

AUGUST 2026

THE PAW[®]

MAGAZINE

Jazmine- Rescued 2017

BACK TO ROUTINE

Helping Pets Thrive Through Life's
Changing Seasons



www.WPP.dog

THE PAW® MAGAZINE

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WOUNDED PAW PROJECT® EXISTS
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ELEVATING ANIMAL WELFARE WITH ACTION

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A WORD FROM THE FOUNDER...

August is a season of transition. Summer vacations come to an end, children head back to school, and our daily schedules begin to settle into a familiar rhythm. While these changes are part of life for us, they can feel confusing for our pets—especially rescue dogs who find comfort in consistency. At Wounded Paw Project®, we've seen firsthand how routines help build trust, reduce anxiety, and remind dogs that they are finally safe.

In this month's issue, we're sharing practical ways to help your pet adjust to changing routines, taking you behind the scenes of our annual wellness day for our sanctuary dogs at Dominion Valley Animal Hospital, and honoring the dogs who continue to inspire us on Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day. We hope these stories encourage you to embrace the new season with patience, compassion, and the simple routines that help pets and families thrive together.

With gratitude and determination,
Ernesto P. Hernandez III
Founder of Wounded Paw Project®



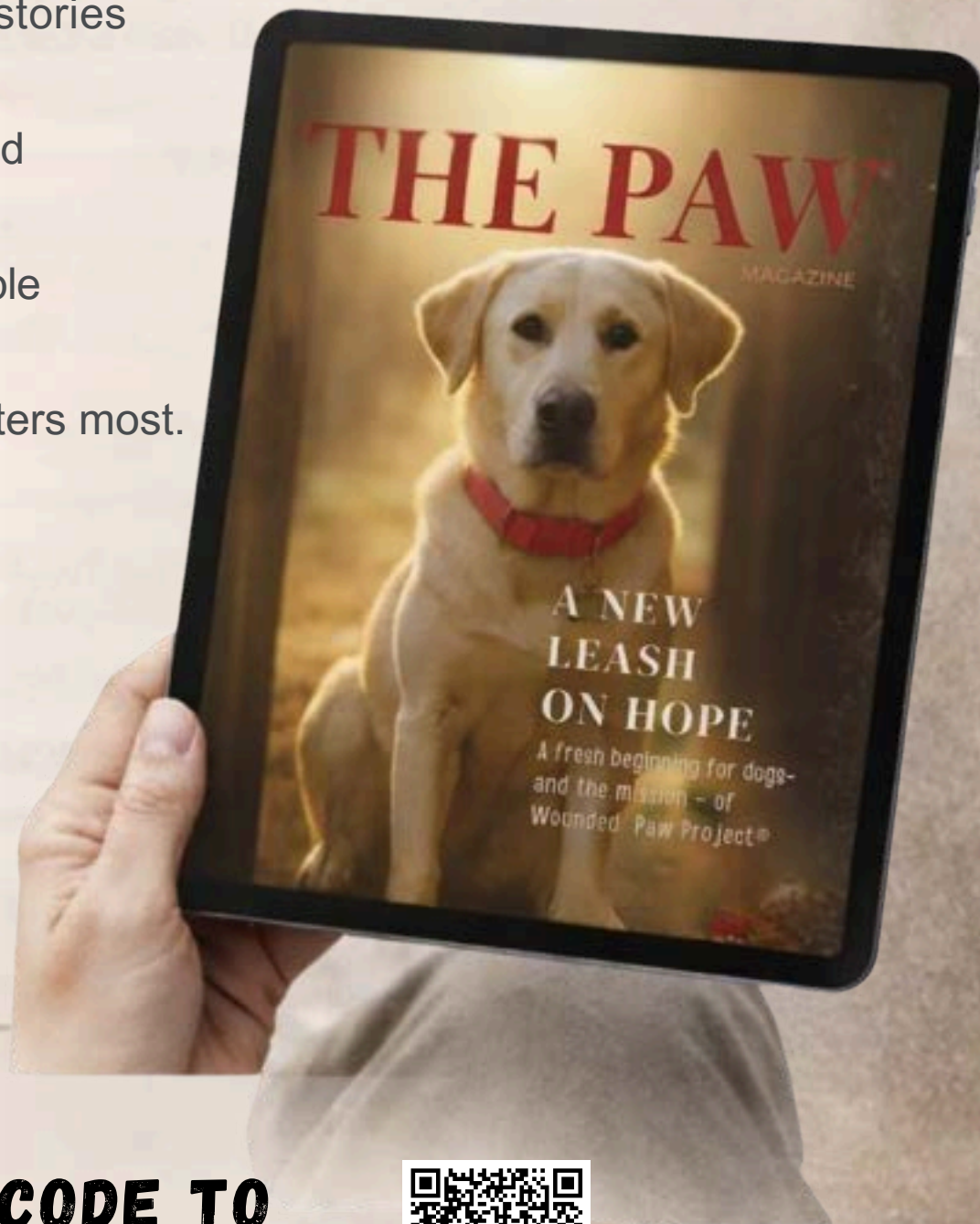
Kane - Rescued 2018

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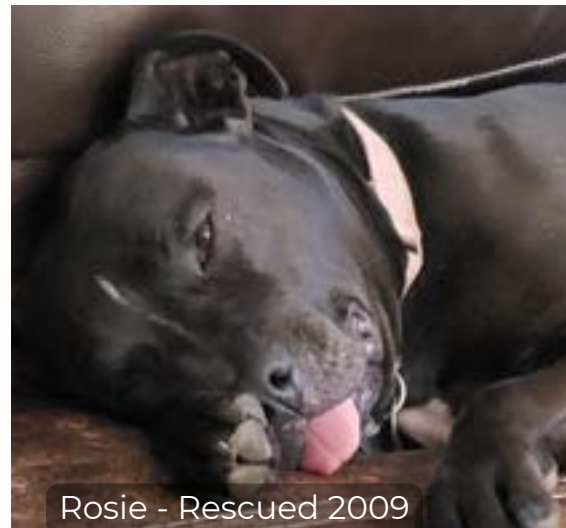




Sadie - Rescued 2016



Jazmine - Rescued 2017



Rosie - Rescued 2009

FROM SUMMER ADVENTURES TO FALL ROUTINES

HOW TO HELP YOUR PET TRANSITION BACK TO EVERYDAY LIFE

The lazy days of summer don't last forever. For many families, August is a month of transition. Vacations come to

an end. Children head back to school. Work schedules return to normal. Even the evenings begin to feel a little shorter.

A photograph of four dogs sitting in the back of a car. A large black and white speckled dog sits in the center, looking out the window. To its right, a tan dog with a black collar and a pink tag lies down, looking at the camera with its tongue out. In the foreground, a small white dog with floppy ears looks at the camera. To the left, another small white dog is partially visible. The car's interior and a window looking out onto a green landscape are in the background.

