

CELEBRATION OF CANINE LIVES SANCTUARY

A NON-PROFIT, 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

WELCOME ROXIE

For CCLS, 2025 took off like a rocket. Our first resident, Lobo, found a wonderful adoptive home with an amazing family (see page 8). We were able to use the proceeds from the sale of our 36 Ford to have a propane heating system installed in our barn, also known as Gee's Home. (See page 6) We survived an attempted scam (and luckily, caught on to it quickly so no money was lost), and rescued our second dog, Roxie! Here is her story:



Roxie came to CCLS on March 13th, 2025. She had been staying at the Olean Town dog control facility for nine months after she was confiscated from someone that had been convicted of animal hoarding.

The first couple of weeks with Roxie were fun but challenging. She was very friendly but, quite frankly, she was also a nervous, bubbly, hot mess. The warm, cozy blankets we put on her Kuranda bed were chewed up and spit out. After several nights with different blankets getting completely shredded, we came to the conclusion that for now, blankets weren't a good thing to give her and we'd have to be content that the room was heated to a cozy temperature and her bed was off the floor and designed for comfort. During the day, we did everything we could to help Roxie relax. We took her for long walks, gave her enrichment puzzles and peanut butter Kongs and had her ride with us every time we ran errands in the truck. Just as Roxie started to get into a good routine, I got the flu. My Dad, who also walks Roxie a lot, also got the flu. Despite our best efforts, when there are 102-degree fevers, long hikes

turn into "pee breaks," and the truck rides temporarily stopped. Well, Roxie wasn't taking the flu for an excuse! She got bored and stressed and ripped off some panels around the window of the door in her room.

Roxie's behavior, although frustrating, was very normal given the circumstances. When animals have an unstable upbringing and/or are shifted from place to place, confusion and stress are very common. Roxie had no way of knowing whether she was trapped in that room, when or if someone would be coming back and why she was in that room to begin with. Desperate to not be left alone, she would attempt to exit the room every time a person would leave the room, which led to a mad dash to the door, stubbed toes, "goaltending" and more anxiety for everyone involved. Early on, we decided to toss some treats in the back of the room before exiting. Roxie, being incredibly food motivated, would race to the treats, giving the human enough time to leave the room. The treats tossed as we would leave the room were coined "escape food."



Rescue/sanctuary/adoptive homes are often described as idyllic, magical and picture perfect, when in fact, there are a lot of challenges when making a lifetime commitment to another living being. Although glory days await and things gradually become harmonious and rewarding, the reality of rescue is that animals end up homeless because society has failed them and the mental and emotional hurdles they face are very real.

After recovering from the flu, my Dad and I were able to get Roxie back into a routine. She loves any and every type of toy, so we switch them up often. One of her favorite toys is a lime green ball that thankfully doesn't deflate when punctured, so she plays fetch with that in the barn and in our large, fenced-in play yard. She had a squeaky toy duck that she enjoyed for the longest time, but after the duck's nose, feet and body were pulled off and the only thing left was the squeaker, she got some new toys. Interestingly, Lobo was not a big toy dog when he was at CCLS, so Roxie has been playing with all his old toys, making sure they get good use (aka enjoying while destroying.)



Another one of Roxie's favorite things is riding in the truck. Most days when we run errands, she comes along. She really is a perfect traveling companion as she sits calmly in the backseat with a huge smile on her face. She gets milk bones at Community Bank and will even fall asleep after a while as we ride along. One of her favorite hiking places in the Genesee Greenway in Cuba. Roxie also likes to play around in our pond and will wade in the water if she sees frogs jumping around. As the weather warms up, we are hoping she'll actually go swimming. She loves playing fetch on land, so she may love fetching "by sea" as well. Lobo would not even get his toenails wet, so we think Roxie is showing a lot more promise of being a "water pup." We've taken her to a handful of hiking trails and nature centers. The same way mother nature is naturally healing to people, going places where the crickets chirp, the wind blows and there are lots of new sights and smells helps Roxie relax and have fun.

