2004 ATRA Year End Report

December marks the end of a great year for ATRA. As I reflect back on what we have accomplished in 2004, I note many exciting and heartwarming things we were able to do because of the generosity of our volunteers and donors.

ATRA took in 224 Airedales throughout our 13 state area plus the province of Ontario. Each of these dogs that arrived with a medical issue received the best possible care. A few of the more noteworthy ones are listed below.

Nyla was treated for a blood disorder.
Teddy Bear and Dusty had extensive dental work and are no longer in pain.
Toby and Sidney had surgery for their bad hips.
Tessa had her spleen removed.
Nalla had a broken leg repaired after being hit by a car.
Breezy had cataract surgery, which has allowed her to enjoy her new family and new life all the more.

I'd like to share this note from Breezy's new mom:

"Breezy can see! I just can't express what it's like to see Breezy stand and stare and stare and stare. She is taking in her new world with a thorough examination of every little thing. What ATRA does for these dogs is beyond belief. I can't begin to thank you for what you have done for Breezy and me." *Suzy Roberts*, Hillsdale, MI

Several of our dogs had behavioral issues or badly needed to learn some manners. New contacts were made through the prison programs in Ohio and Mississippi and relationships were established with new trainers and behaviorists in several of our states. ATRA was able to make a donation to Purebred Rescue Organization of Ohio and to Second Chance Pet Partners, both non-profit groups who run the prison programs in Ohio and Mississippi respectively. These donations were in appreciation of the work they have done to help our Airedales. There is no cost to us for these groups to take our dogs into their programs.

This was the first year that ATRA offered seminars to its volunteers and supporters. We held one seminar in Iowa and the other in Ohio with a total attendance of about 50 people. The topics at both of these seminars dealt with K-9 communication, aggression and behavior evaluation. The speaker at each location gave us a different perspective on these topics as one was a behaviorist and the other was a police dog trainer. Best of all, ATRA was able to cover the cost of the seminars and charged each participant only a minimal fee for lunch.

Another first that occurred in 2004 was the mailing of special volunteer packets to all of our wonderful volunteers. Our volunteers are ambassadors for us when it comes to getting the word out about ATRA, and the packets had several items to help them do just that. Each packet contained a cling/window sticker for volunteer vehicles sporting the words "Ask me about Airedale Rescue", and an "Aire Angel" volunteer pin, along with a few business cards, ATRA pamphlets and "Wanted" posters. In all over 400 packets were mailed. I also presented 5 of our volunteers at our Auction and Fall Aire Frolic with the "President's Award" for service in 2004. We brought back the "Volunteer Spotlight" in the newsletter to introduce our special volunteers to the rest of the ATRA community. Lastly, in recognition of the fact that our volunteers are important to us, 2005 has been designated as the "Year of the Volunteer".

In addition to what is mentioned above, ATRA accomplished several other things as well:
We set up additional committees for some of our important functions: Coordinator, Volunteer, Fundraising, Publicity
The "Message from the President" became a new regular column in AireMail
We did a special newsletter mailing to vets on the ATRA database
We built up our coordinator teams so that nearly every state has at least two coordinators to assist one another
We added a number of helpful books to Annette's Airelooms
We offer "Second Hand Dog" and "Leader of the Pack" books free to new adopters

We sent these same books to all of our coordinators plus the book "Grrr"
We expanded the ATRA Board to its current 7 members, adding a second Vice-President and Director of Education
We obtained conference calling to facilitate Board meetings
We purchased fax machines for our coordinators that did not have them
We began sending feedback from the Board meetings to the key ATRA volunteers
We put ads in several papers in states and areas where we are short of volunteers
We set up a Yahoo groups list for the coordinators to make communication easier
Volunteer meetings were held in Kansas, Indiana and Nebraska
We got the ATRA forms and Volunteer Guide up on a special accessible web page
We began our "Happy Web Tails" addition to the website
We added a webmaster assistant to help with the Spare Dale write-ups
We began work on a totally new look and content for our website
We got old paper applications out to all of the appropriate state coordinators
We helped three individuals so that they could keep their beloved Airedales rather than surrender them
We did two home visits for other breed rescue groups
We expanded our database to include several new categories for entry and tracking
We are represented on the National Airedale Rescue Board by volunteer, Carol Domeracki
We added the state of Mississippi to the list of ATRA states
We held a teleconference with ARG (Airedale Rescue Group) to help them with fundraising and volunteer ideas

The one thing ATRA is most proud of this year was our ability to do outreach to other Airedale rescue groups to help when needed. We sent a donation to RMARC (Rocky Mountain Airedale Rescue of Colorado) for hip replacement surgery on one of their dogs. RMARC had planned to help financially with this surgery until their treasury was wiped out trying to assist another dog who had to undergo emergency surgery.

> "McGuire underwent event-free and successful hip surgery (total hip replacement) yesterday. Our group also received the check from ATRA in yesterday's mail. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for helping us with, no – *let's say that properly* – for covering this bill. Both Mary and I find ourselves in a whirlwind of emotion from the outpouring of support that comes to rescue Airedales in need from the wonderful people at ATRA. We are honored and glad to be a part of the ATRA family." *Paul and Mary Diggins*, Colorado Springs, CO

When one of our Board members saw the sad plight of Airedale Sally on the ARG (Airedale Rescue Group) website, ATRA sent them a donation to assist with Sally's medical expenses. I also held a conference call with the ARG Board and helped them with suggestions for fundraising. ATRA shared the names from our database of people in their states so they could recruit volunteers for their group. ATRA has also dedicated one of our sales items on "Annette's Airelooms" to ARG to give them some on-going financial assistance. Lastly, ATRA is co-coordinating the states of Kentucky and Mississippi with ARG.

