



*Saving just one dog won't change the world...  
but, surely, the world will change for that one dog...*

# Happy 2018!

Thank you to all of our hard-working, generous volunteers! You enabled us to help over 170 dogs in 2017.

All of our foster families provide excellent care to the dogs in need. We also have some wonderful volunteers who do our administrative functions throughout the year, and they also deserve recognition: Ian (bookkeeping), Cathy and Nancy (monthly newsletter), Gerry (social media), Colette (website, graphics and other activities), Kathy and Patti (post-adoption follow-up calls), Karen and Gail (meet-and-greets, transports and other activities), Tammy (correspondence), as well as the many people who help with our home checks and transportation network.

Photographers Tracy Munson, Michelle Scott, Suzie Mortimore and Katrin Faridani all take amazing pictures that help our dogs find their forever homes.

Thank you also to Chris and Denice, who successfully planned and implemented our biggest fundraiser in 2017, Party 4 Paws.

On top of all of these amazing volunteers, we have numerous people who help with our other fundraising efforts and booths. We apologize that we've not mentioned all of your names, but your efforts are just as important and very much appreciated!

We look forward to 2018, and we know that, with the passion and hard work of our many volunteers, we will have another successful year and will help many more dogs who need us.



## JANUARY 2018

### THE OFFICIAL SPEAKING OF DOGS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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#### About Speaking of Dogs

Speaking of Dogs is a Toronto-based organization that launched in 2001 and is dedicated to educating and enlightening people about dogs through seminars, workshop forums, outreach and rescue. Our goal is to end cruelty, abandonment, mistreatment and homelessness of man's best friend.

*Speaking of Dogs Rescue is the operating name of Speaking of Dogs Rescue Program, a Canada Revenue Agency-registered charity based in Ontario.*

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#### Newsletters

If you no longer want to receive our newsletter, email [newsletter@speakingofdogs.com](mailto:newsletter@speakingofdogs.com), with "unsubscribe" written in the subject line.

Very merry wags and wiggles to the many generous donors who shared their holiday cheer with us through our Canada Helps page. Your support helped us to raise much needed funds in December, and this will allow us to help many deserving dogs in 2018. Many thanks for Speaking of Dogs Rescue and the dogs.

# Dogs Looking for Homes

## A friend in need is a friend indeed

Without a doubt, a dog is a real friend. Our dogs come in all shapes and sizes, but they have one thing in common – they all need loving forever homes. Open your heart and your home to a rescue dog. You'll be glad you did. For complete information about the adoption process, please visit [www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process](http://www.speakingofdogs.com/adoption-process). For more information on each dog, simply click on their name.

# Zoey

POODLE / MALTESE MIX  
SMALL, ADULT, FEMALE



## FEATURED DOG:

Zoey is a sweet, busy spayed female Poodle/Maltese mix who is almost 10 pounds. She's only two or three years old, but she has a birth deformity: her kneecaps are out of place, and her legs follow suit. She will need joint supplements for life.

Her veterinary specialists have advised that any type of surgery to repair or realign her legs is not the route to go, but her body and legs have adjusted and she is not in any pain. Her conformation issue does not slow her down. She walks and runs in a crouch/hopping position, and when she stands, it often looks like she is posturing to go to the bathroom.

Zoey loves to play hide and seek or peek-a-boo to egg on other dogs and will walk other dogs around by their leash. She enjoys chewing and does best with tough chew toys, as plush stuffed toys get "unstuffed" very quickly!

She is puppy-like in attitude and energy. She has not met a dog that she doesn't like, but she does barrel at them, barking with excitement, which some dogs find off-putting. She can become mouthy when excited or while getting her harness on.

Although Zoey is outgoing, she can sometimes be nervous and will react/bark with new stimuli or people. She would benefit from positive training to direct her focus and excitement level.

