

Looking Back on 20 Years and Ahead to 2022!



by Lorraine Houston

As many of you know, Speaking of Dogs was founded in 2001 as an educational forum to help people better understand dogs and treat them better. Last year we added a newsletter feature called "Speaking of Flashbacks," and each month we'd cover a year, sometimes two years, featuring the dogs, events, and other highlights of that time period.

I so enjoyed the walk down memory lane while celebrating 20 years "in dogs." Social media wasn't even a thing when we started our rescue efforts! There were no FB pages to follow and no texting, Instagram, or Twitter. Vet records were faxed, x-rays had to be picked up, and, if your rescue had a website, you were a rockstar!

As I sent the photos to our extraordinary newsletter volunteers, Cathy and Nancy, it was a roller coaster of emotions as I looked at all the dogs we've helped over the years. I remembered picking them up from the shelter, taking them to the vet, dropping them off at the foster family's home, and many came home with me – some for a short stay, others for longer periods of time, and some stayed with us forever.

COVID affected our rescue throughout 2021 and dictated whether or not we would be attending in-person events. In the fall, restrictions loosened a bit, and we were invited to events, but our Board did not want to risk the health of our volunteers, so we declined going to pictures with Santa and other holiday happenings.

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JANUARY 2022

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.

Lainey

FEATURED DOG:

Sweet, kind Lainey came to us from northern Manitoba when her family could no longer care for her. She is an approximately 6-year-old, 60-pound collie/retriever mix and has been spayed and vetted. She had a large benign cyst removed from under her front leg – she must feel so much better now that it's not rubbing!

Lainey is also overweight, and we are working on this. She has arthritis (for which she takes medication), which makes going up and down stairs a bit challenging. She also needs help getting into cars as well as on and off couches, and her daily walks are usually more of a slow stroll. It doesn't, however, stop her from doing a dance and barking with excitement when getting ready to go for a walk or greeting her foster family!

Lainey loves her people and will cuddle for pets and scratches. She is housetrained and good in the car. She sometimes barks when left alone or crated but is not destructive. She also knows her basic commands, including "sit," "down," and "touch."

This friendly girl is happy to meet people when out on her walks and always has a big, wide hello wag! She



can get excited and bark when other dogs bark at her. When this happens, Lainey's foster family give her space and redirect her toward them, and then they give her a treat as a reward. It's working well, and she's already starting to redirect on her own.

Lainey currently resides with a dog about her size and two cats but doesn't always feel comfortable with them, especially around food, so she is best suited to being a single pet in her forever home. Lainey has not been tested with children.

If you welcome this sweet girl into your life, you should expect to keep your vacuum handy, as she does shed. Regular brushing with a nice grooming rake and comb helps a lot though.

Lainey is a gentle, silly, and laid-back dog who is an all-around super star! She'll need support to help her continue to lose weight and stay focused when other dogs bark at her, but she has so much love to give. Can you give her the supportive, understanding forever home she so richly deserves?



Brady

BEAGLE / LABRADOR MIX
MEDIUM, ADULT, MALE



Jerry

SHIH TZU / TERRIER MIX
SMALL, ADULT, MALE



Veeru

INDIAN PARIASH DOG
MEDIUM, YOUNG, MALE



Charlie

SHIH TZU
SMALL, SENIOR, MALE



Daisy

CAIRN TERRIER MIX
SMALL, YOUNG, FEMALE



Zoey

CHIHUAHUA
SMALL, ADULT, MALE



Peek & Boo

BORDER COLLIE / LABRADOR MIXES | MEDIUM, SENIOR, FEMALES
COURTESY POST FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO SHELTYE RESCUE



Baker

LABRADOR RETRIEVER
LARGE, SENIOR, MALE

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We were, however, super busy last year with dogs coming in. We continued to work with the northern Manitoba groups K9 Advocates Manitoba and Save A Dog Network. We also continued to work with Ontario and Quebec shelters and with owner surrenders.

