Our Lives Have Gone To The Dogs

By
Audrey Spilker Hagar and Eldad Hagar

Our Lives Have Gone To the Dogs

Story and photographs by Audrey Spilker Hagar and Eldad Hagar

copyright© 2009

This book is dedicated to all the stray and shelter animals hoping to be rescued, and in memory of those who never got their second chance.

Our Lives Have Gone To the Dogs; Second Edition

We created this edition with more photos and stories because we actually sold out of our first printing of *Our Lives Have Gone to the Dogs*. We could not have imagined the overwhelming reaction we would get from all over the world to the inspirational stories of stray and shelter animals defying all odds. We feel that we can help educate people on the proper way to treat our fellow animals. Together we can make a difference.

I have never known life without a dog. When I was born, my parent's Puli, Punim, welcomed me as the newest member of the household by proceeding to lick my face when I came home from the hospital. I, in return opened my mouth in delight. My germaphobic mother managed to restrain herself from separating us. She instinctively knew that this mutual love fest between the dog and baby was the start of a bond that would prove us inseparable for the remaining eight years of Punim's life. Punim was never jealous of the attention I took away from her. She accepted my clumsy petting, and tolerated my attempts to dress her up. From the day she met me until her death, she slept by my side. She was there throughout the most trying times of my childhood. Punim was my trusted friend and guardian.

At the same time I was growing up in Southern California, Eldad was a child in Northern Israel with the reputation in his town as the caretaker of the sick and lost animals. Everybody knew to seek him out when someone discovered an abandoned bird or motherless kittens. Eldad's parents gave him free reign to bring the animals into his home to help them survive. Eldad's dog Lady, an English Pointer mix, was ten-months-old when she greeted his arrival into the family.

Lady helped Eldad with the care and healing of all his orphaned animals. Lady became a mother to all the stray kittens who entered his house. She knew to provide them with the safety and comfort which was so important for their survival. She lovingly accepted the injured hedgehogs and the abandoned baby birds Eldad found as well. Lady died at the late age of seventeen, truly a hero to all who loved her.

Like others who were lucky enough to know such dogs as a Punim or a Lady, we cannot accept the horrible fate that awaits so many dogs in our community. Today in Los Angeles, as a married couple, we are on a mission. Whether an animal was abandoned and is minutes from being put to sleep at the pound, or is running scared and starved on the streets, we take that pet into our home and become its fosters. We rehabilitate these animals both physically and mentally by giving them the treatment they deserve. This means that they get lots of love, good food, and get to sleep in our bed. Finally, we find suitable homes for our fostered dogs, and we begin the process again. As long as the human mistreatment of these magnificent animals continues, we will not stop fighting for them.

The most common question people ask us is, "How can you give them away, don't you become attached?" We love every single dog we have ever fostered and although it is hard to give them up, we remind ourselves that they are going to great homes and that by letting them move on; we now have room to rescue another dog that desperately needs us.

Many of the people who have adopted our dogs keep in touch by sending us photos with e-mail updates. It gives us a lot of joy and comfort knowing we did the right thing. These dogs, who were not just suffering, but were about to be put to death in the shelters, are now happy and loved as they should have been their whole lives. The greatest thing about fostering and adopting animals is that anybody can do it. Anyone who fosters knows that we are the lucky ones. These amazing animals shared their lives with us and taught us the importance of hope, love, loyalty, and gratitude.

Time after time, they manage to forgive the species who treats them cruelly and neglects them. The dog's power to not just merely forgive, but to embrace and love a human being is nothing short of miraculous. It may take work and time on the human's side to regain a badly abused dog's trust that was hurt by the hand of another man, but the dog always forgives.

The second most common question we are asked is, "How can people treat an animal like this?" The only way to reply is with another question, "Why do people do any of the evil things they do?" Human beings created dogs and cats as companion animals. Our ancestors bred and domesticated these creatures, thereby passing their responsibility onto us. It is our duty as their offspring to be responsible for the health and well-being of these dependent animals. The animals will reward you with renewed spirit and an appreciation for all that the world has to offer. These pets are a gift.

In this book, we share our personal photos and stories of some of the dogs and other creatures who spent time with us on their road to their second chance at a better life.

"For every animal that dies in a shelter, there is someone, somewhere, responsible for its death. You cannot do a kindness too soon, because you never know how soon it will be too late."

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our Baby Dolly
Found stray when she was only ten-weeks-old

Spotty

Spotty was our first. He was a Pit Bull who suffered abuse no animal should endure. He was a "guard dog," kept in a dirt yard without shelter from the heat or from the cold. He dug a hole to protect himself from the elements the best that he could. Sometimes they fed him. Sometimes they remembered to refill his filthy water bowl. He was lucky because somebody was brave enough to speak up about what was happening in his neighborhood, and Spotty found safety.

Spotty was skinny, malnourished, sunburned, and his ears were riddled with fly bites. His owners had never adjusted his collar since the time they procured him as a puppy. The vet surgically removed it because it had become embedded in his neck. He had fleas, ticks, and internal parasites. His teeth were broken from trying to chew on the metal chain in hopes of freeing himself from the life he was condemned to live. I did not realize then that this scenario would repeat itself so many times. Little did we know that we were just at the beginning of meeting hundreds of victimized animals like Spotty.

We met Spotty one week after he had been set free. Though saved from his torturous existence, he was still homeless, living in a temporary cage at a veterinarian's office. It was our job as volunteers to walk him, give him affection, and help him recover mentally.

The moment the cage opened, Spotty came bounding out and kissed us as if to reassure us that he was going to be okay. All he wanted to do was to lick us and then, when he got the hang of the leash, he just wanted to run because he had never been free to do so. I could swear he was laughing as his tongue hung out of his mouth and flapped in the breeze. It became our daily ritual. Go see Spotty.

After the warm greeting of kisses, smiles, and the wild run around the neighborhood with the crazy tongue, Spotty would drink out of his pan of fresh water. He would close his eyes as if he just tasted the nectar of the gods. When he would wind down, he took turns sitting in our laps and staring happily into our eyes.

I thought we were going to go help poor Spotty by teaching him a few things, but the dog taught and inspired us. Spotty found an adoptive home and then we took it to the next level. We were no longer just volunteers, we now took these animals into our home as fosters. We wanted to do as much as we could for all the Spottys out there who need just a little help.

"Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like never washed a dog."

~Franklin P. Jones

"He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion."

~unknown

"God made the earth, the sky and the water, the moon and the sun. He made man and bird and beast. But He didn't make the dog. He already had one."

~Native American saying

"Acquiring a dog may be the only opportunity a human ever has to choose a relative."

~Mordecai Siegal

Bambi

Bambi was a petite dog who bore deep psychological scars that her previous owner inflicted upon her. Someone had badly beaten her and she would not let anyone get close to her. The shelter would not allow anyone from the public to adopt her because she had behavioral problems. They would only release her to an experienced rescuer.

We could not touch her without her snapping. When Eldad attempted to pet her, he had to wear an oven mitt to soften the edge of her bites. It was very sad that we needed to teach her that a human hand was not a weapon. When Bambi did bite, she would cry as if she felt badly about it. This was the only way she knew how to react to someone's touch.

Bambi was so fearful that she would try to hide and make herself invisible. We once found her sleeping in a shopping bag tucked under a bookcase.

