

OLD DOG HAVEN

HELPING SENIOR DOGS LIVE THEIR GOLDEN YEARS IN LOVING HOMES

www.olddoghaven.org



Final Refuge Dog, Daphne

January 2026

MEET PERMANENT FOSTER DOG, MAGGIE

Maggie, a 12 year old schnauzer poodle or 'schnoodle', came into ODH care after her family could no longer care for her any longer. After a 5 month stint with one of ODH's dedicated temporary fosters, Daria (featured in our July 2025 newsletter), Maggie became Kari and husband Alan's 8th ODH dog in their 10 year foster journey.

Kari and Alan were grateful to welcome Maggie into their home last November, 'We had just said goodbye to an ODH dog, Scooby, and also we knew there is a great need for fosters so we told Judith we were open to another ODH dog.'

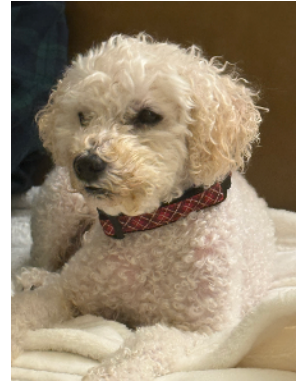
Maggie's intensive care regime was well started when she arrived at Kari and Alan's - Daria had begun visits to a veterinary dermatologist for what Kari describes as 'horrible skin lesions, which made her skin raw, red and weeping.' After biopsy of Maggie's lesions, the dermatologist found Maggie had a variant of cytotoxic dermatitis, an 'erythema multiforme', but not in its "normal" form, as the dermatologist explained, in fact, Maggie had a rarer and more difficult one to treat.

'Maggie was put on a special diet and a routine of daily meds, including antibiotics and steroids, an immune suppressant, as well as medicated baths every other day, and over the months her skin has improved,' writes Kari, 'but Maggie still gets medicated baths twice a week, has twice a week ear flushes, daily pills, ear drops, eye ointment, skin cream over lesions, as well as a special diet for her skin.'

Though the demands of being a foster are great, Kari makes light of it, 'Non bath days don't take much time,' writes Kari, 'it's about a half-hour twice a day. The baths are two stage: bathe and apply medicated shampoo, wrap her in a towel and sit for 10 minutes, then rinse, process takes about a half hour.'

The joy of caring for a stoic old dog makes it all worth it, 'Maggie is so patient and sweet during the process,' writes Kari, 'Day to day, she is an absolute love - she wants to be right next to her people at all times, even under the covers in bed. She's deaf and looks to our ODH dog, Rory, (a shih-tzu) for guidance on when it's time to bark or run to the kitchen, but she is a bit of a princess - she wants what she wants, NOW. She barks to go potty, to get a closed door opened, to ask for a treat, but we do as she says, because she's earned it with everything she's been through.'

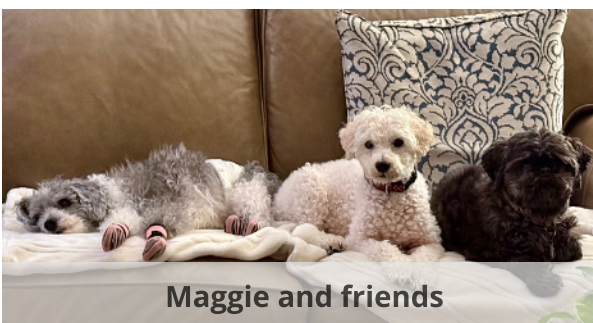
'Her skin condition is chronic, so she'll need lifelong treatment to keep her feeling good, but thanks to ODH, covering as they do all of her treatments, she's a very comfortable and happy girl,' Kari writes, knowing that Maggie has ODH behind her to make sure this will always be the case.



Kari with Maggie and fellow, ODH dog, Finn



Alan with Maggie



Maggie and friends

IN THIS ISSUE



1 Permanent Foster Dog, Maggie



2 Featured Foster, Cheri



3 A message from the Executive Director & '10 Questions' for Petunia



4 Spotlight on Super Volunteer, Erica & Thank you to Transport Volunteers & Save the Date



5 Creating an Emergency backup plan & Thank you to Recent Fundraisers & Adopt a Senior Dog



6 ODH Contacts & Board of Directors & ODH Dog Stats

MEET FEATURED FOSTER, CHERI

BRINGING OLD DOGS COMFORT

Cheri writes about her fostering journey and the ways she has found to bring old dogs comfort.

'Having been an Old Dog Haven foster now for almost six years, I have been honored to share the last chapter in the lives of seven special dogs. Caring for these dogs, although filled with all the love that only a dog can give, is nonetheless difficult. There are multiple vet visits, sleepless nights, and boundless worries about each dog. While you work along with ODH, which generously supplies all possible medical needs, as well as support, other needs fall to the foster, such as healing the dog's heart.'

