

Kudos and Congrats to Two of Our Own!



By Lorraine Houston

We love making good adoption matches for our dogs, and it seems that another kind of match was made back in early 2012, when two adopters came together to take the reins of the Speaking of Dogs newsletter.

When we needed a new newsletter captain, we were initially stumped, but Lindsay, one of our board members, suggested we get in touch with Cathy, an adopter who was a graphic designer. I also put a general call out to volunteers, and one of our foster moms, Nancy (turned adopter when she failed fostering with dear Bailey), mentioned that she was a freelance editor.

A long email discussion followed, and a meeting was set for the end November 2011 with not two but three interested volunteers, as well as the outgoing newsletter captain and a few board members. However, the meeting did not go as planned.

The day of the meeting, a heartbroken Nancy let us know she had received bad news from her vet about her cat Ophelia and wanted to spend as much time as she could with her beloved girl, so we went ahead with the meeting without her.

The group got off to a rocky start with the January 2012 newsletter. Nancy's absence at the meeting was felt and one volunteer

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MARCH 2020

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, with "unsubscribe" written in the subject line.

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. For more information on each dog, simply click on their name.

Kodi & Bella

YORKIE MIX & POMERANIAN
SMALL, ADULT, MALE & FEMALE

FEATURED DOG:

These two love bugs are Kodi and Bella, who need to be adopted together. They were surrendered to us at Christmastime, when their owner passed away.

Kodi is a 13-year-old neutered male Pomeranian who shows off his puppy-side daily as he runs up and down the stairs and walks briskly when he's out and about. He also loves chasing a ball and will entertain himself with his toys.

Bella is Kodi's long-time buddy. She's an 8-year-old spayed female Schnauzer/Yorkie mix who loves running and chasing a ball – or chasing Kodi when he has the ball!

These two get along so well and also get along with the other dogs in their foster home. They are easy going about food, toys, and attention and don't make a fuss. When they first came into rescue, they were somewhat disoriented and a bit shy, but before long they were seeking attention and engaging with their foster parents without any concerns at all. They just needed time and stability.

They love to cuddle up and don't have any space issues. Both Kodi and Bella love to be picked up and will tuck their heads into your neck and snuggle in. Bella will even wrap her paws around your neck and embrace you.



Both dogs are housetrained and have not had any accidents in the foster home; they let you know they have to go out by standing by the door. They are always interested in what their human is doing and like to follow their foster mom. Once they realize that not much is going on, they will go to their beds for a nap. Neither dog has separation anxiety or destructive behaviour when left alone.

Kodi and Bella have double the love and double the devotion to give. The best double-double you'll ever bring home!





Jelly Bean
SHIH TZU / TERRIER MIX
SMALL, ADULT, MALE



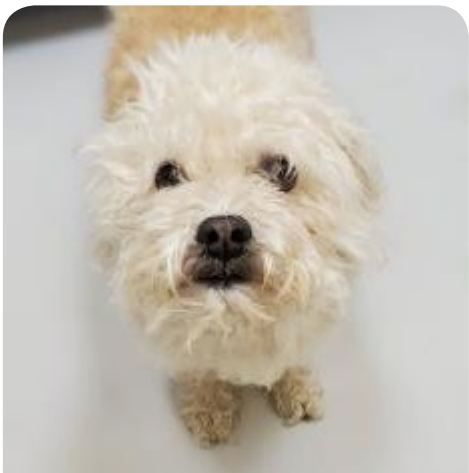
Jamilla
HOUND / VIZSLA MIX
MEDIUM, ADULT, FEMALE



Zoey
RAT TERRIER MIX
SMALL, YOUNG, FEMALE



Ben
SHIH TZU / POODLE MIX
SMALL, SENIOR, MALE



Josie
POODLE / BICHON FRISE MIX
SMALL, ADULT, FEMALE



Bernard
BEAGLE
MEDIUM, SENIOR, MALE



Winnie
CORGIE MIX
MEDIUM, ADULT, FEMALE



Jersey
SHIH TZU MIX
SMALL, ADULT, FEMALE



Eddi
SPANIEL / POODLE MIX
SMALL, SENIOR, FEMALE



Daisy
COCKER SPANIEL
MEDIUM, ADULT, FEMALE



Roxy
YORKIE / TERRIER MIX
SMALL, ADULT, FEMALE



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had to drop out, but we pulled up our socks for February, and we've never looked back!

