

CELEBRATION OF CANINE LIVES SANCTUARY A NON-PROFIT, 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

REMMY TAKES CCLS BY STORM!

You can probably guess by the title of this article Remmy, our sanctuary's latest rescue/resident, has presented us with some unexpected challenges. Remmy's story is best summed up by a title of a chapter in one of our favorite books. The chapter's title is, "When You've Seen One Rescue...You've Seen One Rescue." (Sidenote: The book's name is "FOREVER WILD, FOREVER HOME" by Melanie and Mark Shellenbarger and it is about The Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado and the amazing work that they do rescuing and rehabilitating large carnivores.) Getting back to Remmy, this title best describes what happened the night in late September when we brought him to our sanctuary.



Remmy was originally found as a stray, roaming with porcupine quills in his nose. A dog control officer (dco) picked him up with another dog, who appeared to be his son. Neither dog was claimed during the stray holding period, and Remmy's apparent son was adopted soon thereafter. Remmy remained at the dco's kennels for the next five months.

Meanwhile at CCLS, our second rescue/resident Roxie was adopted to a wonderful home in Livonia, NY, (see page 11). This meant that the one completed dog room in our barn was empty, which of course gave the green light to rescuing another dog. Having already placed our first two residents, Lobo and Roxie, in loving homes, we felt pretty confident that we were getting into the "swing of things." After speaking with several local dco's and almost taking one dog who found a good home a day before she was set to come to the sanctuary, we decided to take a big, handsome Husky/German Shepherd mix named Remmy after hearing that he had been with the dco the longest.

Before going to pick up Remmy, I took one last look at his room. The walls and floor were meticulously clean. The Kuranda bed had extra cozy blankets and there were a few toys for Remmy to play with. Then my Dad and I headed out to pick him up. After signing transfer papers from the dco, Remmy rode back to CCLS, whining, panting and barking the whole way. This wasn't unexpected. The dco had told us that Remmy had only been in a vehicle twice that he was aware of, one to get the porcupine quills removed and two for a rabies vaccine. No one knows anything about Remmy's life before he

Remmy is crate trained but will most likely have some separation anxiety issues, (especially during the transitional phase of adoption), so he would do best in a home where he doesn't have to be alone much during the days.

was with the dco. Obviously, the truck ride to CCLS was quite an intimidating experience for him, leaving with two people he was barely familiar with.

Once back at CCLS, I took Remmy for a walk. Of course, having no clue what was happening to him, Remmy was nervously going through the motions of life without really being engaged in the activity of walking, exploring, sniffing, etc. Again, this was normal. I knew that once Remmy got used to the routine of CCLS, the fun activities and predictability of one good thing after another, his nerves would subside. I took Remmy back to his room and said, "I'll bring you dinner a few minutes."

About ten minutes later I headed back to the barn with Remmy's meal. When I opened the door to his room, I was horrified. The wood around the window had been chewed off and there were pieces of wood all over the floor. It was shredded and splintered and it looked as though Remmy was desperately trying to escape the room. He had even chewed a little on the metal panel walls and there were small drops of blood on the walls. I also found pieces of his claws on the floor, which indicated he had been trying to scratch his way out as well. A million thoughts raced through my mind:

"Oh no, did he swallow any of the wood?"

"Are his paws seriously injured?"

"I can't leave him in there, he will die of panic or kill himself trying to escape!"

"I wanted him to be happy and this is a nightmare for him."

"Oh geez, these rooms are expensive and he is ruining our hard-earned money!"

"I don't know what I'm doing."

"AAAAAGGGGHHHHHH!"

After staring into the room for a few minutes feeling overwhelmed, I brought Remmy to the front porch of the house to discuss the situation with my family. We all agreed that if Remmy was going to panic to the point of self-harm, he couldn't be put back in the room. It would be unsafe and cruel. I checked Remmy's mouth and paws; thankfully, he didn't appear to have any serious injuries. Then I stared into outer space. I went from feeling extremely prepared for this dog to feeling completely clueless in ten minutes. We needed to come up with a way to help Remmy. But we couldn't put him in the spacious, toy-filled, cozy room that was meant for dogs like him. Nor could we leave him in the barn with the door to the first room open, as we knew he'd feel trapped and try to escape regardless of how large the area was. Besides that, the barn is constantly under construction, so there were literally countless materials that would be dangerous for him to chew. We couldn't simply bring him into our house because we weren't sure if he'd be safe with our three family cats, and we were never going to risk their safety or well-being. The house is their home. Furthermore, we couldn't put him in a room in the house because even if he'd be completely separate from the cats, he'd destroy any room if left alone.