'Finding what will make a dog feel safe and loved is not always as easy as it would seem. For some, a reliable routine, gentle handling with love, and time are all that is needed to mend a broken heart. Others need more. For gregarious **Juno**, a three-legged cattle dog, found alone at a wildlife refuge, it was her daily walks and a chance to greet the neighbors, or sitting outside on her bed while I garden. For little **Ezra**, a Jack Russell taken from his owners for animal neglect, it was sleeping on my bed at night, safely rolled up in the comforter.'



Cheri and her Yorkies



Casa and her beloved HeartBeat Puppy

'But sometimes, that is not enough. One of my dogs, **Casa ahora**, a chocolate lab who had spent years wandering alone, needed more. Although she seemed happy to have a warm, comfortable bed, and regular food, it was clear that Casa had no faith in humankind. And who could blame her? Quiet and stoic, she lifelessly went along with whatever the humans wanted, as if she had given up any hope for more. Nights were filled with restless pacing. Although she was slowly forming an attachment to me, it was not enough.'

'I stumbled on a solution almost by accident. Casa had had multiple mammary tumors, which often indicate she had one, if not more, litters of puppies. When searching online for something that might bring her comfort, I came across the **HeartBeat Puppy**, a stuffed dog with a battery-operated "heart" that sounds and vibrates like a heartbeat. When it first arrived, I excitedly opened it and turned it on. To my dismay, it

sounded horrendously loud, I wasn't sure if I could sleep with it in the bedroom. So, I set it down to see how Casa would react, and went out to the computer to check the return policy.'

'When I returned, however, the deal was sealed. Casa had curled around the stuffed puppy, gently resting her head on it, as if protecting it. She never, ever slept without it again. And, yes, I did get used to the sound. In fact, after Casa's passing, I left it on until the batteries ran down. It was almost as comforting to me as it was to her.'

'**Neville**, a toy poodle, and **Ginny**, a maltipoo, a bonded pair, were my very first ODH dogs. I love getting bonded pairs. They come with a ready-made best friend, so they seem to settle in much quicker. All went on fairly quietly for over three years, until little Ginny's condition worsened, and we were forced to say goodbye to her. After that, Neville was fine as long as I was home. But after even short trips away from the house, I would return to find Neville panting, with his little nose pressed to the crack under the back door. Often, there would be a pool of saliva around the door, and Neville would be foaming at the mouth with anxiety.'



Neville finding comfort with 'Betty White'

'Then I remembered something I had seen several years ago on Instagram. So, I bought a life-size stuffed body from a Halloween shop and a cheap wig online. I dressed it in an old shirt that I had slept in, and the slippers that I wear every morning. The dummy, now dubbed **Betty White**, was then propped up on the couch. I tossed a few tiny treats on the floor to distract the dogs, and left. Several hours later, when I arrived home, no one sat slobbering by the door. Instead, two dogs and the cat were curled up on the couch by Betty White, and one dog lay at her feet.'

'You may think Betty is creepy, and I have to admit, at first, so did I. But after seeing the pets' reaction to her, I've changed my tune. Sadly, Neville has passed on. But oddly, every new dog seems to gravitate to Betty. Maybe she seems safe, and quietly available. **Westley** and **Buttercup**, a recent bonded pair of **Yorkies**, wasted no time settling in with her, just hours after their arrival. So even though Neville is gone, Betty remains - a silent guardian for each dog that finds their way to me. Sometimes, I even let her have the remote.'

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As I look back on 2025, I am amazed and very grateful for all the support Old Dog Haven received throughout the year. This support allowed us to care for close to 300 wonderful old dogs in our network of permanent foster homes, and to provide assistance to owners who are struggling with decisions about how to meet the needs of their dogs as they grow older. So many people give selflessly of their time, resources and love to give senior dogs the very best last chapter possible. I am very fortunate to witness the remarkable transformations that occur when old dogs who are in desperate situations and very poor health, receive the veterinary care and love that they need. To watch frail, scared, and often shut down old dogs blossom into a relaxed, healthy and secure versions of their former selves is a delight. Our ODH Facebook page and many of our emails to our followers, strive to share their

journeys with all of you. I believe it is important for us to share what it looks like when an old dog receives the care they deserve.

Going into 2026, I am hopeful that we are able to help even more old dogs and their families -both those that can no longer care for their pups and those that reach out for guidance. I hope you will read the article in this newsletter that talks about planning ahead for your pets, because that can really help ease the process when owners can no longer care for them.

As always, I am extremely thankful for all of you: those who help us spread the word about senior dogs needing new homes, our dedicated permanent foster homes, the volunteers who give so much time and energy to help these dogs, and our generous donors who share their resources with us so that all of the dogs in our care receive the life-long medical care they need.

