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## COVER DOG

**W**hen I was dating my husband, John, I told him that if he wants a dog, he should break up with me because it will NEVER happen. It's a deal breaker. I'm just not an animal person.

Seven years later, and I am still mad at my husband for getting to the Wisconsin Humane Society 13 minutes after they opened on July 25, 2010. After seeing Murray on their website the previous night, I was worried he would already be gone. I locked eyes with him through the glass of his adoption suite, and it was truly love at first sight. I felt like I had been hit with a tranquilizer gun of adorable cuteness. He had me at his eyebrows! His gorgeous brown eyes, scruffy fur and shocking white eyebrows made my heart swell. We immediately adopted him, a rescue mix of the best ingredients, Schnauzer, Poodle, Chihuahua, and who knows what; and made him our first fur baby.

Murray has a story full of trials, tribulation and triumph. Pets with special needs are the MOST special. While we care for them, they are constantly teaching us how to be resilient and move forward with grace.

Eleven years ago, I could have never predicted this life filled with joy, laughter and sometimes sorrow that Murray has given us. Murray is truly our "Murracle." He turned 12 on December 16, 2021, and we look forward to celebrating his Bark-Mitzvah when he turns 13!

Owner, Linda Teweles

*For the full article, see page 9.*





# FETCH

SPRING/SUMMER 2022  
Volume 19, Issue 1/2

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Circulation: 10,000 copies (semiannual)  
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## EDITOR'S PAW

St. Jude, friend to those in need, I am weary from grief, without joy, without hope, struggling through the dark night of the soul. I turn to you, my most trusted friend. Take away this emptiness and the pain of my broken heart. In your compassion, wipe away the tears and carry me to a place of peace. Too long have I been blind to the goodness of God's world. Heal me. I yearn to feel, to bathe in light and joy. Envelop me in brightness, and do not hold back. And I promise, if you should see me fit to receive these gifts, I will share them always. *Amen.*

Dear FETCH Friends,

**L**ast issue, I wrote about letting my best friend go. The guilt and sorrow of living each day without her has left me in grotesque condition most days. Other days, I seem to be able to go through the motions better. As I am writing this, I am home on quarantine for the second time with COVID-19. I'm not sure how many times a person can get this virus, but I've had it twice now. I just keep thinking about all the pain and suffering in the world due to this pandemic: people losing their jobs, their loved ones, their homes, their sanity, and for what? I don't have the answers to how we overcome such a desolate state. What I do know is that prayer and service can do wonders for your soul. This issue is about faith, kindness and caring for dogs with special needs. Who can afford an animal that needs insulin shots or needs to go to the vet for constant monitoring? Special needs require another level of care and compassion. It takes those who are special people themselves to take on these harder cases. I think about my son who is on the spectrum, my cousin's son who has hemophilia or my other cousin's little girl born too early. These kids face daily challenges. These dogs are the same. Some won't ever make it out of the shelter. But for those that do, there is a saint taking care of them. God Bless You! Please find a way to help another in need this year. Maybe it's just talking to a friend on the edge. Maybe it's feeding a homeless person. Maybe it's taking in a dog that is deaf or blind. Whatever it is, thank you for doing it. We all need help. We all need to know that someone cares in this time of madness.

Here's to overcoming your own pain and blessing another,

*N. Putz*







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BRAVEST DOG





# The Bravest Dog Ever:

## The True Story of Murray, a Special Needs Dog with Diabetes and Blindness

BY CHERESE COBB, FREELANCER

**L**inda Teweles never wanted a dog. “When I was dating my husband, John, I told him that if he wants a dog, he should break up with me because it’s a deal-breaker. I’m just not an animal person,” she says.

That was before she saw Murray – a mix of the best ingredients with schnauzer, poodle, chihuahua and who knows what else – on the Wisconsin Humane Society’s (WHS) website. When she locked eyes with Murray through the glass of his adoption suite, she felt like she had been hit with a tranquilizer gun of adorable cuteness. “My husband thought I had a lobotomy,” Teweles laughs. “Murray’s gorgeous brown eyes, scruffy fur and shocking white eyebrows made my heart swell.”

Flash forward six years and Murray has been diagnosed with a special need—diabetes. “Special needs” is a broad term without a universal meaning. But it usually includes a range of physical disabilities, chronic medical conditions or behavioral issues that need extra care. For example, deaf dogs may require specialized hand signal training. Or to avoid early arthritis, three-legged cats may need a specific diet to keep them lean.

“Whether or not a special needs pet has more health problems really depends on the unique diagnosis,” says Angela Speed, vice president of communications at WHS. “A one-eyed cat may not need any supportive long-term treatment, but a dog with chronic allergies may need supportive treatment for the rest of its life. A

cat positive for feline leukemia may be symptom-free for a long time then suddenly become very ill.”

When Murray was first diagnosed with diabetes, he was free-fed and tipped the scale at 28 pounds. “You want to spoil your dog with treats, but it’s much better to give him love, attention, petting and praise,” Teweles says. While Murray has dropped eight pounds, he still needs two insulin shots per day, 12 hours apart. Each vial costs \$64. “I’d rather eat ramen noodles than be without Murray. That’s a small sacrifice. I always say, ‘I’m not rich in money, but I’m rich in Murray,’” she says.

**"I'm not rich in money,  
but I'm rich in Murray,"**

**-Linda**

While many dog owners believe diabetes is a death sentence, that’s not been the case for Murray. Teweles views diabetes as “LIVEabetes.” That’s because a veterinarian can check your dog’s blood sugar levels and create a diet and exercise plan that will help him maintain a healthy weight.

Murray was also diagnosed with cataracts and became blind fairly quickly. “We officially became seeing eye parents, making sure to lead Murray in the right direction to avoid bumping into things. He astonished us by adapting so quickly to life without sight,” Teweles says. Despite being afraid of the dishwasher and printer, Murray learned the entire layout of the two-story house and backyard through touch.

Unfortunately, 3 years later, Murray’s diabetes caused another condition called glaucoma. It increased the



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In December 2019, Murray underwent the \$1,100 eye removal surgery. Despite how horrifying it may sound, enucleation surgery is common and an excellent solution to a blind, painful eye. Murray's bravery surprised everyone. His mojo came back, and his pain no longer held him back from being his friendly and outgoing self. "Now, instead of saying that Murray's eyes are the window to his soul, we say, 'It's his eyebrows,'" Teweles says.

Murray inspired Teweles to find a new career working with animals. Before working at Dr. Noah's Ark Veterinary Clinic in Shorewood, Wis., she worked as an adoption counselor at the WHS and managed a homeless shelter. "Murray was like everyone's dog. I used to let the residents take him on walks while they told me stories about their pets," she says. Because Murray lives in the moment, he treats everyone with gusto. "Even animals that are born with disabilities, it's all they know," Poehlmann says. "If we don't treat them like there's something wrong with them, they lead wonderful, normal, happy lives like everybody else."

