

The official Speaking of Dogs Monthly Newsletter

# MAY 2024

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## Calling all dog lovers!

Put your best paw forward and join us for a tail-wagging good time at our fundraising dog walk June 22nd!



In honour of the dogs we've loved and lost, this year we are calling our annual fundraiser

 'Step Up for the Pups: Rainbow Walk' 

Funds raised will go towards the medical care of dogs in our foster programs.

Stepping up for the Pups is easy. Just set up a fundraising page on the [Canada Helps site](#) by clicking on [Create a Fundraiser](#) and following the instructions. Then it's simply a matter of sharing far and wide to help raise funds between now and June 22nd! This year, you have the choice of walking on the day by yourself or walking with other supporters at Woofstock at Woodbine Park (details will be provided to walkers in the coming weeks). Whichever way you walk, you can take part with or without a dog. Participants can compete and win gift certificates for the most money raised, the farthest distance walked, and the best social media promoting the walk. Complete details can be found on our [Step Up for the Pups web page](#).

If you cannot take part in the walk itself, you can pledge your support to one of our participants through our special [Canada Helps page](#) which will issue a tax receipt to you immediately. Pledge your support for a Participant by clicking on **Fundraisers** (next to About Campaign) or by filling out the form at the bottom of that page and choosing a participant in the drop-down box to support.

You can also help us by 'sharing' our posts about the walk and about the dogs from our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Once again, this year, we're hoping as many people as possible will take part in our Step Up for the Pups walk and help us help dogs!

For more information about Step Up for the Pups and how you can help, please visit the [Speaking of Dogs website!](#)

### Meet Some of the Pups Our Rescue Has Helped!



By participating in our Step Up for the Pups walk, you'll be enabling us to treat dogs like Lana, who came to us with a broken jaw, Gizmo who needed a cystotomy, and Kenna, Rudy and Pumpkin who all had a genetic heart condition that needed surgery called a PDA to close the leaking blood vessel. Flower, Gertie, Canella, Missy, Jelly, Bean and Lily all came from Northern Manitoba through our partner rescues and now have happy, loving homes to call their own.

We continue to help puppy mill survivors. Over the last year we've helped free 50 moms, dads and pups from a life of misery, loneliness and suffering. They will no longer be used to line the pockets of greedy millers and backyard breeders.

As you may remember, Speaking of Dogs Rescue took 15 of the 29 dogs from a hoarding case in the Brantford area in 2022. All the dogs found new families in a relatively short time period except one fellow, named Reggie, who just couldn't seem to grab anyone's attention despite his stunning looks and crystal blue eyes. Being shy, skittish, not housetrained and dog selective didn't help his cause but his foster mom sang his attributes and training progress on a regular basis. In late February we received an application for Reggie (thanks to other rescues sharing him on their site) that ticked all his boxes and then some! We announced his successful adoption on March 24, 2024 on social media noting that his time in rescue was 543 days, the longest we've ever had a dog in foster care!



We approved 46 dental surgeries last year for our senior friends who came to us with rotting and abscessed teeth.

We continue to receive owner surrender forms on a regular basis as people struggle with affordability issues, lack of time and commitment and regret at acquiring a dog during COVID. Shelters contact us frequently because they are full of dogs who are getting no adoption interest, which seems to be an "across the board" challenge as adoptions sink to all time lows.

In 2023 we found homes for over 120 dogs, supported 28 Forever in Foster dogs, sponsored 31 dogs through Blackie's Fund and participated in several northern community spay/neuter clinics.

Please help us continue our dog rescue efforts by walking in or sponsoring our Step up for the Pups – our coffers need replenishing and many dogs need us.

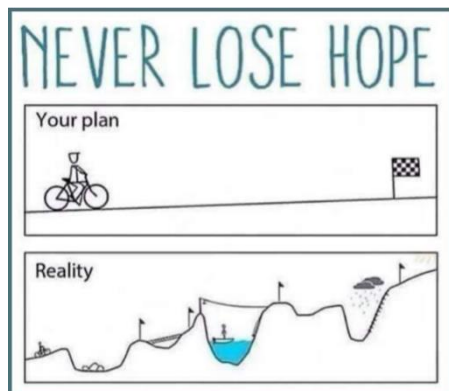
Visit our [Canada Helps page](#) and Step Up for the Pups!

## Ask the Trainer

*Learning is a Journey, not a Destination*

Originally, this article was titled “Training is a Journey, not a Destination.” However, the word “training” didn’t quite capture the essence of what I wanted to convey. You see, when we talk about training, it often seems like it’s only the dog’s end of the leash that’s doing the learning. In reality, both humans and dogs embark on a journey of learning together. The term “training” tends to focus too much on achieving a specific skill or task, suggesting that learning has a finite endpoint. In reality, the journey of learning is a dynamic and lifelong adventure, filled with its share of highs and lows. Learning is far from being a straightforward process; it’s influenced not only by our dog’s age and experience but also by their adaptability and attitude. Let’s take a closer look at what this journey actually entails:

As our dogs learn new behaviours, adapt to changes in their habits, or navigate through unfamiliar environments, it’s natural for there to be ups and downs along the way. But why does this happen?



