

# Adoption Tails

The Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire

Fall 2009



## The Long Journey Home



*Mick D. upon arriving at the League*

Animals come into our care at the Animal Rescue League of NH through a variety of different ways, and from a variety of different backgrounds. Someone may need to re-home their beloved pet due to an unfortunate series of events or a change in lifestyle. Members of our general public, police or animal control officers may bring in a stray that has lost its way and sometimes through our Animal Cruelty Investigations and Community Outreach program we may also have to go into the field and intervene on behalf of an animal, thereby rescuing it.

One such situation occurred this past

May when residents in a neighborhood reported seeing a German Shepherd running loose and living on its own throughout the entire winter. As the residents and their families were spending more and more time outside enjoying the nice spring weather, this uninvited guest started to become a concern. Coupled with requests by that town's police department, the League's Animal Cruelty Investigator (ACI) began what would be a lengthy project, stretching over several weeks to try to gain some of this dog's trust, determine its daily routine and have just enough luck to be able to capture it. Thanks in part to efforts on behalf of some of the neighborhood residents who had been feeding and watching over the dog for the many long months, the ACI was able to help establish feeding stations and essentially set up a safe area for the dog. He would ultimately return to this safe-area each day despite any sort of problems that had occurred on any particular day. This was a frustrating process. There were times when he was just about to be caught but then ambushed by a couple of outdoor cats who were being territorial over their property. He wasn't seen again until several hours later.

What became clearer though was the mental and emotional trauma this victim had endured. Thanks to a microchip implanted in the dog, we were able to piece together a bit of this dog's story, one which left even the most seasoned League workers shaking their heads in disbelief. Mick D.'s microchip was traced to a German Shepherd breed rescue group in Alabama. From there, we were able to contact the volunteer that had actually known Mick D. as a puppy. Mick D. and his littermates were born to a nearly wild Shepherd mother who protected her litter fiercely therefore not allowing them the proper socialization towards humans and critical learning that needed to take place during the young puppy's development. Once away from their mom, Mick D. and his siblings were altered, vaccinated, micro chipped and transferred to a shelter in New Hampshire for a second chance.

In the summer of 2008, Mick D. and two of his siblings were put up for adoption. Mick D. was adopted in September of 2008. With just a few short days in his new home, Mick D. bolted out an open door and began a nine-month stint of living on his own feeding on scraps and avoiding human contact.

Finally, one day in early June, with a lot of luck, patience and some tasty cheeseburgers, the renegade Shepard was lured by food, cornered and eventually captured. Before the day's end, Mick D., nicknamed after the McDonald's cheeseburger used as bait, was safe and sound at the League. Although another dog could have easily perished from the experience, Mick D. seemingly suffered no other physical ailments from his time in the wild other than contracting Lyme disease.



*Mick D's first bath at the League*

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Mission Statement

Pets give us so much. They teach us compassion, protect our families, work as therapy professionals, and entertain us. Pets comfort us when we've had a bad day and touch our hearts with their unconditional love. At the Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire we save pets' lives, and they enrich ours.

# Message From The President & CEO

Dear Friends of the League –

Much of my time of late has been spent on medical issues.

Animals are coming to us in worse shape than ever because owners haven't been able to afford adequate vet care. Despite wonderful and generous partnering vets our medical costs are soaring. We are seeing more and more animals in need of surgery, which is the most invasive and expensive kind of care.

However, often these animals are wonderful in all other ways. They are sweet-tempered, entertaining, loving pets with one big thing standing between them and adoptability.

This year we've rolled out a new program: the Medical Miracle Workers (MMW). So far we've had eight people sign up to be MMW partners which means they have agreed to be "On Call" when we have medical needs. When we have an animal come in with extraordinary medical needs (usually surgery or an "extreme dental" procedure) we call them to ask whether they will help us fund all or part of that specific animal's surgery.

When we share the need, we give a prospective sponsor the animal's story and share photos of him or her. If the sponsor says yes, we keep them updated as the animal is treated and let them know when he or she is adopted.

To date, all our MMWs have said a resounding "YES!" when we've called and together we've saved the lives of several animals. However, we have many more animals in need and so we are always looking for more MMW sponsors.

I hope and believe that this program is a Win-Win-Win. The animal wins because it gets the critical treatment it needs. The sponsor wins because they have a rewarding and very tangible giving experience in a cause that's important to them. And the League wins because we have the privilege of bringing an animal in need together with a sponsor, which helps us fulfill our mission.

If you or anyone you know is interested in being "on call" as a Medical Miracle Worker, please let us know. You may contact me at [caroline@rescueleague.org](mailto:caroline@rescueleague.org) (603.472.5710) or reach out to our Director of Philanthropy, Donna Nicholaides at [donna@rescueleague.org](mailto:donna@rescueleague.org) (603.472.5788) for more details on the program.

