

There Once was a Plain Brown Dog

What chance does a plain brown dog have of getting adopted from a shelter full of adorable puppies and flashier breeds? Not much. But with his sweet nature, a dose of marketing, and a touch of luck, this plain brown dog finally got his chance to shine.

After attracting zero applications, #A00000's time was up at the county shelter.

But after administering a successful temperament test, the SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County (SPCA/HS) decided to accept the little guy into its foster program, and asked my husband and me to care for him. We were specifically warned that #A00000 was a plain brown dog—typically hard to place—and we might end up fostering him for an extended period of time. And, my

goodness, the distorted photo taken by the shelter barely even resembled a dog, let alone an identifiable breed. Boxer? Retriever? Italian Greyhound? Well... we *always* fall for the pathetic ones and couldn't resist inviting this supposedly unremarkable canine into our home.

When we brought Plain Brown Dog home, our Labrador deemed him so sad and sick with kennel cough that she didn't even give him a

sniff. We brought out the digital camera and got straight to work on photographing his questionable assets, coming up with an appropriate name, and analyzing his behavior for his Petfinder.com write-up.

We quickly discovered that there was no way this shy little guy was going to make a personal statement anytime soon, so we took the counterapproach: Give him a grand name, and maybe he'll live up to the expectation.

"All Hail Caesar!" began his grandiose write-up. With not much to focus on but his sweet nature and desire for a home, we wrote to the hearts and souls of potential adopters searching the web for the perfect new family member. And so began the new life of Julius Caesar, plain brown dog.

A funny thing happened ("...On the Way to the Forum?"). Not only were people

interested in a plain brown dog, but their hearts were captured by his story, his history of being passed over, and mostly his big sad eyes. I found myself fielding application after application, email after email, from people wanting to know all about him. Is he dog-friendly? Is he good with kids? Would he be good for my grandma? Yes, yes, and yes.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's about Cooperation

A young Beagle mix paced alongside the highway, near the lifeless body of a cat apparently killed by a car. Just as I had, other would-be rescuers had stopped and were trying to catch the dog, worried that he too would be killed. But the skittish, sly pup eluded them. At first, they exchanged ideas: treats, a burlap bag, a makeshift slip-lead? But their conversation soon degenerated into a heated disagreement about how best to help. I had an appointment and couldn't stay; when I drove by again later, I was sad to see the dog lying dead on the shoulder of the road.

That roadside scene aptly depicts a sad truth about animal welfare in general: Too often, we see the suffering and stop to help, but our best efforts are hindered by conflict. I'm not talking about normal disagreement—differences of opinion are inevitable, even healthy if handled appropriately. I'm referring to unproductive infighting, especially when it occurs in public forums. When we criticize each other publicly instead of focusing on the real problems and working quietly to resolve differences, it diminishes the important work all of us are trying to do. And all the while, animals continue to die needlessly.

It's okay if we don't always agree, but no one group can be everything or do it all, so public faultfinding is pretty pointless. Occasionally, legal or ethical concerns may cause us to steer clear of a particular group, but we don't openly attack them. We get on with the business of rescue, and we work with those whom we can, in spite of (and sometimes because of) our differences. Diversity can make us stronger overall, allowing us to reach more people and accomplish more... but only if we're respectful of—and even kind to—each other. Otherwise, we become mired in tension and discord, distracted from our core work and diverted from our goals.

Projects like the Asilomar Accords (www.asilomaraccords.org) give me hope. A few years ago, industry leaders in animal welfare came together to “find common ground, put aside our differences and work collaboratively to reach the ultimate goal of ending the euthanasia of healthy and treatable companion animals.” They came with a wide range of disparate views, but they knew they could achieve more working together, and they agreed to treat each other with respect, integrity, and decency.

I also gain inspiration from the outstanding animal welfare leaders I've met and worked with locally. I respect them highly as individuals, and I appreciate their example and their support. They lead their operations responsibly, ethically, and humanely. They do not misuse public funds, mistreat animals, seek to elevate their personal status, or make a profit from their work. And they don't spend their time publicly attacking or disparaging other groups. They have too much real work to do!

Animal welfare work is hard. So much needs to be done, and sometimes the problems seem insurmountable. Will we always battle irresponsible breeding, abuse and neglect, outdated public policies, ignorance and apathy, animal hoarding, high euthanasia rates, and too many litters? I hope not, but while we do, I'm grateful to work alongside ethical people who in spite of differences embrace their common goals and together achieve amazing things.

