

the

echo dogs press

A quarterly publication brought to you by the courtesy of your Echo Dogs White Shepherd rescue dogs and rescuers.



The Story of the Indiana Dogs



Turn around and look at your dog. Perhaps he's lying comfortably on his bed, or maybe on a fluffy rug. Perhaps he has a favorite toy under his paw. Perhaps he's sitting by your side waiting for an ear scratch.

Now consider twenty dogs, ages 6 through 10, who've never known a warm bed, a toy, or a loving hand. Who have been lumped together in a single pen, some of them fighting, but all being bred until they are too old and malnourished to produce anymore.

In September a member of the white shepherd community was called by an animal control officer who had convinced a puppy mill breeder to give up some of his dogs. He gave up the twenty oldest. Echo Dogs was called in to help. Volunteers, friends, everyone who could, came together in just one day to give these twenty dogs what was probably the first kindness they'd ever known.

It's important for everyone to understand that the county ordinances in place in this area require that food, water, and shelter be provided for the dogs. As long as those three things are present, the Animal Control officers have no rights or jurisdictions that allow them to remove the dogs without owner consent. This county has no limits on how many dogs each person can own.



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An animal shelter in the area graciously cleared out a large part of their shelter for the volunteers to bring the dogs there to clean them up. They had a bathing center, transportation ready, and enough crates gathered to hold 20 shepherds all within eight hours of receiving the first phone call from the Animal Control Officer.

Five dogs were brought in at a time. They were flea infested, hungry, covered in mud and feces, and scared. Every dog got a bath, a Capstar to start killing the fleas, a heartworm test, and some immediate TLC. The dogs were then transported to a kennel where they each had a crate, fresh water, and food waiting.

Stumpy was a special boy that came in on the third load. Stumpy was 11 years old and heartworm positive. He was having a hard time walking and his breathing was very labored - the decision was made to let him go to the rainbow bridge. Stumpy was surrounded with lots of love as he left. Of the remaining dogs, eleven are white shepherds (nine of which are heartworm positive). Eight of the dogs are colored shepherds, with four definite positives and the other four to be retested.

By that evening, all 19 shepherds were settled into their crates as the foster homes began to show up. Seven of the white shepherds left to go to their foster homes and four of the colored shepherds went to the next group of volunteers that would be helping them get to their foster homes. The next morning, the remaining four colored shepherds left and three more white shepherds left to meet their new foster families. By Friday afternoon, all dogs were in their foster homes.

The eight colored shepherds went to a rescue organization called Magnificent Mutts in Chicago. This rescue organization is an all breed rescue, but the founder has a love for shepherds and was willing to help out in any way possible. They arranged for transportation to get these dogs to their facility where they all had a vet check and started going home to their foster homes. They are still in need of foster homes.

All of the dogs rescued are six years or older. They've had a rough life until now and each of the foster homes has their work cut out for them as they start to gain the trust of these dogs and show them how great a dog's life can be.

Both of the rescue organizations need help now to be able to provide for these dogs. Most of them need heartworm treatments and all of them will need spayed or neutered. Please consider donating to these organizations - no amount is too small to help!

Echo White Shepherd Rescue: www.echodogs.org
Magnificent Mutts: www.magnificentmutts.org

We can't express our thanks enough to the volunteers who made such a difference for these twenty dogs by helping with the baths, medications, transportation, and for caring enough to spend two whole days consumed with the rescue effort.

Pictures and updates on all of these dogs are already on the Echo Dogs website! This terrible situation has really shown that we have a great group of white shepherd lovers and these dogs are certainly grateful for that!





the story of rory

by paula & steve darlington

When we saw her image on the computer screen we knew we were hooked. Rory drew us both in from just that picture; but her story truly begins years earlier.

