



NORTHEAST PYR RESCUE (NEPR)

NorthEast Pyr Rescue is an organization that provides a safe haven for lost or abandoned **Great Pyrenees dogs (pyrs)** as well as assisting owners to re-home a pyr if they can no longer provide care.

Our Organization educates the general public about the Great Pyrenees Dog in the hope that new owners, whether adopting dogs or purchasing puppies, are informed regarding both their wonderful qualities but perhaps more importantly, their difficult qualities.

EDUCATION

Contact Websites

- The national organization: *Great Pyrenees Club of America (GPCA)*. The GPCA also provides free written material that can be mailed to you. www.clubs.akc.org/gpca
- The regional breed club: *Pyrenees Fanciers of the NorthEast (PFNE)* www.PFNE.org
- The *American Kennel Club (AKC)* website also provides information for *all* breeds, breeders and affiliated rescue organizations (including Pyrs) www.akc.org

♥ DESPITE THEIR BEAUTY, THIS IS CLEARLY NOT A DOG FOR EVERYONE!! ♥
♥ ♥ DO NOT PURCHASE A PYR UNTIL YOU HAVE EDUCATED YOURSELF! ♥ ♥

Local Rescue Contact People (*We will gladly talk to you about the breed*)

- Jody Chiquoine, Lee, MA (Western MA) 413-243-9850
 - Phyllis Hubert, Ashfield, MA (Western MA) 413-628-4415
 - Nicole Sharpe, Averill Park, NY (Albany area) 518-674-8418
 - Evelyn Naglie, Peterborough, NH (South Central NH) 603-924-7472
 - Joyce and Bill Brady, Brooklyn, CT (CT & RI) 860-779-7072
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BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE BREED

The Great Pyrenees originated as *livestock guardians* in the Pyrenees Mountains of France. It is believed that ancestors of these large white livestock guardians migrated with shepherds and their flocks from Asia about 5000 years ago. Today, Great Pyrenees dogs remain the most popular livestock guardian for sheep, goats, llamas and free ranging poultry throughout the NorthEast. These livestock guardians are large dogs (90 – 150 pounds or more) able to defend against wolf, bear and coyote. They are NOT herding dogs but dedicated protectors. This protectiveness quality requires great responsibility of ownership.

The Great Pyrenees are large, beautiful and fiercely loyal dogs that are totally dedicated to their flock or family. They are especially loving and protective of well deserving children. As pets, sometimes they are overly protective and therefore must be socialized with people and other dogs throughout their lifetime.

CHARACTERISTICS

The most common reason Pyrs are in rescue relates to lack of understanding concerning the heritage of the breed (breed characteristics). The following are the most common issues:

Barking: Pyrs bark more than most dogs and bark at everything near your property. This is the way they protect and defend their border. They can **NOT** be left outside in a neighborhood for prolonged periods or you will quickly have neighbor problems. They are excellent in the house when left alone but are **NOT** apartment dogs due to proximity of neighbors.

Marking: One way of “defending” their property boundaries is to urinate, defecate and walk a path along property borders. While this is desirable on a sheep farm, many homeowners do not appreciate this practice.

Digging: Due to the heavy coat, Pyrs love to dig several large places in the yard to keep cool. Some of this can be discouraged but most Pyr owners find the need to fence off favorite flowerbeds!

Wandering: Many Pyrs wander and *all* are best in solidly fenced yards. Also, many Pyrs will *not* respect underground electric fence systems. The other problem with underground electric fence systems is that strangers (people and dogs) can come onto your property when you are not home. This can be a potential problem for these protective dogs. Due to their curious nature and need to walk/protect property boundaries, they can **NOT** be tied. Prolonged tying can cause aggression.

Leashes: While some select Pyrs can be trained to hike off lead, most Pyrs can never be trained for off leash work. This is especially true for adult Pyrs that enter rescue and have never been taught to walk off lead. Most require leash walking through out their lives.

Obedience: While many breeds “live to please their owners”, the Pyr has more of an attitude that says “Your swell, but what’s in it for me?”! This is an independent minded and very intelligent dog. The breed originated to think for themselves while caring for sheep and worked independently of a shepherd or human commands. This differentiates them from the hunting and herding dogs that originated to obey human commands. If you wish the obedience response of a golden retriever, border collie or lab, this is definitely **NOT** the dog for you!

Pyrs do **NOT** respond to the traditional compulsory obedience model based upon repetition and heavy correction. Establishing mutual respect is vital for a healthy relationship with your pyr. A relationship of mutual respect and trust takes time spent with your dog, consistent language and positive reinforcement. There is no short cut and you will not achieve this in an 8 week obedience class; it is a life time commitment.

General Care: *Brushing* - Caring for a Pyrs coat requires 45 – 60 minutes of brushing per week or they must be professionally groomed monthly (grooming costs range \$50 to \$80 /per visit). They have a great deal of under coat that “blows” in the spring. If you are bothered by hair, this is **NOT** the breed for you!

Size – Keep in mind this is a very **LARGE** and strong dog. If you have not seen one, be certain you see several before you seek to care for one. They can have large muddy or snowy feet that track across your floors!

Health – Pyrs overall are relatively healthy and are the longest lived of the large breed dogs. However, as with all large dogs, the cost of vet care is considerably higher than in medium and smaller breeds. You must be willing and able to accept the financial responsibility of caring for a Pyr.

SUMMARY

Please... make an informed and educated decision before choosing a Great Pyrenees. If you like the breed characteristics and/or would like more information, please contact one of our local rescue representatives.

♥♥ If you give your heart to a Great Pyrenees, your life will never be the same! ♥♥