Want to adopt a disabled pet? It's a good idea to do as much research as possible and chat with an adoption counselor or veterinarian before making the leap. Speed also suggests investigating whether the disabled pet needs extra behavioral support, training or medical care. Then consider your budget and ability to support the animal.

"You may find that maintaining a good quality of life for a special needs animal isn't as daunting as you thought," she says, "or that you simply need a few more resources to provide a loving home."

pressure in his eyes, and he felt like he had a migraine 24 hours a day. For 3 weeks, Teweles tried six different eye drops, three times a day, 15 minutes apart. "This was an incredibly difficult time because I had to restrain Murray to get the drops in each of his eyes," she says. "This is something a dog parent never wants to do."

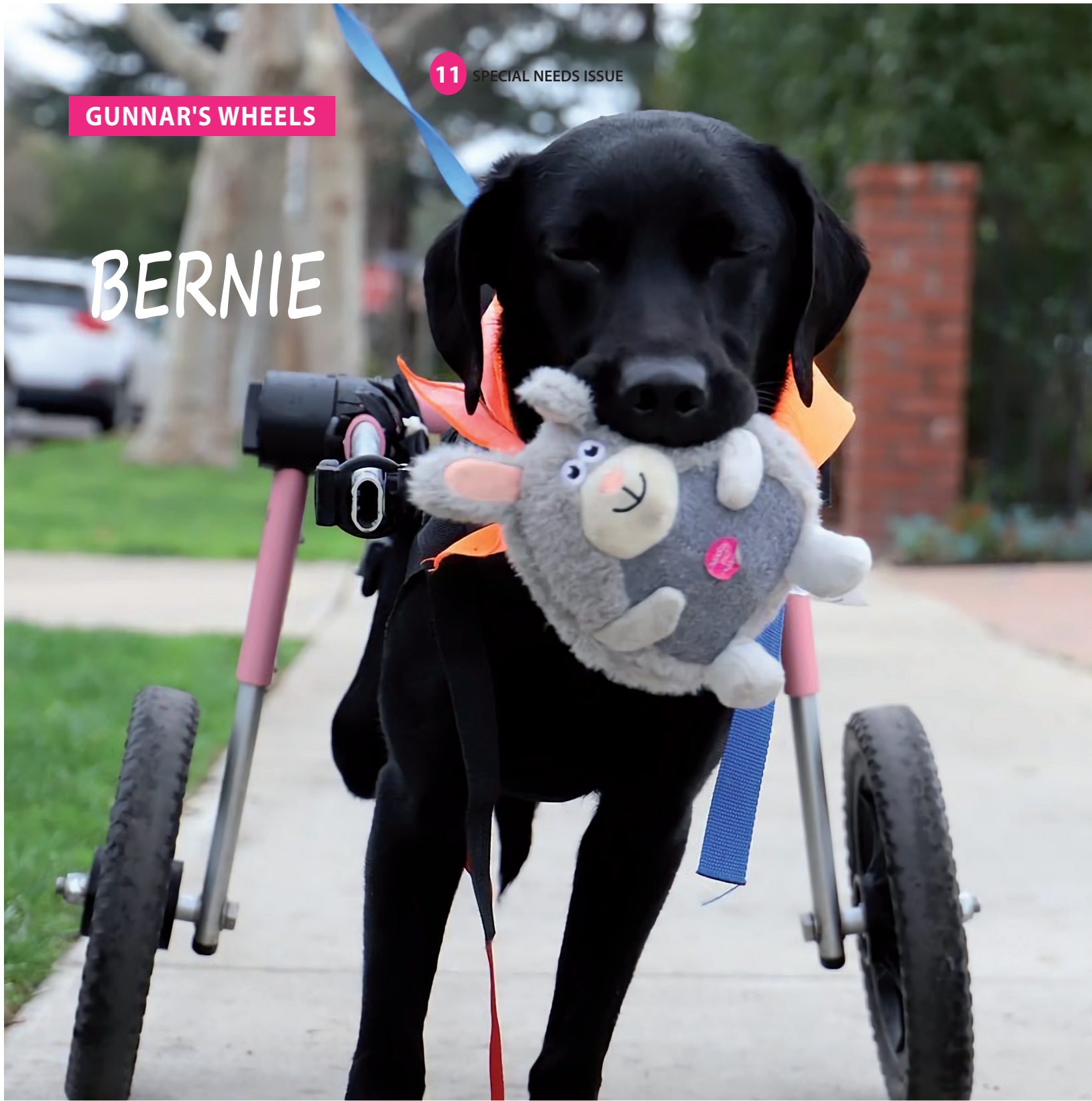
That's when Dr. Cathy Poehlmann, DVM, from Park Pet Hospital in Milwaukee, Wis., suggested an enucleation surgery to remove Murray's eyeballs. Teweles was hesitant. What would Murray's life be like without the so-called "windows to his soul?" And more importantly, would Murray still be Murray?





GUNNAR'S WHEELS

BERNIE



Wisconsin Nonprofit **Gunnar's Wheels**  
Gives Free Wheelchairs to Paralyzed Dogs

BY CHERESE COBB, FREELANCER



**O**n February 16, 2014, Jason Parker's black Lab, Gunnar, was struck by a truck. He had two broken vertebrae, and his back legs were paralyzed. With spinal surgery and six weeks of rest, Gunnar had a fifty-fifty chance of walking again. That's when vets at the University of Minnesota offered to put him to sleep. Parker and his wife, Stephanie, refused. They decided to fight for Gunnar.

To pay for the \$6,000 surgery, the Parkers maxed out their credit cards. When Gunnar needed a second surgery for slipped pins, they scraped together an extra \$2,000. Despite many surgeries and physical therapy, Gunnar's back legs didn't work. Parker started searching for options. "I didn't even know there was such a thing as a dog wheelchair," he says. To keep Gunnar healthy and happy, he needed a \$500 cart. But Parker was completely broke after paying vet bills.

Unbeknownst to Parker, his sister, Jaimee Campbell, contacted a local newspaper. They did a story on Gunnar and solicited donations to help cover his ongoing veterinary care. "That's how I paid for all those bills and bought Gunnar's first wheelchair," Parker recalls. "I've never been a person to ask anybody for anything. I thought, 'How am I ever going to repay all these people, who helped out a dog they've never met before?'"

To pay it forward, the volunteer firefighter and car parts salesman launched Gunnar's Wheels in 2016. Parker's original goal was to donate 50 wheelchairs. With GoFundMe and Facebook donations, he has sent more than 3,300 wheelchairs to paralyzed animals around the world. "We have a lot of chairs in Canada and a couple in Africa. You could throw a dart at the world and land in a country where we have a wheelchair," Parker says.