> "This is overwhelming. ATRA's donation for Sally is just incredible. Your help will mean so much to this sweet girl and to Barbara and Scott, who have given so much of their time, money and most importantly, their hearts to their rescues. Thank you. It is an honor to be associated with such caring folks." *Jackie Cash*, Memphis, TN

> "I am still getting chills thinking of your loving gift for Sally. All of us are stunned and thrilled at ATRA's generosity. How wonderful it is to receive this gift, and your offering without our asking makes it twice as special. Your generosity gives us so much more than money at a time like this – you give us hope, energy and camaraderie. It's so wonderful to know how much we can accomplish together." *Claire Payne*, Asheville, NC

Even though Airedale rescue has been going on in Virginia for many years, ATRA found out that ATRVA (Airedale Terrier Rescue of Virginia) was in its formative stages as an organization and in need of some help. With some coaching from National Rescue, ATRVA knew they needed to open a checking account and start to pay rescue bills through this account. However, they never seemed to have enough extra money to get it started. ATRA gave them a donation to open their account. We have also dedicated one of our sales items on "Annette's Airelooms" to ATRVA to give them some on-going assistance until they can get on their feet.

> "ATRVA really appreciates your offer to help with a donation to our rescue fund. We have had so many dogs come through in 2004 that fundraising, newsletters, etc. have been put on the back burner."
> *Elizabeth Berry*, Midlothain, VA

This past summer, AireCanada had a big boy (118 pounds), Duke, who needed to be transported via the airlines and go through behavioral training and get medical help with a volunteer in Ontario. ATRA saw their fundraising efforts on the internet and gave them a donation to help out.

> "Today I took Duke to see my homeopathic vet to get all of his thyroid issues addressed. His thyroid levels were extremely low and I did not feel the dosage my country vet recommended were sufficient enough as I was still seeing some behavioral issues that indicated his thyroid levels were not right. With thanks to all the money raised for Duke, I was able to take him to see my homeopathic vet. Upon doing a thorough consult, my homeopath said "Stephanie, if you had not helped this dog, he would be dead by now." It appears that Duke has a heart murmur, poor circulation and a very fatty liver due to the years of living with his hypo thyroid condition. His heart would have given out on him if he had not lost the weight, started the proper diet and started his thyroid meds. Thanks to all of you, we have saved this dog. Duke is a MacNeill until at least March. The best part of all of this is that even though he has not yet found his forever home, Duke has helped find forever homes for four other Airedales. I have been getting a minimum of two inquires about Duke a day and so far no one has been appropriate for Duke, but they have applied for other Airedales. So while patiently biding his time as a foster, he has become a recruiter for forever homes for Airedale Rescue. Thank you everyone for saving this boy. He is so deserving."
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> *Stephanie MacNeill*, Vars, Ontario

ATRA was alerted to the plight of an Airedale brought in to NTAR (North Texas Airedale Rescue) about a month ago. Angel had severe mange and other medical issues and had to stay at the vet's office for 3 to 4 weeks to begin her road to recovery. NTAR was looking for items to put up on E-bay to help raise the needed money for Angel's treatment and boarding. ATRA not only send them some nice items, but we gave them a donation as well.

> "Please thank everyone at ATRA for the donation and the beautiful items we received today to sell on E-bay. Angel is doing better every day. We are hoping to get her out of the vet's office soon so she can continue to build up her immune system and be spayed in a few weeks. She was wagging her tail and smiling at me when I saw her, something she didn't do for the first week. She was such a sad girl. Her Airedale energy is coming out as she gets better. Thanks again for all that ATRA has done for us." *Marilyn Doubt*, Highland Village, TX

In the course of a conversation with a fellow rescuer in Florida, ATRA found out about a very sick Airedale, Katy. It is unknown today as to what specifically happened to Katy, but as a result of her illness, she lost the use of her rear legs. She is alive and well, though, and ATRA gave the Sunshine Airedalers of Florida a donation to help with her care.

> "Katy is doing great! I am so glad we were able to save her. Just having her here with dog friends, people food to beg, sunshine on her back, security and love and stuff to be interested in… makes me so happy for her – and happy for me because I get all the smiles!" *Evie Fieseler*, Melrose, FL

I attended the National Rescue meeting at Montgomery this fall. One of the goals that National Rescue has set for themselves in 2005 is to invite interested parties in rescue groups throughout the country to join in on a conference call dedicated to a particular topic – such as fundraising. ATRA has a conference calling plan that we use for our Board meetings and we offered this to National Rescue to hold one or two conference calls to see how this idea would work.

As you can see, 2004 has been a year of many steps forward for ATRA. We expect no less for 2005. We hope we can count on your continued support in the coming year as ATRA prepares to help a record number of homeless Airedales and continues to be a leader in Airedale rescue.

Sincerely,

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