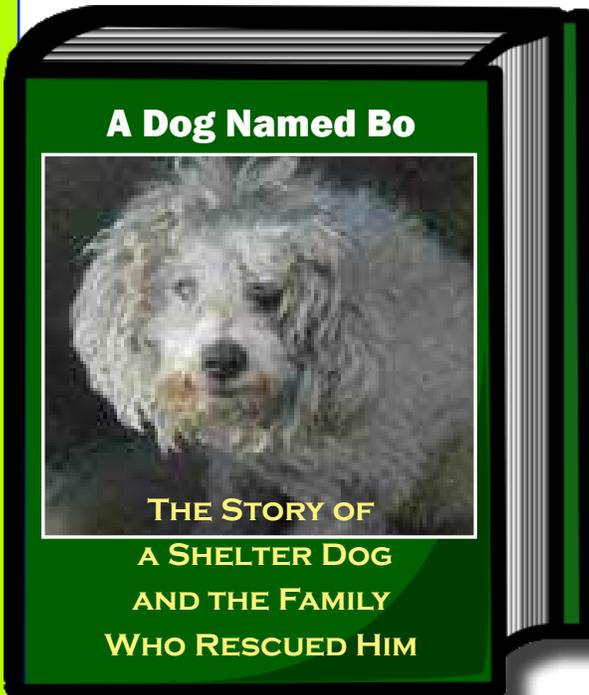


Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover (or even the first few chapters!)

By Joyce Pepper, Adopter and Foster Mom

How old do you think this dog is? Is he slim or overweight? Does he have a family? Is he happy or sad? Those are the types of questions I asked my second grade Brownie Troop as they were learning a very important life skill at our last meeting: Don't judge a book (or any person or creature) by its cover.



They looked at the shelter picture of Bo (see photo on left), a dog they had never met, and chimed in with different answers: "He's 5 years old"; "no older." Some felt he was overweight; all felt he needed a bath. They could see that Bo had no home. Then one girl said "He's nice though." Nice? How do you know I asked? "He just looks nice." YES, they all emphatically agreed he DID look nice. He looked sad - but still they felt certain that he was nice.

I had first seen a photo of Bo on Bichon FurKids' Face Book page. BFK was asking for fosters and posted Bo's picture as an example of a dog who could be helped if there were more foster volunteers. The little guy looked miserable; his matted, dirty coat was secondary to the look of having the weight of the world on his shoulders.

Over the next few days I kept thinking about how much that dog needed a home. I reached out to the BFK Facebook editor to see if anyone had offered to foster him. No, I was told - he was still in desperate need of a family.

(Please turn page to read the happy ending!)

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Don't Judge a Book ...

(Continued from Front Page)

Our family was already approved to foster because of the process we decided on in adopting our first BFK sweetheart, Cruiser. So with the family in agreement, we decided to open our home to this Bo dog for a few weeks -- to give him love, guidance and ultimately to help him to find his forever home. We could do that much, couldn't we?

Bo did not appear to have had any family of consequence before coming to us. As such, manners were an issue. In general, feet are not allowed on our kitchen table, a rule Bo needed to learn. He also acted out around my younger daughter if she was nearby when he was being fed. Bo needed a lot of guidance. We hoped to iron out a few of his rough edges so he would become a good family member in his forever home. At one point I questioned if I had taken on more than I had bargained for. A BFK trainer's suggestions, however, got us on the right track.

Although it wasn't intentional, we couldn't help but compare the adjustment of Bo in our home to Cruiser. Cruiser was easy; Bo was not. But we couldn't

ignore the fact that something incredible was happening! Cruiser, whom we thought enjoyed being an only furkid, absolutely LOVED having Bo in our home! They wrestled and then they snuggled! Bo seemed to provide Cruiser with a different level of companionship than any of us human family members. Conversely, Cruiser was a good role model for Bo.

When it came time to write Bo's bio to post him for adoption, it became evident to our family that we had smoothed out Bo's

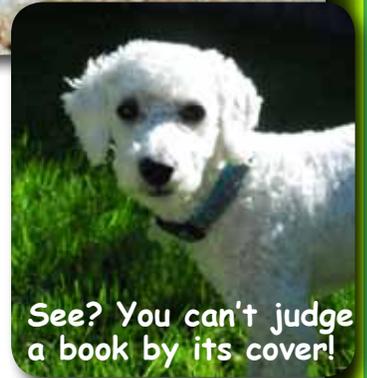
rough edges enough for him to become a wonderful family member in his forever home... Ours! As a result of fostering Bo, we are now a two dog household. We are fortunate that we can write new chapters in Bo's story.

Back to the Brownie troop. After discussing the dog they saw in the photo, my daughter then left the room and returned with Bo (who had been waiting patiently in another room.) The Brownies were incredulous that it was the same dog. "Really, that's HIM?? He's looks so different - and he is so skinny." Yes Bo is skinny, and playful and young, barely a year old according to the vet. Bo definitely didn't look like any of these things in his previous incarnation -- but he has been with us for over a month and his light is peeking through. Sometimes a bit anxious around children, meeting six of them all at once was an adventure for Bo. But with assurance and guidance he managed it well, and napped soundly after they left.

