



Rescue Plan to the Rescue!

We all know that COVID times were challenging, isolating, and emotionally draining for many people around the globe. Processing the loss of a loved one, unable to physically connect with family and friends, managing frustrated children who could not socialize with their classmates, and for many, the downright loneliness and seclusion were devastating. Humans turned to canines for companionship, comfort, and support like no other time in history. Record numbers of puppies and dogs were purchased online, most were from puppy mills, backyard breeders and some even came from faraway lands. ‘Puppy cons’ became common when scammers asked for deposits and then disappeared, only to pop up again with a new name, website, or FB page with different breeds of puppies that didn’t exist.

For rescues, it was a landscape that we’d never experienced before. We would receive anywhere from 20-30 applications for one adoptable dog. At one point, we needed to add extra volunteers to read over the applications and take the dog off the site quickly before 30 more applications could come in. Volunteer applications were also coming in daily from people who wanted to help homeless dogs in any way possible. Working from home offered them flexibility and time to foster a dog, help with admin, clean our storage locker and/or drive dogs from A to B. The offer of help was unprecedented and appreciated – however there were only so many jobs available and only so much one could do in a lockdown scenario. One night, I received a link to an online training video on “How to Foster a Dog”. It was from a young woman who had applied to foster for us, and she thought it would be helpful to share it. The video was done by a ‘trainer’ who was telling her new foster parents how important it was to be the alpha boss, how to read canine body language and how to be dominant over the dog you are fostering; it was vital, she advised, that you show them you were the ‘pack leader’. Watching that video was a heartbreaker (especially when there is now so much solid and proven information that has been available for years) and knowing that the information provided was not only going to be confusing, stressful, and potentially harmful for dogs, but it could also put foster parents at risk by following this protocol.

With so many folks interested in fostering, and with the recent circulating misinformation, we needed a way to educate and prepare as many people as we could ‘all at once’ AND with the accurate, informative information of knowledgeable trainers. While our foster manual has always been a useful training tool, it’s a written document and not interactive or visual. I reached out to our merry band of dog trainers (many you know from our newsletter column “Ask the Trainer”) and explained (and forwarded) the video I had watched the previous night and asked for feedback. I heard back from Andrea Dinan, owner of City Dogs, who suggested a series of Zoom webinars, perhaps one a week, on training, body language and common behaviour challenges. It was brilliant in so many ways – people were home and couldn’t go anywhere, the meetings could



be attended by more than just potential foster parents -why not invite other rescues, shelter staff, adopters, and the dog-loving public? We set up a group chat where we could all bounce ideas around and, before you knew it, we had a list of topics, dog trainers willing to host, a Zoom link, and a designated night and time! I remember fondly sending reminders to all our volunteers, FB groups (including our own page), social media platforms and to other rescues. By the second week, word had spread that extremely helpful behaviour and training webinars were happening each Tuesday night! The sessions were called “Webinars to the Rescue” and the first one came to life on April 14, 2020.

Andrea, Carla, Maggi, and several other trainers did an incredible job every week – educating and imparting their knowledge to so many eager attendees. Despite the great deal of work getting photos, videos, and Power Point presentations ready, for months during the pandemic they soldiered on helping humans to understand dogs better. It wasn’t long before Andrea and Carla saw a greater need. Carla notes, “The same questions were being asked and people were looking for solutions. Maybe we needed more than just another webinar series.” Andrea agreed, and the two put their heads together to create a program that could better serve the dog rescue community. Together, they came up with a 4-module training program that covered Decompression, Ready to Learn Inside, Ready to Learn Outside and Feeling Safe. The program also offers insight into calming games, recalls and treat/retreat and includes access to free Q&A if needed.

“Our focus for The Rescue Plan is threefold” says Andrea. “One is to help the dog, two is to help the foster/adopter and three is to help the rescue organization”. Speaking of Dogs Rescue implemented The Rescue Plan for all foster parents a couple of years ago and couldn’t be more pleased with the results and feedback. Even foster parents who have been with us for years commented on how they learned from the program; some said it was a ‘well presented refresher course’. “Its user-friendly format is helpful to those of us who struggle with technology. It was so interesting to learn and understand from the dog’s perspective during the course. I liked that there were mini quizzes after each lesson”, said one of our foster moms.

