



Society for Animals in Distress (North Shore)

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Newsletter – January, 2010

This is meant to keep our members, supporters, donors and friends aware of important events and information.

If you are receiving this as a paper edition and have email, please let us know so that we can add it to our list and reduce our postage costs.

1. *Message from the President*

This Newsletter comes to you with our very best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year and with the sincere hope that together we will all be able to make life better for as many animals as possible during 2010.

Some exciting news for SAD. We have recently updated and added to our web site a new way for our members, benefactors etc. to donate to your Shelter via **Canada Helps**. This new way of donating allows you to donate to SAD from the comfort of your homes in a completely secure way.

... (this section intentionally removed at the request of the Society for Animals in Distress so I may post this online) ...

7. *Your stories*

We are hoping that this will be the first of many that we will include in our newsletter so sit back and enjoy reading it.

FINDING DALLAS by CHRIS FONTES

It was an unusually warm October day. I parked the minivan in front of the local bookstore, anticipating several hours of shopping. My kids couldn't stop talking about the pet store we had just come from. Apparently, the two cats and one dog at home weren't enough to satisfy their need for animals. Funny. For my wife and me, it was plenty.

"Daddy, why can't we have another cat?" My seven year old, Brandon, pleaded.

"We have two cats already, that's why." I replied.

"Your Father and I have already talked about it: we have plenty of animals. You should be thankful for the ones we have." My wife, Julie, said.

I nodded in agreement. I was sure one more pet was one too many. Then, I saw it. Right there in the rear view mirror: a new animal shelter. *There's nothing wrong with just looking*, I thought. Although resistant to another pet, we always enjoyed looking.

"Ok listen up, kids. Before I tell you what we're about to do, let me reiterate. We are *not* getting another animal. Ok?" A unanimous "Ok" echoed from the backseat.

"Ok. Behind us is a new shelter. Who wants to go see some pets?" I asked. "Me!" Again in unison.

The shelter was small and smelled of fresh paint. My boys ran off to look at the cats; the wife and I were caught in the gaze of a beautiful German Shepherd. He sat in a black wire crate, much like the one we had at

home for our other German Shepherd, Dakota. He looked to be smaller than Dakota, so I guessed him at 6 months. He was laying down with his head on his paws, ears erect and eyes in proper puppy form: large, brown, and full of love. When we started to walk closer, he stood up and put his paw on the door of the crate. A slight whimper slipped through his mouth, and his bushy tail started wagging.

It won't hurt to just look at him, right? I looked at Julie and we nodded in agreement. I knelt down next to the crate, putting my finger through the bars. His long tongue was quick to welcome me.

"Awe! He's cute!" Julie said. We made small talk with the employee closest to us, then inquired about the dog. "His name's Dallas. He's about 7 months old. We picked him up as a stray and he's been to several foster homes. I'm afraid he doesn't have any more options, though." Beth, the employee, said.

"How is he with kids, cats and dogs?" I asked.

"Oh, wonderful! Every foster home has hated to part with him, but we're only allowed to leave him with each home for so long." She said. "You wanna take him for a walk?"

"Sure." I said. I figured if anything, at least I could give this dog a walk and let him out of the crate for a bit. What a fool.

"Are we gonna keep him?" Brandon asked.

"Yeah! Keep him?" My two year old, Davis, chimed in.

"We're just taking him for a walk, that's it." I said.

"That's right, just a walk kids." Julie added.

Dallas played the perfect gentleman; sitting on command, acting cute, walking on a loose leash. He knew how to play his hand, and play it he did.

"So, what are we doing?" I asked Julie quietly.

"I dunno. I mean, Dakota could use a friend." Julie said as she found a seat in the shade.

Dallas, on queue, walked up to Julie and sat next to her. He put his head in her lap softly, then whimpered again. *Oh boy.*

"Awe!" Julie stuck her lip out like a sad child. I was about to tease her about it when I realized my lip was doing the same. "Ok, are you sure?" I asked. She shook her head in agreement. In less than 20 minutes, we were sold; hook, line and sinker.

The rescue in my home town mandates that all animals are neutered or spayed, micro-chipped, and vaccinated before they can go home. Since we had signed the papers on a Saturday, we had to wait until Monday for the process to even start. It ended up being a long 4 day wait.

On Wednesday, I waited anxiously for the phone call all day. The day seemed to drag on and on, and all I could think about was how *my* dog was stuck waiting for me. Finally, after lunch, the phone rang. I left work immediately. My heart hurt in anticipation. I checked my watch twice a minute. Eighty checks later, I heard him crying for me. I signed the requisite paperwork, and headed for the door, Dallas at my side. Everyone commented on how gorgeous and well behaved he was. He sat and wagged his tail, happy to give his attention to anyone who asked. It took another 15 minutes just to get to the door. The ride home was something I will never forget. He sat next to me on the bench seat of my truck, head in my lap. I just kept my arm around him, thankful he was part of our family.

It took a few weeks for him to fold into our family completely. Dakota and Dallas figured out who was boss the first day, but continued to test each other for the weeks to follow. He took to the kids right away, although he seems to forget how easy he can push the two year old over. The poor cats, however, are not so happy. They get along ok, but you can tell they would be happier with a dog free household.

Although it has been only a few months, I can't imagine my family without Dallas. Sure, he thinks he can sit on my two year old's lap and fit; he jumps in, or rather at, my arms, expecting me to catch him; he may eat every meal like it's his last; but he also loves us as much as we love him. He is always there, ready for a hug. I am thankful we decided to "look" at pets that day. I am thankful to the foster homes who took in my Dallas when he needed them. And I am very thankful to the shelter. Without their help and services, my poor Dallas would be walking the streets somewhere; cold, hungry, and in desperate need of a hug.