Finally, after two days, she allowed us to pet her head. However, she would still snap if we touched her anywhere else. On the third day when it seemed like there was still no real progress, Eldad decided to make Bambi confront her fears and prove to her that she was safe with us. He scooped up Bambi and held her close to his chest. She did not cry or try to bite. She tensed up for several seconds, and then slowly relaxed.

Bambi changed that day. This was the first time she finally felt security in the hands of a human. Bambi's rehab continued as she began to play chasing games and rough house with our permanent rescue dog, Dolly. Bambi was now jumping up onto our laps and actually asking for attention. A kind and beautiful woman who adopted her, loves her like a daughter. She told us that when she gave Bambi her first bath, she did not want Bambi to be nervous, so she put on a bikini and jumped into the tub with her.

"My little dog - a heartbeat at my feet."

~Edith Wharton

"All of the animals except for man know that the principle business of life is to enjoy it."

~ Samuel Butler

Chu-Chi

One of the most common excuses people use for dumping dogs in the shelters is, "We're moving." Chu-Chi, a fluffy beige terrier, a casualty of such ridiculous reasoning, was about to be put down. Nobody wanted her. When a potential adopter would to try to pet her, Chu-Chi would back away into the furthest area of her cage. Her time was up. You could read the kindness in her eyes. She badly wanted to be touched so but was just too scared to allow it. Someone had clearly hurt her in the past.

Eldad got down on the floor so that he was on her level. He took a chance and put his face up to her cage. She slowly walked up to the bars and gave him a kiss. She had been spayed at some point, so we were able to take her home that day. She walked out of the kennels on a leash with a sense of joy and her head held high. An L.A. Animal Control Officer even exclaimed, "That dog looks so proud."

Chu-Chi abandoned her fear and turned out to be the kindest and most affectionate dog. A young man who works in the fashion industry adopted her and now he gives her a new wardrobe every season. Our terrier, Dolly, really took a liking to Chu-Chi. She was able to have a play date with Chu-Chi when Chu-Chi moved into her permanent home.

"I am in favor of animal rights as well as human rights. That is the way of the whole human being."

~Abraham Lincoln

Checkers

There was one particular time where I figured we were getting another difficult abuse case like Bambi on our hands. Again, the shelter was releasing a dog solely to a rescue because the owner who turned her in had described her as a "vicious biter." Eldad agreed to go save this little fluffy terrier mix with the black head and white body.

When Eldad walked in with Checkers, I instinctively moved out of her way. "Just try to pet her," said Eldad. "No way," I said as Checkers came running towards me. "Grab her!" I said to Eldad, who just laughed at me as I blocked my kneecaps with my hands to fend off this lunatic dog. Checkers did not attack me. Instead, she licked my hands while wagging her tail.

It turned out that Checkers was one of the happiest and most well adjusted dogs we ever met. Eldad thought it was funny not to mention this piece of information when he set her loose on me. We tried to make her bite us. We waved fingers in her face and stuck them in her mouth. Nothing worked.

Her previous owners obviously lied. It is common for people to make up wild stories when they abandon their animal at the shelter because they do not want to appear evil or irresponsible for ditching their pet. Of course, their deception endangers the animal even more since the shelter is obligated by law to post a warning on their cage. Because nobody wants to take a risk with a dangerous dog, it is doomed to almost certain death.

In an odd but fabulous coincidence, Checkers moved into a home with two other black and white terrier mixes whose names are Charlie and Chelsea. The three siblings are excited to celebrate Chanukah together every year.

Heidi

Eldad went to the shelter to bail out a dog when a woman walked in with a small cardboard box. He asked her what was in the box. "Someone threw this into my backyard, I saw them do it and run away." Without looking to see what was in the box, Eldad said, "I'll take it."

Looking back, perhaps Eldad was too quick to accept a small package from a stranger containing a live animal sight unseen. For all he knew, it could have been a baby raccoon, a skunk, or perhaps a relatively large rodent.

As it turned out, it was a starved, little four-pound Malti-Poo. She was strangely quiet and calm, yet, a few weeks later somehow morphed into the loudest, boldest dog in our hold. I was afraid someone would stick a tutu on her and carry her in a purse, so we decided that we had to keep her. Dolly and Heidi act as if they have known each other forever and spend hours each day playing and hanging out together. Dolly cleans Heidi's eyes every day and is still waiting patiently for the day that Heidi will reciprocate the favor.

Fifi tags Heidi

"The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue."

~Unknown

A Second Chance for Chase

Inevitably when I am with my adopted dog Heidi, someone will ask me, "What kind of dog is that?" I imagine that Heidi is a Malti-Poo (a Maltese and Poodle mix) but I always answer, "I'm not sure because I adopted her from a shelter." More than once, I have been asked, "Oh, what was wrong with her?" I find this question so odd. I answer back, "Nothing was wrong with her, something was wrong with the people who were supposed to take care of her and instead dumped her."

I remember once getting into an argument with somebody about shelter dogs and saying, "Dogs help the police, the army; they find people trapped in buildings and avalanches. They offer medical assistance to blind and sick people." The person answered back, "Well, it's not shelter dogs doing that kind of work." Yes, in fact, many times it is.

People have problems with shelters because they are not pretty places and appear as animal jails. However, the residents are not criminals. The shelter is frightening whether you are a Poodle or a Pit Bull. You will bark, you may whine, and you may cower.

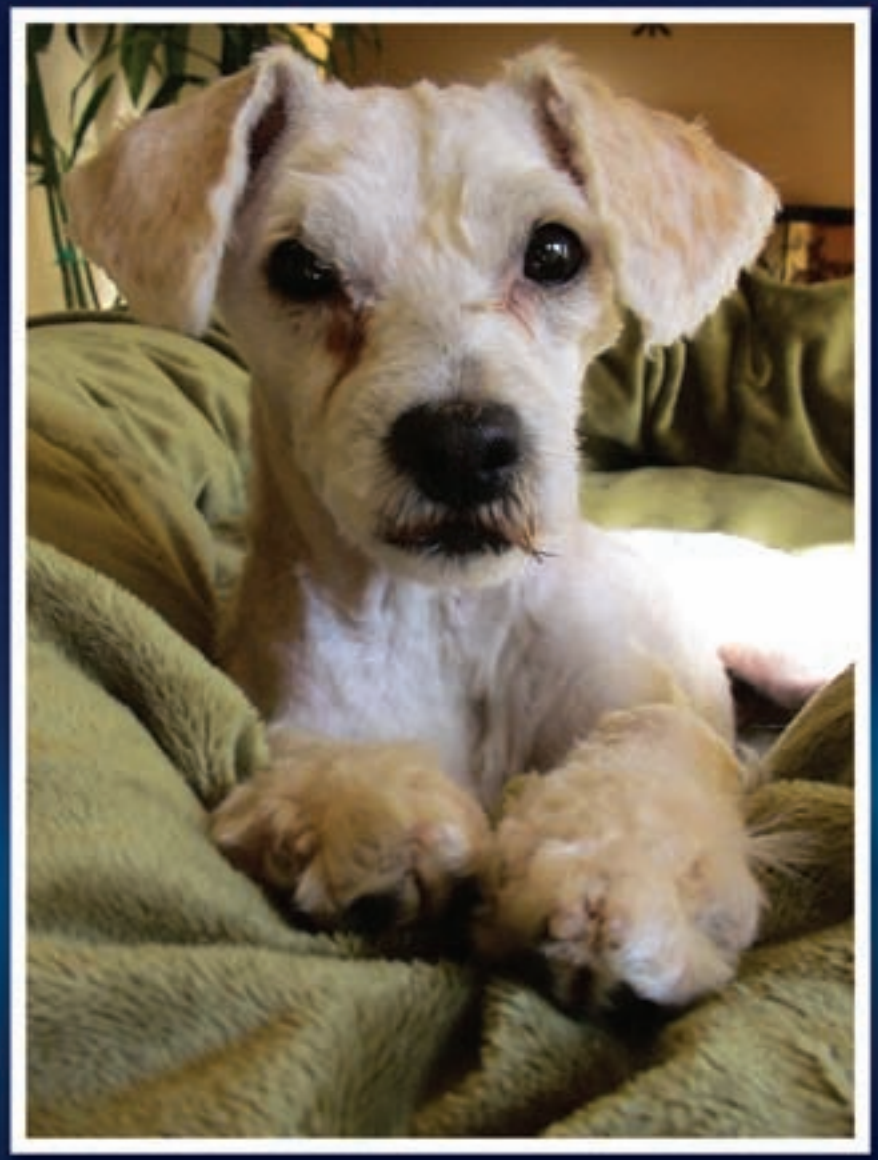
Our latest rescue Chase, a tiny Terrier and Chihuahua mix was doomed to die because she bit out of fear. She had been abused for three years. Her owner brought Chase into the shelter. She was covered with fleas, and also had a skin and respiratory infection. One can only imagine what hell she lived through.

