Bichon Bits & Bytes
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A Tale of Two Tails—Max and Norman

By Barbara Pollinger

Editor's Note: *Into each of our lives come special pups, often at a time when we do not expect to adopt—nor even think that we want to. After the loss of a FurKid many of us have hearts that we feel will never heal. Yet these innocent little pups, who end up in shelters through no fault of their own, have an uncanny way of worming their way into our hearts—and we find, in hindsight, that this is exactly the right time and the right pup to help us heal. The saying "Who Rescued Who?" is one that truly resonates.*

I grew up with a cocker spaniel, Sport. I have had many types of dogs in my adult life and loved them all, and enjoyed each one as a part of our family. My sister introduced me to Bichons years ago when she gave me one of her pups. My pup, Snowball, later had pups of her own, and then I had three pups!! They were a part of our family and great companions to our family for 14 years. They loved everyone as well as all four-legged creatures. They were an important part of our family and did everything with us, including going on vacations.

Norman (left) and Max say "Hello!"

After the last of my pups died, it was years before I could even think of getting another dog. But, there was my dear sweet sister nudging me to call a rescue organization to get another Bichon. That was when I found Bichon FurKids…I started fostering and then adopted Buddy, who had had a rough and abused life before living with me. After he had passed, I adopted Charlie. Charlie was absolutely the BEST companion and dog EVER!! It was just 'Charlie 'N Me'. I have struggled with cancer for years and Charlie was my constant companion, and he would laugh with me...yes, he smiled! We travelled, walked and played together, and he loved snuggling and napping with me. After Charlie died of kidney failure, I was broken hearted and decided not to consider getting another dog, but continued to foster dogs for Bichon FurKids.

While I was still grieving the loss of Charlie, I learned that Max was in a shelter and had to get to a foster home fast!

MAX: "Hi, I am Max…I do not know why, but my parents dropped me at the door of this big scary place with lots of barking dogs in cages. My parents tied a rope around my neck and used it as a leash. I don't understand what I did to make them abandon me this way. I was sitting on the dog pound scale wondering what had happened and why was I was left all alone. I felt so lost. Then someone nice came and played with me and said they would take me to a loving new home."

When Marti called me, I said I was available to foster—not adopt. When I got Max home, I could not see his eyes through his matted fur. I trimmed the hair

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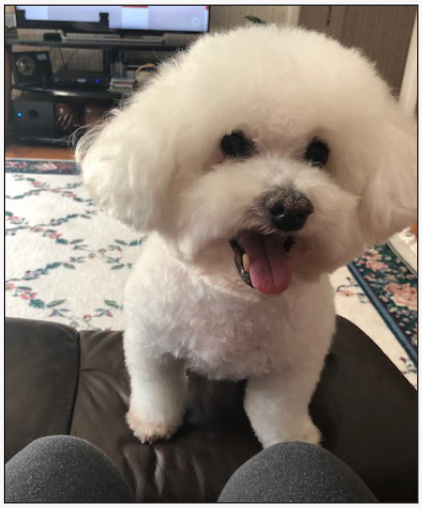
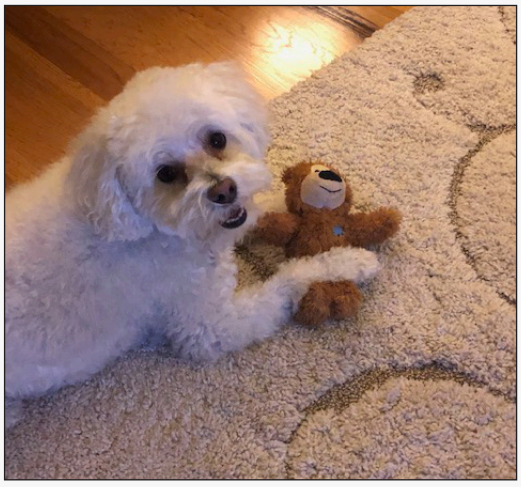
Find us on Facebook

Me (Max) and Mom taking our first selfie together.



Me (Max again) listening to Mom tell me how wonderful I am!



Hey Mom? A new brother would make my life complete...

Cover Story, continued...

around his eyes so he could see again and noticed a growth under and on top of his eyelid. Bichon FurKids (BFK) was fantastic! They immediately arranged for his eye surgery and a dental check. Max may never have had his teeth cleaned, so they were in pretty bad shape, and he had eight teeth removed. He was such a trooper!

MAX: "I was in a new home, had a very sore mouth and stitches in my eyelid, but never complained. I was glad to be where I felt loved and cared for. My foster Mom talked to me and was never far from me, and she let me sleep on my new comfy bed. After surgery on my eye and dental work, I never put up a fuss, even when antibiotic ointment had to be put on my eye stitches twice daily. I am just so happy to be where I am cuddled and talked to…and get to have someone play with me! My foster Mom calls me 'Maxie'—I love that, it is so special, maybe I am special too!"