For every dog we rescue, we have a rehabilitation plan before putting them up for adoption. The first step is for us to simply show the dog consistent, positive things-good food, toys, companionship, long walks, rides in the truck, etc. We work to minimize the anxiety the dog has and to help her/him learn they are at a safe place and are loved. Once dogs start to relax, we work on teaching them basic skills that will help them understand to communicate with people rather than just acting on impulse. These skills include coming when called, waiting for a few moments before coming through a door, etc. After we get a good sense of the dog's personality, we invite people to come up and socialize with the dog. The more people who visit, the better, as the world is comprised of people of all ages, sizes and demeanors and a dog builds confidence by having positive experiences with a variety of people. We cannot stress enough the importance of having volunteers come up and walk Roxie. Whether you only have time to come up once or you can volunteer on a weekly basis, socialization is an essential part of adoption preparation.



As I type this, we have not started to socialize Roxie with other dogs yet. Ladies at the dog control facility told us Roxie did well with other dogs, so we are excited to schedule some play dates in May. Roxie had a spay appointment for April 23rd and we purposely decided to wait to socialize her with other dogs until she had been spayed because we didn't want any hormonal issues to give us an inaccurate idea of how much Roxie enjoys being around dogs. When dogs come into heat, some of them can be quite difficult to get along with.

After two months of living at our sanctuary, we have a really good sense of who Roxie is. Her most impressive characteristic is her loving and gentle attitude toward people. She will let you take her food bowl anytime, even when she is really hungry. She will also let you take toys out of her mouth anytime during an action-packed game of fetch. Roxie loves with her whole heart and tries to be a good girl. She has an excellent recall and knows how to "drop it," when she grabs something off the ground that she shouldn't have. And...drum roll...we have been able to give her blankets again and she no longer shreds them. We take the blankets out during the day, but every night we snuggle them around her on her Kuranda bed and we think she is finally appreciating a blanket for what it is. Although Roxie is a really lovely lady, she is not without her faults. We feel that she may have tendencies toward separation anxiety, as she becomes quite vocal whenever she is left alone in her room, despite having plenty of daily time outside of the room and enrichment toys when left alone. And although she walks generally walks wonderfully on a leash, she has very intense prey drive tendencies when she spots squirrels, turkeys and other wildlife in the woods. The fixation level is so high that we decided not to introduce her to our family cats. She will need a cat-free home. We have some doggy play dates scheduled for her, and are considering enrolling her in a Canine Good Citizen class to help prepare her for adoption. With minimal distractions at our sanctuary on the top of the hill, Roxie's behavior is exceptional, but her nervous energy and lack of impulse control manifests itself in more public settings. We are committed to learning everything we can about her and sharing everything we know about her with potential adopters to set everyone up for success and to ensure her first adoptive home will be her forever home. That is our goal for Roxie in 2025.

We'd like to thank each and every one of our donors. You have provided Roxie with healthy, delicious food, clean, cozy blankets and a wide variety of fun toys and puzzles. Your donations have enabled us to keep her room heated throughout March and during the cold days and nights in April. Thanks to you, Roxie is now spayed, up-to-date on vaccines and has gotten medicine for a tick-born illness she tested positive for when she first came to our sanctuary. Roxie sends her gratitude to all of you.



GOTCHA!

"If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is..."

Here at CCLS, we actually do not like that quote. Why? When running an animal sanctuary, or even volunteering at one, there are many times when amazing things happen that are very real. For instance, there are countless stories of animals at rescue organizations that find wonderful families that cherish them. Other times, an animal who has suffered severe physical and/or mental trauma gradually begins to heal and eventually becomes stable and happy, and the remainder of his/her life is spent surrounded by love and comfort. This does not occur because some magic has been sprinkled into the air. It occurs because hard work, love and commitment to helping others yield a brighter, more compassionate world. Our dedicated donors are another very real and vitally important part of our sanctuary. From the amazing women who donate monthly (referred to as "The Ladies Club"), to people who have saved their money and given unbelievably generous amounts, to those who understand the plight of non-profits and reach out a helping hand when it is needed most, we are surrounded by people and compassion that seem to be too good to be true, but they are indeed real. Except "Terry Cranston."