Andrea and Carla wanted to keep The Rescue Plan “training neutral” in terms of methodology, so that people from all camps can support new adopters and perhaps add to their foundation skills. “When we were creating the program, this was very much in the front of our minds. Everything that we did was from the baseline of kindness, empathy, and solid foundation

work”, adding “Andrea and I approached with the mindset of empowering people by educating them on body language and Best Practices, promoting empathy, kindness and patience – which helps people recognize when a dog is making progress, even though it feels like the boulder has only moved an inch”, explains Carla. The creators want the program to offer a resource of support and education to avoid rescue organization volunteers getting caught in a cycle of burnout. “The Rescue Plan does not draw on the resources of the rescue agencies; rather it’s a resource-saver. We’ve created a streamline of information and support, no matter where the dog lands.” says Andrea.

Speaking of Dogs Rescue is so proud and honoured to be a part of The Rescue Plan and to have been consulted during its creation. The program rolled out flawlessly and is a top-notch program that we are proud to use, promote and stand beside! Hopefully, more rescues will jump on board and join The Rescue Plan! We owe it to the dogs we take into our care to do everything we can to understand and communicate appropriately with them. Once we can do that, we can better help them and find them the most suited best-fit families.

About the Creators: Andrea Dinan (CPDT-KA, FFCT, KAD, LFDM-T), owner of City Dogs and Carla Filies (CPDT-KA, CTDI), owner of Walking the Six. The Rescue Plan can be found at this link: <https://educanine.org/the-rescue-plan>



Lorraine Houston

President and founder of Speaking of Dogs



The Step Up for the Pups walkathon was a grand success
thanks to our participants and supporters!

Many dogs will be vetted, cared for and loved because of this fundraiser.

BIG WAGS to all!



WWW.SPEAKINGOFDOGS.COM

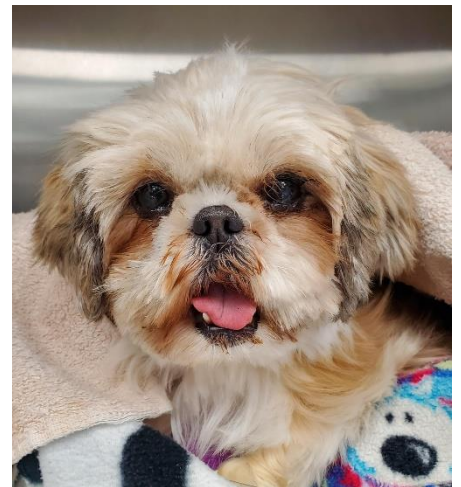
DOGS LOOKING FOR HOMES

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 pictures and you'll be taken to our available dogs.

Meet our July Feature Dog: **Lana**

Lana, an approximately 7-year-old, 8-pound Shih tzu came to us from a puppy mill. On arrival, we discovered that her teeth were so badly rotten that her jaw had broken. Obviously, she was in quite a bit of pain and couldn't eat. She was quickly seen by an oral surgeon specialist who, after removing her remaining 13 teeth, advised us that her broken jaw would heal, but in such a way that she might never be able to completely close her mouth. However, he assured us that she was pain free and on the mend. After her surgery, she started to eat, run, bounce, wag her tail and just relax and live the way a dog should. Her personality is slowly emerging, and she is looking and feeling a lot better. Being from a puppy mill, and because she's so small, Lana is fearful of walking on stairs and on leash. At this point she needs to be carried up and down the stairs and her leash-walking is a work in progress.



She will need support with housetraining and confidence building. She is still quite shy around people, great with other dogs and very sweet. She lived 7 years in a barn, repeatedly giving birth to puppies for a puppy miller's profit! It's time she found a loving, caring home where she can live her life surrounded by a family that will cherish her.