A home with a big fenced in yard would be great, but any home where Remmy gets to play, go for long walks and have tons of fun will make him a happy boy.



Finally, a thought occurred to me: Remmy lived in a crate at the dco facility. He was used to going into and out of a crate and he obviously wasn't monitored 24/7. Maybe I should get him into a big crate. Perhaps I could even borrow the dco's crate that Remmy had been staying in. I called the dco and explained the situation. He kindly told me I could take Remmy's crate for free and keep it. I went back to the dco's facility to pick up the crate while my Dad took Remmy for a walk. After returning with Remmy's crate, my Dad and I put it in the main part of the barn and lured Remmy in there with treats. Sure enough, he hadn't chewed himself out of the crate when he was at the dco's, and he had stayed there for over five months. But as soon as we walked out of the barn and Remmy started to whine then bark frantically, I knew this wasn't going to work, either. He was terrified; I couldn't leave him in there crying and panicking. Also, he could seriously injure himself trying to escape. Most dogs that are surrendered to shelters experience some degree of anxiety and depression, which is sometimes unavoidable, but many snap out of the nerves and sadness as love, happy routines and comfort begin to fill their days. What Remmy was experiencing though, was "off the charts" anxiety. "We're going to have to bring his crate into our shed leading into the kitchen," I told my Dad. "He needs to be supervised and know that people are close by."

Remmy needs a family who will keep him entertained. With the brains of a German Shepherd and the energy of a Husky, this boy thrives with gentle leadership, reward-based training and bonding activities.

After bringing Remmy's crate into the shed, I finally felt some relief. Although he barked and rattled the crate constantly, we could monitor him and guarantee that he wouldn't harm himself. Whenever someone gave him attention, he seemed a tad bit calmer. The three of us took turns sitting by his crate

and talking to him. As the night went on, we learned that although noisy, Remmy wasn't trying to escape the crate too much, so eventually we were all able to go to bed. Remmy barked almost the whole night with small breaks in between barking. Although none of us slept a wink, I knew that Remmy was safe from harming himself, and we had a plan going forward.

The next week was hard but rewarding. Gradually the incessant barking began to decrease as Remmy began to realize that there was a routine to this new place and that the crate door opened frequently. As humans, I think people tend to forget that what is obvious to us is not obvious to an animal who has just been placed in a new environment. Remmy didn't know when and if the barn door or crate door were opening, which is obviously terrifying. He didn't know that wholesome, tasty meals would come every day at regular times. He didn't know what our plans were for him or why we were doing what we were doing. Love, patience and time were the only way to heal the scars of a stray dog who had no control over his life.

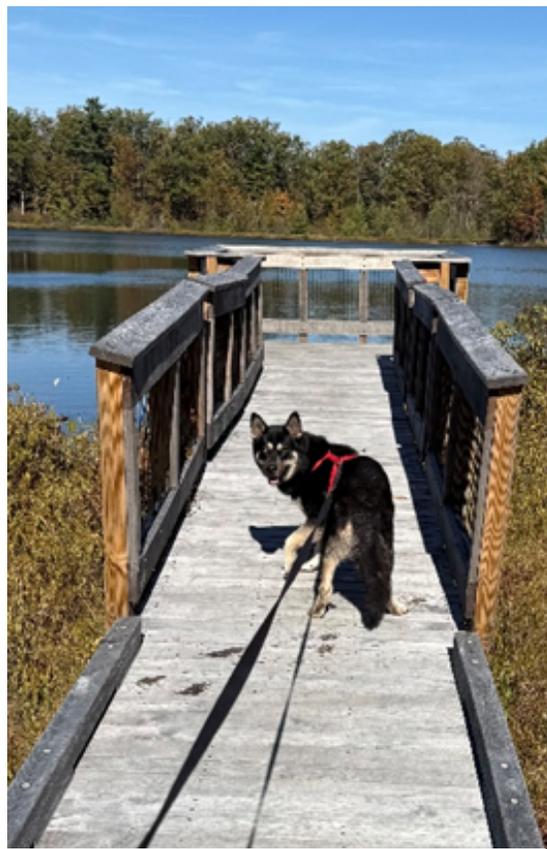
Day by day, Remmy began to show signs of calming down. Besides a gradual decrease in barking, the first change I noticed was that during walks, Remmy was becoming emotionally present. He was stopping to sniff flowers, trees, etc. instead of mindlessly plowing forward. He would look over the fields, stop and move his ears when he heard sounds, and glance in my direction with a somewhat contented look. Remmy spent (and continues to spend) a lot of time in our living room where we give

him food enrichment puzzles and teach him training basics like "stay," "come," "watch me," etc. During this time, our cats have to be put another room. Sometimes they are good with this and find a cozy spot to sleep in the main bedroom or in my office, while other times they are clearly saying, "Who's the big dope that takes over the living room certain times every day?" Eventually, we may introduce Remmy to the cats very carefully, but as mentioned previously, the cat's safety and happiness is our number one priority. Being nearly 80lbs, Remmy can easily move quickly with a lot of power toward something that excites him, so until I am sure that he doesn't see them as prey and I have complete control over him, the cats and Remmy will remain separate.