On the day of her scheduled euthanization, Chase snarled and tried to bite Eldad. He decided to take her anyways and rehabilitate her with me. On the second day with us, she approached Eldad with her head and tail down. She now accepted attention. On day three, her ears were up and she was playing and acting normally.

Chase is so comfortable with herself that she actually is now beyond what we would call normal. She likes to hop up onto my back when I am on the computer, and fall asleep on my shoulder. She vocalizes unlike any other dog I have ever met. She will throw herself down on us or the other animals at bedtime, make her weird grumbling "Chase noises", and roll around on her back. She finds fun in licking people and shooting her tongue up their noses. She is obsessed with flying bugs.

The only leftover sign of her abuse is that she will bark at new people. Nevertheless, all you have to do to show her you are not going to harm her is to pet her or pick her up. It is so easy and takes so little for these animals to become wonderful pets. Do not judge them by the cage and the dirt because underneath is a real gem.

Edie



Edie was another dog like Chase who was going to be put down. A rescuer named Bronwyne was at the shelter where they were going to kill poor Edie, and Bronwyne was determined to save this dog's life. Edie was labeled "evil" because she would try to bite anyone who attempted to touch her. This is the horrible effect of animal abuse. A dog will become so terrified that it trusts nobody and just lashes out in pure terror. She was small very and dirty. Bronwyne called Eldad knowing he could handle a dog with issues. Eldad asked Bronwyne to bring Edie to the vet where he would meet her. Within moments, Eldad made Edie realized he was not going to hurt her, and she let down her guard.

Eldad managed to film the transformation of both Chase and Edie and as a result, millions of people around the world are able to see that these dogs are acting out purely from fear. People have written to us that they are using these videos as a teaching tool. Edie was lucky to have bronwyne fighting for her when everyone else said that the dog was not worth saving.

Edie now has a new loving home. You can see the amazing video of her transformation on our website: www.hopeforpaws.org

"The love of all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man."

~Charles Darwin

Junior

Eldad called me and said he had just seen someone heading towards the shelter with a box and intercepted the person before he could turn in the animal. "Was it another Heidi?" I asked. "No," he said, "Even smaller, and I'm bringing it home."

It was not another Heidi; it was not even a mammal, it was a baby OWL.

A man had found the owl in the middle of the street in downtown Los Angeles. Eldad rushed the owl to our vet who gave him vitamins and fluids. The owl displayed signs of shock and appeared very weak. We thought he would die within hours.

We contacted a wildlife rescue to save him. Eldad knew enough about owls to place this newest foster, Junior, in a warm box with a stuffed animal owl. (We have almost every species of stuffed animal in our) This was supposed to make junior feel like he was back in the nest.

Eldad downloaded the sound of owls hooting off the computer and played them for Junior. It was a successful move, as Junior perked up a little and chirped back at the computer.

At nightfall, we peeked into Junior's "nest" and were shocked to see a completely different owl. Junior was standing upright on his stuffed toy and staring at us with clear, intelligent eyes as if to say, "Can I help you?"

While Junior had been resting during daylight, Eldad had procured an owl's feast of mealworms and crickets. We all sat in the dark. I held Junior in my lap and Eldad placed the first worm into the owl's beak. Junior seemed stunned and just let the worm dangle for a second, but then he consumed it with great vigor. Junior ate like a king, and so we were certain that he was now going to survive.

Junior's eyes were the most incredible of all. They were bright yellow and he would stare directly into the face of whichever one of us was speaking. He craned his neck to make sure he got a good view. It was extraordinary how intelligent and inquisitive this baby creature was. Two days later, we took Junior to the California Wildlife Center which is very well equipped to provide this unique type of animal the best chance of survival. The refuge assigned Junior a number that enables us to check on him for as long as he is in their care. There is a great chance that one day he will be able to care for himself where he belongs, in the wild.

Other critters we fostered

"The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself too."

~Samuel Butler

"We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals."

~Immanuel Kant

Prayer of a Stray

Dear God please send me somebody who'll care!
I'm tired of running, I'm sick with despair
My body is aching, it's so racked with pain
And dear God I pray as I run in the rain

That someone will love me and give me a home
A warm cozy bed and a big juicy bone
My last owner tied me all day in the yard
Sometimes with no water and God that was hard!

So I chewed my leash God; and I ran away
To rummage in garbage; and live as a stray
But now God I'm tired; and hungry and cold
And I'm Oh so afraid; that I'll never grow old

They've chased me with sticks; hit me with stones
While I run the streets; just looking for bones
I'm not really bad God; please help if you can
For I have become just another; "victim of man!"

I'm wormy dear God; and I'm ridden with fleas
and all that I ever wanted; was an owner to please
If you find one for me God; I'll try to be good
I won't chew their shoes; and I'll do as I should

I'll love them; protect them; and try to obey
When they tell me to sit; to lie down or to stay!
I don't think I'll make it; too long on my own
Cause I'm getting so weak; and I'm Oh so alone

Each night as I sleep in the bushes I cry
Cause I'm so afraid God; that I'm gonna die
I've got so much love; and devotion to give
That I should be given; a new chance to live

So dear God please; oh please; answer my prayer
and send me to somebody; who will really care
That is dear God; if You're really there!

~Anonymous

Taz (Before)

Nobody wanted Taz and time was running out. He sat in the pound covered in motor oil. He was so matted and filthy that the shelter staff accidentally placed him in the female area. If he had not been so depressed and had the inclination, he could have gotten several of his kennel mates pregnant.

