

# Professional and Reliable Consulting for Pet Owners

When it comes to our pets, we want to give them the best life possible. But sometimes, aging or recently rescued animals have a great need for behavioral assistance. Companies like All-Ears Animal Communication are your reliable source for consulting for pet owners. Help your pet feel safe and loved with the help of Brigitte Noel M.Ms – pet psychic, therapist, and coach – who uses compassion, patience, and knowledge to address the root cause of their anxieties.

Our pets are as much a part of our family as anyone else, and giving them the love and patience they need to adjust to a new life is a lasting gift we can offer them. Whether they come from rough beginnings or are entering a new phase in their life, getting **animal behavior advice** will help everyone in the family understand their pets who might not feel so comfortable around them. As pure creatures, their instincts are there to protect them, and sometimes you need a professional to bridge any gaps between pets and owners.

Equally important as assimilating a pet into their new life is also **emotional assistance for pet owners** once their beloved animals have passed on. It's a very difficult process, and the grief is all too real. But with the help of All-Ears Animal Communication, you'll be able to move towards the peace and tranquility you deserve. Contact them today to learn more about their animal behavioral advice and services.

---

# Books Mentioned in Podcast

**Books referenced by Brigitte**

Kinship with All Life

My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly

**Checkout Woo Woo for the Skeptic podcast**

Listen to Podcast Now

---

## Of Silkys, Border Collies and The Lindas.



Brock, circa  
1965, Linda Ann's  
first Silky.



Raymond



Raymond sporting  
red bandana



Clio



Clio Flyball  
jumping



Clio working  
Flyball



Clio herding  
sheep



Show Albert 2  
years old



Clio & Mouse  
doing therapy  
work



Clio, puppy  
Charlie, Mouse



Charlie out of  
the tunnel



Serious  
business:Plotting  
the agility  
course!



Charlie triple  
jump



Charlie lure  
coursing



Handsome Danny



Danny running for  
1st place



Danny nose  
searching car



Fabulous Tazz





Tazz out of the tunnel



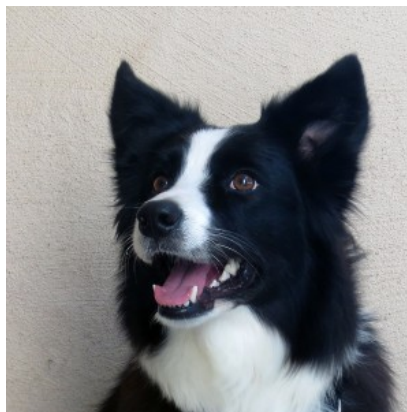
Tazz doing therapy work



Casey & JP



JP Therapy Dog  
Excellent Medal  
(200+ visits).



JP



Casey star  
therapy dog  
400+visits



Gigi just handed  
to Gordon



Recent addition:  
Rocky



2015 Lindas on  
Nenana Glacier,  
Yukon, Alaska

My experiences have led me to believe that nearly everyone has a great story. This belief was born out when I looked more closely into the experiences of long time clients Linda Louise and Linda Ann Schulte. The Schulte family has always been smitten with the Silky Terrier breed of dog and has had several over the years, including their father's Gigi, who I worked with before and after he passed away in 2003. The Lindas, as I will refer to them, have had many communication sessions with their dogs over the years.

Our introduction was in 2000, when I consulted with them and their first rescue, a ten year old Silky Terrier named Raymond, a prior show dog who had fallen on unbelievably hard times. When they adopted him from the Orange County shelter he was in pitiful shape, but his fortunes were about to change dramatically. This little crestfallen Silky now found himself receiving the best of care, along with lots of support and love, and he became the king of the house.

They also shared their home with Clio ,Mouse, both Border Collies, another show Silky named Albert, and Charlie, a five year old male Silky. The latter, a small performance powerhouse and "renaissance" dog, represented the best of the

breed. Linda Louise was an avid show person and competitor. Linda Ann liked the activities as well, but it is Linda Louise who holds the competitive streak in the family and in Charlie she found her dream dog. Linda Ann worked with him in obedience, but Linda Louise took on the other disciplines. He excelled at everything: obedience, agility, conformation, herding, and go to the ground (track rats at end of a tunnel). Linda liked to win and Charlie liked to win for Linda.

**This is an excerpt from my first communication with Charlie shortly after Raymond had been adopted:**

...BN: What have you come in to do?

*Charlie: To be noticed, to be number one, to PERFORM, PERFORM. I love, love, love APPLAUSE. I love attention, I do, I do, I do.*

BN: Do you understand Raymond is staying because he needs a home?

*Charlie: Yes, yes. I really, really like Raymond! He is a "show dog" like me. He is very smart and he is a very very very good companion now. Very. I enjoy having another small dog to play and to stay home with when everyone is out out out.*

BN: Can you help take care of Raymond?

*Charlie: No, that is NOT, NOT, NOT MY JOB. NO. NOT. That is Mouse's job. She is "mom" dog. I am "child dog", "child dog", child dog, NOT NOT NOT "mom dog."*

The Lindas made sure their dogs each got their needs met (see list below), but Mouse played a crucial role in keeping the pack dynamics smoothed out in the home. When she passed, the group dynamics suffered.



**Mouse, Charlie, Danny, Tazz**

Sadly, Raymond's health problems got the better of him and he passed away six months after being adopted. However, his legacy lived on as he became the catalyst for them to become involved with Silky Terrier Rescue. I had not known about the breed before I met Raymond and though I could tell Raymond had been a magnificent little show dog, his run down body and depressed emotional state didn't portray the breed accurately anymore.



**Casey and JP**

### **Border Collies and Silky Terriers:**

Border Collies are larger dogs and considered the brains of the working breeds. Silky terriers are much smaller and, at first glance, may be mistaken for a Yorkshire terrier. Raymond and Charlie were my first Silky encounters.

Why did the Lindas have such different breeds under one roof? What exactly was a Silky? How did the dogs get along? Did they form a little pack or were they divided into separate ones



according to their breed preferences? I found this particular juxtaposition of large and small dogs under one roof puzzling and interesting.

As it turns out, Border Collies and Silky terriers have more in common than not. Silkys are a cross between the small, tough, shaggy coated Australian terrier and the longhaired Yorkshire terrier. Border Collies and Terriers come from the working dog breeds and originate from the same rural area between Scotland and England. Here are a few descriptors about the temperament of the two breeds:

**Silky Terrier:**

Alert  
Friendly  
Inquisitive  
Joyful  
Quick  
Responsive

**Border Collie:**

Alert  
Responsive  
Intelligent  
Obedient  
Energetic  
Acrobatic  
Athletic  
Workaholic

**Needs:**

Mental Stimulation  
Physical Activity  
Leadership

**Needs:**

Mental Stimulation  
Physical Activity  
Leadership

As you can see both breeds are similar in temperament. And both breeds need a leader (human in charge providing them direction) and **a job to do** so that they do not become destructive.

Mystery solved! Indeed, the Lindas had it all figured out.

Their dedication to saving Silkys led to the adoptions of Danny and Tazz. Danny was rescued from East Los Angeles and showed fear of people and of other dogs in open spaces, where he growled and lunged. When I asked him what he came to do his response was the following:

**Danny:** *I HAVE COME TO BE SPECIAL, TO BE UNIQUE. TO BE ADMIRE.*

*I teach love and companionship I am the PERFECT COMPANION.*



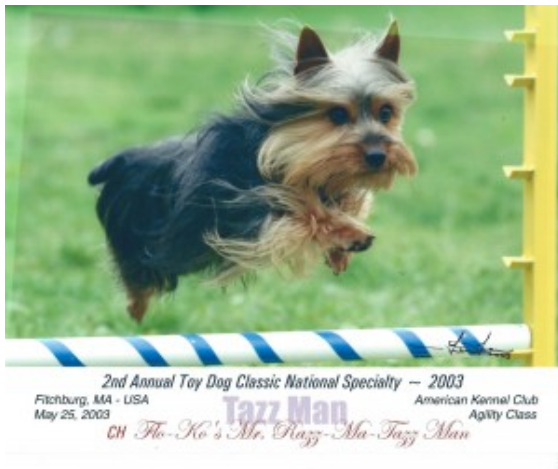
**Danny Beauty Shot**

He also mentioned he wanted to be like Charlie, his role model.

Within a few months Danny, now three years old, had turned into a people lover who always wanted to be the center of attention, even competing for attention and position with Charlie. He thrived with the Lindas and had no qualms in declaring he and Charlie were equal (!), even relegating Charlie to number two position. Charlie, a very secure dog, didn't challenge him and relied on Mouse and the Lindas to keep Danny in check. After Mouse passed, and in spite of efforts to keep him in line, Danny showed a dominant, aggressive behavior with Charlie and the other dogs. They wanted to feel special too, and weren't as accommodating as Charlie to his self appointed position of power, might and specialness. With age he got even less tolerant and had to be kept apart from the others so peace could be maintained in the house. His ongoing disrespect of the other dogs created tension in the pack until he crossed over at seventeen.

Tazz, another Silky, followed Danny's adoption. Tazz was a lovely show dog that was signed over to the Lindas by the breeder when he got his championship title. He behaved in a submissive manner except in the show ring, where he knew how to strut his stuff. Tazz had a sensitive and refined soul and found commanding respect from other dogs to be challenging. He

was a wise one, and on going back to his transcripts, I feel I would have liked to spend more time with him.



**Tazz**

**BN:** What have you come to do?

**Tazz:** *To show*

**BN:** What are you teaching?

**Tazz:** *Beauty at all levels (in body, mind and spirit.)*

**BN:** What are you learning?

**Tazz:** *Not much. I am a teacher, not a student. A teacher. A teacher. A teacher.*

**BN:** What will you be teaching your people?

**Tazz:** *Refined soul in dog body. Refined, refined, REFINED.*

**BN:** Would you like to join Charlie and Danny in agility and obedience when you are done in the show ring?

**Tazz:** *Don't know yet. Do I need obedience?*

Linda Louise agreed with him, he didn't need to pursue obedience.

Tazz went on to earn titles in conformation and agility, but never competed in obedience.

Wise Tazz, petulant Danny, and generous Border Collie mother figure and boss of everyone, Mouse, have passed away and the current 2016 line up is as follows: J.P. (short for Jean Paul), a female Border Collie, came into their lives in 2011; Casey, a female Silky puppy who came to them through Silky Terrier Rescue in 2013; and last, but certainly not least, the bigger than life young male show Silky, Rocky, arrived in March 2015.

A mature five year old JP in a consult clearly declined to raise or teach the cocky young Rocky his manners. That was a responsibility she squarely delegated to the Lindas. A Mouse, mother figure Border collie, she would not be!



**Casey**

The Lindas no longer take part in competitive activities because they are retired and also slowing down, but they know their dogs need to feel useful. Recently, in the spirit of supporting the community at large and providing a job for their dogs, J.P, Casey, and young Rocky have become Certified Therapy Dogs with the Love on a Leash organization in Oceanside, California. Casey, the only Silky girl in the family, has racked up four hundred hours of service and earned the first Distinguished Therapy Dog title for her breed.

There is a very interesting sideline story about J.P., the



Border Collie. She appears to be connected to the Border Collies that came before Mouse. She confirmed with a doggy chuckle and delight that she was Clio (pronounced Clue) the female Border Collie that came before Mouse. Clio (1984) wouldn't urinate outside her yard, which was a problem for a dog taken to shows and events. At that time, the Lindas consulted with animal communicator Samantha Khury, who helped Clio overcome her issue. It so happens that J.P., a year old in 2011, had the very same problem, which we worked through with Flower Essences and lots of consistent encouragement. Linda Louise and Linda Ann hid behind bushes and buildings so J.P. wouldn't be seen while urinating and, eventually, she grew out of it. Furthermore, J.P. has the same mannerisms as Clio. She is very noise sensitive and loves to lay in the bathroom behind the toilet, in the same bathroom, in the same house. Her looks and markings are identical except for the coloring. J.P. is black and white, while Clio was tricolored. Clio loved to play ball, but in a consult with J.P., she communicated that she is beyond ball playing in this life. Instead, she prefers people and her therapy dog work.

Each of the Lindas' dogs burst with personality and eagerness to engage in their life with them. It isn't like they don't have their challenges, but they keep true to the fundamental needs of each breed: to provide each dog with good leadership and a job that engages their intelligence and physical abilities, as well as occasional animal communication sessions to be clear about the needs of each individual.

I would like to end this blog with a small tribute to Gigi, who brought so much joy and companionship to Gordon Schulte, Linda Ann's father, who lived alone after his wife had been moved to an Alzheimers facility. He found Gigi on the internet, at approximately one year old, through Silky Terrier Rescue. When he saw her picture, the connection was immediate and he couldn't get her out of his mind. After a few days, he made the necessary arrangements to adopt her and pick her up

in another city.



**First encounter, Gigi  
handed over to Gordon**

**Here is Gigi's communication after living with Gordon for a few months:**

**Gigi:** *I am so pleased to be here, to be loved, to be cherished. So pleased to be IMPORTANT. I love to be important, I love to take care of, I love to be taken care of. I AM A PERFECT DOG. I AM, I AM, I AM A PERFECT DOG. I DO NOT HAVE ANY FLAWS, I AM PERFECT. I am so willing, so willing. I am so generous. I am so, so, so grateful to be heard. To be able to express my gratitude to have been saved, saved, saved. I was not, not in a happy home. I was in a home full of fighting, full of abuse, full of lies, lies, and lies. All the time lies. I am a very honest dog, I NEVER LIE. I was constantly accused, accused, accused of lying. Lying like my person. I hate lies.*

Gigi had grown up to feel insecure and lacked confidence. Her trust in men needed mending as well. This all changed when she came to live with Gordon. A great little dog found a man that loved dogs, and especially her breed, and allowed her to shine. In good Silky mode, she loved to show off and be seen. She wanted Gordon to take her everywhere and show her off to people. Of course this got him motivated to get out of the house and casually socialize with his new little companion.