In this program, by paying one vet bill you can truly save a life. And any day you can say you did, that is a pretty great day in my book. I hope you will join us in this important program.



**Jelly, a sweet ten-week-old black & white stray kitten will need a colopexy wherein the vet will go in abdominally and tack the colon to the frontal part of the abdomen to keep it in place. Without this procedure, Jelly will not survive.**

**Fortunately, Jelly has a MMW sponsor and will receive this life-saving surgery and a second chance at happiness!**

Best regards,

*Caroline Boyd*

Caroline J. Boyd  
President & CEO

# Volunteers' Input Is Guiding Improvements



Linda McCarthy has been a volunteer cat cage cleaner since 2003, completing an impressive 1,723 hours! Additionally, Linda has been generous with donations of material goods which includes solicitations from pet food manufacturers to benefit the ARL's annual Kitten Shower

Animal lovers are great people. And our animal loving volunteers have great ideas to help us with all aspects of running the shelter.

## Volunteer Survey

To harness these ideas, we sent out a 12-question online survey to anyone who had email and also made it available in the volunteer room. The 77 people who responded represented a wide variety of volunteers in terms of length of service and jobs performed at the shelter. We were also thrilled to learn **that 98% of volunteers responding are either extremely satisfied or satisfied with their experience at the League** (the rest were neutral – no one was unsatisfied).

One of the things we really struggle with is how to show appreciation to a group that has such significant value. As such, one of our key questions was; "Most volunteers have told us they don't want us to spend money on "stuff" (e.g., magnets, mugs, etc.) to recognize their service. What are the top three things that the League and its staff could do to recognize your service in a way that would be meaningful to you?" Four themes emerged:

### Communication

- Verbal & written thank yous
- Share the big picture
- Share animal success stories (adoptions)
- Listen and be responsive

### Work Support

- Provide more training/refreshers
- Keep the drinks & treats
- Provide new opportunities
- Easy access to supplies

### Service Recognition

- Recognize hours of service levels
- Appreciation Dinner
- Newsletter highlights

### Personalization

- Nametags for ALL
- Volunteer T-Shirts
- "Know me!"

Of these, we highlighted four things we could do right away: provide everyone with nametags, order more volunteer shirts, share adoption reports weekly, and make sure we keep the drinks & treats stocked!

## Volunteer Forum

We used feedback from the survey to create the agenda for our first Volunteer Forum, at which 15 volunteers joined us to give feedback on everything from animal care to communications. One of our most challenging issues was how to handle no-show volunteers on any given day and our Forum attendees had some very creative solutions. We know the League staff left the Forum feeling energized, and I think the volunteers did as well. We plan to work on implementing all the great ideas over the course of the next year.



We could not run the shelter without our volunteers. Period. We were delighted with all the insightful suggestions we received and look forward to using volunteer input on an ongoing basis to ensure the League has the best volunteer experience... which leads to happy, engaged and effective volunteers and – ultimately – to happy, healthy animals that will all experience a second chance at happiness!

If you'd like to see the results of the Volunteer Survey, they are available online at: <http://www.rescueleague.org/helpvoununteer.cfm>.

Mark Duprey has been a reliable dog walker since 2007. Recently Mark received a new title as "senior dog walker". To achieve this status, Mark had to complete additional training making him eligible to walk dogs typically restricted to staff only. This new volunteer initiative is part of a tiered training program that enables individuals to take on more demanding volunteer tasks while increasing their skills with dog handling.



Our Volunteer of the Year in 2004, Roy Gilson, is shown here cutting the lawn with a newly donated lawn mower. Roy has been the point person to trouble shoot and repair any facility concerns at the League, all on a volunteer basis! This year he has managed issues with the boiler, well, and roof, as well as the construction of the new quarantine area.

# Many Thanks to Our Pet Step Sponsors!

You helped to make this event a success!

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## Employee Spotlight



Frances Dube  
Animal Care Technician

I joined the Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire in July of 2006. I work full time as an Animal Care Technician. Some of my duties include routine cleaning in the morning and evening, administering medication/fluids, performing physicals on cats, dogs, and small animals, conducting canine temperament evaluations, adoption counseling, processing incoming appointments, and coordinating spay/neuter clinics. I also enjoy coordinating the ARL's foster care program.

Some of my current interests include facilitating the development and coordination of programs such as semi-feral cat/kitten socializing and socializing for sick cats. Our volunteers are such amazing assets to the shelter that without them these programs would not be possible.