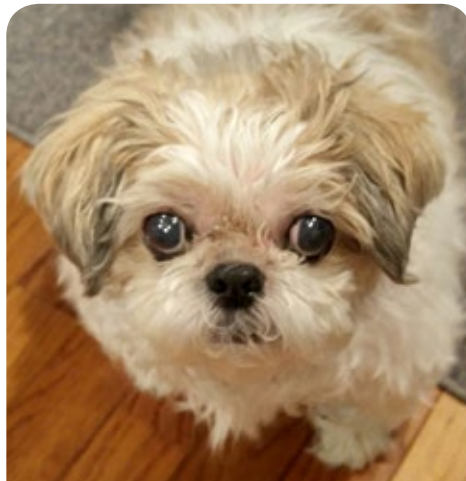
Zoey is loving and bonds quickly. She is happy to lie by your feet or snuggle in your lap. She is not the best match for a home with cats. Can you give Zoey a happy, safe forever home?





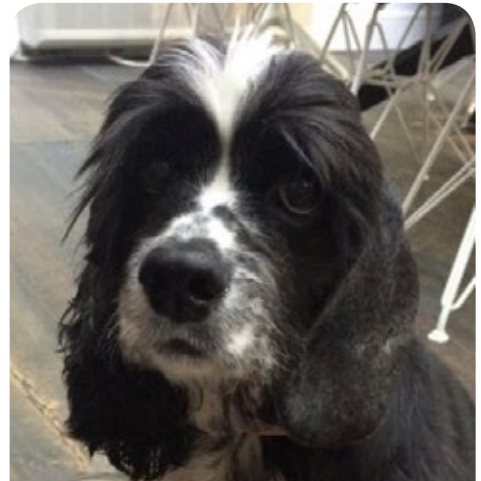
*Hank*

CATTLE DOG / BULLDOG MIX  
LARGE, ADULT, MALE



*Tara*

SHIH TZU  
SMALL, SENIOR, FEMALE



*Ebony*

SPANIEL  
MEDIUM, SENIOR, FEMALE



*Mercedes*

GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG  
LARGE, ADULT, FEMALE



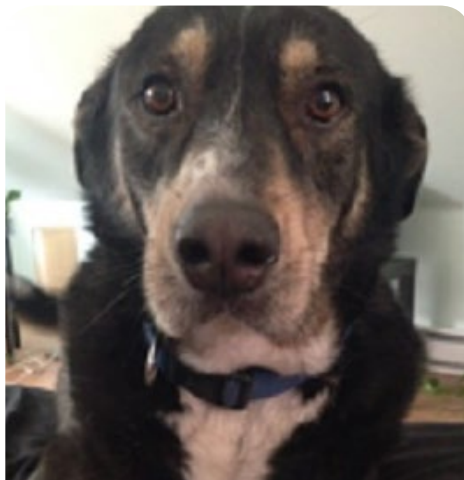
*Jack*

AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOG MIX  
MEDIUM, ADULT, MALE



*Spex*

FOXHOUND / BEAGLE MIX  
MEDIUM, YOUNG, MALE



*Jacques*

RETRIEVER / HOUND MIX  
MEDIUM, SENIOR, MALE



*Effie*

HOUD MIX  
MEDIUM, ADULT, FEMALE



*Chico*

PUG MIX  
SMALL, ADULT, MALE

# Ask the Trainer

## MORE THAN OBEDIENCE

A young woman came to me with her German Shepherd, Wheels. At less than a year old, Wheels had already bitten a half dozen times, with increasing severity. Wheels's owners called up her breeder to seek help and express concern at his behaviour. Her breeder told her, "Wheels just needs to learn to stay and heel. If you teach him better obedience he won't bite."

This ill-conceived advice is ineffective, at best. At worst, it's downright dangerous.

Obedience training is like woodworking: taught properly, it's enjoyable, enriching, and has some useful results (a pretty table leg, a dog who walks politely).

Behaviour modification is like therapy. The objective is to manage and resolve deep-seated issues like anxiety and depression. Carving a nice table leg is of minimal benefit!

