

The official Speaking of Dogs Monthly Newsletter

DECEMBER 2023

In this Month's Newsletter:

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Adoption Update • Recent Adoptions • In Memoriam*



ASK THE TRAINER

Holiday Safety for Your Pup

For all pet owners, the holiday season means being extra prepared. So much happens – family and friends get together, the house gets decorated, and doorbells ring with carolers or deliveries. Being prepared for all the bustle includes ensuring your pet's safety and comfort throughout this time. Below are some tips to help you ensure your holiday season is fun and safe for everyone, including your dog – it's amazing what they can get into!

Preparing for Visitors and Visiting

If you have visitors coming into the house – neighbors, co-workers, friends, relatives – some of whom your dog doesn't know or regularly see, it can be more confusing and stressful than you might imagine. Make sure that you're watching your dog during the visit, keeping them safe and comfortable, so that they don't get overwhelmed or over-excited, as this could lead to some bad behaviours that you don't want to see.

We also suggest you keep an eye on your company, as some of the folks coming to your home might not be dog-friendly people. If they aren't, you might have to put your pet in a comfortable, safe space away from the guests. If there are children in the group – especially young ones – be sure to watch your pup to keep everyone safe, perhaps using a leash or a tether around your waist to keep your dog close. There also might be places you'll be invited over the holidays when your pup may need to stay home.

When leaving your pet at home, realize they may find new ways to get into trouble, as there might be ornaments and decorations around at this time of year. Always make sure your dog is secured and well exercised so that, when you leave, they are tired out. I crate my dog and give her a stuffed KONG, something to entertain her while I'm out. Normally she just rests because we've exercised her.

If you are going somewhere overnight, be prepared for your dog too! Bring food, toys, and their crate, bed, or sleeping blanket. If you have puzzle games or things that they like to have fun with – pack them. If it's a new environment, familiarize your dog with it when you get there because it'll be new surroundings, new smells, new everything. Also, don't forget to pack any medications, supplements, or special food – ensure you consider all of your dog's needs.

Size can matter! If and there are disabled or senior people in the home, a tiny dog can get underfoot and potentially trip someone. – you will have to take precautions to keep everyone safe.

Deliveries – watch that door!

With people coming and going and deliveries, the doorbell ringing, knocking at the door, or strange trucks pulling into your driveway, your dogs will get excited and can bark. If you want to curb the barking, you could teach your dog to go to a mat or place, just to focus while people come in and get settled. With in and out traffic, really watch that your dog is safe and can't scoot out the door.

Trees and Other Decorations

Many of us love to entertain and decorate our homes – so, what are some of the things to be prepared for when we have dogs?

When you get your tree – if it's a real tree – watch for the needles as they start to drop, to make sure your dog doesn't ingest them, as they are not good for them. Also, watch your dog does not access water that you put in the base of the tree. That water is not good for your dog either.



In terms of ornaments, if you have a very inquisitive dog or one that's very large, consider what you're putting around the bottom of your tree. Are there things that they can break? Avoid putting things within their reach like popcorn or cranberry strings, which might tempt them to grab at the food and pull; they could literally bring the whole tree down. Many people put little bells on their bottom branches, so they get that warning when anyone is close to the base of the tree. Some people even tether their tree, attaching it to something for extra stability. – Be very conscious of where the electrical wires and cords are so that your dog, if a chewer, can't chew or get tangled in them and, again, potentially hurt themselves or bring the tree down.

Other seasonal decorations are the plants that come into your house. One that's most typical is the poinsettia plant, which is not lethally toxic for your dog. However, if consumed, it can make them extremely ill and will definitely send you to the vet for care! So, try to pick up any leaves or petals that fall from the plant to avoid your dog sniffing around and deciding it's something good to eat. Two toxic plants to be aware of and which must not be accessible to your dog are mistletoe and holly. So, keep them either very high out of the way, or consider not having them in the house at all.

