

A weary traveler nursed a soda and visited with flight attendant Suzie. The May 10th Saturday evening American flight to Dallas was not full. The man's University of Michigan EMBA binder lay unopened on the seat next to him. His June/July article, "Should you buy a used equity recommended by these guys?" incomplete on his laptop. Had it only been a week since he left four wagging-tailed dogs behind for this business trip?



Spirit Princess Belle

The puppy, born on November 17, 1991, came for Christmas to a man who named him Max. Max loved the man and the man loved Max. They built a house on Willow Wood Lane and dubbed it the "House of Max"... A puppy was born on May 25, 1993. She was named Belle and lived in Highland Park. Her life was very happy ... In 1999, the man married, and Max was now boss to a lovely lady named Kaye ... In July 2001, the man was in a parking lot late at night. A dog had been found in the road. He was horribly injured. The man took the dog to the emergency clinic. At 2:30 a.m., the man called Kaye. "We have a new senior golden named Nick."

The "to be completed" article was an essay on the latest round of hyperbole from Bernanke, Paulson and Cox. The traveler would share his thoughts that this was another head fake. Bad financial times were not over yet. He would opine that the latest equity market rally would fail and new lows were coming. Nick lived for 105 days. The man and Kaye were very sad. Max was also sad but seemed to say, "you can do more." Max knew a spot was open on Willow Wood Lane.

Suzie spoke to the traveler. She was thinking about getting a dog for her family. Did he know about rescue? Was an adult dog OK?

The man and Kaye learned about organizations called "breed rescues," local grass roots organizations that take in unwanted and mistreated pure bred dogs. The one in Dallas for goldens, goldenretrievers.org. The dogs are kept at foster homes and matched to people for forever homes ... In December 2001, Belle's family decided she no longer fit their life style and abandoned the eight-and-a-half-year-old to rescue. Shortly after, a spot was filled on Willow Wood Lane ... In 2004, a young one named Buddy was sent to the rescue, but the foster homes were full ... A spot was added at Willow Wood Lane ... In the spring of 2005, Max went to the Rainbow Bridge. In September, Max watched Hurricane Katrina and picked a Naw'lins girl, Kajun, to fill his spot at the House of Max ... In 2006, another foster home shortage. Room was made and Conner had a forever home.

The first rescue, Belle, had a fabulous time! She worked with the man right from under his desk. She treated all guests as best friends. As the years went on, Belle had some serious illnesses. But with the best of care and a special friend Shari, she thrived ... Kaye taught her a game called "Boo," and she also retrieved plastic fish from the pool ... Her best day every year was May 25th, when she had a liver cake and dog guests. This year would be the best party yet!

Was it just yesterday that the call came? Belle had been a little ill, but nothing compared to the past. She stayed overnight, but surely Dr. Ellis would declare her OK. After all, her birthday was coming and Dr. Ellis said she had more lives than a cat ... The traveler was quietly weeping. There would be three wagging tails and a new Spirit Princess named Belle waiting in Dallas. Somewhere in the universe, Max, Nick and Belle, were busy. There were many needing forever homes ... and a spot was open on Willow Wood Lane.

Belle's enduring thanks to all who loved and cared for her. If you are in need of a loving friend to provide day care for your pet, please consider Shari Sisto at crittercareco@aol.com, 214.912.2870. For medical care, check out the wonderful professionals at Preston Park Animal Hospital, vcaprestonpark.com or call 972.985.0081 ... Go online and find a breed rescue or go to your local animal shelter. If you need help, just find this one email: jane@kelcap.com.