



Good Sam Club
The World's Largest RV Owners Community

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RV Pet Forum Inspires Good Sam Members

The [Good Sam Club's Online Forum](#) has become a popular gathering place for members to get help for RV-related questions and meet others who share the same interests.

The Forum is also home to a long-running thread that has inspired Good Sam Club members to support the cause of homeless canines. The popular "Old Fella" thread is close to reaching 12,000 posts and has touched the hearts of members across North America.



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It all began a little over three years ago (Sept. 5, 2005 to be exact). Good Sam member Richard Daniels started a thread in the RV Pet Stop forum titled "Very Old Stray (the Old Fella Story)." The longtime RVer recounted the story of a camping trip the previous weekend where he came across a scruffy, old, homeless black dog hobbling around the campground. The dog would not let Daniels touch him but would eat from his hand. Daniels learned that the dog had lived at the campground for four to five years, relying on the kindness of RVers for survival.

Daniels, who posts as Dixie Flyer on the Forum, asked his fellow RV Pet Stop posters for advice. He couldn't stop thinking about the homeless dog with the sad eyes, and was considering bringing him to live at his home 60 miles away in Waynesboro, Georgia. After getting encouragement from forum members, Daniels returned to the campground the following day to look for the dog. The skinny, black pooch was nowhere to be found.

The next day he returned again and his perseverance was rewarded. But the dog put up a struggle and wouldn't get into Daniels' truck. So Daniels again drove home without the dog he had started to refer to as "Old Fellow." Daniels visited the campground several more times before capturing the dog and taking him to the vet.

As Daniels remembers it, the stray dog was not in the best of shape. Part of his back paw was missing and his front teeth were severely damaged. The dog smelled "to high heaven," was covered in fleas and might be suffering from mange. The vet went to work on the rescue dog, giving him heartworm treatments and performing surgery to repair the paw that had apparently been caught in a steel trap. The vet estimated

that Old Fella was about 10 or 11 years old.

As the vet bills mounted, Daniels was overwhelmed by the generosity of Good Sam members from all over North America, who donated funds to help cover Old Fella's medical expenses.

Daniels, his wife Sue and Old Fella soon became inseparable. Within weeks of the rescue, Old Fella was a changed dog, healed inside and out. To honor the skinny dog, Daniels and a group of animal lovers formed Old Fella Burke County Animal Rescue in late 2006.

Old Fella's legacy as an icon of rescued, old stray dogs, lives on in the thread that bares his name. The thread has brought together animal lovers across North America who have also rescued stray animals. Last year, some posters at the thread helped transport Ana – a dog that lost a leg in a roadside accident - from Georgia to her new home in Washington, by passing the pooch from RV to RV in a cross-country journey.

This past July, citizens of Burke County, Georgia (Daniels' home county), voted overwhelmingly in favor of a nonbinding referendum in support of a county animal control shelter. This referendum could help pave the way for the measure to be placed on the ballot in November 2008. As Daniels says, "Old Fella is still making an impact on this community."

Sadly, on June 28, 2008, Old Fella passed away due to complications caused by bone cancer. Old Fella lived with the Daniels family for three years and his incredible journey has inspired many to participate in the rescue movement.

Shortly after Old Fella's passing, Daniels and his wife adopted another "very old stray" who reminds them a lot of Old Fella. Daniels found Charlie, a golden lab (also about 10 or 11 years old), at a local shelter. It was an instant attraction between dog and man.

"I went back to the shelter, and while I was talking with some of the guys, Charlie had been let out of his pen," recalls Daniels. "So he walked over and climbed into the open door of my truck and said, 'take me home'. The rest is history."

To read more about the story of Old Fella or participate in the RV Pet Stop forum, visit www.goodsamclub.com/forums.