It is so sad to see that people refuse to acknowledge great dogs because they are dirty or depressed. Who wouldn't be despondent while living for days in a cage after barely surviving the streets? Who wouldn't be joyless from spending his or her life chained up in a yard with a lack of food and companionship?

Taz (After)

Taz started out as a grey dog but a good bath transformed him into a gorgeous, strawberry blonde. His one blue eye and one brown eye added to his unique beauty.

Taz had looks and brains. He was especially good with kids. In less than five minutes, he learned how to shake with one paw and give five with the other.

He now lives in Lake Tahoe where he plays in the snow and swims in the lake.

"If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men."

~St. Francis of Assisi

"No one appreciates the very special genius of your conversation as the dog does."

~ Christopher Morley

Jesse, Linde and Brittany

Jesse was a four-year-old black Lab mix. An animal control officer found her lying on the side of the road with two broken legs. She was a victim of a hit and run. This dog needed complex surgery. Since the shelters are not equipped to perform such operations, it meant Jesse was to be put to sleep at the end of the day. We could not just call to have her taken off the kill list; someone would have to show up in person to claim her.

Jesse was waiting on borrowed time in "ISO," the isolation unit where they keep the sick and injured dogs. Some animals in it need operations, while others just have colds and are in quarantine. They happen to be adoptable, but since the public is unaware that they exist, they have slim chances of survival.

Eldad came to her rescue just as the doors were shutting for the night. Then, as he carefully carried Jesse out to the car, a woman ran to the door holding a kitten she had just found on the street. Eldad told her that the cat would immediately be killed by the shelter because it was too young. The girl started crying and explained she was from out of the country and was soon leaving to go back home. There was no way she could keep the three-week-old kitten. Eldad took the kitten from the woman after he had placed Jesse comfortably in the backseat of his car.

He rushed Jesse to the veterinarian, since she would be receiving early morning surgery. The orphaned kitten, who we named Linde, came home to stay with us. Neither of our two adult female cats initially showed any interest in her. Linde was tough and had a huge appetite. It seemed likely that this orphan would pull through.

Eventually, our cat Mousie decided to groom Linde. Mousie likes to clean every foster dog that comes through our. Dolly and Heidi are her number one clients. She also likes to groom human eyebrows occasionally. We were happy she finally took a liking to her own species.

Jesse came home the next afternoon, still groggy with two bandaged, repaired femurs. She was incapable of standing on her own and we had to carry her outside when she had to go to the bathroom. Though recovering from mental and physical trauma, Jesse chose to become Linde's new mother. There was a little competition between Mousie and Jesse for the affection of little Linde who was very happy ambushing all the animals and biting their tails.

Jesse began to heal and finally walk on her own. The bond she shared with Linde was now unbreakable.

We received a great application for Jesse from a very special family willing to give her the extra medical care she needed. We crossed our fingers and mentioned how she happened to have a best friend who was an orphaned kitten. Unbelievably, the husband confided that he was a cat lover and would be more than happy to adopt Linde along with Jesse. Dreams came true for everyone. Linde was renamed Meowzer by the family's eight-year-old son.

Custody Battle

The story did not end with the family who had adopted Jesse and the newly christened Meowzer. It just so happened that when we went for our routine check of the family's home, we were accompanied by our newest foster Brittany who was a gorgeous and rare Polish Lowland Sheepdog. She was left at the shelter because her family said she grew larger than they expected.

Brittany was a fluffy ball of shaggy cuteness, full of fun and energy. The wife's mother could not resist her charms. She wanted Brittany and since we loved this family so much, we agreed. We had placed two dogs and one cat in one week; we thought we had hit the jackpot.

A week later, the father of Brittany's new family called and sadly said that he would have to give Brittany back to us. He explained, "Basically, there was something that had me worried," he continued. "Our son was playing in the backyard on Sunday with some of the kids from church and well, Brittany got very excited and decided that she needed to herd all the children so she was chasing them and pulling their pants down."

Jesse and Linde/Meowzer are still together and doing great. Jesse goes with the wife to church and school to pick up the kids and does not have any interest in herding the kids. We found Brittany a new home without children and today she shares a yard with a Golden Retriever who taught her how to swim in the pool.

Kiss me you fool!

"I think dogs are the most amazing creatures; they give unconditional love. For me they are the role model for being alive."

~Gilda Radner

Ally

Eldad's phone rang when we were having dinner. I answered it. "Can I speak to Edgar please?" "It's for you," I said, handing it over. I knew dinner was going to be cut short. A woman told Eldad that she saw a little dog running around her neighborhood.

When Eldad got to the area, he saw the little dog roaming the sidewalk. He almost missed her because she was so short and dark. He bent down to talk to her, but the dog took off running. Eldad had to chase her.

This dog was terrified and did not want contact with anyone. She hid, and then ran until Eldad cornered her in front of someone's house. Ally surrendered at the exact second the owner of the home opened his drapes, peered through his window, and came face to face with a breathless Eldad holding a Chihuahua/Dachshund on his front lawn.

When Ally came home, Eldad bathed her and we sat her on the couch. She looked like an old lady, but she was only two years old. She was so stunned that she stood perfectly still and only darted her eyes occasionally. She was going to be a tough one to crack. She was much easier going with the animals, than she was with us.

Ally came around as they all do, and liked being on the bed where she felt that everyone was equal to her in height. It really boosted her confidence. She trusted us, played with the dogs, and had fun, except when new people came over. She became catatonic every time a potential adopter came to visit her. Then, when they were not looking, she would sneak off and hide. We were running out of good applications.

Not long after we got Ally, Andy showed up. Andy looked like a mix between beautiful white wolf and a lion. The police found him on the street after a car ran him over. Normally the police do not get involved in animal issues, but an officer was kind enough to get Andy to safety at a local shelter. Andy could only get basic care and was in severe pain with two broken bones. We took him to Dr. Olds who scheduled surgery for the next day. He gave him a strong pain patch and splints for the interim. We tried to make Andy as comfortable as possible. Andy was a young dog and very sweet. Andy came home from his surgery with a new cast on his leg. He was big and heavy, but Eldad had to carry him everywhere. Andy started to heal and he became more and more outgoing.

When he got his cast off, Andy became a new dog. He was walking proudly and Ally suddenly took a special liking to the new, improved, and goofy Andy. They made a rather interesting couple. Andy was tall, white, and fluffy while Ally was short, black and the opposite of fluffy. The two loved to play roughly, and little Ally was tough. Many times Ally would sit on the bed and Andy would come up behind her on the ottoman, reach his front legs around Ally, and then pull her down to his level. It was like an octopus grabbing its prey, but in a good way.

Two weeks later, Andy found a loving home.

We thought that this would break Ally's heart, but a Doberman Pinscher named Trixie showed up and took Andy's role.

Trixie was even bigger than Andy, and Ally loved it! She also stepped up her game. The Doberman and the Chihuahua would play insanely together. Ally did not mess around. Eldad videotaped their games and put it on youtube.

Our friend Jaime showed the video to her friend, who watched it with her daughter. They sent in a perfect application wanting to meet Ally. The catch was that they also were interested in our other foster, Kiwi.

This family even had a terrier at home for Ally to have a friend to play with. I was so worried that Ally would mess it up by acting catatonic and Kiwi would win them over.