Well, Max and I bonded immediately, even though I was trying really hard not to!! And you guessed it...I adopted little Max.

Max and I were settling into our routines and enjoying each other.

MAX: "I did not know much about playing, so I was having fun learning how to play with soft toys. I wanted to learn to chase a ball, so Mom got soft balls for me, and I loved running as fast as I could to get the ball and bring it back so Mom could throw it again! I feel so special when she laughs at cute things I do. When she said the word "walk", oh my gosh, I would get so excited and dance around in circles!! I love my walks and exploring sights and sounds…and meeting new friends (both two and four legged) in the neighborhood. Mom keeps telling me how cute, exceptional and extraordinary I am…I am not sure what those big words are, but I can tell she thinks I am really wonderful…it makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside."

Two weeks after I adopted Max, I got another emergency call that a foster home was needed for Norman. His owner had kept him in a 10'x10' room for 2 years...getting out just to go potty. His owner had some mental problems and a friend encouraged her to let Norman go to another home. Again, I said I was available to foster, but not adopt…Max was new in my home and one dog was enough for me! I felt that Max needed my complete love and attention. I met Norman at a park that night and he and Max became immediate friends (which made it easy for me to be able to foster Norman.)

One of my sister's sibling dogs had just died and she was hoping to adopt a bichon to help her, her grieving dog and family. Carol drove with me to meet Norman at the park. To my surprise, Norman rode home on her lap and Carol was IN LOVE!! Later that night she started going through the adoption process as Carol really wanted Norman to join her family! Her remaining dog did not want Norman around, yet she missed her brother. Carol was really disappointed but knew Norman needed to go to a forever home. She thought that home should be my home!

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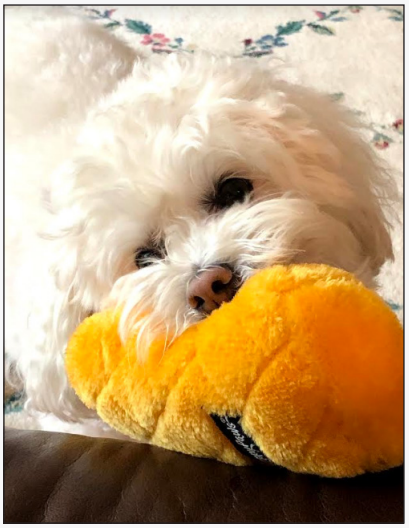
My wish came true! Here I am (on the right) with Norm and Mom on our first trip to the dog park together as a family!

BFFs for life!



Norman here...like my new toy?

Cover Story, continued...

I kept telling her NO, one pup was enough and Max was still getting used to his new home.

Norman had been with me for a few weeks as we dealt with a few of his medical issues—again Bichon FurKids is so good about making sure that their pups are not available for adoption until they are healthy and ready for a forever family. I completed bio information on Norman and took some cute photos so he could find a fantastic forever family… and I still did NOT want two dogs.

BFK foster parents have first choice to adopt, and Marti asked me a few times if I wanted to keep Norman…but I said emphatically "NO, I really, really do not want two dogs." As a side note, understand that at this time in my life I am now dealing with two stage-four cancers and sometimes simply need some peace and quiet, which I did not think would happen when I considered having two dogs!

My sister Carol and other friends kept telling me I should adopt Norman, that he was a perfect fit for Max and me…but I kept saying NO. But the Lord had other plans and knew this would be the best thing for me, for Max and for Norman! Before long I was having to admit that I had fallen in love with Norman—and he and Max had bonded so tightly that they could have been brothers!! They played together with toys, chased each other, taught each other things and slept together.

I learned that Norman is a hunter.

NORMAN: "I love to sit in the back yard or inside the house looking out the window, and if I see a lizard or anything move (leaves included), I shoot out the doggie door as fast as I can—and I am on the 'hunt'! I am in heaven and having a blast!! It is so much better than being inside a room looking out the window but never being able to smell, chase or explore. Mom calls me 'The Great White Hunter' and I love it! If you listen you can hear me yelling 'whoopee' as I chase things in the back yard. I have even taught my brother and best buddy, Max, to chase lizards too!!"

Norman is a kick to watch, and I am so glad he has the space to now run full bore to chase things to his heart's content. Norman loves attention and to play. He brings his toys to me and nudges me to play. He also 'bonks' Max with his nose to get Max to play and chase!

NORMAN: "I am very protective of my Mom and scoot as close to her as I can when she sits…I even block Max from getting in for a hug…in a playful way of course!! Mom loves us both and I just cannot get enough loving from her."

