The Heart of a Champion

Shannon’s metamorphosis from a woeful, scruffy young cocker who came to CSRNE to the Agility, Flyball and Barn Hunt champion she became is almost unbelievable. We could show you Shannon’s pathetic “before” picture – a droopy dog facing the camera with a hollow look in her eyes, missing large patches of fur, the handiwork of pernicious mange mites – but it’s sad to see.

With support from Donna Gondek and her friends in Glastonbury, CT, Shannon developed into a star athlete and bounced back to life. She went from quietly passing the days in her previous life to “living out loud” as a nationally-recognized Flyball winner with her own fan following.

Gondek has trained dogs to perform in athletic competitions for years so she lived a naturally active lifestyle. When Shannon joined Gondek’s household, she did, too. Says Gondek, “I wanted her to be active to keep Shannon from dwelling on her medical issues. I took her everywhere with me.” Fresh air, hikes, swimming, canine massages and Reiki sessions were part of Shannon’s new regime. It worked. She emerged visibly renewed: healthier and happier.

The final piece fell into place when Shannon accompanied Gondek to Agility competitions. Noting how much Shannon loved playing with a tennis ball between events, Gondek began running her through basic Agility drills. Gondek recalls with amazement, “She did really well. I mean, REALLY well.”

Shannon retired from Agility and Flyball at age 10, and was awarded Master Agility Dog and Flyball Master Champion titles. Three years later, she earned a Master Barn Hunt title, only the sixth cocker in America to achieve this honor. Reflecting on Shannon’s journey, Gondek remarked, “The universe has a funny way of making things right, of making things the way they are supposed to be.”
President’s Message

The word “rescue” is in our name but Cocker Spaniel Rescue of New England’s core mission includes helping pets who are doing well in loving homes, stay right where they are.

A few times every year, I hear from a distraught owner who feels they have no other choice but to surrender their beloved companion. But rather than assume that a pet must be “rehomed,” we look for a solution that works for all; something that can be tried to salvage an important relationship. Providing counseling to address a behavioral issue, recommending a specialist to properly diagnose a health problem, or providing short-term financial assistance can mean that a dog will remain settled.

Recently, Sebastian (photo above) was at risk of losing his family. His owner was reluctantly prepared to surrender him because an unexpected veterinary treatment was beyond her ability to pay. Because of your support of the Joey Fund and CSRNE’s mission, Sebastian got the care he needed without having to lose the support system he counted on. Thank you.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Gerry Foss
President
**All About Buzz**

Sue-Ann Fecteau and her cocker, Deogie, said a final goodbye to their dear family member, Buzz, on Veteran’s Day a year ago. A CSRNE alum, Buzz was 12 years old when he passed and had been with Fecteau since he was a 7-month-old puppy.

She adopted Buzz to be a companion for her cocker, Nifty, but he quickly became Fecteau’s best friend. A red cocker with a keen mind and a mighty personality, Buzz, says Fecteau, “Gave me much more than I gave him.”

In her grief, Fecteau decided to do something for others. She chose to help Cocker Spaniel Rescue of New England because, explains Fecteau, “CSRNE gave me Buzz, the best ‘gift’ I could ever have.”

Fecteau checked our website’s list of needed items (select the “Donate” tab on our home page) and knew that collecting food, bedding, and toys would be a perfect way to honor Buzz’s memory. “Buzz had a lot of friends, both canine and human,” says Fecteau, so this was a natural fit.

She sent a flyer to family and friends far and wide via email and her Facebook page, and word spread quickly. The response was fast and generous: four 33-pound bags of kibble and four new dog beds from a relative’s friend in Kansas; prescription kibble from Buzz’s veterinarian; numerous blankets, cookies, leashes, and thoughtful Petco and Walmart gift certificates.

So much arrived that Fecteau could not squeeze it all in her SUV to deliver to CSRNE but it’s a good problem to have. Fecteau is thrilled that so many people joined her in paying tribute to Buzz. Even better that other dogs benefit, too. “This effort was not about getting recognition for me. This is all about him, it’s all about Buzz.”
When the Show Is Over  
Ella and Lucas

It is apparent from their perfect stance and impeccable manners that Ella, age 8 years, and Lucas, age 11, are well-bred and well-trained. A daughter of Mark Steffen and Randy Price’s highly decorated champion Rudy, a Westminster Dog Show Best of Breed winner, Ella continued a stellar bloodline by producing three litters. Lucas is also related to Rudy but less directly.

Sadly, when their owner Maya Klock, a breeder of champion cockers, suddenly passed away, the dogs were left without a home.

Today, this bonded pair of “retirees” has been given a place to call their own as companions to Nancy and Jim Adams of New Hampshire. Says Nancy, “They won’t have to move again.”