Tamela Terry, president

Plain Brown Dog, continued from front page

We received plenty of good applications for Caesar and chose the one that best suited his needs. Unsuccessful in the stressful, chaotic environment of the shelter, all he needed was a little TLC and a bit of marketing gloss to rise to the occasion. And now you can be the judge. This plain brown dog graces the cover of the new SPCA/HS brochure, his soulful face a perfect reminder that **fostering saves lives** and that shelter animals aren't always what they appear to be inside a cage. All hail Caesar!

by Kerry McCutcheon

Editor's note: Read what Caesar's new mom has to say about him on the back cover.



United Way
of the National Capital Area

United Way #8977

CFCNCA #73688

The SPCA/HS of Prince George's County is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to animal welfare. All activities are funded solely through contributions, dues, and special events. To learn more, visit our website at www.pgspca.org or call 301-262-5625.

Help Fight Animal Abuse and Neglect

As much as we might wish that the pitbulls that died at the hands of Michael Vick were an isolated example of man's inhumanity toward animals, the harsh fact is that they were not. Animal cruelty is a sad fact of life, and it takes many forms: roaming cats used for target practice, pets abandoned when it's time to move, unwanted litters drowned at birth...the list goes on and on. Some cases of animal cruelty are obvious, but others are more subtle. So how can we recognize such inhumane treatment and what should we do when we see it?

First, learn the signs of animal abuse and neglect. Get to know and look out for the animals in your neighborhood. By being aware, you're more likely to notice, for example, that the dog next door who was once hefty has lost weight rapidly—a possible indicator of inhumane treatment.

Other signs to look for include:

- Wounds on the body;
- Patches of missing hair;
- Limping;
- Extremely thin, emaciated animals;
- An owner striking or otherwise physically hurting an animal;
- Dogs left alone without food and water, often chained up in a yard;
- Dogs kept outside without shelter in extreme weather conditions; or
- Animals who cower in fear or act aggressively when approached by their owners.

If you witness animal abuse or neglect, contact your local humane society, animal shelter, or animal control agency—immediately if the animal is in a life-threatening situation. If you're away from your house and don't have the phone number of your local animal control or police departments close at hand, a quick call to 911 can help connect you with the proper authorities. Or call the 24-hour answering service of the SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County at 301-262-5625, line #1, and our animal cruelty investigator will follow up.

It's important to provide the authorities with a concise, factual statement of what you observed, giving dates and approximate times whenever possible. The more details you can provide the investigating officer, the better. If at all feasible, try to photograph the abusive situation and date your pictures. It would also be helpful to get short, factual written statements from other witnesses.

You aren't obligated to give your name when reporting animal abuse. However, keep in mind that prosecution of animal abusers is very difficult without a witness who is willing to step

forward in court. Always make sure to keep a careful record of exactly whom you contact, the date of the contacts, and the content and outcome of your discussion. Make a copy of all documents for your file. And make it clear to the authorities that you are very interested in pursuing the case, and that you are willing to lend whatever assistance you can.

If the situation involves a good friend, family member, or neighbor who is neglecting his or her pet, you might be able to resolve the situation via education (depending upon the particulars of the case). A surprising number of otherwise well-intentioned people simply do not realize that companion animals have certain requirements for food, water, shelter, and socialization—just as people do.

On Call for Cruelty

The SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County is the only humane group in the county with a formal anti-cruelty program. Cruelty investigator Judy McClain handles more than 100 calls a month from citizens reporting animal abuse or neglect, injured pets and wildlife, or animals presenting a public threat or nuisance. McClain also follows animal-related legislation on the state and local level, and provides expert testimony when needed.

So the next time you see what you think is a case of animal mistreatment, call our 24-hour voicemail service at **301-262-5625, line #1**, and we'll follow up as soon as possible.

by Denni Johnson & Pam Townsend

Online Resources

Humane Society of the United States (hsus.org); click on "Campaigns & Programs" and then "Animal Fighting & Cruelty"

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (aspca.org/cruelty)

To report websites that display acts of cruelty to animals, contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation (fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm) and the Department of Justice (usdoj.gov/contact-us.html).

**It's About
the Animals**

Park Goes to the Dogs at Adoption Reunion

Food, friends, and fun! What more could you ask for? Despite the threat of rain, the annual Dog Adoption Reunion (held in June) drew crowds of playful canines and their human guardians. People ate pizza and reminisced with friends; the dogs frolicked and took part in contests, such as highest jumper, and fastest hot-dog bobber.

