

18. “Temperament is inherited, but it can be modified or enhanced by the environment,” writes the author. How do pet owners create many of the behavioral problems that make their pets difficult to live with?
19. The author writes that she has learned to pay attention to “the little tickle in the gut” that says someone may not be a good candidate for a pet. Have you ever had a “little tickle” that warned you off something even though the “facts” on the surface seemed okay?
20. The author stresses the importance of matching an adopter to not only the right species and breed (or mix), but the right individual animal. How have you chosen the pets in your life? Will you choose the next one any differently?

Other Books by Sheila Boneham, Ph.D.

The Multiple Dog Family (T.F.H., 2009)
The Shetland Sheepdog (T.F.H., 2009)
Training Your Dog for Life (T.F.H., 2008)
The Multiple Cat Family (T.F.H., 2008)
The Dachshund (T.F.H., 2007)
Senior Cats (T.F.H., 2007) – Award of Excellence & Finalist for MUSE Award, Cat Writers Assoc.
The Golden Retriever (T.F.H., 2006)
The Parson Russell Terrier (T.F.H., 2006)
The Boxer (T.F.H., 2005)
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting and Owning a Cat (Alpha Books, 2005) – Best Care & Health Book, & Award of Excellence, Cat Writers Assoc.
The Simple Guide to the Labrador Retriever (T.F.H., 2003) – Best Single Breed Book, Dog Writers Assoc. of America
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting and Owning a Dog (Alpha Books, 2002) – Best General Interest Book, Dog Writers Assoc. of America
Guide to Owning a Pembroke Welsh Corgi (T.F.H., 2000)
Guide to Owning an Australian Shepherd (T.F.H., 2000)
Breed Rescue: How to Organize and Run a Successful Program (Alpine, 1998)–Best General Interest Book, Dog Writers Assoc. of America

Critical Praise for Rescue Matters!

Rescue Matters! How to Find, Foster, and Rehome Companion Animals is the definitive guide to animal rescue. Intelligent, compassionate, practical, and comprehensive, this marvelous book is a must-read for not only for novices but for experienced rescue people as well. Superb!

Susan Conant, Author of All Shots and other novels in the Holly Winter series of Dog Lover's mysteries

Rescue Matters is a must read for all animal rescuers. Even the most experienced rescue person will find information to help them do a better job for their organization and the animals in need....Rescue Matters should be a part of every rescuer's equipment—right beside their cell phone, computer, leash, and treats. Thank you Sheila Boneham, for such a thorough look at the ins and outs of rescue.

Jody Young, Ridgeback Rescue of the United States Indiana Director, and Former Assistant National Director

Rescue Matters! offers essential advice to anyone wanting to start a rescue, and worthwhile advice for experienced rescuers. I particularly appreciate her comments on recognizing and dealing with "burn-out".

Mara Melton, Beagle Rescue in Maryland

Rescue Matters is available from local booksellers and on-line vendors. Discounts are available from the publisher for order of four or more copies.

Dr. Boneham is available for appearances and interviews. For more information, please visit <http://www.rescuematters.com> or e-mail sheila@rescuematters.com

Rescue Matters!

How to Find, Foster, and Rehome Companion Animals: A Guide for Volunteers and Organizers
 by Sheila Webster Boneham, Ph.D.
 Foreword by Dean Koontz

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About This Book

"Great changes in societies start small," writes Sheila Webster Boneham, Ph.D., "and while the rescue road is long and often dark and bumpy, we have covered considerable ground." This book offers an illuminated map to light the road and smooth the way for individual volunteers and volunteer-group organizers.

Rescue Matters! is a compassionate and comprehensive look at the issues that affect both pets in need and the people who work to save them. The guidelines for assessing animals and potential adopters, and for matching pets and people, transcend rescue and apply no matter where we acquire our companion animals.

Although the focus of the book is on rescuing animals, "compassion for people" is always front and center. Many of the issues and suggestions in this book are relevant to other paid and volunteer jobs, especially those involving emotionally draining work. "One of your goals should be to expand, diversify, and organize..." writes Boneham, "so that the same few people aren't stuck with all of the work and any volunteer can take a break or leave without the program falling apart."