Just as you wouldn't sit down with your woodworking instructor to talk about past traumas and current struggles, dogs in need of behaviour modification work can't fully benefit from obedience training. Wheels needed a very different approach.

Understanding the difference between behaviour modification and obedience lies in understanding the mechanisms through which animals learn. Consequences are critical to learning, but we often place too heavy an emphasis on them and don't fully understand how they function. Consequences are defined by their results – in other words, if you attempt to punish a dog and the dog continues to do the behaviour you intend to stop, you're not actually punishing the behaviour! Whatever you're doing as "punishment" – shouting, collar corrections, pinning the

dog – is likely scary or painful, yet it is not a punishment, at least not in the way we, as people, understand and interpret punishments.

In other words, just because you think you're punishing your dog for something, doesn't mean you actually are.

Obedience training is based heavily in consequences. Obedience training that is enriching and valuable for a dog is based in positive reinforcement, such as dispensing food or toys or providing access to something your dogs wants as a reward. There is no punishment. Obedience training's value is limited by its specific focus on the dog's behaviour – whether to reinforce "good" behaviour or punish "bad."

Understanding how behaviour fulfills an emotional need is critical to assessing problem behaviours and assembling an appropriate training plan. All this rests primarily on how associations are formed and, most importantly, understanding this as a largely unconscious and uncontrollable process. Behaviour that is born of emotional turmoil is not behaviour the dog can easily control, and thus it is not subject to "obedience training."

This explains why Wheels can have excellent leash manners when walking down the street with no other dogs around, but when he sees a dog he barks, lunges, and drags his owner down the street and continues to do so even after the other dog is long gone.

Wheels is triggered to an uncomfortable emotional high by the sight of the other dog, and even after the dog is gone his sympathetic nervous system remains engaged in a "fight or flight" response. This leash pulling may look like an obedience issue, but really it's a much deeper issue.

A woodworking instructor can help you detail your table leg just so, but she can't help you overcome OCD or an addiction. Woodworking can also be an enjoyable hobby to help you de-stress, but it is not the root of a therapeutic approach. Obedience training can help an owner give their dog valuable structure, but it does not, in and of itself, resolve behaviour problems.

A behaviour consultant, just like a therapist, understands how behaviour is a reflection of an emotional state as well as the intricacies of how that emotional state is reflected in an animal's behaviour. Just like a therapist recommending woodworking as a hobby, a behaviour consultant may use obedience trained with positive reinforcement as a secondary strategy to get to the emotional root of the problem, but that will not be the sum total of the training.

Rather than focusing on stay and heel with Wheels's owner, we focused on developing his ability to emotionally self-regulate in the presence of dogs and implemented strategies to help him recover after the turmoil of encountering a dog, creating a relaxed, calm, and positive association, and cultivated a sense of safety.

We didn't punish any "bad" behaviour; instead we got to the root of the problem behaviour through changing Wheels's emotional state and associations with other dogs.



Emily Fisher, CPDT-KA, CDBC, Scratch and Sniff Canine Services, Guelph, ON



# Bits & Bites

*Simply click on a summary to be whisked away to the internet page where you can read the full story.*

If you're resolving to work on training with your dog, check out this article on how to train a puppy not to jump up. (The same technique can be used with adult dogs; it just may take a little longer, depending on the dog.)

The only thing more complicated than trying to compare pet foods is trying to fully understand the ingredients that go into them! **TruthaboutPetFood.com** has compiled a "consumer only" list of pet food regulations and definitions, free for all consumers to access and share.

Find out about vestibular disease, a common – and treatable – disease in cats and dogs that presents with stroke-like symptoms.

Montreal's new municipal government has lifted the previous administration controversial ban on "pit bulls."

A new study indicates owning a dog can reduce a person's risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

Just like people, pets can sometimes get a cough. Find out what the most likely causes are.

If you're looking for inspiration and motivation to keep your resolution to help homeless pets in 2018, check out this article from Animal Wellness.

Consider also making a resolution to help homeless cats this year. Canada's cat overpopulation problem is improving, but there's still a lot of progress to be made.