When Remmy is not hanging out with us in the living room, riding in the truck, hiking or in the play yard, he stays in his crate. We work hard to ensure his days are full of activities and that the crate is just a place to go back to for a nap in between physical, mental and social enrichment. Remmy's crate is appropriate for his size and has a mattress, cozy blankets and a pillow. The crate is so large that we are no longer able to open our side door leading into the shed. We also have a baseboard heater in the shed so Remmy is warm and comfortable throughout these cold months. We will never have a room in the barn because he is obviously very content with the living arrangements we have made for him, and we never want to set a dog back on progress he/she has made. We have entertained the idea of possibly taking in an additional rescue with that first room being available, but in order to do so, we need to find more ways to bring in the revenue needed to responsibly care for a second dog and to have an effective backup plan should the dog, heaven forbid, have the same issues Remmy does. Obviously, with so many homeless dogs in need and our dedication to doing everything we can to help them, he won't let that room sit empty for too long.

In addition to long hikes, puzzles, toys, reward-based training and social time in the main part of the house, we've added the play yard and field trips to Remmy's rehabilitation plan. Remmy loves running free in our large fenced-in play yard. He's a pretty independent guy in the yard, doing laps around the inside perimeter and sniffing the weeded areas. We have been practicing recall in the yard and he does really well with that, as he is very food motivated and knows that good things are waiting when he hears the word, "Come!"

We have taken field trips to Moss Lake Nature Preserve in Caneadea and down into the village of Cuba so he can get used to the sights, sounds, and experience of walking in the community. Generally speaking, he does well with these. He doesn't show any fear of new places, cars, people, etc. However, he whines and barks while riding in the truck. In other words, he's not the best passenger, but he loves the destinations once we arrive, so we're hoping that over time, Remmy will grow to enjoy the truck ride or at least be somewhat calmer while riding. He had scary and unknown experiences getting into and out of vehicles before coming to CCLS, so it is not surprising that getting in a vehicle causes anxiety. We will continue to desensitize Remmy to the feel of the truck ride and over time, hope that he makes more positive associations with the ride itself.



Hiking at Moss Lake Nature Preserve

We are beginning to socialize Remmy with both human and dog visitors. This has been an interesting experience. Although Remmy has mastered skills like "come," "stay," etc., when you introduce new people/dogs to the mix, he quickly becomes highly excitable and forgets or doesn't seem to care about the skills he has learned. He is very friendly with people, but his manners need some fine tuning as his idea of greeting people is to race toward them and jump on them with full force. Obviously, when an 80lb dog does this, it can be dangerous for children, people with balance and/or pain issues, etc. It's obvious that Remmy never learned impulse control when he was a youngster, and the unstableness of his past was a breeding ground for him to feel the need to act impulsively. Therefore, each day, we are teaching him that it is more rewarding to wait and think for a few moments that it is to just act. My experience as a CPDT-KA has given me the knowledge and skills to help him learn how to integrate more smoothly with humans in social situations. The challenge I face with this is having enough people to come to the sanctuary and practice these manners with Remmy. The more practice he gets greeting people politely, the more he will start to do that naturally.

Once we fine-tune Remmy's manners a little more, we are going to schedule some more dog play dates for him. Doggy play dates are conducted in a very safe manner. We never simply put a CCLS dog with a volunteer's personal dog and "see what happens." First, if a dog has any history of having aggression issues with other dogs, they do not have doggy play dates. Secondly, we spend a lot of time getting to know our rescues and their responses to various stimuli. We make sure that we feel confident handling them in a variety of situations, so that should a dog-to-dog conflict occur, we are prepared to intervene before things become dangerous. The volunteers who bring their dogs to play are experienced handlers and know their dogs well. We make sure the dogs become familiar with each other in a small environment before putting them in the play yard off-leash together.

Remmy's first official dog date was decent but not exceptional. He was not aggressive but very excitable and nose-y. The other dog was interested in engaging in mutual chasing with Remmy, but Remmy wanted to take things a little further and play some tackle football. Although all of Remmy's behaviors were done in good faith, it was obvious the other dog thought Remmy was an overwhelming, irritating, big blob. After giving it a little time and hoping to see playful, relaxed and consensual interactions between the two dogs, we decided to call it quits while the other dog could still "label" the experience as "mildly annoying" instead of "very upsetting."

