



Activity Idea: This activity can be used to teach teens about heroic dogs that save human lives. You can use the attached file, or search the web for other examples of heroic dogs.

- 1) Print document or website listing hero dog stories
- 2) Cut the paper so that each story is on a separate piece of paper
- 3) Fold the papers and place them in a bowl
- 4) Ask each teen to select 5 pieces of paper from the bowl
- 5) Allow the teens a few minutes to read the stories on the papers they selected
- 6) Ask each teen to share with the group which hero dog they find the most fascinating

25 Heroic Dogs and How They Saved People

People have always seemed to have a soft spot for heroic dogs. Whether it's TV classics like Lassie or heart-warming family films like Homeward Bound, the idea of dogs rescuing their human masters (or even complete strangers) captures our love and affection as few other things do. So it's only natural to love hearing about dogs who save people in real life! Here are 25 true accounts of dogs who saved people from perilous circumstances.

1) Brutis

Brutis was a 7 year old **golden retriever** when he became a hero in 2004. That's when the loveable pooch snatched up a coral snake as it was slithering dangerously close to a young child, suffering a near-deadly bite from the snake in the process. His heroics did not go unnoticed however, as Brutis was promptly flown to Los Angeles to receive the National Hero Dog award.

Said the committee who awarded the medal, "when we give an award like this, we're looking for something extra, something that would make people wonder why a dog would do what he did."



2) Zoey



Everyone knows that smaller dogs have to display in attitude what they lack in size, and Zoey is living proof. A five pound **chihuahua** from Colorado, Zoey made headlines in 2007 for rescuing a one year old child from an approaching three foot rattlesnake when the snake got too close for comfort. While Zoey sustained a small wound from a snakebite above her eye, she eventually recovered and the snake was killed by the dog's owner.

3) Katrina



Hurricane Katrina was a miserable occurrence for everyone down south, but inspiring stories of heroism have helped give victims something to smile about. That's certainly the case with Katrina, the ironically named **black labrador** who **saved a drowning man** before rising flood waters claimed his life. The dog, who was later rescued herself by rescue teams, was honored at that year's Genesis Awards with a standing ovation.

4) Shana



In a Fox News story titled "Half-Breed Wolf Dog Hero Rescues Elderly Owners From Snowstorm", **readers learn the heroic tale of Shana**, a half wolf dog/half German shepherd who saved an elderly couple from a treacherous snow storm. When Shana found Norman and Eve trapped by snow, she went to work, diligently digging out a tunnel through which she would pull the couple back to the safety of their home.

5) Maya



You don't get to be the 2008 Dog of the Year for nothing, and this pooch is no exception. Maya took home this year's honors for **courageously saving Angela Marcelino, her owner, from a vicious male attacker**. The pitbull's act of bravery earned some high praise from the Animal Miracle foundation, who was happy to report that "the pitbull breed can be hero dogs just like any other breed."

6) Moti



2007's Dog of the Year winner was Moti, the five year old **German Shepherd who literally took a bullet** for his human family. When a masked intruder made his way into the Patel household, Moti wasted little time, leaping to his feet and barking to draw the gunman's attention. Faced with the angry pooch, the gunman shot him and ran off without harming any of the Patels. Luckily, this furry hero is making a full recovery!

7) Honey



Honey was the 2006 Dog of the Year, an award she earned by saving her owner from a violent car accident. When she and Michael Bosch found their SUV rolled over and stuck upside down in a deep ravine, Bosch was trapped and knew that Honey was his only hope. With all his strength, he managed to release the dog and hope that she would somehow find help. Sure enough, the then 5 month old **English Cocker Spaniel** got the attention of a man about a half-mile away and brought him to the scene of the accident. Rescuers concluded that had it not been for this, Bosch would have died.

8) Napoleon



Cats and dogs are always made out to be enemies, but this not always so! Enter Napoleon, the **English Bulldog who defied the poor swimming skills of his breed** to swim deep out into a lake and rescue a burlap sack containing 6 abandoned kittens! While two of the kittens didn't make it, the other four were nursed back to health, leading to a hero's welcome for Napoleon back at the local adoption center.