Sadie - Rescued 2016

Jazmine - Rescued 2017

Bella - Rescued 2019

Millie - Rescued 2017

While these changes are part of life for us, they can be confusing for our dogs. During the summer, your dog may have become accustomed to extra walks, backyard games, family road trips, camping adventures, afternoons spent lounging on the deck, or simply having everyone home more

often. Then, almost overnight, the house becomes quieter. Cars leave the driveway each morning. The children disappear for the day. The excitement of summer gives way to the predictable pace of everyday life.

Dogs don't understand

why the routine has changed.

They only know that it has.

Fortunately, a little preparation can make the transition easier.

By slowly reintroducing structure and maintaining consistency, you can help your dog feel secure, confident, and

ready for the season ahead.

Dogs Thrive on Routine

Dogs don't read calendars.

They don't know when summer vacation ends or when school starts. Instead, they pay attention to patterns.



They notice what time breakfast is served.

They know when the leash usually comes out.

They recognize the sound of the school bus, the garage door, or your car pulling into the driveway.

Routine gives dogs confidence because it helps them predict what comes next. When those routines suddenly disappear, some dogs become confused or anxious.

This is especially true for rescue dogs.

Many rescue dogs have experienced instability before finding their forever home. Consistent daily routines help build

trust by showing them that good things happen regularly and that they can depend on the people who love them.

Returning to Work After Summer

If you've spent extra time at home this summer—whether because of vacations, remote work, or simply taking time off—your dog has probably enjoyed every minute of it.

Going from constant companionship to spending eight or more hours alone can be a big adjustment.

Rather than making the change overnight, begin practicing several days before

your normal work
schedule resumes.

Leave the house for
thirty minutes.

Then an hour.

Then two.