The importance of giving Remmy these play dates cannot be emphasized enough. Although play dates don't always result in two dogs becoming best friends, they provide a wealth of information. Despite being excitable, we feel Remmy has a pretty good nature with other dogs and that he would do well with a playful, confident dog about his size. We also observed that Remmy seems eager to meet other dogs and that another canine companion he can fool around with will provide enriching and meaningful experiences for him. This first play date of his also reinforced in me the importance of being able to have Remmy under good voice control, as once he gets running and wrestling, no human can physically keep up with the speed of an adult Husky racing through a large yard!

All of this information we are gathering about Remmy will help us find him the family of his dreams. He will be put up for adoption when: 1) We can provide potential adopters all the information they'll need to give him the best life possible and 2) He is emotionally ready. Of course, dogs always experience some stress when taken from an environment they have come to trust and enjoy, but the transition phase from sanctuary to forever family is well worth it when you consider that the forever family is the dog's last step on the journey to happiness.



Our adoption criteria, background/reference checks, matching-matching process and legally-binding contract is completely centered around Remmy's safety, care and quality-of-life. In other words, we will make sure that the family we choose for Remmy is the family he would choose for himself. He will be loved unconditionally, treated tenderly and will get to do all the activities that make him happy. Here's to finding Remmy the dream family in 2026!



Remmy acknowledges the fact that he is very handsome, but he wants a family who falls in love with his soul.

CCLS: FINANCIAL REALITIES

Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary is so much more than a place with a handful of rescued dogs. It is a place where dogs heal from their pasts. It is hard work on a daily basis to ensure that every dog who comes through our doors has a wide range of fun and enriching experiences, from field trips to social opportunities to mental enrichment. It is an unwavering commitment to finding every dog we rescue the type of family and home environment they will thrive in. CCLS is an organization that combats pet overpopulation with our spay/neuter program for animals in surrounding towns. Simply put, we are a community of animal lovers doing everything in our power to help as many animals as we can. We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. We receive no government, state or local funding. All our work is made possible by individual donors. Here is a general breakdown of our current efforts, future goals, expenses and projects.

A. Ongoing Expenses:

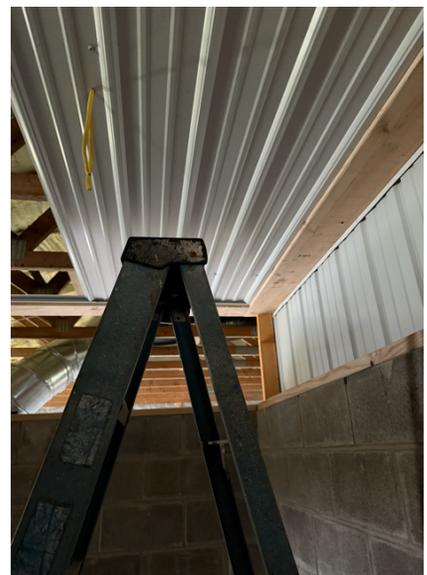
1. Dog Food (Blue Buffalo Adult hard food and Fresh Pet tubes)
2. Enrichment Puzzles/Toys
3. Pet cleansing wipes
4. Harnesses and leashes
5. Veterinary Care (vaccinations, spay/neuter, microchip, general exam, and treatment for any medical concerns)
6. Electric and heating bills for the barn
7. Cleaning Supplies

How this is paid for: We have a small group of women (seven to be exact) who give us monthly donations. This group is referred to as "The Ladies Club." (Men are welcomed to join...to date we do not have any monthly male donors, but the name will be changed to "The Animal Lovers Club," once we get a man or men on board.) Donations from individuals who are not monthly donors also help with these expenses.

Why This Is Important: To date, we have rescued three dogs: Lobo, Roxie, and Remmy. We always have a dog at CCLS, but so far we have never had more than one dog at one time. Our goal in 2026 is to have two dogs at the sanctuary at any given time. Of course, some of the above items will require double the funding to properly care for two dogs at once.

