Bichon Bits & Bytes
September 2018 Bichon FurKids Rescue

# A Small Miracle Named Chipper

By Virginia Sankey

*Editor's Note: On December 28, 2017, we put out a plea on social media: "We just rescued an emaciated five month old puppy who only weighs 2.8 lbs. He looks a lot bigger than he is but he's skin and bones. We've named him Chipper because he is so upbeat and sweet. We believe he may have diabetes. If the tests confirm that, little "Chipper" will need someone to give him shots twice a day, possibly for his entire life. We know that's a tall order -- and we also feel that this little guy is worth saving. We believe that there is someone in our amazing community who will be able to help Chipper -- and in return will get all the love and fun this little pup has to offer. "*

*Accompanying our message was a photo of a tiny, tiny little 'moppet' with a spark that was undeniable. His hair had never been cut and beneath the puff of hair he was only bones. The Sankey family, who have fostered many furkids over the years, saw our request and immediately knew they wanted to step up. Despite a house full of holiday guests, including other dogs, they believed that they were meant be Chipper's foster family- in part because two of their family members who were visiting over the holidays, had been diabetics for decades.*

On December 30, 2017 we joined Marti at Stonecreek Animal Hospital to pick up Chipper. Chipper had been relinquished to a shelter a few weeks earlier and had been in rapidly declining health.

Once BFK decided that helping Chipper was a mandate, he was taken to Stonecreek where tests showed that Chipper had diabetes, a situation that had not been treated since his birth.

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## Fosters Needed

To get a Foster Application, please go to the BFK website at: http://www.bichonfurkids.org/volunteer

**Donate to BFK**

Shop at Amazon.com, and a portion of your purchase will be automatically donated to BFK.

amazon.com

Use GoodSearch.com, powered by Yahoo! whenever you search the Internet, and a portion of your purchase will be automatically donated to BFK. Make sure to specify BFK as your Cause!

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## *A Small Miracle Named Chipper, continued...*

We wanted to meet with Dr. Glass personally to receive detailed instructions. I recall a daunting laundry list of medical concerns. Besides having out of control blood glucose levels, Chipper was severely anemic and had a 'raging' bladder infection. His triglycerides were 'off the charts' and was on a special diet.

**Chipper after his initial haircut to remove all the matted fur**

When I picked up Chipper, I could truly feel every rib. And then there was the need to give this tiny little being his shots! When it came time to deliver his first injection, Mariah, my 21 year old niece, a diabetic for more than half of her life, delivered his first injection, while our family gathered around for support. It was hard to find a place to inject the needle as he was so very thin and tiny. He was also so very sick that we worried that Chipper might not survive the weekend.

Chipper slept the first night on my teenage son's chest. When he made noise, he did not bark, it sounded instead like a faint 'meow'". All of us lavished Chipper with love, food, rest, meds, attention and prayers. For good measure we brought him to our church and had him blessed!

**Frail little Chipper with foster mom Virginia Sankey on his first day with the Sankey family**

There was nothing Chipper needed that he was not going to get from our family and the family of BFK volunteers that were there for him.

But survive he did. From the beginning, Chipper displayed an amazing personality and spunk. He charmed everyone he met and everyone fell in love with him. Because he was so tiny and fragile, like a little bird, I bought a sling to carry him around like a baby (keeping him safe), and a tiny sweater to keep him warm.

From the beginning, it was obvious that Chipper craved interaction with people. We kept him close to us as much as we could. Chipper's 'village' included the Sankeys' own teenagers, their family who was visiting from out of town, their own four pups, and a multitude of family and friends who all lavished Chipper with love and attention. And Chipper relished all of it!

**Chipper in his protective sling, with foster mom Virginia Sankey**

Of special note was Aunt Rose, visiting for a month from Alaska. Aunt Rose has been a diabetic for over 40 years; she doted on Chipper and was very attentive to his diabetes, which was still in the process of getting under control.