Wyatt





MIA







BOOTS



To date, Gunnar's Wheels is run by four main volunteers. **1.** Stephanie manages cart returns and the mountains of paperwork associated with running the foundation. **2.** Jaimee combs Craigslist for used carts. The former vet tech also requests support and donations from private parties and public corporations. **3.** Beth is a volunteer from Florida. She is the Facebook coordinator for wheelchair requests. Gunnar's Wheels gets 5-10 requests per day for wheelchairs. There are also 50-60 disabled pets on its waiting list. **4.** Parker speaks with every dog owner to help them measure and get the right fit. Because Eddie's Wheels are custom wheelchairs, they need 15-16 different measurements. "Walkin' Wheels are like convertible carts," Parker says. "Because I can turn them from a rear wheelchair into a quad with one attachment."

Facebook donations cover 5-6 brand new chairs per month. And Parker prioritizes rescue and shelter dogs. "Sometimes, shelters and rescues won't take a chance on a disabled animal because they think, 'Now, I've got to buy a \$500 wheelchair and pay for vetting,'" Parker says. "I've got a lot of rescues that are looking at disabled animals in a different light because they have us in their corner helping them with a wheelchair." Military dogs and K-9s are also granted a wheelchair right away. "They put their lives on the line for soldiers and police officers, and they deserve help," he says.

Gunnar's Wheels is a lifetime loaner program. That means paralyzed dogs—or cats, rabbits, baby deer, possums and even raccoons—get to use the wheelchair until it's no longer needed or they die. At that time, it's shipped to Parker's work address. That's because it's a lot cheaper to send a wheelchair to a business than a private residence.

Parker spends 36 hours reconditioning each chair. To prevent canine diseases like parvovirus and kennel cough, he disinfects each wheelchair. Then he washes its harness, leg rings and stirrups. "Some dogs are very long-haired, so there's hair in the velcro and

stuff," Parker says. "I try to give people new soft parts because the wheelchair companies that we're partnered with give pretty good discounts on them."

Gunnar's Wheels spends \$600-\$700 on shipping per month. "When we ship carts out of the country, we don't ask for them back. People should pass them on to another disabled animal in their own country," Parker says. The Osseo-based nonprofit also asks each person to include a photo and a brief biography of their disabled pet. "It helps owners with the grieving process and gives the next owner of that chair a little bit of hope," he says. "Some are just heartbreaking, tear-jerking letters. We also get a lot of thank you letters inside the wheelchairs, and those are on a bulletin board in my workshop."

When the coronavirus pandemic hit, Gunnar's Wheels stopped fundraising. "I would rather see people keep a roof over their heads and food in their bellies than donate to a poor, disabled dog that's on GoFundMe," Parker says. "It was a hard decision for me to make."

**If you would like to donate to Gunnar's Wheels or request a free cart for your paralyzed pup, visit [tinyurl.com/gunnars-wheels](https://tinyurl.com/gunnars-wheels) email [twobirddogs@hotmail.com](mailto:twobirddogs@hotmail.com)**



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FETCH MAGAZINE

# How to Identify & Treat **POST-COVID**



*Photo Courtesy of Leah Boshart*



# SEPARATION ANXIETY

BY LAURA BENGIS, FREELANCER

**C**onfined to work from home and cancel social events, many households looked to breathe life into the home during the COVID pandemic shutdown. “COVID puppies” joined 1 in 5 households across the U.S. in the last two years, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

Now, as owners transition back to work and reengage in recreation outside of the home, they’re left with the challenge of reintegrating their pets, too. Trainers and day care owners are now seeing a higher incidence of separation anxiety among pets, especially in younger dogs adopted during the pandemic shutdown.

Khris Erickson, professional dog trainer, says the problem stems from COVID puppies missing out on the critical socialization period of development when owners expose dogs to novel things: other dogs, other people, textures, sounds, and environments. She says as parents followed COVID safety protocols, they were likely only to expose dogs adopted during COVID to their owners and neighborhoods resulting in dogs that are much more fearful than dogs that had exposure to varied stimuli early on.

That fear is fueling separation anxiety as their owners start to return to their pre-COVID ways.

“All of a sudden, they’ve gone from always having somebody with them to being all by themselves which is scary,” Erickson says.

Separation anxiety isn’t just impacting COVID puppies. As parents return to work, dogs that once were used to spending longer periods alone have now grown accustomed to having company.

Camp Bow Wow Area Director Leah Boshart says they’re seeing a rise in lack of confidence in dogs when separated from their owners. Some dogs now come into camp much more nervous, taking longer to warm up or adapt to new situations.

“Two years is so much longer to a dog than it is to us even,” Boshart says. “So if they’ve been home for two years with their parents, and they’re finally returning to work, that can definitely be hard.”

Most signs that separation anxiety is present occur when the owner is absent, which can sometimes make it hard to detect. Receiving reports about behavior from neighbors or day camp counselors or noticing destruction of doorways and windows are often the first signals that a pet is in distress while an owner is away. Video cameras observing the pet’s behavior is the most effective way to fully understand the scope of the issue.

A dog experiencing separation anxiety will present panic-stricken behaviors like panting, drooling, wide



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*Continued on page 21*





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eyes, barking, howling, scratching, and pacing. Dogs that are housetrained may have accidents inside or even vomit.

Cases can be mild and treated with behavior modification or more severe needing professional help, depending on the dog's predisposition. While best treatment practices will be unique to each dog, owners may find success in one of these strategies for treating separation anxiety:

**Call a trainer.** If a pet is causing injury to themselves or causing major damage to the home, it's likely time to call a trainer to treat this more severe case. Trainers can objectively observe behaviors and provide helpful training for owners to work with their pets to treat separation anxiety.

**Seek medication.** Some dogs may have separation anxiety to the point of needing medication in addition to behavior modifications to cope. A trainer can help owners discuss this option and decide if it's the right solution.