We are always grateful to our foster parents and volunteer drivers. Foster parents who open their hearts and homes to dogs in need are a special breed, and our drivers make sure that dogs get to and from airports, vets, foster homes, and picked up from shelters and from owners who can no longer care for them. For longer distance transports we ask Critter Cabs and/or Cheryl Lamb for help getting dogs from A to B, and they are always so helpful!

Our Board worked hard this past year to update policies and programs, organize a really fun 20th anniversary Zoom party for all of our volunteers and budget for all our programs, including Forever in Foster, Blackie's Fund and Leg Up.

COVID was discussed at every Board meeting, and we kept our rescue running

with safety protocols in place, meaning no in-home visits, events, or anniversary get-togethers.

We were proud when we won a couple of Readers' Choice Awards both in Toronto and Simcoe County. We can thank our volunteers and their tireless efforts for these awards and accolades. They never let the dogs down, are constantly at the ready, and always jump in when asked to help a dog in need.

We are more than fortunate to have the team we do – and every single person in our organization is a volunteer, including our Board of Directors and bookkeeper.

Our virtual Step Up for the Pups walkathon was successful again this year, and we'll most likely run it again in 2022. If we can safely gather outside in the spring, we may have a small group walk in Caledon. The dogs really enjoyed the trail walk we did a few years back, and we're hoping to be able to enjoy a similar walk in 2022!

Throughout the year we, as always, kept our focus on the dogs. We were able to successfully rehome approximately 175 dogs, and our outreach programs helped another 100 dogs with financial support

and partnership placements.

We currently have 15 dogs in our Forever in Foster program, which was created in 2005. Over the years, Forever in Foster has helped hundreds of dogs live their golden years with top-notch health care, loving humans, and an excellent quality of life.

Although we couldn't celebrate our 20th anniversary as we had hoped, even COVID couldn't stop us from enjoying our Speaking of Dogs Rescue family! We kept in touch with our volunteers, adopters, and supporters through social media, monthly newsletters, and good old-fashion phone calls!

Over the last two decades, we've been able to meet over 2,000 dogs and help them find a new leash on life. We've been privileged to work with incredibly dedicated veterinarians and shelter staff, and we've been blessed with extraordinary, talented, and committed volunteers and supporters who have served our mission proudly and generously.

We look forward to another 20 years of loving, helping, and caring for dogs in need!

Happy new year from our home to yours!

May 2022 bring health, peace, joy, and happiness to one and all.

For each dog, we wish them humans who understand their physical, intellectual, and emotional needs, kind and caring families where they can feel safe and loved, and the Five Freedoms.

What are the Five Freedoms?

- Freedom from hunger and thirst.
- Freedom from pain, injury, and disease.
- Freedom from distress.
- Freedom from discomfort.
- Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being.

Best wish from Lorraine and the dogs!



Ask the Trainer

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: NEW TRAINING ADVENTURES WITH MY DOG!

Winter really sets in with the new year. The best remedies for the winter blahs are getting out with your dog and exploring new ideas and activities! Why not do both together?

There's so much more to training your dog than teaching "sit," "stay," and "come." You should never stop training the basics, but you don't need to be a professional trainer or have dreams of competing for you and your dog to benefit from all that dog sports have to offer. There are many easily accessible activities you can enjoy together!

Agility

First on the list is, of course, agility. Agility is an obstacle course made up of different types of equipment that dogs jump over, climb onto, or run through. Until you get serious about the training, it's best to find a non-competitive "fun-gility" class. These keep things friendly and relaxed, letting you and your dog do a fun and safe obstacle course without the pressure of the foundation that serious agility training requires.

When looking for a class, you'll want to ask the instructor the following:

- How much pressure is on students? Are you allowed to just go and have fun, or will you be expected to progress through the levels at a set pace? You can decide for yourself whether you're goal-oriented in this activity or want a more casual approach.



- Is the equipment safe? Dogs and owners without the aforementioned foundation training shouldn't be running on full-size and full-height equipment. This can be scary for the dog – or even downright dangerous!
- How does the instructor approach a fearful dog? If the instructor doesn't encourage you to slow down, take the pressure off your dog, feed an enormous amount of treats, and make sure your dog is having fun, walk out that door and don't go back! Your dog should never be cajoled or pushed onto equipment that they're afraid of or hesitate to use.