From the beginning, Chipper needed weekly visits to our vets at Stonecreek for rechecks and more testing. Because the Sankeys live in San Diego, a team of wonderful volunteers was assembled to 'relay' Chipper from San Diego to San Clemente, then from from San Clemente to Irvine, and back. This team of 4-6 volunteer drivers became known as the "Chipper Express". Due to Chipper's strict insulin shot

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schedule, the driving invariably involved rush hour traffic. But no one ever complained!! Every driver raved about Chipper and asked to drive him again in the future. Mona, our Transportation Coordinator recalled, "In all of my years of coordinating transports for BFK, I have never encountered a dog that had every single volunteer driver asking me if they could please drive the dog again."

**Chipper in his tiny sweater soon after arriving at the Sankeys**

As the weeks went on, Chipper began to stabilize. We were devastated, and cried, when he was strong enough to be shaved down at the groomers. Due to his matted hair having never been groomed there was no hair to cover up his frail body. But Chipper slowly, and surely, began to gain weight. We felt victorious when he reached four pounds - and then five pounds.! After switching to a different insulin that was more effective for him, Chipper began to thrive.

By the end of February, Chipper had grown to seven pounds and his hair was growing back into a lush, soft coat. And best of all, he started acting like the puppy he was meant to be! Chipper enjoyed romping, playing, and running full speed with his foster doggy brothers and sisters, and 'getting into trouble' including chewing on anything in sight. He found his voice and could bark like a real dog! We were all delighted!

**Chipper looking like a happy, healthy dog**

**The Facebook plea to help Chipper**

During this time, we had planned a long weekend away in mid-February and needed a substitute foster family for Chipper during that time. Again, BFK put out a plea on social media for a temporary foster family who would be willing to give Chipper shots and be attentive to his diabetes. The Belser family immediately came forward, offering to help. Jessica is a vet tech and is very experienced in taking care of dogs with all kinds of medical needs. She completed our foster process, reviewed our guidelines and took Chipper for the long holiday week-end.

**Chipper at the groomer's after his first "big-boy" haircut**

Within hours of having Chipper in their home, the Belser family, including husband Dennis and little daughter Caylee, had fallen in love. We had left for a long weekend in Big Bear and were still on our way driving up the mountain just a few hours later, when they started texting us about how they had already fallen in love with Chipper, and felt like maybe he needed to be an addition to their family! We could not have been more thrilled!

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## *A Small Miracle Named Chipper, continued...*

**Chipper meeting his adoptive mom Jessica Belser for the first time**

And love it was. Caylee, age 3, was his best friend and constant companion. Caylee and Chipper napped together right from the start. Chipper could be a playful, energetic puppy, but as soon as he knew it was nap time, he snuggled right down with her instantly every time. After their weekend of fostering Chipper had ended, the Belsers strongly considered adding Chipper to their family. Finally in mid-March they confirmed what they had known all along-- Chipper was meant to be theirs!!!!

Having completed an adoption application, "Chippy" was able to officially become part of the Belser family. He joined two rescue 'siblings' and continues to be a miracle. Chipper now weighs a whopping 12.4 lbs and is still growing. His diabetes is in excellent control, and he couldn't be more loved. He acts like a silly, crazy, lovable puppy with so much personality! And best of all, the two families who have loved and cared for him from the beginning have become dear friends, frequently spending time together. The Sankeys and Belsers have declared themselves as 'family forever', bonded for life through their love of little Chipper!

**Caylee and Chipper, love at first sight, a love to last forever**

**Chipper with Annie Sankey and Caylee**

**Chipper saying goodbye to foster mom Virginia and Auntie Marti at his going-away party thrown by his BFK Aunties**

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# It's Time to (Re-)Register for the Ralph's Community Contribution Program

## Registration for the new term begins on september 1, 2018 and ends September 30!

Through the Ralph's Community Contribution Program, we generate important funds for the rescue and rehoming of FurKids. All you have to do is use your Ralph's Rewards card when you purchase food or other grocery items, and a portion of the sale is contributed to Bichon FurKids Rescue. The first day you can register for the new term is September 1, 2017 or after. Even if you registered as recently as June, July or August, you are still required to register again, on or after September 1.