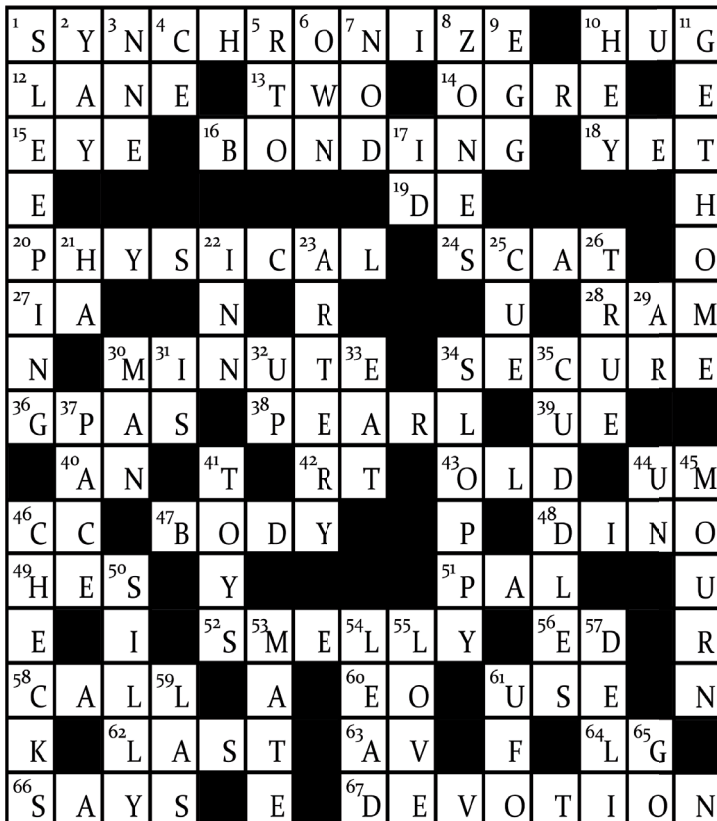
**Build in short absences, increasing them gradually.** Start small with a trip out to dinner before leaving

the dog alone in the house all day. While working from home, create some distance by keeping the pet out of the home office or crating it for short periods of time. Gradually build up these absences from one hour to several hours to eventually a full day.

**Engage the pet in mental and physical activity.** Make sure the pet is getting enough physical activity so they're tired when everyone leaves. Try a short game of fetch or a long walk in the morning (or even the night before). If you don't have time to exercise your dog, mental activity is another great option. Using puzzle toys (like a Kong) can also tire them out, but this should be done before owners depart the home and not to distract them from the departure.

**Provide some background stimulation.** Putting on dog TV or music while the dog is home alone can keep them calm and help to relax them. Providing some stimulation with background noise can provide some comfort to the dog, so it is not sitting alone in silence while the owner is gone.

**Find some company during the day.** Giving a dog one to two days of socialization at a day camp can help give it the exercise and mental stimulation needed to help cope with an owner's absence. Hiring a dog walker or using a dog walking service could be another way to provide a pet with some company throughout the day.



\*Answers

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RESCUED

# SPECIAL NEEDS IN DOGS

BY JENNIFER TROPPEMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I believe that a dog is considered “special needs” when it has medical issues or health concerns that cause it to be “unadoptable” in a city shelter.

Rescue Gang makes it a part of our mission to save special needs dogs and puppies when we have the resources. We like to save seniors as often as we can because we believe that no dog should die alone in a shelter simply because of their age. Often times they were someone’s beloved pet that passed away, couldn’t provide care, or didn’t have the funds for needed medical concerns.

We are always looking for foster homes and adopters that will open their hearts to these wonderful

pups! If you aren’t interested in seniors, we also save dogs that are blind, deaf, tripods, wheelchair bound, or that need medication to maintain a quality of life.



We typically try to save a few special needs cases every month, depending on our resources. We are currently working on two dogs that needed amputations due to old injuries that were left untreated, 3 seniors that are blind/nearly blind, and 32 dogs that came from a hoarding situation that have severe skin issues and are extremely malnourished.

While it’s easy to find the needy dogs in rescue, providing the necessary medical care can be a bit overwhelming at first. We try to have a solid plan



Your ticket includes your choice of a hors d’oeuvre or dessert box, as well as early access to the event’s online silent auction. You will also receive a video providing insight about how we helped animals that were in our foster homes in 2021.

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in place and a regimen of care established prior to placing them in a foster home. We continue to have an open line of communication between our fosters and our medical care team to make sure that the dogs are staying healthy and that no issues are continuing or developing.

Once our special needs dogs are maintaining a healthy and stable life, we place them up for adoption. They have lower adoption fees because we understand that they need more care than a normal healthy pup. It's a balance because the adoption fees don't even come close to the costs we have with providing them with all the necessary care, but we strongly believe that these dogs are worth it and THIS is what rescue is. We often times have these dogs in our care for months trying to find the "right" home, because it also takes a special person to open their hearts to a dog that needs extra care.

We also have some fosters that we keep in our program because they were deemed "hospice" cases. These are the pups that got all the proper care and still have zero chance at regaining a high quality

of life. End-stage heart failure and liver disease are two of the most often reasons for hospice. When we have a hospice case, one of our main concerns is the stress and uncertainty that happens when we have to move a dog from home to home (adoption or new foster). We strive to make sure that our hospice dogs are as comfortable as they can be and getting all the love they deserve in the end times.



### Beans

is from a horrible hoarding situation. He was living with 32 dogs and 15 cats.

He is a little scared but warms up quickly when he realizes you aren't going to hurt him.

He is good with other dogs and is about 20lbs. Patience and understanding will help this little guy get out of his protective shell. Apply today at [Rescuegang.org](https://Rescuegang.org)

# Brady Street Pet Parade

## October 2, 2022



**Come for the Pet Costume Contest,  
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Live Music  
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## HEALTH &amp; HOUNDS

# Do Puppies Need "Special" Food?

Puppy food is a marketing gimmick, not a nutritional need

BY MICHELLE PELLETIER, PET FOOD GEEK

**E**ver hear someone say age is just a state of mind? "Puppy" is really just a state of mind.

Those pesky dog food-marketing folks have played us once again! To get to the heart of the matter, we have to revisit the notion that dogs are really wolves.

After all, the two species descend from a common ancestor and share 98.8 percent of the same DNA. That's closer than kissing cousins. So even though your Frenchie looks more like a couch potato, or your Goldendoodle is prancing around like a king, you still have to think wolves.

When mama wolf has her pups, she is a focused, dedicated, meat-eating, milk-making machine; for about three weeks. After that, she and the pack start bringing back meat for the littles. No puppy formula, no special label on the rabbit's paw that says it's "better for puppies." Nope. Same stuff the rest of the pack eats just in a mushier, regurgitated format. That's how it's been for the last million years when the first grey wolf appeared.

Leap forward to the 1930s and 1940s when dry dog food became commercially prepared, and there was only dog food. A certain dog food that shall not be named hit the market in 1960, and their famous puppy food was launched a full 20 years later. That's it. Some marketing guy came up with a catchy jingle, and puppy food was born.

I'm not saying that a 175-pound Mastiff grows and matures at the same rate as a 3-pound Yorkie. I'm just saying that the

nutritional needs are the same. Big wolf, little wolf, they just eat more or less of what momma brought them to eat or taught them to hunt.

