

# LIFE

## [The dog rescuer]

Always either very late at night or very early in the morning, Michele Armstrong traveled to a designated location to meet a truck loaded with dogs gathered from somewhere else relatively far away.

"When they first open up the truck doors, you see all these dogs," Armstrong, 42, says. "And you're thinking, Oh, my god. And then you realize these are the lucky ones."

It's different now, but not much. Since founding the Point Pleasant-based Lu-Lu's Rescue ([www.lulusrescue.com](http://www.lulusrescue.com)) with Jane Zeolla in January, volunteers pick up the dogs, which arrive now, more often than not, under the high sun of early afternoon.

Though the agency is in its infancy, Armstrong is hardly new to the rescue scene. She started saving dogs over 12 years ago while living in New York. They just found her, she says.

When Armstrong moved to New Hope, she met Denise Bash, the founder and president of Animal Lifeline, an umbrella organization that aids local rescues, including Lu-Lu's. In Bash, Armstrong discovered a mentor and the

encouragement to formalize her operation.

Rescuing abandoned, abused dogs, Armstrong says, as if confessing an embarrassing secret, is her calling. She worked as an art director in New York, wrote a pair of books, designed jewelry, teaches yoga, and she's experienced fulfillment in all of it, but nothing of the level she's found in helping a dog. In them, she learned to love unconditionally and to live in the moment, qualities that are every bit as elusive as they are obvious.

Driven by those emotions, Armstrong's heart rate quickened at the sight of the dogs being unloaded from the truck — and still does at the thought of it.

She'd collect her dog, its information and then take it for a short walk before loading it into her car for the next leg of its journey. In that instant, when the two strangers were settled, Armstrong found all the affirmation she needed. The dog would lean in and lick Armstrong's face. It should have suspected by then, after all it had been through, that this was likely going to end badly, but it didn't. This is what happened in every one of those occasions, and Armstrong lived for it. —*Scott Edwards*

Photo by Cantor Design

**INSIDE:** 70 > Scenes from the spring's choicest gatherings 78 > Meet the former model behind a Philadelphia-inspired makeup line 79 > Sound skincare begins and ends with consistency 80 > Keep your comeback story from falling 10 pounds short 79 > What it means to be well is ever-evolving, as you should be 82 > Free — and nearly free — ideas to keep the kiddies moving 84 > In this heat, you have to pick your spots 86 > Before they slip away, turn the last two months of summer into your playground 92 > When the going gets too hot, head for the hills 96 > Reclaimed, restored, ridiculously cool 98 > The Famous River Hot Dog Man epitomizes summer on the Delaware