

LOCALNEWS

Facebook assisting in dog rescues

Two local dogs have happy endings with a little help from Facebook friends

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Two dogs with local roots are home with families thanks to exposure on pages of Facebook.

Mary Ann Woods Kasich, Ranier, tracked for nine days an obviously distressed dog during recent frigid temperatures with a lot of help from Facebook friends. “Soloman,” or solo man, has now joined her at home with another dog and three cats she previously rescued.

And “Willow,” a dog adopted a few years ago by Robin Ramquist, Littlefork, after a rough start in life, was reunited with her family in February after she disappeared from an Ely vacation in September when someone saw the posting of a found dog in Duluth on Lost Dogs of Minnesota.

Now, Cindy Meyers and Kallie Kantos-Fritz, active members of Borderland Humane Society, have established a Facebook site featuring lost and found pets in Koochiching County and the surrounding area. Meyers calls it an “amber alert for pets” and it includes the stories of lost and found dogs and points to the value of identification tags for pets. The page is found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/231668833686600/>.

SOLOMAN

Kasich told The Journal Friday that she had just taken Soloman to the veterinarian for a check up that day and he was getting to know the other members of his new family.

“He’s in great shape,” she said. “Very thin, but otherwise in good condition.”

The 1 1/2 to 2-year-old Labrador mix survived a number of extremely cold days and nights outside, and was lured to the safety and warmth of a blanket, food and water offered by Kasich the day before the record-breaking low of -37 Thursday. With one pad bleeding, Kasich said he was shivering

when he finally accepted her help.

The story began nine days earlier when Kasich pulled over to watch a black and white dog on the road, nearly making her late to an appointment. “The way he was moving I could see he was in distress and didn’t belong in the area,” she said.

She wondered if the dog had headed home and began to second guess her gut instinct about the dog, she said. A day later, friend Cheryl Knutson Douglas reported on Facebook she’d seen the dog and Mary Lesard called Kasich about her earlier posting about the dog on Facebook.

Two or three days later, Kasich was on the move getting Facebook alerts and telephone calls about the dog. “Then I was fully committed,” she said. Realizing the obviously anxious and distrusting dog would not give in to being rescued easily, Kasich began to use food to break its fear of her. She asked people to contact her if they saw the dog, to allow it to get familiar with just one person, instead of many good-meaning people.

“I set up a line of tip people all over,” she said. “I got a tip, I’d take off, look for the dog... I knew in the end, it needed to be one person that could build trust to get him in. I couldn’t give up until it was solved. That’s my personality.”

She used the same whistle, truck and name for him as she attempted to approach, getting ahead of him and throwing treats, hoping he’d become familiar with her as she offered water and talked to him.

But while he’d accept a treat or two, he shied away from her and was again on the run. “It really bothered me,” she said. “I was staying awake a night.”

Kasich and others suspected the dog had been abandoned or dropped off in or around the dog-friendly community of Ranier. The dog wore no collar, and it



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Mary Ann Woods Kasich crouches near Solomon for a photo after nine days of coaxing the dog into trusting her.

was later found he had no identification chip.

As she lay in a tanning booth, she got the final call the day before the thermometer nearly bottomed out. “It was that last day,” she said. “I had no more time. I knew I would be staying out all night if I had to.”

She credits the happy ending to the many people who provided information about the dog and Douglas, who on that final day stayed for the long haul, discretely herding the dog toward Kasich, without frightening him into hiding. She notes that Nancy McHarg donated organic hamburger for the final and successful rescue attempt.

For the second time, Kasich approached the now visibly tired dog with a blanket that smelled of “Sammy,” the abandoned dog Kasich took in a few years ago, while holding a rope her husband Wayne fashioned into a capture noose.

“I put out the blanket on the road, threw food, and he stepped on the blanket and felt how good it felt,” she said. Then she slipped the rope on him and led him into the truck and took him home.

“We bonded immediately,” she said. “He has a gentle personality.”

WILLOW

Willow, according to information provided by Kantos-Fritz, was reunited with Ramquist Feb. 28 after about six months of near rescues and attempts.

Willow was spotted in Tower by a couple who shared a photo of the dog in their yard with Ramquist, but the dog eluded a live trap set up with the help of a local Sheriff’s Department.

In February, someone saw a dog they thought might be Willow on the Facebook of Lost Dogs of Minnesota Facebook page. Willow had been seen during the nights in a Duluth family’s yard snatching food from trash cans and eating seed from bird feeders and living in an abandoned barn down the road.

A live trap was set in the area and the small, white shepherd mix was finally captured and taken to a veterinarian in Duluth. The frightened dog was found to have minor injuries, given that she had been on her own for many months. She suffered from frostbitten ear, infected pads and low-grade fever.

The dog is now home, recovering among the other dogs that live with her.

Kantos-Fritz reported in a story to The Journal that



Willow was reunited with Robin Ramquist after spending nearly six months on her own and ending up near Duluth.

Ramquist “is happy to report that Willow is doing well and that she is slowly coming out of her shell once again. Robin is a faith-oriented person

and always prayed for Willow’s safe return or for her to be with someone and was taken care of. She said, ‘God does answer our prayers.’”

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