

Live Like a Native

The Bigger the Bark, the Bigger the Heart

A look at a local dog rescue that strives to be different



Top: From left to right: Patricia Haynes, Suzy Blocker and Lisa Schauseil.

Bottom: CBHBB Ambassador Nala.

When the Carolina Big Hearts Big Barks dog rescue first opened its doors, Suzy Blocker, Lisa Schauseil and Patricia Haynes made a two-fold promise that they were eager to fulfill. They promised to do everything in their power to demonstrate how much they value their fosters and volunteers, and to recognize that nothing is simply black and white. They set out with an objective to think outside the box and embrace the grey areas that accompany pet rescue without passing a snap judgement. They did not want to be “just another rescue,” but instead set their sights on being different.

The women pulled together their own experiences and developed a special program in which “every adoption is touched by many different hands,” says Blocker. Through a multitude of documents, suggestions and referrals, the rescue provides support to adopters in training their new dog while simultaneously building a strong relationship between pets and their owners.

CBHBB was founded in July 2015 and is a non-profit organization that is 100 percent foster-based and run by volunteers. Their mission stems from their dedication to the rescue, rehabilitation and adoption of large breeds, serving as a safe stepping stone for dogs in search of their forever homes.

Schauseil says that the most rewarding part of working with this organization is “seeing happy, healthy dogs living their best lives!” She reflects on Pinky, a 3-week-old puppy her family nursed 24/7 on the brink of death

until she gained her strength back. Now that she is healthy, Pinky has learned how to be a puppy once again, allowing her silly and playful nature to come to the surface. She also mentions Jilly, who after waiting four years finally found her a home a month ago with an amazing couple and as Schauseil puts it, “hit the jackpot.”

Blocker emphasizes that, “the biggest thing we want people to understand when they adopt any dog is that they need a decompression period and some level of training.” She stresses to adopters the importance of maintaining patience as they integrate a new dog slowly into their home. Oftentimes the life of these dogs and level of neglect prior to their rescue remains unknown, making it essential to allow them time to adjust to new surroundings.

Dog rescue is hard, but the dedicated contributors of CBHBB continue to move forward, learning to use challenges and mistakes as a way to grow and evolve. According to Haynes, in the first six months of the rescue’s operation they rescued 66 dogs and had 29 adoptions. Haynes proudly adds that, “Right now, we have 43 dogs in foster homes, and have had 117 adoptions so far in 2020.” To date, the rescue has adopted out 758 dogs, and intends to continue increasing this number for many years to come.

To learn more about Carolina Big Hearts Big Barks rescue or to inquire about fostering, adopting or donating, visit their website at www.bigheartbigbarks.com. — *By Emily Thomas, Photography by Jamie Cowles*