



Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue

forever dogs for forever homes

Our Mission

The Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue is dedicated to the rescue of homeless, abandoned, abused, unwanted and neglected German Shepherd Dogs and puppies. We work to rehabilitate each dog physically, medically and emotionally with the goal of placing them in appropriate homes where they can thrive as loving and loyal companions, typical of this noble breed.



Dog pictured above is Chloe, our first rescue.

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MEET THE PRESIDENT

Michelle Delaney combined her lifelong passion for dogs and her 28 year career in the fire service as a Firefighter/EMT into a successful and rewarding business endeavor as the sole owner of Shelzsmide K9s, where she serves as training director, handler, breeder, and professional consultant. Michelle has successfully competed and titled in Conformation, Obedience, Schutzhund and Search and Rescue, and has been training quality family pets for the past 15 years. Michelle is a devoted advocate for animal welfare and is the founder and president of Big Cypress German Shepherd rescue, a not for profit 501(c)3 founded in 2015, where she dedicates an extensive amount of time and personal resources addressing behavioral issues, malnutrition issues and assisting in rehabilitation of dogs so they may be adopted as quality, lifelong companions into their new fur-ever homes. With her unique professional background in public service, she appreciates the value of canine team members. Knowing that all work and no play is a recipe for poor performance, she intuitively guides the training process with discipline and fun, bringing out the best in both human and canine components.

No two working teams are exactly alike in what motivates them to excellence – just as no two home situations are exactly alike in the challenges and relationships that exist. Michelle utilizes multiple training techniques and an extensive knowledge of animal psychology to empower her clients to overcome any behavioral issues and develop harmonious relationships with their canine companions, whether they are working dogs, competition dogs, family pets or rescues dogs. Her ability to communicate with dogs enables her to reliably train, motivate, and achieve consistently high rates of success. Her professional affiliations include evaluator for AKC Canine Good Citizen, ABC-LT2, Pet Care technician (she is also a valued resource for pet care, health, and well-being issues.) She is a member of the National Search and Rescue Association (NASAR) and the North American Police Working Dog Association (NAPWDA). She is a former member of of the Tracking Club of Central Florida, held a Board of Directors position for the Greater Naples Dog Club and as Treasurer for the Peace River Schutzhund Club.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Pets On 3rd Parade

Sunday March 6th, 2022

10:00 AM until 02:00 PM

Location: Pets On Third
(Behind Tommy Bahamas)

3rd Ave South Naples FL
34102



Raise the Woof Spring Fundraiser

Saturday April 2nd, 2022 6:00 PM until 09:00 PM

Location: Allstar Dance Studio

4910 Tamiami Trail N Suite 118 Naples FL 34103



GET INVOLVED

PLEASE VISIT WWW.SAVEAGERMAN SHEPHERD.ORG FOR APPLICATIONS & DONATIONS

Fostering saves lives! If you would like to help us save one of the many German Shepherds needing rescue, please consider opening your home on a temporary basis while we search for their forever home. All expenses are paid for by Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue and the rewards are endless.



If you cannot foster, please consider the many ways you can volunteer. Volunteers with a variety of skills are needed to ensure the success of our rescue. Are you good with animals, people, social media, or general work? Come have fun volunteering with us and help us make a difference.



Many people would like to be involved but are unable to foster or volunteer. Please consider sponsoring one of our rescues or making donations. Donations go directly to medical expenses, boarding fees, food, and supplies for our rescues. All donations are greatly appreciated.



DOG SPOTLIGHT

Say hi to Bandit!

He is available through Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue. He is a ton of fun but will need an experienced German Shepherd family. Bandit has been in boarding for quite some time due to his ongoing behavioral training, but he needs a fresh start and to be given a chance. Life behind bars is not a life. We absolutely adore this dog and will be very selective on his new forever family.

