

CELEBRATION OF CANINE LIVES SANCTUARY

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

CAROL'S MIRACLE

As some of our readers already know, 2026 started very painfully for CCLS. One of our founders passed away. Carol was a wonderful friend, mother, wife, etc. but we wanted to use this opportunity to share what she meant to Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary.

Carol was a philanthropist who loved learning about work people were doing to make the world a more compassionate place. I was blessed to have her as a Mom. She taught me the joy and importance of helping others on this earthly journey. After I got "a taste" of the heart-warming rewards that come with helping needy animals find happiness- whether it be taking a shelter dog for a long walk, donating to a farm sanctuary or helping a little kitten find a loving adoptive family, I quickly realized that I would be bored beyond belief if my life didn't revolved around charity work. This was the foundation for CCLS.



Carol not long after her arrival to CCLS

My Mom taught me how to dream. To her, dreams were not fantasies that only occurred in people's minds, but were legitimate visions of how great the world could become when empathy, compassion and desire to make things better were the motivating factors impacting choices and actions people made. I know that when I was younger, my dreams were HUGE. In all fairness, in some ways they were childish, unrealistic, and extremely innocent. Yet, the ability to dream like that gave me the energy and desire to work very hard to improve the lives of many, many animals. If I hadn't been encouraged to dream big, I doubt I would have worked as hard for so many years. One has to know what they want before they can work on creating it. Thank you, Mom, for teaching me to dream big.

Equally important, my Mom was very realistic. On a daily basis, she would study financial figures in her notebooks. We would spend hours analyzing the logistics of moving the sanctuary forward and discussing in depth the potential answers to questions like:

"How much should we have in a reserve fund in case a dog(s) has a medical emergency that needs to be addressed right away?"



"How can we increase our donor base?"

"What is the next step in barn construction, how much will it cost and how do we obtain the funding to get it?"

"How do we communicate to donors and potential donors that our projects have been very successful and our animals are really happy, yet we (like all non-profits) are in constant need of funding to continue and grow our mission?"

My Mom's realistic nature coupled with her eternal optimism had an irreplaceable role at our sanctuary. Our hearts are shattered without her earthly presence, yet we feel her watching over the sanctuary. What would she say now?

She would say thank you to each and every person who donated to the sanctuary in honor of her, because your donations literally saved a beautiful life...

On the day of Carol's funeral, our sanctuary received a voicemail from a dog control officer who had taken in a stray female Pit Bull. The dog had no collar, microchip or form of identification. The dog's body looked as if she had given birth to more than one litter of puppies. The legally required holding time had expired over a week ago, meaning that the dog could be made available for adoption, sent to a rescue organization or killed. Yes, the



Carol enjoys chasing toys a little bit, but her favorite game is playing tag with people.



Carol's favorite activity is going for truck rides. Her friendly, gentle nature combined with her easygoing mannerisms and her zest for life and being with people make her the perfect companion to take to work, go into stores, hike with, etc.

practice of killing homeless dogs is still legal in 2026. The dog control officer told me that he had reached out to multiple rescues but they were all at capacity and that ending this dog's life could be a potential outcome. Every emotion from rage to despair to anxiety flooded through me. No matter how many years you work in the rescue field, EVERY life still matters to you and you never become desensitized to this kind of news. Used to it? Yes. Desensitized? No.

As I stared at my phone after listening to the message several times, this "sixth sense" came over me. This little female Pit Bull was supposed to be our next resident! To be perfectly clear, if love and desire to help were the only criteria needed to take in dogs, we could and would rescue every single one. However, running a non-profit is a lot more complicated than that. When you rescued a dog (or any animal for that matter), you need to have the funding to support him/her for unknown period of time that may just be couple months or many years into the future. Furthermore, you need to make sure that funding will provide whatever that animal needs to thrive—high quality food, veterinary care regardless of the expense,



etc. You absolutely must have the TIME every day to give the animal a happy lifestyle full of activities they enjoy. So, with these factors in mind and a leap of faith, I called the dog control officer back and told him that we would come meet this little Pit Bull. Not long after we met her, papers were signed and the little Pit Bull who we named Carol became our fourth rescued dog!

