Harley's Hope Foundation celebrates First Anniversary

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Contributing Writer

One year ago this month, Harley’s Hope Foundation (HIF) helped its first client and her cat, Miakah, with emergency veterinary care.

HIF was founded in the summer of 2010 following the loss of David and Cynthia Bullock’s dog, Harley, to cancer.

Their experience in locating specialty care and funding led them to create the organization that focuses solely on keeping pets and their people together. Since then, the small, nonprofit based in Black Forest, has helped 45 individuals and 47 pets receive much-needed veterinary care or behavioral training.

Perhaps you saw the news story on Channels 5/3/last September? It featured the plight of Heidi and her medical assistance dog, Jade. Jade, a beautiful and gentle Rottweiler, is specially trained to detect Heidi’s epileptic seizures and alert her owners in time. Heidi had to pull the car away from the side of the road, or to seek a quiet, private place in which to deal with her medical condition.

Heidi moved to Colorado last summer hoping (for a better life)—unfortunately, things didn’t turn out as well. Heidi’s car broke down twice on the drive out.

Tina suffered two back-to-back veterinary emergencies.

First, she developed a potentially fatal infection called pyometra, which required life-saving emergency surgery. Around that same time, Tina tripped in a rabbit hole, badly injuring her knee and requiring orthopedic surgery.

With her funds expended on the first emergency surgery, Heidi struggled for more than a month, researching options, calling local media for help—she even considered returning to her trainer to see if her companion could get the care she needed. Fortunately, the veterinarian who performed the emergency surgery suggested Heidi call Harley’s Hope Foundation.

HIF was able to help and Tina is back to doing her job—protecting Heidi and providing her with unconditional love and companionship.

Harley’s Hope Foundation staff and volunteers absolutely believe in the power of prevention when it comes to keeping pets and people together and reducing the number of homeless animals in our area. They are committed to providing services and support not previously available in the Pikes Peak region.

As co-founder and executive director, Cynthia Bullock, commented, “We live in a city that has received accolades for being pet-friendly. So, why shouldn’t we, as a community, encourage preservation of the human-animal bond, rather than provide help only when an animal has already lost its home?”

In addition to financial assistance for low and fixed-income pet guardians, HIF offers an on-line pet care resource manual available to anyone, anytime via the website, www.harleyshopefoundation.org. And, in recognition of the importance education plays in animal care, HIF created the HOPE Series (Health, Options, Planning & Education), free workbooks designed to inform and prepare pet guardians for a lifetime of pet care. HIF is partnering with the Colorado Springs Area Veterinary Society to present the Colorado CARES Pet Health Fair in August 2012, which will include the HOPES workbooks. This much-needed event will offer free and low-cost veterinary care vaccinations, and spay/neuter services for pets of economically disadvantaged guardians. There will also be demonstrations, vendors, and reduced-cost services like microchipping and nail trims available to the general public.

HIF is hosting its first annual Tea & Biscuits Fundraiser on Sunday, December 18th at the Black Forest Community Center. The holiday tea party will include live music provided by the New Horizons Band, and a bake sale featuring seasonal treats to finish up your holiday shopping. Reservations are strongly encouraged. $12 per adult, $5 per child 5 years to 12 years of age. Call (719) 362-6335 or send an email to info@harleyshopefoundation.org. All proceeds will benefit the Financial Assistance Fund, providing direct support to low and fixed income people with pets in need of emergency/veterinary care or behavioral training.