The Association of Animal Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), which does NOT regulate pet foods, the FDA does that, has appointed themselves the authority on pet food ingredients and labeling for the last 100 years! Since they set the standard and pet food manufacturers must use their rules for labeling, you may be surprised that they don't have anything called "puppy food." They have only two recognized categories: growth and reproduction and maintenance. That's it.

In 2014, to address the concerns large breed and giant breed owners had about calcium and phosphorus levels, AAFCO standardized the minerals across the board laying the groundwork for the "all-life-stage diet" meaning as long as a food had a minimum of 22.5 percent protein and a minimum of 8.5 percent fat, it could be fed to all life stages. Because those percentages are the MINIMUMS set for a breeding female to have, that would make for one HANGRY Mama! For maintenance, it's even scarier. Only 18 percent protein is needed and 5.5 percent fat. Take a look at the dog food bag in your house. I'd bet my reputation that you chose a much higher fat and protein level for your best friend. I know I did! The two most fat-restricted diets for obese pets and those dealing with pancreatitis that I can find on the market, one "vet made," the other over the counter, and neither of them drops below 7.5 percent fat. None of them are below 25.4 percent protein. So whom is AAFCO creating these "guidelines" for? I can't find a food I'd be willing to feed my dogs with such low nutrient density anywhere. I'd love to hear from you if you do!



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**Aimee Lawent Beach** (414) 732-9860  
animalconnectingandhealing@yahoo.com

Facebook: Animal Connecting and Healing



Spend your energy on the quality of the ingredients and where they come from. That matters far more than worrying about a percentage you're not likely going to ever encounter. Your dog will thank you for it. As always, reach out to your local independent pet food store, and let them use their vast knowledge to help you navigate the evils of marketing.

Maybe next time we will talk about how dry food is like asking you to brush your teeth with a cracker or how awesome table scraps are!



## THE SCRATCHING POST

## 4 Common Genetic Cat Diseases

BY CHERESE COBB, FREELANCER

The International Cat Association recognizes 73 cat breeds, from the ancient Egyptian Mau to the newest Toyger. Wondering what genetic diseases come with your purebred's deep blue eyes or sassy stripes?

Here is an overview of four common genetic cat disorders, from the Burmese head defect to Manx Syndrome.

**Burmese Head Defect**

The Burmese head defect (BHD) is a genetic mutation in Australian Mist, Burmese, Bombay, and Tonkinese cats. This birth defect is recessive. That means only cats with two copies of the abnormal gene (i.e., one from each parent) will have this deadly head defect. Cats that have one mutated gene (i.e., carriers) will have a rounder head and shorter face with pushed-in features.

According to the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, 5.9 percent of Burmese and related Asian cat breeds carry the BHD gene. It causes a protruding brain and an underdeveloped lower jaw and nostrils. Kittens born alive with BHD may not have eyes or ears. They cannot survive for long on their own, so humane euthanasia is recommended.

**Devon Rex Myopathy**

Devon Rex myopathy (DRM) is a genetic mutation that affects 3.7 percent of Devon Rex and Sphynx cats. Cats with DRM cannot walk normally because of generalized muscle weakness. They tire easily and may suffer from muscle tremors, head bobbing and a dog-like begging posture.

Affected cats also have trouble swallowing and may choke to death. "Although it may be difficult to compensate for the inherent weakness of the neck muscles, owners can try to prevent their cats from choking on their food by either feeding them by hand or from a raised surface," says Sarah Reichert, DVM at The Cat Doctor in Milwaukee, Wis. "For dogs, something called a 'Bailey Chair' exists to keep dogs upright while eating. Although this can also be attempted in cats, it can be difficult."

Unfortunately, there is no treatment. After Devon Rexes are 9 months old, the disease usually begins to stabilize or progresses slowly. With the right care and support, these cats can live the normal lifespan of 9-15 years.

**Spinal Muscular Atrophy**


Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) is a genetic disease that affects Maine Coons. By 3-4 months of age, affected cats become increasingly wobbly and can have various posture abnormalities. This is because of muscle atrophy and loss of motor nerves.

Though SMA is not treatable, it is not fatal. Cats with SMA are mentally normal and are not in any pain. Some affected cats can use all four limbs their whole life. But others are partially paralyzed by a very young age. "Due to the degenerative nature of the disease, these cats should be kept indoors for their safety," Reichert says. SMA results in decreased jumping ability, an unsteady gait and weakness in the hind limbs, making an outdoor environment more dangerous for them.


**Manx Syndrome and Spina Bifida**

Manx cats have a genetic mutation that shortens their tails. It also compresses their spine, spinal cord, and nerves. This causes spina bifida – where the hollow tube that forms the spinal cord or the bones of the spine do not close. Some cats with spina bifida cannot feel the skin around their urethra or anus. That means they cannot control their bladders or bowels. They may also have constipation or back leg paralysis. While less affected cats can walk, they have an odd, bunny-like gait.

According to the Canadian Veterinary Journal, 16 percent of Manx cats have spina bifida. Rumpies (or tailless Manx cats) are most affected and die in utero or are euthanized at birth. "I do not advise owners against adopting purebred cats, as these cats need loving homes too. But I believe that we have a responsibility as humans to care for animals and responsibly breed," Reichert says. "I do not believe that it is an ethical decision to continue to breed animals without thinking about the welfare implications of those decisions. It is not fair to these cats."



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MADDIE'S TIPS

# Dogs, Disabilities & Kids

BY MANETTE KOHLER, DVM, FREELANCER

**H**i friends! Maddie and Bella here to chat about dogs with disabilities. My friend Thomas and his family just adopted a blind dog, and it got me thinking about what it must be like to live with a puppy or dog with disabilities such as deafness or blindness. How do they navigate their world without that important sense? What might it feel like if they lose their sight or hearing gradually versus all of a sudden? How should humans, including kids, behave around them or interact with them so that we don't scare them? What might be different about training a blind or deaf dog?

You might be wondering how a dog might end up blind or deaf. I asked our vet, Dr. Lacy, about this, and she said that deafness can be congenital (born deaf) or it can be due to things like trauma, infection and degeneration of the cochlea (organ of hearing) due to old age. She said blindness can happen gradually such as with glaucoma, cataracts or progressive retinal atrophy, or it can happen very quickly such as with certain types of cataracts or sudden acquired retinal degeneration (SARDS). How easily the dog can adjust to the loss of sight or hearing can depend on things like age, personality and how quickly they lost the sense.