B. Construction Expenses:

Our barn (aka Gee's Home), is an ongoing, long-term project. We have made a lot of progress with the barn given that we started with nothing more than four walls and a dirt floor. Over the past handful of years,



Metal paneling ceiling going

we put cement flooring and spray foam insulation throughout the entire barn. We put concrete block walls up for all the dog rooms and we had a propane heating system installed. Now our focus is the second dog room. Expenses for the second dog room include but are not limited to:

1. Metal paneling walls (this has already been paid for and is mostly installed)
2. Door for the second dog room (this has already been paid for and is installed)
3. Flooring above the cement that will be comfortable for the dog's feet but easy to clean and sanitize
4. A small, attached outdoor fenced in area
5. A dog door with a pulley system
6. Electricity installation to that specific room
7. Labor costs



Second dog room in progress

How this is paid (for): Our family provided the funding for the major initial construction projects (cement, spray foam, concrete block walls, heating system). Donations are needed for construction work on the individual dog rooms. Because homeless dogs and their welfare always come first, a completed room will always house a homeless dog, and funding will not be put into additional rooms while completed rooms sit empty. In other words, we will always make use of the space we have to save lives, while using additional funding to create more space for homeless dogs in need.

Why This is Important: More donors and volunteers are the two "ingredients" so-to-speak that are needed to complete more dog rooms and responsibly take in more rescues. Without supporters to help fund these construction steps, our rate of progress declines. Without volunteers to help exercise and socialize dogs, a rescue organization cannot have a barn full of dogs. Because CCLS practices fiscal

responsibility and sustainability, we take small steps to reach big goals. And because of our amazing supporters, we are able to create heaven on earth for the dogs we've rescued. Expanding our donor base is essential to being able to save more dogs. With love and compassion from many different individuals/sources, the sky is truly the limit.

C. Community Spay/Neuter Program Expenses:

Long before CCLS had a barn and took in dogs, we ran (and continue to run) a spay/neuter program for families with pets in surrounding communities. In fact, this was the first program we established as a non-profit. A spay/neuter program saves lives because homeless animals are killed all over the United States. Rescue groups are maxed out, meaning that when someone calls them about an animal(s) in need, every space, penny and resource their organization has is already being used on the animals they have rescued and they cannot ethically, physically or financially take in an additional animal(s). Our spay/neuter program works to decrease the number of homeless animals entering shelters.

How this is paid (for): Funding for this program has come from a mixture of monthly donations and other non-monthly donations (checks from supporters, donation jars, etc.) It is important to note that although our spay/neuter program has been very successful and we have never had to turn away a person/family asking for assistance, this is not a high-volume program compared to spay/neuter clinics in big cities. This program doesn't "compete" for funds with our barn project. Our rescued animals and continued construction on Gee's Home are our sanctuary's first and foremost projects.

Why The Spay/Neuter Program is Important: Contrary to stereotypes that always associate responsible guardianship with spay/neuter and irresponsible guardianship with failure to spay/neuter, this program has taught us volumes about the plight of animals in need and the people seeking help for them. Every case is different, but here are some examples of people doing everything they can to help animals, and our sanctuary providing funding for spay/neuter:

*A person passes away unexpectedly and a relative takes custody of the pets to prevent them from going to an animal shelter.

* A litter of kittens was dropped off at someone's home in a rural area. All the rescue groups are full and the person is willing to keep the kittens and give them a loving home, but could use help with the initial costs of medical care.

*People/families running into unexpected financial hardships but will do anything to keep and protect their beloved pets.

Our compassionate spay/neuter program strives to help people give their pets the best care possible and keep pets in loving homes and out of shelters. Some individuals/families we have helped with this program have returned the love to us by donating to the barn project and sharing our work with others. A community that looks out for each other and its animals is our vision.

D. Fundraising Expenses:

As the saying goes, "It takes money to make money." In other words, most fundraising efforts are not without expenses. Our goal as a sanctuary is to minimize these expenses and maximize the output from fundraisers. Some fundraising/unavoidable expenses include but are not limited to:

1. Printer ink
2. Stamps (we have a donor who helps purchase these)
3. Envelopes



Reese was found wandering around a family's property. When the weather started getting cold and none of their neighbors claimed her, the family welcomed her into their home to stay. We are honored to get her spayed. Now she is thriving with people who love her dearly.

4. Monthly \$100.00 fee to maintain the CCLS website (our family always donates the funding for this)
5. Entry fees to put booths at festivals (one of our board members donates the entry fees)
6. Pamphlets, flyers, business cards, etc.

Why This is Important: Fundraising is vital to getting the word out about our past accomplishments helping animals, our current work and our future goals. The more people who know about our sanctuary, the more potential donors, volunteers, adopters, etc. we will come into contact with. Although our core group of donors are amazing, we need many additional donors in order to expand our rescue work and services. Being a small non-profit in a rural area, we know there are virtually countless people who would believe in and support our mission if they knew we existed. Therefore, getting the word out is vital to being able to help more animals.



Outlined above are the inner workings of our small non-profit. We are committed to transparency, sustainability and most of all, doing everything we can for animals in need. Please help us expand our mission!

ROXIE GOES HOME TO LIVONIA!