Tricks Class

Tricks are also, of course, on this list! Tricks classes can be anything from the basics of "give a paw" and jumping through a hula hoop to training more complex tricks like cleaning up toys or backing in a circle around you. Whatever the tricks, it's important that they suit

your dog. For example, a dog with back or hip problems shouldn't be encouraged to "sit pretty." A dog who is fearful should have tricks modified to build their confidence while learning. Make sure that whatever school you go to uses lots of treats to teach and reinforce the tricks.

Rally Obedience

Rally obedience may sound a little scary, but it's loads of fun! Rally involves a course with stations where the dogs heel and perform an action indicated on a sign. That could be anything from your dog spiralling around pylons to lying down while you walk around them to going over a jump.

While this sport is based on competition obedience, rally is far more casual, and you're even allowed to chat to and feed your dog in competition. You also have the added benefit of advancing leash-walking skills, which are built into the class.

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Adoption Update

To: Speaking of Dogs Rescue

From: Paige and family

Subject: Spike and Ricky

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

Spike and Ricky are a perfect fit with us, and we are so incredibly grateful to have them in our family. They have been the highlight of a very challenging year with the pandemic. They give us a reason to get out for exercise, sunshine, and fresh air every single day, and I think they have contributed so positively to my mental health.

The biggest health challenge when they arrived was definitely their weight. If you remember, they were both quite obese and in desperate need of a responsible weight loss program. Luckily our vet was super helpful and supportive in this regard, and my partner happens to be a personal trainer and nutrition coach, so we were definitely up for the challenge. I'm pleased to report that Ricky's weight has gone down from about 13 pounds when

we adopted him to now about 9 pounds. Spike's weight loss has been even more impressive – he was about 18 pounds when we brought him home and now weighs in at about 10.5 pounds. Our vet gave both dogs a perfect body condition score at our last appointment, and we did a happy dance!

In terms of behaviour, they are both super good. Ricky is a bit of an anxious boy, and I think the lack of visitors during the pandemic has made it a bit harder for him to adjust to guests starting to come over to our home now. He gets a bit stressed and barks a lot when anyone comes to the door, but we are working on some counterconditioning exercises for that through an online course specialized in reactivity. He seems to be improving a bit, but it's a slow process. Luckily,

he has never exhibited any aggressive behaviour – he's just a bit loud.

It's pretty amazing to see how much they can learn through positive reinforcement and how enjoyable it is for them. They both seem to really love using their brains and problem solving! They are quite motivated to learn and do tricks – even for carrots! When they first arrived they didn't know much, but now they can both sit, lay down, come, walk on a loose leash, and go to bed quite reliably. "Stay" is a little tougher for them, but we working on that.

I can't believe how quickly a year has passed, but I must say I can't imagine life without these little guys now. They really are the best part of my day! Thank you for all the important work you do.