A smitten Nancy confides, “We call them ‘Hum and Strum.’ They don’t leave each other’s side and often sleep bum to bum. They are incredible, and precious.” An equally adoring Jim concurs. “They are so gentle, so polite, and cute as buttons. They just want to belong, to touch you and know that you are there. Ella likes to lay across me -- but only if she’s invited to -- and will stay that way for an extended period. I think she’s hugging me.”

Other than snuggling, how do Ella and Lucas spend their free time? Burning energy playing together in the Adams’ fenced yard. Ella is a fast runner but Lucas keeps pace. These dogs defer to each other in the house but out in the yard, Lucas reveals his competitive spirit. Says Jim, “Although he is three years older, Lucas runs neck and neck with Ella.”

Thank you for your contributions to the breed, Ella and Lucas. Enjoy your retirement!

Lucas, left, and Ella, right – “Want to see our snowdog?”
Home for the Holidays:  
“The Boys” Welcome Miss Daisy

Roberta and Dick Steflik and daughter Liz happily share their Binghampton, NY home with three rescued cockers. Last May, 3-year-old Daisy came home to “the boys,” 10-year-old Gordon and 7-year-old Gradon.

When they reached the final adoption stage, Roberta and Liz drove to Cape Cod to meet Daisy. CSRNE volunteer Rick Hildebrandt cautioned them that Daisy was a fearful girl who tended to be wary of new people. Liz knew just what to do: she stretched out on the grass and patiently waited for Daisy to come to her. After conducting a thorough sniff investigation of Liz, Daisy concluded that she was “friend not foe.”

When it was time to leave, Roberta kept Daisy company in the car’s backseat while Liz drove. Says Roberta, “Daisy rode in a flexible crate but we held paws on the way home.”

Daisy’s transition into her new life and routine has been smooth and easy. “She just wants to be with somebody,” says Roberta. Daisy and the boys get along quite well but she is especially attentive to Gordon, a recent cancer survivor.

Daisy loves to run around the Steflik’s nearly one-acre, fenced yard and accompanies Roberta to the community’s Episcopal church where Roberta plays the organ. While the boys chase tossed balls up and down the church’s center aisle, Daisy runs along the organ’s pedal board, “making her own music,” teases Roberta.

Roberta enjoys watching the three cockers interact with each other. Daisy is their first female so it’s difficult to know if behaviors are gender-related or Daisy-specific. Roberta asks, “The boys have completely yielded to Daisy. Are female cockers always a bit bossy?”
Home is where your dog is...
CSRNE Alumni: new homes, new families, lots of love

Pet Project

According to the most recent statistics (2017) reported by Non Profits Source, 72% of total U.S. charitable giving came from individuals. The “Greatest Generation” (born 1910-1924) gives the most at 88% of total giving, with “Millennials” (born 1980-1994) close behind at 84%. Perhaps because they are still so young, little is available about those in “Generation Z” (born 1995-2012).

Gen Z high school student Mary is leading by example. Rather than accept birthday gifts for herself, Mary asked her friends to give to CSRNE, a nod to CSRNE alumna Coco who recently joined Mary’s family. In the photo at left, Mary and Coco are surrounded by many of the goods Mary collected. Your thoughtful gesture, Mary, is much appreciated. We hope it will inspire others to give, too!

Angie and Maxie are thrilled to be home for the holidays. Dressing up? Not so much.

Pets make a home more lively, and it only takes one person and one dog to make a family.
Thank You!

As we approach the end of another busy year, we want to express our gratitude to all of you who make it possible for us to save, improve, and extend the lives of abandoned and neglected cockers.

Thank you to everyone who supported CSRNE this past year. Thank you to our kind-hearted volunteers, donors, and adopters. Thank you to our devoted network of veterinarians, Animal Control Officers, and foster families who step in to embrace disrupted, frightened, and ill dogs. Working with you, we can continue to serve community members – human and canine – who need our help.

Happy holidays from CSRNE!

Touching Base with Romeo

Look closely at the shadows cast by Romeo and his pal, Mikey, in the accompanying photo (right) and you’ll find a characteristic cocker profile. Adopted by Tom Dahlke in April 2017, CSRNE alumnus Romeo can be difficult to photograph because this boy likes to be on the move.

Dahlke and Romeo live in Maine, in an area that offers convenient access to forested trails. They frequently walk a path that loops around a pond. “Romeo,” says Dahlke, “is so alive and alert when he’s out walking in the woods. He’s doing great, and certainly enjoying his life.”

Dahlke appreciates that 25-pound Romeo, unlike his previous larger cockers, is “small enough to fall asleep in your lap without your arm going to sleep.” It’s easy to imagine this active pair quietly wrapping up a day together, perhaps even drifting off in a cozy chair they share.
“We appreciate your support.
Happy Holidays!” ~ Ted

Seasons Greetings!

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