three years. I have had dogs my whole life but I've never had one who is so “exceptionally intelligent”. He has a special relationship with each one of my three children and they with him. He's gentle and friendly with whomever he meets, whether they have two legs or four. He never has a problem letting you know what he wants and his facial expressions can tell a story.

Each day I am thankful I made that wrong turn because thanks to all the caring people at North Hempstead Animal Shelter I am enjoying the unconditional love from one of the “sweetest creatures” I have ever met.

Thanks again! Sincerely ,
Nancy Daly and family

Thank you Nancy for one of the nicest letters!. We are thrilled to hear how well Tucker is doing. The seven lords and ladies were very special dogs to all of us here at the shelter and it makes us all smile to know what a wonderful home he has with you and your family. Thank you for letting one of our Lords leap into your hearts!.

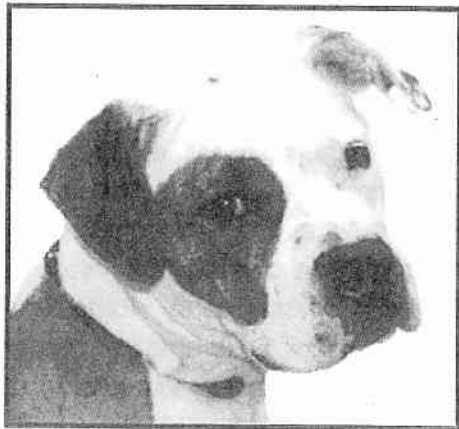


Lord Tucker at home all grown up.

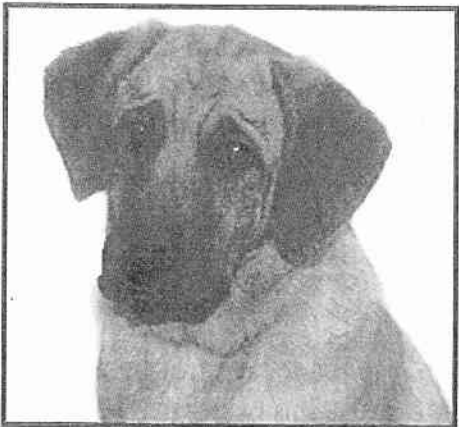


Two of the seven “lords and Ladies” before they were sprung

**We're available
for adoption!!**



"Lilly Vanilli"



"Red Dog II"



"Baxter"

**To Kibble or not to Kibble
that is the question.....**

Denise Waters

Dog owners love kibble. It is easy to feed, easy to store, and, we believe, safe from spoilage. Not so. Kibble can lose nutrients if it sits around too long. Some studies show that kibble can lose nutritional value if removed from its original packing and stored in plastic bins. Most frightening of all is an odorless contaminant called Aflatoxin. Aflatoxin is a chemical by product from mold on corn and other crops used as ingredients in pet food. It can be deadly. Signs of Aflatoxin poisoning include yellow eyes and gums, loss of appetite, severe and/or bloody diarrhea, internal bleeding, liver failure and death.

There are precautions you can take:

- If your usually hungry dog suddenly refuses to eat that new bag of kibble, consider ALL possibilities, including contamination, as their sense of smell is considerably better than ours.

- Check the expiration date on the kibble bag before you purchase it and make sure it has a recent manufacture date or a long expiration date. If your brand of kibble doesn't disclose these dates, switch to a better quality kibble that does!

- Keep kibble in its ORIGINAL bag inside an airtight container in a cool, dry place. The bag will have product lot numbers that you can use to call the manufacturer if you should suspect a problem or hear of a recall.

Trust your instincts and trust your dog! If you suspect a problem, better to be safe than sorry! Your dog's life may depend on it.



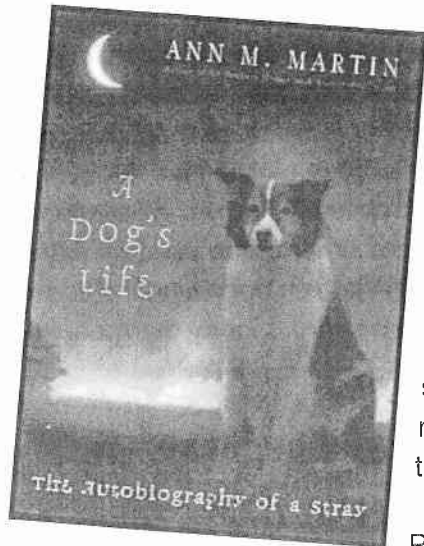
"Garth"



"Riley"

The Year of the Dog at the Dolphin Bookshop

Paula Kellner



Recently the Dolphin Bookshop in Port Washington hosted a book signing event featuring Newbery author Ann M. Martin. Her latest book, *A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of a Stray*, drew a decidedly K-9 crowd of children, parents, teachers, and even a few dogs that came to shake a paw.

In keeping with her commitment to community service, Ms. Martin requested that all individuals having a book signed that day bring in a dog toy or treat to be donated to the Town of North Hempstead shelter dogs. Belle, a senior beagle mix, accompanied by Animal Control Officer, Nancy Morrie, personally thanked Ms. Martin on behalf of all of our dogs. Belle and her shelter mates will enjoy the goodies while waiting for that special someone to bring them home.

"We were delighted that Ann Martin so generously agreed to visit Port Washington to sign her wonderful new book *A Dog's Life* and that she encourages her readers to make a contribution via community service in acknowledgment of her visit." commented Dolphin's Robin Ryan. "We were happy to bring Ann Martin, The Dolphin Bookshop customers and The North Hempstead Animal Shelter together for this special cause. It coincidentally happened at the beginning of the Chinese New Year which officially started the Year of the Dog. What could be a better omen? We're sure it is a good year for every dog that finds itself in the care of the North Hempstead Animal Shelter."