Gradually increase the
amount of time you're
away so your dog
learns that every
departure is
temporary.

Just as importantly,
avoid making
departures and
arrivals overly
emotional. Calm
goodbyes and quiet
greetings help teach
your dog that coming
and going is simply
part of everyday life.

When the Kids Go Back to School

For many dogs,
summer means having
built-in best friends.

The backyard games.

The afternoon walks.

The endless games of
fetch.

The extra belly rubs.

When school begins,
many dogs spend the
first few days
wandering through the
house looking for the
children who were
there yesterday.

Some wait by the
front window.

Others lie near the
door until everyone
comes home.

This behavior is perfectly normal.

You can help your dog adjust by gradually returning to your school-year routine before classes begin. Wake everyone up earlier, feed breakfast at the usual school-day time, and take morning walks when you expect to during the fall.

Small changes made ahead of time are often easier than one dramatic change overnight.

Replace Summer Fun with New Traditions

One of the biggest mistakes families make is allowing their dog's activity level to

suddenly drop.

Your dog's need for exercise hasn't changed simply because the calendar has.

If long afternoons of playing outside are no longer possible, replace them with smaller, consistent activities.

Take a morning walk before work.

Play fetch after dinner.

Practice obedience while dinner cooks.

Explore a new walking trail on weekends.

A consistent twenty-minute walk every day is often more beneficial than one



long adventure every few weeks.

Watch for Signs of Separation Stress

Some dogs adjust quickly.

Others struggle.

Pay attention during the first few weeks after routines change.

Common signs of stress include:

- Barking or whining after family members leave
- Pacing around the house
- Destructive chewing
- Digging at doors or windows
- House-training accidents
- Loss of appetite

- Following family members constantly when they are home

These behaviors are not acts of revenge.

They're often your dog's way of saying, "I'm having a hard time understanding what's happening."

If your dog struggles, return to shorter periods of separation and increase them gradually while rewarding calm behavior.

Keep Their Mind Busy

Exercise isn't just about burning energy.



Millie - Rescued 2017

Dogs also need opportunities to think, solve problems, and use their natural instincts.

Mental enrichment helps prevent boredom during long school or work days.

Simple ideas include:

- Stuffed food toys
- Frozen enrichment treats
- Snuffle mats
- Scent games
- Puzzle feeders
- Hidden treats around the house
- Rotating toys every week

A dog that spends time solving problems is often calmer and more relaxed than one who simply runs around the yard.





Roxie - Rescued 2024

Back to School Means Back to Training

Summer schedules often become a little more relaxed.

Maybe your dog started jumping on visitors because everyone thought it was cute.

Maybe loose leash walking became less consistent.

Maybe basic commands weren't practiced as often.

August is the perfect time for a refresher.

Keep training sessions short and positive—just five to ten minutes a day.

Review important skills like:

- Sit
- Down
- Stay
- Come
- Leave It
- Loose leash walking
- Waiting politely at doors

Training isn't just about manners.

It's one of the best ways to strengthen the bond between you and your dog while building confidence and trust.

Rescue Dogs Need Routine Most

At Wounded Paw Project®, we've seen firsthand how powerful routine can be.

Many rescue dogs come from situations where life was unpredictable. Meals weren't guaranteed. People came and went. The world didn't always feel safe.

A consistent daily routine helps change that.

Regular meals.

Daily walks.

Predictable quiet time.

Positive training.

Gentle encouragement.

These small moments add up to something much bigger.

They tell a dog that they are safe.

That they are loved.

And that this home is forever.

Every walk, every meal, every bedtime routine becomes another promise kept.

A Season of New Beginnings

As summer fades into fall, life naturally becomes busier.

But even during life's busiest seasons, remember that your dog isn't asking for perfection.

They're asking for consistency.

After all, while seasons may come and go, one thing never changes.

To your dog, every day is made better simply because you're in it.



Daisy - Rescued 2024



SADIE

SAYS

SCHOOL'S BACK. WALK'S ON.

The kids may be headed back to class, but your dog still expects to major in walks, sniffing, and squirrel surveillance. Keeping a regular walking routine helps burn energy, reduces stress, and makes the transition back to school easier for everyone—including your four-legged family member.