My love for shelter work began when I started volunteering at a local shelter. At 14 years of age I was volunteering my time at adopt-a-thons and other public events. During my last year of high school and throughout college I routinely de-wormed cats and assisted with spay/neuter clinics.

While attending UNH I completed a full year of training as an animal care technician at another shelter, as well as a year of grooming.

I graduated from UNH Thompson School of Applied Science in May 2006. There I received an Associates Degree in Animal Science - Small Animal Care.

I successfully completed two internships at Caring Hands Animal Hospital where I assisted with surgeries, performed laboratory tasks and routine physicals, and observed appointments with clients.

Frankie's Children: A 13-year-old cat Leah; three-year-old cat Baby; five-year-old cat Chewie; and a one-year-old American Pit Bull Terrier, Lenny.

# Come And Join The ARL of NH At Our Fundraising Events!



The ARL NH receives no state or federal funding. In addition to donations, we depend on the income from the events each year to sustain our programs and services, which collectively cost over \$65,000 per month.

Please attend these events and show your support for the League.  
For more information about any upcoming event, call Robin McCune at (603) 472-5714 or (603) 472-3647 or e-mail [robin@rescueleague.org](mailto:robin@rescueleague.org)



## Kennel Up!

Interested in helping the League but don't know much about us? Interested in networking while working for a good cause? Sign up to "Kennel Up"! On Thursday, October 22nd, the League will hold its first ever "Kennel Up" event in which willing participants agree to raise their "adoption fee" between the hours of 1pm and 6pm. Afterwards, a private party will be held to celebrate the success of the day, reached by obtaining pledges to help the animals at the League. To sign up contact Robin McCune at (603) 472-5714 or email [robin@rescueleague.org](mailto:robin@rescueleague.org). All participants must pre-register with Robin at least one week prior to the event.

## 11th Annual Live and Silent Auction!



The 11th Annual Live and Silent Auction will be held on Saturday, November 7th at the Radisson in Manchester from 6-10:30pm. The ticket price, which includes dinner, is only \$50. Last year we had over 425 people attend this popular event and all raved about how much fun they had! This year we have plenty of vacation trips, tickets, jewelry and so much more to bid on. To purchase your ticket go to: [www.rescueleague.org/auction2009.cfm](http://www.rescueleague.org/auction2009.cfm) or contact Robin at (603) 472-5714. Interested in captaining a table of eight of your own friends for the event? Ask Robin all the details!

## Tree and Wreath Sales

Get your Christmas tree and wreath here at the League and support the animals! Trees and wreaths will go on sale the day after Thanksgiving and can be purchased at the shelter during open hours; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-7pm, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 12-5pm.



## Craft Fair

Saturday, November 28th and Sunday, November 29th the League will hold its annual craft fair from 10-5pm each day. Check out the wonderful crafts and visit the animals that are available for adoption at the same time. Don't miss the yummy bake sale table run by the ARL volunteers!

## Holiday Photos



Saturday, December 5th we will have holiday photos with your family or dog here at the League from 10-5pm. No need to make an appointment, photos will be taken first come, first served.



Basic Graduation 3

Do you ever need a way to chill your dog out on a late summer day? Try some ice! One of the favorite tricks in our puppy-level course at the Animal Rescue League is using “pupsicles.” Desperate puppy owners are sent home with a great new trick where they can fill an ice cube tray half full with water, toss in some treats or even some puppy food, add some more water and freeze. Once frozen, the ice cubes take on a whole new meaning. Not only is it a nice cool, refreshing treat on a hot day, the ice cubes themselves are slippery and will become a fun game of chase for any crazy pup (we recommend serving them on tile or other slippery surfaces, as it makes the chase even better). The added benefit of the treats or food when the ice cube melts will make a great surprise for your hungry puppy.

The best news about this training tip is that it’s a year-round recipe. Great for all seasons, and even for any age canine. If you are looking for something to offer your adult dog, open the freezer and let the games begin!

For more tips on amusing crazy pups or keeping your adult dogs busy, join one of The Crazy Canine/Animal Rescue League obedience classes. For more information, email [thecrazycanine@yahoo.com](mailto:thecrazycanine@yahoo.com) or call 603-582-5400 for more information.

Typically our “Obedience Happenings” article highlights many of the recent obedience classes held at the Animal Rescue League of NH. Often times, it highlights some of the ways our obedience families come out in support of the League, while showing their dogs a great time. (By the way, thank you to all the obedience families who came out in support of us at the Annual Pet Step. You are all the best!) But this particular “Obedience Happenings” article is about a broken puppy, a real team effort, and a happily-ever-after story.