Author
Anne Martin
with young fans
of

**"A Dogs
Life"**

Shown here
with the Shelter's
Nancy Morrie &
everyone's
favorite shelter
dog

BELLE

She's available
for adoption.
Come meet her
in person!

"COWBOY TAUGHT ME THE WISDOM OF A BEAGLE IS ENDLESS AND NO LIFE IS COMPLETE WITHOUT ONE. HE LET ME KNOW IT IS OK FOR ME TO BE A WORK IN PROGRESS."

LOUISE MURPHY

"TIGGER TAUGHT ME PERFECTION WILL ALWAYS BE A MATTER OF PERCEPTION. SAMMIE TAUGHT ME SMILE, AND THE WHOLE WORLD REALLY DOES SMILE WITH YOU."

MARIANNE SIKORA

"BELLA TEACHES ME EVERY DAY HOW HEART WARMING AND REWARDING AN EXCHANGE OF LOVING GESTURES CAN BE. IF ONLY HUMANS WOULD DO THAT MORE OFTEN WITH EACH OTHER!"

VALIDA SCOTT

There's a New 'R in Town..

Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic & RUBY



Shelter Director Sue Hassett & Ruby read along with students

of picture books such as "Let's Get a Pup!" said Kate by Bob Graham, which reinforced Sue and Ruby's lesson.

Sweet Ruby enjoyed all the attention she got from the children, as well as some popcorn and goldfish crackers left over from snack time. After Ruby and Sue left, the book buddies collaborated on stories of their own illustrating a responsible pet ownership rule from the point of view of one of our town's shelter dogs. Their stories are displayed in the lobby of the shelter and, we hope will help prospective adopters think twice about the long-term obligations of pet ownership.

In addition to their enthusiastic participation in the read-in, the Human Relations Club sponsored a school-wide toys and treats drive at Weber to benefit the shelter dogs. Back at the shelter Ruby and the other dogs are enjoying those goodies. Only one thing could make this event even better: a "They-Lived-Happily-Ever-After" home for Ruby.

The National Education Association (NEA) observes the March birthday of Dr. Seuss with an annual, nation wide event, "Read Across America", encouraging children to pick up a book and read. We took this opportunity to coordinate a local celebration we called "Book Buddies with Something to Bark About". Our "rrrrrrread-in" brought together members of the Human Relations Club of Weber Middle School in Port Washington,

and children from Kids Port's Kindergarten through second grade after school program.

Town of North Hempstead Shelter Director Sue Hassett and our very own shelter dog, Ruby, made a visit to the "buddies" gathered at Kids Port to explain the many long term responsibilities that are involved in the commitment to bring a companion animal into your home. After the discussion, the children teamed up to read a selection

"STORMY HAS TAUGHT ME TO APPRECIATE A DOG'S GIFTS BY THEIR STANDARDS, NOT OURS."
PAULA KELLNER

Continued from page 3

I am asthmatic but have it well under control. In case of problems I have all the stuff I need to care for myself at home. I have not had a bad attack in well over 10 years. On February 24th I went to sleep like any other night. I took my night time meds, watched a bit of TV and fell asleep. About 2 AM I am hearing this strange compelling alert bark coming from Spanks and it seemed like he was far far away. I am also aware that I was coughing erratically. But I was truly out of it, almost like I was drugged. I was confused and lethargic. I heard Spanky barking and I did sense that he was standing right over me, (he was in actuality jumping on me) but he also seemed so far away. I think I wanted to tell him to shut up but not really. I wasn't really thinking I was just experiencing.

My friend was downstairs. He was having trouble sleeping and went for a snack and fell asleep in front of the TV. He heard Spanky's

Continued back cover

"DOOGIE TAUGHT ME THAT EVERY DOG DESERVES TO LEAVE THIS WORLD LOVED."

MARIANNE SIKORA

"DITTO TAUGHT ME DREAMS REALLY DO COME TRUE (HE IS MY DREAM DOG)"

SUE HASSETT



My Hero Spanky

weird bark and when it didn't stop he came upstairs and called to me. I kind of answered him but I was really out of it. He called again and I did finally respond to him. I sat up and realized I was having a life threatening asthma attack. I reached for my rescue inhaler and thank goodness it gave me some immediate relief. Within about 30 seconds I had a clearer head and was able to act rationally and did

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what was necessary to control the asthma attack. I tried to settle back to sleep. During the whole ordeal Spanky was glued to me. Literally. Every step I took he mirrored with his side always touching me. When I was back in bed he lay over me with his head on my chest, almost like he was listening.

If he had not tried to wake me with the alert bark, and my friend had not heard that strange and compelling bark and come upstairs, I probably would not be here to write this. A physician told me that the lethargy and confusion I felt was probably due to CO2 Narcosis which is anesthetizing and I would not have awakened enough to use the rescue inhaler and would never have known what happened to me.

So had I passed on adopting a dog that I connected with because he was a "senior dog with issues", I might very well not be alive today as I am sure that I owe him my life.

"MOO SHU TAUGHT ME THAT IT IS OK TO STOP MOVING ONCE IN AWHILE AND SIT DOWN AND WATCH THE GRASS GROW. SHE TAUGHT ME DOGGY LOVE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DOG HAIR AND PUKE ON THE BEDROOM RUG"

DENISE WATERS

"MY DOGS HAVE TAUGHT ME THAT LOVE COMES IN ALL SHAPES, SIZES, COLORS, AGES AND WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT!"

SUE HASSETT

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