I knew our trainer, Holly, had a blind dog of her own, so I asked her what it was like to live with a blind dog. Her dog Nestle gradually went blind due to glaucoma, so she had some time to teach her helpful cues to slow down and stop, so she could guide Nestle verbally to prevent her from running into something. "Living with a blind dog is not all that different than other dogs," says Holly. "Nestle gets around incredibly well, and most people don't even know she is blind until we tell them." Holly noticed that once Nestle was blind, she relied on her other senses more such as hearing and smell. Touch can be an important sense as well to help the dog feel their way around the environment.

Anyone (human or pet) that's lost their sense of sight may feel anxious, scared or vulnerable, but there are ways to help them feel safe and build their confidence:

- Consistent routine and a safe environment: block off stairs, cover sharp table corners, get rid of clutter, keep furniture in the same place, remove low branches or other dangers in the yard. Running into something and getting hurt can decrease a blind dog's confidence.
- With time the dog will get a mental map of the home and yard.
- Keep the dog on a leash when out of their home environment, Holly does this with Nestle to gently guide her when needed.
- The other senses can help them find their way around: 1). Bells or tags can be put on the other animals in the home, so the blind dog knows where they are; 2). Wind chimes by doors; 3). Scent markers such as vanilla or lavender can help the pet find their bed or the door; 4). Different textures are very helpful such as mats at doors or throw rugs in front of furniture or under food/

water dishes. Mulch, sand and landscaping stones can help a dog navigate outside. Holly has witnessed Nestle using her own bark sound to navigate. For example, Nestle will sometimes bark and then move in the environment.

- There are products available called "Halo" which are harnesses with loops that jut out in front of the dog. The loop hits an obstacle to tell the dog something's there so they don't run into it.

Holly has worked with families with deaf dogs, and she says that the hardest part of living with a deaf dog is remembering they cannot hear what we're saying to them. Holly explained how humans are a verbal species. We talk a lot, but a deaf dog is going to rely on hand signals and physical cues instead of our voice. Deaf dogs need special precautions too, such as being kept on a leash or in a secure area because they cannot hear traffic or a recall cue to guide them as needed, according to Holly. Teaching dogs to "check-in" with us is also very important. This allows us to give them hand signals to guide them.

**Training blind dogs:** Holly shared a few tips. Since they cannot see hand signals, we need to interact with these dogs in other ways. "I generally use a treat to lure the behavior I am teaching," says Holly. "Once they are successfully following the lure, I will add a verbal cue."

**Training deaf dogs:** We need hand signals to not only cue the dog to do a behavior but also to tell the dog they got it right. A "thumbs-up" can be a good "reward marker." To get a deaf dog's attention, a pen light or a remote-controlled vibration-only collar can be used. "The dog is taught the vibration means to look for the owner and provide eye contact," shares Holly. Once there is a reward marker in place, deaf dogs can be trained via luring, shaping or capturing behaviors.

**Safety concerns for blind dogs:** Since the dog cannot see you approaching, talking to the dog can be a very good way of letting the dog know where you are, so they can find you, and so they know you're heading their way. This prevents the dog from being startled. If you're going to pet/touch the blind dog, Holly explains that it is very important to announce yourself. If the dog is still calm and showing interest, allow the dog to sniff you, and then try a short, gentle pet to the shoulder area being sure not to startle the dog.

**Safety concerns for deaf dogs:** "It's important not to startle a deaf dog from sleep or by walking up on them," says Holly. "If approaching a deaf dog, stand in front of them so they see you prior to interacting with them," Holly adds. As we've learned in past articles on safety with dogs and kids, it is always a good idea to let the dog come to you.

Caroline Levin, author of *Living With Blind Dogs*, mentions that stimulating the dog's senses is important for the pet's mental and physical health. Blind dogs can learn to run and have fun in a safe, open space. They can even learn to play fetch with a toy that makes noise. They can find the toy with their hearing and their nose, and they can learn to run back to their human by following their voice and smell. Encouraging a deaf dog to use their nose such as with a sniff walk or even nose work games is great mental stimulation.

Blind and deaf dogs can live very enjoyable and safe lives with some effort and planning and consistency on our part. There are many great resources for living with blind and deaf dogs.



## AROUND THE WATER BOWL

### Spay & Neuter Clinics

**Spay/Neuter Clinic in West Allis (WHS)**  
414-323-6163  
clinic@wihumane.org

**Milwaukee Area Domestic Animal Control Commission**  
Low cost spay/neuter  
(Milwaukee residents only)  
414-649-8640

**Humane Animal Welfare Society**  
SNIP Clinic  
262-542-8851 (x109)  
hawspets.org

**Spay Me! Clinic (Madison)**  
608-224-1400  
reception@spayme.com

**Safe Harbor Humane Society (Kenosha)**  
Low cost spay/neuter  
262-694-4047  
clinic@safeharborhumane.com

**Animal Benefit Society (Manitowoc)**  
Spay & neuter  
animalbenefitsociety@yahoo.com  
animalbenefitsociety.org

**WHS SNAP Services**  
Racine 262-554-6699  
Green Bay 920-469-3110  
West Allis 414-323-6163

### Lost/Found Dogs

**Dane County Humane Society**  
608-838-0413 (x182)  
giveshelter.org

**Elmbrook Humane Society**  
262-782-9261  
ebhs.org

**Flyer Database**  
petfbi.org

**Humane Animal Welfare Society**  
262-542-8851  
hawspets.org

**Humane Society of Sheboygan**  
920-458-2012  
info@SCAdopt.org  
adoptsheboygancounty.org

**Lost Dogs of Wisconsin**  
lostdogswi@gmail.com

**Milwaukee Area Domestic Animal Control Commission**  
414-649-8640

**Safe Harbor Humane Society (Kenosha)**  
Low cost spay/neuter  
262-694-4047  
clinic@safeharborhumane.com

**Wisconsin Humane Society**  
414-264-6257 (Milwaukee)  
262-377-7580 (Ozaukee)  
262-554-6699 (Racine)  
920-746-1111 (Door County)  
920-469-3110 (Green Bay)

### Emergency/Rescue

**24-Hour On-Call**  
262-993-9811

**Wildlife in Need Center**  
262-965-3090  
helpingwildlife.org

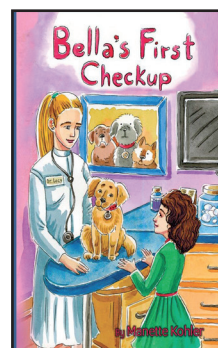
**Department of Natural Resources**  
1-888-936-7463  
dnr.state.wi.us

**County Humane Officer or Police Department** (report abuse)  
nationallinkcoalition.org

### Grief Counseling/Support

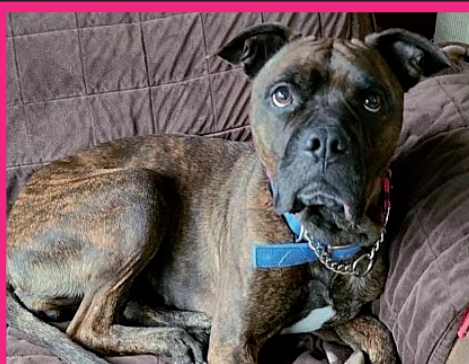
**Fur Angels Pet Loss Support**  
920-547-4544 (Sheboygan)