And, his eyes, well that's what captured us too! He is our sweet boy - and Cruiser's best friend.



Bo, left, with best friend Cruiser



See? You can't judge a book by its cover!

BFFs 4 ever!



And they all lived happily ever after. The End.

I Blame it on My Mother

By Melodie McArdle

I blame it on my mother! She would rescue all sorts of animals in need, from abandoned baby robins, stray cats, to our first abandoned dog! She taught us at an early age that every creature deserves to be loved! This is the story of how I adopted four bichons in need of a loving home!

I first adopted Minkie after a tragic ending to my first bichon left me heartbroken. My loving husband did not want another dog. After five long winter months where I would come home to an empty house, with my husband often gone on business trips abroad, he finally relented saying he loved me too much to see me so sad! I went online the next day, saw Minkie on the Bichon FurKids website, and applied to adopt her. She was found on the streets of San Diego. Her face looked so much like my previous dog, Missy. We got approved and thus began my journey.



Well, we live in Canada and Minkie was in Southern California! So my husband said, "Lets go have an adventure!" We flew to San Diego, rented a van, met Marti of Bichon FurKids and Minkie (then named Trinity), walked Minkie around a park, and then literally started our drive back home to Calgary, Alberta. Minkie was a fabulous traveller and adapted to our home like a pro! She is so smart but did have some issues to deal with. She attacked my sister's dog, and I couldn't touch her tail without her biting me. Over the next six months I gained her trust, and nowadays I can grab her tail with no problems!

After a while we noticed Minkie needed some company, so we searched again, this time targeting puppy mill mothers that had been rescued. I found Pollie, but to my dismay she was spoken for, so I searched again and found Candie, who had been one of over 30 dogs from one puppy mill! She was of no more use to the puppy mill at 3-1/2 years old! No longer able to produce babies, she was going to be either shot or starved to death. Luckily other rescue organizations dashed out and saved these dogs in one day! We set up a time and day to have Candie flown to Seattle because that agency could not fly her over the border.

Then I received an email saying that Pollie was available again. To my surprise, my husband said, "Well, what's three dogs if you're ready to have two?" So, I said yes to Pollie and worked it so she was flown to Seattle at the same time as Candie. Next stop: Seattle. I picked Pollie up, but Candie had missed her flight! So Pollie and I found a hotel that took pets and started to acquaint ourselves. The next day Pollie and I picked up Candie at the airport and drove to Spokane, where we met my husband, who had driven down from Calgary with Minkie. We returned my car and all drove home.

Back home, we found out that Minkie was to be the queen boss and soon enough they all assumed their own roles and became a family! What we didn't count on was the extent of Pollie's distrust of everyone. It took us six months of cornering her to put her leash on, teaching her how to walk on it, and feeding her away from us. Neither Candie nor Pollie knew what toys were for, were terrified of loud noises, and had trouble at first with doors and stairs. It was a daily task of gaining their trust. I also had trouble getting Candie to eat before I realized she needed



I Blame it on My Mother (continued from previous page)

very soft food, as she only seemed to know how to lick food as if it came out of a tube! I kept wondering what I had gotten myself into and whether they would ever be normal dogs! After about six months, Pollie finally accepted us, but even to this day she will not come to me right away if she thinks something's fishy!



Two and a half years after we adopted these girls, I got myself into trouble again, by offering to foster a stray boy dog - part poodle, part bichon - from Bakersfield, California. After travelling for three days in a crate, he arrived sneezing nonstop, severely dehydrated, with diarrhea! He also was very angry and ready to bite anyone's hand off! I had not dealt with a dog with this much attitude before! After about a month, all

his symptoms disappeared and he settled down, and I realized it was all caused by stress! Then it was Christmas, and Buddie was making himself at home. We were falling in love with him, and he adored us with his big brown eyes! So, we decided to keep him in our family - his Christmas present! As it turns out, he is a perfect companion for our Minkie! They complement each other and he has brightened up her life tremendously! They are the two trouble makers of the group and it's hilarious to see them work off of each other! They take one look at each other, bark, and race down the stairs to the back door to chase squirrels or watch for deer that walk by at night!

All of our dogs have distinct personalities and have become their own little gang! Pollie has turned into the sweetest little girl who just adores being on your lap getting cuddles! Candie has come so far out of her shell and now is playing with Pollie, racing around like a madman! Buddie is now the cutest darling with the most personality I've ever seen in a dog! He now comes for cuddles and massages, whereas before he would growl if you touched him! Minkie is still the queen boss but is even more lively than ever before! I believe it is from having the whole gang together that the personalities have developed so quickly, but mostly from having Buddie teach them to speak, how to play hide and seek with their "bones," and how to race to the back door to see if the squirrels are out! Before him, I had mild-mannered girls!! Now they are the playful dogs they were supposed to be! Pollie has shown the most improvement. She is very social now and goes off to greet anyone or almost any dog! It is truly amazing to see the great strides they have made! With these precious, scared little dogs we found that only loving kindness worked as a training method. Any other method just put the fear back into their lives and took a step backwards in their trust issues.