Ally did go catatonic, but it worked in her favor as the daughter was able to hold her and put her in her lap. We didn't think Ally would be good with kids, but this young girl was special. Some kids are very sensitive and tuned in to animals which is always beautiful to see. The daughter said to her mom, "I love her so much, please can we have Ally, I only want her, and I love her". This was Ally's chance, and it happened to be a home run.

The family terrier, Lucky, met Ally and kissed her right away. She was home. She also got a new name.
Ally is now known as Bella.

Kiwi for Christmas

What would you do if your family moved away and left you alone on the street? What if you didn't speak the language of the big animals that surrounded you? How would you find food? Who would you trust? Where would you sleep? What if you were cold and hungry right now? What if you didn't know where you were? What if danger was everywhere?

I don't remember my family that well. I remember we had a house together with a soft floor, there were a lot of them, and they gave me things to eat. When a bell rang, more people came inside. Sometimes hands would grab at me and scared me a little, but at least I was safe. I knew I could go to sleep and wake up without being hungry.

I do not know what happened to my family. They moved all of their things out of our home and left me in the yard. I sat in the sun and waited for them. I waited and waited, it became dark and I was cold. I thought that maybe they could hear me if I cried loudly. No one came to get me I started barking because it was so dark and I thought that maybe they couldn't see me. I barked and I barked and then I heard voices down the street.

I wagged my tail and ran over to the voices but they were not coming from the family I knew. Their voices were rough and mean, and they threw something at me. I ran away, but came back, thinking maybe they didn't mean to throw something at me. The people with the voices started chasing me. I ran and I ran. I smelled all sorts of new people and foods and my stomach hurt but I kept running in the dark.

I heard other dogs barking. Maybe they were asking their families to come home and not leave them alone in the dark. I heard terrible noises and felt roughness on my paws. I wondered why so many bad things were happening to me. I was a good dog.

The creatures who had chased me had stopped. I found a wrapper with a few tiny crumbs stuck to it that I licked off the sidewalk. I could see new creatures, animals of all kinds. Two skinny dogs ran by me and I wanted to join them but they were bigger I didn't know if they would be nice to me.

More humans were yelling and horrible lights shone in my eyes. I had to run again but I was so tired and thirsty. I shut my eyes and just ran and ran until the noises of the street became softer. I was cold, but at least plants and trees now surrounded me. There was a big building with a light coming out of it. I nervously trotted over and snuck in. I fell asleep inside the building under a bench.

I woke up to the sound of feet echoing by my head. I curled up into the smallest ball I could. I heard voices coming towards me and I opened my eyes. I was startled to see a man and a woman sitting across from me holding out some food. I would not dare move. The woman put a piece of the food down on the floor near me. I wanted to eat it very badly so I ran over to it, swallowed it, and hurried back under the bench. The woman put another piece of food down. As I went to grab the food this time, the man tried to touch me, but I was too fast for him. I ran, and I hid in the garden under the bushes. That is where I stayed. I was not falling for the food trick again. I thought they were going to hurt me just like the people who chased me in the night.

The man and the woman brought me food almost everyday. When many people would come into my garden, I hid for hours and did not dare even eat anything they put down in case they tried to get me. I do not know if people wanted to hurt me or kill me, but I knew to stay away. I was still very sad and was confused about what I did to my family that made them hate me so much to leave me living in the cold. My body itched a lot. I was all alone.

One day, I saw a new man in the garden. He threw a piece of hotdog at me and quickly I ate it. He threw another piece, but I had a weird feeling and didn't eat it. I started running. The man tried to block me. I was panicking. I turned the other way and a woman was blocking my other escape route. I squeezed under a fence and thought I could keep going but I was trapped. I didn't know what to do. They were gaining on me. The man jumped over the fence and walked towards me, so I tried to squeeze back to the opening I came in through. The man blocked me with his big hands.

The man tried to touch me so I of course tried to bite his fingers, but he was quick and I missed. Then, the man offered me another hotdog and I was too nervous to trust him and eat in front of him. I do not know why he was doing this. Then, the man started talking to me in a soft voice. Nobody had ever spoken so nicely to me before. I still tried to trick him and escape one last time, but it was too late. Something pink was put around my neck and the man was trying to touch me gently, not like those other mean people. I figured I might possibly trust him. He picked me up and took me to his house.

Water! I had never had a bath before! I was warm, I was clean. The man and his wife gave me food, I stopped itching, there were other dogs and cat creatures, and they wanted to play. Toys! Chewies! I could not stop jumping for joy. I got food every day! I slept in a bed! I even had outfits and my life was better than I could ever remember.

When I thought nothing could get more perfect, a family came to visit me in my new place with their dog. I felt like he was my long lost brother. We chased each other right away. He was a good runner and jumper like me. Later that night, the man who found me in the garden (who I feel bad about biting because he was actually cool) took me to my new permanent family.

I saw trees that were singing in the rain. There were colored lights all over my new home. When I went into the house, I saw that my new brother was in an outfit too! It turns out I am a Chihuahua mix, and need to protect myself from cold temperatures. My name is Kiwi and I am the happiest girl in the world. You may say I am a miracle.

Kiwi was a stray Chihuahua mix. Eldad rescued her after his friend Anita saw her taking refuge in the Church of Jesus Christ of downtown Los Angeles. They captured her together. We fostered Kiwi until we found her a permanent home where the new owners had waterproof singing Christmas trees on their lawn. They even had wrapped gifts for Kiwi inside under their Christmas tree.

"No matter how little money and how few possessions you own, having a dog makes you rich."

~ Louis Sabin

"...he will be our friend for always and always and always."

~ Rudyard Kipling

Dasha

There is nothing better than seeing a dog that once was in terrible shape, completely transformed into the epitome of beauty and happiness. Dasha was an American Bulldog who was obviously starved. The vet discovered that she had uterine tumors that had to be taken out right away. She was so skinny and weak we did not know if she would even survive. Her emaciated appearance was so shocking that Eldad was afraid to walk her in public because he thought people would mistaken him as a dog abuser. Dasha pulled through her operation without complications. After a short recovery, a loving couple drove eight hours from San Francisco to adopt Dasha and take her home.

Six months later, Dasha and her parents drove back down to Los Angeles in hopes of possibly adopting another dog. We were excited to see how Dasha had turned out. Obviously, we expected her to be healthier and hopefully a little heavier, but we were surprised to see that Dasha was actually chubby. This former skeletal stray now eats like a queen and has a top-notch veterinarian who has recommended that she lose about five pounds.

"To err is human, to forgive, canine"
~Anonymous

Zoey

The animals that come into the shelters as strays off the street have the "luxury" of a few days to live at the shelter because of the fact that they may actually be lost. They may have owners who are searching for them. However, the animals whose owners intentionally dispose of them have very little time to live because nobody is looking for them. The one person in the world they depended on for security and safety has abandoned them. Since so many pets are packed into the shelters, the odds of someone adopting them are stacked against them.

Some people turn in their dogs when they think they are too old and want a puppy instead; others will discard their pet if it gets sick or has fleas. We rescued a purebred Shih-Tzu named Zoey whose pound papers said she was given up due to "snoring." She was so cute and mellow and of course has a great home now. Her owner loves her and her snoring.

"To be followed home by a stray dog is a sign of impending wealth."