**Pet Loss Resource Center**  
PLRCMadison@gmail.com  
petlossresourcecenter.org  
(Madison)

	<p><i>I am excited to announce the release of my children's book, "Bella's First checkup"!</i></p>
<p><b>Available on Amazon!</b></p> <p>This fun story gives kids (and their families) a glimpse into the veterinary clinic and promotes how to raise a behaviorally healthy pup including the importance of socialization and fear-free handling in the clinic and at home.</p> <p><a href="http://www.helpinghanddvm.com">www.helpinghanddvm.com</a> for more info</p>	



## Canine Cupids caninecupids.org



### Coco

is a very sweet 60lb, 8-year-old, energetic female Boxer mix. She can be shy at first and cautious of men. After Coco gets to know you, she'll love you big time and follow you everywhere. She is potty trained, good with kids, and is learning to be chill around cats – she does not need to be crated.

Coco is dog selective and would do best as the only dog in a home where her people are around a lot for love and reassurance.



### Theo

is a 60lb, 4-year-old love bug. He is a smart boy who loves to stretch his legs on a walk or during a game of fetch. He enjoys playing with toys, sleeping and being close to his people. He also loves his foster fur brother. Theo has a strong waggy tail so he would not be suitable in a home with small children. He is potty trained and enjoys making canine friends (no feline friends for this hunk). Shy when meeting new people, Theo is looking for a loving home to help him build his confidence.

Adoptables  
w/extra needs &  
lots of love  
to give!



Pit Bull Advocates of America  
pitbulladvocates.org

### Amelia

is roughly 4 years old and has shaken off the trauma of her past. She is looking forward to a brand new start. Starting out as a stray, Amelia was hit by a car resulting in the loss of her leg.

She needs a family that will help her with resource guarding and does not have small children. She would be fine with other dogs and loves sunbathing/snuggling on the couch. She also loves swimming. Please reach out to chat about this girl!



## FETCH ME IF YOU CAN

## Humane Animal Welfare Society [hawspets.org](http://hawspets.org)



### Chevy

is a 6-year-old, mixed breed boy who came to HAWS on a transport from Louisiana.

He is a tripod, but it doesn't seem slow him down at all—he's playful and likes to go for walks. He likes to cuddle or sit next to you while you're working, chewing on his bone. A home with older kids might be best.



### Draco

I am a sweet young boy that loves attention! I am very smart and know some commands. I would make a great running companion! I love playing with the other dogs at the shelter and being a goofball.

Draco has been at HAWS since October 2021.



### Lady Bug

I am a highly energetic girl that loves to play! I love toys and I will play fetch with you. I would be the perfect match for someone who has an active lifestyle and loves to go on adventures.

Lady Bug has been at HAWS since October 2021.

## Mecca's Pit Bull Rescue [meccaspitbullrescue.com](http://meccaspitbullrescue.com)



### Blossom

is estimated to be 2 years old, spayed, micro-chipped, weighs 48lbs and vaccinated. American Staffordshire Terrier/mix. Blossom is a shy dog that will need a family that understands her special needs. She says hello to new people in her own special way. She loves treats and is food motivated. She came into rescue with her tail under her body but now that she knows us, that has changed. She is currently learning basic skills. Loves cuddling and doesn't like conflict. To learn more about Blossom please contact Mecca's Pit Bull Rescue.



# FLASH



A lost, but found story told by Flash,  
the son of an abandoned cat.

*Written & Illustrated by Mary Lynn Kluss*

**By Mary Lynn Kluss**

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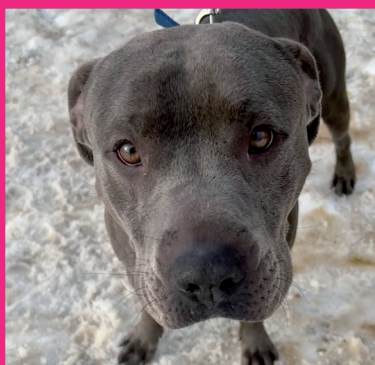
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## **Kobe**

is a Terrier/American Pit Bull mix. He is 1 year and 9 months old. He was surrendered because his owner was no longer able to keep him. Kobe is a very friendly dog and his tail wags a mile a minute. He has lived with children over 5 and would enjoy an active family. He's playful with other dogs but would not do well with cats. Kobe knows a few basic commands, but he does need some training and some help on proper leash walking. He's a sweet dog that needs a family to love him and give him the attention he deserves. He is up to date on all of his vaccinations and will be neutered prior to adoption.



## **Pretzel**

is an 8.9-year-old Pit Bull mix and he is excited to be your next lap dog! He was surrendered to us because his previous owner could not give him the time and attention he needed. He is very smart, knows his basic commands, and is eager to learn more. Pretzel would love to find a family that can keep him active so he can watch his figure. He would love to play with children but prefers a home with no other animals. Pretzel has been at the shelter since April 2021 and would love nothing more than to find his forever home. He may be older, but he still has a lot of puppy left in him. He truly is a sweet, sweet boy with lots of love to give! He is housebroken, neutered and up to date on his vaccinations.



## **Sparky**

is an Australian Cattle Dog mix. He is 2 years and 10 months old. He was surrendered to us because his owner passed away. He is very timid at first, but once you've earned his trust, you're his buddy for life. He is very loving to people once he gets to know them. Sparky does pretty well walking on a leash with minimum pulling. He doesn't know many commands and would need someone to work with him and train him. He is an intelligent dog that would thrive if someone could give him the time he needs. He would prefer a home with no cats and would be okay with a small dog companion. Sparky is housebroken. He is neutered and up to date on his vaccinations.