Both Norman and Max are cuddlers but Max is more sedate. If I am sitting, he is up lickety split getting settled in my lap. If I am napping, he is snuggled right into my side and does not move until I am ready to get up. By the way, Norman sleeps at my feet or on my feet, or somewhere very close! I have had a number of hospital stays of a week or so in the last year and God knew the boys would keep each other company playing and sleeping

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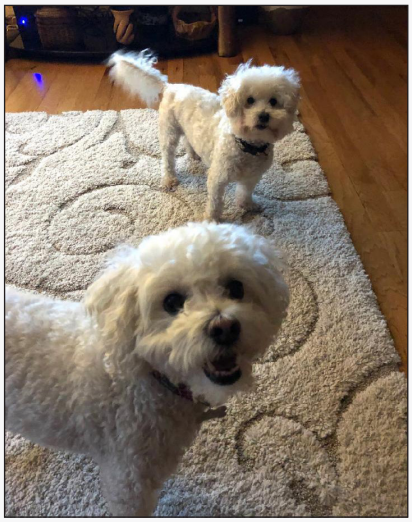
Shortly after Norm arrived to be my brother...we love our new home and all the cozy soft places to hang out together!



Let's play! I'm so glad you adopted Norm, Mom! He's the BEST!

Hello, world! It's me, Norman!

Cover Story, continued...

anytime I was gone…whether for an hour or for days, and they are good as gold when friends dog sit. They have yet to meet a dog or person they do not love instantly.

God knew I would have a difficult medical year ahead before I decided to adopt two dogs!! They have been such a continual blessing—I cannot tell you in how many ways! Adopting both of the boys has been the best decision for me...and they seem to be very happy too!

BOTH DOGS: "We both love our new forever home where our Mom loves and plays with us, plus we have a brother to play with and we get lots of walks and TREATS too!"

It has now been a year since I adopted Max and Norman… what a deep source of joy they have brought me, individually and together. If they could talk, they would say life could not be better, and I certainly feel that way.

I love Bichon FurKids and I support them whole heartedly. From A to Z they care about each individual pup and each foster and adoptive family. I am amazed at the care that goes into each pup—finding them, transporting them, giving them a foster kit (with bed, blanket, etc.), medical care, adoption process… everything is top notch and done with such love! The Stonecreek vets told me that they had attended to and cared for over 2,000 pups for Bichon FurKids who needed care before going into foster care. WOW!!

I appreciate the love that 'my boys' give me every day! And while I certainly did not intend to adopt again (no less twice) I am so very glad that Max and Norman came into my life. There is a saying "Who Rescued Who" and, like many other adopters, I think that saying definitely applies.

"Dogs have a way of finding the people who need them, and filling an emptiness we didn't ever know we had."

—Thom Jones

"Thank you for reading our story! We hope it warmed your heart ... and maybe inspired you to bring a new FurKid into your life."

Love, Max and Norman

Denny & Me

By Audrey Belamaric

Editor's note: *We love when we are able to place FurKids with a family that includes children, as some of the best childhood memories include those special times spent with a pup or pups. The article below is written by a young lady whose wish came true when her family adopted a sweet little guy named Denny.*

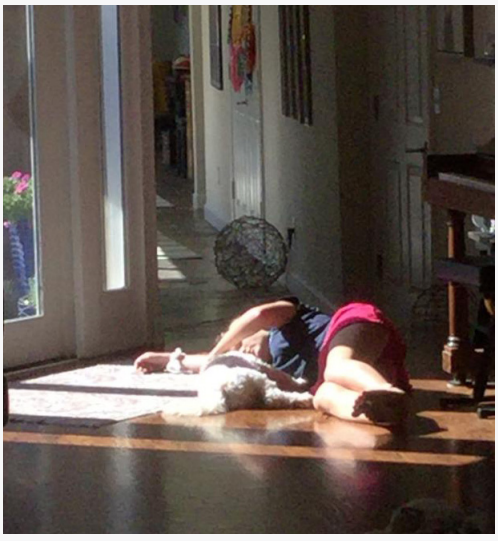
We brought Denny home at the end of last summer. He has been a joy to our family since day one, and having a dog of my own has been a dream come true.

Denny is pure joy and always ready to play. He is my favorite creature and is the cutest one around. He's only been with us a few months but it seems like he's been part of our family forever. He comforts me when I am sad, keeps me company when I am lonely, and makes me laugh when we play.

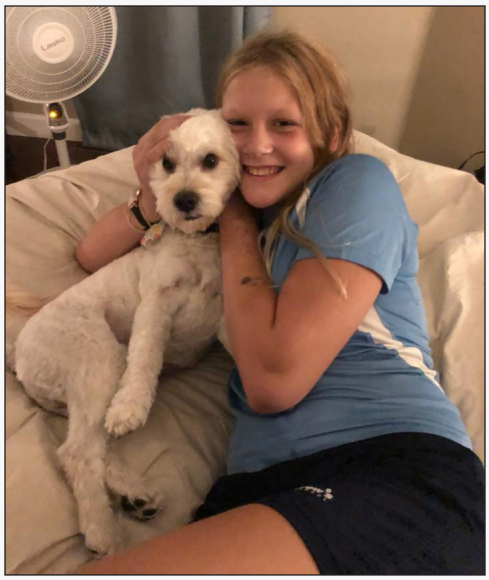
One of his favorite games is to act like a human. He likes to stand on his two hind legs and hop around hoping to get noticed. You will constantly find him jumping into an empty chair where he sits like a little gentleman. He stands on his hind legs faithfully watching us leave in the morning.