~Chinese Proverb

Rusty

Rusty was turned into the shelter and was too downhearted to even raise his head to acknowledge the people who came to his cage. It was as if he had given up on life. He also had a major bout of kennel cough, an ailment that is common amongst shelter dogs or wherever many dogs are confined together, yet is easily treatable. Rusty was a Jack Russell Terrier, an active breed that cannot stand to be restricted. Eldad said he never saw such a dejected and miserable dog, and therefore he had to get him out of the pound.

Rusty definitely had personality. He was irritable from being ill and cooped up. His old owners mistreated him so he would cower whenever we picked up an object like a remote control. He just wanted to be left alone. However, just two days of TLC brought out Rusty's happy side. As he felt better, he revealed his obsession; playing fetch. Now, the majority of dogs take a lot of pleasure in playing with toys or at least they learn to enjoy toys. A somber fact is that so many of the dogs we rescue have led such joyless lives that they do not understand the concept of playing. They have to be introduced to toys and then taught that it is okay to chase and chew on them.

Whether or not Rusty had ever seen tennis balls before, he immediately grew to have an extreme fondness for them. All Rusty wanted was for us to throw the ball so he could catch it. He made us throw it repeatedly. He was fast. If we were not fast enough for him or ignored him, he would drop the ball on our feet. If we did not immediately throw the ball, he would bark and insist that we hurry up.

We thought that Rusty had stored energy and frustration from living in a cage. We hoped that a day at the dog park would tire him out. At the dog park, he was quicker on his feet than every dog of every size. He chased every ball that we threw. He stole other dogs' balls, then approached strangers and dropped those stolen balls onto their feet. He was insatiable.

When we finally left the park after several hours, he fell asleep in the car. We smiled smugly; we had worn him out. Once we got home, Rusty suddenly had a renewed sense of vigor, found his tennis ball, stared me in the eye, and proceeded to drop it on my foot. It was then that we noticed BLOOD! Rusty had run himself ragged and his paws were chapped and bleeding. This dog was so obsessed that even self-injury could not sway his unwavering need to chase the ball.

We were at the point of considering getting Rusty some psychiatric treatment when we got a call from a man who trained dogs to perform at science fairs. It was a humane show aimed at teaching people the natural talents of dogs. He explained that this entire troop was composed of rescued dogs and he had read our description of Rusty online. Rusty had focus, but did not dominate other dogs. This made him an ideal fit.

We met the man, his wife, and the troop. We were amazed at the beauty and grace that his pack of assorted rescues displayed in their act. These happy, well-adjusted dogs loved to perform as a means to harness their energy. This was not an animal circus; these were just dogs acting like dogs. They were constantly rewarded, yet never forced to perform. The troop encouraged rescuing and adopting dogs.

Rusty passed his audition and the couple adopted him. They wanted him even if it turned out that performing was not in his genes. They saw him as a new family member regardless of his talents. As it turned out, Rusty was a natural and today, is famous across the country as the renamed "Action Jackson." Rusty can finally use his speed and agility and his beloved ball in a focused and positive manner. His keen concentration and agility has made him a star. He is also very much loved and that is the most important part of his story.

Pumpkin and Scruffles

Pumpkin was shaggy, orange, and had a great personality. From the second she left the shelter, she was full of joy. We took her the next day to meet a classroom full of second graders. We were trying to educate them on humane animal treatment. Pumpkin and the kids loved each other. When we left the campus, it was lunchtime and all the kids chased behind us yelling "Bye Pumpkin!"

One of the activities we asked the kids to do before we left was to write down the name they thought we should name our next rescue. The most original name we liked and chose was "Scruffles"

Goliath

Occasionally we get a call for help with an unusual animal. One such wild animal we took care of was Goliath, the Sugar Glider. Sugar Gliders are marsupials that are native to Australia and New Guinea. They are small creatures so people think they are cute pocket pet alternatives to rats or hamsters. They do not realize that these little animals are much more complex than pet rodents. It requires an enormous amount of care when it comes to the intricacies involving their feeding and habitat. Unfortunately, people would discover that they take a lot of work and consequently the poor animals end up not cared for properly as well as being passed around from home to home.

Goliath was traumatized. We were the third family we knew of who had accepted him. They are social creatures, but all he wanted to do was hide in his little nesting pocket. He only emerged at night to eat. Normal Sugar Gliders need a balanced diet of protein and calcium. Goliath had been deprived of the correct foods and medical attention.

Sugar Gliders have extra flaps of skin that give them the ability to float off tree branches. They need a lot of space to climb and dive. They are actually happiest when they are high up. Poor Goliath had been living in a flat hamster cage on the floor in an apartment where noisy kids would bother his daytime slumber.

Eldad built Goliath a huge enclosure with stairs and toys and ramps made of eucalyptus from which he could dive. He also had a special area high up where he slept undisturbed in his pouch. During the days he was with us, we kept noise to a minimum until the sun went down and Goliath woke up.

Because Goliath required special conditions, we could not just let anyone adopt him. We were fortunate enough to find Goliath a permanent home with a woman who owns a wildlife rescue. This organization s wild animals that people bought both legally and illegally, thinking it would be fun to own an exotic animal. However, they soon realized that these animals needed to live in the wild, not under a roof or chained in a backyard. Because these animals are now domesticated, they lost the skills needed to survive in their natural habitat and have to live out the rest of their days in these sanctuaries.

Beatrice

Some dogs seem to take forever to find a home. One of these was a Rottweiler named Beatrice. Nobody wanted her simply because most people are fearful of adopting certain breeds. Just as the shelters are full of cast off Pit Bulls, the same holds true with Rotties. Most do not make it out alive.

Beatrice did have a commanding presence that drove other dogs crazy, but she was as gentle as could be. She was especially good with children. On the way to adoption events, she demanded to sit in the front seat. We had to tie her leash to the headrest or else she would try to sit in Eldad's lap while he was driving.

One day we had a booth at a huge Animal Planet adoption event. Beatrice was there and a mother and her five-year-old daughter took special interest in her. I was holding Beatrice's leash as the daughter was petting her head. I described Beatrice's great personality to the mother while the intelligent little girl told me all she knew about Rottweilers.

Just as the daughter was kissing Beatrice goodbye, a Dalmatian walked by and stared at Beatrice. All dogs tended to size her up. Beatrice usually ignored other dogs but this time she stared back at the Dalmatian. Everything seemed to happen in slow motion. I looked down and saw Beatrice's leash in my hand but Beatrice was no longer attached to it. She was running full force at the Dalmatian. Time seemed to stand still as Beatrice charged toward the other dog. The little girl and her mother were watching the whole scenario. I could not breathe. Beatrice stopped right in front of the Dalmatian and started wagging her behind. She acted as if she was somewhat intrigued by this distinguished, spotted gentleman. She had wanted to stop and say, "Well hello there." The Dalmatian wagged back. Beatrice then trotted back to our booth. We had been hoping to find Beatrice a home with another dog.

That day an Animal Planet employee, who already owned a Rottie, fell in love with Beatrice and adopted her.

You Can Teach an Old Dog New Tricks

Would the book "Old Yeller" been as famous and well loved if was just called "Yeller"? The old, faithful canine sitting at its master feet is an image that seems to be in our psyche as something good, pure, and American. Our pets are loyal to us and we respond in kind. Is not an aged pet an old friend to be cherished? Is it so much to pay for a pet's basic medical needs to keep it comfortable and happy in its final years?

