

Making a Difference—One Animal at a Time

Many retirees elect to relax and take it easy. Not so for Doug Rodrigues who uses his time and love of animals to make a difference in the lives of homeless pets.

Doug retired from Intel in 1996 after 18 years. He was initially an Industrial Engineer supporting the Test/Assembly area. He moved into Automation in 1984 and when that position moved to Phoenix, he transferred to Facilities where he ultimately became the Facilities Manager for Santa Clara. Doug says that his position was nicknamed the “headache manager” job! Finally he moved into Quality and Reliability before retiring at the “ripe old age of 51”!



*Doug Rodrigues, Intel's
“Headache Manager”*



*Doug in front of the High Sierra
Animal Rescue facilities.*

Since leaving Intel, Doug and his wife Betty started High Sierra Animal Rescue – founded in May of 1999 as a 501 (c)3 non-profit in Portola, CA. The non-profit status means that Intel retirees with a passion for animals can volunteer and, once requirements are met, Intel will donate \$10 per hour to High Sierra as outlined in the [Intel Involved Matching Grant](#) program. Doug is in particular need of help with marketing and the social networking aspect of the business. Telecommuting is welcome, and a VIP tour of the organization could be arranged!

High Sierra’s basic charter is to rescue homeless dogs and cats in Plumas County, California. They are a no-kill option for all adoptable animals, boasting a fully staffed 6,800 square foot state-of-the-art shelter. They place an average of 225 dogs and 40 cats a year, totaling over 2,800 otherwise homeless animals since High Sierra was founded! When space allows, they help rescue animals in Lassen County to the north and in the Reno, NV area. An important part of their mission is to provide an aggressive spay/neuter program. For those in the area, High Sierra shows animals at the Petco store in Reno almost every Saturday, and has an extensive website connected to Petfinder that gives them a broad range of potential adopters (customers).

High Sierra’s approach is a very active one. Last year, Doug outlined and implemented a one-year training program at the shelter with a professional trainer from Reno. The trainer focuses on improving the adoptability and mental welfare of the dogs at the shelter.



*Pearl wearing her National Disaster
Search Dog Foundation scarf.*

Animals from High Sierra have gone on to interesting and rewarding lives. While most become family pets, some dogs have performed at Circus Circus Hotel and Casino in Reno and even on America’s Got Talent, while others have transitioned to Search and Rescue. One dog, Pearl, was deployed to Haiti in July of 2010 and was named the ASPCA Dog of the Year for 2010 for demonstrating extraordinary efforts in humanitarian endeavors.



*Conditioning training with Kennel Tech, Debra, and
PJ Wangsness, the trainer from Reno.*



Volunteers help to make "Bow Wow at the Barn" a magical annual fundraiser.

The organization is sustained through fundraisers and volunteers. Doug was emphatic that their mission could not be accomplished without dedicated volunteers! As far as fundraisers, Doug puts the "fun" in fundraiser. There is Bow Wow-at-the-Barn (silent auction, dinner and music) the Saturday following the 4th of July, and for those more sports minded, there is a golf tournament called Duffers for the Dogs that is run every year on Columbus Day.

As you can see, Doug is using his Intel skills in an entirely new way to benefit otherwise homeless animals!

Doug's advice for new retirees is "Don't retire! At the very least, just semi-retire... Keep busy and do something for your local community. Complement that with doing things you and the family really enjoy. You can't go wrong with that combination! Keep your body and mind active!" Good advice Doug!

For those who have questions or would like to discuss volunteering opportunities with Doug, he can be reached at diverdug@psln.com.