Fast forward to today: Carol is one happy girl! As with all of our rescues, it took her some time to get adjusted and feel comfortable. But once she learned that hikes, truck rides, treats and plenty of love were part of her daily routine, her uncertain brown eyes became softer and she became more mentally/emotionally present. She was able to focus on the content of Canine Good Citizen skills, chase bouncy balls, sniff and roll in stuff while hiking, and just overall have fun.



Carol made friends with our other rescue, Remmy. Remmy recently got adopted to a wonderful home in Pennsylvania (see Page __). Now is Carol's turn to find her dream family!

situation that we don't feel extremely confident about. Carol is athletic and needs a home where long walks and exploring are a regular part of her activities. She loves going for truck rides and would do best in a home where people are not gone for too long during the day. She is not destructive when left alone, but being alone for more than a handful of hours during the day is not in her best interests. She listens very well, loves food puzzles and wants to snuggle with everyone.



How about a long hike?

Carol is now available for adoption. The "last leg" of her journey is to find her forever home. She has been loving and tender with every person she has met, including children. We think she'd do well in a home with another dog(s); we require a couple meet-n-greets first. Carol would also do well as the only pet. Being mature, Carol does not instigate problems with other dogs, but she is no pushover, either. She and our other resident Remmy get along well. We are going to say Carol needs a cat-free home. She doesn't exhibit a strong prey drive, but she will get angry and does have strong opinions about cats that slap her or claw her. For everyone's safety and best interests, Carol and cats aren't the best mix. Although she may be okay with gentle cats, we never put any animal in a



Carol is a smart lady who will work with food puzzles until the goodies come out. She also loves Kongs and food in general.



We want to thank every person who donated to our sanctuary in honor of my Mom...it was one donation after another that gave us the reassurance that we could financially support this sweet dog. Please know that your support gave life to this dog and that our sanctuary is NOTHING without the amazing supporters who enable us to help these animals. Human-Carol always told me to, "Be light. Be joyful. There is good in everyone and love is sometimes the strongest in times of turmoil." I will always look on my Mom's passing not with despair, but with the memory of how people who loved her came together and enabled another Mama to be saved. You ARE the sanctuary.



Let's make 2026 Carol's year to find her dream family



WELCOME OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER, DR. KATHY ZAWICKI!

Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary is honored to welcome our newest board member, Dr. Kathy Zawicki!

Kathy teaches Sociology at St. Bonaventure University. Before that, she was a social worker. Her knowledge of systemic injustice, her deep love of humanity and animals, and her go-getter attitude are a huge asset to our sanctuary.



Kathy became a vegetarian in the 1990's, long before meatless options and recipes became popular. She always took a deep interest in her students' passions, especially those which revolved around service work. Many years ago, when I told her my passion was to "End the practice of killing homeless animals," her response was full of gratitude, joy, hope and respect. Rather than being just one more person to say, "Oh, you'll never do that," Kathy was thrilled to hear someone wanted to address the wrongs in the world and make them right. She had the wisdom and maturity to know that I didn't mean that I personally would rescue millions of dogs, but rather be a part of a movement that didn't accept killing, cruelty or the commodification of animals. She knew I meant working with others to find solutions for

challenging animals/situations and she knew that I was referring to living a lifestyle in which I used every opportunity I could to help animals in need.

Before joining the Sanctuary's board, Kathy had been a long-time donor. Additionally, she would pursue avenues to draw awareness to the sanctuary's work, spend time with the sanctuary animals and share our newsletters with family and friends, which also added to our donor base. She even wrote a testimony for the sanctuary when we applied for a \$1,000.00 grant from the Pollination Project. Her testimony helped us secure funding back when we were working on the first dog room. It is a privilege to add her to our board of directors, as she puts her time, energy and passion into sanctuary projects and gets to work like an A+ student. Thank you, Kathy!

Dr. Kathy Zawicki with Ned. Back in early 2021, Ned used to be one of our neighbor's barn cats, but Ned started spending more and more time at the sanctuary and the neighbor told us we could have him. We gladly accepted and he is a permanent family member now. He and Kathy are good friends.



SUMMER 2026 FUNDRAISER: VIRTUAL DOG WALK...SORT OF

One of our biggest fundraisers is upon us-**The 4th Annual Virtual Dog Walk**. Being an organization that prides itself in transparency in every aspect of our work, we feel the need to explain that The Virtual Dog Walk has taken a very strange road!