There is very little oversight of independent pet rescues in Canada, so it's unfortunately adopter beware. This article discusses Big and Small Rescue, based in Vancouver, which is currently under scrutiny. (If you have any questions about the policies of Speaking of Dogs Rescue, please don't hesitate to contact us.)

## THIS MONTH'S RECALLS:

Click on a recall to be directed to further information online.

- Primal canine and feline freeze-dried poultry formulas
- Darwin's dog food



**From: Sharon C. and family**  
**To: Speaking of Dogs Rescue**  
**Subject: Xena (formerly Diva)**

Diva, now Xena, has been great. We wish we had a few more like her. She's a happy little girl, has a great personality, is very social, and is so funny! Whenever she's acting silly and we start to laugh, it just encourages her more. When we go for walks she wants to say hello to everyone, dogs and people alike. Xena loves to be outside watching birds, squirrels, and bunnies. She's amazed that birds can fly. As you know, our lot is 130 x 110, so she really gets her exercise doing laps around the yard every day. If I had one word to describe Xena, it would be "wonderful." We feel so fortunate to have her.

Best of the New Year!



# 10 New Year's Resolutions for Dog Owners

## 1. Use only force-free, positive-reinforcement training techniques:

Positive-reinforcement training is not only motivating and fun for your dog, it's the most effective way to train your pet or to resolve unwanted behaviour. Check out our monthly trainer articles for tips.

**2. Walk your dog every day:** Even a short walk can help stimulate a dog's body, mind, and olfactory senses, as well as give them much-needed social opportunities. It's also an excellent time to bond with your beloved dog, so put that cellphone away and enjoy some uninterrupted time with your best friend.

**3. Exercise your dog's mind as well as his body:** It's not just your dog's body that requires activity. Use a feeding toy like a Kong or snuffle mat instead of a plain, old bowl, play hide-and-seek, or go on a treasure hunt! Keeping a dog young at heart often starts with his mind!

**4. Read up on pet nutrition:** Not all commercial pet foods are created equal. Even the best foods can also be supplemented by a few fresh pieces of meat, fruit, or vegetable. It is, however, important to do your research, as many foods for humans aren't safe for dogs. Speak with your veterinarian if you're unsure.

**5. Keep your dog at her ideal weight:** Even if you exercise your dog regularly, keep an eye on her food portions and measure every meal. Dog obesity is an epidemic in North America, leading to serious health problems like diabetes and worsening problems like arthritis. One of the best things you can do for an elderly pet is keep her trim.

**6. Never hesitate to bring your dog to the veterinarian.** The need for yearly check-ups goes without saying, but that doesn't necessarily mean your dog should only go to the vet once a year. If your pet looks injured or unwell, Google may provide a lot of leads, but only your trusted veterinarian has a history with your dog and can provide a proper examination. Your dog depends on you to keep him healthy – don't try to diagnosis his ailments yourself. Take him to the professionals.

**7. Look after your dog's teeth:** We all know brushing a dog's teeth isn't the easiest dog-care task, but it's so important. If you're having trouble brushing, discuss your dog's oral care with her veterinarian and see what options are available.

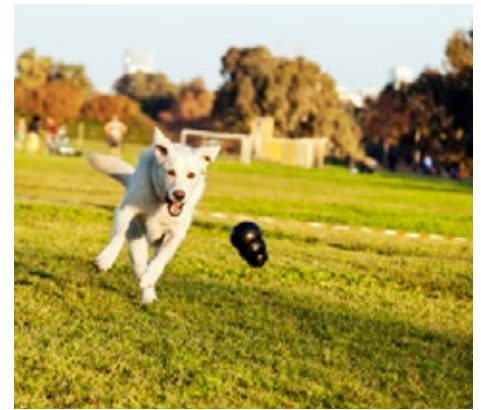
**8. Groom your dog regularly:** Some dogs only need a quick brushing now and again, while others need a full bath, trim, and brush out regularly. Make sure you groom your dog based on his coat's requirements to keep him happy and healthy all year long.