An award-winning member of the Dog Writers Association of America and the Cat Writers' Association, Boneham wrote the first and until now only book on starting and running a dog rescue program more than a decade ago. In *Rescue Matters!* she takes the issues of rescue, pet ownership, volunteer work, and volunteer management to the next level.

Discussion Questions

1. The choices we make about pet ownership as adults are often colored by our experiences with animals when we are children. What were some of your own pet-related experiences growing up, and how have they affected your attitude toward animals as an adult?
2. The author argues that banding together with like-minded people usually makes rescue work more effective and less risky than solitary efforts. What advantages and disadvantages do organized rescue and private rescue offer the rescuer, the adopter, and the rescued animal?
3. Boneham writes, “You may hear rescuers say that ‘you can’t save them all,’ but the emotional reality of that statement won’t hit home until you encounter the animal that *you* can’t save.” People in many fields experience similar epiphanies when ideals run into harsh reality. How can we do emotionally difficult work without becoming cynical or depressed?
4. The author asks, “why would you want to give up your evenings and weekends, parts of your home, some of your money, many of your other interests, and huge hunks of your heart to work without pay?” Why *do* some people invest so much of themselves in volunteer work of any kind?
5. Think about your own work as a volunteer or employee. What actions and policies of the organization or business empowered or inspired you? What actions or policies had the opposite effect?
6. If you were to volunteer (or if you already do) with an animal rescue group, what knowledge and skills could you offer right now, and what new knowledge and skills would you be willing to acquire?
7. What is the most creative fund-raising or material support campaign you have seen or been involved with? What made it effective?
8. Rescue groups rarely have enough money or people to cover all the needs of all the animals they want to save. How should such a group respond to an animal in need of extraordinary medical or behavioral care if funds are limited?
9. The Internet has become a vital part of the world of animal rescue. As we have come to know, though, Internet discussion groups all too frequently become a forum in which some people defame, bully, and inspire mob posting against others. Some moderated lists enforce rules to prevent such behaviors. Have you ever been attacked on a discussion list, or witnessed cyber attacks on a list member? What can we do, as individuals and as a society, to fulfill the potential of on-line communication to do good and minimize the bad?
10. The author asserts that pet education should be about more than rescue animals per se. What can caring pet owners, whether involved in formal rescue efforts or not, do to reduce the need for animal shelters and rescue organizations?
11. The author stresses the need for safe procedures when dealing with animals, especially those newly arrived in rescue. Have you ever done anything with an animal that, in retrospect, you realized was not safe? How would you do things differently now?
12. People who relinquish animals to rescue organizations often omit crucial information or lie outright about the animal’s health or behavior. People who choose to keep “problem” animals also often make excuses or deceive themselves about reasons for their animals’ undesirable traits. Why do you think that is?
13. The author argues writes that, “Even a responsible pet owner can find that an individual animal just isn’t working out and needs to be in a different home.” Have you ever rehomed a pet or returned her to the breeder because she wasn’t working out? Have you ever kept a pet that you thought might truly be happier in another home where she would fulfill someone else’s expectations better than she did yours?
14. In our speech, writing, and popular culture, we use many words, mottos, and platitudes that seem to establish common ground but may in fact mean different things to different people. What such conversational shortcuts bother you? How do they obscure real conversation and understanding?
15. The author writes that, “many well-meaning people create problems by failing to give their pets the basic tools of good behavior and optimum health: physical exercise, mental stimulation, proper nutrition, regular grooming, and basic training.” Do you know any pets for whom this is the case? How might addressing some or all of these issues make for happier pets *and pet owners*?
16. Rescuers, shelters, veterinarians, and responsible breeders and pet owners have promoted spaying and neutering of pets for decades, and yet irresponsible breeders continue to produce pets with serious genetic health and temperament problems as well as unconscionable numbers of homeless animals. Why do so many people in the U.S. support irresponsible breeding by buying the puppies, kittens, bunnies, birds, and other animals produced without regard to genetics, selection, early handling, and other principles of good breeding?
17. The book recommends that rescuers establish a standard health-screening protocol for incoming rescued animals. How is such screening important to the animal, the rescue group, the foster caretaker, and the adopter?