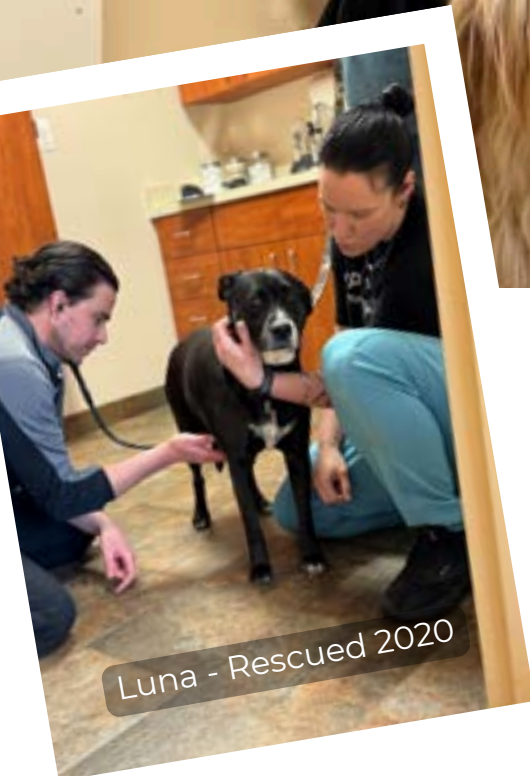
A DAY AT THE VET WITH WOUNDED PAW PROJECT®

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Caring for Our Sanctuary Dogs



Sadie - Rescued 2016

Millie - Rescued 2017



Luna - Rescued 2020

There are ordinary veterinary appointments...and then there's **vet day at Wounded Paw Project®**.

When it's time for our sanctuary dogs to receive their annual wellness exams, we don't simply bring in one or two dogs—we bring **our entire sanctuary family**.

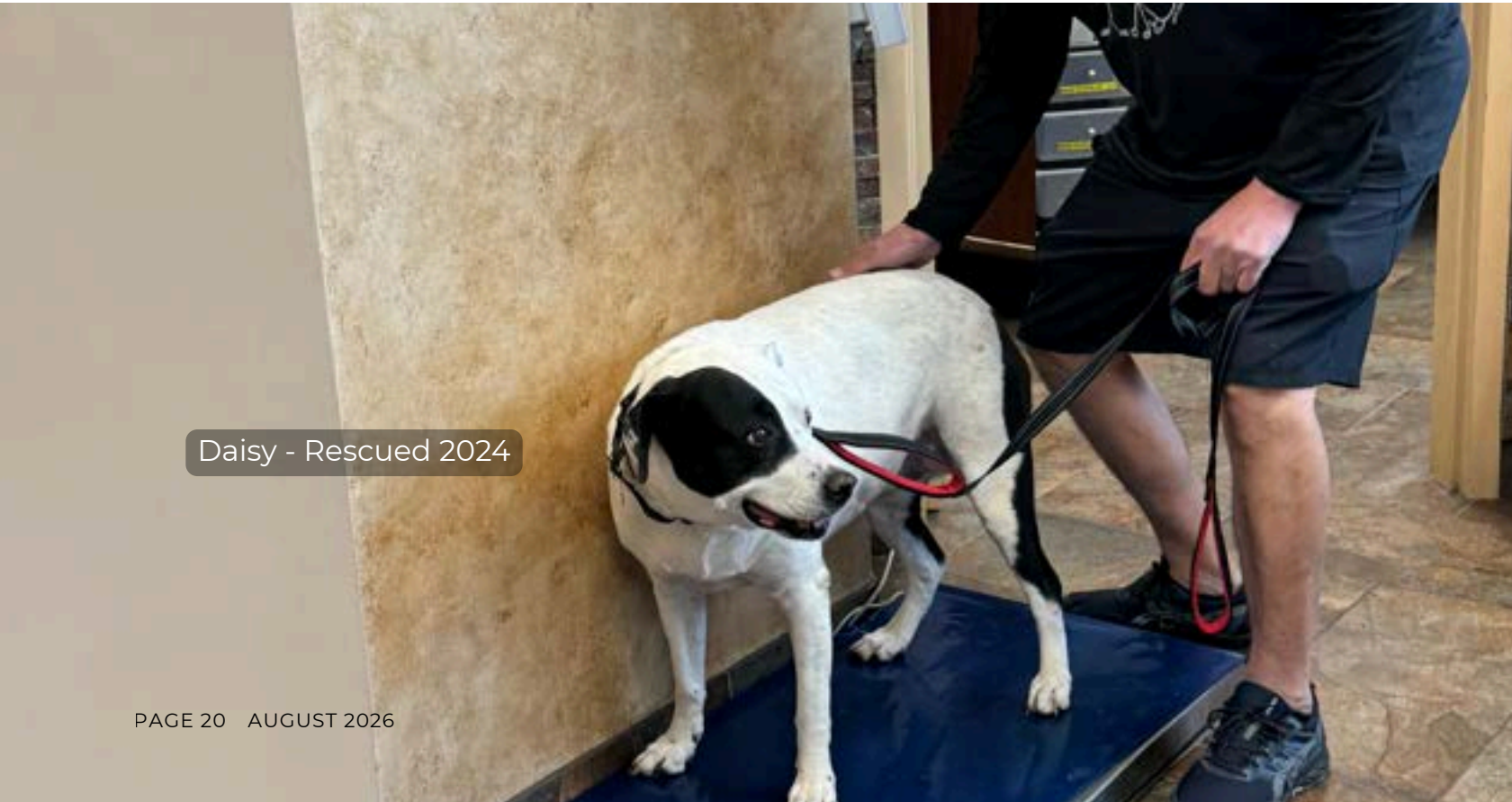
It's a day that takes careful planning, patience, and teamwork. Thankfully, our trusted veterinary partner, **Dominion Valley Animal Hospital** in Gainesville, VA, helps make it possible by reserving the hospital exclusively for Wounded Paw Project® during our appointments. By blocking the schedule so only our sanctuary dogs are being seen, the entire experience is calmer, quieter, and far less stressful for the dogs.

