



July, 2023

To everyone who knew us at Dog Mountain Rescue and who knew my mother, Ann Koch:

Dear friends. That's what you all are. Dear friends. Any person who puts the needs of a dog above her- or himself was a friend to my mother and thus a friend to me.

This week Dog Mountain Rescue officially closed. Thanks to the assistance of so many of you, we managed to adopt or transfer out every single one of my mom's dogs. Six weeks ago, our kennels were bursting with thirty-eight. Saving so many dogs couldn't have been possible without the help of a huge network of people, so I'm going to start with some shout-outs:

Mars at Special Needs Dobermans.
Christy at Desert Harbor Doberman Rescue.
Melani at The Doberman Rescue Pack.
Sheila Segurson at Maddie's Fund.
Susan at Doberman Pinscher SOS.
Ardis at Dobies & Little Paws Rescue.
Plus numerous private adopters and Humane Societies.

Without the above-mentioned people, saving these dogs simply would not have been possible.

I was raised with Dobermans. When I was born, my family had two pedigreed Dobies named Battle and Star. They were my older siblings and protected me, as dogs will, from the evil mailman, the evil garden hose, the evil vacuum, and lots of other evil things. I remember all the dogs that shared their lives with my family as I grew. Battle, Star, Sophie, Rusty, Emily, Rudy, and many others. My mother's passion for dogs in general and Dobies specifically was present my entire life, but it wasn't until her golden years that she really discovered how much she could help them.

Attached below is a pic of my mom trying to rein in two dogs and one wild three-year-old.



I suspect my mom had dallied with the idea of opening a rescue for a long time. But it wasn't until the early 2000s that she really got serious about it. Every wounded or lost animal led her to the next and the next and the next. You all know how it goes.

No one gets into the rescue business to make money, but my mom seemed to adopt that tenet more eagerly than most: Without even waiting on her articles of incorporation, she spent vast sums of her own money on vet bills, on kennels and crates and food and bowls and blankets and so on. Just as when someone who becomes a parent can no longer watch shows that put child characters in danger, so my mom could no longer learn about animals in danger without pausing to help. And even as far as she stretched her wallet, her heart stretched farther. She regaled me with stories of dogs saved from other states and from lives of torment, pain, or neglect. She saw something in the proverbial underdog, and I suspect it's because she felt like one, herself.

And while my mother was never overly demonstrative with her affection, she felt very deeply. Every time she lost a dog, she would send me moving odes extolling the beauty of the Rainbow Bridge.

(For those of you not aware, the idea of the Rainbow Bridge that has been used in rescue circles for so many years comes from a young Scottish artist named Edna Clyne-Rekhy who at nineteen years old wrote the original lines after the passing of her own dog. You can read about her [here](#):

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/rainbow-bridge-poem-pet-death-mourning-origin-revealed>)

The reason I'm writing all of this is to say thank you on behalf of my mother to anyone and everyone who may have known or interacted with her, but also to anyone who has ever known or loved a dog. Those of you who knew her personally probably saw a stubborn, fierce woman with a fire in her belly. But what I know of her is that she was kind. Kind to animals, kind to people, kind to the world. It's from her that I developed a desire not only to be a good person, but to do good to those around me.

When my wife and I brought my mother's belongings home from the hospital, a handful of doggy treats spilled out of her coat pocket. That's the truest sign of whom she was—always prepared to meet and to help doggies. The last picture I got to show her was of our rescue Dobie, Luna, sunning herself upside down on a cot in the back yard. I've attached it here.



And thus I sign off this letter, in gratitude on behalf of my mother and on behalf of every dog you've loved. Though a rescue may be closing, I'm confident that you will all keep the dogs, and by extension my mother, in your hearts. And we will all meet again one day at the Rainbow Bridge.



-Greg Koch, Ann's son

Dog Mountain Rescue