In November 1993 a White shepherd mix pup took our hearts and though we weren't married yet, getting Higgins seemed like the right thing to do. Higgins was what I call a "human" dog. She could communicate with us. She was intuitive to our emotions; even when not outwardly displayed. We loved Higgins for 8 years. When she died in late November 2001, we were devastated but no one more than my husband, Steve. About 2 years later we adopted 5-year old Merle, an Australian Cattle Dog. She is a sweet old girl but Steve would often say, "She's not Higgie".

Back to October 2009 and the image of Rory on the

computer screen. Rory resembled Higgie in a way that was distinctive of their common white shepherd characteristics. Steve described it as the recognition in her eyes; her connection to her surroundings. We began emailing Rory's foster mom and only a few days later we completed our application. We were like expectant parents; waiting for word that we were approved!

We were supposed to get Rory the weekend of November 21, 2009 but illness delayed the trip a week. It felt like forever. On November 27 we set out from our home in Stouffville, Ontario, Canada (near Toronto) to head to Canton, Ohio. Yep – we drove for 8 hours to another country in pursuit of the dog we knew just from a picture would be our girl. We arrived at Rory's foster home on the morning of November 28 and instantly, I knew Steve was right about her.

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Dee's Doggie Crack Recipe

- 1 cup milk
- 4 eggs
- 1/3 cup oil
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 6 cups oats
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1/3 cup shredded cheese
- 1/3 cup peanut butter (optional)

Combine wet ingredients, and then add dry ingredients by hand. Press into large cookie sheet or jelly roll pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Cut into small pieces while still warm. Turn off oven and return pan until cool. Store in air-tight container.

Makes approx 200 pieces

She looked us right in the eyes and immediately took to Steve. She shed enormous amounts in the first moments. Pictures don't convey size well and she was bigger than we'd expected.

Steve and I headed back home and Rory slept stretched right out in the back seat of our truck for most of the 8-hour trip home. Once, about three hours in, Rory poked her head in between the seats and looked from one of us to the other as if to say "where am I going now?" At the border when we went through the kiosk the customs officer startled me and Rory growled at him. Shades of Higgins' intuitive behavior! Despite this customs was a snap and we continued home with our new Canadian. Our sons were so excited to meet her that night. When our daughter came home from University Rory somehow knew that Kelly was part of the family. Rory is so receptive to everyone and she has settled into our home beautifully. She and Merle hang out together. We've even managed to set up two sets of bowls for the two of them; most of the time they don't steal each other's food.

We call Rory "The Big Galut" because she is fluid in her movements; jiggling and bending to greet us every day. It is not enough to wag her tail--she moves her whole body. She has gained 15 much-needed pounds since we picked her up in November. Those first weeks she wouldn't curl up as dogs are apt to when they sleep. We thought it was her size but after settling in she now sleeps in a compact ball. She chewed a few things those first weeks. Things like a snowboarding helmet! As she became more secure this behavior ceased. We had talked about a Border collie or a German Shepherd but adopting Rory was just the right thing for our family! Rory is not Higgie. She is different and wonderful in her own right. She loves each of us and I am grateful that my husband found her on Petfinder.com and that we made the journey to bring her home to our children. On the way home from Ohio I realized that it was 8 years to the day since Higgie died. That coincidence made the experience feel like Providence. For eight years Higgie was our girl and eight years later we brought Rory into our lives and hearts.

the story of destiny

by debra and john franklin

Thank you so much to all that helped in getting Destiny, formerly Columbia Girl, to us. It was a long ride from Columbia, SC but well worth it! What a gal!! Destiny has fit right in with Boone - our first Echo Dog rescue. She had her first visit to our vet yesterday and she is in great shape, hip X-Rays good, just needs some weight which we are starting to work on. We noticed a lot of really cute "puppy" qualities and our vet thinks she is just over a year old. She is completely housebroken we just have to work on the "counter surfing" issues. Destiny travels well with Boone and comes to the office every day. By day's end she is one pooped puppy!



