

FAIRFIELD COUNTY CARES HELPS THERAPY DOG STUCK IN DRAINPIPE

November 28, 2008



When the call came in for us to help save a dog that had been trapped for five days in an old drainage tile in St. Paris, Ohio, we got busy. As part of Fairfield County CARES efforts to assist animals, we began asking what we could do to help. Networking with a few others around Ohio and Indiana, we set up a plan. Time was running out for this dog and we knew it.

We made phone calls, sent emails and recruited others to take action to save Zeke, a rescued German Shorthair Pointer mix, also a trained therapy dog and beloved pet. Sarah Story adopted Zeke and trained him through a group called Canine Companions in Indiana.

While visiting her family for Thanksgiving, Zeke went into an open 12" drain pipe Friday, November 28, most likely chasing an animal. At about 60 pounds, Zeke is a good size dog and couldn't maneuver in the pipe. Sarah and her family spent their Thanksgiving holiday weekend trying to rescue the dog. Neighbors came in with backhoes and shovels, dug several holes and cut many sections of the drain pipe to find Zeke without success. After four long days and nights, they called off the search Monday night, December 1.

Sarah's father, Rick Story, admits he had given up on Zeke and feared he was dead. It wasn't until he got word from Steve Maller, a Reynoldsburg business owner, offering to come to help that renewed hope surfaced for Zeke. Maller said he had a camera that could go 1300 feet into the pipe. It was literally a last ditch effort and the Story family welcomed the opportunity to make one more try to save him. On Wednesday afternoon, Maller arrived with a crew of two men and a robotic camera. Dreier and Maller, Inc. contracts with cities in Ohio to do sewer line inspections.

After four hours, at about four-hundred-fifty feet deep inside the pipe, Maller's workers spotted a set of blinking eyes. With his lead still on, Zeke appeared calm. When Zeke finally backed out of his enclosure

into the arms of Rick Pizzurro, family members, neighbors, and work crews broke into applause and cheers. After some tender loving care, Zeke has regained the weight and seems to enjoy all the added attention he is now receiving.

Fairfield County CARES, along with some other rescue groups in Columbus, brought folks involved in Zeke's rescue together Saturday, December 20, to celebrate Zeke's rescue. The story has captured not only the attention of Ohioans but folks across the country. During the holiday season, Zeke's story of hope and survival has touched the nation. News stations report that Zeke's story was the most viewed in the last few weeks.

People care about animals. We CARE as well.

We hope our efforts will help more animals and move our community to be more compassionate to both human and animals alike. Do you CARE about the animals? Volunteer today.