

A Husky mixed-breed, **Preston** won't be among the approximately 1,100 dogs euthanized at Sangamon County Animal Control Center in 2008. He was an Illinois Humane New Hope dog who was "pulled" from the "pound" after a stay of about 10 weeks. Many people who adopt from animal controls are looking for small dogs or young dogs, so Illinois Humane's emphasis in selection is not only temperament but also the at-risk status of the dog. In this case, Preston was young, about 10 months old, but it was obvious he was going to be a very large dog, and he had no manners, jumping crazily on humans who gave him some attention. He would lunge against the wire kennel gate, drop quickly to the floor and then whirl in circles begging for attention. "Kennel crazy" is a term devised to refer to dogs like Preston!



When I go to animal control to choose a dog for Illinois Humane, I am not looking for a cute dog or a pretty dog. I am looking for a dog I have reason to believe will be a safe dog in the adopter's home.

Preston met that criterion. Before I could pull him, however, I had to know that funds were available through Illinois Humane to pay for his shots, neutering, microchipping and housing. I took him outside and to a visiting room to temperament test him, which only served to confirm my initial impression that he had a great temperament and personality. Luckily, Jeanne, a new volunteer, came forward to provide a foster home, so that worry was taken care of.

After I signed the necessary paperwork and took him in for veterinary care, I delivered him to Jeanne's house to see how her dogs accepted him. That went smoothly in spite of the age differences in her two dogs and Preston, the older, rambunctious puppy.

I, along with other Illinois Humane volunteers, took Preston to our weekly nursing home visits. Soon his foster mom was taking him to training classes to improve his leash-walking skills and to improve his chances of being adopted and staying adopted. She also worked with him at home, taking long walks to reinforce what was learned in class.

I took him for our bi-weekly appearance on WDBR-FM's "Find a Home Friday" and then on to Channel 20's "Pet of the Week," where





he charmed everyone from the video photographer to the staff and visitors coming to the station. Jeanne began bringing Preston to Illinois Humane's Sunday adoptions at local pet stores. It wasn't long before Ashley came to an adoption and fell victim to this fellow's charms. Ashley also owns three Chihuahuas, but she wanted a big dog to exercise and spend time with, too. She submitted an application that very day.

It is Illinois Humane's policy to do a veterinarian reference check before acting on an application if the applicant has other animals. I called Ashley's veterinarian the next day, and her record of care was excellent. Soon Jeanne and I were taking him with us to do a home visit. I am so proud to volunteer with an organization that is unique in the area in requiring a home visit prior to finalization of the adoption.

I questioned Ashley about how Preston would be cared for in her absence and how he would be exercised. I was particularly concerned about how Preston would be with the trio of much smaller dogs. Ashley had thought all this through and provided safety adjustments to her home. We examined the fenced back yard carefully, and the dogs were allowed to become acquainted. All went well. Jeanne filled Ashley in on Preston's likes and dislikes, habits and quirks. Every report from Ashley since the adoption was finalized has been positive, and soon I'll be going to do a follow-up visit. I can't wait to see him again!

Rescuing dogs like Preston through the New Hope program has become my passion. I love working with all of the Illinois Humane dogs, many of whom are with the organization because of other at-risk situations. Something about seeing that dog behind the gate and being able to take it out, getting to know it, temperament testing it and, finally, opening the kennel and leaving its "jail," though, is where I find my most fulfillment. I am limited in how many New Hope dogs I can save by the availability of housing (whether foster homes or reduced-cost boarding) and funds to pay for their medical care.

I hope that you share with me the desire to continue to add to the 356 dogs I have already rescued. You can do that by being generous to Illinois Humane in this endeavor. I give my heart to each of these dogs I release from probable death. My greatest happiness is visiting them later and having them happy to see me, receiving e-mails or calls from their new moms and dads and sometimes getting photographs of them doing something cute or funny. I look at them, often fat and sassy, with their beaming owners and know that what I have done is significant. I hope you see it as significant, too.



Rose Hatches,
Illinois Humane New Hope Coordinator

Chloe, surrendered to Sangamon County Animal Control by her previous owners due to a divorce, is a purebred Akita with a superb temperament. Chloe had a couple of features that allowed her to be bypassed. Her left rear foot is deformed and useless. She moves easily, appears to have no pain and veterinarians said it could have been congenital or from an earlier injury that had not been treated. Secondly, she is already six years old, and her tail stands straight out. Her tail is more humorous than by any means otherwise problematic, but it is not attractive to a breed purist. A true Akita tail curls at least once, and some are tightly double curled.



Early on after her release, Michele, another volunteer, and I took her for a bath to remove the “top layer” of dirt on her gorgeous, primarily white coat. I took her with other Illinois Humane volunteers to our weekly nursing home visits. Soon a volunteer was taking her to training classes to improve her leash-walking skills and to improve her chances of being adopted and staying adopted.



It is Illinois Humane’s policy, whenever possible, to find a breed-specific rescue group for a purebred animal. With Chloe’s age and deformity, this was not as easy as if she had been younger and “sound.” This policy allows Illinois Humane to save purebred dogs because its funds do not have to be used for medical treatment and housing, which the breed rescue group would do, and also allows for saving another dog, a mixed-breed.

Even though we would still have liked to get Chloe into rescue, we took her to adoptions just in case the right person came along and to give her more outings and chances for socialization.

That is just what happened. Bob showed up at an adoption in August and totally fell in love with Chloe. By this time she was less stained and had put on some weight. He spent a long time with her, asked many questions and then filled out an application.

I took Chloe with me on the home visit, during which I inspected the home and the fencing in the back yard. I questioned Bob about how she would be cared for in his absence and how she would be exercised. Chloe remembered Bob from when he had met her at the adoption, and it was obvious the two were mutually attracted.



I have been back to visit Bob and Chloe since her adoption in September. He says she loves to ride in his truck with him, and they take almost daily walks in a north-side park in Springfield. He says people stop and talk to him about what a gorgeous dog she is. His neighbors are crazy about her. He no longer crates Chloe while he is at work, and he has found a dog food that she likes. It appears both of them have bonded well and are soul mates.

Rose

As we close 2008, and turn to family and friends in deep appreciation of their love and support during this holiday season, we at Illinois Humane ask if you could also think of our four-legged friends. We ask you to give those four-leggers who are members of your family a special hug for us. And, we ask for your help in caring for the four-leggers who do not yet have a family. We have one last story to tell. At the beginning of December, Illinois Humane received **Trebo** who was the subject of a court-ordered relinquishment that resulted from one of our neglect cases. Trebo is pictured here. You might note that his right hind leg is off-center and turned outward. Trebo was rolled over by a car and his owner failed to provide veterinary care for the injury. If the injury had been treated immediately, the leg could have been addressed without



surgery. Now it can't. Trebo, under treatment for pain, awaits his \$1,000 plus surgery to become whole again. He needs your help.



Chloe, Preston and Trebo owe their lives and their well being to you. There isn't a soul among all of our many volunteers who doesn't deeply appreciate our generous donors. Please take another look at the transformations depicted on these pages – that is, the lives saved, the healing power of love and tremendous new emotional bonds formed. We ask that you continue to play a role in our work saving these innocent lives.

Jane McBride
President