Together, Cathy and Nancy have created an incredible newsletter that's been educating, promoting, updating and dazzling our readers for over eight years now. For six of those years we submitted the newsletter to the annual Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA) writing competition, and we'd received four nominations, which in itself is an honour.

For the 2019 DWAA competition we were once again thrilled to be nominated and not only in one category, but two: Best Online Magazine or Newsletter and the Grey Muzzle Award for helping senior dogs.

On Sunday, February 9, the DWAA hosted its annual banquet and awards event, which was going to be live-streamed. Technical difficulties meant we couldn't hear the presenters, so we had a long wait before we could find out who the winners were. All we could do was wait. We checked the Facebook page, hoping for news, but didn't see the winners. When I checked my phone



after lunch on Tuesday, I could barely believe my eyes when I saw our names and Speaking of Dogs in **bold** letters!

But wait, maybe all the names were bolded. My hands were shaking as I tried to make the text bigger. I called Nancy and asked her to check, as I was away from my computer. Minutes later she called me back and confirmed that we had won the category of Best Online Magazine or Newsletter!

The feeling of excitement and pride was overwhelming!

Big congratulations to Nancy and Cathy for such an accomplishment! These two ladies work tirelessly every month to put together a professional and informative publication. Their time, talent, and expertise are given freely as volunteers, all to help dogs. Many thanks and kudos to our newsletter team – they really are the dynamic duo!

Ask the Trainer

This article originally appeared in the April 2016 newsletter. Make sure you don't miss any of our fun, informative newsletters, as we'll be featuring an article on training blind dogs later this year!

WORKING WITH DEAF DOGS

I grew up with deaf dogs and have fostered many. While I haven't always had a deaf dog in my home, I've had quite a few over the years and consider myself to be pretty good with them. Here, then, are some thoughts on working with deaf dogs.

Vibration Collars

First, I'd like to discuss why I don't use vibration collars.

Far and away, the biggest reason I don't use vibration collars is that I haven't needed to. They didn't exist when I had my first deaf dog, so we had to use other methods. I learned those methods and became comfortable with them, so I just continued doing what had worked for me and my deaf dogs in the past.

Furthermore, I see too many dogs for whom the vibration is aversive. Let's be clear: I know vibration collars can be used well and conditioned appropriately, but it's not an easy skill to acquire, and it requires very good timing and a fair bit of knowledge about how dogs make associations (often ones we don't intend).

I've also mostly had small dogs, and most vibration collars are bulky and awkward (at least they were the last time I looked at them). They have to fit tightly, and I don't like tight collars on my dogs, or anything else tight around their neck. I like to condition my dogs to having my hands in and around their collars, and I don't want anything to interfere with that, so I haven't used anything on their necks that could ever be a negative for them.

So How Do I Train My Deaf Dogs?

I mostly train them the same way I train my hearing dogs: lots and lots of working on "watch me" and "touch." I train for

check-ins, and I mark and reward heavily for offered check-ins. I train "touch" early and often. My hand down with my palm out is my signal for touch, and it often becomes my recall signal as well, for hearing and deaf dogs alike.

My hand goes down, my palm out, and the dog comes and touches. I mark and reward. I mark as the dog moves toward me so they begin to associate the movement to me as the "right" thing to do, and I pay heavily when they get to me. I also make sure I hold their collar before I reinforce so that we don't get a dine-and-dash – another reason I avoid using collars that could impact negatively on the dog's perception of my hands near their neck or collar.

Off Leash and Recall

There is an increasingly popular belief that deaf dogs must be trained to be safely off leash and have 100% recall. I have two issues with that. One, even my sighted and hearing dogs are never off leash where they could get away from me and be lost. Two, no dog has 100% recall. It's a lofty goal and one I strive for, but all dogs have 100% recall until they don't – and that's usually a tragedy.

Deaf dogs should never be off leash in any unfenced area. If we are in an open area, then they are on a long line. Hopefully I have worked enough on voluntary check-ins that I can get one offered, and I mark and pay it. I also use a very minor (think light pull and release) leash tug as a distance signal to look back at me. I do this so the dog isn't startled, and I make sure we have some history with gentle leash pressure being a signal to turn back to me – but that follows weeks and weeks of working on offered check-ins.

Startle Response

One of the biggest issues I see with deaf dogs is an exaggerated startle response, so I strive to counter-condition anything

that is already startling (waking the dog up, suddenly showing up by them, unexpected touches, etc.), and I strive not to add anything that will cause a startle response. I move slowly and deliberately with deaf dogs. I want my movements and my actions to be, if not predictable, interesting and non-threatening. While I think working remotely can be done effectively, I prefer not to do this. I prefer a more hands-on approach. My hands are the delivery method of all things good. They signal food, play, toys, fun.