### **Gigi two weeks with Gordon.**

When Gordon Schulte passed in 2003, Gigi was driven from Scottsdale, Arizona to New York City by the Lindas' younger sister, Cindy, and her husband, John. Before she left on her cross-country trip, the Lindas arranged for a phone consult. Gigi communicated she was devastated by Gordon's passing and didn't want to leave her home because she still felt his presence there and his concern for her. I explained where she was going and what waited for her there ~ a big yard, and another older dog named Gus. John would be home during the day. Cindy would come home from work and be with her too. She liked Cindy and John; she just requested that they give her time to mourn Gordon. *"Got to have time to be sad, can't be cheerful all, all, all the time."*

Gigi embraced her new home with John and Cindy and is still with us at the venerable age of seventeen. Gordon Schulte, who raised his children to be dedicated animal lovers, didn't have a thing to worry about concerning his beloved Gigi.

P.S. If you are wondering, like I did for a long time, how Linda Ann and Linda Louise got the same last name. Linda Louise explained that the Schulte's adopted her into their family in 1974 after she had met Linda Ann while they were both working at a Naval hospital. Linda Louise was a Navy Corpsman and Linda Ann was a Navy Nurse.



**Eleanor, Linda Ann, Linda Louise and Gordon Schulte.**

\*\*\*\*\*

As always I am grateful for Phyllis McLaughlin's editing skills.

---

## **One Plus Two Makes Three and a Happy Family**



Beautiful and  
generous Ling  
Ling



Ling Ling only  
girl



After 1st  
consults





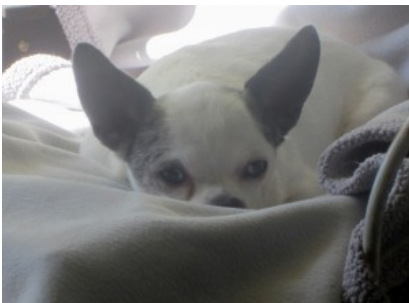
New beginnings for  
Sterling Feb. 17,  
2015



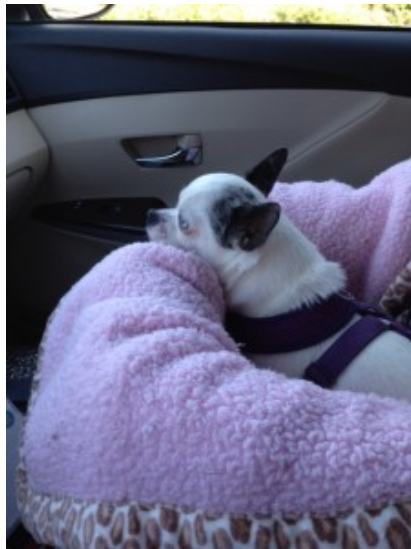
Supportive Amber  
March 12, 2015  
Scared anywhere  
other than his  
crate.



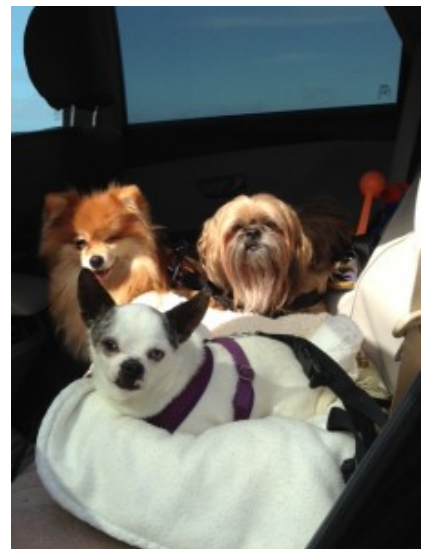
Need/love my  
blankie, March 9,  
2015



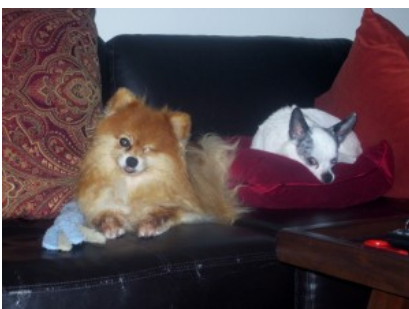
March 26, 2015 On  
the patio



Car ride April 9,  
2015



Going for an  
outing together



Buddies, August  
2015



Sept 2015, bitey  
face

Three BFF's



Christmas Picture  
2015



Sterling,  
handsome and  
happy.

This story begins when Diane's husband, Denis, gifted her with a puppy for Valentine's Day about nine years ago. Diane picked out Ling Ling, a Shih-Tzu. The little puppy was shipped to San Diego, California from a breeder in Arkansas at ten weeks old. From the start, Ling Ling connected deeply with Diane and they were ideal companions for each other. Ling Ling seemed naturally inclined to be well behaved, loved her life, and enjoyed being the only dog member of the family. This co-

sympathetic arrangement went on for seven years until drama entered into their lives in the form of a cute rescued Pomeranian named Amber. Amber had been brought to the South Bay shelter with one eye hanging out. She received the veterinary care she needed was spayed, and then sent into the foster care system to prepare her for adoption. Things did not go smoothly there for the exuberant Amber.

ONE PLUS TWO~

Diane met Amber when she was a short-term foster in the home of a friend. Unfortunately, she could only stay there temporarily due to the fact that the friend fostering her had four dogs of her own. They tried other foster homes but, for some reason, Amber just didn't fit in any of them. Clearly, her behavior was trying the patience of dedicated foster volunteers and she wasn't popular with other dogs in their care either. Over time Amber was in danger of drifting in the rescue system with fewer and fewer opportunities for adoption. Diane didn't really need or want a second dog, but she also could not bear to watch little Amber be relocated from one foster home to another, so she bravely adopted her. These excerpts from the transcript of Amber's consult with me on December 31, 2012, nine months after her adoption, reveals so much of her beautiful heart and soul. She was around two or three years old.

BN: Hello Amber, this is Brigitte the One Who Listens. Diane has asked me to communicate with you and find out all about you.

Amber: *I am AMBER, I am AMBER, I love being Amber. I am Am-be-rr.*

BN: What have you come in to do?

Amber: *I have come in to be very beautiful. I am a BEAUTIFUL DOG. I love, love, love to be groooomed. I love it. I love having my toes PAINTED. I got my toes painted. (Note: With*

former owner.)

BN: What are you teaching?

Amber: *I teach LOVE. I am all, all, all about LOVE.*

BN: Yes, you are. What happened before the shelter and Diane?

Amber: *Nothing happened. I was cared for.* (Not eventful.)

BN: And then what happened?

Amber: *I got away. I ran off. I did, I did.* (Then she never could get back home.)

BN: ...What does Diane need to know she doesn't already know?

Amber: *I am scared of LOSING her. I am, I am, I am.*

BN: Well, that won't happen. Diane and Denis are your forever people and home. Diane will always watch you and look for you. You are micro-chipped. That means if you ever get lost they can easily find Diane and call her on the telephone. You are very safe now, and identified. No losing Amber ever again.

BN: How do you feel about Ling Ling

Amber: *ADORE LING LING. SHE IS THE BEST, the BEST.*

The treasured and poised "only one" Ling Ling, at seven, found herself paired with this young, rather rough and tumble street urchin with one eye. Though Amber loved her, she was very needy, went everywhere, got into everything, and had no manners. She enthusiastically pushed Ling Ling around and made a mess of her peaceful and agreeable life. Returning Amber into the rescue system never was an option, but Diane was at a loss about how to improve the situation. She saw how stressful life had become for Ling Ling, so ten days after Amber's consult she brought her in to give her a voice and find a solution to her dilemma.



Excerpt of January 9, 2013 Session transcript with Ling Ling when I asked her how she felt about Amber:

Ling Ling: *Just needs manners. Amber has NO MANNERS.* (Looked straight at Diane while she communicated this.)

BN: What do you need Amber to know?

Ling Ling: *I'm senior, I'm senior.* (BN: In age and as number one, first arrived.)

BN: Okay and then...

Ling Ling: *Diane is mine too. Diane is mine too. Amber has no manners when it comes to Diane.*

BN: What would you like Diane to teach Amber?

Ling Ling: *OBEDIENCE. She is NOT, NOT obedient.*

BN: Okay, will do. And what else?

Ling Ling: *Treats aren't just for her. She is RUDE with treats.*

BN: I'll have Diane make her sit and give you treats first. And what else?

Ling Ling: *That's all. That's all.*

I was relieved to learn that Ling Ling's problems with Amber didn't run deep. She wasn't opposed to her presence altogether, which was good news for Diane. Ling Ling had no trouble pointing out exactly what it was about the new dog's behavior that bothered her and why. They were all things that Diane could address with Amber. I explained how to make it clear to little Amber that Ling Ling is the number one, first arrived, senior dog by treating her as number one, with perks and privileges. Diane, like most people who adopt a new family

member, want to make them feel at home and provide them with all the attention they crave; however, these good intentions hadn't produced the positive results she anticipated. The new dog simply got more needy and more pushy (hogging her for attention and treats) at Ling Ling's expense. To save herself and become a welcome family member, Amber finally had to learn basic obedience, period.

As Ling Ling wisely identified and pointed out, good manners (obedience training) is the foundation of a pleasurable, positive relationship with people and other dogs. If people sometimes don't know this fact, I've found most dogs are very aware of it and they are the first to point out a lack of manners as an issue with another dog. From all points of view, Amber, in her desire to "belong", behaved in a desperate, frantic way and constantly overreached for treats or attention from Diane. A fruitful discussion followed. She needed to learn how to be a team player.

As usual, I followed up the consult a month later for an update on the situation. Diane, a quick study, had driven home the point with new behavior rules for Amber to follow. This was her forever home and she was her forever person, but she clearly established that Ling Ling was "first arrived", and "number one", and to be respected and taught her how to do this.

Diane understood the issues Ling Ling had been having and had implemented the recommended changes, which resulted in the situation gradually balancing itself out. Amber remained a tomboy, but she learned the rules and, more importantly, knew that Diane expected her to respect them. Ling Ling, more at ease with her new, better behaved, adoring companion started to play and interact with her.

Diane's response via email February 10, 2013 following our

consult with Ling Ling.

“Yes, I have seen big changes in both dogs. Ling Ling LOVES that I am aware of Amber’s lack of manners. And Amber has learned that she needs to be more polite. It’s getting better everyday. Your session brought us all closer. I feel more connected to the individuality of each dog.”

Furthermore, both dogs were getting fresh air and plenty of exercise during their regular romps on Fiesta Island (a dog off-leash space on San Diego bay). These visits to open spaces had initially proven to be a challenge for Amber, who needed to acclimate to such a new experience. This is how she felt about her outings in that first consult:

BN: Do you like going to Fiesta Island with Diane and Ling Ling?

Amber: *I’d rather stay home. I am a dog that likes to stay home.*

BN: Do you enjoy your walks there?

Amber: *I like to be where Diane is. That’s all.*

BN: Do you understand this is your forever home.

Amber: Yes.

BN: And that Diane is your forever person?

Amber: *Need to find out. Need to find out.*

In time she did find out and gained confidence. Her outings into the world with Diane and Ling Ling on Fiesta Island got more and more fun and enjoyable.

This family’s story doesn’t end here, however. No one knew at that point that active little Amber would one day be another dog’s ticket to his wonderful, forever home. Therein lies the continuation and silver lining in this story of upheaval and

mayhem.

Suddenly, during the year Ling Ling turned nine, she put a stop to playing with Amber. It appears she decided it was time to turn the page and be the dignified, senior dog that she had become. Amber lost her doggie playmate entirely and turned to focusing all of her attention on Diane. In Diane's own words:

"She would try to engage me in play from the time I got home from work at night until I went to bed at midnight. My husband would wake in the middle of the night to find dog toys scattered throughout the house and Amber wandering around looking for someone to play with. She desperately needed a playmate!"

### ONE PLUS TWO MAKES THREE ~

Diane began looking online for a third addition to their family. She sought a small dog that hadn't been overly vaccinated during his or her journey through the system, and was young enough for Amber. She spotted a white and grey merle Chihuahua male with one blue eye, one brown, who was three years old, unneutered, and had only been given basic starter health care in rural Louisiana. The owner, a breeder, couldn't manage any longer because of her poor health and was re-homing a few of her dogs that she would not be able to show or breed. Diane felt an immediate connection with this little Chihuahua nicknamed Sterlini and agreed to have him shipped to her, at her cost, as soon as possible. He would be neutered well before he made the trip.

Frustratingly, inertia bogged down the adoption. All parties were willing, but the breeder's poor health and fuzzy thinking made the drive to and from the airport a real hardship for her. Finally, after four long months of waiting, Sterlini (now renamed Sterling) was on his way to catch the flight to San Diego, but things did not go as planned yet again. Diane



explains:

"The day he was shipped I woke up early feeling something was wrong. It turned out they put him on a different flight and a different airline that got into SD much earlier. The breeder failed to tell me (she had the flu and just drove home and went to bed without calling me). I called the airline to see if the flight was on time and they told me he wasn't on the flight. I called the breeder and she gave me the updated flight info...poor Sterling was sitting at luggage claim for three hours! Thank God the baggage check people took him into the office and gave him water and food while he waited for us. The airline personnel were upset with me, but it was really the breeder who dropped the ball. Ugh! But Sterling looked happy at that point...he was in his carrier eating kibble and drinking water. I think he thought he was going somewhere with the breeder and poor baby was just patiently waiting for her...

