

## Seven years later Maddie is still loving life with her family



My husband spent a lot of time working with her, being kind and safe and my friends also took part. She is still a bit skittish and tentative but the fear and defensive barking is reduced.

On the way home from adopting her she tried to crawl into my lap while I was driving. Luckily, my mom had come along and she helped to keep Maddie in the back seat. From the very beginning she was sure that she was my dog and I was her lady. We had a lot of separation anxiety issues that had to be worked out and we got them to a lower level (though not cured). She is my constant companion, even now she is curled up next to me as I type this up.

When I first got her and was trying to get her medical issues figured out there was the 'knowledge' that she really only had a couple years and my role was to make her comfortable and happy until her chronic problems became too much.

Back in 2005 I adopted a little Sharpei named Maddie from you. You were in Iowa and I was in Minneapolis but I just fell in love with her Petfinder pictures and was prepared to drive down there to adopt her. Luckily you were on your way up to the cities anyway and you brought her along. I always joke that I adopted her in a Target parking lot.

She had some health issues, chronic yeast infections in her ears, skin problems and persistent painful swelling in her feet. We tried everything, so many visits to the vet and so many pills and creams and treatments. She was such a good and sweet dog that it hurt to see her in so much discomfort. Finally, we tried a different vet and there it was! The answer! She had a slight deficiency in her natural steroid production that was allowing her immune system to be wonky. Basically, she was allergic to her feet. We started her on a very small daily dose of prednisone and the difference was amazing. Her entire demeanor changed. It occurred to me that if my feet hurt endlessly I'd be crabby too. She was more outgoing, she engaged with dogs at the dog park and actually played with them. Her ear and skin infections cleared up and her coat filled in again.

She was skittish and defensive around men, she also tried very hard to protect me from men. She would get between and bark ferociously at them and I would have to get her under control.

BUT oh! She turns 12 years old next month! She shows absolutely no symptoms of long term steroid use, she plays and runs and is active. We moved to Vermont this summer and that seems to have triggered some more separation anxiety issues but we are working on them. Now instead of the dog park we take her and our other dog, Chester, for long hikes in the woods. I wish I could describe her funny little happy dance spin around move that she does when we get to a trail and start hiking. She gets to run and run and sniff all of the things and she wrestles with Chester in the leaves. Her eyes are starting to get cloudy but beyond that you wouldn't know she was 12 years old at all. Even the vet forgets.

She still tries to keep me safe. When I take a shower she stands guard in the bathroom. We put a dog bed in there for her so that she can be comfortable. She puts herself between me and the world and I appreciate how important that is for her and also that I would do everything I could to keep her safe and happy as well.

I want to thank you so much, so very much, for letting me adopt Maddie. I don't know that I can ever really describe how much I love her and how much she has helped me in my life.

Heather

### People for Pets monthly budget - raising funds takes great efforts

Running a shelter can easily result in monthly expenses exceeding our income. **Our annual budget is \$80,000! We are privately funded by donations and grants. We do not receive any public assistance.** Everything adds up quickly yet we don't turn any animal away! Any gift you can offer would be very much appreciated.

106 dogs and 35 cats were adopted through People for Pets this year we helped 121 dogs and 31 cats find rescue. We have spayed/neutered 209 animals so far this year! We could not have done this without the continued support from all of you, local veterinarians and the many rescues that work with us to keep the animals safe. We thank all of you for your support.



Hugs to Angel and her family from People for Pets



"Saving lives, 4 paws at a time"

# People for Pets

2312 Highway Blvd. • Spencer, IA 51301 • 712-580-2738

## Angel acts just like her namesake around the baby

Hello! I hope you remember us...we adopted a Great Pyrenees, Angel, from you in April of 2012. We wanted to write an update of how she is doing and give you some pictures.



Angel is adjusting great to our family! She's a bigger gal and tougher to handle for Val but we are all learning. Angel is still very playful and loves to wrestle with the 3 boys. She also herds them around the yard.

Angel and I have gotten used to a bike ride in the evening where I ride a bike and she runs. I've taught her left and right depending on the turn. She has definitely learned to come and I can call at great distances and she will come running home.

During the summer we took her swimming at our local lake. She loved chasing after thrown sticks in the pond and "sniffing" out nature.

Her best "trick" though has to be dealing with the new addition in our home. You will see in the pictures that my wife and I have adopted a little girl, 5 weeks old.

Angel has taken the role as protector and guardian of lil' Alexa. Every night Angel sleeps in the baby's room between the crib and door. Even though Angel is big and wild she is extremely calm and careful around the baby. When the baby cries Angel will whimper to let us know something is wrong. We've been amazed that she was never jealous but instead instinctively knew her role in the house.