In early February, CCLS received an email from an individual who supposedly had heard wonderful things about CCLS and wanted to make a generous donation to our sanctuary. The individual, "Terry Cranston," and his wife, "Leslie," were eager to support our sanctuary. Although "their" email sounded vague and formal in an odd way, we were thrilled to have some new animal lovers supporting our hard work. Future emails from "Terry Cranston" flooded in and the individual asked where he could send a check to. Oddly, the sanctuary, dogs or animals were not mentioned in his emails to us. Nonetheless, we continued to remain optimistic. Over the years, we have learned a lot of interesting things about donors and people who love animals. Some prefer online donations, while others prefer paper and pen. Some prefer to keep their donations private, while others enjoy telling people about their philanthropy. There is no right or wrong way to express compassion. Our youngest donor is in elementary school and some our oldest donors are closing in on 100. Animal lovers come from all walks of life. In other words, we've learned not to expect or make assumptions about who will help us. Therefore, if "Terry Cranston" was a formal, private person who had odd ways of wording things and had a secretary doing his bills but simply wanted to help a young non-profit continue to grow, we were thrilled to make him part of the CCLS family.



Eventually, we received a check from "Terry Cranston." There were two different addresses on the envelope and the envelope could not be traced back to a residence. Immediately upon the check's arrival, we got a text from him asking us if we could cash it right away because he was going on a business trip and wanted to get his finances completed so he could focus on his business meeting. Having our suspicions, we took the check to the bank (which was for over \$3,000.00) and told them to look at it and make sure it wasn't fraudulent. After several bankers examined the check and



listened to the story, they determined it was fraudulent. A department at the bank took it to further investigate the criminal activity, but told us these scams were hard to trace.

Further research by ourselves and one of our genuine donors led us to online information that "Terry Cranston" was a name being used by an individual who was attempting to scam small animal rescue organizations. This particular scam would start with the scammer offering to make a specific donation ("Terry Cranston" told us originally that his donation would be for \$2,000.00) and then sending more money to the unsuspecting non-profit. After sending a larger amount than the scammer originally said he/she would, the scammer would then say the "secretary" made a mistake and would ask the non-profit to send back some of the money. The intricate details of how this scammer planned to steal from our sanctuary are unknown, but had we fallen for this scam, it would have involved the sanctuary losing our hard-earned money in one way or another.

To steal money from another individual is simply wrong, but it is especially callous to do that to an organization that's entire purpose is to save and improve the lives of others. As much as we wish money was readily available, the reality is fundraising is a full-time job and non-profits are constantly searching for ways to increase their donor base, inspire people to join their mission, appeal to grantmakers, etc. Donors are behind everything good a non-profit is able to accomplish. Nothing happens without support.

We are glad we exercise so much caution with all our finances, as "Terry Cranston" did not get a penny of the money you so generously gave to our sanctuary. We want to thank all of you for your support. You help keep our barn warm and cozy during the bitter cold months. You kept Lobo well fed and are keeping Roxie well fed. You are helped pay for Roxie's medical care, insuring she is fully vaccinated, dewormed and spayed. You are helping us continue construction work in the barn, tackling the mundane but necessary aspects of construction involving getting electricity to new areas of the barn to metal paneling for additional rooms. We will never be able to thank you enough for helping us rescue and transform the lives of those most innocent and vulnerable.



CCLS PROPANE HEATING SYSTEM INSTALLED

As we mentioned in our previous article about rescuing Roxie, 2025 took off with a bang. Her rescue and Lobo's adoption were both huge successes, but there is a third success story that is deeply intertwined with their comfort and happiness: our brand new, propane heating system!