That level of compassion makes an incredible difference.

A Veterinary Visit Designed Around the Dogs

For many dogs, a visit to the veterinarian can be overwhelming. New smells, unfamiliar equipment, and busy waiting rooms can create anxiety, especially for dogs who have experienced difficult beginnings.

By dedicating appointment time exclusively to Wounded Paw Project®, the team at Dominion Valley Animal Hospital creates an environment where our

A black and white dog named Daisy is standing on a blue scale. A person is holding the dog's leash and supporting its back. The dog is looking towards the camera with a slightly open mouth. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Daisy - Rescued 2024



Elvis - Rescued 2022

sanctuary dogs can move through their wellness exams at a comfortable pace, receiving the patience, kindness, and individual attention they deserve.

Watching an entire sanctuary make its way through a veterinary hospital is quite an experience. Every dog has a unique personality—some confidently greet everyone they meet, while others prefer a little extra reassurance. The calm atmosphere allows each dog to be cared for in the way that best meets their individual needs.

A Commitment That Lasts a Lifetime

The dogs who live at our sanctuary aren't simply passing through.

They are home.

Our commitment to them extends far beyond rescue. It includes providing exceptional medical care throughout every stage of their lives.

During each wellness visit, every dog receives a comprehensive examination that may include:

- Complete physical examinations
- Vaccinations and preventive care
- Heartworm and tick-borne disease testing
- Weight and body condition evaluations
- Dental, ear, eye, and skin assessments
- Mobility and joint evaluations
- Medication reviews and follow-up recommendations

These routine visits allow us to identify health concerns early, helping our dogs enjoy long, healthy, and comfortable lives.

Partnerships That Change Lives

Providing lifelong sanctuary is only possible because of dedicated community partners.





Lola - Rescued 2023

The veterinarians, veterinary technicians, assistants, and staff at **Dominion Valley Animal Hospital** consistently provide outstanding care while treating every dog with compassion, patience, and respect. Their willingness to dedicate an entire appointment block to our sanctuary dogs reflects a shared commitment to putting the well-being of animals first.

We are incredibly grateful for their partnership and the

kindness they show our dogs every time we visit.

More Than a Checkup

As the last exams are completed and everyone heads home, there's a sense of relief—and, of course, plenty of well-earned treats.

Days like these are about much more than vaccinations and medical records.

They represent a promise.

A promise that every dog entrusted to Wounded Paw Project® will receive the care they need, the comfort they deserve, and the opportunity to live a healthy, fulfilling life.

Rescue doesn't end when a dog is saved.

It continues through every wellness exam, every preventive treatment, every compassionate partnership, and every moment spent ensuring our sanctuary dogs receive the very best care possible.