Bessy was a casualty of animal ageism. A Spaniel mix, whose crime consisted of living for at least ten years, led to her owners becoming tired of her. She was forgotten outside. Nobody bothered to remove the ticks before they dumped her.

After having been used to breed, she lost her value. She came to us suffering from Pyometra, a disease that only affects unspayed dogs. She was bailed out of the shelter seconds before she was supposed to be put down. Our vet saved her life by performing an immediate hysterectomy. She recovered quickly.

Mentally, Bessy was still a mess. She did not know how to play with toys, she didn't like cats, and she didn't like dogs. Since she was a victim of maltreatment, she also was afraid of most people. We worried that nobody would want to adopt her.

Unexpectedly, a friend of ours called and said that she was hoping to find a dog for her mother-in-law. We took Bessy to visit the mother-in-law in the Hollywood Hills. The woman spoke very loudly. "What's her name?" she asked. "Bessy," I said. "Betty," answered the woman. “No, Bessy,” said Eldad. "Oh, “Betsy," she exclaimed, "Hello Betsy, come here Betsy!"

Bessy hid behind Eldad at first, but then slowly approached the woman who immediately asked us if she could keep her. We agreed and figured it would take Bessy a few days to adjust. We had to distract Bessy and make a run out the door when she was not looking. No one would ever guess from that first meeting that this was a match made in Heaven.

Bessy's story was out of a movie. She went from being ignored to living the good life in a plush house. She spent her days relaxing with her loving new owner, watching television, and being hand fed by the woman's two caretakers.

When the woman died a little more than a year later, we received a phone call from our friend who was sobbing and said, "Bessy has gotten under the covers with my mother-in-law and she won't let the paramedics take her."

Now Bessy was heartbroken. Just when she had found happiness, it was taken from her. She needed a new home. Luckily, Bessy was adopted right away. The love she received had changed her, and she in turn had brought joy to the woman during her final days. The woman's son says that Bessy gave meaning to his mother's life.

Even more astonishing is that a dog that did not have social skills, which was treated like garbage for most of her life, and was thought unfit to even live her life, now goes to work everyday at a hospital as a therapy dog for the elderly.

Misty, Sydney, Caesar, Phoebe and Daphne.

Misty, a tiny terrier, came to us sick, hungry, and sad. She ignored Dolly and the cats. Two weeks later, she gained a few pounds, recovered from kennel cough, and ultimately came out of her shell.

Soon after Misty showed up, we got a call that a dog and her three puppies were at high risk of being euthanized. Eldad went to the shelter and brought the four of them home. The young, reluctant mother, Sydney, preferred to spend as little time as possible with her offspring. We had to hold her down every two hours, and bribe her with treats just so she would feed Daphne, Phoebe, and Caesar.

Caesar and Phoebe seemed healthy, but Daphne, the runt, seemed to be failing. She was incapable of opening her eyes while the other puppies were thriving. We braced ourselves for the worst.

Meanwhile, Misty divided her time between playing chase with Dolly and Sydney, and fostering Sydney's puppies. Misty took it upon herself to groom the three pups and even attempted to nurse them. This care probably is what ultimately saved Daphne's life. Misty then found the perfect home.

Although Sydney and each of the puppies were adopted separately, we have stayed in touch with their new families and every year we celebrate the puppies' birthday with their mother, Sydney. They just turned five on April 18, 2010.

We cannot tell if they know that they are related, but they seem to have a lot of fun.

Daphne, the former sickly runt is the largest one of all. In fact, her owners just recently adopted another dog from us, Baxter, the sweetest Cock-a-Poo we saved from the East Valley shelter just as his owner was getting rid of him. They are the cutest brother and sister who just love each other.

"Dogs are miracles with paws."

~Susan Ariel Rainbow Kennedy

Topsy

Topsy looked like a Muppet. Her new owners live right next door to a three-legged Chihuahua we rescued a few years ago called Mimi. They meet every day at the beach in Malibu. Topsy is a healer of sorts. When her owner's old dog had passed away, their pet bird, Lolly, became very sad. Lolly mourned her dog friend by laying eggs. This seemed to put her in a worse temper. Once Topsy entered her life, Lolly was happy again. She has finally stopped laying eggs and now has a new canine sister who is also her best friend.

"A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe. Our task must be to widen our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

~Albert Einstein

Rex

Rex was the cutest white terrier who needed surgery to fix his leg. He was very gentle but extremely sad and could barely walk. Our first priority was to raise the funds to get him the medical attention he needed. The longer he waited for the operation, the less chance he had to move normally.

The stars were in alignment when a great couple offered to adopt Rex into their family. We explained Rex's medical situation. Their response was, "Go get him the surgery; we'll pay for all of it, no matter how much it costs."

A few days later, Rex underwent the repair of his leg. Dr. Olds, his orthopedic surgeon, put a metal pin inside. Coincidentally, his new owner had been injured and had a pin in his arm as well. Rex's pin was eventually removed and he now goes on long hikes. He runs faster than all the dogs in the park. Thanks to his adoptive parents, both his physical and emotional pain are ancient history.

Witnessing the incredible transformation of dogs like Rex, and meeting caring and generous people such as his adoptive parents, is what keeps us motivated and inspired.

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated...I hold that the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man."

~Mahatma Gandhi

Rosie

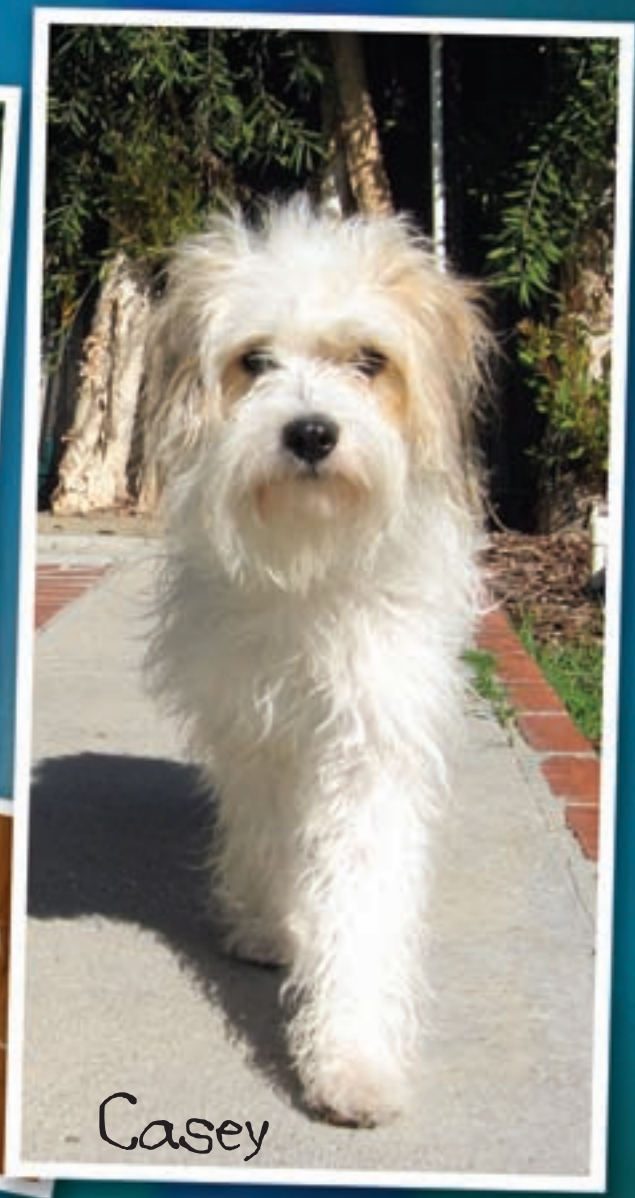
Rosie was a one-year-old American Bulldog with a herniated left eye that was sightless. She was a stray that was picked up by animal control and placed in a crowded kennel where other dogs harmed her. When we got her home that morning, she crept along the ground as if she was afraid of being attacked again. By nightfall, she was completely paralyzed in all four of her limbs.