Before we rescued Lobo, we explored different ways to heat the barn. Geothermal heating was suggested first, but the start-up costs of doing this would have taken away critical funding for other barn projects and was fancy but not necessary. In floor heating was also suggested, but quickly was dismissed as it would have required a lot more cement. Also, if in floor heating was going to be utilized, piping should have been installed before cement was laid. As the first dog room neared completion, we were eager to take in our first rescue and only needed heat for that first room. We decided to heat the first room electrically. The first wall-mounted heater did not keep the room warm enough, so we had a second heater mounted on the ceiling. Both electric heaters struggled to circulate the warm air around the room, so we got a ceiling fan to help to push the warm



air down. To ensure the safety of any future dog that would utilize that room, we installed a guard around the fan. Having heat in the first room allowed us to be able to rescue Lobo, and we are proud to say that the electric heaters kept him warm and cozy throughout the cold months. But. Yes, there's a "but". The expense was around \$230.00 a month. This, of course, was not a problem for us. After all, we were just heating one dog room. However, this would not work for ten dog rooms! Say we use electric heat from November 1st to April 30th. That's six months. If \$230.00 is multiplied by 6, the cost is \$1,380.00. If \$1,380.00 is multiplied by 10, that's \$13,800.00 a year to heat the barn. Of course, that would not even include the area in the barn that will eventually be divided up into a visitor's room, a grooming room, etc. So, although heating one room electrically worked, it was not a long-term solution.

Wanting to work on future dog rooms but knowing we had this heating hurdle in the way, we reached out to Rinker Oil and asked about heating the barn with propane. They sent a representative up to look at our barn and give us an estimate. The representative explained that although they could install heating ducts one-by-one as the dog rooms were completed, in the long-run, it would be a lot more expensive than to simply install ducts to all the dog rooms at the same time. We were given a cost of \$13,358.00. This was a very effective way to heat the barn and the most affordable one they offered.

After the Rinker Oil representative left, we sat and discussed what to do. Our young sanctuary did not have the funds for this project, and payment was due upon completion, which the representative said would only take a couple weeks to complete. But we didn't want to wait...life is short and dogs



need help. Then something wonderful happened. A man on Facebook marketplace was interested in buying our 36 Ford. Despite a lot of serious advertising, the public showed very little genuine interest in purchasing the car. Oddly, we had a price tag of \$13,500.00 on the car, which was very close to the cost of the propane heating system. The stars aligned and a family came from Rochester with a check (a legitimate one, not a Terry Cranston check). In less than three weeks, the propane heating system was installed. My Dad and I, along with our Amish neighbor, stapled tarps to the barn's wooden frames to keep the heat confined to the dog area and not the entire barn, which will also save our sanctuary money. Thanks to our awesome donors, we were able to handle the approximately \$450.00 a month heating bills.

We are so grateful to have this huge project behind us. Building an animal sanctuary is much like climbing a mountain. There is a long way to go, but every completed project is a success in and of itself and puts you closer to the sky. Of course, we will have heating bills for roughly six months of the year, which will cost us approximately \$2,700.00 or more depending on the weather. But we can tackle these expenses, thanks to each and every one of our donors. As bitter cold, deep snow and blowing wind pass by the barn, all our rescued dogs will be warm and cozy.



LOBO HITS THE JACKPOT!

Many of our supporters who follow us on Facebook know that Lobo was adopted in February 2025. If you are a supporter of CCLS but aren't on Facebook, you will be thrilled to read his adoption story. If you are fairly new to our sanctuary, we hope this story will inspire you to join our mission and help more animals. For those of you who already know about Lobo's adoption, this story will get you caught up on his incredible new life.

We'll begin with a little backtracking. Lobo was the first dog our sanctuary rescued. He came to us on May 20, 2024. We don't know his entire history. Before coming to CCLS, he was an unclaimed stray found in the Kinzua Dam area. The lady that found him and trapped him specializes in helping lost dogs reunite with loving families who miss them. But no family claimed Lobo. The lady who found him was deeply committed to ensuring this beautiful, shy Alaskan Malamute have the family he deserved. It was just hard to find that ideal situation for him. Meanwhile, CCLS had just finished construction on our first dog room and we ready to take in our first dog. When we learned about Lobo, we accepted him into our rescue.