Because at Wounded Paw Project®, rescue is more than a single act of compassion—it's a lifelong commitment.



Kane - Rescued 2018



Diva - Rescued 2020

GET YOUR DOG **READY** FOR A *Vet Visit*

A little preparation can
make a big difference.

Here's how you can help!

➔ PREPARE YOUR PUP FOR A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE ➔



1. KNOW THE BASICS

Be ready to share
your dog's:

- Medical history
- Current medications
- Allergies
- Changes in appetite,
behavior, or energy
- Any concerns or
questions



2. PRACTICE MAKES PAW-FECT

Help your dog feel
comfortable with:

- Getting in the car
- Wearing a leash
- Being handled
(ears, paws,
mouth, tail)
- Short training
sessions



3. GET COMFY WITH THE CARRIER

A familiar carrier
can reduce stress.
Make it a happy
place with treats,
toys, and cozy
blankets.



4. EXERCISE BEFORE YOU GO

A good walk or
play session can
help burn off
extra energy and
promote calm
behavior during
the visit.



5. BRING GOOD THINGS

Bring your dog's
favorite treats,
toys, or a blanket
to help them feel
safe and relaxed.



6. PLAN AHEAD

Schedule
appointments
at a time that
works best for
your dog—
less waiting,
less stress.

DON'T FORGET!

- ✓ Current ID tag with up-to-date
contact information
- ✓ Leash (and harness, if used)
- ✓ Medical records (if visiting a
new vet)
- ✓ List of questions or concerns
- ✓ Treats and/or favorite toy

*Your calm, confidence
and routine help
your dog feel safe.*



**TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE
VET VISITS POSITIVE
AND STRESS-FREE!**

➔ SIGNS OF STRESS TO WATCH FOR ➔

- 🐾 Panting or drooling
- 🐾 Trembling or pacing
- 🐾 Tucked tail or pinned ears
- 🐾 Yawning or lip licking
- 🐾 Trying to hide

💡 Let your vet team know—
they're here to help!



WE GIVE THEM A SECOND TAIL IN LIFE.®
LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR MISSION AT WWW.WPP.DOG

BE THE VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS.®

BEYOND THE RAINBOW BRIDGE

Remembering the Dogs Who Changed Our Lives

August 28 is Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day, a day dedicated to honoring the beloved pets who are no longer by our side but whose love continues to shape our lives.

For those of us involved in animal rescue, saying goodbye is one of the hardest parts of the journey. Every rescued dog arrives with a story, and every dog eventually leaves behind a legacy. While we celebrate the countless happy endings, we also carry the memories of the companions who taught us about resilience, forgiveness, unconditional love, and the true meaning of devotion.

At Wounded Paw Project®, Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day holds a special place in our hearts because we remember two remarkable dogs who helped define our mission.

Fur-ever



In Our Hearts



Daisy - Rescued 2008

Daisy: The Dog Who Started It All

Daisy wasn't just a rescue dog. She was a co-founder.

Long before Wounded Paw Project® officially began, Daisy was quietly changing lives. She was there before the deployments, before the injuries, and before the nonprofit had a name. Her gentle spirit and unwavering loyalty helped

inspire a mission that has gone on to rescue countless animals and bring hope to people facing their own struggles.