Until he came to live with us at age three, Sterling never left his home, the breeder, or his pack of dogs, except for one or two vet visits. Needless to say, he was scared to death when we brought him to our condominium! New faces, an elevator, a harness and leash (he had never worn or walked with one), new dogs, new smells, rules, etc! I never saw a dog so stressed in my life. He wouldn't eat and had diarrhea from all the changes. We used Flower Essences which worked like a miracle to help Sterling at least trust me, but he was still very scared and wouldn't eat. That's when I called you."

This is what Sterling shared with us in my office on February 22, 2015, when, he had been with Diane for a few weeks:

BN: Hello Sterling! This is Brigitte the One Who Listens. Diane loves and cares about you and she has brought you here so we can get to know you better.

Sterling: *I am so HAPPY HERE. Here is QUIET. Here is calm, here I can RELAX. I am very, very RELAXED HERE. I LOVE IT*

HERE.

BN: Welcome little Sterling. All is good here for you. That is why Diane brought you.

BN: What have you come in to do?

Sterling: *TO BE WITH. I LOVE, LOVE L-O-V-E TO BE WITH. WITH, WITH, WITH. It is very important for me to be with.*  
(Translation: Be in a close relationship with a person.)

BN: What do you teach?

Sterling: *I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE. I AM ALL ABOUT L-O-V-E.*

BN: I see that. You are very smart too. Handsome and smart. How can Diane help you acclimate?

Sterling: *SLOW DOWN. She needs to SLOW DOWN AND TELL THE OTHER DOGS TO SLOW DOWN. Everyone moves, moves, moves, all, all the time. I need them all to slow down. SLOW, SLOW, SLOW.*

BN: How do you feel about Amber?

Sterling: *Okay...intimidating. Amber is intimidating.*

BN: And Ling Ling?

Sterling: *Okay.*

I then explained to him why the breeder couldn't keep him and tried her best to find a good home for him with Diane.

Sterling: *I just need more time. I'm exhausted. Never been away from home, never went anywhere. Just stayed home. Very DULL, very BORED. Very ROUTINE. I'm ready for NEW, NEW, NEW!*

BN: Okay. How do you feel inside?

Sterling: *Confused. I'm confused.*

BN: Well, Diane is an active lady. She will slowly but surely

take you with her to new places and do fun things. Diane and Denis are a very good home.

Then I tuned in to Amber at home.

Amber: *I am so so so HAPPY. I am so Happy. I'm SO SO HAPPY. Love, love, love.*

BN: How do you feel about Sterling?

Amber: *Don't. He is uncooperative. Uncooperative.* (Didn't want to play with her...)

BN: Well, you have to let him get used to you, Ling Ling, Diane and Denis, and your home. He comes from far away.

When I tuned in with Ling Ling she replied she felt he was okay and added she felt very secure. No issues there.

With Sterling, Diane faced the exact opposite situation than the one Amber had brought into the home. Amber thrived on a high energy environment from the get go, but Sterling withered in it. She truly could not imagine how absolutely mind numbingly slow and boring his past home had been. I felt the ambient inertia through his communication about it. Sterling's life, from the start, was a routine with no variety or mental stimulation. Most of the time the breeder barely had enough energy to get through her day and didn't interact much with her dogs. They were fed and given water, but left up to their own devices in an enclosed environment all day. He wasn't even potty trained. This little dog needed time to adjust to a livelier pace and for everyone to slow down to a more "southerly" tempo, especially Amber who had immediately tried to engage him in her signature rough play. Because he was exhausted and overwhelmed by the adjustment demands made upon him, Sterling had shut down and stopped eating.

Pro-active by nature, Diane made the needed changes right

away. She made sure everyone slowed down for Sterling and gave him a chance to catch up.

The following is Diane's update at three days after the consult:

"We've already noticed changes in Sterling...slowing down and lots of cuddling is helping him to adjust and realize this is his forever home. He is teaching me a thing or two about RELAXING! LOL, he's on my lap as I type this. The food problem is improving also!

Here is her update a month after our consult:

"Sterling is doing well and blossoming each day. He is such a cuddle bug, I'm trying to cuddle with him a couple times a day...He is very sweet and smart...we started training classes and he is learning quickly, especially for a Chihuahua, which are notoriously difficult to train. Sterling and Amber have been playing rough. I think he may be a bit too rough, even for my tough girl Amber. I'm keeping an eye so he doesn't push her too hard. He is building a strong, stocky body from the raw food, exercise and play. I'm still having to kennel him in the day because he can't be trusted not to urinate and defecate in the house. He's learning and hasn't had an accident since last week, but he still can't be trusted unsupervised. I'll be training him to use the doggie door to the patio, as soon as he catches on he won't need to be kenneled."

Diane's dogs are different from each other in breed and temperament, yet they turned out to be well suited for each other once we learned, from their perspective, how to best facilitate their individual adjustment processes. Ling Ling is clearly, and always, the first arrived, senior dog to the others. Amber had to learn essential boundaries and doggie manners; and Sterling's loving, intelligent, cuddle-bug nature was slowly set free to bloom and blossom in an emotionally rich environment. Diane did not know the day she brought Amber

home, that this fluffy, one eyed, street urchin of a dog would be the catalyst for a third, wonderful addition to their family who would further enhance the quality of her life with his sweet, affectionate personality.

Diane's most recent update of January 5, 2016:

"After we met with you and I SLOWED DOWN Sterling began to blossom and continues to blossom to this day almost a year later. Amber and Sterling play constantly and Amber no longer bugs Mamma at night! Sterling loves walks on Fiesta Island and Sunset Cliffs. Small town boy living the uptown life! Both dogs love Sterling and neither feels threatened by him although Ling Ling did put him in his place a few times lol. He fits perfectly into our lives."

\*\*\*\*\*

Many thanks to Phyllis Anderson McLaughlin, rabbit mom and expert, for her generous editing and proof-reading skills.

---

# **Celebrating Dolly and Never say Never**

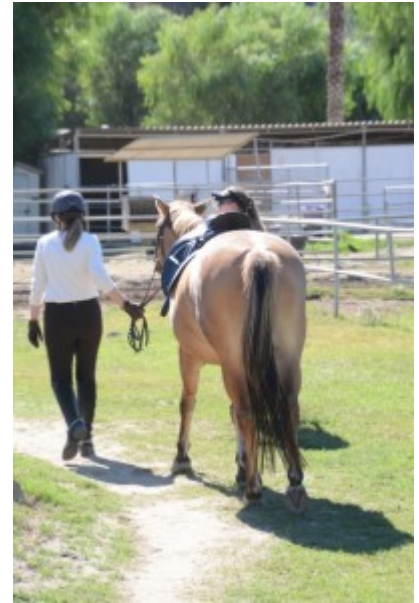




Tacking up



Dolly happy to work



Walking to riding ring



Always a mounting block



Proper rein position



Patient Dolly  
sticks out her  
tongue



Linda listens



Then proper foot  
alignment



October and still  
over 90°; Linda  
stays in the  
shade



Dolly: "Hi,  
Boss."



Dolly's senior  
students



Dolly loves Chris



Lesson, Chris and  
Dolly



Chris and Dolly





Tall Rene, short  
Dolly



New Norwegian  
Fjord mare, Anni



Anni and Linda



Linda and Dallas

Dolly belongs to a very select group of horses comprised of exceptional individuals who do their work consistently and well, but without much recognition. Linda Levy finds these unsung heroes on Craigslist and transforms them into happy working partners for herself and her riding students. Linda, who is as modest as Dolly, works her magic with students of all ages and levels. It feels good to be around Linda and her horses because everyone's needs are being met. The only overworked member of her team, most likely, is Linda herself. I've been seeking just such a kindly, professional environment for a long time.

When my mare, Miss Annie, passed away in 2008 I developed a full blown case of Fibromyalgia that left me debilitated by severe muscle and soft tissue pain in my shoulders, arms and hands for over five years. I didn't know if I'd ever be able to ride again, let alone be pain free. During the worst of it, general arm movement and even holding a pen, typing, or opening a letter caused horrible, long lasting pain. In addition, I experienced massive fatigue. I found myself in bed, or on the couch watching TV, with my arms supported by a pillow, for days at a time. Daily chores were done one at a time over several days.

As they say, "If it doesn't kill you it will make you stronger." I approached this condition from a holistic perspective and an unwavering will to heal. Today, seven years later, I am pain free. My body isn't as strong as before and I'm still overcoming the consequences of five years of inactivity, but I'm back on a horse and I walk around my neighborhood at a brisk pace several times a week. When I have a setback and get frustrated or impatient, I remind myself that I'm turning sixty-three this month, that things have turned out rather well, and I'm fortunate and grateful. What I lost in physical strength I've gained in patience and inner strength.

Several horses and their trainers have helped me get back on my feet and back in the saddle. Thanks to Abby Kogler in Fallbrook and Philippe, a big, well-trained, wise and calm warmblood gelding of twenty-five years, my desire to be around horses again became a reality. Abby had worked with special needs students and she gave me horse therapy sessions. I sat on the horse and learned to move again at a walk, using my flabby, weak muscles, while Abby safely held the lunge line to the horse's head. Abby's life became too busy to continue so I

moved on to Evy, the handsome Friesian on my website picture, at Cook Training Stables in Del Mar. After six months with the marvelous Evy, I sustained a tailbone injury and pulled an inner thigh muscle. Ugh! During my recovery period, which was again spent on the couch, Evy was sold, so there was no going back to him. When I was well enough, I tried a lesson horse on another ranch in Del Mar. Unfortunately, she was so tired and worn out by her job with kids that I cut the lesson short. For the following few weeks, I took lessons from Janet B. Reed in Poway, on a sweet large-boned black mare named Roma. Unfortunately, the commute to the facility in Poway was often quite lengthy due to traffic. By that time, I had pretty much made a big circle around San Diego County. Was I ever going to find a compatible lesson horse and place to ride?

Early on in my quest, I had explicitly stated to Cheryl Erpelding, who knows most everyone in the horse community, that I wasn't interested in returning to Lakeside or East County in general. I had spent 20 years in that heat and dust with Miss Annie and I was done. (Read...I'll NEVER ever go back—been there done that.) In April of this year, I did return to Lakeside to do the blog about Cheryl and Joey, the rescued thoroughbred. Cheryl boards her horses at the Triple S Ranch in El Monte Valley, a beautiful verdant (for SoCal) spot surrounded by cultivated fields and the El Capitan preserve. After that experience, I was drawn to periodically check on Joey with Cheryl and, little by little, I let go of my mindset about returning to East County. I remembered Triple S Ranch from years past and it had always been a pleasant place. This led to Cheryl introducing me to Linda Levy and her ten year old lesson mare, Dolly.

Dolly is a small horse who is a Norwegian Fjord/Quarter Horse mix, which is a rare combination because Norwegian Fjord

breeders usually do not cross breed. She is cute with her golden coat, warm brown eyes, and distinctive Fjord striped markings on her legs. Compared to Abby Kogler's tall, monster horses off the jumping circuit, the hefty Friesian Evy, and my big Miss Annie, Dolly felt like a pony. Dolly forced me to confront my second NEVER: "I am not drawn to small horses, and I will never ride a small horse". Thankfully, Dolly and Linda got me over that silly mindset quickly and, as it turns out, Dolly's size is very well suited for my currently delicate body.

Dolly is wonderfully special, and Linda agrees with me that most of her students have absolutely no idea that she is such an exceptional horse. They take for granted her steady, calm temperament and intelligence. Not a thought is given to how responsive she remains to riding aids, and that her skillset allows her to work with beginners as well as more advanced riders. Linda gets a huge amount of credit for maintaining Dolly's condition and spirit. She knows Dolly dislikes pushy young riders who think they know how to ride. She sagely watches over her mare and teaches students how to ride properly and respectfully, with the horse's comfort and wellbeing in mind at all times.

When Linda encountered Dolly, she had been used as a trail horse. Unfortunately, she was prone to bolting on the trail, so she wasn't taken out any longer and had nothing to do. Her people decided to put her on Craigslist, where her profile caught Linda's attention.

Here is the interview I had with Dolly on October 2, 2015:



Hello Dolly,

BN: This is Brigitte the One Who Listens. I am interested in you. I am a translator in people words for horses like you. Would you like to share with me? This is for Linda and all the people who would like to know more about you.

Dolly: *I am so, so, so HAPPY. I am A VERY HAPPY HORSE. I LOVE AND I MEAN LOVE MY WORK. I LOVE TO WORK. I LOVE TO WORK. If I stand I get very ANTSY. I LOVE TO WORK.*

BN: What have you come in to do?

Dolly: *TO BE WITH PEOPLE. I LOVE PEOPLE.*

BN: That is a great attribute. What do you teach?

Dolly: *I teach GOOD HORSE, very GOOD HORSE AND I'M SO PROUD, SO PROUD OF MYSELF. I AM A VERY STRONG MARE, I AM VERY AWARE. I AM.*

BN: What does Linda need to know she doesn't already know?

Dolly: *SHE SAVED ME. SHE SAVED ME. SHE SAVED ME. SHE DID, SHE DID, SHE DID. I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL, ETERNALLY.*

BN: What did she save you from?