Spike before



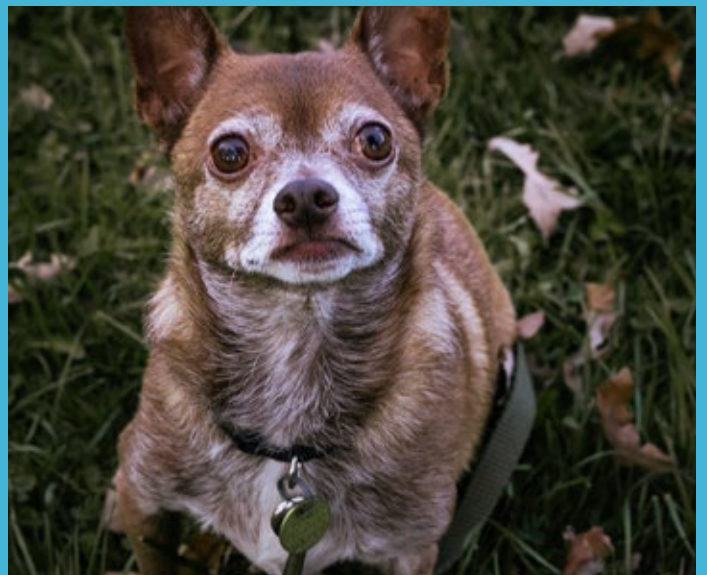
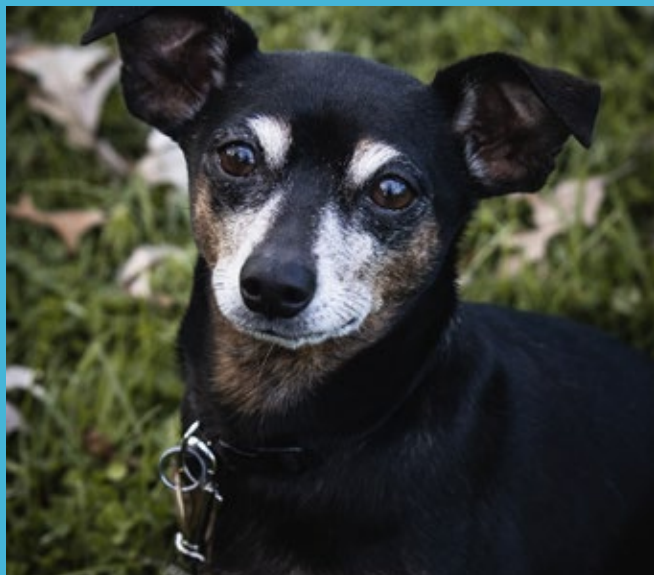
Ricky before



Spike after



Ricky after



Happy Tails

RECENT ADOPTIONS:

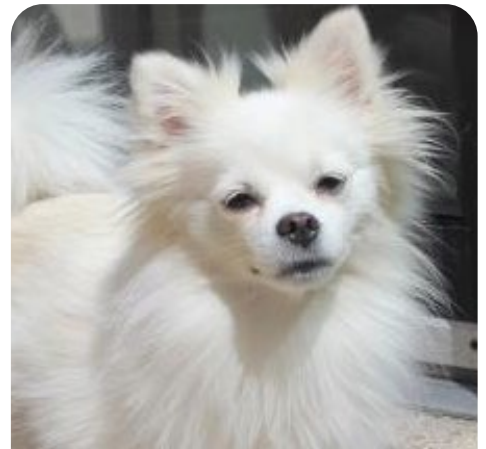
A big thank you to our foster parents and our new adoptive guardians for helping give these loving dogs a second chance.



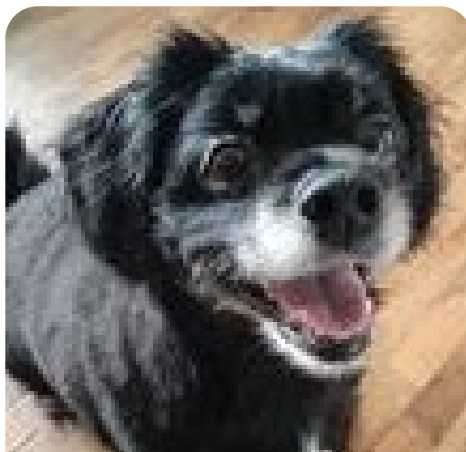
Bella (Pyr)