May this year be one of kindness and healing. Thank you for loving old dogs!

Deeanne Matz, Executive Director, Old Dog Haven

10 QUESTIONS ABOUT PERMANENT FOSTER DOG, PETUNIA

Valerie answers a few questions about her beloved foster dog, Petunia

Age? 14 years old - her exact birthday - 1 / 1 / 12

How she entered ODH? Her person passed away, and the family couldn't keep her.

Health challenges? Mild heart murmur, chronic ear infections, luxating patella, loose molar & needs dental cleaning, collapsing trachea, came with giardia, iris atrophy, anal sac nodule.

Most endearing quality? She loves hugs and lots of kisses.

Nickname? It should be 'Squeaker'. She squeaks when she's happy, eating, pooping.

Favorite hangout? Petunia loves to hang out on top of the couch where she can see us and anyone coming up the drive.



Priceless Moment? When she finally showed me her stomach, which was a sign she was comfortable. (For pets adapting to a new environment, in the rule of 3's - days, weeks, months - she's on schedule.)

Most fitting name for her autobiography? Lion King! Her mane is impressive and really sticks out after a roll on the couch causing static electricity.

How you felt when you first saw her? You can see in our first picture together, it was love at first sight.

The most important lesson you've learned from her? To not take our time for granted. She's pretty spry now, but it can turn on a dime. So enjoy every day with her.



**Petunia's arrival day -
"Love at first sight"**

SPOTLIGHT ON SUPER VOLUNTEER, ERICA

Volunteers are an essential part of the fabric of Old Dog Haven - inspired by their love for old dogs, they give us their time and expertise in roles, including transport volunteer, community outreach and special events person, fundraiser and thank you card writer.

We appreciate all our volunteers, but some have the time and desire to take on multiple roles and become a 'super volunteer'. Erica Farnsworth is one such person. First volunteering in late 2023, Erica acknowledges she has not been involved that long compared to many, but in this relatively short time, Erica has packed in a lot, working in transport, thank you cards and special events.

Erica had an unusual journey to becoming a volunteer for Old Dog Haven - she spent the first sixteen years of her career as a parole officer. Eventually, as a self-confessed "dogaholic", she wanted to focus on where her heart truly lay, which was being with dogs every hour of the day, and so she created her own dog walking business. "I'm a serious Dog mom, and in my adult life I've had four dogs through to old age, all of them adoptions, a Rotweiler, a Great Dane, a Chihuahua and a Pomeranian, Susie. Susie was my heart dog, and I have a tattoo of her, because I didn't want to go through a day without seeing her face."



**Erica's first transport
(New Year's Day, 2024)**



**A Dogaholic's Delight
(Pups on Parade, 2025)**

Erica's passion for old dogs who need a home made the match with Old Dog Haven absolute perfection. "I started with transports," says Erica, "and I still do that occasionally, but with my schedule I found that the 'Thank you Card team' was a great fit." But that wasn't enough for Erica, and last year she got involved with the planning committee for 'Pups on Parade', ODH's annual summer outreach event.

It wasn't just helping with the planning though, there was also her involvement the day itself, "I got up at 4:30 am that day, drove the truck, unloaded, directed the food trucks, ran around the whole day and then was loading when it was all finished." She admits that by the end she was absolutely exhausted and drenched with sweat, but undaunted, she's coming back for more and can't wait for the first planning meeting in February for this year's 'Pups on Parade'.



**More transport joy
with Gabby**

Although not in the situation to become a permanent foster right now, Erica can't wait for retirement so that she can and has already signed herself up. But for now, reflecting on where she is her life with dog walking and volunteering for Old Dog Haven, she 's more than grateful - in fact, she says, "I'm the luckiest person alive."

THANK YOU TO TRANSPORT TEAM

Enormous thanks to our fantastic transport volunteers and their incredibly organized coordinator, April, for managing to transport dogs far and wide, mostly on short notice, and delivering them safely and lovingly to their new homes. We could not take in dogs without their help, it's so appreciated.

Here are April and some members of the transport team:



APRIL



ESTELA



JAMIE



MARY



SCOTT & MARY

SAVE THE DATE

We have three outreach events related to this year's upcoming **Have-A-Heart** campaign at our old friend Paddywack's store, 15407 Main Street #101, Mill Creek, WA 98012. Join us on February **1st, 14th** and **28th**. If you have time we would love you to stop by.

AN EMERGENCY PLAN FOR YOUR DOG

We hear from so many people who don't know what to do with a dog that has been left behind by a friend or family member. For your dog's sake, you should take time to plan ahead for what will happen to your dog in the event of an accident or your own passing, and with flooding and wildfires on the rise, it is wise to have a backup plan for emergencies too.

