



SPOTLIGHT ON RESCUE

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The last column introduced you to the new National Rescue Committee members. One of the Central Region Representative positions was still pending, but I'm pleased to announce that it has been filled. Pat Campbell has joined us as the second Central Region Rep. Carol is President and Treasurer of GRRRR Midwest. She also maintains their web site and is a foster home. She is currently pursuing formal classes in animal behavior at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. We are pleased to have Pat on board.

With this column, we'd like to give you an idea of what we are working on now and what we hope to accomplish in the future. Subsequent columns will provide, among other things, a spotlight on various rescues across the country – their unique problems, needs and accomplishments.

One of our biggest undertakings thus far has been the launch of our web site: www.grca-nrc.org. In its first two months, it has received 45,000 hits (visits)! The web site is divided into two separate areas. The "Public" side is designed to help people looking for information on adopting a rescue, finding a rescue in their area, deciding if a rescue dog is right for them or looking to volunteer. This is where the Master List of Golden Rescues is found. People can search by state. This list changes frequently and our web mistress and administrative assistant are always working to keep it up to date. You can also find a page describing "Rescues in the News" as well as information about

the breed, including the "Top Ten Reasons *not* to get a Golden Retriever." We hope to soon add a Golden Retriever FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) list.

The second section of the web site is devoted to rescue workers. It is accessible by a password, which rescues can obtain by contacting their regional representative or any NRC member. It contains a section for different forms and brochures that groups have shared, the grant applications form, and information about the Golden Retriever Foundation and helpful articles on rescue, including "101 Fund-raising Ideas" which has links to many groups willing to share what's worked for them. We invite any rescue who wishes to submit information, forms or brochures to contact the NRC web mistress, Margaret Strowe, at webmaster@grca-nrc.org

In addition to the web site, a few of the other things the NRC is working on include:

- Mentoring new programs
- A survey of rescue groups to help us track the scope of, and response to, the rescue problem
- Recognition of rescues and the work they do
- Bulk purchasing of supplies for rescue
- Articles and information on evaluating rescue dogs and temperament issues.
- Developing a "Panel of Experts" to offer assistance on various topics
- Arbitration and mediation between rescues

As you can see, the scope of things that fall under our mission is far reaching!

Lastly, I'd like to share with you an e-mail that I sent to the GRRescue101 list. That list is the easiest way to reach rescue volunteers, and I wanted to reach as many as possible with my request. I'm adding it here in the hope that its message will reach as many people as possible because I think it is crucial that this committee is allowed to build a strong and lasting foundation.

Hi Everyone,

You know those phone calls you get in rescue? Anyone who has been doing rescue for more than a few months will know the ones. Those people who say, "It's been two weeks since I sent in my application – why haven't you approved it and done my home visit yet – we want a dog NOW!" and those who say, "Why haven't you found me that two-year-old spayed, housebroken, blond, fully trained female yet!?" We've been waiting for a whole month! What are you people doing – goofing off?"

Each of those calls siphons off a little bit of your enthusiasm and patience and energy. They make a difficult job even harder. I have to admit that when I was approached the first few times about heading the NRC, the e-mail equivalent of those calls was what stopped me. The "You should have's...", the "You never's..." and the "Why can't you's..." dramatic posts were not something I thought I had

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much patience left for. After 18 grueling months on the Rescue Study Task Force (I'd use a stronger adjective than grueling, but I can't think of one!), I was pretty crispy. But as you can see I eventually decided to give some time to the undertaking, because ultimately, I really believe in the concept.

So I thought I'd be pro active here right from the beginning and ask you all for a few favors and make a few promises. Before I do that, I have to tell you that I am in awe of the volunteers who've made a commitment to this committee. None of them insisted on "Interim" before their names like I did. Most of them are in the thick of running their own programs, and despite that they took on the additional work of building a national committee from the ground up. Their enthusiasm, energy and commitment have blown me away! Each one of them has way too much on their plate already (as do most rescue workers), and yet they've approached this job with boundless energy and excitement. They have worked at least 20 hours per week and sometimes more on the NRC since we started and with the workload we have on our plates, that shows no signs of letting up.

During this brief time, we have tried to cover every detail, anticipate every objection, and lay a solid foundation. But...as with everyone...we are not perfect. Anyone expecting that we won't screw up, look silly, inadvertently offend or otherwise fall short probably

hasn't ever undertaken anything of this magnitude before. Yet these women were willing to risk that, in effect paint bull's-eyes on their chests, and agree to take this on anyway. If you have a chance to talk with them, I hope you'll thank them for that.

Anyway, here's my promise: We will always give our best. If/when we can't anymore, we will step down. We will listen to any suggestions and input that people want to offer. We will welcome feedback as long as it is respectful. And we'll work very hard to make the NRC everything our mission statement sets forth. Could you ask for more?

*In return I'd ask that anyone who wants to ask a question, make a suggestion or lodge a complaint, does so to *us.* There are many ways to reach us. We have group e-mails, e-mails for each region's representatives and personal e-mails. We have a mailing address and someone tasked to distribute mail, and my phone number is listed below. If you visit our web site, there are buttons all over the place to simply click and contact. I invite you all to use them. That will get your questions to us. We'll answer you. If by chance we don't, please assume that "yahoogroups" has burped or a voice mail has failed and your message didn't reach us and please try again. And most of all, I'd ask that you please give us the benefit of the doubt during this initial building phase.*

We are kind of like that puppy

you are trying to train. If you reward the positive and shrug off the negative, you'll get much more out of him in the long run! Heck, if you really feel the need to swat us with a rolled up newspaper, maybe we can even make a button for that on the web site to make it easier to reach us directly rather than complaining on an e-mail list or to third parties where we may or may not even hear it. I can assure you all that each member of this committee is sincere in their desire to do a good job. There is NO ONE here whose motivation is self-promotion or a malicious intent towards rescue or its volunteers.

Just as each rescue hopes for a little tolerance from those potential adopters, we at the NRC hope for that same consideration from the rescue community. Thanks for listening and, if you are a rescue worker and haven't already done so, please contact the Regional Representative from your area for the USER-ID and password to get into the "Rescue Only" part of our web site. All we ask in return is a contact person for your organization. I think you'll like what you see.

(And to everyone who sent kudos and cyber-bouquets for our grand opening, our thanks and appreciation! It meant the world to us.)

*Keep in touch,
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