Chico



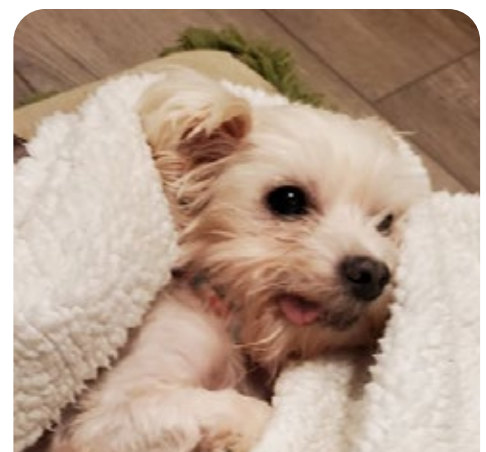
Coco



Ebony



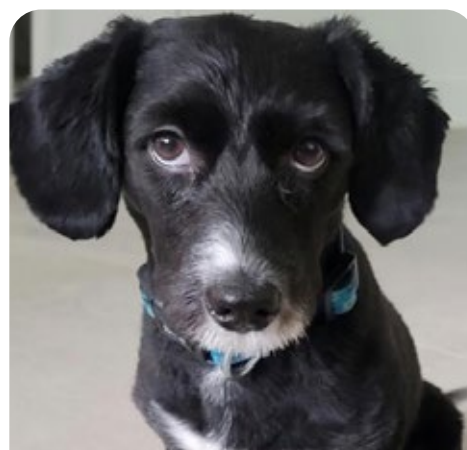
Fozzie



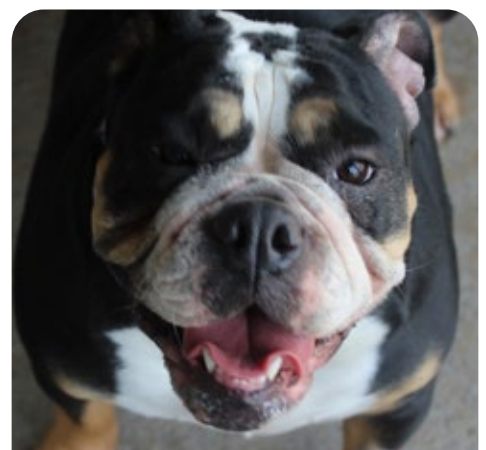
Francis



Jasmine



Mylo



Nova

More Happy Tails



Polly



Rocky (Shep)



Snoop

RECALL

Click the link for details
on this month's recalls:

- [Woody's Pet Food Deli raw Cornish hen](#)
- [Irish Rover Advent calendar](#)

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Treibball

Treibball, pronounced "try-ball," is like a combination of sheepless sheep-herding and soccer for dogs. If that doesn't sound intriguing, I don't know what does! The goal is for your dog to independently run out to a group of yoga balls and push each one with their nose back to a goal post – all without your help.

Joring

Joring is a catch-all term for pulling sports, and it's perfect for fit dogs and

outdoorsy owners! The dog is hitched to anything from a person on skis (skijoring) to a bicycle (bikejoring) or even a person on foot (canicross). The dog learns to throw their weight into the harness and pull forward, similar to a sled dog. They must also learn cues to control speed and direction.

One of the most important considerations in joring sports is getting a proper harness. It's a good idea to look up online specialty stores that can help you select the right pulling harness, to prevent injuries (for example, there should never be a horizontal strap across the shoulders, but unfortunately some brands sell these as pulling harnesses). If you have a particularly enthusiastic canine partner, you might also want to check in with a canine physiotherapist to ensure that your dog is physically fit and won't injure themselves.

Scent Training

Have you ever seen a dog at the airport checking all the luggage and passengers? Did you know that your dog can learn to do this too? Our dogs not only have an amazing sense of smell, but they actually have a significantly larger portion of their brain dedicated to processing smell! Because this is such a natural activity,

most dogs find an inherent interest and joy in learning to sniff out smells.

Scent training can encompass anything from tracking smells on the ground to air scenting for search and rescue to checking a set of containers or specific locations in a room for an odour the dog has been trained to search out. That last version is generally the easiest to find at dog training schools, and the added bonus is that it's easy to do indoors and in a smaller space.

Have fun with your dog this winter! Get out there and enjoy the snow, of course, but then come inside and engage yourself and your dog in a new activity. Your dog will thank you for it. And you'll thank yourself when your dog is sleeping instead of pestering you for another game of fetch!



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

In Memoriam



Twiggy
LOVED BY TORBAR FAMILY
ADOPTED MARCH 2009



Glory
LOVED BY ANGELA
ADOPTED 2012



Maxwell
LOVED BY RAY AND MARGARET
FOREVER IN FOSTER