Age certainly plays a role, but not in the sense of “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” Senior dogs are just as capable of learning and should continue to do so to keep life exciting and to maintain their zest for learning. Witnessing a senior dog taking up a new hobby or mastering a new trick is truly heartwarming. After all, if we humans stopped learning around the age of 12, life would quickly become dull and uninspiring.

Puppies, on the other hand, are like little sponges—they soak up information readily. However, it often seems like they forget just as quickly. This is because their brains are still developing, and they haven’t yet grasped the concept of generalizations. For example, they might not understand that jumping on people is unacceptable, not only inside the house but outside too. The adolescent phase can also be a bit tumultuous for some dogs. This is because the part of their brain responsible for impulse control—the prefrontal cortex—is the last to mature. As a result, behaviours like barking at other dogs, pulling on the leash, or darting out the front door are often more prevalent during this stage.

Just like adolescent humans, dogs can be moody, and their mood significantly impacts their ability to learn. Dogs experience a wide range of emotions, from excitement and curiosity to fear and anxiety, regardless of their age. A dog in a positive mood is more receptive to learning, while a dog in a negative mood may be less motivated. It’s essential to recognize and address their emotional state to create a conducive learning environment that fosters trust, confidence, and enthusiasm. If your pup isn’t in the mood to learn, engaging them in activities that alleviate their stress or anxiety can be more productive than forcing them to train.

Internal pain issues can also significantly affect a dog’s ability to learn and behave. However, detecting such issues can be challenging, as dogs are masters at hiding their discomfort and can’t communicate their pain verbally. A general rule of thumb is that, if behaviours seem random and lack a discernible pattern, there’s likely an underlying internal issue at play. Regular veterinary check-ups and attentive observation by dog owners are essential for detecting and addressing these issues.

So, what does all of this mean for us on the other end of the leash? First, it's crucial to have empathy and understand that dogs have good days and bad days, just like we do. On those challenging days, considering whether your dog isn't feeling their best and allowing your pup to relax and unwind—much like enjoying a “Netflix and chill” session—can be beneficial. Being consistent with your expectations of your dog, but having patience with their behavior in new environments can save you and your dog from frustration. Additionally, it's our responsibility to nurture a spirit of lifelong learning in our canine companions. By celebrating their curiosity, encouraging exploration, and providing support and guidance, we empower our dogs to thrive.

In embracing the journey of learning, we not only enable our dogs to reach their full potential but also deepen our bond with them, creating a partnership based on trust, communication, and mutual respect. So, let's cherish every step taken, every lesson learned, and every moment shared with our beloved companions, for in the end, it's not just about the destination but the journey itself.



Written by

**Andrea Dinan, CPDT-KA, LFDL-T, FFCT**

In addition to the certifications above, Andrea is certified through the Karen Pryor Foundations and Kids Around Dogs, and she has also taken the Masters Course in Dog Aggression through AggressiveDog.com. She is the founder of EduCanine and City Dogs Training & Behavior and also created “The Rescue Plan.”

**amazon wish lists**

Want to help our dogs?

Consider making a donation from our Amazon wish list of priority dog supplies.

[Click here to view list](#)



### **Thanks Global Pet Foods!**

Many thanks to Global Pet Foods Dupont and Eglinton West stores for choosing us for the SHOW US YOUR HEART campaign! We are so grateful to Global Pet Foods for their support and generosity for our rescue efforts! BIG WAGS to all and to Kim who reached out!

Community connections are so important Speaking of Dogs was founded in 2001 and born in Toronto. Most of our foster families are in the GTA and while a few fosters moved out of the city, they still actively foster dogs for us. We have broadened our horizons but our roots remain in Toronto.

## Dogs Looking for Homes

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).

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## Meet our May Feature Dog: **LIBBY**



Libby is an almost 5-year-old shih tzu puppy mill survivor currently living in a home with 2 other small dogs. She was very timid and nervous when she came to the rescue but is slowly coming out of her shell. She's cautious around new people. Playing with her foster siblings and her foster mom is her new thing. Most of the time Libby prefers to be on her own in her quiet corner but she has been venturing out to see what everyone else is doing, and asking to be petted. She loves to have her ears and butt scratched.

Going for walks in the good weather is something Libby enjoys; she walks beside you and does not pull on the leash. She enjoys car rides and usually settles down quickly and goes to sleep. Libby is still uncomfortable being picked up and held, but has gotten much better about it and, with more time, will learn that she is safe and loved. At night, Libby likes to start out in a crate with the door open, but will often move to a bed beside her foster mom. In the morning, she will ask for her ears to be rubbed and scratched.

She is pee pad trained, but is going outside more often to do her business now. Libby has been vetted and is up to date. She had pancreatitis when she first came, but with medication and a low-fat diet, she has made a full recovery.

A forever home with another small dog would be ideal for Libby and she definitely needs people who are going to be home much of the time to provide her with the care and love she deserves. She has not been around cats or small children, however she'd most likely be fine with cats.