For a little background information, we first started the Virtual Dog Walk in Spring/Summer of 2023. One of our board members suggested the idea because she had participated in various races/competitions for other animal rescue organizations and it had proven successful for them. Well, it has proven to be successful for CCLS too, but in a weird way! You see, the whole purpose of the Virtual Dog Walk is to raise much needed funds for the endless stream of projects our non-profit is working on. In order to raise these funds, we had participants pay a registration fee and then record the mileage they had walked with their dog(s) from the day the "race" started to the day the "race" ended. The top three highest mileages received gifts (shirts, coffee cups, etc.) with custom sanctuary gifts that mentioned their success in this competition. We made sure this competition was open to anyone who wanted to help the sanctuary and compete. So, dog lovers who didn't have a dog could compete by recording their mileage walking a shelter dog(s) and people in wheelchairs could compete by riding alongside a dog going for a walk. The competition was even open to people who wanted to walk their pet goat, pig, cat, etc. instead of/in addition to a dog(s). We made these guidelines welcoming and specific to encourage friendly competition from as many people as possible.



The results? Many donors stepped up and wanted to help CCLS but very few actually competed and recorded mileage. We were thrilled that so many people were willing to donate for the dog walk, because that was the entire reason we do it. However, very few people actually competed and recorded mileage, so obviously things didn't go exactly how we planned. Donations came pouring in with notes full of compassion and encouragement and different reasons why people weren't going to compete: they were too busy to record mileage, they weren't competitive and just wanted to donate instead, they thought they would forget to write their mileage down, they recently had surgery, their dogs had surgery, etc. Of course, this is perfectly fine- it's the donations that matter. But with less than five people actually competing each year, (with some people calculating their mileage down to the last step and others estimating what they thought they walked), the competitive nature of this fundraiser sizzled out.

Before the 2024 and 2025 Virtual Dog Walks, we tried hard to recruit individuals who we thought would enjoy active participation in this event. We took flyers and signup sheets to Pet Supply Stores, Veterinary Offices, YMCA's and Doggy Daycares. Despite these efforts, we were unable to recruit new



participants. One of the biggest challenges of fundraising is finding different avenues to get the attention of animal lovers that are new to our sanctuary and its mission.

Of course, with the hope of inspiring more people to join, we could pretend that The Virtual Dog Walk was bringing in heavy competition and that many people were strolling through their towns with their pups and pedometers -but that's not how it is and we are always transparent with our donors. We are so grateful to all of our supporters who donate because they love what we do for animals and don't need a present, game or other incentive to give a few bucks. Just like most non-profit animal rescue organizations, we have an amazing group of core supporters but need to reach more people in order to expand our efforts.

So, we'll call this newsletter the Spring 2026 Fundraiser. If you can, please consider helping our little sanctuary grow. We will be so grateful and we promise you don't have to record how many steps you took...



HAPPILY EVER AFTER...ON THE BEACH!

In our last newsletter (December 2025), we shared the story of Remmy, the third dog our sanctuary rescued. Remmy came to us on September 29th, 2025. His heart of gold and his gorgeous looks could make anyone fall in love with him, but he also came with a lot of baggage...severe separation anxiety, impulsivity (mixed with brute strength), immaturity, generalized anxiety, etc. Of course, none of this was his fault. Our sanctuary has no idea of how many homes he had before being found in the middle of nowhere with another dog that appeared to be his brother or son. We just knew that the stability a dog needs to think clearly, relax and enjoy life had not been present in Remmy's life.

It took awhile, but gradually we saw Remmy's spirit healing as he got adjusted to life at the sanctuary. He stopped bolting at doors, he thought for a few seconds before he did something and his eyes gradually became softer. His constant barking in the truck turned into intermittent whines and he began enjoying activities and knowing what to expect. He learned training cues, made friends with a lot of other dogs, got to know our three family cats (and liked them all but was not liked back). He went for countless hikes both on and off our property, played with toys and learned the joys of being a dog. After we learned about Remmy's true nature-his needs, his personality, his interests, etc., we knew it was time to find him his dream family.

Given that all dogs are individuals, the idea of the "dream family," is different for each dog. Some prefer to be "only children" while others prefer "siblings." Some crave toys and structured play (agility, fetch, etc.) while others crave a little more independence. Some say, "Ew...company's here" and others say, "Yippee, party!" As I sorted out what would be the absolute best environment for Remmy and imagined him living with various people who liked him, a feeling kept coming over me that there were these people he was destined to be with and I just hadn't met them yet.