Denny has given new youth to our other rescue dog, Trixie. Whereas she slept most of the time before, now she plays with Denny. One of the games they love to play together is to sound the alarm and bark their fool heads off when they hear a sound. We know it is most likely a neighbor or a delivery person, but the ferocious barking indicates that they truly believe someone is trying to murder us.

We love our FurKids, but it's hard to know whether Denny has gotten more joy out of joining our family or whether our family has gotten more joy out of having Denny.

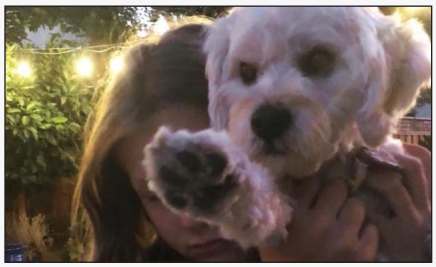


Audrey and Denny sharing a quiet moment in a patch of sun

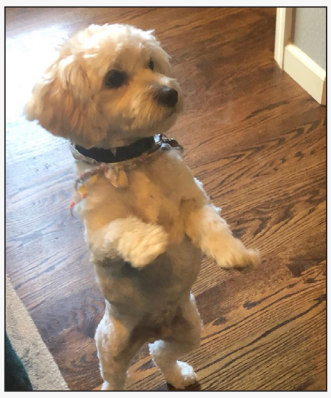


Audrey and Denny cuddling up together for hugs and kisses

Denny caught in a pensive moment



Denny saying "Hello!" with some assistance from Audrey



Denny trying to get noticed

In Memorium

Spuds Dodger Medina

I'm the blessed Mom of a most precious, fun, smart, loving, silly, athletic, barky, fast running, snuggly, cute, amazing Bichon Frise named Spuds Dodger Medina. Our family was approved to adopt him back in November of 2008 when he was around 7-8 months old. It was love at first meeting, and we were so thankful to Marti for pairing us with this wonderful pup! • Over his 12 years of life, Spuds brought

our family so much joy, fun, love, and life! If love could have saved him, he would have lived forever. • Unfortunately, that wasn't the case, and on June 11, 2020 our sweet boy passed away. So heartbreaking and crushing! We love him so much (always in present tense because love remains and continues...), and we will miss him forever. We thank God for the years we got with this precious blessing named Spuds Dodger.

"What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us."

—Helen Keller

Our family would like to share a special video presentation of some of our fondest memories of Spuds. You can find it at: https://youtu.be/uoY4a2OAWWw

Keep Summer Safe for FurKids

The 4th of July is a time of celebration. It's all about food, family, fun, and that includes our pets! As much fun as the 4th can be for us humans, the food and festivities can be a dangerous and even frightening time for our dogs. More animals go missing around Fourth of July than any other time of the year, causing shelters to overflow and pet parents to panic. Here are some suggestions to make summer as fun for them as it is for your family.

- Update Identification
- Always have current identification tags on your pets.
- We recommend getting your pets microchipped and making sure microchip information is current.
- GPS tracker devices are also available in stores and online. These collar devices let you track your pet's location from your smart phone.

Have a current photo of your dog available. You can post it on social media and flyers if your dog goes missing.

Manage the fright of fireworks

Fireworks and furkids generally do not mix. Imagine how painful those thunderous booms are to a dog, whose hearing is many times better than your own. Before the festivities start, try to tire your dog out. Take a long walk or do some serious playing.

If you plan to go somewhere to see fireworks, it's best to leave your dog at home — *indoors* with a safe place to curl up, and if possible, with a pet sitter that you trust. If you must allow your pup to use a doggie door to your yard, make certain that fence gates are secured and there are no possible escape routes. Each year BFK rescues dogs who have escaped to get away from fireworks and are never found or claimed by their families.

Desensitize your pet to fireworks...

- Find a recording of fireworks, and play it at the lowest possible volume a few times each day.
- At the same time, pair the sound of the fireworks with things your dog likes, such as treats, meals, cuddle time, or a game of tug-of-war.
- Slowly begin to raise the volume of the recording over the course of several days, while continuing to pair the sound of fireworks with good things for your dog. If at any point your dog begins to show signs of fear, turn the volume down to a point where he feels more comfortable.
- Repeat this several times each day until your dog can hear the sounds of the fireworks at a fairly high volume without becoming fearful.

