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Shelter Stories: Bully for Brookhaven

presented by Peter Kohler



In Brookhaven, the old dog pound has been reinvented, as new leaders of the town's animal shelter have joined with rescue groups to find homes for the Pit Bulls that are inundating animal shelters all over Long Island.

“Look at that cut around her neck...”

Shelter Director Dori Scofield tells the story of Honey. “She was a stray,” she said, “and we just have so many Pit Bulls and Pit Bull mixes in our shelters on Long Island and that’s why I created the Brookhaven Bully Alliance.”

What’s unique about the privately funded Bully Alliance is that it uses donations to pay rescue groups \$250 to place animals for adoption. What’s more, Brookhaven’s shelter actually trains animals like Honey to improve their behavior for adoption.

Town Supervisor Mark Lesko has bigger plans to make the shelter a regional resource.

“We’re in the process of designing a new large shelter,” he said. “And one of the things we’re talking about is partnering with the adjoining municipalities to see if it makes sense to do a larger regional shelter with the smaller townships like Smithtown and Riverhead.”

Contrast Brookhaven’s experience with Hempstead’s animal shelter, where rescue groups continue to protest their ouster from a shelter that they say is more concerned with political patronage than animal care.

At Brookhaven, volunteers and shelter workers work together so dogs like Honey can find a new home.

Brookhaven has found a better model for its animal shelter—working with volunteers and rescue groups instead of opposing them.

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