Bundles was a five-month-old American Pit Bull Terrier when her prior owners had contacted the League in March about surrendering her. Their reason was that Bundles had a broken leg and they were unable to financially care for her. After coming to the League, undergoing surgery and enduring weeks and weeks of physical rehabilitative therapy, all while being cared for by the staff and volunteers at the league, Bundles (most appropriately named due to her bundles of energy) was adopted by a wonderful family in May who then enrolled her in our basic level class.

One of the perks to holding obedience classes onsite is getting to see some of our many terrific canine alumni excitedly dragging their new owners through the doors for a little canine education. Bundles was no different and arrived on her first night of class full of energy and ready for some fun. Not only was the six-week course a chance to see a continued improvement in her leg as she had finally completed her physical therapy, but also to see her developing a strong bond with her new family. Bundles is one of those dogs that is always eager to please her people, is always ready for the next step and who truly works the room with her big brown eyes, her comical antics, and her signature big ears.

Bundles and her family graduated the basic level course in July and to see this formerly broken pup recover from her physical trauma and to watch her working and playing with her new family was a truly awesome obedience happening!



Bundles

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continued from cover...

As the staff at the League began the process of trying to make him an adoptable animal, the next adventure in this dog's life began. Hesitant to approach people, nervous of many sights and sounds, even things such as maneuvering around items in our hallways and walking in and out of the building, Mick D. was a daily reminder to us as to why not only responsible breeding, but proper socialization and training are so critical to a dog's ultimate success and happiness.

After nearly two months of living at the shelter, being introduced to different staff and volunteers who would clean his kennel, feed him daily and try to offer him friendly voices and smiling faces, it became clear that Mick D.'s re-training needed to be stepped up a notch. The training came in the form of a foster home situation with the one person who had known Mick D. the longest at the league; the League's Animal Cruelty Investigator. As luck would have it for Mick D., the ACI also just so happens to be the League's obedience instructor. This unique relationship serves as a constant reminder of the fact that many of the animals that come to us through either our cruelty or outreach program may have met different outcomes if they had received some of the proper training and socialization that we promote through our obedience classes everyday.

At the time of writing this article, Mick D. has been in a full-time foster situation for nearly two weeks. No longer living in the kennel, but commuting with his three foster-dog housemates and human foster mother back and forth to the shelter for work each week. Spending time in an office during the day, and living in a home at night, Mick D. has experienced what we are calling a lot of 'firsts'. Not knowing what he had experienced as a puppy, and having been living alone for so long, Mick D. is learning everything all over again, if not for the first time. First walk on a leash, first ride in a vehicle, first bath, first walk on a tile floor, or wooden floors, all firsts that should be experienced and accepted as a puppy, are continuing to challenge this one-and-a-half-year-old adult that has the fear and over-reaction of a young puppy that wasn't given the chance to thrive.

Mick D. continues to be a work in progress. As he continues on a path where we are still uncertain where it will lead, the Animal Rescue League of NH is committed to making his life as comfortable and safe as possible and the small rewards such as seeing him truly wag his tail for the first time; seeing him wrestling with one of his housemates and initiating a game of keep-away with a toy, are possibly one of the greatest benefits to not only being a foster parent to an animal in need, but one of the greatest benefits to rescue work. We are happy to have guided Mick D. on his long journey home.

**Mick D playing with his foster sister, Shea**



## Adoption Spotlights



**Rheanna**

Hi, my name is Rheanna and I am a very sweet, spayed female hound mix. I am about five-years-old but the staff says I still act like a puppy! I love to run and play and run and run. They say I cannot be trusted off leash because I love to stretch my legs and explore. By the way, due to an old injury one of my rear legs was removed last year.

It doesn't bother me a bit because I can still run! I would like to be the only animal in my home and kids would be great. The ideal home for me would be one where I can go for lots of walks and get plenty of exercise. I am a great dog and I think I really deserve to find my forever home, don't you? My Canine-ality is: Wallflower (Orange).

Hi, my name is Dodger. I am a seven-month-old male rabbit. I was brought to the shelter with my siblings because there were too many bunnies in my home. I am enjoying my stay here and like getting socialized with the volunteers. I am a friendly boy hoping to find a forever home.



**Dodger**

Hi, my name is Magic. I am a three-year-old spayed female. I was found abandoned and brought to the shelter. I felt very lucky to find an adopter quickly and went right into a loving home. Unfortunately, I discovered that I do not enjoy the company of other cats. My new owner was very sad but thought it was best for all if I found a new home so I came back to the shelter. I am a very active girl who loves to explore. I am also easily excitable and will chase anything, even shadows and sunbeams. I am hoping to find a family where I can be the only pet and receive lots of love and attention.



**Magic**



# Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire

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[www.rescueleague.org](http://www.rescueleague.org)

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