The Dog Adoption Reunion has become a popular event...and it's no surprise. When you are able to see firsthand all the lives you've touched, it makes all the time and effort you've devoted to this cause worthwhile. And while no cats attended, the hundreds of felines that have been rescued through the SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County were in our thoughts.

We wish to extend special "paws up" to the following businesses for their generous support of this year's reunion: Chipotle, California Tortilla, PetSmart, Moe's Southwest Grill, MMI Genomics, Inc., and the University of Maryland Athletics. See you next year!





Find Your Own Forever Friend at One of Our Adoption Shows

Second Saturday of the Month: 11-2 pm, White Flint PetSmart, 301-770-1343

Third Saturday of the Month: 12-3 pm, Columbia Petco, 410-290-1313

Fourth Saturday of the Month: 11-2 pm, Bowie PetSmart, 301-352-7286

* Schedule subject to change! Check our website—pgspca.org—for the latest information.

IN MEMORIAM

SPCA/HS Mourns Passing of Scout



The SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County mourns the passing of Scout, the homeless Canaan dog rescued from Iraq by the late Captain John Smathers (see story in Spring 2006 issue of *Heads & Tails*). Scout succumbed to a severe case of peritonitis despite extensive medical care, including two costly surgical procedures.

In a message to the SPCA/HS, Smathers' girlfriend and Scout's guardian to the end, Lindsay Whetzel, wrote: "Scout fought a strong battle with much dignity and pride. It is so hard to cope with his loss, but I know in my heart that Scout is in a much better world now with John and he is as free as he's ever been in his

whole life. The two of them are probably over in Iraq running beside the Tigris River like they used to.... Those two were just meant to be together, I really feel that in my heart."

The story of John Smathers and Scout was such an inspiring one; it's so sad to have lost them both. Whetzel is understandably devastated and is also struggling to pay the final costs of Scout's care. Those wishing to offer support can contact her at Lindsay Whetzel, Scout's Vet Care Fund, P.O. Box 132, Glenelg, MD 21737.

Get Connected!

Would you like to receive alerts on events, fundraisers, legislative issues affecting animals in our region, and news of interest for pet lovers in the DC Metro area? Then join our email list! We promise not to spam you or inundate you with emails...and you can opt out at any time. Just go to pgspca.org and click on "Join Mailing List."

Ho Ho Holiday "Fun"draising!

Holiday Magic at the Mill (Sunday, November 18)

Get ready to kick off your holiday shopping at Savage Mill! Two mill businesses—Tresses & Shears Salon and The Queen's Ink—have graciously offered to again support the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County in this year's holiday Parade of Trees. We'll kick off the event on Sunday, November 18, with some holiday cheer at Tresses & Shears. We'll have an information table—along with some furry adoptables looking for their forever home—and the salon will offer pictures with Santa, a bake sale, and a raffle. Please check our website—pgspca.org—for exact time. If you can't join us then, don't worry. You can still get in the holiday spirit and show your support; just vote for the trees decorated by Tresses & Shears and The Queen's Ink by making a donation anytime in December.

Franklin's Fundraiser (Monday, November 26)

Another place to find that perfect holiday gift for a friend, co-worker, or family member is Franklin's! So why not do your shopping—and dining—on a day that will benefit the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County? If you do either on Monday, November 26, and turn in your receipts to the hostess or cashier, Franklin's will donate 20 percent to us! Franklin's is located at 5121 Baltimore Avenue, Hyattsville, MD. For directions, please call (301) 927-2740.

PetSmart Santa Claws (Saturday and Sunday, December 15 & 16)

Come out to the Bowie PetSmart from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and get your pet's picture taken with Santa Claws! For only \$8.95 you will receive a 4 x 6 digital photograph and a holiday collectible frame...and support a worthy cause because the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County will receive \$5 for every photo package purchased.

iGive.com (ongoing)

We all shop online and now your online purchases can benefit the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County! Just go to www.igive.com/pgspca and you will be linked to hundreds of stores. By joining iGive.com, a percentage of your purchases through participating retailers will be donated!

Glory Days Grill Fundraiser (Sundays through Thursdays until March 31, 2008)

When you dine at any Glory Days Grill on the designated nights, the restaurant will contribute 10 percent of your total food purchases to the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County. Simply ask your server for a copy of your guest check (not credit card receipt) and mail it to: SPCA/HS of Prince George's County, P.O. Box 925, Bowie, MD 20718.