Dolly: *Boredom. I was so, so, so B O R E D. HERE WITH LINDA I AM NEVER, EVER BORED.*

BN: How do you feel about your students?

Dolly: *Very responsible. I AM ALWAYS, ALWAYS CAREFUL.*

BN: What would you like Chris (a 67 year old female student, who started as a totally novice rider with Linda and Dolly three years ago) to know?

Dolly: *I AM SO PROUD OF CHRIS. SHE IS THE BEST, THE BEST.*

BN: Can she do anything to improve her riding?

Dolly: *No, she is doing so well. She has the correct ATTITUDE. Always open, always. Her heart is OPEN TO ME.*

BN: What would you like to share about rider X?

Dolly: *Needs to relax, worries a lot.*

BN: And young rider Z?

Dolly: *Nothing special.*

BN: Do you like teaching rider Z?

Dolly: *She will move on.* (BN: Rider Z, a little girl, isn't connecting with a horse's heart and spirit.)

BN: How do you feel inside?

Dolly: *Great, I feel great.*

BN: Does Linda need to know anything that would improve your life?

Dolly: *My life is great. I am SO, SO, SO HAPPY (and content). My life is great.*

Linda explained that she is drawn to the smaller horse breeds such as the Norwegian Fjord Pony, Icelandic Horse and Haflinger Pony because they are bred to like people. Their size is unintimidating and they are suitable for adults and youngsters alike. True to her breed, Dolly does express her love of people in her communication. Recently, Linda found Anni, a pure bred Norwegian Fjord, on Craigslist, to help Dolly out with her workload. I fully expect she will become a lovely, secure riding experience like the rest of Linda's horses.

Linda's ability to ferret out good individuals on the internet isn't limited to horses. In 1997, while living in her native

Vermont, she met her husband in a chat room for the Boston area. In those days, you actually met some of the participants of your chat group in person. After their first informal, and successful, encounter at a museum they started to date and soon married. Linda, the only horse person in her family, passed on the passion to her daughter, who is an accomplished professional and trains hunter/jumpers on the East Coast

Linda and Andy moved to San Diego three years ago from the East Coast to be with Andy's elderly parents. That is when Linda found Dolly and started providing horseback instruction and training in Lakeside. Dolly isn't alone any longer, as she now lives with Tug (a Haflinger mix), Dallas (a quarter horse gelding), and the newly arrived Icelandic mare, Anni.

We are so fortunate to have an instructor with an extensive thirty five year background in the horse world. Linda has worked upper level dressage and show jumping. Has trained her share of horses and is familiar with many breeds. At one point, she was named "Care Taker of the Year" for Standardbred race horses who won under one hundred thousand dollars that year. These horses race driven, not ridden. Therefore Linda can even teach how to drive a cart! Now, that's something I'd like to try eventually.

Linda is particularly pleased with the progress her adult student, Chris Wright, has made over the past three years. When Chris retired from nursing, she decided to take up riding. Today, at sixty-seven, she continues to take lessons twice a week and practices alone one day. I truly feel her level of accomplishment is due to Linda's insightful instruction and Dolly's abilities and temperament. The pleasure Dolly and Chris experience during a lesson is undeniably apparent.

I'm also an adult rider in my sixties. For years I rode on trails and kept out of the riding arena, so my dyslexia wasn't an issue. Now I have embarked on a more formal riding

experience which involves a lot more instruction and techniques that engage both sides of my body. This causes a complete imbroglio in my head during those times when I can't distinguish left from right. Linda is a top notch instructor who listens carefully to the horse and the student and knows how to adapt her approach to the student's individual learning style and challenges. With her guidance, I'm slowly but surely progressing, but more importantly, Linda and Dolly are providing me with an equestrian environment and experiences that are balm to the spirit and heart. Thank you Dolly for turning my small horse "never" on its head.

This brings me to my third and biggest resounding "Never". In 1980, while living in Geneva, Switzerland, I vacationed in San Diego with my first husband. Our San Diego experience, after Sea World and the Zoo, wasn't the best. We didn't have a car and were booked into the Hotel San Diego on Broadway at a time when downtown was seedy and dilapidated. In lieu of Horton Plaza, there was a row of old fashioned tattoo parlors, bars, and a few small nondescript smoky convenience stores. We really didn't experience the beauty of San Diego. For us it was a nasty culture shock and, to top it off, our luggage was held back at the airport by the skycap we had not tipped properly. As our plane was taking off, I swore I'd "NEVER, but NEVER," come back. When we got to Las Vegas and found ourselves without our luggage, I yelled a few more angry "nevers." Yet, in a twist of fate, I moved to the United States from Switzerland two years later and drove down from San Francisco in December of 1982 with my future second husband. Our marriage ended and he moved away, but I've continued to live here ever since.

Now, thanks to my insightful instructor Linda and the exceptional small horse Dolly, I'm happily back in the saddle, riding at a lovely oasis in East San Diego County.

\*\*\*\*\*

Photo shoot and all photos courtesy of Cheryl Erpelding, Erpelding Photography.

Review and editing: Phyllis McLaughlin

**Follow ups about a previous blog:** <http://brigittenoel.com/joey-and-cheryl-erpelding-horsewoman/>

Joey the Thoroughbred found jumping to his liking and before Cheryl's medical procedure, he was moved to a facility in the South Bay for more training. I recently learned he was adopted by a young rider and has found a very good home.



With help from friends, family and the equestrian community, Cheryl Erpelding, who suffers from Lymphedema, raised \$86,100 during a two year GoFundMe campaign. This covers her out-of-pocket costs for two procedures to drain the liters of excess fluid from her legs. Cheryl is now recuperating from the second procedure, on her left leg. I see it like a massive lipostuction where instead of fat, excess fluid is removed from the body. The eight week recovery is painful and no fun.

The end result is well worth it. She can her manage her condition better and live a more normal life. You go, Cheryl!



Day five, legs wrapped with compression garments



All done at last!

---



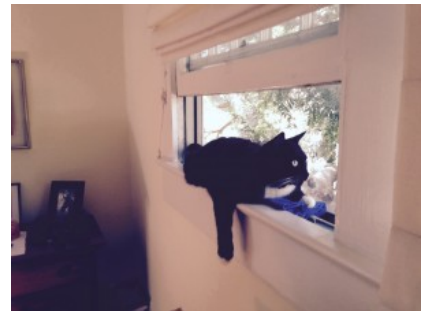
# How Clara Belle Got Her House Back



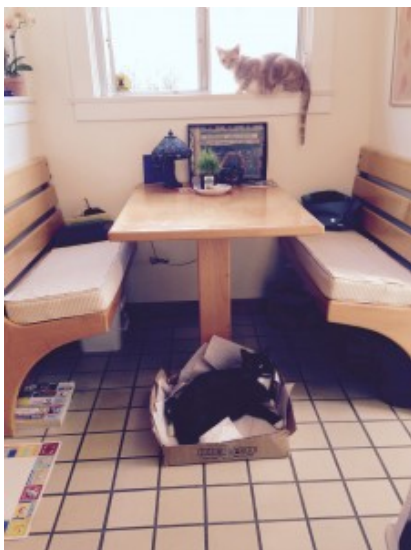
Clara Belle



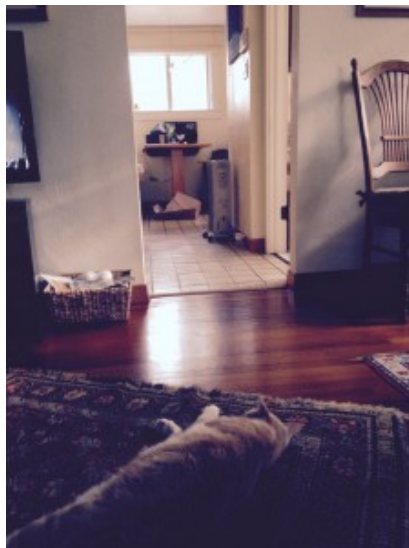
Favorite window



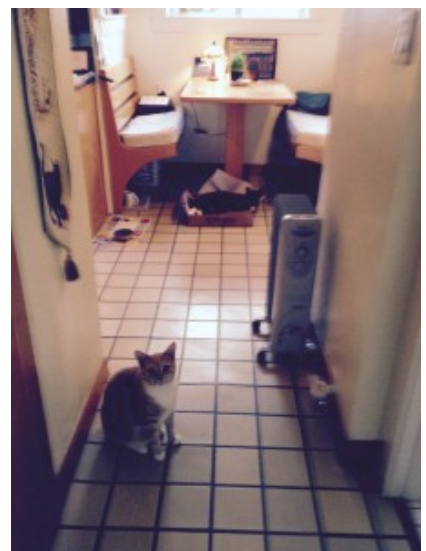
So much to smell  
and watch



Clara Belle's  
little prison



Simon watching  
the entrance



Things getting  
better



Scratch board in background



I'm #2? Really?



Relaxing at last



All is well in  
OUR home.

In a blog last year you got to know little Simon, who is my cream and orange tabby with virtual angel wings. The One-Who-Could-Do-No-Wrong, whose easygoing nature charmed and won over my older, more complex and less social tuxedo girl, Clara Belle. This summer a most interesting situation developed between the two cats. It is one that often occurs under the human radar in many cat homes, even mine!

At the beginning of this year Simon turned two and a half, a time which marks the end of adolescence and full entry into the cat adult world. He and Clara Belle, who is six years old, had stopped play wrestling and I noticed a gradual shift in the dynamics. She considered him a full grown male cat and interpreted his "play" with less humor (she didn't have much to begin with). The usual chasing games became more intense, with Simon "playfully" invading her space. All she would do to show her annoyance was give him a hollow hiss. Their behavior shift continued in the evening when we all went to bed. Clara Belle started to hiss as soon as Simon jumped on the bed. Eventually, with my arbitration, each one found an acceptable personal spot on their claimed side, with me in the middle. For a while everything seemed to fall into an uneasy peace. Clara Belle is difficult and intolerant and I've always been grateful for Simon's good nature. For that reason, I missed his transition to little mischievous cat man. Moreover, like a lot of people, I made the mistake of thinking that the cats would sort out their new dynamics and that Clara Belle would be able to stand up for herself. In most cases they can't and things go from bad to worse. Usually, I am the first to point that out to my kitty clients.

My awakening started at some point a few months ago, when I noticed Clara Belle spending a lot of time in the kitchen. She seemed to like it there and alternated from a cushy bench by the table nook to a cardboard box lined with paper on the floor below the kitchen table. In the evening, she stayed there while Simon walked to my bedroom and jumped on my bed. He gave me the most soulful, "Isn't this the BEST" gaze as he settled by my side for the night. Clara Belle no longer came to bed, not even to wake me up in the morning. She seldom ventured beyond her kitchen space, even declining to visit her usual special spots at different windows. That is little

wonder, because as soon as she ventured to one of them, Simon would come up to her and his close proximity would cause her to jump off in a huff of hissing indignation. I did see Simon moving in on Clara Belle but nothing I did, including shooing Simon away, made her want to stay and insist upon claiming her place. More and more she retreated to her safe spots in the kitchen. Simon, most casually and nonchalantly, had taken to laying on a rug by the entryway to the kitchen ~ a strategic position indeed. If Simon wasn't posted there, she would occasionally leave the kitchen to go to the cat scratcher by the front door. He invariably kept track of her movements and would come to stalk her as she returned to the kitchen from the cat scratcher. Also, he would frequently sit on the kitchen table and stare down at her, whether she was on the bench or in the cat bed below. Staring down from a higher place is another way to intimidate and she was very bothered by it. I'd observe him or hear the hissing and would immediately put a stop to whatever he was doing, but that didn't faze him. He was focused on keeping Clara Belle in her place and was having a great time doing it.

Empowered by his free rein, Simon came and went as he pleased, and loved on me a lot, while she stayed in those same spots in the kitchen. I still didn't completely "get it" until it occurred to me that Clara Belle wasn't just being difficult and intolerant of Simon. She really appeared boxed in. Then the light bulb went off in my head and I adjusted my perception about what that little monkey Simon had achieved. I asked myself how could I, of all people, have missed this? I was so sorry and appalled. As I went back and reviewed Simon's behavior, it became clear that he had figured out how easy it was to push Clara Belle around. He had been behaving this way for about eight weeks and it had given him plenty of time to hone his game.

When he was younger, he had chased her in play and she responded positively. (They do get along. This isn't an incompatibility issue.) As he got older, and at some point during the back and forth chase/running, the intensity of his pursuit increased. She got annoyed, flustered and didn't know how to keep him from going too far in his game. Her response to him was a hollow sounding, ineffective hissing. On many occasions it happened around four in the morning and I wasn't inclined to get up and halt Simon's behavior. Therefore, Simon carried on. He was effortlessly displacing her from a distance of several feet when she yielded the window spot as soon as he showed up. That is how and when, as an adult male, Simon learned he could have an upper hand and grow his power over her. Displacement is significant body language in the animal world. An animal who yields his place to another is sending a clear message of submission. I remember being so amused when a friend's big and powerful Bernese Mountain dog sat down and leaned on me as I was down on my knee to take a photo. He continued to gently increase his pressure until I lost my balance and I fell away from him. He then sat in the place I had just vacated, and if I tried to push him back, he didn't budge. This happened over and over in all sorts of situations and with different people. He'd lean on you and make you move. A displacement of a few of inches was enough to make his point. At the time we all thought his behavior was just ever so cute. Little did we know the joke was on us! He gently, but purposefully, displaced us and, from his perspective, became "the boss of us". In the same way, Simon never ceased to look like my little sweet angel boy cat until I interpreted his new behavior correctly.