9) Hero

In a truly heartwarming story, a four year old Golden Retriever was credited with **saving a paralyzed man who got his wheelchair stuck** in the middle of a muddy field. When Gareth Jones found himself unable to move, the former soldier's service dog was ready to answer the call, dutifully pulling the rope Jones threw to him until the wheelchair was pulled free.

Said Jones, "He didn't let go until I was clear. He knew exactly what he was doing."



10) Eve



Everyone loves those heart-pounding movie scenes where the hero escapes a burning pit seconds before it explodes, but it's not so fun in real life. That's what Kathie, a paralyzed paraplegic, learned when her **Rotweiler** (Eve) **pulled her by the ankles from her burning, smoldering truck**. Upon pulling Kathie out, Eve proceeded to drag her to a nearby ditch, just far enough away to avoid the explosion of her vehicle.

After firemen cleared the scene, Eve was awarded the Stillman Award for her bravery.

11) Ginny



Is Ginny a traitor to canine's everywhere, or an undisputed hero? The 300 cats who attended her memorial service would probably say the latter, paying homage to a dog who endangered herself on multiple occasions to save dying or stranded cats from peril. On one particularly remarkable occasion, Ginny threw herself against a vertical pipe at a construction site so that it would topple and the stranded cats inside could escape. Another time, Ginny suffered severe cuts on her paws to find an injured cat inside a box of broken glass.

12) Trakr

Trakr owns arguably the most prestigious rescue on our list. Together with police officer James Symington, Trakr helped dig through some 30 feet of unstable debris at the World Trade Center "ground zero" site and **locate the last human survivor of the attack**. The dog's bravery was so celebrated that he is going to be cloned for use in other police rescue forces!



13) Shelby



Shelby became the 45th Skippy Dog Hero of the Year for **saving two adults and two children from carbon monoxide poisoning**. The dog (with her keen sense of smell) was the first to detect the rising CO levels while the rest of the family was asleep, nudging each of them out of their sleep and refused to stop barking, scratching, and whining until the family was safely outside. Luckily, each family member was treated at a nearby hospital and made a full recovery.

"In my eyes, and in the eyes of my family, Shelby is more than a hero; she is a lifesaver, a guardian angel," said Joleen Walderbach.

14) Rocky



A Lakewood, Colorado police dog, Rocky made headlines in 2002 for **chasing down a burglar, taking a bullet in the process** and ultimately helping to capture the 20 year old thug. According to Darren Mauer, the dog's officer/partner, the bullet to Rocky's paw never slowed him down. "He was the same dog after as he was before."

15) Blue



Most people wouldn't dare to go one-on-one with an alligator, but that's exactly that Blue did to take home 2001 "Dog Hero of the Year" honors. The Australian Blue Heeler **saved Ruth Gay, his 85 year old owner, from an alligator attack** behind her home. Reportedly, Ms. Gay had fallen while walking Blue. When a nearby gator lumbered over, threatening to attack, Blue charged into action and sparred with the gator long enough to scare it away. Both Gay and Blue made full recoveries, and blue was awarded with doggie treats, cash, and a specially engraved Dog Hero food bowl.

16) Patty



Blue's runner up to the 2001 award was Patty, a yellow lab retriever who saved her owner from drowning while on a winter duck hunting excursion. After Ray Fogg's boat capsized and dumped the two into frigid North Atlantic waters, Patty allowed him to grab hold of her tail while she vigorously doggy-paddled against the powerful current. They made it all the way to the nearest land, where they were rescued by game wardens later on that evening.

17) Neo



This 11 month old **Siberian husky** earned his hero stripes by getting human help for his imperiled owner, Marci Snead. When Snead (a diabetic with fibromyalgia and rheumatoid arthritis) went into hypoglycemic shock, Neo ran to the nearest building. There, he grabbed the attention of several people who followed Neo back to where Snead had fallen. Within moments, an ambulance was called and the woman carted off to a nearby hospital, where she recovered completely.