If you don't have time to prepare for the fireworks, or if desensitization hasn't ended your dog's fear of fireworks completely, here are other things you can do to ease his fears.

- Don't change your behavior. Many people feel compelled to baby their dogs when the dog is showing signs of fear. We pet them more than usual, cuddle them, and talk to them in soft voices. Rather than easing a dog's fears, however, this often reinforces the dog's fearful behaviors.
- Try not to react to the fireworks yourself. If you jump or tense up when you hear fireworks because you are anticipating your dog's fear, you may make his fear worse. Your body language can tell a dog that there is a reason to be afraid.

- Drown out the sound of the fireworks. Try to turn up the radio or television and keep your windows closed during the fireworks. If the weather permits, a fan or air conditioner (if your dog isn't afraid of those sounds) can help, too.
- Don't push your dog past his comfort zone. Allow him to hide if he feels more comfortable in his crate or under a bed. Don't try to force him to adapt to the fireworks. This may result in an even more frightened dog.
- Talk to your vet about medications or other products that can help ease your pet's anxiety.

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Remember to give the proper dose before they start to panic.

- Thundershirt vests (and similar products) provide a snug "hug" fit has been proven to help with anxiety-related issues. (Think about an infant wrapped tightly but comfortably in a blanket.)
- Pheromone therapy: Adaptil is an analog of the naturally-occurring calming pheromone found in the milk of mother dogs. One format is a plug-in, which diffuses Adaptil into the room, and the other is a collar.
- Anxtiane: A chewable medication that contains L-Theanine, an amino acid that acts neurologically to help keep dogs calm.

Help your pets manage the heat

July 4th in the U.S. is also one of the hottest times of the year. Because our dogs can only cool themselves through their mouths and feet, they are more prone to heat stroke. If your dog is outside for the party all day, and you get caught up in the festivities, you may easily forget that your dog might be too hot.

Practice summer safety: Always keep plenty of fresh, cool water available and be sure there are shady spots for your dog. When in doubt, let her go back in the house.

Keep an eye on the pool. We all know that dogs are natural swimmers and love to cool off in a pool as much as we do, but they can drown in a swimming pool if there is no means (such as steps in the shallow end) for them to exit the pool when they tire out — or if they don't know where those steps are. Unlike humans, who can swim to the edge and just hang on, dogs have no way to relax in a pool. They must keep swimming or drown. Please keep an eye on your dog when near a pool, especially if it's one your dog is not familiar with.

Please never leave your pet inside a parked car. Even if doesn't seem that hot outside the car, and even if the windows are cracked open, the temperature inside the car can reach deadly levels within minutes, causing brain damage or death from heatstroke or suffocation. In addition, it makes your pet a target for thieves.

Watch your pet around food and party items: Dogs are drawn to table scraps and hot barbeque grills. Please keep pets away from heat sources and don't leave food and drink where your dog can get to it (and ask your guests to do the same). Even if it may not be poisonous to animals, ingesting too much people food will definitely make your pet sick. Foods that are toxic to dogs include (but are not limited to) those on the following list. More can be found on www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/people-foods-avoid-feeding-your-pets.

- Chocolate
- Anything sweetended with xylitol (a sweetener found in candy, gum, peanut butter, and baked goods)
- Onions
- Avocados
- Grapes and raisins
- Yeast products
- Alcohol (beer, wine, "hard" liquor: Pets can become dangerously intoxicated, go into a coma, or die from respiratory failure. Make sure cups, cans, and glasses are kept out of reach. ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Number: (888) 426-4435
- Keep party items such as citronella candles, insect traps, tiki-torch oil, insect repellents, and sunscreens (unless made for pets) out of reach. These can irritate the stomach and lung and possibly cause damage to the nervous system. The same goes for at-home fireworks, too. Unused ones can be poisonous to a dog looking for a fun chew!

Providing for your FurKids through your Estate Plan

Editor's Note: We are often asked if and how BFK can provide for a furkid if the owner is no longer able to do so. Unfortunately that happened this month. Because life is unpredictable, we recommend that you consider making provision for your furkid that we hope you will never have to use. It is, however, important to ensure that your precious buddy is provided for, if or when you cannot. The article below was written by one of our volunteers as a guide.

There are many ways you can make charitable contributions through your estate planning that will help BICHON FURKIDS. To make the right decision you need to carefully plan and organize your goals for giving. Determining which charitable giving strategy is right for you is as important as making the gift itself. Here are a number of options that can help you as you plan.

Will or Trust

Perhaps the most popular way is through a Will or Trust. A well-planned Will can avoid problems for your heirs and direct a gift to the charity of your choice, reducing taxes and estate settlement costs. You can also create a Trust within your Will that will help reduce or eliminate taxes and provide asset management for your heirs, possibly delaying distribution to minors or to address special needs of heirs. You may also want to designate a "Power of Attorney" to handle your affairs, in case you are not able to.