If you think you would be a good match for Lana, please fill out an application for our consideration.

[Click here](#) to visit our adoption application



Mary & Tink
Yorkshire Terrier Yorkie (short coat)
Small Senior Females



Stella Pomsy
Pomeranian / American Eskimo Dog/
Mixed (long coat) Female



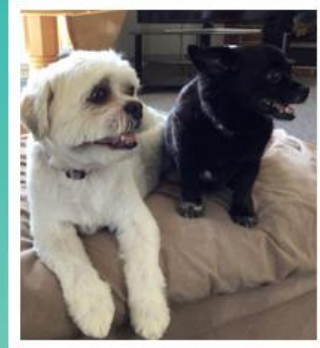
Milo
Yorkshire Terrier Yorkie / Mixed
(short coat) Male



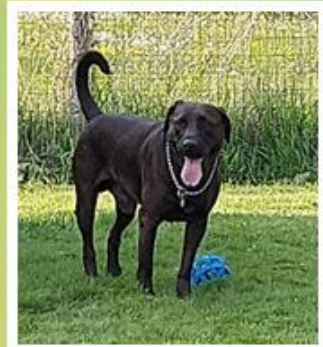
Jelly
Beagle (short coat)
Female



Shep
German Shepherd
Medium Young Male



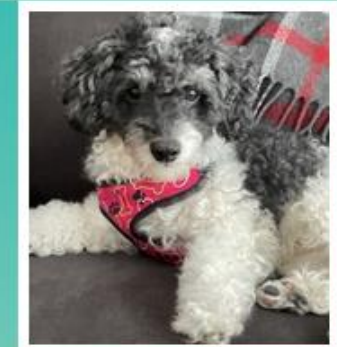
Benji & Fifi
Shih Tzu / Mixed (short coat)
Small Senior Male & Female