**If you think you are the right fit for Libby, please fill out an application for our consideration.**

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





**Moose**  
Saint Bernard  
Short Coat  
X-Large, Adult, Male



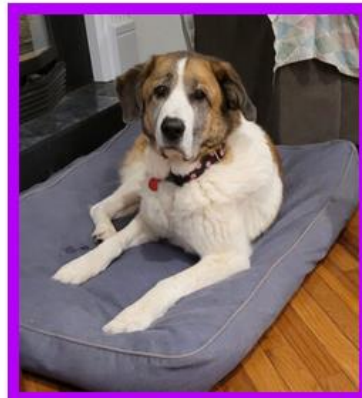
**Piper**  
Maltese / Poodle (Toy) / Mixed  
Medium Coat  
Small, Senior, Female



**Gracii**  
German Shepherd  
Short Coat  
Medium, Adult, Female



**Lily**  
Brittany  
Long Coat  
Medium, Adult, Female



**Hannah a.k.a. Anna**  
Saint Bernard / Collie / Mixed  
Medium Coat  
Large, Senior, Female



**Fripette**  
Poodle (Toy)  
Short Coat  
Small, Senior, Female



**Pogo**  
Husky / Mixed  
Medium Coat  
Large, Adult, Male



**Lylla**  
Terrier / Shepherd / Mixed  
Short Coat  
Medium, Adult, Female



**Freya**  
Poodle (Miniature)  
Short Coat  
Medium, Adult, Female



**Bella**  
Saint Bernard  
Short Coat  
X-Large, Adult, Female



**Reese**  
Yorkshire Terrier (Yorkie)  
Short Coat  
Small, Young, Female



**Ande**  
Shepherd / Labrador Retriever / Mixed  
Short Coat  
Medium, Adult, Male



**Max**  
Beagle / Mixed  
Short Coat  
Medium, Senior, Male



**Rufus**  
Yorkshire Terrier (Yorkie)  
Medium Coat  
Medium, Adult, Male



**Bob**  
Labrador Retriever / Shepherd / Mixed  
Short Coat  
Large, Senior, Male



**Cinnamon**  
Poodle (Miniature) / Retriever / Mixed  
Short Coat  
Medium, Baby, Female





# Wishing all of our wonderful foster moms a very Happy Mother's Day!

## A Mother's Day poem from the dog



You feed me when I'm hungry,  
You keep water in my dish.  
You let me sleep on anything,  
Or in any place I wish



You Sometimes let me lick your hands,  
or even lick your face,  
Despite the fact I've licked myself  
In every private place.

You taught me how to come when called,  
You taught me how to sit.  
You always let me go outside,  
So I can take a S---

You'll always have my loyalty,  
Up to the bitter end,  
'Cause after all, it's plain to see,  
You are my best friend!

Happy Mother's Day!





# Happy Tails

*a.k.a. Recent Adoptions*



Bennie



Blaze



Fifi



Finn



Islay



Ollie

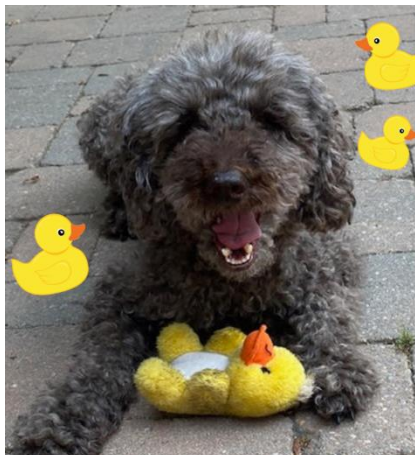


Roscoe



Winnie

## Adoption Update



Dear Speaking of Dogs Rescue,

Ridley (formerly Riley) took a while to become fully comfortable, but that was expected and did not present any behaviour problems. I knew he was coming into his full personality when he started barking at things that go by the house, including squirrels, other dogs, delivery trucks, the mailman, and odd noises. He has continued that to this day, but it only occurs at home and he is a joy to take on walks and visits to other people's homes. I just thank him for alerting me to a possible threat, and try to redirect him. He has a large collection of stuffy toys which he plays with on his own or carries in his mouth (sometimes while barking).

In the evenings, he comes to ask for a cuddle and I spend some time on the floor giving him long body strokes. He loves his dried duck tenders as treats, which are in a cookie jar on the kitchen counter. I was so pleased when he learned to scratch the cupboards to let me know he would like (another!) treat. He is a self-confident, alert, healthy and hearty boy.

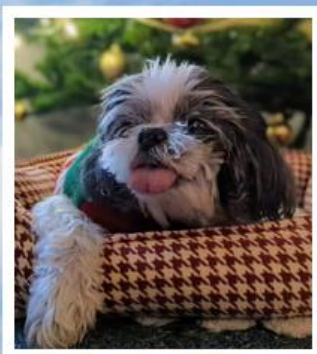
I receive the monthly newsletter and I have been making monthly donations as I really appreciate your organization's work.

Cheers,

**Tricia & Ridley**

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## In Memoriam



Momo aka China

Adopted October 2021

Loved by Janine and Kenneth

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## **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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