I had initially worked so hard at getting Clara Belle socialized. She had made tremendous progress in learning how to be comfortable and how to behave in a home. I was determined not to let her regress.

Simon had gradually lost more and more respect for Clara Belle's senior, number one, first arrived position in our household. I would have to help her get that back and knew how to accomplish it.

The first step was to address him directly and tell him I expected him to respect her. Every time I observed him doing something disrespectful, such as chasing her, intimidating her with his stare, or moving into her space, I'd put an end to it by telling him firmly to stop. If I saw him contemplating doing something, I'd just divert his attention elsewhere. Clara Belle would look at me with relief that I was helping her out. Little by little, Clara Belle started to trust that I was being consistent in enforcing the new rules and her behavior had been vindicated. She began venturing out of the kitchen for quick visits into the living room, but would soon dart back to the kitchen. I would firmly repeat the rules, but Simon would give me a defiant look and continue his behavior. Clearly, from his point of view, I was an unwelcome intruder into his cat affairs and, in true cat spirit, he didn't see any good feline reason why he should comply with my wishes. This went on for several days, until the opportunity to drive the point home with Simon presented itself one morning as I came out of my bedroom. Clara Belle had left her kitchen area and Simon was just starting to stalk and chase her. I came at him, waving a piece of clothing I happened to have in one hand. The message this time was physical as well as vocal. This intimidating physical move into his space startled him and he ran away. I pursued him a bit more and he ran under a bed. I was really sorry I had to do this, but it was the turning point. He tried stalking her another few times and each time had to deal with me waving a dishtowel or whatever I could wave in his direction. The day I pursued Simon under the guest bed, Clara Belle ventured all the way to my bedroom in



the evening. She took her place on the bed and gave me repeated cat hugs during the first night. Both of us had missed the other. Simon acted subdued and a bit sad. I made sure he knew I loved him and treasured him, but he was to respect Clara Belle. I remained very consistent in my mindset. There is no room in this situation for being absent minded or too busy, because the domineering cat will take advantage of any opportunity to go back to their intimidating behaviors. Once or twice I carried Clara Belle and put her on the bed when I went to bed. During the day, I would find Simon in the cat bed in the kitchen when clearly Clara Belle wanted to use it. I would gently but firmly pick him up and displace him to the living room so Clara Belle could take over the cat bed. The first time I displaced him like that he looked crestfallen, but it sealed Clara Belle's #1 position over his. Clara Belle started to freely move around the house and jump up on her favorite places. She even shooed him off the bed once or twice. Impressive!

This process of implementing appropriate boundaries and restoring a more harmonious interaction between the two cats took three weeks ~ twenty one days and nights of constant attention. More than once during that time, I got up at three or four in the morning when I heard something going on, usually Clara Belle hissing, and made Simon stop whatever he was doing. He still tries to chase Clara Belle but, because she is more confident, it is more in play than intimidation. I still stop him and display displeasure. He responds immediately and runs to one of his spots and lies down looking contrite. He knows. Now, they both come to bed and find a spot, but I have pushed Simon off once or twice when he was staring down Clara Belle. After a while, he returns with the right attitude and everyone is at peace.

Yesterday, I observed her play wrestle him while he was lying in the sunshine by the back door. She managed to bother him enough that he got up and left. I gave her an imaginary kitty high-five and she blinked a cat kiss in return. We have a happy, harmonious home once again.



Clara Belle's heart

---

# Boxer Helen returns as Boxer Pippa



Garden stake



Buster, Rascal,  
Helen



Buster and Helen



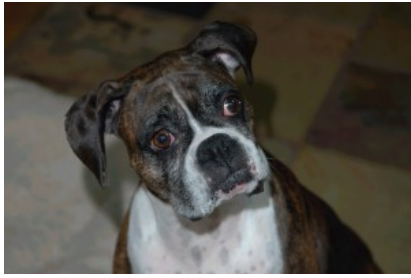
Young Helen



5th B-day Helen  
Rascal



Ice-cream for  
Helen and Rascal



Helen, Christmas  
2004



Helen: I'm a bee!  
2009



Pippa minutes old  
December 8, 2010



Four days



Ten days



Pippa three weeks



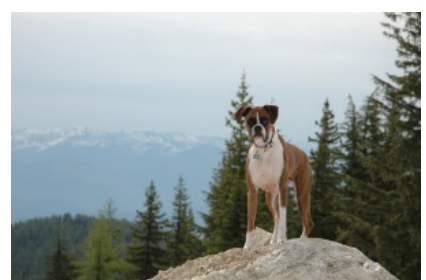
Three weeks



Between the boys,  
cutie sister too



Growing up





Eight weeks going  
home

Pippa 2 years old

Top of the  
mountain



Pippa 2 1/2



Pippa, 4 1/2,  
posing for  
consult 6/2015



Made it home

Helen wanted to come back! It came as a surprise to all of us. If any of her dogs were to come back to her in the near future, Lesly surely expected it to be Buster. During an Otherside session in 2004, Buster, Helen's sire, had clearly stated he wanted to return to Lesly and Kevin when the two boxer girls, Helen and Rascal had passed away.

A year later, Buster communicated that he was still a bit tired and not ready. Now, this amazing development was occurring.

Buster, Rascal, then Helen passed. A couple without children, Kevin and Lesly devoted themselves to their furry kids and did everything they could to give them a good life. They assisted Buster through his geriatric years, and moved mountains to

give Rascal the highest and best care when she became ill with a form of doggie multiple sclerosis. During those years, Helen was the healthy one and, in the end, the one whose needs weren't always met because she was the easier keeper. In other words, Helen was the "middle child" who quietly adored Kevin.

In time, Rascal passed and Helen became the "only one". By then, she was 10. Within two weeks of Rascal's death, Helen developed seizures. It was her turn, for good or for bad, to receive Lesly's undivided attention and care. Lesly and Kevin managed her condition with both traditional and holistic medicine. While they were both at work, she was home alone and they wanted to know if that was hard on her. As you can read in the transcript below, neither seizures nor staying home alone were going to dampen her spirits.

Transcript with Helen 4/8/2009

*BN: Hello Helen,*

*Helen: I am very happy, I am to be the center of the attention. I love being only dog. I do.*

*BN: Do you get lonely?*

*Helen: Sometimes, but I'd rather wait and be alone. I'd rather wait at home. I love my home. I love my home. I do need the curtains left open, I do. I want (to see) "inside/out". I do.*

*BN: Do you miss Rascal?*

*Helen: Sometimes I do. She comes around often. I don't feel lonely. I don't.*

*BN: Lesly was thinking of taking you for a day a week to doggie day care. There, you would play with other dogs instead of waiting at home.*

*Helen: Half a day only. Half a day. Not all the day. Kevin must come get me. He must.*

*BN: Okay. But understand, they won't take you to doggie day care if you don't want to go. (I sensed the 1/2 day seemed fine with her if it made everyone feel better...)*

*Helen: I'm happy. I am.*

*BN: How do you feel inside?*

*Helen: I'm fine. I'd like a "springy" (as in Spring like) headband and more clothes. I need more clothes.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Helen had the best time as an only dog. It wasn't always easy for her to take on a position of greater responsibility, but with Kevin's help she managed. She simply adored Lesly and exponentially worshiped Kevin. They did as much together as possible. She passed away, a content and happy elderly girl, on July 13, 2010 at the age of 12.

For the first time in decades, Kevin and Lesly had an "empty" home. They were taking a bit of a break and letting the grieving process run its course. About a month after Helen passed, Lesly felt internally prompted to connect with her on the Otherside as we had done with Buster and Rascal. The evening prior to our consult a mysterious package made its way to their doorstep. It contained a beautiful garden stake of a boxer with angel wings. Lesly absolutely loved it and felt it was confirmation. Indeed, we needed to connect with Helen. (Lesly found out later a friend of hers had sent the gift of the boxer garden stake in memory of Helen.)



Helen on Otherside, September 7, 2010

BN: Hello Helen, This is Brigitte connecting with you for Lesly and Kevin.

Helen: Please let them know how I am well. I am well. I am also very worried because I'm coming back and I don't want any competition. I'm COMING BACK TO BE ALONE. I LIKE BEING ALONE. I DO. I AM COMING BACK. THAT IS MY DECISION TO COME BACK.

BN: Great, I'll let them know.

BN: How are you feeling?

Helen: I'm feeling LONELY. I am not happy here without Kevin. I want to be with KEVIN. I adore KEVIN. HE NEEDS ME, KEVIN NEEDS ME.

BN: And what would you like to share with Lesly?

Helen: I am here for KEVIN NOT LESLY JUST FOR KEVIN.

BN: But you love Lesly as well?

Helen: OF COURSE I DO. I ADORE LESLY. BUT IT IS FOR KEVIN, KEVIN, KEVIN.

BN: In what ways do you help Kevin?

Helen: I am his little girl. I am his little girl. I am Kevin's little girl. I am, I am, I am.

Note ~~ I took a little break to discuss this with Kevin and Lesly, for whom this was unexpected news. I also asked them to tell Helen where they would be looking for her. (It gives the process a known starting point.) They planned to turn to Buster's breeder in Temecula, CA for a new puppy.

*BN: Helen, Kevin and Lesly would love to have you back. They have contacted the breeder where your sire, Buster, came from and are planning to get a puppy through her or her contacts with Buster's bloodline next Spring, six months from now. We'll be able to give you better details down the line.*

*Helen: So, I'm okay, I'm "Reserved"?*

*BN: Yes, you are. We will guide you to the contact. You need to connect with Jennifer's breeding female dogs. That is the entrance and the way back to Kevin.*

*Helen: Okay, this is so, so, exciting! So. I'm thrilled but still worried.*

*BN: You'll be fine. Get help from the Otherside; we'll work it out from this end.*

*Helen: Okay, I will do that. I'm very OBEDIENT you know, very.*

*BN: Do you want to be a girl (female)?*

*Helen: I am a girl. I am girly, girly always girly, girly girl. But NO babies. I'm a girly girl.*

\*\*\*\*\*

We were all stunned and excited. Helen was coming back and so soon! Buster obviously was letting her go first. He would wait. Time, as it has been explained to me, does not exist like it does on the Earthplane. It is a long continuum, a sort of eternal flow of "now" for which ten years here is hardly a blink of an eye over there.

Helen's focus was returning to complete her relationship with Kevin. Buster, ever the gentleman dog, apparently gave her the opportunity to do so. Had he wanted to change the course of

these events he could have joined the conversation, since we were open and receptive, but he didn't.

Lesly immediately contacted the breeder in Temecula. She recommended they contact another breeder from Escondido, CA who had moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. Puppies from the desired bloodline were due in December. That was two and half months away. Salt Lake City was closer to their home in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho as well. Things were falling into place very quickly. Lesly and Kevin were found to be suitable guardians by the breeder and they made the agreement for a puppy with a "first pick of the litter" clause. We clearly explained to Helen, where she was expected to make her entrance. Lesly kept focused on the Salt Lake City breeder and periodically checked in to see how things were going. The litter was due around December 10-12. We decided to check in with Helen on December 1 to see where she was in the process. We didn't know if she had made the jump in time for this particular litter.

December 1, 2010

*BN: Hello Helen. This is Brigitte communicating with you, along with Lesly and Kevin. Lesly has contacted a lady in Salt Lake City. The female boxer named Cayman is going to have puppies. (I gave her the name of the breeder, location and the name of the business.) Lesly and Kevin would like to know if you are ready to come back to them.*

*Helen: Hello, hello, I am a puppy. I am a puppy*

*BN: Great, where are you? (BN thinking: Oh, my!!!)*

*Helen: I don't know.*

*BN: Are you in this mom boxer, named Cayman.*

*Helen: I very well may be. I am a girl. I am a girl. I am very warm. I am very hot. I am a girl.*

*(BN note: it was hot and crowded in the womb, puppies were quite big by now.)*

*BN: How will Lesly know it is you?*

*Helen: I am a girl and I'll look like me. I'll look like me. I am a girl. I'll look like me.*

*BN: Okay. What does Lesly need to know?*

*Helen/Puppy: Kevin, Kevin needs to know I'm HIS girl. I'm HIS Girl. I'm his Girl. I'm Kevin's girl. I am. I am. I am. He needs to know.*

*BN: So, you are here.*

*Helen/Puppy: I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. Not too many puppies. Not too many puppies. I'm here.*

*BN: They are planning on calling you Pippa.*

*Helen/Puppy: Pippa, Pippa, Pippa. (BN: I sensed she loved the name right away.)*

\*\*\*\*\*

In the early hours of Wednesday, December 8, 2010 little Pippa was born with four other puppies. Two males and two females.

Kevin and Lesly hoped there would only be one girl, but of course it was a bit more involved. There were two brindle girls and a fawn colored one. They had first pick of the litter which served to calm Lesly's apprehension about finding Helen. However, as soon as they received the pictures of the newborn puppies, it was clear a petite brindle girl, the first girl to be born after the two white males, most likely was their little Helen/Pippa. Lesly had hoped for a fawn boxer,

but she knew right away the little brindle puppy was the right one. More to the point, Helen was brindle and she said she would look like Helen.

Email from Lesly on December 14. ...We fly down to meet them Friday, January 7th. I felt absolutely positive the second I saw her picture. I took one look and said "she's here". And guess what, she's not the flashy fawn girl of my wish list. Go figure! Kevin is so worried and over thinking it to death. He is just sooo excited about getting his little girl back.