- Weight: 55 Pounds
- Age: 3 Years
- Microchipped: Yes
- Fence Required: Yes
- Housetrained: Yes
- Obedience Training Needed
- Exercise Needs: High
- Breed Experience Needed

If you are interested in Bandit, please complete an application on www.savegermanshepherd.org. He's looking forward to meeting you!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Janis Mlekoday

Vice President, Webmaster, Application Coordinator & Social Media Director

Janis has been social since the second she could talk; making friends and connections wherever she goes. She has always loved animals, has had a long time fascination with technology, and wanted to put her passion to use. By blending these two elements, Janis fell into the world of digital educational technology, teaching students for over 20 years. Janis spends her days connecting, creating, teaching her elementary school students, and dreaming up digital lessons as a public school teacher. Her evenings are spent dedicating her unique skill set to her most recent passion: Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue.

Janis is an avid traveler and adventurer, but loves to be a homebody just as much as the next person. She wholeheartedly believes the magic is in the journey, not the destination. She lives for moments made, connections and conversations had with students, dogs, loved ones and strangers. This is what makes life more vivid and inspiring to her.



TIPS & TRICKS

30 DAY DECOMPRESSION GUIDELINES

By Michelle Delaney

The most important phase dogs go through is the Decompression Phase, also known as the THIRTY DAY DECOMPRESSION. The Decompression stage lasts anywhere from the first day to a few weeks to even, in extreme cases, months.

The Basics

- When bringing your new dog home, give them a brief tour of their primary living area or the places they will be most often.
- Now, it's crate time! It's time to give the dog some time to itself.
- The crate is a tool, not as a prison. Think of it more like their safe place.
- Something to remember is to NOT let the dog out of the crate while they are crying. Do NOT give in as this will only serve to reinforce their crying and barking to be let out of the crate.
- Initially, keep out of crate interactions short, 20-30 minutes, just like time in the crate should be short.
- Increase the time as needed as the days move forward, little by little.
- If this is a new and only dog, you'll likely find that progress will move swiftly!
- Patience is a virtue and you will be handsomely rewarded!
- Use your gut. Some dogs don't get it right away, others take longer.
- Once they are in a routine, seem relaxed and confident, tolerate the crate well, and look to you for guidance, they are probably beginning to feel safe and secure in their new world.
- Patience and consistency with your new dog will reap the greatest rewards!

How Do I Get Started?

Even if you've had your dog a few days and are beginning to notice some issues behaviorally, you can still start fresh.

Some things you want to do and keep in mind with your new adopted rescue dog when you first get them:

1. A tired dog is a happy dog! Exercising your dog(s) regularly and thoroughly will help ensure they relax into their new household a little easier. Without that pent up energy, they've GOT to relax!


2. Do not take them on walks yet. Walks provide an overabundance of stimulation and there are many variables you may encounter that require trust FIRST before subjecting them to those new situations. Instead, exercise your dog in the yard on a long lead (20ft plus) and spend some time getting to know one another

3. Do not take them to pet stores, dog parks, other people's homes, etc. Again, these situations provide an overabundance of stimulation that your dog needs to have the trust built in you for YOU to handle the situation so they don't have to.

4. Keep them leashed to you at ALL times when they are not crated. Yes, even in the house and yes, even if you have a fully fenced yard. Why? It builds the precedence with them that YOU are the bringer of everything in life. Additionally, keeping them leashed to you keeps them from getting in trouble.

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5. Do not allow your new dog and your existing pets a 24/7 free-for-all. Remember, your existing pets don't know this new "intruder" and the new dog doesn't know the routine of the home and what's permissible.

6. Do not allow your new dog furniture privileges. They haven't earned them yet. Create a spot for them to be when they are out lounging around in each room. Furniture privileges can be given later on down the road if you so please.

7. Do not give your new adopted dog unstructured affection. Any and all affection from you must have a purpose. No kissy face or baby talk. I know it is hard, especially when they have likely never had love before but you will not be helping him or yourself if you do this.

8. DO NOT PUT YOUR FACE IN YOUR NEW DOGS FACE. They do not know you and this can be very intimidating for your new adopted dog. They could growl or worse, bite out of fear/anxiety.

9. Do not allow your new dog to "go ahead of you". Establish this rule right away. You go out and in FIRST through the door. In fact, it is a good idea to have them sit before they can enter, before you leash up, etc.