Pet Trust

There are also pet trusts. A pet trust is a legal technique you may use to be sure your pet receives proper care after you die or in the event of your disability. And there are two types of them.

The first type, called a "traditional pet trust," is effective in all states. You tell the trustee to help the person who is providing care to your pet after you die (the beneficiary) by paying for the pet's expenses according to your directions as long as the beneficiary takes proper care of your pet.

The second type of pet trust, called a "statutory pet trust," is authorized in almost 40 states. A statutory pet trust is a basic plan and does not require the pet owner to make as many decisions regarding the terms of the trust. The state law "fills in the gaps" and thus a simple provision in a will such as, "I leave $10,000 in trust for the care of my dog, Rover" may be effective.

If we should part, if you must leave,

My heart will break, how I will grieve!

My home now empty, where will I go?

Who'll love me as you did? I need to know.

Will my bed be as warm, soft and secure?

Or will it be concrete, my future unsure?

What happens to me, if those left behind

See just a dog, and to my sweet soul are blind?

These things I must know, should my worst fears come true,

Because I have no choice but to go on without you.

© Judy D'Addieco

Inter Vivos Trust

An inter vivos trust takes effect immediately and thus will be functioning when you die or become disabled. This avoids delay between your death and the property being available for the pet's care. However, an inter vivos trust often has additional start-up costs and administration fees.

Testamentary Trust

A testamentary trust is the less expensive option because the trust does not take effect until you die and

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your will is declared valid by a court ("probating the will"). However, there may not be funds available to care for the pet during the gap between when you die and your will is probated. In addition, a testamentary trust does not protect your pet if you become disabled and unable to care for your pet.

What are the factors to consider when creating a trust?

You need to consider many factors in deciding how much money or other property to transfer to your pet trust. These factors include:

- The type of animal
- The animal's life expectancy (especially important in case of long-lived animals)
- The standard of living you wish to provide for the animal
- The need for potentially expensive medical treatment
- Whether the trustee is to be paid for his or her services.
- Adequate funds to provide the animal with proper care, be it an animal-sitter or a professional boarding business, when the caregiver is on vacation, out-of-town on business, receiving care in a hospital, or is otherwise temporarily unable personally to provide for the animal.

You should avoid transferring an unreasonably large amount of money or other property to your pet trust because such a gift is likely to encourage your heirs and beneficiaries to contest the trust. If the amount of property left to the trust is unreasonably large, the court may reduce the amount to what it considers to be a reasonable amount.

What qualities should I look for in a caregiver?

The selection of the caregiver for your pet is extremely important. Here are some of the key considerations:

- Willingness to assume the responsibilities associated with caring for your pet.
- Ability to provide a stable home for your pet.
- Harmonious relationship between the caregiver's family members and your pet.

When should I create my pet trust?

You may create a pet trust either (1) while you are still alive (an "inter vivos" or "living" trust) or (2) when you die by including the trust provisions in your will (a "testamentary" trust).

So many of us say, "I'll take care of it soon — I know it's important." But, life happens and we let time pass and don't take care of this vital matter. You have and want the right to decide who benefits from your estate after your death — don't let the state do it for you! If you were to die without a Will or Trust, the laws of your state will distribute your property as they see fit; and your family or loved ones could battle for years.

Why Do I Need A Will?

A valid Will or Trust is the ONLY way to chsoose your beneficiaries. Even if you are married, both you and your spouse need separate Wills identifying your specific wishes. If you have children or own property,

own stocks or have other financial assets, you should have a Will, regardless of your age or financial standing.

The state can not know your wishes for your family, charitable activities or friends if you don't tell them!

Are there other ways to take care of my pet?

Other ways that may be beneficial, depending on your financial circumstances (be sure to check with your financial and legal advisors):

- Bargain Sale: A sale of property (to a charity) in which the difference between the sale proceeds and the property's fair market value constitutes a charitable donation.

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Make charitable gifts to BFK, continued...

- Cash or designated assets or property: You can leave a specific cash amount or percentage of your estate, your car, RV, home, artwork or other property to a charity like DFD.
- Charitable Lead Trusts (CLT): Funded by a transfer of assets from a donor to a Trust. A charity receives the income for a lifetime or a number of years, after which the remaining assets are transferred to the donor or other persons (typically children or grandchildren).
- Charitable IRA: You can designate a charity as the beneficiary of all or part of your IRA. Other tax benefits may apply.
- Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT): Funded by a transfer of assets from the donor to the Trust. Beneficiaries receive a specified percent distribution from the Trust for a period of years or life, with the remainder interest paid to charity. There are several types of Charitable Remainder Trusts.
- Life Insurance: You can designate BFK as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy. This allows many people to give a larger gift than they would otherwise be able to make, and it avoids probate. By making BFK the owner of the insurance policy, in addition to being the beneficiary, the premiums are tax deductible, too!
- Securities/Stocks: You can donate stocks that may have appreciated and save on capital gains taxes, while enjoying a federal income-tax deduction for the full value.