Training Is Training

I've never entirely understood why training deaf dogs has been seen as some uniquely difficult or complex skill. It really is no different than training a hearing dog – it simply involves using hand signals. I start all my dogs, hearing or not, with hand signals. And I'm already very quiet with my dogs when we are training (you wouldn't know that from watching any videos I've posted, but without a camera on me, I'm very quiet).

Can you mess up training a deaf dog? Sure. Can it have bigger fallout than with a hearing dog? Probably. But it's not necessarily a hard thing to do. It requires thought, attention to detail, knowledge of body language and how dogs learn, and striving for positive associations – pretty much the same goal and method used with any dog.



Blanche Axton is a dog trainer and coordinates the fostering program with Pugalug Pug Rescue. She has been a volunteer and foster parent for Speaking of Dogs for many years.

Bits & Bites

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

- [With snow and ice comes cold and salt, both of which can irritate a dog's paws. But what if your dog doesn't like to have her paws handled? The Toronto Humane Society offers tips to keep your pet's paws in tip-top shape, without any growls or cries!](#)
- [The OSPCA and Humane Society have launched a new website, Shelter Health Pro, which offers tips and resources on animal behaviour, stress reduction, and enrichment.](#)
- [The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association has prepared a document entitled "Best Management Practices for Animal Shelters and Rescues in the Province of Alberta."](#)
- [Brandon Forder, vice-president of Canadian Pet Connection and also known as the Pet Expert, opines on Ontario's new PAWS Act – what it's gotten right and where there is room for improvement.](#)
- [This headline from CNN says it all: "Your pet can't catch coronavirus. Here's why one dog tested positive."](#)
- [You should, however, have a plan in place in case you are unable to look after your pet, due to illness or for any other reason.](#)

JOIN US AT SPRING PET EXPO!

Please stop by Speaking of Dog's booth at the Spring Pet Expo, Canada's largest indoor pet festival. We'll be there to promote our dogs and provide information about responsible pet adoption and ownership. Whether your pet walks, hops, slithers, or swims, they'll be welcome at the festival! You just need to complete and sign a waiver.

Looking for an opportunity to get involved with the rescue? We need volunteers to staff our booth! Please contact Kim at kim@speakingofdogs.com if you think you can help.

Date: Friday April 10 to Sunday April 12

Time: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday

Location: International Centre, 6900 Airport Road, Mississauga (parking is free)

For more information and to buy passes, visit <https://www.canadianpetexpo.ca>.

To: Speaking of Dogs Rescue

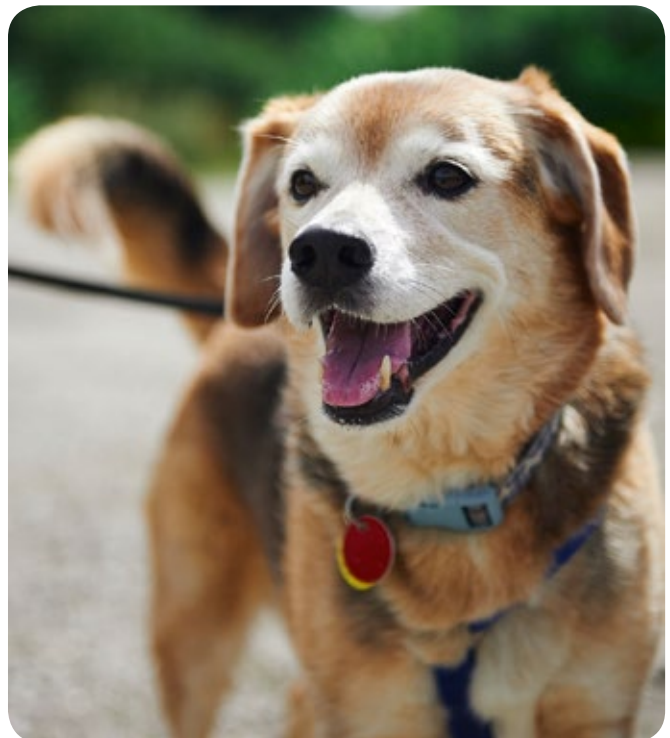
From: Denyse and family

Subject: Larry

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

Larry is doing great! He's made himself very much at home and loves his routine, especially his walks. We've taught him the basic commands using hand gestures, since he is almost completely deaf. He's still active given his age, but he does occasionally have a bit of trouble getting up the few steps from the backyard, and we have steps to the bed and the couch that have helped a lot. He is on pain medication from the vet for his arthritis, and we also use glucosamine. I bring him to work every day. The clients that come in love him and his brother, Morty (who we also adopted from Speaking of Dogs). They are both so quiet and very well behaved! A lot of the time people don't even realize there are dogs in the office until they see them sleeping in their bed!