We feared she had a brain tumor and we took her to the vet the next day. We readied ourselves for the worst. The doctor ran several tests, but nothing conclusive came back explaining what was wrong with her. Rosie was about to go see a neurologist when the doctor started feeling around in her armpits. "Aha," he exclaimed. We looked down to see a couple of ticks that were hiding deep within her sockets. The vet said, "Rosie has a case of Tick Paralysis." The ticks had been embedded there for so long; they had injected large amounts of their paralytic toxin into her body.

Throughout her ordeal, Rosie was easy going and upbeat. She slowly began to walk again. As soon as she was strong enough, the doctor removed her bad eye. She and Dolly became best friends as Dolly tried to help her with her physical therapy by walking her on the leash.

We wondered who would want to adopt a limping, one-eyed American Bulldog. We were We were not kept in limbo for long at all. Rosie soon found a wonderful woman to adopt her.

Today she goes for long runs on her private beach with her mom, and is happy as a clam. She stays in touch with Dolly and stops by when she is on the West Side.



"There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy liking your face"

~Ben Williams

Daisy and Minnie

Daisy had not been spayed, and her irresponsible owner allowed her to become pregnant when she was practically a puppy herself. She was almost the same age as her daughter Minnie when that owner tossed them both at the pound. We astonishingly found them a home

Chase
Carly
Daphne
Maggie

Lizzie and Toby

Lizzie and Toby had never met before they came to our house from separate shelters. Someone hit Lizzie with their car and did not stop. A kind citizen saw Lizzie lying on the side of the road and tried to help her. Although this person could not afford to pay for medical attention, she had the good sense to take Lizzie to the closest shelter where they could provide her with minimal care. Eldad was in that particular shelter and saw her in the medical room. The public never sees this room. He immediately brought her to the doctor. Lizzie had a black eye, a bleeding nose, and a sprained leg. Every person and every animal terrified Lizzie. If someone walked towards her, she shrunk back in fear.

Toby, a Dorkie, (a Dachshund and Yorkshire terrier mix) and his sister were dumped because their owners were having a baby. They mistakenly felt that it would be inappropriate to actually keep their own dogs with a newborn under the same roof. This was really a blessing in disguise as we could clearly see that these owners had maltreated Toby. He was exceedingly thin and feared being touched by both humans and dogs. A person adopted his sister out of the shelter, but they left poor Toby behind. To make matters worse, another dog in his cage kept harassing him. Toby was such a sad mess and he had contracted kennel cough.

Fast forward two weeks. With a little love and kindness, Toby became the funniest clown of a dog who jumped on the bed and flipped over for belly rubs. His little short legs made him look like a sea otter on its back. Meanwhile, Lizzie's eye cleared up and the limp went away. She became the friendliest most adoring animal that ever lived. She wanted to kiss every person, cat, and dog... especially Toby.

Lizzie became Toby's new sister and luck was smiling on them when a great family adopted both of them. We are thrilled they will be together forever.

Teddy

Hours after we got him out of the shelter

Teddy

A few days later, feeling MUCH better

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened"
~Anatole France

"The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference."
~Elie Wiesel

Bindy and Quincy

Bindy and Quincy's family dumped them at the shelter together. The inseparable canines were terrified. It is not easy to find someone who will agree to take two dogs at once. However, we were determined not to separate them; no matter how long it might take to find that special home. It was worth the wait when a wonderful couple decided they loved Bindy and Quincy and wanted them both to live in their lovely house.

Bonnie

Bonnie was a dog that came to our home from an abusive situation. She became a welcome host to all the animals that stayed here. She would sit next to them, groom them, and make them less fearful. She was so young, but had a gift. She wanted to help everyone. She loved to run and play and by doing so, brought out the best in all the new fostered dogs. Her eyes revealed that she understood the other animals' pain.

When we brought home an orphaned and failing kitten named Hunter, who we were told had no hope of survival, Bonnie went to work. It was a little reminiscent of Jesse the Lab and Linde the kitten but this kitten was in bad shape. Again, none of our cats helped her, but Bonnie brought the kitten back to life by cleaning him and comforting him. She just had the right instincts and Hunter made a miraculous turnaround.

The family of our friend adopted Bonnie, and so we get to see photos of her new marvelous life. She lives on a ranch with all the land she can run on and other dogs to play with. She now has a boyfriend named Lucky with whom she spends all her nights and days. She deserved the best, and she finally got it.

AFTERWORD

When we began photographing our fostered dogs, we never imagined we would write a book to commemorate them; we just wanted to remember the dogs we loved. Then our friends and family encouraged us to get the word out to others: to educate the public about animal abuse and neglect; and inspire people to adopt and rescue animals in need. This is what led us to create our own non-profit animal rescue organization, Hope for Paws.

We have been so profoundly affected by all of the animals who shared their lives with us. It takes such little effort on our part as humans to make a difference. It is unbelievable what big changes one can make with a few small acts of kindness. You can do it too.

Our wish is that this book illustrates how much joy you can derive from sharing your life with an animal that was undervalued and treated like garbage. These are valuable creatures who go on to become search and rescue dogs, assisted living dogs, therapy dogs, and more. There are stories every week in the news about dogs, cats, birds, and even pigs that save their owner's lives.

A pet you save today might one day save your life or at the very least, be your best friend.

For more information on how you can help an animal in need please visit our website at this address:

www.hopeforpaws.org

We want to thank all the donors and supporters of Hope For Paws who have made all these rescues possible. Your giving saves lives!

In addition, thanks to all the animal rescue groups and their volunteers around the world.

Thanks to Dr. Jeffrey Werber, Dr. Robert Olds, and Dr. Dean Groulich with their remarkable teams.

Thank you to all the officers and Animal Care Technicians who have worked with us to save lives.

Our Lives Have Gone To The Dogs

Audrey and Eldad Hagar are the founders of Hope for Paws, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit charitable organization created to help animals in distress covering all aspects of care; ranging from rescuing and fostering to medical assistance and emergency aid.

We have many more rescue stories, but they can't all fit in one book. We recently began filming our rescue efforts on the streets of southern California. These short videos set to music, capture the feeling of what is like to be up close and personal with us as we save an animal in distress. These videos are available at

www.youtube.com/eldad75

Designed by
www.blackpixel.NET

With the purchase of this book,
you are helping support the animal rescue

HOPE FOR PAWS

www.hopeforpaws.org

ISBN 978-0-615-24650-5
52995
9 780615 246505