The first thing is to create a will with Power Of Attorney that names who would be responsible for your dog. Also, make sure to include your vet and their phone number, and pertinent information about your dog - their age, where it was obtained, known medical issues, medications, diet, quirks, if it is good with other dogs, if it has lived with cats - all of these things are important to record.

If you have questions about what is needed from reading this feature, do please reach out to us at: office@olddoghaven.org

THANK YOU TO RECENT FUNDRAISERS!

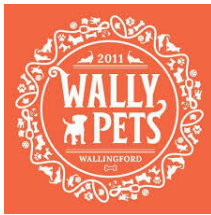


Mud Bay's **Tons of Love** Campaign has wrapped up with Old Dog Haven selected as a recipient of a generous donation from Mud Bay's manufacturer partner, **Tuffy's**, which makes Pure Vita and NutriSource pet food @[nutrisourcepetfoods](https://www.nutrisourcepetfoods.com)



In addition to support through **Mud Bay's** Giving Tree, several of their manufacturing partners are making an additional donation as a percentage of their brand sales during the campaign.

And here are several other companies that we thank for generously raising funds for Old Dog Haven in the last few months:



PATTERSON
CELLARS



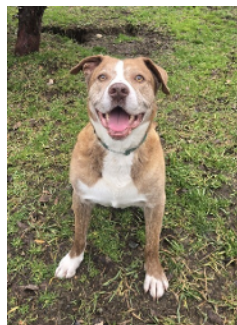
ADOPT A SENIOR DOG!

ODH dogs are permanent fosters, but there are **MANY** more wonderful senior dogs in other organizations and situations waiting for their forever homes!

Here are just a few of those dogs that have been at shelters for some time.

While they have specific needs that make placement more difficult, they certainly deserve loving adoptive homes.

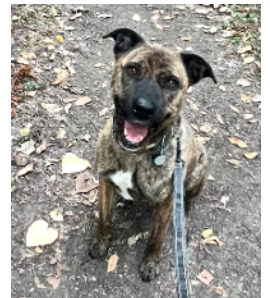
For more information, [visit ODH adoption page](#)



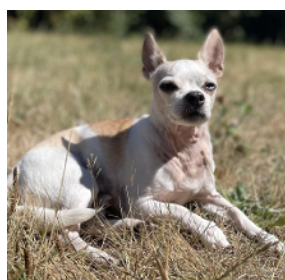
BUDZIE
Wenatchee, WA
[wenatcheehumane.org/adoption](https://www.wenatcheehumane.org/adoption)



MOSES
Wenatchee, WA
[wenatcheehumane.org/adoption](https://www.wenatcheehumane.org/adoption)



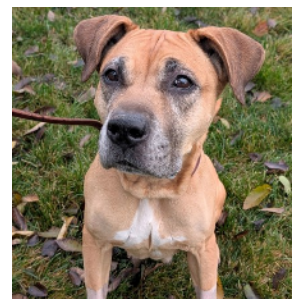
AUGGIE
Portland, OR
referrals@olddoghaven.org



BEANS
Snohomish County, WA
elizabeth@save-a-mutt.org



GROOT
Kennewick, WA
Benton County Canine Shelter, Kennewick



XENA
Wenatchee, WA
[wenatcheehumane.org/adoption](https://www.wenatcheehumane.org/adoption)

ODH CONTACT INFORMATION

Website	www.olddoghaven.org
Phone	(206) 280-7614
Mailing address	P.O. Box 1409, Oak Harbor WA 98277-1409
General issues and volunteer opportunities	office@olddoghaven.org
Inquiries about fostering	office@olddoghaven.org
Help with placing your dog and social media	placement@olddoghaven.org
ODH Instagram	instagram@olddoghaven.org
Corporate giving, fundraisers, PR inquiries, art, and marketing	development@olddoghaven.org
ODH participation at your event and benefits	events@olddoghaven.org
End-of-life decisions and grief counseling	ardethdv@comcast.net
Address changes and donor inquiries	donations@olddoghaven.org
Website questions or issues	ODHWeb@olddoghaven.org
Donation collection containers	outreach@olddoghaven.org

ODH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rita Chan, Kriscinda Hansen, Bob Jensen, Kaitlin Robinson, Judy Pitchford
Deanne Matz, Exec. Director

ODH DOG STATS - TOTAL IN 2025



143 Dogs taken into ODH care , **288** Dogs posted for adoption to help others, **187** Dogs adopted through our posts

HOW YOU CAN HELP

I would love to help. Enclosed please find a donation in the amount of \$ _____

Please make check payable to: **Old Dog Haven**. ODH is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are tax-deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please mail your donation to: Old Dog Haven, P.O. Box 1409, Oak Harbor WA 98277

To donate online,
please go to
<https://olddoghaven.org>

THANK YOU!