NONPROFIT HELPS COVER VET COSTS

Harley’s Hope ensures dog can still serve her human

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For Heidi Berge and Isis, Harley’s Hope Foundation is a lifesaver ... literally!

Heidi, a 42-year-old epileptic, depends on Isis, an 18-month-old Rottweiler service dog, to help her through her epileptic seizures. Isis senses when Heidi will have a seizure, alerts her and sits on top of her to protect her until the seizure ends.

“My disability is hidden from plain sight, it is private and at times humiliating,” said Heidi. “Isis gives me the opportunity to find a safe place out of the crowd and prepare myself. She guards me, keeps me settled and helps me recover.”

One day, while playing in the yard, Isis tripped into a rabbit hole and tore a ligament. Isis needed help, fast! Heidi took her to a local veterinarian who quoted her $800 for the surgery to fix the torn ligament. Living solely on unemployment and having no permanent place to live, Heidi knew she couldn’t afford the operation. She didn’t know where or who to turn to for help. Fortunately, a local veterinary staff member recommended she call Harley’s Hope Foundation.

Harley’s Hope Foundation is a local nonprofit whose main goal is to keep animals in their homes. Through a network of veterinarians, trainers, therapists and others, Harley’s Hope Foundation provides necessary funds to qualifying individuals for emergency surgery, medications and other animal emergencies. Since it’s inception in 2010, Harley’s Hope Foundation has helped over 32 families with pets in need.

“We’re not yet in a position to help everyone who asks for assistance,” said HHF founder Cynthia Bullock, “but it does feel great when we achieve a happy ending like this one with Heidi and Isis. Hopefully, the community will come to understand that through our work we’re trying to prevent more homeless animals. When that happens and donations start to come in, we’ll be able to realize a lot more happy endings.”

Today, thanks to the funding that Harley’s Hope Foundation provided for the surgery, Isis is on her way to recovery and helping Heidi once again.

“Just this morning my girlfriend asked me what I would have done if I didn’t find Harley’s Hope,” said Heidi. “I answered, ‘I had to find them, there was no other option. I just can not express my gratitude.’”

For more information on Harley’s Hope Foundation, visit harleys-hopefoundation.org.

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Heidi Berge with her service dog, Isis, who recovering from a torn ligament.