Lobo was very shy when he first came to CCLS. We spent Summer 2024 showing him how to have fun, relax and build confidence. We took him for many long hikes on a 20-ft leash. We let him romp around in our fenced in play yard and do whatever his heart desired (which was to dig deep holes in random places). We gave him food puzzles, set up treasure hunts in which we hid delicious food in varying places for him to find and took him for many truck rides. We hiked at state parks and nature preserves and went for walks in little villages to get him used to the small town "hustle and bustle." We invited supporters to bring their dogs to play with Lobo and we learned that Lobo has a deep love and enjoyment of his fellow canines. After socializing him with other dogs and people, he became quite a happy boy. He still had some shy and nervous tendencies, but he was ready for the next step: a family of his own!

After putting him on Petfinder, we started getting adoption inquiries. Although it sounded like most of the people interested in him had their hearts in the right place, something they said usually made us nervous or lacked the clarity we were looking for. People boasted about Lobo having the dream life on a rural property with 100+ acres to roam free on, and we thought, "Hmmm...this could be Kinzua Dam Part 2." Obviously, we didn't want to put him in a situation where he'd be lost again. Other potential adopters would ask how much he liked to be outside and said that he would have a blast playing all day with their "outdoor dogs." We had a hard time getting a mental picture of whether this meant Lobo and their other dogs would be partying on several fenced in acres and then coming into a warm, cozy house with a family, or if this meant he would live mostly outdoors. While Alaskan Malamutes and other Northern breeds do love the snow and spending lots of time outside, playing in the snow a lot during the day but living indoors with a family is different than living outside and not fully experiencing life as a family member. Every dog we adopt out will live in the home with his/her family, receive plenty of daily attention and take part in the family's activities. Other potential adopters we spoke to had higher opinions of themselves than their references did. So, our search continued. Although life at the sanctuary is happy and eventful, we knew Lobo would be even happier with a family of his own.

Our friends at Northern Chautauqua Canine Rescue kindly let us put him on their website's adoption page as a courtesy listing. This is when the magic happened. We got an email from a woman in Dunkirk, NY saying that she and her fiancé saw Lobo on their website and fell in love with his face. They thought he'd love their Husky and were very serious about getting to know him. This sounded good, but we tried not to get too excited. Knowing that we were placing Lobo's entire future in the adopter's hands, we



explained to these potential adopters that this would be a process. They weren't the slightest bit deterred and were happy to do whatever was in Lobo's best interest. After a completed application, an awesome phone interview and great personal and veterinary references, I invited them to come to the sanctuary with their dog and meet Lobo!

Lobo's future "Mom", "Dad" and "Brother" came to meet him on a cold winter day in early February. There had been so much snow and wind that snow drifts outside the gates to the play yard doors prevented them from opening. With work being done inside the barn, we decided to have the dogs come into the house and play. First, all the cats-Finn, Ned, Betty and Verity and to be put into rooms. The body language between Lobo and Stormy (this future Husky brother), was so good that I didn't hesitate to tell Lobo's future family, "We'll let them sniff off leash." Their compatibility was apparent right away. Stormy wanted to play with Lobo. We could tell that Lobo was not turned off by Stormy's playful advances, but needed to stop and assess all that was going on around him before he could really play. Although we had invited many people and dogs to come to the sanctuary for play dates, Lobo seemed to have a sixth sense that there was something different about this meeting. He sat on the floor, looking at each of them while Stormy play bowed him, emitted some playful vocalizations and then went over to his "parents" to tell them that he was having a hard time engaging this "Lobo" dog in play.



Did someone say we are going for a "W-A-L-K?!"

"It'll just take him some time, Stormy," they reassured their Husky. "Remember, when we first rescued you, it took you some time, too." Lobo's future parents had adopted Stormy from a shelter around three years ago. He was shy and hesitant, but I'd have no way of knowing that if his parents hadn't told me. When I looked at Stormy, I saw an extremely confident, social and happy dog. "These people are just what Lobo needs," I thought.