Roxie, our sanctuary's second rescue, was adopted to a wonderful home in Livonia, NY in September of 2025. Whether you follow us on facebook or not, this heartwarming story will make your day as it is filled with extra details about the challenges of finding dogs well-matched homes and to up-to-date info about Roxie's new adventures and life in her forever home.



Roxie's first day in her forever home.

We'll begin with a quick refresher. Roxie came to CCLS in March of 2025. We picked her up from an animal control holding center in Olean where she had been staying for nearly nine months. Roxie was a bundle of energy, nerves and cheerfulness, all rolled into one. The transition to our sanctuary was challenging for her at first, as she had grown accustomed to the schedule and familiarity of the holding center, and the people there treated her very well. It was obvious that she felt uprooted from her former life, but she gradually began to learn that CCLS is a happy, enriching and comforting place to be. Before putting any dog up for adoption, we have what we refer to as a "Step-by-Step Program" in which we learn everything we can about the dog in order to find them a

home that best matches their personality, needs, interests, etc. Roxie's "Step-by-Step Program" revealed that she loved every human she had met thus far. We also learned that she had an excellent and playful disposition with other dogs, but a prey drive with squirrels and other little critters, so sharing a home with a guinea pig, cat, rabbit, or chinchilla would not be a good match. We learned that Roxie loved every toy and was very coordinated when chasing Kongs and catching them on the bounce. Additionally, we learned that Roxie loved going for walks and hikes, and rode wonderfully in the truck. In our large fenced-in play yard, Roxie showed off skills she had learned (or naturally did), such as coming directly to us and sitting. We helped Roxie fine-tune those skills by rewarding her with treats and/or toys every time she would stop and think about what we were asking her to do instead of just acting on impulse. She taught us that she was a foodie and would never turn down a snack, and she also taught us that she did not guard her food bowl and that she was extremely patient with humans handling her. These behaviors indicated she would most likely do well in a home with children. After we learned all this and much more, Roxie was ready to find her dream family.

We put Roxie up on our website, on our Facebook page and on Petfinder. One of our board members, DJ Sammy Stone, broadcasted Roxie three separate times for Pop Radio 101. Our friends at Northern Chautauqua Canine Rescue in Westfield, NY put her up on their website as a courtesy listing. We took Roxie to festivals and told people about her story. Yet, despite everyone's best efforts, there was not one single inquiry about this beautiful girl. It made no sense...Roxie loved everyone...shouldn't someone want to adopt her? After several months of no inquires at all, I asked another one of our board members, Linda, who lives in Conesus, if she would share Roxie's info in her area. Linda shared Roxie's story with all of her local town groups on Facebook. This is when the magic happened...almost instantly!

I got a message from a man named Matt who saw a picture of Roxie sitting in the backseat of my truck. He said Roxie's smile, tongue and soft brown eyes caught his attention. He said Roxie was beautiful and wanted to meet her. Not wanting to get too excited, I told him to fill out an adoption application and if he sounded like a good match for Roxie, we would take the next steps. The very next day the application was sent back to us and sure enough, it sounded like a great match for Roxie. Matt was already looking forward to taking Roxie for long walks and having her ride shotgun in his gator. His parents live next door and also have a dog, so Roxie would get to go for regular visits to her "grandparents" house and play with their dog. Roxie would also have Matt's brother Tom, a huge dog lover, to play and go for adventures with. After speaking with Matt's references, who said he had the "patience of a saint," we were getting a big green light to go forward.



Snuggling on the couch with her BFF Tom.

Just a few days later, Matt and his family came down to meet Roxie. We were so excited to see how eager and willing the family was to drive over an hour one way to meet her. Roxie and Tom made friends at first sight, and it was clear that the whole family was excited to welcome her into their lives.

After signing our adoption contract, a date for a home visit was scheduled for the following weekend. If all went smoothly, Roxie would be staying with her family. I knew in my heart that the home visit would turn out great, which it did. For me, one of the most rewarding aspects of rescue work is going into a dog's room and leashing them up for the last time with the knowledge that he/she is stepping into a new life. As great as life at CCLS is, having a loving family life is better.

That weekend, Roxie rode up to Livonia with my Dad and I. As we stepped into Matt's house and saw dog toys, a big comfortable couch Roxie is welcomed up on anytime, new leashes and a dog bed, tears of joy filled my eyes as I thought to myself, "Welcome home, Roxie." After going over some final paper work and Roxie giving herself a tour of her new home, we headed over to Matt's parent's home where Roxie met their dog, Sadie. Then Tom and Matt showed us their ten acres, where Roxie could play ball, ride in the Gator with them, watch vegetables being planted, roll in the grass, and do dog stuff.