With evergreen garlands and such, as long as your dog can't get to them, and you're picking up any needle droppings, you are safe having them in your house.

Scents and Candles

Going hand in hand with the indoor decor are the scents and fragrances of Christmas that people love, such as scented candles and different oils burning in the house. Keep these high up so your dog can't get to them. If your dog tipped one over and you didn't notice, that could start a fire. Be aware of the type of candle – the quality of it and the ingredients. If you're burning a lot of candles in a smaller enclosed area, they can overwhelm your dogs as well. Your dog's scenting ability is so much more acute than yours and it really can be off-putting and even damaging to them, so please be very careful. If the scented oils are very concentrated, and if they happen to get on your dog's coat or paws and they lick it, it can be very bad for them. A safer alternative are plug-in scents. But again, we would recommend that you check them first for potency and safety. Consider the size of your room and make sure the scent is not too overwhelming for your dog.



Festive Food and Drinks

There is a lot of food around at holiday time. One training tip is to teach the “leave it” command, as it's important when you want them not to touch the charcuterie board, cheese and crackers, nuts and such that are on the table. At dinner, make sure that the dogs aren't begging your guests for food. Some holiday food and treats are toxic to your dog. Those include chocolate, raisins, grapes, macadamia nuts, and sugarless products that contain Xylitol. So, when you're putting out a box of chocolates, make sure that it's nowhere near your pup, because your dog can easily unwrap it with its teeth. And if they eat it, it can make them sick.

Ensure too that your dog can't get into any alcoholic drinks that are being consumed.

Some people love to feed their dogs scraps. The fats from meats and cheeses can be dangerous if they're ingested by your dogs. The bones and fat from ham, turkey and other meats can cause pancreatitis or intestinal blocks, so avoid feeding them to the dog. Also, mesh wrappers that are on some food items will have tempting smells but can cause bowel obstruction if ingested, and then you've got a trip to the vet! Dogs will also get into trash cans, especially if they can smell that “really good stuff”. So, being extra vigilant about everything that you have around when you're entertaining for the holidays is essential.

Corey McCusker, CPDT-KA
Corey is the founder of Muttz with Mannerz
Canine Academy located in Stouffville. In
addition, Corey is an evaluator for St John
Ambulance Therapy Dog Program and created
the first Kids & K9 Camp in Canada.





Raffle tickets are digital, so you will get your lucky numbers by email



Hockey Raffle

Maple Leafs vs. Anaheim Ducks



Tickets are one for \$10.00 or three for \$25.00
Raffle begins November 30 and runs to December 14th with the
lucky ticket announced December 15th

Game is Saturday Feb. 17, 2024 at 7pm
(Scotiabank Arena)
GOLD SEATS – SECTION 122, ROW – 19

Email speakingofdogs@gmail.com for tickets stating how many
you would like

Online payments only
Please do not pay until you get your lucky numbers

amazon wish lists

Want to help our dogs?
Consider making a donation from one of our Amazon wish lists.



Can you lend a Paw?

Speaking of Dogs Rescue benefits from:

- People purchasing gift certificates from FundScrip. [Go to FundScrip using our link.](#)
- [Gifted](#) – is an online invitation, RSVP management, cash registry and fundraising platform that allows hosts to donate any portion of their cash gifts to a charity of their choice. Speaking of Dogs Rescue can now be chosen as the charity that will benefit from a [GIFTED](#) party.
- Visit our donation web page by clicking [here](#)





DOGS LOOKING FOR HOMES

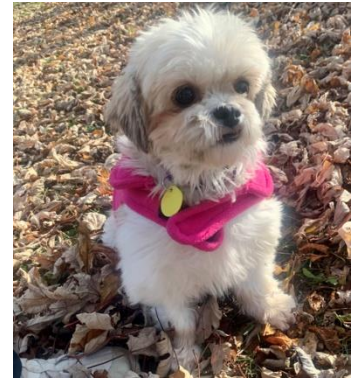
A friend in need is a friend indeed

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 December Feature Dog: Anita

Anita is a lovely 5-year-old female shih tzu previously used as a puppy mill mom.