Lesly had a very good rapport with Cheryl, the breeder, and they had arranged for Cheryl to call her and send pictures of the puppies as soon as they were born. (Lesly is the designated organizer and get-it-done person in their marriage.) That Wednesday, Lesly sensed a call was eminent and wondered why her cell phone wasn't ringing. By ten o'clock they were ready to go to bed when Kevin checked his phone messages, not expecting anything in particular. There, to his utter amazement, he saw the emails and the pictures of the just born puppies. By some fluke the breeder had entered Lesly's cell phone number with an eight at the end instead of a nine—which converted it into Kevin's cell number. In this unanticipated manner, the news of Pippa's birth flowed directly to him. His little girl had landed!

The final confirmation for Kevin and Lesly came when they visited the four week old puppies for the first time in Salt Lake City. Lesly sat down on the floor facing the puppies, with her legs folded by her side. The petite brindle girl separated from the group, walked around her, curled up behind her legs, and went to sleep. She was "home". During the visit, Kevin held that same puppy and she planted "a petal kiss" on his lip ~ the exact quick, gentle lick Helen used to give him. He was elated by this confirmation. In an unexpected twist and turn to the meet-up with the puppies, one of the big white males took an immediate liking to Kevin and singled him out. Their connection felt strong and the puppy was adorable. I

remember learning about the second puppy's behavior with Kevin and thinking it was a crucial juncture. Would Pippa be the only one or would she have a dog companion? Kevin felt very drawn to the white puppy, but in the end his sense of commitment and loyalty to Pippa shone through. Soon he learned the two white boxers were going to a good home in Las Vegas, where no doubt their coloring, size and beauty would turn heads. All the puppies were well placed. A few weeks later, on February 10, the breeder boarded a plane with Pippa, now weaned and eight weeks old, and flew with her to meet Kevin and Lesly at the airport. They drove their puppy home to a new life together.

Pippa as a puppy was a handful of exuberance and play. To this day she enjoys a lightness of being that was out of her reach as Helen. She cracks everyone up with her antics. Lesly takes care of all of Pippa's needs but emotionally leaves plenty of space for Kevin to bond with his dog. Pippa goes to work with Kevin every day. They are inseparable.

Recently, she sat with great poise and gravitas for her picture. It is the one that Kevin would send me for our consult. It was clear to him while he took the photo, and to me when I saw it on my monitor, that Pippa understood perfectly she would be communicating with me soon. This is how she wanted to present herself. It was our first connection since she was born four and a half years ago.

June 10, 2015

*BN: Hello Pippa, This is Brigitte, the One Who Listens.*

*Pippa: I know, I know. I am so thrilled, so thrilled to be back. My life exceeds all, all, all my expectations. I never dreamed it could be so good. I am so, so, so, HAPPY. SO, SO,*

*SO. I HAVE KEVIN. I finally HAVE KEVIN all, all, all to myself. I am the Only One and Number One and MORE.*

*BN: What is the more?*

*I am a STAR,*

*I am a STAR,*

*I COUNT,*

*I COUNT,*

*I COUNT.*

*BN: What does Kevin need to know he doesn't already know?*

*Pippa: How PROUD I AM TO BE HIS GIRL, TO BE HIS FAMILIAR. I AM HIS CLOSEST, CLOSEST COMPANION. I AM. I AM. I AM SO, SO, SO thrilled to go everywhere with Kevin. I am so, so, so happy. (BN: felt her bursting with joy and love of life.)*

*BN: What does Lesly need to know?*

*Pippa: How much I ADORE HER AND I AM SO GRATEFUL NOT TO HAVE TO CHOOSE. (BN: Lesly acts selflessly, completely from the heart and allows the relationship between Kevin and Pippa to flow freely.)*

*BN: Do you remember your life as Helen?*

*Pippa: Good, good life but this one SO, SO MUCH BETTER. SO!*

*BN: What do I, Brigitte, need to know?*

*Pippa: How special you always, always make me feel. So special.*

*BN: You are! Is there anything you need from Kevin?*

*Pippa: No*



*BN: From Lesly?*

*Pippa: No. We live in complete H-A-R-M-O-N-Y. Harmony.*

*BN: How does your body feel?*

*Pippa: Great, so happy. So.*

Pippa is a smart girl and she entertains herself for hours. She does all sorts of clever things like roll the windows up and down in the car on her own and “negotiates” with them for what she wants. Helen used to be game to wear anything: shamrocks, bunny ears, bee antennae headbands, hats, holiday outfits, summer or winter and every day outfits. Pippa clearly shows she doesn’t want, or perhaps need, to be dressed up and wear clothes. When she wants attention, she asks for it and it is generously given. People stop to admire her on the street. Kevin feels they know each other in a manner that goes beyond what he has experienced with his other dogs. The sense of complete fulfillment is mutual.

Returns are not unusual and I’ve facilitated quite a few of them. Helen/Pippa’s had a quick three month turnaround from time of death in July to re-incarnation in December of the same year. All of the important elements, such as location and timing, fell into place. I was happy to assist, as I always do, with a few practical suggestions that would create coordinates the animal and their people could follow, a bit like a (celestial) GPS system.

In general, for the join-up to be successful two criteria have to be met. First, the animal is the one to choose to come back and secondly, the people, after they agree and some ground work is laid out, let the process unfold without trying to control the outcome in any way.

A perfect example of this happened just this year with a cat

named Allez that was yearning to return to his person. He clearly stated in a communication from the Otherside she would have nothing to worry about or do. He would find his way up the driveway of the home and back to her. His person was to simply wait for him. She waited and waited and he did not come. We connected with him on the Otherside and knew he was on the Earthplane as a kitten. Then, in another communication, he mentioned he was in a cage and the woman thought all was lost. She had a strong feeling he was in adoption center about to be homed. Resigned, she (finally!) just let go of the hope of being reunited with her cat. Then one day, well over a year after Allez had passed, a friend of hers in Northern California asked her if she would take an eight month old cat, named Katrina, which she and her husband had rescued as a tiny kitten up a tree. I saw a short video and felt this young cat surely belonged with my client. Eventually, the woman agreed to take her. Katrina traveled down from Northern California in a comfortable, air conditioned animal transport service van. The van, (we later joked it was her limo) with her inside, drove right up the driveway to the front door, as she said she would. Yes, Allez chose to be a she this time around, and responded with exuberant racing around the house when asked if she was Allez. Her "new" name, because she appeared to like it so much, became Ally with a y. (My client also found out later, kitten Katrina had spent a couple of months in a big metal crate on her friend's property.)

Some animals may return to their people older in years, in a different species, and from far away locations. From far or near, in a straight line or with multiple detours, the reunion eventually takes place. All one needs to do is be aware, sit back, let go and have faith.

---

# Thoroughbred Joey and Cheryl Erpelding.



Just arrived at  
Falcon Ridge  
Equine Rescue



After a few  
months at Falcon  
Ridge.



November 2014 New  
partners



Round pen work  
first, lets do  
this.



Moving out in the  
round pen



With Cheryl,  
round pen work  
done. Good job!



Now, in the saddle.



Nice relaxed walk



Moving out



Brief chat break, but lesson not finished yet.



Well done, good job!



Joey and Cheryl

Joey, a registered thoroughbred named Youmustberight, was sold like so many countless discards of the racing world. He probably was around two years old. In general, horses bred for the track are minimally handled and, if they do race, are trained specifically for racing and nothing else. If he is lucky, the young horse will be purchased by a trainer who sees potential in him and takes the time to prepare him for resale for another discipline such as jumping, dressage, English or even trail riding. Or an individual who intends to provide some general training along the way may buy such a horse at a low price. For a variety of reasons, among which are lack of

consistency, know-how and money, the latter plan rarely works very well. However, affluence, of all things, turned out to be the enigma in this young horse's new home.

Handsome Youmustberight ended up on a luxurious property in the wine country near Temecula with a few other companion horses and was renamed Marquis. Unfortunately, this beautiful environment turned out to be a gilded cage in which Marquis was starved to skin and bones by his inhumane owner. She strongly disagreed there was anything the matter with her horses when the Riverside Animal Control finally removed them from her care. Falcon Ridge Equine Rescue in Valley Center, CA took in Marquis and spent three months restoring him to normal weight and health. He was soon adopted but brought back to Falcon Ridge a year later because the person could no longer afford his care. Marquis was up for adoption again.

Cheryl Erpelding, whose mission, among her many equine related activities, is to save one horse at a time, was looking for a new project. She had recently completed training and successfully re-homing a horse. She turned to Nicki Branch and Falcon Ridge to find a suitable new horse in need of her expertise. Marquis, now 10 years old, had a sweet disposition but hadn't had any consistent basic training and desperately needed a spring board to a better life. Therefore, he was an ideal candidate for Cheryl's remedial training. After a few visits Cheryl felt he was the one and, in November 2014, she trailered him down to Triple S in Lakeside, CA. He is now "Joey", and is in expert, kindly hands, being loved and appreciated by all who know him.

Late February this year I came down for a consult with Joey. He and Cheryl were getting along well. She was moving forward

slowly, at an extremely basic level of handling. Up to this point, nothing much had been asked of him and he'd hardly been ridden. He appeared to love all the attention, but didn't quite understand the purpose of having a rider on his back make him do things while going around in a large circle. Cheryl who is an assistant to trainer Ronnette Leja were making good process working together with Joey. When the time came and Ronnette asked Joey to go into a canter during short training sessions, he started to buck. Was this exuberance or something more serious? Cheryl set up the consult to find out more about Joey.

When I got to his corral I didn't know much about him, but I could see he looked glossy and healthy, had a friendly disposition and a good confirmation. He appeared to be an uncomplicated sort, but we surely needed to know how his prior experiences had affected him. Cheryl met me and we sat down in front of Joey who was only too happy to have company and treats. I was aware he was Cheryl's new foster horse and that he had come from Falcon Ridge Rescue but I hadn't seen the picture of him emaciated and had no idea of the harrowing experience he had been through.

**Joey ~ February 27, 2015**

BN: Hello Joey,

This is Brigitte, The One Who Listens. Cheryl has asked me to connect with you. Would you like to share with me? I translate into people words for horses.

**Joey:** I am very curious. I am a curious horse. I love my life. I have a very good life. Very good. I love my life.



BN: Great. We are so interested in knowing more about you, especially Cheryl.

**Joey:** Please let Cheryl know I am a SIMPLE HORSE. NOT COMPLICATED. THEY THINK THERE IS MORE TO ME. THERE IS NOT. I love, love LOVE people. I need people to talk to me. TO CARE ABOUT ME. You care about me. I love that. I have a very, very, generous spirit, I have—for that “Special Person.” I am a very good, good horse.

BN: Yes, I can see that. What have you come in to do?

**Joey:** To be with. I love to be with.

BN: What do you teach?

**Joey:** I teach love. I’m a lover boy.

BN: What did you do on the racetrack?

**Joey:** Not much. Considered okay, but just okay.

BN: Did you ever race?

**Joey:** No. Given away. I was given away.

BN: How do you feel inside?

**Joey:** I’m very calm, very contented.

BN: Cheryl is taking care of you now. She wants to know what you want to do.

**Joey:** I don’t know. I’m not very ambitious you know. I like to hang out.

BN: Do you like dressage?

**Joey:** ...okay...?

BN: Do you like to jump?

**Joey:** I don't know.

BN: What do I need to know?

**Joey:** You know, you know. I'm just me.

BN: Do you have any discomfort when you are ridden?

**Joey:** I'm just not used to being ridden consistently. Tell them it is all new to me. All new.

BN: When you cantered, you bucked?

**Joey:** New. Too new. New.

BN: Do you have any pain under saddle?

**Joey:** No.

-----

His communication confirmed a lot of what Cheryl already figured out, but I don't think anyone had an inkling as to how little Joey had been ridden or handled. In my opinion, his good disposition weighed heavily in his favor and made him more manageable. In addition, he says of himself that he is a simple, uncomplicated horse, without much ambition. A lover boy type. These are definitely desirable qualities for a pleasure/companion horse. Eventually, Cheryl may discover he likes one discipline or another, but being someone's BFF seems a likely preference for Joey. An important role indeed, not ever to be underestimated.

Cheryl agreed that the formula for success with Joey's training was to continue to move forward very slowly and

consistently. She would continue to maintain a routine until he was very comfortable with it, then introduce one new element. The second or third time when Ronnette asked him to canter he had bucked again because it had felt strange to run with a person on his back. I could assure her it wasn't out of pain, resistance or unwillingness. We needed to understand, for the most part, his interactions had been with people on the ground. He was still a bit confused as to why a rider, i.e. Cheryl and Ronnette, got on his back and asked him to do things and he needed to be reminded: They are the teacher, and he is the student. In fact Joey, at 10 years of age, was learning kindergarten horse stuff for the first time. Because he had led such a sheltered, uneventful existence I also emphasized how everything was "new" to him around the ranch as well. In short, he was constantly called upon to become familiar with and learn simple things about being out and about.

Our consult came to an end. Cheryl fed him his daily goodies and supplements, I gave him the last of my carrots and we called it a day.

All went well until about three weeks later. Joey, apparently not receptive to training that particular day, took the bit in his mouth and bolted at high speed out of the ring in the direction of his grooming area. He was out of control. Cheryl used all her experience to slow him down and safely guide him to a halt. No one got hurt. But this was a close call. I found out about this mishap and offered to come out and check with Joey. By the time I got there the next day, he was standing in his corral a bit sore from the lunging he underwent as a deterrent for future running off, but still very much sweet Joey.

**Joey ~ March 22, 2015**

(He had just finished simple round pen work with Cheryl and was back in his corral all groomed and handsome.)