Anyway, if you were wondering, this is how the name Destiny came about. I wanted to name her Annika after Annika Sorenstam a very famous female golfer. Deb wasn't buying it. So on Monday I was explaining to one of the office staff that the past weekend we had cancelled our weekend trip to Key West because of the weather and we had gotten an e-mail about Columbia Girl needing a foster so we decided to go to Columbia, S. Carolina to pick her up and at the same time transport another dog, Linen, to her foster in Florida. The staff person said to me that it must have been my *destiny*. I yelled, "That's it!!"

Can you believe it has only been one week since we received the first e-mail?

helping shy dogs

by dee wilusz

Dogs come with different personalities, just like people. Dogs have a genetic predisposition to personality strengths and weaknesses. In addition to their genetic factors, we need to look at early socialization, living situation and their life experiences. With rescues, we don't always have the luxury of knowing a dog's past, but we can make some educated guesses, based on behavior. Most people understandably want a well adjusted, friendly family dog. Sometimes, though if you look beneath the surface, you find a diamond in the "ruff," just waiting for a chance to shine.

I love shy, frightened dogs. They are my passion, and my great love. My first White Shepherd, Wolfie, and I had a wonderful journey that led to my passion for White Shepherds. He was abused as a pup and when I got him at 13 months old, he didn't even want human contact. He had learned that people only bring heartache. Wolf and I began the journey together and now, my dog that didn't even want to be touched, shows in dog shows in the altered classes (AWSA rescue of the year) is a therapy dog, and goes everywhere with me.

People often feel sorry for shy and frightened dogs. They certainly do pull at our heartstrings. Most of us are convinced that we can just "love them" back to wholeness. Sorry to burst your bubble, but it takes a bit more than that. They need to learn that the world is a fabulous place. This means socialization, training, taking tiny baby steps, but above all, it takes patience to see it through. The rewards on the other side are worth it, trust me on this!

Most of us want to protect the shy or frightened dog. We are afraid to push them out of their comfort zone, and we have a myriad of excuses ready. If I had done that with Wolf, he would still be hiding next to my bed! It is important to help them take tiny steps out of their comfort zone in order for them to begin to function in the world.

You start by slowly building your trust with them. Offer treats, offer to pet, but do not force the issue. It is so much more effective when the dog chooses to come to you. Be aware that with some shy dogs you are asking for a great deal of courage just to approach a person. Be patient, it will come. Any attempt toward positive contact with you should be a party!

Walks are a great way of bonding without having to force the issue of touching. Of course, just getting the leash on may take some creativity! Finding a positive training facility in your area is a must! Take them to a class, even if you can't get them to work, it will be good for them to be out and about and around people. Many people take my classes just for socialization. I teach a class specifically for shy dogs, check your area for similar classes.

Finally, and this is important; you have to live in today with your dog. What happened to them in the past is just that, the past. While it may influence behavior, we know that behavior is fluid and changes. Nothing bad will ever happen to your dog again with you, so help them to build their new life based on that. Everyday is an opportunity for celebrating some tiny accomplishment. If you can keep that in mind, it is a wonderful journey filled with excitement and lots of parties!

Here are a few of the most important things to remember:

- 1. Go slow, but keep going....do not allow your shy dog to just sit in a corner.**
- 2. Do not reward behavior you don't want. Telling them that everything is OK when they are frightened only reinforces that it is good to be scared. Reward them for brave behavior!**
- 3. Get them out of the house! Take them to safe places where good things will happen. Be positive and always reward them for being brave.**
- 4. Find a positive training class. Talk to the trainer and explain what is going on. A good trainer should be more than happy to help**
- 5. CELEBRATE! Celebrate every tiny accomplishment. Keep a journal and when you have a bad day, go back to see how far you have come.**
- 6. Watch your dog carefully for signs of stress and help give them tools to deal with it. It may be as simple as removing them from a situation or taking a canine massage class to help reduce their stress level.**
- 7. Be there for your dog. Build that bond that can never be broken, never let them doubt that you will be there to protect and love them.**