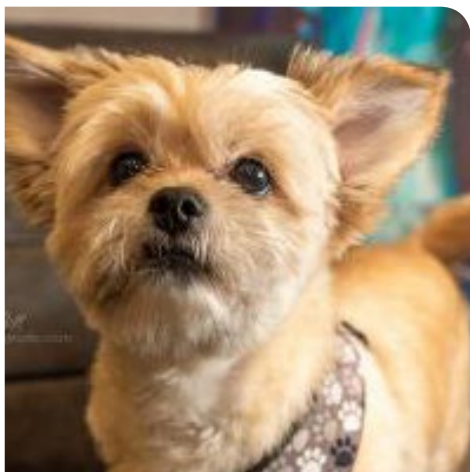
We're so grateful that we have them in our lives. They're the best dogs.



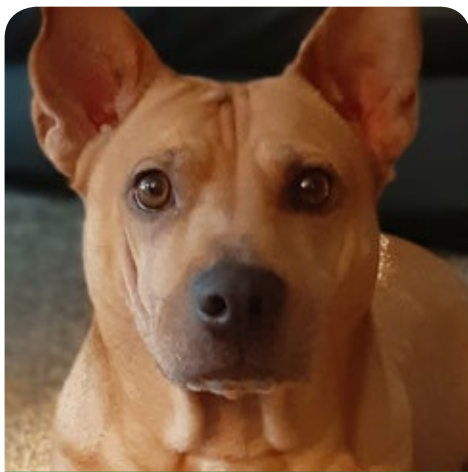
Happy Tails

FEBRUARY ADOPTIONS:

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



Chili



Dixie



Emma



Faith



Arnica & Chica



Jody



Scooby



Phil



Sadie

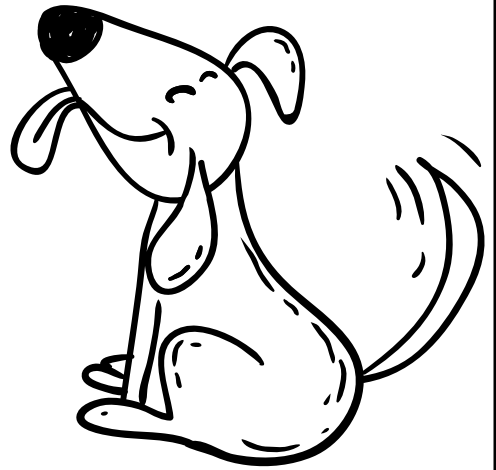
FURRY FRIENDS 5K

Speaking of Dogs Rescue is proud to be a part of the Furry Friends 5K run/walkathon circuit, and we're looking for walkers and runners who are willing to collect pledges. These important fundraisers help us help homeless dogs in need, including the wonderful dogs in our Forever in Foster program.

But it's not just the dogs who benefit! These races are always a fun day, and there are great goody bags and prizes. Participants can walk or run with or without a dog, and all activity levels are welcome – from relaxed strollers to experienced runners and everyone in between. You can even join as a team!

This year we will be participating in the Oshawa event on Sunday, June 7th.

To find out more about this year's Furry Friends 5K, please visit <https://www.furryfriends5k.ca> and, of course, keep reading the monthly Speaking of Dogs newsletters to learn all of the exciting developments!



In Memoriam



Jack

LOVED BY CHRISTINE K. AND FAMILY
ADOPTED APRIL 2014
PASSED FEBRUARY 2020



Snooky

LOVED BY PANABAKER FAMILY
FOREVER IN FOSTER
PASSED FEBRUARY 2020



Leo

LOVED BY LINDSAY AND TOM
ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 2011
PASSED JANUARY 2020



Spanky

LOVED BY FADUMA H. FAMILY AND FRIENDS
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2012
PASSED FEBRUARY 2020



Harriet

LOVED BY SUSAN, HELMUT, FAMILY AND FRIENDS
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2015
PASSED FEBRUARY 2020



Bobby

LOVED BY TAMMY, LOU AND FAMILY
ADOPTED APRIL 2009
PASSED FEBRUARY 2020