**Sauk County Humane Society**  
**saukhumane.org**



## TO THE RESCUE

### ALL BREEDS

**Bichons & Little Buddies Rescue**  
414-750-0152, bichonrescues.com,  
bichonandlittlebuddies@gmail.com

**Canine Cupids**, caninecupids.org,  
caninecupidsrescue@gmail.com

**Fetch Wisconsin Rescue**  
fetchwi.org, fetchwirecue@gmail.com

**H.O.P.E. Safehouse**, 262-634-4571,  
hopesafehouse.org, hopesafehouse@gmail.com

**Hoping Fur a Home**, hopingfurahome.com

**JR's Pups-N-Stuff Dog Rescue**,  
414-640-8473, jrpsnstuff.org,  
jrpsnstuff@yahoo.com

**Lucky 7 Dog Rescue**, 920-455-0901  
lucky7dogrescue.com  
adoptions@lucky7dogrescue.com

**Milwaukee Pets Alive**  
milwaukeekeepsalive.org,  
adopt@milwaukeekeepsalive.org

**Misfits Mutts Dog Rescue**  
misfitmuttsdogrescue.com

**Paddy's Paws**, 920-723-5389,  
paddyspaws.blogspot.com

**Patches Animal Rescue**, 920-344-6637,  
patchesanimalrescue.org,  
patchesanimalrescue@yahoo.com

**Remember Me Ranch**, remembermeranch.  
org, remembermeranch@gmail.com

**Rescue Gang**  
rescuegang.org, info@rescuegang.org

**Shelter From the Storm**  
sftsrescue.org, sfts.info@yahoo.com

**Tailwaggers 911 Dog Rescue**  
262-617-8052, tailwaggers911.com,  
rescuedogs@tailwaggers911.com

**Underdog Pet Rescue of Wisconsin**  
608-224-0018, underdogpetrescue.org,  
info@underdogpetrescue.org

**Woof Gang Rescue of Wisconsin**  
woofgangrescue.com, Woofgangrescue@gmail.  
com

**Yellow Brick Road Rescue & Sanctuary**  
414-758-6626, yellowbrickroadrescue.com,  
loveqmoment@wi.rr.com

**BASSET HOUND**  
**Basset Buddies Rescue, Inc.** 262-347-8823,  
bbrescue.org, info@bbrescue.org

**BORDER COLLIE**  
**Wisconsin Border Collie Rescue**  
WIBorderCollieRescue.org

**BOSTON TERRIER**  
**WI Boston Terrier Rescue**, 414-534-2996,  
wisconsinbostonterrierrescue.com,  
Ollie1022@sbcglobal.net

### BOXER

**Green Acres Boxer Rescue of WI**  
greenacresboxerrescue.com,  
info@greenacresboxerrescue.com

### CHESAPEAKE BAY RETRIEVER

**Chessie Rescue of Wisconsin**  
920-427-4295, CRROW.org

### CHIHUAHUA

**Wisconsin Chihuahua Rescue, Inc.**  
608-219-4044, wischirescue.org  
chigirl1983@gmail.com

### COCKER SPANIEL

**Wisconsin Cocker Rescue**, 262-271-6014,  
wicockerrescue.com

**Shorewood Cocker Rescue**, 262-877-3294,  
cockerrescue.net, elaine@cockerrescue

### DACHSHUND

**Oolong Dachshund Rescue**  
oolongdachshundrescue.org

### DALMATIAN

**Dal-Savers Dalmatian Rescue Inc.**  
414-297-9210, dalrescue.us, loveadal@yahoo.  
com

### GERMAN SHEPHERD

**German Shepherd Rescue Alliance of WI**  
414-461-9720, gsraw.com

**ARF's German Shepherd Rescue Inc.**  
arfrescue.com, gsd@arfrescue.com

**White Paws German Shepherd Rescue**  
920-606-2597, whitepawsgsr.com,  
calspence@aol.com

**Mit Liebe German Shepherd Rescue**  
920-639-4274, mlgdsr.com, ccgsds@aol.com

### GERMAN SHORTHAIRED POINTER

**Wisconsin German Shorthaired Pointer  
Rescue Inc.**, 920-522-3131, wgspr.com,  
wgsprinfo@gmail.com

### GOLDEN RETRIEVER

**Golden Rule Rescue & Rehabilitation  
(GRRR)** 608-490-GRRR (4777), goldenrul-  
erescue.org, info@goldenrulerrescue.org

**GRRoW**, 888-655-4753, GRRoW.org,  
president@grow.org

**WAAGR**, 414-517-7725, waagr.org,  
president@waagr.org

### GREAT DANE

**Great Dane Rescue of Minnesota &  
Wisconsin** gdromn.org, gdromn@gmail.  
com

### GREAT PYRENEES

**Great Pyrenees Rescue of Wisconsin,  
Inc.**  
920-293-8885, greatpyrrescuewi.com,  
woolfodge@yahoo.com

### GREYHOUND

**Greyhound Pets of America-Wisconsin**  
gpawisconsin.org,  
Webmaster@gpawisconsin.org

### LABRADOR

**Labrador Education and Rescue Network**  
847-289-PETS (7387), labadoption.org,  
learndogs@labadoption.org

**Labs N More**, 414-571-0777,  
LabsNMoreRescue.petfinder.com,  
LabsnMoreRescue@yahoo.com

### MALTESE

**Northcentral Maltese Rescue Inc.**  
262-800-3323, malteserescue.homestead.com,  
malteserescue@hotmail.com

### PIT BULL TERRIER

**Apple Valley Pit Crew**, applevalleypitcrew.org

**Pit Bull Advocates of America**,  
pitbulladvocates.org

**Helping Pitties in the City  
(Remember Me Ranch)**

remembermeranch.org/pittiesinthecity,  
pittiesinthecitymke@gmail.com

**Off-the-Chain MKE**, offthchainmke.org

### PUG

**Pug Hugs, Inc.**, 414-764-0795,  
milwaukeekeepugfest.com,  
milwaukeekeepugfest@yahoo.com

### SAINT BERNARD

**Wisc. St. Bernard Rescue**, 414-764-0262,  
wstresq@jmuch.com, saintrescue.org

### SHIBA INU

**Midwest Shiba Inu Rescue**  
630-225-5046, shibarescue.org

### SHIH TZU

**New Beginnings Shih Tzu Rescue**  
nbstr.org, nbstr2.board@yahoo.com

**Shih Tzu Rescue of Central Wisconsin**  
shihtzurescueofcentralwi.org

### VIZSLA

**Central Wisconsin Vizsla Rescue Club  
(CWVC)**  
608-279-4141, WiVizslaRescue@gmail.com

### WESTIE

**Wisconsin Westie Rescue, Inc.**  
920-882-0382, wisconsinwestierescue.com,  
westies@new.rr.com

## CAT RESCUES

### Almost Home Kitty Rescue

almosthomekittyrescue.org,  
info@almosthomekittyrescue.org

### Happy Endings No Kill Cat Shelter

414-744-3287, HappyEndings.us,  
info@HappyEndings.us

### Little Orphan's Animal Rescue

608-556-6130, littleorphansanimalrescue.org,  
cdcpumpkin@yahoo.com



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## DOG GOODS FOR THE GREATER GOOD

Good Hound Company contributes directly to supporting local dog rescue + protection organizations. We're driven by community and often team up with small businesses we love and other like-minded individuals. It is our goal to invest back into the community that has given us so much support.

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