

Puppy Love

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In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina

nearly 50% of the people who turned down the opportunity to be rescued said no because they refused to leave their dogs behind. Today it is different. Hurricane Harvey victims are different. Official rescue plans now include our beloved dogs. Hurricane Harvey proved it when rescue teams in boats, trucks and helicopters scrambled to reach thousands of Texans, along with their dogs, marooned on flooded streets in and around the city of Houston. The rescue efforts are not perfect for humans or dogs, but we have taken a courageous step in the right direction.



Representative Lantos and Mrs. Lantos with their little Masko

Representative Tom Lantos was moved by Snowball's story and co-authored the *Pets Act*, along with Christopher Shays, to require government assistance for pets effected by disasters. He expressed this beautifully saying, "The dog was taken from this little boy, and to watch his face was a singularly revealing and tragic experience. This legislation was born at that moment."

The Other White Dog



The Snowball Effect...

is used to describe how something small can evolve into something big. And the image of a little white dog named Snowball being torn from the arms of his beloved nine year old human did just that. This little boy had saved Snowball from the flood waters of Katrina, he spent five days holding and protecting her in the Superdome while waiting to be taken to safety. As he boarded the bus heading towards Texas, where he was supposedly going to be safe, an officer forcibly took Snowball from his arms. Snowball tried numerous times to get onto the bus, and was pushed aside by other officers nearby. The media captured the unforgettable scene of this little boy crying and calling out "Snowball, Snowball," followed by the young child vomiting from emotional distress. As the world watched this tear jerking moment they reacted, and not in a small way, it took hold, big things began to happen. It laid the ground work for people understanding that dogs are "people" too, Professionals and volunteers began the process of developing real, viable disaster aid for animals.



PETS ACT

On October 6, 2006, President George W. Bush signed into law, the *PETS Act* (*Pets Evacuation & Transportation Standards*), an amendment to the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act*, authorizing FEMA to provide rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs for individuals with household pets and service animals, and to household pets and animals themselves following a major disaster or emergency.