

Lister - The Rescue That Became IMPS

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This concludes a two-part series introducing readers to a hardworking breed rescue group, Internet Miniature Pinscher Service. The First installment appeared in the March issue.

As a sad indicator of how many Min Pins are in need of help, IMPS is up to 170 rescues. Susan Lyons, who kindly provided information on Lister and IMPS, is a founding member of the group, which was born with the rescue of one pup in Florida.

It all started on a warm Monday in July 1998, a day that began like any other day for the diverse group of Miniature Pinscher owners, breeders and friends linked through an Internet list. Most were not known to each other beyond e-mail addresses and shared stories of their furry "best buddies."

As fate would have it, a post was forwarded onto the list that day regarding a young male Min Pin in need of immediate assistance in southwest Florida. Perhaps there were a few moments of hesitation as list members asked themselves the usual questions: "What can I do?" and "How can I help, being so far away?" People often ask questions like these when they hear of a child or animal in need. We make ourselves feel better by assuming that someone else will come to the rescue. This day was different.

Somehow, that young pup reached out with a silent cry -; a cry that crossed the United States, then carried across the ocean. Soon a response asking for more information was posted by a Florida list member. "Where is this pup located?" she asked. "What are the circumstances?"

The response was sickening: This pup was being kept in a pen in a hot Florida garage because he was not housebroken. He was only 8 months old. His only sin was not having been properly trained. It was likely that he would soon be left in the night drop-off at the local shelter. This news hit the list members like a shockwave; the resounding response was that this was unacceptable.

Within hours, list members sprang into action with offers of a foster home, a permanent home in Illinois, funds to cover veterinary expenses and so on. Thanks to the combined efforts of these individuals, arrangements were made for the dog, whose name was Orion, to be taken from the garage and brought to a local veterinarian. (He was picked up by a representative of Spay Lee, a "no-kill" animal shelter group operating in Ft. Myers, Fla. This group originally learned about the dog's plight and notified others.)

Orion was examined at the veterinarian's office, given necessary medical attention and neutered. A short time later, a list member picked him up from the vet and brought the scared pup to her home, where he was enthusiastically greeted by three female Min Pins. (If you know the breed, you'll understand.)

What ensued over the next few days was nothing short of amazing. The members of this Internet list bonded together for Lister Orion Saluki, the dog's new full name -;"Lister" because of the list that had saved him, and "Saluki" for the list's Web address (minpins@saluki.Org). A new foster owner, previously unfamiliar with rescue, opened her heart and home to him and offered to act as the collecting agent for the donations that list members were eager to send.

A new home for Lister was soon found. Because he was afraid of crates, list members decided that his new mom should fly to Florida to bring him back with her to his new home in Illinois, but the airfare was expensive. Again, the list members rose to the challenge and funds began pouring in to help make this possible. Within five days of his rescue from that hot Florida garage, the frightened, abused pup had turned into a trusting, loving little dog who was about to embark on the journey to his new life.

That was just the beginning. The list members were psyched. Joy flowed from fingers to keyboards through modems, to monitors. This "high" was born from feelings of success, accomplishment pride and love. "Why stop with one?" seemed to be the common sentiment. "There have to be more Min Pins needing our help. Who better to do it than those who love the breed? Who better to do it than a group that stretches across the

country -; and the world?" This unified sense of purpose marked the birth of Internet Miniature Pinscher Service.

Since July 1998, IMPS has developed 81 contacts in 42 states and one contact each in Canada and Puerto Rico. IMPS members have volunteered for various duties including fostering and transporting dogs, making shelter checks and screening prospective homes. At the time of this writing, there are 35 potential homes in 19 different states on the waiting list.

On average, IMPS receives contacts from three potential adopters per week. Many of these do not pan out. IMPS does not place dogs in homes with unfenced yards unless the prospective new owner lives in an apartment (and thus can't have a fenced yard) and has previous dog experience and dogs are not placed in homes where other dogs are living loose outside. The group also does not place dogs in homes with electronic fencing; free-roaming dogs can enter a yard that has this type of fencing, and the danger this poses to a Min Pin is too high.

The rate of contacts to IMPS regarding dogs needing to be placed varies, but currently averages out to about 7 to 10 dogs per month. Many of the dogs coming into IMPS have behavioral problems necessitating their placement in homes with few or no other dogs and no children. This need to meet special requirements in making certain placements is why dogs can be waiting for homes while the group has a waiting list of prospective adopters. IMPS is very careful to match dogs with the right homes.

All rescued dogs are micro chipped and spayed or neutered prior to placement. The microchip is registered to IMPS so that if the dog is lost, it will be returned to the group. Dogs are placed on an adoption contract, which can be found on the group's Web site (<http://members.aol.com/minpinresq>)

If you would like to know more about IMPS or would like to join or assist us, please visit our Web site, Information on the site includes the stories of deserving Min Pins the group has assisted and a list of those that are currently available. IMPS can be contacted via e-mail at harkon @inxpress.net. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call toll-free 877-MinPin-I or (877) 646-7461.

Thank you, Sue, and thanks from all of us to IMPS for its vital service to the breed. With the group having handled more than 170 rescues so far, we must remember that rescue begins with the breeder. Thumbs up to those who thoroughly screen potential buyers, use spay/neuter contracts and Limited Registrations, and recognize that their responsibility does not end with the sale. Please breed responsibly. Be ethical where you place and sell your dogs, and don't "throw away" your seniors. MPCA breeder referral can direct prospective owners to MPCA members in their area.