**9. Foster a senior dog:** There are so many senior dogs looking for forever homes, and you can help by providing a temporary home for a dog in our rescue program. Contact [lorraine@speakingofdogs.com](mailto:lorraine@speakingofdogs.com) to find out more.

**10. Make time for fun!** After the grooming, the teeth brushing, the vet visits, and the training, play a game of fetch or tug, try an agility class, go for a play-date with a friend, or do whatever

you think you and your pooch pal will enjoy. After all, dog ownership is about experiencing the fun and the love in the moment!

**Bonus resolution:** Read the Speaking of Dogs Rescue newsletter every month!





# Happy Tails

## DECEMBER ADOPTIONS:

A big thank you to our foster parents and our new adoptive guardians for helping give these loving dogs a second chance.



*Dustin*  
FOREVER IN FOSTER



*Blacky*



*Buddy*



*Chester B*



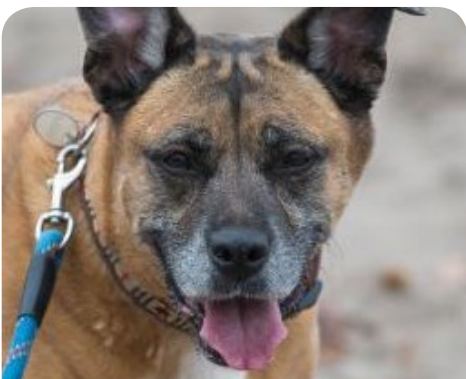
*Coco Beagle*



*Freckles*



*Gilbert*



*Raven*



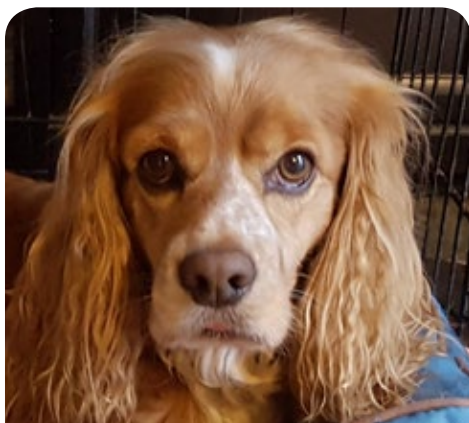
*Rex Beagle*



*Scout*



*Stewie*



*Toby Spaniel*



*Toby Coton*

# Can you lend a paw?

Although we have a partnership with a doggy daycare, we do not have a physical shelter; our dogs are in-home fostered by caring, loving volunteers. Because of the way our rescue is structured, the only hands-on volunteer position with our dogs is fostering. Can't foster but want to help our dogs? Consider donating new or gently used items for them. We are always in need of

- Gas gift cards
- Global Pet Foods or Pet Valu gift cards
- Kong or other treat-disensing toys
- Canned and dry quality dog foods
- Martingale collars
- Kuranda beds
- Thunder Shirts





# In Memoriam



*Bentley and Mona*

LOVED BY JAMES M. AND KEITH L.

## I HAVEN'T LEFT AT ALL

I saw you gently weeping as you looked through photographs  
You paused for just a moment at one that made you laugh.

But as you turned more pages the tears began to flow  
You whispered that you missed me but I want you to know;

I softly licked those stinging tears that down your cheeks did fall  
I want to help you understand I haven't left at all.

On those days that you are overcome with sorrow, pain and grief  
I rest my head upon your leg to offer some relief.

When you take our walking path I've seen you turn around  
Because I know you surely heard my paws upon the ground.

At night while you are sleeping I snuggle at your side  
You stroke my fur as you touch that place where I used to lie.

You said it's just your heart playing tricks upon your mind  
But rest assured I'm really there, my spirit's left behind.

I know your heart is hurting; it's like an open sore  
You think my life has ended and you won't see me anymore.

But for those of us bound tight by love, death is not the curtain call;  
It's really the eternal beginning that waits for us all.