I hope you enjoy the pictures. Again, thank you for such a wonderful gift in Angel. She is definitely part of the family.

Matt, Val, Kael, Kaiden, Kameron, Alexa

### People for Pets expands outreach program to help feral cats

People for Pets has expanded our outreach program this year by spaying/neutering feral cats. The cats are given vaccinations and altered then returned to their environment. Providing this service helps to keep the feral cat population under control in several areas in and around Spencer. A huge thanks goes out to the volunteers who have spent many hours setting live traps, taking cats to the vet and returning the cats to their environment. Also a big thanks to Emmet County Animal Shelter for organizing spay/neuter clinics.

Visit us on the web at [www.peopleforpets.org](http://www.peopleforpets.org)

## People for Pets opened my eyes to what rescue really means

We have all seen the stories on the news about abused or abandoned animals and our immediate reaction is “how can anyone do such a thing”? At times it makes us sick to our stomachs to hear of the nasty ways in which people try to justify their mistreatment of the defenseless animals. Yet sometimes it is easier to just turn the channel and focus our thoughts elsewhere because it is so hard to comprehend. I admit, I’ve done that too. Even though I wanted to do something, I felt helpless.

We adopted our first two Pomeranians named Jingles and Wolfe. They were our “babies” yet I was still unaware of rescue efforts and their importance. When our little Wolfe died in 2004 it was then I realized that there are too many pets abandoned by their owners and too many rescues in need of fosters or adopters. We adopted Sparky, a tri-color Pomeranian, from a rescue in Ohio.

When our beloved Jingles died at Christmas in 2008 we were devastated. Yet we knew we wanted to give another Pomeranian a good home. That’s when I saw a Petfinder ad for Bubba, from People for Pets. He was abandoned by his owner. While we arranged for a transport to meet us halfway, ***I did not realize the profound effect that the volunteers of People for Pets would have on me.***

Bubba quickly became a cherished family member and through my contact with Donna at People for Pets to provide updates on his progress I learned that it really takes a village to rescue and care for animals in a no-kill shelter. I learned that it is not just a “once in awhile” thing for volunteers to show up and feed the dogs, clean their cages, play with them and get them vetted properly all while trying to figure out how to raise funds to keep the entire process going so more dogs and cats could be saved. The commitment had to be there 24x7, rain or shine, holidays or workdays or weekends.

Some animals were so scared, some were dumped in the hallway during the night. Some just needed a human touch to tell them they were okay. All need baths and

grooming. They need warm blankets to sleep on and food in their tummies. They need fresh water daily. The folks at People for Pets were always there.

It is not an easy task to devote your time to rescue. Once you start, you cannot simply take a break. It is heartbreaking yet rewarding. A rescue volunteer needs to learn how to educate people on important issues such as spaying and neutering and how not to just yell at the person who decides to abandon their dog even when they know the owner was abusive or neglectful. The main focus always has to be getting the animal to safety first.

A few months after we adopted Bubba, we also adopted Jack from People for Pets. He is an awesome white Pomeranian with a personality all his own! I then decided I wanted to do something more for People for Pets. I started creating the newsletters and other fundraising materials. Although my efforts were small in comparison to what others did daily to directly care for the animals it was the only way I could help from miles away.

Now it is a few years later and I have since become involved with supporting rescue efforts in different parts of the country as well as People for Pets. Even though everyone is spread all over we all do our best to network the dogs in need on Facebook and we pledge dollars to rescues when we can. I am amazed at how many dogs can be saved when a village comes together to help! Yet I am still saddened by the number of dogs, no matter their age, that are still killed daily because of their breed or because there is no room to keep them. I am heartbroken to hear that owners keep taking their pets to a kill shelter knowing full well that they have 3 to 5 days to get adopted or they will be put down. Kill shelters don’t care if it is a puppy or a senior. **That is why People for Pets is SO SPECIAL. They are a no-kill shelter. They have helped so many who would not have a chance elsewhere.** Please consider supporting their efforts in any way you can.

Recently there was a little Pomeranian mix who was a stray in Los Angeles. She

was at a high kill shelter for three weeks and was red listed which means she was due to be euthanized at any moment. She had no chance—she was labeled as a 15-year-old dog with cataracts, not spayed with bad teeth. Her intake photo looked awful with her tied by a rope to a wall in the shelter. My husband and I decided that she needed to be given a chance to live and with the help of several rescue folks our little 9-pound girl

was flown to O’Hare in Chicago. We brought her home and I could never have imagined how well she and my three Pom boys, who are all twice her size, have gotten along. To our surprise, my vet says she IS spayed and that she is probably only 11 or 12 which means we may have a few more good years with her. I would not have had the knowledge or the courage to help Zoe if it wasn’t for People for Pets!

