

Dear Labs4Rescue,

I have been a part of your organization for just 9 months and you have changed my life. **Thank you.** Thank you for making me see who I am and what is important in this world. As a very competitive person I have learned to love fighting a fight which we may never win. I now see the joy in each battle that is won and life that is saved.

In October I inquired about the foster program as I thought it would be a good way to see if I could handle the responsibility & cost of another dog and if it would make my current dog happier. I began with a foster and then soon inquired about home visits and screening and the how the organization ran and who was who in the core. Before I knew it I had found my way into the core group and was happily screening for these wonderful orphan dogs.

Then, right before Christmas, and a blizzard, I went with another volunteer to evaluate a local owner surrender. This was the first dog I watched go from surrender to adoption and my first realization of how easily people can see a very special member of their family as an “inconvenience” that needs to be “dealt” with.

Being from New England, the realization and knowledge of the southern conditions and mentality was soon to hit. I was absolutely appalled to realize the conditions people allowed their “animals” to live in only to discard them with the hundreds of other dogs looking for homes and teetering on the brink of a worse fate; if they are lucky enough. These people are very aware that their dog may never make it to the adoption wing and they just don’t care. It is no longer their concern.

We have all sorts of volunteers. We have the strongest of the strong. Some go into shelters day after day and see the torturous conditions. They lose dogs to these horrid environments because they were just a few minutes too late. We have volunteers who simply take all of these shelter dogs to their own house because they can’t bear to leave them any longer. We have volunteers who find, arrange and beg people to please take one more foster into their home so they don’t have to die. We have people who live at their computers on beautiful sunny days going through application after application to find these dogs loving “forever homes”. Others keep spreadsheets for home visits and beg to have them done in a short time so we can keep moving. And some do home visit after home visit driving all over to make sure these new homes are safe and our promise to these dogs to be protected and loved from now on is met. We have improving resources, contacts and website capabilities everyday because our volunteers are determined. Whatever role each of our volunteers play in placing dogs ensures them a place in heaven. Each volunteer is plays the role of a guardian angel and is rewarded every time a happy adopter sends a picture or a “happy tail” of their new best friend and how lucky they are to have found their rescue dog.

These angels are who I stride to be. You can not stay discouraged for long with such an amazing group of people supporting you and your cause. Together Labs4Rescue continues to grow and to be great. I look forward to the many more amazing people I will meet, to reaching the “million dogs saved” mark, and to be a part of it very step of the way.

Thank you for giving me a purpose, a passion, and a group of people to share it with.

Bethany Hickey
Labs4Rescue Volunteer
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