PRODUCT REVIEW



Kong Genius Dog Toy

By Lily McLane-Dalton

This is my favorite dog toy that I have had for 8 years. If you look closely, you can see some teeth marks! I got this toy after I adopted my first German Shepherd Dog who struggled with separation anxiety. This handy toy was one of the best tools for helping him cope and it has now survived 4 dogs over the years. You can hide a variety of treats inside, which your dog must work to retrieve. My favorite is peanut butter (beware of artificial sweeteners) frozen inside to keep your dog occupied for even longer.

Pros:

- Affordable! Currently listed for \$5.94 on Chewy.com
- Durable and no swallowing hazards
- Connects with other Kong Genius toys for a variety of entertainment
- Engages your dog's nose and mind in easy puzzle solving

Cons:

- The sides have started to split; however, this is minimal for its age and does not prevent usage
- You must be diligent about keeping it clean and sometimes larger treats can become stuck

DIY Dog Toy

By Lily McLane-Dalton

For dog owners on a budget or the do-it-yourself crew, you can create your own snuffle board for your canine friend. You can make one for roughly \$10 using a cheap, but durable, shower mat and pieces of felt.

Items:

- Shower mat with holes through it
- Felt sheets / cut into 1" wide by 8 - 10" long strips.
- Scissors

Cut your felt into strips of roughly equal size. It's ok if they are not exact as this will add variety. Starting in one corner, pull the strips through the holes one at a time from the backside of the mat. Be sure to tie them in a sturdy knot with equal portions hanging on the frontside of the mat.

Crisscross the pieces of felt to fill in the mat. When you're done, it should look like an extreme piece of shag carpet. This picture is the project at 50% completion.



Once you're done, lay your snuffle board flat on the ground and randomly hide your dog's favorite treats inside. Having your dog search for the treats will engage his nose and give him a mental challenge to ward off boredom.

HAPPY TAILS



Sweetie (now Zara) is living the dream in one of the ultimate success stories! Zara was a Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue from Miami. Some of you may remember her as the 18 month old girl with severe mange, skin infections, heartworms, and malnourished, along with several other ailments. She had a difficult path to recovery and needed 24/7 care due to her skin condition. Despite everything she had suffered, she was one of the sweetest dogs we have ever fostered. She received an outpouring of support from many of you and it tremendously helped her recover.

Happily, the owner of Grassy Run Ranch / Canine Hemp Solutions fell in love with this sweet girl. He adopted Zara and continued to nurse her back to health. She is now almost fully recovered, with a beautiful coat of fur and healthy weight. She loves her new life living on a ranch and is truly in a German Shepherd's paradise!

Thank you!

A special thank you to Canine Hemp Solutions for their continuous donations and support.



COMMUNITY NEWS

The Debate for New Regulations on Animal Rescues

By Lily McLane-Dalton

Many of us have heard of the tragic event that occurred on February 17, 2022, involving the fatal dog attack in Oakland Park, FL. A 71-year-old volunteer was killed, another volunteer injured, and the dog was euthanized following the attack.

The events that follow may have a huge impact on animal rescue groups and volunteers. The tragedy has sparked controversy from some animal activists, claiming that new regulations need to be established for animal rescues and those activists intend to solicit legislators to prompt changes in the community. Ana Campos, an animal activist, is one of the people leading this charge for change and stated that animal rescue groups are the "wild, wild west" and "need to be regulated."

Others, such as Michele Lazarow, a Hallandale Beach commissioner, oppose the idea of new regulations and state that this situation is too rare to warrant the passing of such regulations.

The passing of Pam Robb was very upsetting and very unfortunate. Pam had at least 8 years of experience rescuing animals and was a true asset to dog rescue efforts. Placing limitations on volunteers will only hurt the animal rescue community and make it more difficult to find, what people like Campos feel are qualified volunteers. We should honor Pam's memory by volunteering more, not less.

Source: Fatal dog attack could spark debate about regulating animal rescue facilities. By Chris Perkins. SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL, FEB 18, 2022

A Message from the Editor

Thank you for joining our newsletter. If you have suggestions or wish to submit an article to be considered in our next newsletter, please email Lily McLane-Dalton at Secretary@saveagermanshepherd.org along with your contact information.

If you would like to become a volunteer or consider one of our adoptable dogs, please visit us at www.saveagermanshepherd.org to submit an application.

We value all of our volunteers, donors, sponsors, and adopters. Thank you for being a part of our community.