There are two ways to enroll: a) Online registration at www.ralphs.com (see instructions below for new and existing participants) or b) by calling us at 800-443-4438.

New Members Registration Instructions for the Ralph's website:

1. Log in to www.ralphs.com.
2. Click on Create an Account.
3. Follow the steps to create an online account.
4. You will be instructed to go to your email inbox to confirm your account.
5. After you confirm your online account by clicking on the link in your email, return to www.ralphs.com and click on my account (you may have to sign in again first).
6. View all your information and edit as necessary.
7. Link your card to your organization by clicking on Community Rewards, then on Edit my community contribution, and then follow the instructions. Note: Make certain to click on the circle to the left of the Bichon FurKids name! BFK's Ralph's ID is DH972.

Current Members Re-Registration Instructions for the Ralph's website:

1. Log in to www.ralphs.com.
2. Click Sign In.
3. Enter your email address and password.
4. Click on My Account (in the top right hand corner).
5. Click on Account Settings.
6. View all your information and edit as necessary.
7. Link your card to your organization by clicking on Community Rewards, then on Edit my community contribution, and then follow the instructions. Note: Make certain to click on the circle to the left of the Bichon FurKids name! BFK's Ralph's ID is DH972.

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# HOME CHECKERS WANTED....

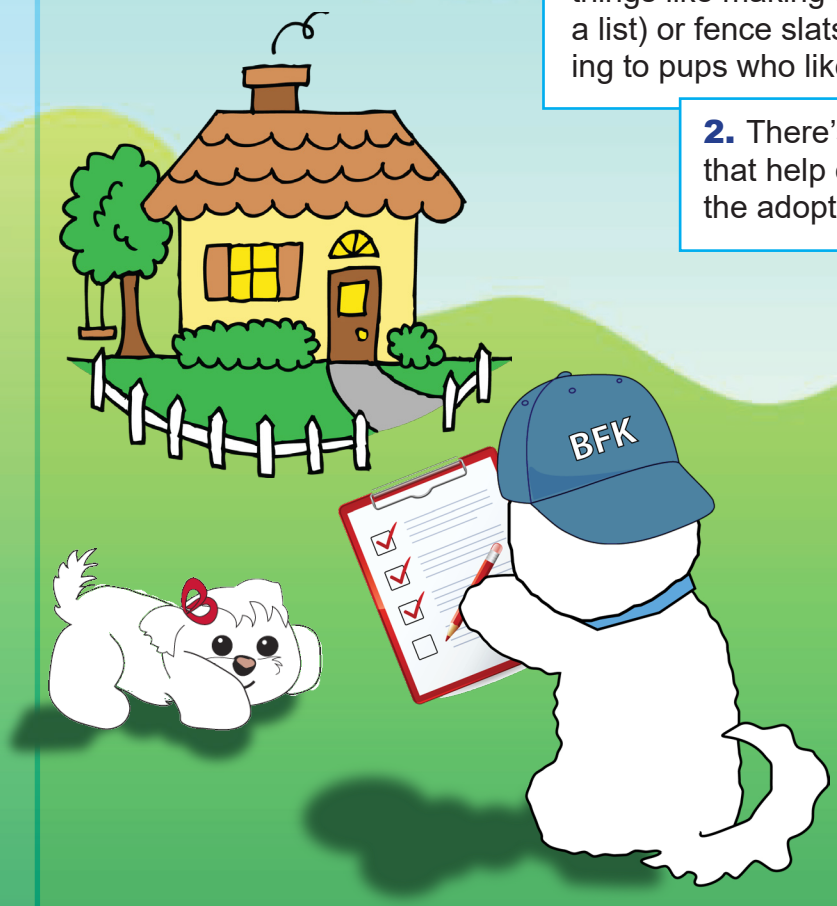
This is me, Bijou the Bichon, writing to ask you for some 'assistance' please. Because we want each and every FurKid to go to a safe and amazing home, Bichon FurKids conducts what we call a Home and Yard Safety Check. (We also call it an HSC for short!) It's part of the adoption process for people who want to adopt FurKids like me! (Of course the best part of doing that, from my perspective, is that the people doing the HSCs (we call them "Checkers") get to bring FurKids (like me!) with them to meet the people and families who want to adopt. Now I think that's pretty darn neat – don't you?