Once my Dad I were back at Matt's house, it was time to say good-bye to Roxie. Of course, a big emotional good-bye and then "disappearing" out the back door was not in Roxie's best interests, so as she sniffed around Matt's place, my Dad and I gave her a gentle pat and said, "Have fun, sweetie!" Then we left. While this departure may sound bittersweet to some, for me, it is the best part. Not only has Roxie found her forever home, CCLS keeps in touch with all of our adopters, so we will always know how our girl is doing and be there for her and her family. A couple hours after we left, Matt sent us a photo of Roxie and Tom, curled up on the couch together.

As we drove back to the sanctuary that night without Roxie, an overwhelming sense of happiness came over us. We were at peace with why there had been no adoption interest before this family came along...Roxie was supposed to be with them. The empty room symbolized Roxie's final step into her forever home, as well as a having space for another homeless dog in need. Best of all, as the cold weather

and winter sets in, Roxie will not be in a room in the barn. She will be curled up on a big couch with people who love her...her family!

We want to thank everyone who made Roxie's dreams come true:

- ♥ Thanks to the DCO and others at the holding center who took loving care of Roxie for nine months before she came to CCLS.
- ♥ Thanks to each and every one of our donors who provided the funding for Roxie's medical care, food, and comfortable living quarters.
- ♥ Thanks to every person who helped socialize Roxie by coming to the sanctuary and taking her for walks.
- ♥ Thanks to every person and their dogs who made Roxie's time at CCLS special and helped us learn what type of home she'd do best in.
- ♥ Thanks to DJ Sammy Stone for working tirelessly to promote shelter animals for adoption and to Pop Radio 101 for featuring Roxie.
- ♥ Thanks to Suzanne Wise for her creativity in designing collages and photography that best showcases the beauty of our rescued dogs.
- ♥ Thanks to Linda Carter, our board member who is also the real-life wonder woman, who shared Roxie's story in the Livonia area.
- ♥ Thanks to Roxie's Family for giving her a true home!



Home Sweet Home

of Rochester Emergency Veterinary Services for their care for Bo in his final hour, as well as the compassion they had for us including my younger brother, who is autistic.

About 10 months later, at my brothers urging "Matt, I miss Bo, but you need another dog" I started following a few rescues. The summer went by without any luck. Then, almost exactly a year after saying goodbye to Bo, I found Roxie. The look on her face, her eyes and her expression, I knew that we had to

Here are some words directly from Roxie's family:

Before I give an update on Roxie, I want to share some of my journey that led us to each other.

In July of 2012, my parents and brother and I took a trip to Livingston County animal control. I was tricked into going. There was a beagle mix that I met and we had an immediate connection. Mr. Bojangles came home with us, and I had a new partner. Bo would spend the next 12 years with us on our farm. He was always by my side, even riding along on the tractor when I plowed snow. Bo was growing older and slowing down, but we were all devastated by his sudden loss Labor Day weekend in 2024. We are still grateful to the staff

meet her. My brother Tom, 17, has strong connections with animals. He helps care for our chickens and sheep, which he shows through 4H, and has lots of love for his Sheltie Sadie.

After talking with Megan and learning Roxie's story, I was feeling hopeful, but it would all depend on how the meeting went. When Megan brought Roxie out, her excitement was wonderful to see, and it was matched by my brothers smile. Roxie quickly warmed up to all of us. We took a walk around the sanctuary with Roxie giving a tour. Back in the yard, Roxie was excited to be pet by all of us, and soon Tom and Roxie were rolling around giving hugs. The connections were established and the decision was obvious!

There was a learning curve for all of us the first couple of weeks. A few items got chewed on, like my slippers and a board game box. We had lots of laughs. Roxie likes to sit on the kitchen counter and look out the window. She has managed to get on the kitchen table to get at a box of milk bones I had left out. So far, everyone that Roxie has met has had a positive experience, including many neighbors, friends and family, and quite a few canine friends.



Roxie's first ride on the gator with Dad and Grandma.



Walking with her Daddy. Her kong continues to be one of her favorite toys.

All of us have settled into a nice routine. My mom lets her out a couple times during the day while I am teaching. When I get home, I am greeted with a hug! Roxie will get up on the couch and put her paws on my shoulders. Then we take a walk around the yard and the farm (just under a mile). After our walk, Roxie and I will usually head back to the farm and find some project to do. Tom will walk Roxie for me while I feed the farm animals. Dinner is usually next store at my parents house, where Roxie and Sadie will play and my dad won't let her leave without saying good night to her. Everywhere she goes, she brings a toy along with her.