Sure enough, that feeling happened to be true when I got an email from a family in Pennsylvania that had seen Remmy on petfinder and were eager to meet him. They wasted no time in filling out the 8-page adoption application. As I spoke to each of their references, a feeling of peace came over me. A feeling that Remmy was finally going to be loved the way he had always deserved to be loved. A feeling that a brand-new world full of fun and possibilities was right on Remmy's horizon.



Fun day at the Beach!





Bonding with his Aunt Chris

Just several days later, Allen and Patti came to meet Remmy. Remmy was his typical self: excited and thrilled to make new friends. In no time at all, he had snuggled up to them and them to him. In fact, everyone was so comfortable sitting on the floor that a stranger looking in would never guess that this was the first interaction. After a walk and a romp in the play yard with Remmy, his future parents were signing our adoption contract! The following week, we would be taking Remmy for his home visit-and to stay-in his forever home.

Home visits are one of the most rewarding aspects of rescue work. There is no greater feeling than entering a home that is waiting to welcome a shelter dog. Remmy had many toys awaiting him, including a stuff sheep that he sleeps with. He had big cozy dog beds that were freshly made and treats on the counter. His parents like camping, so Remmy will be able to enjoy many adventures with them in their RV. Remmy will also get to play with their son's female Akita, who I'm sure Remmy will be thrilled to meet. Best of all, there is a big park close by that he'll get to spend time at and he has his own beach right on Lake Erie! Who knows, he may even enjoy swimming when he sees his parents go in the water. The look on Remmy's face when he looked out on the lake was a look I'll never forget. While I'll never know exactly what he was thinking, it was a look of wonder and contentment. Perhaps that the world looked brighter and bigger than he ever realized. I know that was how I felt that day. Welcome to your forever home, Remmy!

Here are some words from Remmy's family:

The process was enjoyable, straight forward and rewarding. We knew when we first met him that he was the right addition to our family after our last dog (Bear) passed away in February.

Remmy has already adapted quite nicely. We are seeing more and more of his true personality come out each day, very loving as well as inquisitive and smart, he is figuring out how to open some of the doors in the house on his own.



Snuggling with his Dad



Discussing the fun plans for the day

He has made quite a few new friends including new neighbors, his new vet and all of the staff at the clinic among them. they love how vocal he is. He has also made new doggie friends in the neighborhood. He loves his new doggie cousins "Anara" (American Akita) and "Pippin" (Miniature Golden Doodle).

He likes going down to the lake, even got his feet wet, we will introduce him to more of the lake at his own pace.



He loves going to the park over the ridge, there are so many new smells down there.

He makes a great nap partner, when I go to work, he will curl up with mommy until she gets up, or when she takes a nap after a busy day outside.

We look forward to many more adventures, like going to Presque Isle state park, and many camping trips.

You can consider this a great success story.



Remmy's first day at home



ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS

Since the publication of our last newsletter, two of our monthly donors-Edith and Marcia, have passed away. We wanted to share a little more about these amazing women and their unforgettable kindness to our young non-profit.



Edith aka Betty. Our hero.

Edith was our sanctuary's first monthly donor. Her nickname was Betty, and we named one of our beautiful kitties who we rescued in October of 2022 after her. It is hard to put into words how much Betty's donations meant. In many ways, establishing and running a non-profit is like climbing Mt. Everest. At the bottom, you're told not even to attempt it. Yet, when "climbing the mountain" (so-to-speak)



Betty. Will be celebrating 4 years with us in October.

means that lives are saved and improved as you climb, there is no reason to stop. Betty's donations helped with everything from spay/neuter programs to barn construction to hands-on care of our rescued animals. She was a team player who knew that the sanctuary's success depended on the whole team. When we first began, some months her donation was the only donation we received and it was like a candle in the dark. Thankfully, more animal lovers followed in Betty's steps and this the entire reason we are able to rescue and help animals. We will never forget the "pack leader" of donations. Love you, Betty!