BN: Hey Joey, you did really well today.

**Joey:** I am SO, SO, HAPPY. I am so Happy. I really like it here. I do. I'm so relaxed here. SO.

BN: Very good. How do you feel about your riding with Cheryl.

**Joey:** Very good. Very. Love, love, love ATTENTION. Love time with Cheryl, love, love , love.

BN: What happened yesterday when you took the bit. I'm just curious. To me you are the best boy.

**Joey:** I need a break. I need a break.

BN: I see. You got stressed?

**Joey:** I got TIRED. I WAS TIRED.

BN: Did you need to pee?

**Joey:** I just got tired.

BN: How can Cheryl know you are getting tired?

**Joey:** I'll just not behave.

BN: So you are willing until you get tired.

**Joey:** Yes, very willing. But TIRED, TIRED, TIRED.

BN: Please explain tired.

**Joey:** Just tired. Plain tired.

———

Working through his fear and flight instinct and being good for so long had taken its toll. I had a feeling things had been moving along smoothly and he had reached a threshold. I was happy to have this confirmed in the communication. He needed more time to catch up and reboot. Cheryl was more than happy to continue to give him a break. In addition, she scheduled a chiropractic adjustment to make sure he wouldn't have negative repercussions to his back and body from his exertions. A sore back would not help him learn to enjoy a rider and saddle. Soon, Joey was a happy camper again.

The back story about Cheryl is as important as her work as horse magazine founder and with Joey. Several years ago she suffered from uterine cancer. The surgery was a success and she is cancer free. However, her lymph nodes were removed on both sides of her body around the cancerous region. This is a common practice. It is now evident that tampering with the lymphatic system has serious consequences that can manifest a year later or more. The lymph fluid runs through lymph vessels and is filtered by the lymph nodes and when these are removed the fluid starts to pool in the body because the fluid is unable to automatically flow up the body through the cleansing mechanism of the lymphatic system. The result is a massive amount of fluid retention in the legs and elsewhere. To keep her legs from blowing up like the Michelin tire man or the Pillsbury dough boy, Cheryl has to wear custom fitted and measured constraining compression garments twenty-four hours a day. I view them as Spanx on steroids. Even though Lymphedema now affects ten million Americans, it is often times not covered by health insurance. The compression garments need to be replaced at a minimum of every six months and they are very expensive. She has had to fight her insurance for some reimbursement for her garments and recently opted for elective cutting edge surgery from Dr. Jay Granzow in Seal Beach, CA. The surgery cost \$43,000 and was paid for by Cheryl and her

husband Steve with the help of her many friends and family that donated to her GoFundMe site to have the surgery. The procedure removed 4.3 liters or a little over a U.S. gallon of lymphedema sludge from her right leg. (It did not eliminate the need for compression garments.) This is after having participated in a drug trial at Stanford University, undergone human growth hormone treatments and stem cell treatments to no avail over a period of three years. The out-of-pocket surgery seemed the last option and it appears to have been a good gamble. Her right leg is better than the left one, but she needs to gather the funds before she can have the same procedure on her left side. As Cheryl says "Hold on to your lymph nodes, you need them."

Not long ago, at an afternoon party, I saw a pretty blond woman with an athletic body type in a long flowing skirt. Her right leg was heavily bandaged all the way up. She must have been around fifty. I assumed she just had some kind of sports injury or had surgery on her leg. We ended up sitting close to each other and I discovered she had been an avid sportswoman and runner. A couple of years prior she underwent cancer surgery in the hip area and the lymph nodes had been removed. There was another person with a serious case of Lymphedema. Thanks to all that I've learned from Cheryl, I was able to listen and relate to what she had to say. She put up a brave face, but it was clear the Lymphedema changed her life, and not for the better; she just couldn't get away from it, even for a short time.

The only place Cheryl can forget she is squeezed into a tight half-body girdle twenty four hours a day is on the back of a horse and with a horse. There, for an hour or two, she is totally focused on the horse and her interaction with him. She has lost some of her quickness and agility and she has to be



very careful, but she is in her element. Her fatigue, feelings of discouragement and all physical discomfort fade away ~ to be replaced by the magical, timeless, healing connection with the horse.

Cheryl is enriching Joey and Joey is helping Cheryl. I am proud to say I feel like Joey's "Auntie" and sideline coach as I follow his progress with Cheryl and Ronnette and, in some ways, he is also saving horseless me. The trade is bountiful.

---

**Cheryl Erpelding** is the founder of California Riding Magazine and the annual California Horseman's Directory now owned by MPM Publications. She is advertising consultant for MPM Publications, photographer, videographer, part time assistant trainer for Ronnette Leja's Harmony Farms, horse show announcer, and part time bookkeeper and wife to Steve Erpelding.

### **FalconRidge Equine Rescue**

#### **Nicki Branch, President**

P.O. Box 1500

Valley Center, CA 92082

(760) 742-0285

[nickbranch@aol.com](mailto:nickbranch@aol.com)

[www.falconridgerescue.org](http://www.falconridgerescue.org)

Please remember Falcon Ridge Equine Rescue in your donations!

---

# Roscoe on the Otherside- Completing the circle



Roscoe on his couch by the window

Connecting with an animal family member on the Otherside can be a life affirming and heart healing experience. Roscoe is a good example of the process of individual growth and enrichment that can take place on the Earthplane and then is carried over to the Otherside. This dog crossed over with a “suitcase” full of positive, enriching life experiences that are important stepping stones to a future incarnation. These

experiences create the cellular memory we store, process and carry forward and which eventually manifests as wisdom. That is what we see in the eyes of a dog that is deep and knowing. The individual who barely needs obedience training, who is present and focused; who appears to understand his world and yours from his heart and soul. This extraordinary accomplishment does not happen in one lifetime, but over the course of several. Each lifetime contributing (or not) to the advancement of the whole.

At first Roscoe is a simple, immature large dog. By the time he finds himself in the shelter and up for adoption at the age of one his expectations of people and life are very low. Had he not found Roe and she him, things might have just stayed at the same extremely basic level of advancement or growth. He would not have become Roe, Rahul and John's Roscoe. By the way, I never cease to be amazed at how we are coupled with just the right animal for our personal growth and for theirs.

As a young dog Roscoe was rambunctious and excited, even more so when he was in the house. Roe's college roommates asked that he stay in the yard until Roe came home from her classes. Only then was he allowed to come in and be in her room. While being in the yard for long hours Roscoe often broke things. He pulled cables, took off screens, and went after the irrigation system. Even with obedience training he was a lot of work and high energy. Truly, in the early years this dog required a huge commitment and dedication from Roe. She never gave up or considered Roscoe's behavior anything that couldn't be sorted out in time. She simply stuck to it, payed for the damages and moved on. From Roscoe's submissive and fearful behavior around men Roe surmised that he had been abused. If a male took off his belt while he was around he would hide. If a big man wanted to pet him on the street he would pee submissively. It is important to note, that Roe's friend John and her husband Rahul, played an important role in healing the emotional damage done by a man in the early part of his life.

When Roe and Rahul got engaged they moved in together in a townhouse. John continued to visit and help with Roscoe. The first day Roscoe was put outside when they left for the day, a neighbor reported that he barked pitifully. He just didn't want to be outside alone anymore and he preferred to be inside while they were gone. From then on that is where Roscoe waited for their return without getting into trouble. To provide a safe release of his energy they took him to the dog park four times a day.

The non-verbal communication process with someone on the Otherside is pretty much the same as having a phone consult. The animal or person you are communicating with is invisible, but the connection/communication is very real. Most of the time I use a picture of the individual to provide focus, and then I scan the energy coming towards me for the energetic frequency on which the communication is to take place. It is much like turning the dial on an FM radio receiver to establish a good reception. Once I sense I'm connected and clearly feel the energy of the animal on the Otherside I proceed as usual. The person with me or on the phone line anchors the process. It is definitely a cooperative endeavor. Years ago I was very amused by a conclusion made by Stuart Wilde in his book Affirmations, about his experience in this area "...if you are thick as two planks when you are alive, you are thick as two planks when you are dead." It points out that building awareness, consciousness and understanding and ultimately personal growth is accomplished down here, in the physical realm of Mother Earth. For some reason, perhaps influenced by religious thinking I had assumed that once we were on the Otherside all would be revealed, and we would be enlightened and wise. I see now, after much studying and my personal experience with communication on the Otherside how our lives here on the Earthplane are so important because much of our applied learning is done here, not there. On a less

complex level it is the same with our furry ones.

In the name of expanded learning and awareness, animal beings incarnate and also reincarnate in different species. They can be wild, feral, or domesticated. When they choose to be with us and be our close companions their lives are intertwined with ours and another level of growth, more complex, ensues. This is where Roscoe's life fits. Like many, his entry into the world as a domestic dog wasn't easy. Whoever got him to the shelter did him a great favor and gave him a second chance. Had he not encountered a dedicated person like Roe he might not have made as much progress. The diamond would certainly have stayed in the rough. The Roscoe of the early days is a distant unsophisticated version of the more centered Roscoe of the later years. (Raccoon invasions excluded.) Dogs like Roscoe take a lot of work, but the rewards are great for all involved especially when you know he crossed over with his cellular memory filled with a wealth of positive learning experiences that constitute a spring board to more of the same.

### **Roscoe's communication from the Otherside July 24, 2014 :**

Passed on July 3, 2014

Hello Roscoe,

This is Brigitte connecting with you for Roe and Rahul,

*Roscoe: Please let them know I am so, so, so happy. I truly am. They now have my replacement. Roman (baby) is my replacement and I am very proud of him taking my place. Please let Roe know I was ready to go, I waited for the correct moment to let go. It was just in time wasn't it for me to slip away and let the baby take my place. He will have a very good home. He will.*

BN: How did you feel about Roe and still feel about her?

*Roscoe: Roe meant everything to me, everything. I did not want to share her with another dog or with another human baby. My relationship with Roe healed, healed, healed my heart, healed my soul, healed my spirit. With Roe I became important enough to be "part of", to be "with". I had never been with before. Never, never, never. I never dreamed I could ever be "with" and Roe made that a reality. I have no end to my appreciation and my gratitude for what she did for me. She made me special. She made me important, she made me VALUABLE. I never, never, never had any VALUE. With Roe I had value. I was priceless with Roe, priceless (love is priceless.)*

BN: Did you know it would work with Roe at the shelter when you first met her?

*Roscoe: I never guessed. I never imagined. I never conceived how good my life came to be after I met Roe.*

BN: It was difficult for Roe to make the decision to let you go. How did you feel about that?

*Roscoe: I was ready. I showed her I was ready. I was sad but I knew my replacement was on its way—I knew.*

(BN: Note, he was comforted in knowing Roe would now have the baby to love and fill in the void of his departure.)

BN: Roe apologizes for not having as much time for you when you were young.

*Roscoe: Did great. Had no expectations. Was so, so, so lucky to be with Roe.*

BN: How is it on the Otherside?

*Roscoe: Fine, I'm adjusting. Healing. Getting stronger. When I'm stronger I will visit. I will say hello to Roe. I will.*

BN: How did you feel about Rahul?

*Roscoe: Best, best friend. Adore Rahul. Will visit Rahul too. Will. In the car will visit in the car!*

BN: Did you have a physical break down of some sort before you crossed over?

*Roscoe: No, it was my time. I was done. It was my time.*

BN: How did you feel about the baby shower?

*Roscoe: Sad.*

(Seems like Roscoe made the baby shower his good bye party; according to Roe he was social, upbeat and happy, yet inside we discover he was sad. A few weeks before she crossed over, my horse, Miss Annie, had the same behavior at a birthday party given to another horse on the ranch we were staying.)

BN: Roe and Rahul thank you for making them a family. They are so grateful to you.

*Roscoe: My, my, I'm so grateful to them. Without them I would be nothing, nothing, nothing.*

BN: Is there anything else you'd like to communicate?

*Roscoe: No, I'm very tired—need to conclude our wonderful time together. So, so, so grateful, so, for this. So.*

Roe and Rahul gifted Roscoe with an opportunity to connect one last time and completed the circle of their life together. The elusive awareness of “infinity” becomes more tangible in the capsule of the communication. It is something that is felt in the heart and soul, not in the mental mind. Among other things a bit too complex to explain here, Roscoe is adapting to being without his physical body. He also had to lower his present energetic frequency as I increased the level of mine for us to mutually connect. Heart centered telepathic communication burns energy much like an alkaline battery. I have to be watchful not to get too drained and depleted. Rest,



tea, dark chocolate and almonds and a good show on TV are excellent at building me back up. As for Roscoe, I have no worries. He is in good hands where he is and will be restored in no time. Because, on the Otherside, there is no time as we know it.

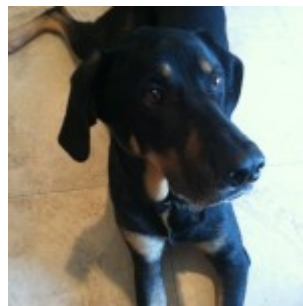
\*\*\*\*\*

---

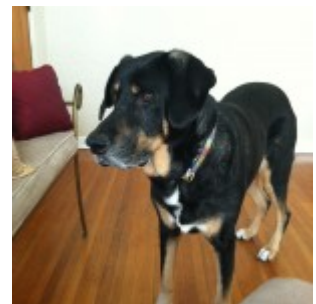
## Roscoe the Coonhound mix



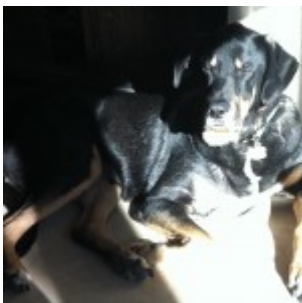
BFF



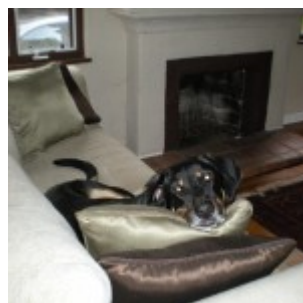
What's that I hear?