To actually do an HSC is pretty easy. It goes like this:

**1.** There's a checklist to review with the adopter (it includes things like making sure there are no poisonous plants (we have a list) or fence slats that are too far apart (and could be tempting to pups who like to explore the world without their owners).

**2.** There's also a short report (we provide samples) that help our Placement volunteers know more about the adopters.

**3.** If there's a pup in the home already, why I get to meet that pup and find out more about him or her too! (That's called a bonus!)




My BFK Aunties say we need "Checkers" everywhere. I think they mean mostly in the Western states (California, Arizona and Nevada) but we also do HSCs for people who live on the East coast. (More about that later.)

To become a Checker, you need to complete a short volunteer application (you can find it on our web site at www.bichonfurkids.org). It's short and you can fill it out in a few minutes.)

Or, you can email lindar@bichonfurkids.org and say "I'd like to be a Checker!"

One of our team members will then contact you about our process – and at a later time, be in touch when there is someone in your area that needs an HSC.

**Oh, and did I mention that you schedule the visit when it's convenient for you and the adopter? In some geographic areas you might be asked once every month or two, while in other areas it could be more often. Best of all you would be helping pups like me to find safe and amazing forever homes.**

**We'd sure appreciate having you become a part of our team. Thanks a bunch!**

*Bijou the Bichon*

(and Checker Recruiter)

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Bichon FurKids Rescue

# Save the Date!

## Bichon Bash
### Sunday, May 19, 2019

***Please note***: This year's Bichon Bash is on a Sunday.

You are invited to join BFK adopters, potential adopters, volunteers, vendors, and the community at large...as we come together to celebrate all things **Bichon**. Whether you have a **Bichon**...are considering adopting a **Bichon**...or just want to experience the wonder of **herds of Bichons running free**, the **Bichon Bash** is the party for **you**!

This year we have an exciting new location...Florence Joyner Olympiad Park in Mission Viejo, CA (Orange County). This park offers expansive grassy areas for the pups and their peeps, as well as plenty of fun play areas for the entire family!

Florence Joyner Olympiad Park was created to honor Olympic athletes. The park is named for Florence Griffith Joyner, who was the first American woman to win four medals in a single Olympics, a feat she accomplished at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea. She and her husband, gold medalist Al Joyner, were Mission Viejo residents until she passed away in 1998.

Please save the date today, and we'll see you and he whole family for food, fun and FurKids in May!

Sunday, May 19, 2019
10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Florence Joyner Olympiad Park,
Mission Viejo, CA

*Please keep checking the newsletters for details to come!*

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Irvine Animal Care Center

6443 Oak Canyon

Irvine, CA 92618

Phone: 949-724-7740

Please join us for the 12th annual Home for the Holidays Adoption event at the Irvine Animal Care Center. Many of our adoptable FurKids will be there. Bring your family and friends for some fun and lots of smiles!

Pet rescue groups and animal shelters will bring more than 600 homeless dogs, cats, rabbits and small animals for adoption. The event will also feature vendors, refreshments, free veterinarian and trainer advice, low-cost microchips and a silent auction.

Suggested donation is $2 and parking is free. Call 949-724-7740 or email dharris@cityofirvine.org for more information.

CITY OF IRVINE
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