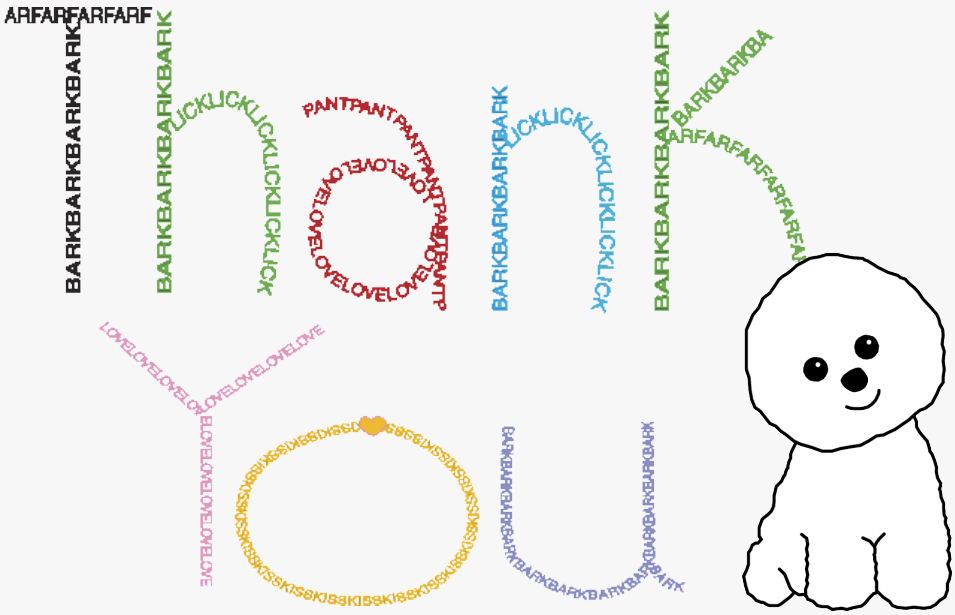
Did you know...?

- Giving appreciated property like stock, property or real estate can cost you less than giving the equivalent in cash.
- Some assets are worth more to you if you give them to charity.
- Some charitable gifts allow you to pass on more to your heirs AND save taxes.
- You can benefit from making a gift now, while leaving a legacy later.

One more thing, and this is important...

It is especially important that financial and/or legal professionals be consulted in order to attain maximum benefits from donations for both the donor and bichon furkids. Because of BICHON FURKIDS's 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service, all donation options have tax benefits according to current laws.

As always, Bichon Furkids, Inc. cannot provide legal or financial advice. Please remember to check with your financial advisor to find the option that will be most beneficial to you.



Drivers Wanted....

Want to help but can't foster?

Love to see new places and meet new people?

Want to make a difference for a FurKid or two?

We need your help! Every week FurKids need to be transported to groomers, vets and foster homes. We rely on our volunteer drivers to get them there—and are grateful for their help. We DO need more people who are willing and able to transport our fluffs primarily throughout San Diego or Orange County (and not for great distances usually, either.)

Sometimes we have days in which to plan; other times it is more immediate like when we find a FurKid that needs to be moved 'right away' due to a medical situation, to be exited from a shelter or who needs to be some place other than where he or she is at that moment.

If you have time and a love for bichons, we NEED you. And if you love to organize transports, we need help with that too! Please email marti@bichonfurkids.org and say "I want to drive a furkid" and we'll be in touch.

... because this is what happens when our FurKids try to drive themselves!

Furkid Sponsorship Program

For the past 14 years we have rescued and rehomed nearly 3400 furkids, many of whom have needed special services or treatments. This amazing breed that we love is also somewhat pre-disposed to having dental issues, juvenile cataracts and luxating patellas (knee caps that move in and out.) We have also seen an increasing number of mammary masses that need to be removed.

Even each of the precious pups we rescue that have no 'special needs' incur basic costs. A 'typical' furkid's spay or neuter, non anesthetic dental, shots, grooming, microchip and flea/tick preventative, as well as basic medication for spay/neuter, costs Bichon FurKids $360. Our adoption fee for pups over 1 year of age remains $350, which has been the fee for nine (12) years. The adoption fee for our puppies, who require three rounds of shots, de-worming, spay/neuter etc. remains at $500.

To offset the costs of the care they receive, we have established a new sponsorship program that provides an opportunity for our amazing bichon-loving community to help us continue to make a difference! There are five different sponsorship opportunities: FurKiddo, Puppy Love, Hipsters, Golden Oldies and Snowflakes (our once or twice in a million FurKids). As the year winds to a close, and if you are able to participate, below is information regarding our program.