The point of my long-winded story is this: anything you can do to help the animals in need DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Whether you can donate used or new items for the shelter, volunteer your time to help care for them, temporarily foster a dog in need, adopt, help out with fund-raising events, donate cash or simply help by spreading the word about the importance of rescue among your own family and friends you can help save countless animals from suffering or dying.

You no longer have to feel helpless when you hear the sad stories about animal abuse and neglect. You can be part of a solution to a happy ending for the animals who don’t have a voice. Do even just a little bit and you will feel rewarded more than you could ever imagine.

Dawn Stenbol



## A heartfelt thank you from Millie’s family as she crossed the rainbow bridge



In March of 2000 my wife and I walked into the Walmart in Spencer, Iowa. When we walked out, our lives had been changed forever. People For Pets had a bunch of puppies in a playpen that needed a forever home. The playpen was

strategically placed just inside the Walmart entrance. There was no way to miss those cute little puppies. My wife picked up one of the female black Lab mix. The little thing snuggled into my wife’s neck and our fates were sealed.

We took her home and named her Millicent Valentina. We called her Millie. She fit right in and was immediately accepted by her new siblings. Millie never gave off negative vibes and was able to be around other dogs without any problems.

Millie absolutely loved to ride in the car. She could ride for hours and hours without complaining. Even when we would pull into the driveway she would still want to just sit in the car. She was our constant companion. Always around but never in the way. Her one mark of imperfection however, was her need to open things. She could open doors, baby gates, and outside gates with ease. She could open a cupboard door like it was her job. And packages, cereal boxes, containers, and Tupperware were child’s play. We could trust her about as far as we could throw her. Nothing was safe. We got so used to her breaking and entering that we stopped getting upset long ago.

Sometime in early November of this year, 2012, I noticed that she wasn’t eating well. We worked with our vet to try to get her to eat more. Then, it seemed like it all went downhill. She got to the point of refusing to eat anything. She wouldn’t even eat her favorite treat in the whole world, two for a dollar beef sticks from convenience stores. We tried everything our vet suggested. She had tests, x-rays, bloodwork, and an ultrasound. Nothing was found. Her breathing became labored. She lost 12 pounds in 10 days.

Two days ago we returned to our vet with Millie. We figured that reviewing all of the reports from other vets and analysis from the various tests, he would tell us what to do to fix her up good as new. We were not prepared for what he had to say. Our trusted vet, in a kind and compassionate way, told us that Millie was not fixable. Sure, he would run more tests if we insisted but the outcome would be the same. It was then that denial was violently forced out of the way by reality. Our beloved family member had reached her end.

I asked Millie to tell me what to do. It was then that I realized her soul was already taking leave. She was telling us what to do. We made the heart wrenching decision To give her body the rest she so deserved. She left us peacefully and with the grace and dignity she had shown us through the years. She entered the gates of Heaven November 26, 2012.

We wish that everyone could have a pet in their life like Millie. Her life and her death has made us better people. We will see her someday, on the other side. Goodbye Millie. Thank you People For Pets for putting the most amazing dog in our lives.

Ed and Robin

## Pete’s hurricane Sandy update



We made it ok. Only lost power for a day and only had a small flood in the basement. We are fortunate. For many it was devastating. I know people who lost their homes. Had 4 people staying with us for a few days while they waited for power to come back on. This picture is from down the street by our apartment.

### Estate planning Please keep P4P in mind

Recently more people have come forward to inquire about ways to help People for Pets in the future. Making a planned gift to People for Pets is a meaningful way to carry forward your compassion and love for unwanted, abused and neglected animals. In addition, bequests and legacy gift giving may assist you in achieving financial goals like reducing your tax liability.

- Bequests. One of the simplest ways to leave a charitable legacy to People for Pets is through a provision in your will.
- Specific Bequest- directs a specific dollar gift or property to be passed to People for pets. “I leave the sum of \_\_\_\_\_(dollars) to People for Pets in Spencer, Iowa, tax ID 42-147529.”
- Percentage Bequest- designates a percentage of the total value of the estate as a gift to People for Pets. “

Your generous and kind decision to include People for Pets in your estate planning shows a true commitment to the animals and a tremendous desire for your legacy of love to continue for years to come. To include People for Pets in your estate planning, you must include the following: Legal Name: People for Pets, 2312 Highway Boulevard – Spencer, IA 51301. Federal Tax ID: 42-147529