Roxie will accompany me to the fire hall when I have paperwork to do. The ambulance crews enjoy seeing her and one medic in particular spoils her with treats. Roxie enjoys going for rides, but she is not a fan of the 1951 Ford. We enjoy playing fetch and finding treats. Roxie has come to understand when my fire pager goes off and I tell her I have to leave, that she needs to stay in the living room while I head out to the hall.

Walks, hikes, games, rides and cuddles. We couldn't be happier!

Tommy says "thank you for Roxie!"



A WORD FROM OUR SUPPORTERS

CCLS is blessed to have dedicated supporters. Donors are behind every kind act we've ever been able to do for an animal. Every veterinary appointment, every bowl of food, every toy, all the construction projects, the comfortable living environments and the amazing adoptions have happened because of them. If you love animals and our work, considering joining our donor family! Here are words from some of our supporters. We are deeply grateful to every person who has ever done something to help our sanctuary.

Brenda Springer/The Springer Family Olean, NY:

"I have known Megan for a long time. When I heard she was opening Celebration of Canine Lives Sanctuary I was so excited and couldn't wait to support her in this endeavor. After visiting the sanctuary numerous times, I can say that what Megan has done is amazing. The homeless dogs that she has taken in are so well cared for. They are given love, training, and are treated like they belong. When these dogs are ready to find their forever homes, Megan makes sure they are a perfect fit for the family they are going to so they will have a loving home for the rest of their lives. We are so lucky that Megan has chosen this area to have her sanctuary."

Suzanne Wise, Dunkirk, NY:

"I first learned about CCLS from mutual friends I know through Northern Chautauqua Canine Rescue. One friend shared some of Megan's posts and I later did the same. I learned Megan had once volunteered for NCCR. I asked Megan if she is Carol's daughter, a dear friend I know from Dunkirk Schools. She confirmed this, so I knew she must be a very special person like her mom.

The more I got to know Megan, and her dream of creating a sanctuary, the more I wanted to help. I send a monthly pledge, as I do for NCCR. Helping those who help dogs in need is my passion. Megan and her family care deeply for the dogs they take in. They make sure the dogs are placed with wonderful families. I truly look forward to watching CCLS grow."

Susan Burns, Queensbury, NY:

"I'm proud to know Megan and her family personally. I have toured the facility twice, the first being in the planning stages. Watching the progress has been exciting! Beautiful grounds for this sanctuary. Thank you Megan for your efforts to help animals in need."

Joy Sullivan, Olean, NY:

"Hello there! My name is Jazlynn, people call me Joy. I am a proud animal advocate and have been working in the shelter environment for over 3 years...I do hospice care so I practice patience and understanding every day. In my free time, I love volunteering at CCLS to continue to practice those traits and learn new traits. I have learned so much hanging out with Meg and her beautiful family. They have welcomed me with open hands and take great care of the animals. I want to express deeply how safe I feel with them and how safe any animal is that comes into their lives. I learn something new every time I volunteer and I get to enjoy peace and the love of a dog in need of help. No matter the behavior or obstacles the dog faces, Meg is right there to advocate and learn what is best for them. You can trust that they would do nothing but give unconditional care and make sure they live the life they deserve. Once thing I learned while volunteering is loyalty blooms in a relationship from setting them up for



success. Please consider volunteering, donating and/or supporting in any way you can. We can save lives together!"

Kathy Zawicki, Batavia, NY:

I was thoroughly impressed with Megan from the start, and in the nearly two decades we've known each other, my estimation of her has only grown. I still clearly remember the first conversation I had with her: that was when Megan told me her goal in life was to make America a "no kill" country, a place where animal shelters would provide for animals, care for them, and find forever homes for them. From that day forward, I've been touched to see Megan's unwavering commitment to achieving her dream. It's been beyond wonderful to observe the unfailingly dedicated, steadfast, and optimistic work of someone so passionately devoted to such a wonderful goal. By establishing CCLS, she has taken direct action to make a difference in this world. She is to be commended for that, and I've been proud and honored to help support all of Megan's work. It's been great to watch CCLS grow, and know and see that my contributions have gone directly toward helping such an important cause."



WISH LIST:

*Monetary Donations

*Volunteers to help walk and socialize our current rescue(s)

*Businesses willing to accept donation jars

SPECIAL NOTE: Over the past couple years, we have had several supporters do birthday fundraisers for us on Facebook. For the most part, these fundraisers were very successful. They connected the sanctuary to new donors, helped spread the word about our mission and provided much needed funding for our projects. Even if a Facebook fundraiser does not bring in any revenue, we appreciate the effort, and it is an expense-free way to raise money. With over 250 followers, we can only imagine the success if even $\frac{1}{4}$ of our followers set up birthday fundraisers. Please consider us on your birthday...it will make your wishes and our wishes come true!