She is learning that being a loved dog comes with the benefits of playtime and lots of positive praise and petting. She is so overcome with joy when her mom comes home from work that she wiggles her tail fast and just doesn't know what to do with herself. Anita loves running outside in the garden, playing chase, and is a curious girl who loves to walk along the fence line of the property, investigating smells outside the chicken coop or saying hello to her four-legged friend living next door. Anita has a great relationship with one of the cats she lives with and they lay on beds next to each other when hanging out in the kitchen or living room. The family's second cat is very aloof and so doesn't appreciate the benefit of Anita's sociability. She would be fine as a solo dog or could live with other dogs or cats.



At night Anita usually sleeps on a doggie bed on the floor in the kitchen but recently has also decided that, some nights she prefers to lay right outside the door of her foster mom's bedroom.

Anita is good at the vet and the groomer and is slowly learning to walk on a leash. She is fine in a car, however doesn't like confined spaces like crates.

Her ideal forever home would be to live with someone who is there during the day so she could continue learning how great life can be when she has a loving place to call her own. A fenced yard is a must, since she loves exploring outside.

If you are interested in giving Anita a place to call home, please fill out an application for our consideration.

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



Miller

Labrador Retriever / Shepherd / Mixed
Short Coat
Male



Charlotte

Bichon Frise / West Highland White Terrier
Westie / Mixed
Medium Coat
Female



Harvey

Poodle (Miniature) / Golden Retriever /
Mixed
Medium Coat
Male



Shep

German Shepherd
Male



Rocco

Poodle (Miniature) / Golden Retriever /
Mixed
Medium Coat



Allie

Shih Tzu / Mixed
Medium Coat
Female



Lucy

Shih Tzu / Mixed
Medium Coat
Female



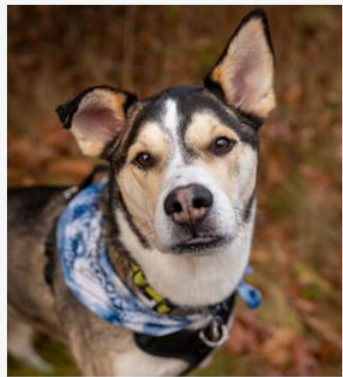
Dexter

Golden Retriever / Poodle (Miniature) /
Mixed
Medium Coat
Male



Dude

Shih Tzu / Poodle (Miniature) / Mixed
Short Coat
Male



Pogo
Husky / Mixed
Medium Coat
Male



Cinder
Poodle (Miniature)
Medium Coat
Female



Reggie
Catahoula Leopard Dog / Labrador
Retriever / Mixed
Short Coat
Male



Maggie
Shih Tzu
Short Coat
Female



Leela
Shih Tzu / Mixed
Short Coat
Female



Benji & Fifi
Shih Tzus / Mixed
Short Coat
Male & Female



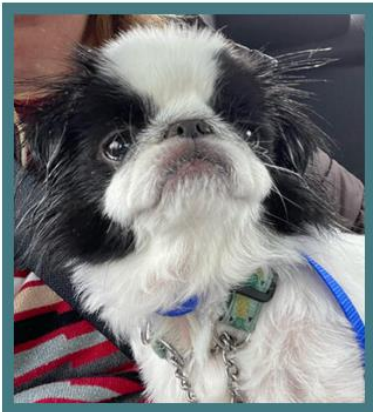
Prince
Maltese / Poodle (Miniature) / Mixed
Long Coat
Male

🐾 New Adoption Fee for 2024 🐾

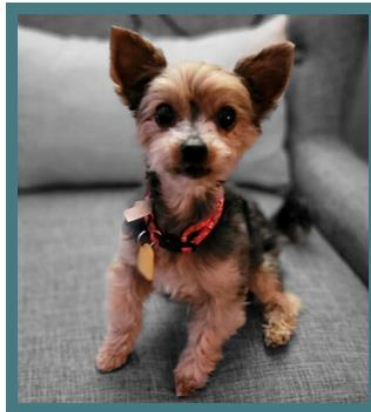
Please note the Speaking of Dogs Rescue adoption *fee will be increased on January 1, 2024*, from \$500 to \$525 to keep up with the rising costs of veterinary care, medication, grooming, microchips, and other dog-related supply costs.



