



Jackie Meyers with Rosie (left) and Thelma

PEACEFUL PASSINGS

BREMO BLUFF, VIRGINIA

Grow Old Along With Me

Jackie Meyers founded Peaceful Passings in 2002 to save senior animals with nowhere else to go. She believes that no pet should be euthanized because of age or medical condition, as long as he still has a good quality of life.

Meyers started with about eight dogs, paying for their care out-of-pocket until the sanctuary became an official nonprofit in 2010. By carefully limiting intake, Peaceful Passings is able to provide its animals with top-notch care.

By the Numbers

Peaceful Passings operates on a \$30,000 annual budget with a crew of 15 dedicated volunteers and an evolving number of at-risk kids Meyers meets through her work with the county. The rescue organization has helped more than 300 senior animals to date.

Support Services

With a master's degree in counseling, Meyers often gives free support to grieving owners. She receives up to 75 emails a day, and her website contains a wealth of information on pet aging, illnesses and hospice care, and advice for coping with a pet's death.

+ LEARN MORE at peacefulpassings.org.

SENIOR MOMENTS

A SMALL SANCTUARY IN VIRGINIA MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE FOR ELDERLY ANIMALS // BY EMILY SMITH

ROSIE AND THELMA deserve a quiet retirement. Now 11 and 13 years old, respectively, the mini poodles were in rough shape when The HSUS removed them from a North Carolina puppy mill last year.

But after receiving long-needed medical care—veterinarians removed both of Rosie's eyes and one of Thelma's because of infections—the dogs traveled to Peaceful Passings, an HSUS Emergency Placement Partner, in rural Virginia.

The rescue organization—started by Jackie Meyers in 2002—offers care to senior, hospice and special needs animals in a home setting, Meyers' home, to be precise. Thirteen dogs, one cat and two birds fill the rooms in the modest farmhouse Meyers shares with her husband, while eight large dogs reside out back in well-appointed outdoor shelters.

Peaceful Passings is very warm and welcoming, says Tia Pope, HSUS manager of puppy mill rescues. "It feels like you're visiting someone's grandma's house."

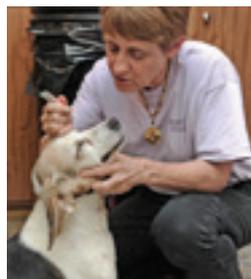
Meyers' day starts at 3:30 a.m., when she lets everybody outside.

Then it's time to make breakfast, dole out medications, wash bowls, scoop poop, clip nails, clean ears, brush fur, do laundry and then get ready for her day job, working for the county to help connect at-risk youth with tutoring, mentoring and other services. She comes home for lunch so the animals never go more than five hours without a break.

All this doesn't leave Meyers much time for going out to dinner, watching movies or hanging out with friends. Instead, she talks to other rescuers and takes pride in providing comfort to animals such as Thelma and Rosie.

More than a year after arriving at Peaceful Passings, the pair is thriving—maneuvering around Meyers' home as well as the fully sighted dogs. They may live out their golden years at the sanctuary, or they may catch the eye of someone interested in an older companion.

After all, as Meyers tells potential adopters, even if an animal isn't expected to live many more years, "you have the opportunity of making [them] the best years of that animal's life."



Meyers administers eye drops to 8-year-old Winnie.