Marcia found out about CCLS while researching rescue organizations that provide a lifetime home for dogs who are difficult to adopt out for various reasons. She was especially fond of and talented with puppies. (Anyone with experience in rescue work knows that in many ways, puppies are actually a lot more challenging to care for than adult dogs. Quite frankly, they usually are messy, loud, destructive and require significant supervision and patience.) Marcia had been active in animal rescue work for many years and was extremely interested in the sanctuary's mission and even thought of specific shelter dogs who she thought may thrive at our sanctuary. I explained to her that our little sanctuary was still very much in the early stages and we

did not yet have the resources and manpower to do quite as much as she thought we could at the present moment. "How can I help?" she asked and added, "I love to see people following their dreams." Soon after that conversation, Marcia became a monthly donor. She knew first-hand the challenges of fundraising, how success stories build, the value of every dollar and the importance of encouraging others. Every month, her donation played a role in bringing comfort to an animal-a nutritious meal, a warm place to sleep, a preventative vaccine, a new toy, construction supplies to help more dogs in the future, the list went on and on. We will never forget what she did for CCLS. Thank you, Marcia.



PLEASE HELP US!

CCLS is a dedicated and determined non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization; we do everything in our power to help as many animals as possible. Our sanctuary receives NO federal, state or local funding-we rely entirely on donations. Please help us expand our work.

Ways to help:

1. Monetary donations are needed most. You can either donate to us through **PayPal** by going to our website: celebrationofcaninelives.com or by making a handwritten check out to:

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

***Please make checks Payable to "Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary"**

2. Join "The Ladies Club"-FOR MEN TOO! The Ladies Club is a group of monthly donors. These generous individuals give our non-profit what it needs most-sustainability. Every month, we rely on this act of kindness to feed and provide medical care for our rescues, to heat our barn in the colder months and to help with the endless ongoing construction expenses. The amount given each month does not matter. We currently have 6 members of the Ladies Club. We had 8, but two passed away within the last year. Sidenote: **We call this "The Ladies Club" because all our monthly donors happen to be women. We will change the name to "The Dog Lovers Club" once we get our first male monthly donor. PLEASE help us make that name change-we want to be inclusive!**
3. Volunteer. Our dogs are always looking for opportunities to socialize with people. We have hiking trails, a large play yard and a pond. Our small sanctuary takes a lot of pride in giving every dog we rescue a lot of enrichment-truck rides, puzzle games, play dates, field trips, etc. Many times we wish we had more people helping with the direct hands-on care because running a sanctuary also requires us to spend a lot of time on projects such as fundraising, fencing repairs, painting and barn work, etc. More volunteers = more ability to help additional animals in need. If you would like to volunteer, please reach out to us. ANYTHING that brings the sanctuary publicity, donations, etc. is greatly needed.
4. Follow us on Facebook! We currently have under 300 followers on Facebook. Help us get to 300 and beyond. We want and need more people to know about us.
5. Do a Facebook birthday fundraiser! Birthday fundraisers are a great way to spread our message, increase awareness and help us get more donors. Here's some simple math that shows how a birthday fundraiser can work:

If the sanctuary has 270 followers, and every follower did a birthday fundraiser and raised \$100.00 or more, the sanctuary could get \$27,000.00 or more! Yet, that might be a little too idyllic. Let's say out of 270 followers, only 100 (less than half of our followers) decided to a birthday fundraiser and raised \$100.00 or more- that would still equate to



\$10,000.00 or more. But of course, the world isn't even that idyllic. Let's say only 50 followers set up a birthday fundraiser and each fundraiser made \$25.00...that is still \$1,250.00. For giggles, let's say no followers do a Facebook fundraiser. Well, then, we have some pretty useless followers. Kidding aside, we hope you can see how "simple" acts of kindness can go a long way. Of course, there are never any guarantees as to how much a Facebook fundraiser will generate, and this is one of the aspects that makes running a non-profit challenging. Yet, even if you try a Facebook fundraiser and no one donates, your attempt to help our sanctuary means the world to us.

6. Know of anyone who loves animals and runs a personal business such as a restaurant, a hair salon, etc.? Ask them if they are willing to put up a donation jar for CCLS.
7. Do you work for a business that gives to non-profit charities? See if your business is willing to make a donation or do a matching funds program.
8. Have an idea to help our sanctuary? Send us an email, call or text and we can discuss!

Thank you to EVERYONE who has EVER helped the sanctuary.
You are the reason we are able to save lives.