HAPPY TAILS



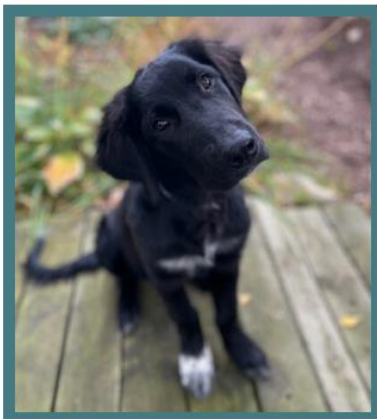
Gizmo



Dumpling



Genesis



Guinness



Kyle



Thank you Lisa Charlton!

Many thanks to Lisa Charlton for creating yet another amazing holiday ornament for Speaking of Dogs volunteers!

Lisa has been a contributor and supporter for many years, and we can't thank her enough for her time and talent!

You can visit Lisa's stunning artwork at www.lisacharltongallery.com

Thank you Lisa!



ADOPTION UPDATE

Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

Chloe and I have settled in together smoothly. She is a gem and a smart girl. We went to obedience classes last fall/winter and she did very well. We are now signed up for agility classes and Chloe is a natural with the courses! It's a learning experience for me, as well and a great bonding experience. Not only that, she is a Therapy Dog with St John Ambulance! We make regular visits to a retirement home and today we are visiting students at a high school. She is my little her!

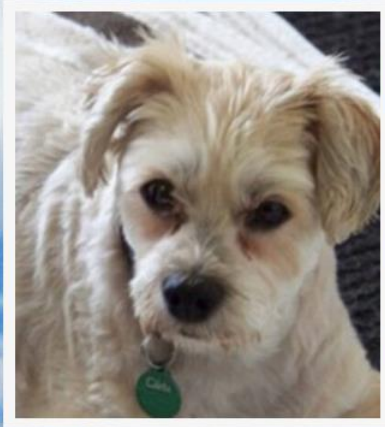
I receive the Speaking of Dogs newsletter and have picked up some very helpful tips from the articles.

I can't thank Speaking of Dogs enough.

