

The Story of Sophie

In April 2012, Peter [redacted] and Kingsley [redacted] lost their beloved Old English Sheepdog, Jenni. Peter remembers, “Jenni was 11 ½ years old, and doing well. All of a sudden, she was diagnosed with stomach cancer and was gone within seven days. The house was so empty without her, and as time passed, we began to think about finding a new companion to brighten our home. While we were traveling in Germany in the fall, we saw this sweet, smaller dog, with an adorable shaggy face and floppy ears, and asked the owners a couple of times what type of dog it was; we weren’t quite sure if it was the accent or the breed name, but after speaking to them, we still weren’t sure what type of dog it was. Over the Thanksgiving holiday, we were watching the National Dog Show and caught a glimpse of that same breed that we saw in Germany. Thank goodness for Tivo — we were able to rewind again and again to validate. Yes! It was a Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen! The rest of the holiday weekend, I began doing my research to learn more about the breed. I also contacted Kathy Zavodjancik, PBGV Rescue’s Northern California representative, to learn more about the opportunity to find a rescue. Over the month, we had a few phone calls, and she helped me better understand the uniqueness of the breed. She told us that if a PBGV came into rescue, we would be the first to know. Kathy also suggested that we join the PBGV-L email list to learn more about the breed.”

In January 2013, Sophie came into a San Jose, Calif., shelter at the St. Francis Animal Protection Society. The family that owned her had recently moved from Iowa to San Jose, and could not find housing that would allow them to keep her. The staff at the shelter recognized her as a PBGV and called Kathy Z. The shelter named her Scrappy. She was about 4 years old, and the thought was that she might have come from a puppy mill, judging from her anatomy. Kathy [redacted] went to make the ID and verify that the dog was a PBGV. The shelter spayed Sophie and treated her ear infection before turning her over to Cathy for fostering.

From Kathy Z.: “I had been working with Peter about another dog before Sophie became available. The first dog that was in a



shelter went to a rescue group before Cathy [redacted] could get there to make a positive ID. Then Sophie came into rescue. The shelter was willing to work with us until Cathy could get there to make a positive ID. Peter saw a picture of Sophie and knew he wanted her.”

Peter continues: “About a week later, Cathy delivered our new girl to us. She was small, 22 pounds,



super sweet, kind of shy, all cleaned up and brushed out, and very attached to Cathy. Within a day, she wormed herself into our hearts. We renamed her Sophie, in honor of Duchess Sophie Charlotte in Bavaria because of our discovery of the breed while we were traveling in Germany."

"Sophie is so sweet and always so happy. She exhibits all the behaviors we had read about: zooming up and down the stairs, howling out of joy, chasing birds and squirrels, intensely loyal to us, and, of course, keeping her nose to ground or up in the air seeking out her next treat or trouble! She has adapted very well to city life, enjoying daily walks, seeking out new discoveries each time, and making all the neighbors smile. She is up to 24 ½ pounds now. Her only behavior that is a bit of a concern is that she sometimes displays aggressive behavior to other dogs when on leash. Once off leash, she is fine. We continue to work with her on that!"

"We are so grateful to the work and dedication of the Region 6 PBGV rescue organization. They made our dreams come true of helping us find such a sweet, happy companion."

Thanks so much to Peter and Kathy Zavodjancik for their contributions to Sophie's story. ■

You Can Help. To make a difference in a PBGV's life, visit the PBGVCA's rescue page: www.pbgv.org/BreedInfo/rescue/shtml and consider making a donation to the rescue effort. No amount is too small, and every donation is appreciated.

We need rescue stories!

If you've added a PBGV to your family through Rescue, please consider telling us your story. You can send text and pictures to Joan Mann at JMann17307@aol.com or jmannsox@gmail.com

