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Pilots Fly Puppy Mill Pets To Safety

Volunteer Aviators Bring Dogs To New Home In Mass.

POSTED: 7:12 pm EDT September 19, 2009
UPDATED: 7:38 pm EDT September 19, 2009



BOSTON -- Volunteer pilots took two puppies on the ride of their lives Saturday, whisking them from a puppy mill in Virginia to a safe, new home at a Massachusetts shelter.



George Rodrigue / WCVB

The animals were transported to the Bay State as part of a national program called "Pilots N Paws" that organizes volunteer aviators to rescue animals facing euthanasia and transport them to new homes. The group, which says it has saved more than 2,000 animals since 2008, launched a campaign to rescue thousands more animals this

week.

Bonnie and Otto, the two dogs who touched down at Beverly Airport on Saturday afternoon, will find their new homes at Northeast Animal Shelter in Salem. The brother and sister are a Beagle/Basset mix.

Pilots N Paws co-founder Debi Boies told "Good Morning America" that a tremendous volunteer network has been essential to helping the group accomplish its objectives.

"Pilots have taken the week off from work and informed their families that they may be late for dinner," Boies said.

If animals are amputees, older, pregnant or have medical needs, flying is easier and safer. Boies says ground transportation is an option for rescues traveling short distances, but for new homes that are far away, "the journey is long and the animals need to change vehicles every hour. It's stressful for them," she said.



George Rodrigue / WCVB

Flying animal rescue missions is not cheap. Volunteer pilot Steve Edwards said the average animal airlift will cost \$2,500. "Between the fuel, maintenance and plane permits, it's expensive," Edwards told "Good Morning America".

Edwards hopes other pilots will follow his example and sign up to save shelter animals from being put to sleep.

"As pilots, we have the ability to fly, and it's our duty to use it for good," he said.

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It is bunk to say the Southern shelters have more small dogs. They have many, many big dogs, a lot of houndy things and things that hunt, pretty much all mixed. . But of course in populous areas people prefer smaller dogs. We have thousands of strays and shelters dogs pouring into Mass. All the while these dogs come and some of them don't work out and they get dumped on the municipal shelters. Who pays for that? We do. If all the do gooders really anted to help down South they would go down there and offer free s/n and try to do some education. But if a poor family can get \$25 a puppy to sell to "rescuers" they will do it!

Sep. 21, 2009 10:41am EDT | from [Adogladly](#)

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The southern shelters have found that they have vastly more small and medium sized dogs than can be adopted. Many of the more northern states find that they have many people looking for small and medium dogs. So dogs are rescued from a shelter where they would be unwanted and unadoptable, and taken to a place where they are likely to be adopted very quickly. This sort of transfer has been going on for years. In fact, there's a large van that is often used to move pets around, long-haul truck drivers are sometimes willing to add a dog or two to a shelter where someone is waiting to adopt, and there are relays of people who drive animals from place to place. There is a site called Petfinders that lists many of the pets in shelters. Often someone in one part of the country will decide that a particular pet is exactly right, and the animal is a thousand miles away. Organizations such as this can provide help getting an animal to its new owner.

Sep. 20, 2009 12:05pm EDT | from [nlp](#)

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I think it's commendable these dear puppies were rescued. Northeast Animal Shelter does a great job and I donate to them regularly, cash and I bring them supplies.

Sep. 20, 2009 10:58am EDT | from [dtigerr](#)

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Ollie...give it a rest...why is it when people help an animal, SOME people get their knickers in a twist? Most shelters here are full of cats and the dogs are being brought in from Puerto Rico. I must say, the west coast treats animals much better than here in New England. Oh, and before you say we should help people first, the same people who help animals are the ones who are helping people too. Stop whining celebrate humanity at its best.

Sep. 20, 2009 10:39am EDT | from [Jetsmom](#)

[Inappropriate](#)

Olie, its not always the shelter that has the problem, its the people that think they need to buy pet store animals, which 99% of the time come from puppy mills because they are cheap to get and can sell for a lot of money, so they trick people into thinking they are getting a purebred. unless you are showing or breeding a dog, you don't need a purebred. sometimes you can even find purebreds in a shelter, there is nothing wrong with a mutt a dog is a dog they only want a home and someone to love them

Sep. 20, 2009 8:07am EDT | from [lshallow](#)

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