

# DOG RESCUE SAVES LIVES

By Karen Romano Young | Illustrated by Giovanni Da Re

- 1 He was leashed to a stake in the snow: a lanky white puppy, shaggy and damp. I sat and looked into his huge brown eyes. He lifted a paw and touched my arm. With that, I was rescued from being a dogless human.
- 2 Bino was a ten-month-old Great Pyrenees, a huge sheepdog breed popular for the work it had traditionally done guarding livestock. Volunteers had rescued Bino from a “kill shelter” in Georgia and brought him to Connecticut for adoption just before Christmas. My daughter found him on Petfinder, a website that posts profiles of adoptable dogs and the rescue agencies providing foster homes. For a fee that covered his shots, transport, and food—and contributed to the rescue organization’s expenses—sweet Bino was ours. I loaded him into the back of my car. As we drove home, I heard what some dog folks call the “rescue sigh”—a dog’s exhalation of relief at being delivered from a life without people, place, or prospects.
- 3 Rescue organizations are just one way that animal-care professionals are working to save the lives of dogs. How many dogs? Their goal is *all the dogs*.
- 4 The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) reports that dog adoption rates rose almost 20 percent between 2011 and 2016, a period when the idea of “rescuing” a dog blossomed. Dogs got homes, people got dogs, and cars got bumper stickers saying “Who Rescued Whom?” In dog parks across the land, saying your dog is a rescue makes you seem kind and cool—and perhaps



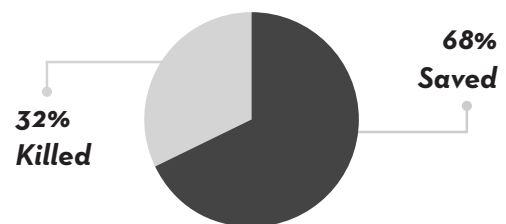
- even morally superior to people who buy pets from a pet shop or breeder.
- 5 What are dogs being rescued from? Some dogs wind up in shelters when authorities remove them from situations where they were abused or neglected. Some families find they can’t afford to care for their animals. Other families unexpectedly move to new housing that doesn’t allow pets. Animals may get lost without identification. And unwanted puppies are sometimes born when people fail to neuter or spay their dogs.
  - 6 But ultimately, dogs need to be rescued from euthanasia—being put to sleep or put out of their misery by an injection that kills them. Some shelter managers feel that they have little choice but to remove unadoptable dogs this way if they are going to continue to take in and help others. Fortunately, euthanasia rates are going down. Today, Americans euthanize over ten million fewer dogs and cats than were killed in shelters in 1970, reports the Humane Society of the United States.

- 7 Many people want the United States to be a “no-kill nation.” The goal is nothing less than a home for every dog—and an end to euthanasia. Over the last 40 years, the number of households with dogs and cats has risen. This goal is a real possibility over the next ten years if the rescue trend continues.
- 8 Here’s how dog rescue works. Through the internet, rescue organizations access town and city shelters’ “kill lists”—profiles of dogs whose time is running out. Rescuers assess the adoptability of these dogs and request those animals they think they can find homes for. They arrange for medical care and transport the dogs to volunteer foster homes, where they will live until the rescuers find them permanent homes.
- 9 How do adopters find them? The internet again. Social media has helped. Posts of dog profiles and photos make it easier to find adopters. And Facebook pages and other sites invite dog lovers who can’t adopt to donate money, food, blankets, beds, and toys. Thousands of dogs are transported from areas where they are unwanted to areas where they stand a better chance of being adopted. One rescue organization, Paws from Paradise, in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, asks visiting tourists to fly home with dogs destined for adoption nearby.
- 10 It’s important for people to understand that when they rescue one pet, they’re actually rescuing two—the one they adopt, and the one their adoption makes space for.
- 11 Shelters host every breed of dog, as well as wonderful mixed breeds. This negates the need to seek out breeders or to shop at pet stores, which often sell animals bred in factory-like conditions known as puppy mills. In some areas, raising or selling puppy-mill dogs has been outlawed. That’s led some pet stores to transform into shops that sell dogs from rescue organizations.
- 12 The American Kennel Club (AKC) was once known mainly for its pedigrees of purebred dogs. Those are dogs whose parents, grandparents, and so on all share the same breed. The pedigree is a record of that family history. Now the AKC has developed a

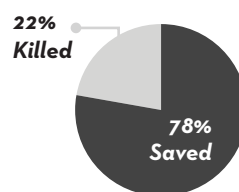
nationwide network of rescue organizations and has even instituted a program to encourage people to adopt mixed-breed dogs. Some places jokingly call this a “mutt-i-gree.”

- 13 If you’re considering going to the local dog pound or shelter to choose a dog, please do! But many people find this experience emotionally wrenching. How can you choose the best dog for your family among so many eager adoptees? Rescue organizations have created a middle step between the shelter and your family, ensuring medical care and the socialization that comes from living in a foster home before the dog comes to yours. The result is the right dog for the right home—and a vacancy for the next dog in need.

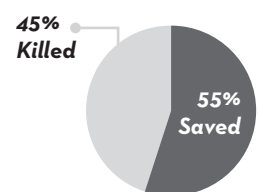
## DOGS AND CATS IN US SHELTERS



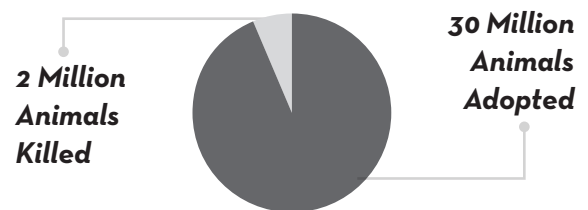
**% DOGS AND CATS  
Saved vs. Killed**



**% DOGS  
Saved vs. Killed**



**% CATS  
Saved vs. Killed**



**% PET ADOPTIONS  
VS DEATH RATE**

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## Test Questions

*Circle the correct answer.*

**1. Which is the best meaning for the word *negates* as it is used in paragraph 11?**

- a. reveals
- b. encourages
- c. reverses
- d. affirms

**2. Which is the best sentence from the text to include in a summary of this article?**

- a. And Facebook pages and other sites invite dog lovers who can't adopt to donate money, food, blankets, beds, and toys.
- b. Shelters host every breed of dog, as well as wonderful mixed breeds.
- c. But ultimately, dogs need to be rescued from euthanasia—being put to sleep or put out of their misery by an injection that kills them.
- d. Rescue organizations are just one way that animal-care professionals are working to save the lives of dogs.

**3. Using the text feature on page 37, which statement below is a true statement?**

- a. Cats have a lower save rate than dogs.
- b. The percentage of animals saved has decreased.
- c. People like cats more than dogs.
- d. Shelters take more cats than dogs.

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## Test Questions (*continued*)

**4. Select two causes that led to the increase in dog adoptions from 2011 to 2016?**

- a. Society thought buying pets from stores and breeders was cooler than rescuing them.
- b. Society euthanized over ten million fewer dogs and cats than in 1970.
- c. Society began to think rescuing was cooler than buying pets from stores or breeders.
- d. Slogans like “Who Rescued Whom?” gained popularity.
- e. The American Kennel Club became known for its pedigrees of purebred dogs.

**5. What is the overall structure of “Dog Rescue Saves Lives”?**

- a. Compare and Contrast
- b. Cause-Effect
- c. Chronological
- d. Problem/Solution