Before diagnosis, thin.



After treatment, healing in the sun



Waiting inside on his couch by the window.



Life is good

Antoine de Saint-Exupery writes about life and human nature in the *Little Prince*. The story of the rose is woven through the pages as the Little Prince learns about many meaningful things. He first encounters the rose growing on a single bush. The only one of its kind on his planet. The rose turns out to be quite beautiful and a tad demanding flower. He complies with her demands and accommodates her moods. One day he decides to leave his planet and the rose. She will have to get along without him. In his travels to another planet he meets up with a fox and strikes up a conversation about the art of friendship. On the fox's planet he sees a field of roses, all beautiful and identical to the one he left on his planet. Suddenly, he figures out all roses are not the same. None of the beauties in that field are like his rose at all. His rose is special because he watered her, protected her, put a clear bell on her against the cold at night, kept her from harm from caterpillars, and took pains not to hurt her feelings when she was vainglorious. She put much stock in her four little thorns to protect her and appear fierce, but he knew she was vulnerable. His flower's bravado moved him. Now, he understood—she was his rose, and for that reason special and unlike any other rose. The fox tells him, "Yes, you are responsible for those you tame, you are responsible for your rose", "I am responsible for my rose" repeats the Little Prince after the fox.

Dogs and cats of every color, shape and size cast away by someone and left in a shelter remind me of the story of the Little Prince's rose. It only takes one person to make an ordinary animal extraordinary and restore his world into one of goodness and love through their heart to heart connection. May all dogs find themselves as fortunate as Roscoe, an exuberant, lanky, black and tan Coonhound mix spotted and adopted by Roe in a shelter in Orange County when he was

around a year old. Shortly after Roscoe came into her life, Roe met Rahul.

When I met Roe, Rahul and Roscoe they had been together six and half years and were extremely bonded. At that time, Roe who now is a “people” therapist, worked in a doggie deli. Her dog got the best quality food and care. Recently Roscoe had symptoms of lethargy, weight loss, vomiting, and diarrhea. When the vets could not determine what was wrong with him, they assumed it was some GI issue. He had been given antibiotics and meds for the vomiting, but they couldn’t trace the source of the problem. Western medicine had gone as far as it could go. The dog was scheduled for consultation with a holistic veterinarian soon. Roe brought him to me so we could check on how he felt and find out how she could help him. He threw up in Rahul’s car on the way to my office and I sensed that Roscoe, in addition to being weakened by illness, was also a very sensitive fellow prone to motion sickness.

At first glance Roscoe looked like a large hound dog, with long legs (the kind that hunts critters in the South). He appeared shy and a bit overwhelmed in my office. As he revealed himself in his consult, a beautiful, sensitive soul emerged and his appearance in my eyes took on a whole different bearing. That essence is what Roe saw in that young dog at the shelter and how her love and devotion over time made Roscoe, Roscoe. Roe, Rahul and I would like to share this dog’s spirit with all of you.

Here is Roscoe’s first transcript from 3/9/2011:

BN: Hello Roscoe,

*Roscoe: Where is Rahul, I need Rahul.*

BN: Rahul is clearing up the car (throw-up all over his back seat!). He will be up later.

Would you like to share with me?

*Roscoe: I am worried, I am always worried.*

BN I see that. What concerns you?

*Roscoe: Rahul, I want Rahul to be here.*

BN: He will come when he is done. All is okay I'll explain your concern to Roe and she will share it with Rahul.

*Roscoe: I am a very happy, happy dog. I am SO, SO, SO H-A-P-P-Y all all the time. All the time. I am happy. I ADORE MY HOME. I AM SO SO LUCKY TO HAVE ROE AND RAHUL. I AM A VERY LUCKY DOG. I am.*

BN: What have you come to do?

*Roscoe: I have come to be a gentle giant. A gentle giant. I have no need to fight, I have no need to assert. I just want my people. I ADORE people, I do. I adore people, they have been so, so, good to me. I adore people.*

BN: What are you teaching?

*Roscoe: I teach special and sensitive. I am in tune with EVERYTHING, everything and that is a big task. It rests heavy on my shoulders to be so aware. Most dogs aren't this AWARE. I am very AWARE.*

BN: You mean to humans?

*Roscoe: Yes.*

BN: Emotions?

*Roscoe: Yes, everything my people go through, I go through. I am aware. Please let them know how aware I am, I am very*

aware.

BN: I will. What happened when you got sick? (With abdominal viral (?) infection.)

*Roscoe: I am still sick. I am still sick. Nausea, fatigue, dizzy.*

BN: I see, I'll explain that to Roe. She is going to take you to a gentle vet with gentle medicine to help complete the healing. This will be in so many days. (BN flashed the # of days telepathically.) The vet will also add something to the food that will help the tummy settle. What does Roe need to know she doesn't already know?

*Roscoe: I am so devoted, so. I am so devoted and that I am still feeling sick.*

BN: What does Rahul need to know he doesn't already know?

*Roscoe: I'm too tired to run. Too tired to run. (Takes him out on walks and runs.)*

BN: What were you before you came in as this beautiful Roscoe dog?

*Roscoe: I was a bird. A very beautiful and gentle BIRD. I love, love, love birds. I do.*

BN: Interesting. Why did you pick dog (incarnation)?

*Roscoe: Because I wanted to be with people. I loved people.*

BN: How does the raw food feel for your digestion?

*Roscoe: Okay. I need simple, everything simple. One thing at a time. Simple.*

BN: Roscoe are you ever bored? (Roe and Rahul were concerned because he is an only dog and they both work during the day.)

*Roscoe: No.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Roe and Rahul took Roscoe to the Animal Healing Center in San Diego. There it was determined he had cancerous tumors and the removal of a kidney was advised. He came through the surgery and made a good recovery.

Here is Roe's account of what followed in her own words.

~~When we booked our original appointment with Brigitte we were also awaiting our initial appointment at the Animal Healing Center (AHC) since the traditional vets had failed us and Roscoe remained ill. Shortly after we finally met Dr. Katy Kangas at AHC. She took tremendous time to get to know Roscoe, listen to our concerns, and did a very thorough exam. Whereas the other vets dismissed Roscoe as simply having a sensitive stomach, Katy did a thorough body exam and right away found the dreaded lump in his kidney. She then called her peers and spent the next several days advocating for us to get Roscoe an emergency surgery to remove the kidney with the tumor. She went above and beyond to help us and this began an important relationship for Roscoe and for us because we finally had a vet that understood Roscoe and our commitment to him.~~

Personally, after seeing how ill Roscoe had been at the time of our consult, I was amazed at his recovery. At the age of seven and a half, seemingly, like a cat, he had lives to spare and his people made the most of their time together.

Two and a half years later Roe and Rahul made a second appointment with me. Roscoe's time of remission was over. A cancerous tumor in his mouth had been partially removed and a recent chest x-ray revealed tumors in his lungs. They needed to know how Roscoe, now ten years old, felt and were looking for support and clarity from him on how to proceed. In addition, Roe had a few questions written out:

What were his food preferences: raw, home cooked, canned?  
Did he like to go to the dog park or simply go on walks?  
Did he have pain or discomfort?  
How did the construction in their home affect him?  
What can they do to stop him from barking at skunks and getting sprayed?

Roscoe walked into my office with confidence, and it was obvious his car ride had not been difficult. He had made tremendous headway. By this time Roe and Rahul were married and were expecting a baby.

Second visit of 12/26/2014:

BN: Hello Roscoe, This is Brigitte the One Who Listens. Would you like to share with me for your people Roe and Rahul?

*Roscoe: I am happy here. It is such a good fun place to be. I love it here. Very happy. Very happy. Very.*

BN: Great. Roe and Rahul would like to know a few things. How do you feel?

*Roscoe: I feel great, great, great. I AM SO SO SO HAPPY, SO HAPPY.*

(I sensed he enjoyed the company of the contractors in his home.)

BN: Excellent. What can Roe do to make you happy at home?

*Roscoe: Be with me. The most important for me is to be WITH. I value being with above all else, all else.*

BN: And what can Rahul do to make you happy at home?

*Roscoe: I LOVE RAHUL, I LOVE RAHUL. HE CAN PLAY WITH ME. LOVE TO PLAY WITH RAHUL.*



BN: What do you like best: To go to the park? or go on walks?

*Roscoe: I love being with, I just want to be with.*

BN: Is the park with the other dogs enjoyable?

*Roscoe: I don't know.* (Remember in the previous transcript Roscoe said he liked people more than other dogs...)

BN: Okay, I'll discuss this with your people.

*Roscoe: I just want to be with, I love to be with. I want to be with.* (His people.)

BN: They would like to know what food you prefer?

Raw: *okay*

Home cooked: *okay*

Canned: *less okay.*

(Reader you will notice he isn't enthusiastic about any food really, okay in dog speak means, okay. Not great, not bad.)

BN: They told me you chased skunks in the yard, and that can be a problem.

*Roscoe: It is my space. No other animals are allowed on my space.*

BN: I understand...but skunks will spray you!

*Roscoe: I BARK, BARK, BARK AND THEN THEY SPRAY.*

BN: Can you leave them be?

*Roscoe: Why? Doesn't make sense. They are INTRUDERS, INTRUDERS, INTRUDERS.*

BN: Do you mind the construction at home?

*Roscoe: Company, love the company. Don't really like to be*

*home alone.*

(In the previous transcript we asked if he got bored, and he replied, "no". However, he now shows that if he isn't bored he does get lonely when left alone, but that doesn't mean he wants a dog companion.)

BN: What do I need to know I don't already know about you?

Roscoe: I'm SO SO SO H-A-P-P-Y.

Then we had a question about John, a longtime friend who often visited and took care of Roscoe. They always shared a special bond from the time he was adopted.

BN: What does John need to know he doesn't already know?

*Roscoe: He knows EVERYTHING. He knows. I so so so appreciate him He is so UPBEAT. So UPBEAT. Adore him. CAN TRUST HIIM. He is trustworthy. I trust him.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Roscoe, like most animals lives mostly in the present moment. Undoubtedly, he has health issues and they impact his daily life, but he is so well supported and nurtured that he focuses on how happy his relationship with his people make him feel. At this point in time, the happiness outweighs any physical setbacks.

Here is the second part of Roe's account in her words:

~~Roscoe maintained regular appointments with Katy over the next 3 years and received acupuncture, massage, and Chinese herbs. Katy also taught us how to home cook for Roscoe and educated us on an anti-cancer diet. You may not believe it but Roscoe LOVED going to each appointment! He never minded the needles because Katy would distract him with delicious treats. For those three years, AHC and Katy became a refuge to help us through the ups and downs of his cancer. Each time he walked

in he felt like a rock star. All the staff knew him by name and greeted him with love and treats. His masseuse Ann even dubbed him "The Miracle Dog" because he remained so healthy and happy through it all. For the majority of his treatment, Roscoe remained full of life and energy. None of the other patients even suspected he was ill. And yet cancer has a way of sneaking up on you and we had a few close calls. Each time we thought it would be the end, Roscoe would suddenly make another recovery and pull through. His initial kidney cancer went into remission but later returned as salivary cancer and then finally lung cancer. Through all his different specialists and medical providers, we maintained his treatment with Katy because it was his second home and we truly felt her care and treatment helped to improve the quality of his life. Katy always kept a positive attitude and hope for Roscoe's recovery. Katy was one of the only calls I needed to make to discuss the eventual decision to end his pain. I could hear the sadness in her voice when we agreed it was time. She remained a champion for Roscoe and an ally for us. Without her, I have no doubt Roscoe would have suffered needlessly and likely passed away before his time.~~

Roe, like Roscoe, was a highly sensitive individual and they were well matched for their journey together. It is important to remember he had a bird past life. It gave him an unusual sensitivity and would set him up a bit differently for this lifetime. A dog that feels everything has a lot of processing to do because he would register a lot of complex people feelings and emotions that most other dogs ignore. Roe would sense when he was overwhelmed and be able to manage a situation for him. For example, if he didn't particularly like the dog park, they didn't go that often and took him on walks. They learned by his behavior he preferred to stay inside rather than be out in the yard while they were away, and let him do so. Their good friend John played a big role in Roscoe's life, because even though he was prone to worry, he found he could trust this person at a deep level. He would not

be exposed to uncomfortable situations and if it did happen, John would know how to protect Roscoe. In the last year of Roscoe's life John even made special visits weekly on his lunch break to give him extra TLC. Roscoe, who started out as a typical 'diamond in the rough' big dog learned, bloomed and flourished. Unlike the Little Prince's rose, he never again had to fend for himself in a big, unfriendly world. Even though it was quite a challenge at the beginning, his people whole heartedly took responsibility for his wellbeing, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Roscoe passed away with assistance at home on July 3, 2014. He was eleven years old. He lived his life to the fullest with the assistance of his people. When the time came, Roscoe let them know very clearly he was ready to go. Roe wrote "As tired as he was on his final day, when the veterinarian came to the house to put him down, he actually wagged his tail when he saw her. He knew exactly what was going to happen and he embraced it."

Next blog: Roscoe on the Otherside.