



October 10, 2010

## Donors helping to send local puppy to the 'Puppy



Julie Kroon is shown here with Sophie, the Shih tzu-Bischon mix puppy she picked up that the Riverside Regional Pet Shelter. Look for Sophie on Animal Planet's "Puppy Bowl" come January. Robb Murray

## Bowl' (<http://mankatofreepress.com/local/x1644187919/Donors-helping-to-send-local-puppy-to-the-Puppy-Bowl>)

**Sophie to be featured on Animal Planet show**

**By Robb Murray**  
**Free Press Staff Writer (<http://mankatofreepress.com>)**

NORTH MANKATO — C'mon. Admit it. When the big game comes on in February — the .... big ... game — don't you slyly grab the remote and flip over to Animal Planet at half-time, just for a second, just the check the progress of the "Puppy Bowl"?

Of course you do. We all do. But this year, when you check to see if the beagle will repeat as "Puppy Bowl" champ or go down in defeat to the corgi, keep your eye out for a dark horse in the running, one with local ties.

Sophie is a Shih tzu-Bischon mix puppy from North Mankato that, a few weeks ago, got called up to the big show. Yep. Sophie's going to be in the "Puppy Bowl."

Julie Kroon, a staff member at KTOE radio who also volunteers regularly at the Riverside Regional Pet Shelter, is her owner. Kroon says she's trying to raise roughly \$1,000 for the flight, hotel and puppy transport costs to get Sophie to New York for the Friday filming.

Animal Planet does the "Puppy Bowl," and while they're very good at filming cute baby animals, they're not very good at covering costs for the puppies' owners.

So Kroon has been doing a little fundraising.

She started with Pub 500, which agreed made a contribution to the fund and will help Kroon host a "Puppy Bowl" party. Pet Expo helped her out. Soon she was up to \$600 and her goal of hitting \$1,000 was looking a little more attainable.

She's still hoping to raise more, but she's confident now she'll be making the trip to New York this week.

Her goal, she says, is to get the name of the pet shelter out there again in hopes that people come in to adopt dogs and cats. That is, after all, the ultimate goal of the "Puppy Bowl."

Other than being a great marketing tool, the event raises money for, and gets out the word about, organizations such as humane societies and animal rescue centers.

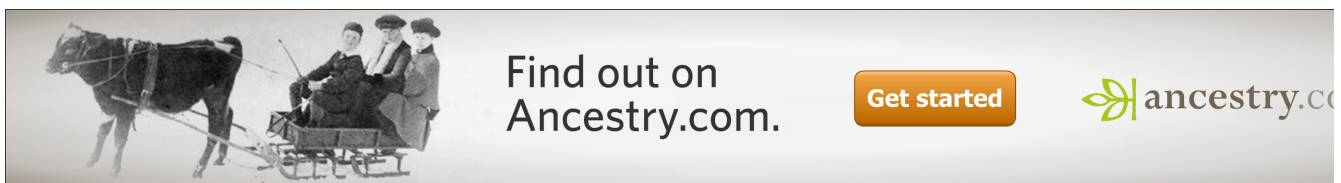
"The common perception is that, if you want a desirable breed like a Shih tzu, you can't get that from a shelter," Kroon says. "Sophie was a shelter dog."

At first, Kroon's relationship with Sophie was merely as a foster home. It didn't take long for Sophie to become a permanent member of Kroon's family.

She first learned Animal Planet was looking for "Puppy Bowl" contestants when Animal Planet sent out an e-mail to shelters on the petfinder.com network. They submitted applications for several puppies, and Sophie was selected. She'll be the only Minnesota participant.

Sophie was surrendered by a family that had her for three weeks before deciding having a dog wasn't a good fit for them. Now she's three months, and heading to New York for her television debut.

"Puppy Bowl" airs Feb. 6 during the Superbowl.



Find out on  
Ancestry.com.

Get started

ancestry.com

---

The Free Press, Mankato, MN 418 South Second Street Mankato, MN 56001