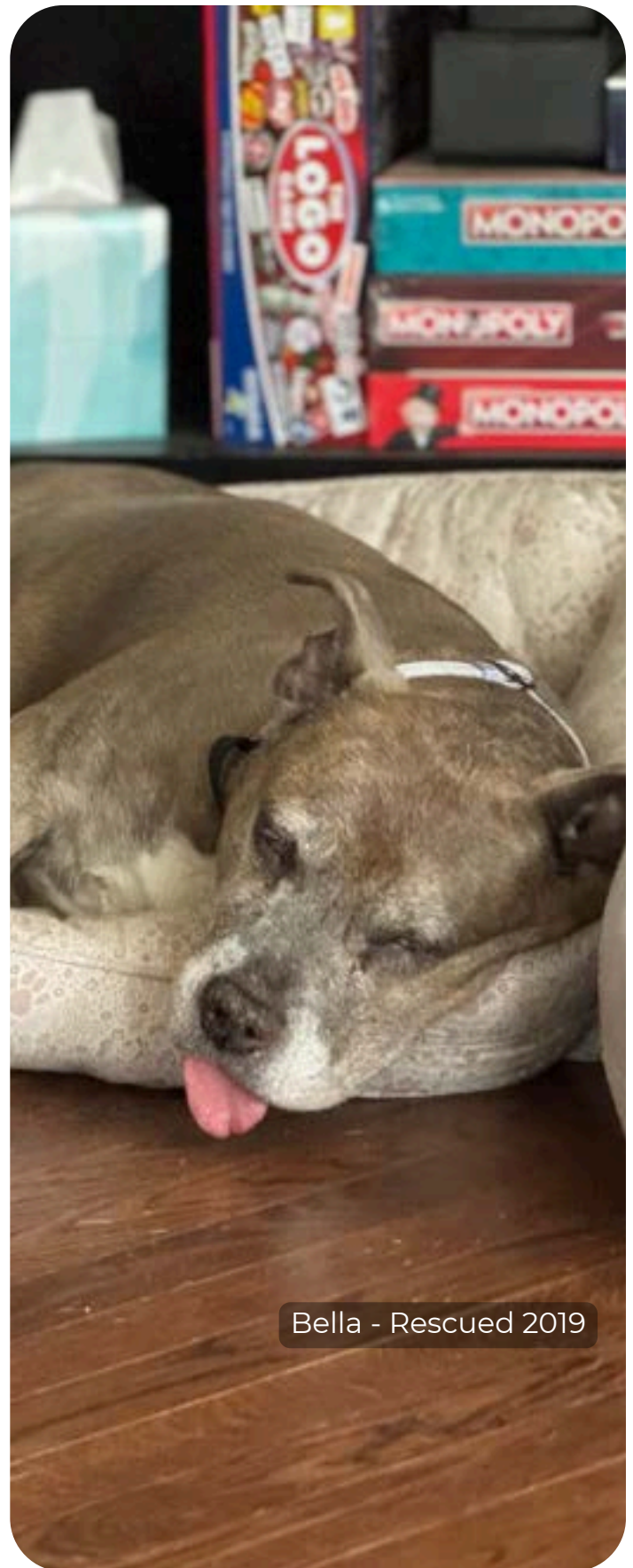
Today, every dog that finds safety through Wounded Paw Project® carries a small part of Daisy's legacy forward.

Bella: A Life Filled With Love

Bella reminded us that every rescued dog deserves more than survival—they deserve to be cherished.

She became part of the Wounded Paw Project® family and, in doing so, reminded us why we continue this work every single day. Her joyful personality, quiet companionship, and unconditional affection touched everyone who knew her.

Although Bella's paws no longer walk beside us, her memory continues to inspire compassion and kindness for every animal still waiting for a second chance.



Bella - Rescued 2019

Love Doesn't End

Anyone who has ever loved a dog understands that grief is simply the price we pay for unconditional love.

The bowls are eventually put away.

The leash hangs quietly by the door.

The favorite bed sits empty.

Yet somehow, their presence never truly leaves us.

The lessons they taught us remain. The routines they created stay with us. And the love they gave continues to influence the way we care for every dog who comes after them.

That is the gift our pets leave behind.

Honoring Their Memory

On this Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day, we invite

you to take a moment to remember the dogs who have forever changed your life. Most importantly, honor their memory by extending that same love to another animal in need. Whether it's adopting, fostering, volunteering, or simply showing kindness to a dog you meet, every act of compassion keeps their legacy alive.

At Wounded Paw Project, we believe every rescued dog deserves a life filled with safety, dignity, and love. That belief was strengthened by dogs like Daisy and Bella, whose lives continue to inspire our mission every day.

Because while their journey on Earth has ended, the paw prints they left on our hearts will remain forever.

"How lucky we are to have loved someone whose memory makes saying goodbye so hard."

***Our mission is stronger
because of partners like
you. Together, we are
creating safer futures for
animals in need.***



This is what a second chance looks like.

The ride that changes everything.



Kane didn't always know what freedom felt like.
He came to Wounded Paw Project from Washington, D.C.,
having survived a life no dog should know.
Today, what you see in the mirror isn't his past-it's his future.
Vehicle donations help make journeys like this possible.
They support rescue, rehabilitation, and the road forward
for dogs like Kane-and the people who walk beside them.
Turn your vehicle into a second chance.
woundedpawproject.org/vehicle-donations

From shelter to riding shotgun.

