

Foreword

BY TAMIRA CI THAYNE, DDB FOUNDER AND CEO



“**T**his is all your fault, Tami,” accused Pennsylvania area rep Kathy Slagle. “If it weren’t for you, I’d still be getting my nails done and making sure I had the right shoes to go with my outfit.”

“Well, it’s not like I’m having any fun either,” I retorted.

We both snickered, but it dawned on me that she was being serious. She was kinda’ pissed.

Then it dawned on me that I was kinda’ pissed too! Who’s braniac idea was this anyway, birthing an organization that’s taken over my being, my home, my every waking moment?

Kathy continued to lament, “I used to have time for relaxing, drinks with my friends, movies, dinner. Now it seems when I *do* get out, it’s stolen time and I have to rush home to care for my dogs and foster dogs. And just so’s you know, I blame you and this damn organization I dug up on the internet.”

I suspect Kathy’s not the only one—that most of our area reps have at one time or another stepped back and looked around bewilderedly, “Holy crap, where am I? What happened to my sanity, my ordinary life?”

I certainly have. But I know I wouldn’t change it for all the manna in heaven. I suspect none of us has ever been as personally fulfilled as we are at the moment we see the light come back into a foster dog’s eyes.

Yes, that moment.

Words do not exist that adequately describe how it feels to release a dog from its bondage into freedom, joy, and love.

I first see this dog with nothing, literally nothing but the dirt beneath his feet, trapped within a 20-foot radius, love to give but none to receive, and then one week later I watch the exact same dog crawl nonchalantly up onto the overstuffed chair after a long walk in the woods and fall asleep like he's been doing it his whole life.

But *I know he hasn't.*

It's that moment.

I love our Area Rep Program, and I adore our area reps. These women and men pour their hearts and souls into their rescue work. They educate, fundraise, build fences, and save dogs.

What you'll find in this book is but a tiny fraction of the stories we could tell; a tiny fraction of the joy, a tiny fraction of the heartbreak. I hope you'll appreciate reading them as much as we delight in bringing them to you.

As for Kathy, she was finally off to Italy the next week for much-needed couple time with her partner. I told her "Have a blast, and try to forgive me while you're over there."

She humphed. "Forget that, there's no way I'm forgiving you."

Wow, she was kinda' pissed. Maybe the Italian wine will help.