We are creating a new web page for those sponsors who want to be acknowledged publicly however we are grateful for those that want to contribute anonymously as well. Please reach out for any questions to micheler@bichonfurkids.org.

Puppy Love

A puppy under seven months of age whose regimen includes shots, de-worming, spay/neuter and basic care. **Monthly commitment: $25**

FurKiddo

A pup who is 1-5 years old. **Monthly commitment: $30**

Hipsters

These furkids are generally in good health but have not had their booster shots addressed nor the yearly dentals done. They are typically 6-9 years old and their dentals/shots typically cost an average of $480. **Monthly commitment: $40**

Golden Oldies

Many bichon owners are not aware of the need for bloodwork and dental as their dogs age. When these dogs are then surrendered or 'dropped off' at a shelter, they often need extensive dental work including extractions, blood work, often mass removals. Our 'typical' costs for the basic services averages $600-$800. The furkids are often 10 years or older, although we are also seeing a lot of mammary masses in younger females. **Monthly commitment: $50**

Snowflakes

All dogs are special—and furkids with special needs are even more special. Juvenile cataracts (that start at the age of 4) are becoming more frequent due to in-breeding, likewise with luxating patellas. We are also seeing more juvenile diabetes, the youngest being a five month old pup named Chipper that we rescued last year and a little one called Hope that we rescued just this week!

There are also the pups who are in the wrong place at the wrong time—and are hit by a car, requiring medical intervention to save their lives. The surgeries required for our Snowflakes are extensive and start at $1800. They often reach $5,000 yet we cannot put a price on the life of a deserving furkid. These unique needs are part of the Snowflake program.

Monthly commitment: starts at $75

No-Sew Blankets

For those of you who want to help our FurKids to be warm and cozy all year-round, here are instructions on how to make the No-Sew Blankets that every FurKid loves!

Supplies:

Good pair of cloth scissors

Tape measure or ruler

Two 1-yard lengths of coordinating fleece

4"x4" cardboard template marked with 1" intervals

Directions:

Please read all directions before starting your blanket.

1. Lay out fleece wrong sides together (if "wrong" sides are evident).
2. Match up edges.
3. Pin together to hold while you knot.
4. Cut off rough edges.
5. Cut 4"x4" square out of each corner.
6. Make 4" deep cuts at 1" intervals around all 4 sides.
7. Start in one corner – Tie overhand knot close to blanket edge – Use one strip from top fleece, one from bottom fleece – Tie second knot – Make sure your knot is tight.
8. Knot EVERY OTHER pair of strips until you are all around the blanket one time.
9. Turn blanket over – Knot the same way until you have tied all your knots.

Hints:

Use your template as a guide to keep cuts even and equally deep.

Keep your knot tie tension steady while tying your knots so you don't overstretch your fleece.

Snug knots will hold well through washing/drying.

For more information, pictures, and tutorials:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9S7y6eeQH0

http://www.instructables.com/id/No-Sew-Fleece-Blanket-1/

Packing:

Optional: When you have your blankets ready, you may roll one up tightly, tie with a ribbon, and tag with a note: "This blanket was made with love and hope for your BichonFurKid Forever Home from "<your name>"

Mailing:

If you live in Southern California we may be able to suggest a drop-off location for the blankets.

If not, you may mail them to one of these locations:

Bichon FurKids
6965 El Camino Real #105-425
La Costa, CA 92009
(Please note: This is a UPS store that cannot receive drop-offs.)

Or...

Cherie Bauer
7959 Calle Madrid
Carlsbad, CA 92009

Keep your FurKids Safe!

There are a number of household items that can be very harmful to our pups, many of which are truly poisonous when ingested. Please be aware (and make sure your guests are also aware) as with holidays some of these items may be even more prominent.
Avoid:

- Chocolate!!!
- Coffee/coffee grounds
- Raisins and grapes
- Onions and onion powder
- Macadamia nuts
- Alcoholic beverages
- Fabric softener sheets
- Fertilizer and plant food
- Antifreeze (it smells sweet so pets love to lick it from a puddle or on the street)
- Prescription drugs
- Outside your home:
- These common plants are also dangerous:
- Castor bean or castor oil plant
- Milkweed
- Tomato plants
- Aloe vera
- Ivy, Chrysanthemum
- Amaryllis and American Holly
- Cyclamen and begonia
- Oleander
- Mistletoe!
- Lantana
- Angel's Trumpet
- Sago palms
- Lilies, azaleas, kalanchoe and tulips
- Rhododendron
- Wisteria
- Dieffenbachia
- Daffodils and Hyacinths

Links you can check for additional information include:
https://www.ccspca.com/blog-spca/education/poisonous-plants-for-dogs/
https://www.ucdavis.edu/one-health/garden-plants-toxic-to-pets/
https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants/c
https://ucanr.edu/sites/poisonous_safe_plants/Plant_Toxicity_Levels_523/