So that is the story of how I adopted four dogs needing a home! The whole neighborhood knows the people with the four dogs. We always get asked if they are all related, as they all look similar, so I take time to tell people where to find adoptable dogs, as there are thousands looking for homes just like my four were! Quite a few people have actually taken my advice and adopted so I am glad to have helped a few more bichons!



BFK Goings-On



It is our pleasure to again participate in the original and world's largest, consumer Pet Expo: **America's Family Pet Expo at the Orange County Fair & Event Center**. For five years, Bichon FurKids has had a booth at America's Family Pet Expo and we feel it is a "must-attend" event for our organization. The purpose of event is to promote responsible pet care among current and future generations of animal lovers, so what better place to promote our rescue efforts.

This year's event will begin on **Thursday, April 18th** for setup at the Orange County Fair Grounds. The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, April 18, 2013	Setup
Friday, April 19, 2013	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 20, 2013	10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 21, 2013	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

As a volunteer, you get free admission to the Expo when you show your Exhibitor's badge. Parking is \$5 a day, or let us know when you sign up to help and we can get you a 3-day pass for \$9.

We need your help. Can you volunteer for 2 to 3 hours on any of the three show days or can you assist with the set up on Thursday? We maintain a minimum of 3 volunteers in our booth at all times. **Primarily we will be recruiting fosters and other volunteers for BFK.** We will also be promoting bichons and our rescue efforts and looking for potential adopters and supporters. We want to showcase our beloved breed, so personal FurKids are welcome, space permitting once we know how many adoptable dogs will be there.

To volunteer, please contact Jackie at jackie@bichonfurkids.org.

Sit.Stay.Play. At the BFK Fundraiser

Join us for a delicious meal at the Lazy Dog Cafe on the date below, and 15% of your meal bill will be donated to Bichon FurKids Rescue if you present the special flyer that can be downloaded from <http://www.bichonfurkids.org/events>. Click the **Lazy Dog Cafe Fundraiser** link. The Lazy Dog has something for everyone and provides a lovely outdoor dining patio where you can eat with your FurKids - weather permitting!

Tuesday, April 23
Dine-in and Take-out, All Day (11:00am - 12:00am)
The Lazy Dog Cafe 13290 Jamboree Road Irvine (714) 731-9700

Yard Sale Fundraiser for Bichon FurKids

Spring Cleaning time means funds for Bichons! Come shop our yard sale and find good stuff at great prices - and help BFK in our mission to rescue and rehome FurKids.



Saturday, April 13
7 a.m. to 1 p.m.
910 Wrangler Court
Bonita, CA 9190





**Mark your calendars for Saturday,
May 18th, 2013, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.!**

And join us for the Spring 2013 Bichon Bash.

The Bichon Bash is our most exciting and fun-filled event. Last spring we hosted nearly 300 guests with their FurKids. And, at that and every other Bash, we always ask the question: Who has more fun? The FurKids or their Moms and Dads?

In 2006, Marti Colwell, our CEO and Founder, decided to rescue and rehome one bichon. That one bichon was the beginning of Bichon FurKids Rescue. Today in our seventh year we continue to identify abandoned, neglected, and sometimes abused bichons, those surrendered by their families and those who become part of the shelter system. And despite the efforts of Bichon FurKids and other rescue groups there is still no end in sight.

This year we are on a mission - and a very special mission it is! We are going to rescue and adopt FurKid #2000! As of March of this year we are nearing 1960 bichons rescued - so our 2000th bichon is not far away.

We hope you will join us as we commemorate the rescue and adoption of FurKid #2000. We will have a special recognition for this special FurKid and his or her Forever Family.

Join us as we observe this milestone and look back over the years, and on the beautiful FurKid faces that have brought us together on this amazing journey.

Invitations have already gone out - so if you did not receive yours, please email info@bichonfurkids.org. Simply put "Bichon Bash invitation" in the subject line and a Socializr invitation will be sent to you immediately. You may also visit our website at www.bichonfurkids.org for more information. Over the next few weeks we will be posting information on both our website and in the April newsletter. Please circle your calendars for May 18th and respond to our invitation. We can't wait to see you, greet you, fuss over your FurKid and, hopefully, be able to 'crown' Bichon FurKid 2000 at the Bichon Bash!

Let's get some Bichon FurKids Gear!

Have you been wondering where your fellow BFK Volunteers are getting their cute BFK items? Now you know. You can go to our Queensboro Store and check out all the great items that we can customize.

<http://www.bichonfurkids.qbstores.com>

If there is an apparel item that you want and don't see offered, let us know and we can add it to our storefront.

Email Julie at: Julie@bichonfurkids.org.