For the second visit, I brought Lobo up to his future family's home in Dunkirk, NY. Lobo was about 50% enjoying himself and about 50% overwhelmed. Stormy was thrilled to have him for a visit and was ready for some doggy play. Lobo wandered around through the home and looked at me as if to say, "What's going on?" I was excited, my Dad was excited and his future family was excited. I knew Lobo would have been excited if he knew how much he was wanted and how great his life would be. As much as I wanted to leave Lobo there, emotionally he wasn't ready for it just yet, so we set up another home visit and took him back to the sanctuary.

Lobo always had plenty of attention, love and time of out his room. But on snowy winter nights, I quickly started to imagine him cuddled up on the couch at his new family's home instead of where he



currently was, a room in a barn. Although the room was warm and cozy, with toys and lots of visitors, a room is not the same thing as living in a loving home with a family. I decided that my original plan of taking baby steps might not be in Lobo's best interests. Instead, maybe it was time to take a little leap of faith. I decided that the next time he and I visited his future family, I would observe his body language carefully. If he was interacting more with his future parents and playing with his brother, I would leave him there. If he still was pretty nervous, I would take him back and we could simply schedule more visits.



Lobo on the couch with his Daddy

The second time Lobo visited his future home, he was considerably calmer. His eyes were lighter and he was initiating interaction with his parents. Of course, there were still some nerves, but that is to be expected for anyone experiencing changes and learning how they will fit into a new environment and way of life. Lobo's parents had bought him some new toys that Stormy showed him how to play with. Knowing in my heart that a leap of faith was the best thing for Lobo, I had his family sign our sanctuary's legally binding contract. Part of our adoption contract states that if for any reason a family cannot keep a dog anymore, the dog is to come back to CCLS. This ensures that every dog we rescue will always have a loving and safe home.

After the final papers were signed, I softly petted Lobo and said, "This is the best thing that will ever happen to you, you just don't know it yet. But you will." I casually left the home and headed back to the sanctuary. This was one of the most rewarding days of my life.

his family reported that he was showing more and more signs of feeling at home, like sitting on the couch with them, going upstairs to bed with them, and joining in with a few howls of his own when his Dad and Brother "sing." His Mom told me, "He's found his voice, and he's welcome to use it and is free to be himself." Lobo and his brother enjoy going for long walks and truck rides. With a fenced in dog park close by, Lobo can run and play off-leash with his brother. Their "Grandma" has a home in Fredonia with acreage for them to hike on, and there are a lot of beautiful parks and trails not far from Lobo's home. We are so happy to have found our boy his loving, happy, forever home.

Here's what Lobo's "Mom," shared with us:

"We are so happy that we adopted Lobo; he makes our family complete. We have always felt like we were missing something and it was him. The two don't go anywhere without the other. It's cute to see who will get into the truck first and who will lead the pack on our walks lol 😊. He has adjusted well into his new and forever family. Oh one thing they both do well is guard my coffee pot, they look like, 'Mom, we got it guarded we know how you are without coffee in the morning.' The two are just too cute together; you would never know that they didn't grow up together."



THIRD ANNUAL VIRTUAL DOG WALK

Enclosed you will find information about our Spring/Summer Fundraiser. The purpose of this fundraiser is collect materials for the second dog room and to pay for the labor costs which will involve both professional construction and electrical work. To register for The Virtual Dog Walk, please make a check out to:

**Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary
1401 Carpenter Hill Rd.
Cuba, NY 14727**

You can also register by making a donation on PayPal by going to our website, celebrationofcaninelives.com. Whether you send a paper check or a donation through PayPal, please indicate that this check is for our Virtual Dog Walk.

If you have any questions about the Virtual Dog Walk, please email Megan at: mahonemt@bonaventure.edu. You can also text or call: (716)785-4706 or (716)785-4705.

To participate in the dog walk, the \$25.00 registration fee is required. The best time to register is in May, but we will accept donations at any time! However, in order for your mileage to count, we must receive your donation before the last day of The Virtual Dog Walk (July 31st).

Also, please note that you are welcome to donate more than the registration fee. Additionally, if you want to support CCLS but do not want to participate in the Virtual Dog Walk, you are more than welcome to send a donation of any amount to us.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