Boomer
Labrador Retriever / Mastiff / Mixed
(short coat) Male



Prince
Maltese / Poodle (Miniature) / Mixed
(long coat) Male

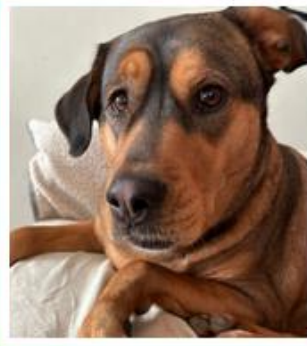


Benny
Poodle (Toy)
(short coat) Male



Pumpkin

Poodle (Miniature) / Retriever / Mixed
(short coat) Medium Adult



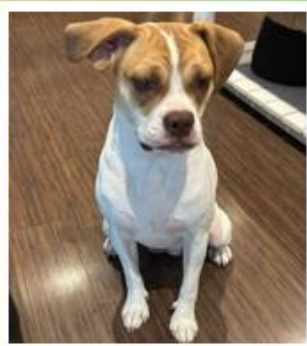
Danny

Mastiff / Labrador Retriever / Mixed
(short coat) Female



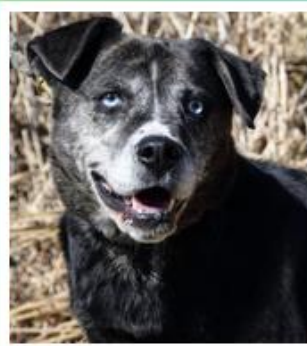
Tootsie

Wheaten Terrier / Poodle (Miniature) /
Mixed (medium coat) Female



Daisy May

American Bulldog / Mixed
Female



Reggie

Catahoula Leopard Dog /
Labrador Retriever / Mixed
(short coat) Male



Leo

Beagle / Mixed (short coat)
Male



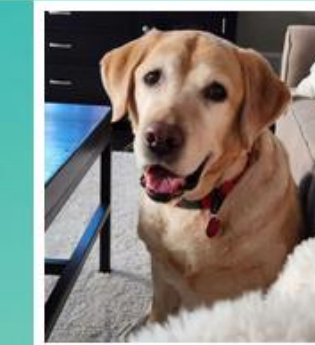
Nala

Retriever / Mixed (long coat)
Female



Cherry

Poodle (Standard) / Golden Retriever /
Mixed (short coat) Female



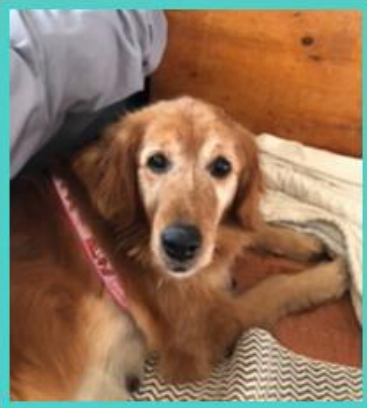
Bailey

Labrador Retriever
(short coat) Female

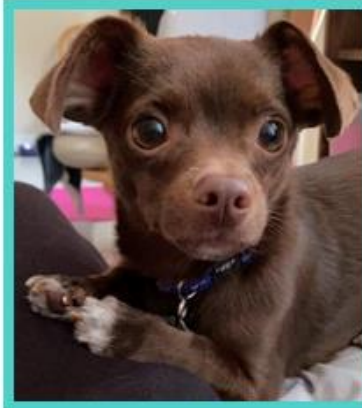


HAPPY TAILS

Recent Adoptions



Holly



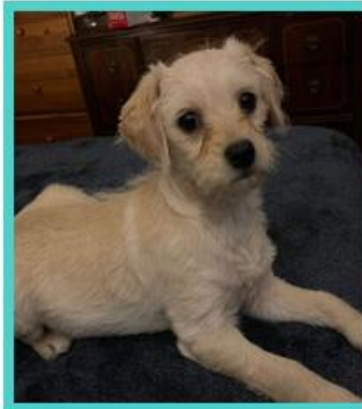
Bear



Cameo



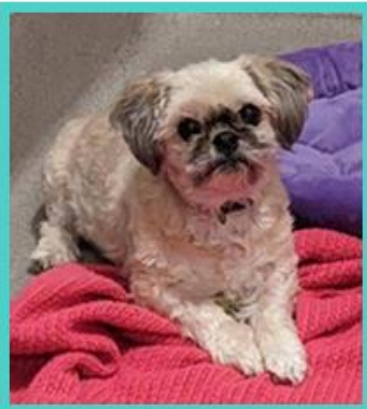
Harley



Marsha



Missy



Nella



Rosie



ADOPTION UPDATE

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

We met our beloved Dude a year ago this month.

He has been an absolute delight; loving, smart, a character, and the most youthful 13.5-year-old on the block!

Comfortable in his skin, Dude fit right into the family in no time. He always lies with one eye on his people, and the other on the treat jar. Drawn to the beach, he rushes as fast as he can to the shore, slams the breaks on and then delicately tiptoes through the first few inches of water, careful not to get too wet. Dude jumped right on the welcome bandwagon when we brought home our other senior pup from Speaking of Dogs Rescue six months later, sharing his bed, coats and the best vantage point to watch the squirrels. A kind boy with a big heart, well trained and full of tricks, Dude has enriched our lives.

We are thankful to all the dedicated volunteers and the open arms that brought Dude to ours.

Sincerely, Louise and Robyn



IN MEMORIAM



Chili

Loved by Carol and all of us at Speaking of Dogs Rescue



Murphy

Loved by Jennifer, Robyn, John and all of us at Speaking of Dogs Rescue



Cheyenne aka Betty

Loved by Tamara and all of us at Speaking of Dogs Rescue

About Speaking of Dogs

Speaking of Dogs Rescue Program is a Canadian registered charity established in the Greater Toronto area (with foster homes across Ontario). Launched in 2001, we are a foster-based, all breed rescue with a focus on senior dogs. We are run solely by volunteers with a mission to help homeless dogs in need by providing shelter or sanctuary, necessary medical care, adoption and education.

Newsletter Team

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