

Volunteer profile

Meet Lorraine Spreadbury

By Lynsey Franks

The organization had only been in existence for roughly three months when Lorraine Spreadbury jumped on board. It was 2002 and Lorraine started as a volunteer just after her mother adopted a puppy from SCARS. Then in 2006, she became a foster home for rescued pets in need of a temporary shelter.

Since her beginning with SCARS, Lorraine and her family (shown right) have fostered over 25 dogs, some of which stayed a week, others up to 18 months. "We usually take in adult dogs," she explains. "They tend to stay in foster care longer than puppies." During March 2010, the household fostered Shizam, a Border Collie/Great Pyrenees cross, and Elin, a Retriever/Collie cross.



Lorraine gets help from her husband, Wayne Pidsadowski, and their two kids. She says her kids, Tyson, who is 12 years old, and Jayden, who is 10, are a big support to their fostering efforts.

"We try to bring dogs into our home, just as if they were our own," says Lorraine. "It's an absolutely tremendous learning opportunity for the kids to volunteer and be a part of something where you are giving back to the community."

The family lives on an acreage near Westlock, Alberta, and their house proves to be a welcoming place for furry friends of all kinds. The family has a pet of their own named Happy, and Zoe, a foster dog that "adopted them," as well as four cats and three horses. Lorraine says that it can be hard to give up a foster animal, especially when their stay is an extended one. "There have been times that they [her sons] would like to keep a dog," she explains. "But if we kept them all, that's not really helping to solve the problem."

Her boys are actively involved in handling, walking and attending vet appointments with the dogs whenever possible. "These dogs are a part of our lives," she says. "We want to teach our kids the importance of giving back and this is a great opportunity to do so."

Aside from the family's learning curve, Lorraine also finds inspiration in the dogs themselves. The family often takes in sick, injured or timid animals, most of which leave their care happy, healthy and feeling loved. "It's amazing to see these skinny little terrified dogs," explains Lorraine. "And with a little bit of love, food and rest, all of a sudden they have loving, beautiful personalities."

Lorraine ensures that the dogs get adopted out to great homes. To describe the fostering experience, she rehashes a statement from one of the organization's founding members, Sylvia Christiansen, "Eventually they all get adopted, some just take a little longer than others."

She hopes SCARS will continue to do what they're doing. She expects that, 10 years from now, they will still be providing this service to communities and looking after dogs and other animals in need. "Ultimately, I wish there were really good neuter services out there," she laughs.

As a sincere and dedicated member of the SCARS team, Lorraine is modest in her assistance to SCARS. "All the people involved in the organization have their hearts in the right place," she says.