SPECIAL THANKS

Memorials & Honorariums

*Special thanks to
Antharia LLC for website design
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hosting our adoption shows, and College
Park Animal Hospital for taking
such good care of our
furry fosters.*

In Honor or Memory of an Animal...

For Irma-Cujo (Jade): Jennifer Augsburg
For Mittens: Meredith Scheopner
For Bashful: Susan Jackson
For Charlie: Virginia Myers
For Josie and Smokey: Josephine Simmons
For Miss Gabbie: Barbara Watson
For Dixie Cup: Sheila Brown
For Sugar: Sonya Euell
For Buster: Arlene Conner
For Keri Boo: Linda Bolden
For Rufus: Ann McKenzie
For Kiwi: Lauren Cummins & Wendy Guyton
For Rainbow: Michael Jones
For Ralph: John King

In Honor or Memory of a Person...

For Addie Lepore: Gary Lepore
For Katy Fraber: Maggie Butts
For Aileen Craig and Libby: Jane Norman
For Mildred Cuozzo: Charles Cuozzo
For Rosemary White Skarbek: Jargaret Jones
For Deb Wathen: Brett Hahne, Rose Kornell, Richard Schall
For Kathy Dingess: Sheila Brown
For Judi Richardson: Carol Zimmerman, Renee Speenburgh
For Bob Willing: Ellen O'Boyle, Prince George's
Philharmonic Inc.
For Jim McQueen: Patricia McQueen
For Else Weirich: Patricia Brennan
For Mary Haker: Jacquelyn Phelan, Kristen Scott
For Johnus Rutkowski: Richard Dorr
For Joseph Tevis: Robert & Helen Roeder, Chuck Weaver
For Irene Przybycian: Joanne Walter, Helen Beaton

From Margie Dowsett: In memory of Ivy, Samantha, Kira,
Lucy, Tyler, Ricky, Shazam, Lady Bear, Little Bear, and
Kopak, and in honor of Kyle Wint.

The SPCA/HS of Prince George's County relies on contributions. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. If you want to help, just fill out and return the form below.

Membership Application/Donation Form

SPCA/HUMANE SOCIETY OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, INC. * P.O. Box 925, BOWIE, MD 20718 * 301-262-5625

PLEASE CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY:

MEMBERSHIP (circle one): *Single (\$20)* *Family (\$30)* *Lifetime (\$100 per person)*

RENEWAL: Please check here if this is a renewal membership.

ADDITIONAL DONATION: I am enclosing an additional gift in the amount of \$ _____

I enclose the additional donation **IN MEMORY OF:**

A person: _____ A pet: _____

I enclose the additional donation **IN HONOR OF:**

A person: _____ A pet: _____

VOLUNTEER: I am willing to help in the following capacity:

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____ **(PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE SPCA/HS OF P.G. COUNTY, INC.)**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

All donations and dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please complete this form and mail with payment to the address above.

Plain Brown Dog Epilogue

I am so glad that I decided to adopt instead of going to a breeder. We LOVE Caesar so much! He is a very sweet, social, and sensitive guy, and when I look at his cute little face I know he is appreciative.

It seems that anyone who encounters Caesar thinks he is the cutest and sweetest dog. My fiancé Vinnie's family loves him and are willing to dog sit him anytime we go away; they have a really big yard so Caesar loves going over there to play. And all of our friends let us bring him over to their houses...even though some of them have cats. A woman whose two—adopted—dogs Caesar was playing with at the dog park said, "I can't believe someone would even think about putting him down, he is so cute, and look at him playing, he is so full of life!"

I can't begin to tell you how much he fills my heart. I am so glad that my application was chosen; I couldn't imagine being without him. I went away for two days and missed him so much! When I came home I was giving Caesar kisses even before saying hello to my fiancé. We are an all-around happy family with him...even though he is a HUGE bed hog.

Jen Maartens

HEADS & TAILS

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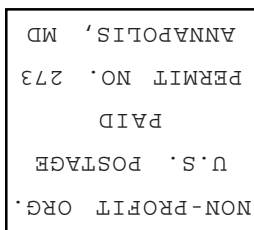
Individual membership to the SPCA/HS of Prince George's County is **only \$20** and includes a subscription to Heads & Tails. Your vital support will help us reduce animal overpopulation, homelessness, and mistreatment in Prince George's County. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

"Hear Ye, Hear Ye..."

The SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County has a new Capital Federal Campaign number. We are listed as #73688 in the CFC charities directory.



It's About the Animals



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Bowie, MD 20718
P.O. Box 925

