

## A Dog Named Hero

*By Marilyn Reeves*

This here's a picture of my dog Hero sitting on a six-foot snowbank outside our blue house a week after he saved my life.

Here's what happened. I had just gotten a new pair of ice skates for Christmas and me and the other guys went down to the pond to go skating for the first time this winter. The weather had been fairly mild up till December, but then we had a really cold spell for a couple of weeks and we figured the ice would be about right for skating.

We sat down on a big log and took off our boots and put on our skates. I was the first one to get mine on and I went scooting out on the ice, lickety-split, as fast as I could go. I was having a high old time until I got out toward the middle and noticed the ice out there had a different color – more a dark shade of grey than silver. Well, you guessed it – thin ice! And of course I plunged right in. In fact I sank clear down till my feet touched bottom and then somehow managed to swim my way back up to the top. Cold? I can't even begin to tell you how cold I was, floundering around, trying to keep my head above that freezing water and catch my breath!

My buddies were all screaming at me, "Johnny! Johnny!" But they were all afraid to go out there as they figured they'd fall in too. Thankfully one of them used his cell phone and dialed 911, and all I could do was hope I could hold out long enough for the rescue guys to come and rescue me.

Then I heard the sound of a big dog barking. And next thing you know, unlike my friends, that dog ran out on the ice right up to the edge of the hole and grabbed ahold of the sleeve of my coat and started to pull. It's a wonder he didn't fall in too, but he didn't. I just clung to that big old dog and held on for dear life, saying over and over again, "Thank you! Thank you! You're my hero! Thank you."

Well, a few minutes later here come the ambulance and the paramedics and even a fire truck. They stuck me inside the ambulance and started peeling my wet clothes off and rubbing me all over with a big towel. Then they wrapped me in some kind of electric blanket and gave me a cup of hot coffee to drink (my first cup of coffee ever!). After about half an hour they declared me likely to survive and gave me a ride home, and that dog followed the ambulance all the way to my house!

I told my mom what happened and said, "Say hello to Hero. He saved my life!" She agreed that we could keep him until the rightful owner came to claim him. But when the story of my rescue got published in the local paper along with a picture of Hero, we got a call from a Mr. Tyson, an old man who said that was his dog Ralphy, but it was alright if I wanted to keep him as he was fixing to find a new home for him anyways.

Ralphy has a new name now. I call him Hero. He's the dog who saved my life.