Bonnie and Chloe



In Memoriam



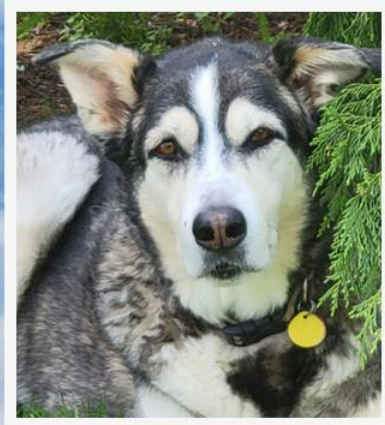
Gilda

Adopted May 2022
Loved by Dina Bagg and family



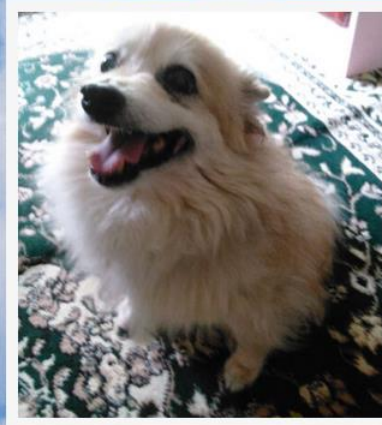
Quinn

Forever in Foster
Loved by Robyn & John Rood



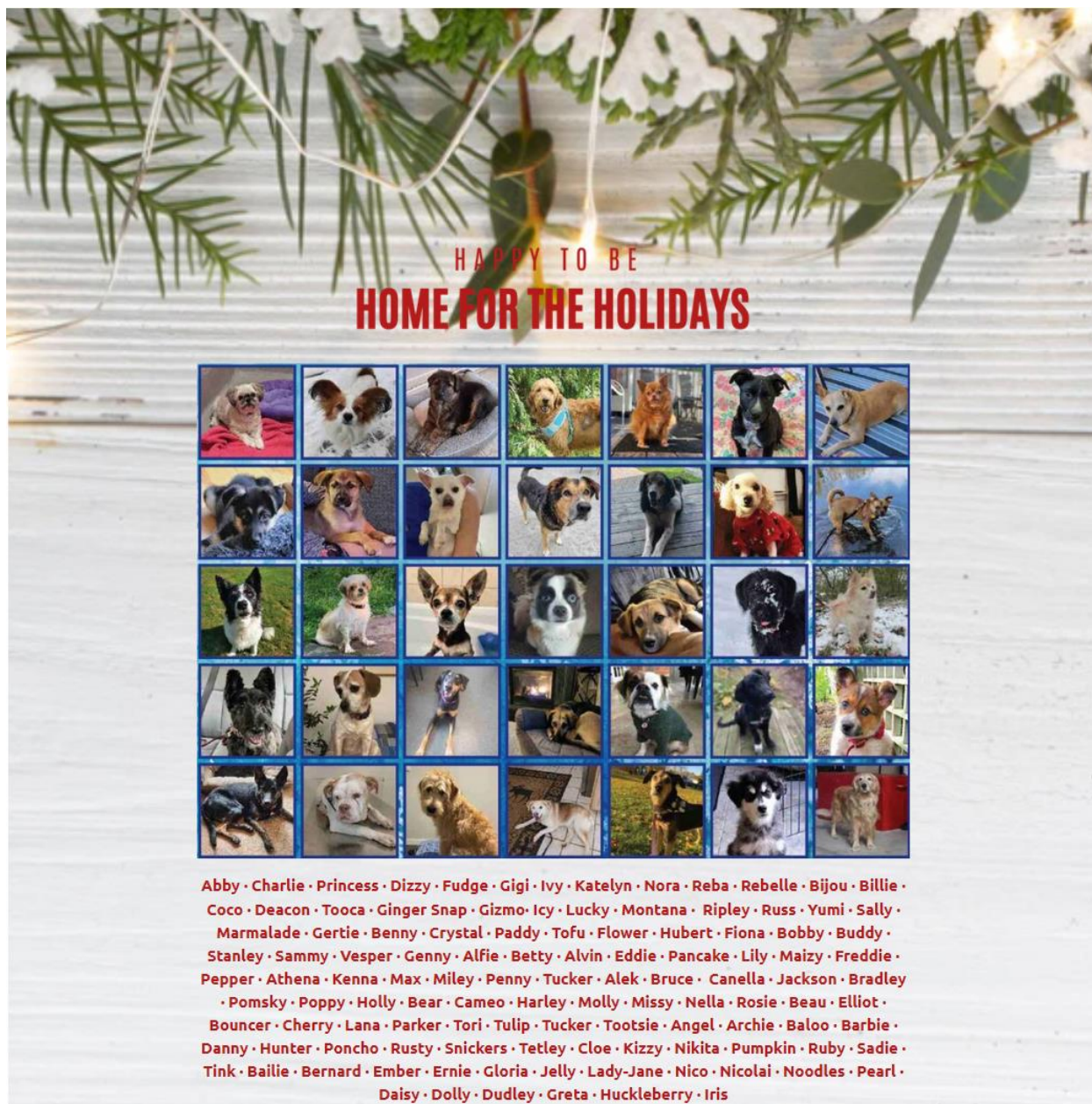
Louis

Adopted November 2020
Loved by the Houston family



Ricky

Adopted August 2019
Loved by Pam Collie



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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