18) Kankuntu



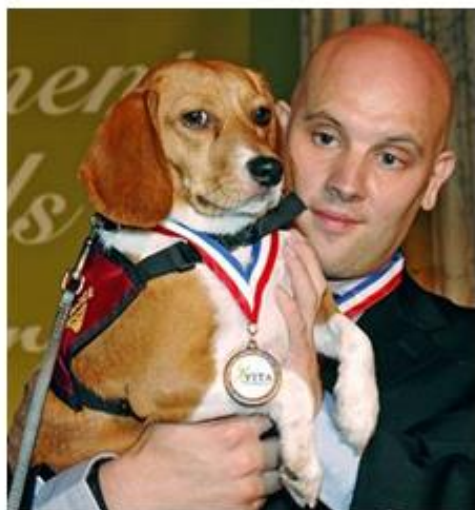
It's not every day that a dog saves its family from armed pirates at sea, but amazingly, that's exactly what Kankuntu did. When Peter Lee found himself about to be hijacked on his 41 foot yacht by armed pursuers, the dog (who "thinks he's a lion") leapt right into action, furiously attacking the gunmen until one of them shot and stabbed the pooch between his shoulder blades. Amazingly, the dog was nursed back to the health and the family continued with their voyage.

19) Junior



Don't let the name fool you; there was nothing "junior" or small about this dog's effort. As fire tore through the Davilmar household in the middle of the night, the 14 month old shihtzu mix **started barking and did not relent until everyone (including the family's half-dozen visiting relatives) was awake** and out of the house.

20) Belle



In a nearly unbelievably story titled "**Dog Makes Cell Phone Call to Save Owner's Life**", readers learn about Belle, a beagle who literally bit "911" into Kevin Weaver's cell phone after the diabetic man collapsed from a seizure. Said Weaver, "there's no doubt in my mind that I'd be dead if I didn't have Belle", who became the first canine to win VITA's Wireless Samaritan Award. Evidently, the pooch had been trained to bite down on the phone's keypad in the event of an emergency!

21) Toby



MSNBC tells the story of Toby, a golden retriever who heroically saved owner Debbie Parkhurst from choking to death on an apple in her Maryland home. When it became apparent that she was choking, the dog leapt hard onto her chest and forced the lodged morsel to come loose from her throat. For his efforts, Toby took home a share of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' "Dog of the Year" award in 2007.

22) Nyla



Nyla is another dog that risked her own life to **save her human owner from the threat of fire**. When Sheila found herself surrounded by smoke and flames, unable to see in front of her, Nyla courageously guided her toward a nearby door, barking whenever Sheila lost track of her. While her home and belongings were destroyed, Sheila was guided to safety, noting that "Nyla could have left anytime. Instead, she chose to stay and risk her own life and face death to save me."

23) Roselle



When Michael Hingson found himself on the 78th floor of the World Trade Center on September 11, it took some **unexpected heroics from his yellow labrador to save his life**. When the building started to sway and the air filled with choking smoke, Roselle lead Michael to safety, guiding him through the crumbling office toward a stairwell. It wasn't easy for Michael or Roselle, who was panting and extremely thirsty, but the two managed to reach safety just moments before Tower 1 collapsed.

24) Nellie



All dogs are known for their super-sharp hearing, but most of them don't win awards for it. But when Nellie, a 4 year old black lab, **used her high powered ears to detect an intruder** in time to save her severely deaf owner, it would've been a crime to give the Heroic Hearing Dog of the Year award to anyone else! The charity that trained Nellie couldn't have been more proud.

25) Kaze



Kaze earned top honors from the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department for saving the life of a woman in her late 20's, reported missing a few days earlier. On his first-ever rescue mission, Kaze located the missing woman under a bridge, in a coma that authorities later reported that would have killed her within the hour if she had not been found. Luckily, the woman was rushed to a hospital, where she recovered after a week's time.