



## RESCUE IN BUANGKOK: SAY HELLO TO 11 BLESSINGS

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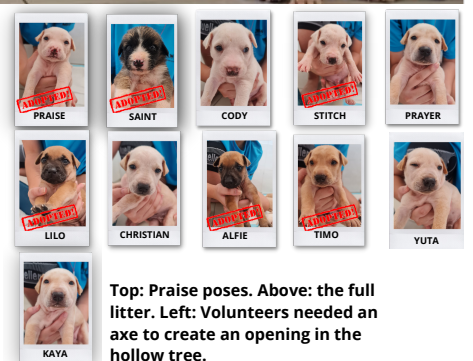
#### GREAT LOSSES

DAWN/MOCHI..... 8

This group of 11 young puppies were found in a forested area at Buangkok in February. The search began after one of our volunteers saw a post on Facebook about their then-pregnant mother looking for food next to a busy road.

After 5 hours of searching, the puppies were found hidden deep inside a hollow fallen tree trunk. The search continued for the mother, yet she could not be found.

The puppies are estimated to be about five weeks old based on the growth status of their teeth. There are 2 female puppies (Lilo and Praise) and 9 males (Alfie, Christian, Cody, Kaya, Prayer, Saint, Stitch, Timo and Yuta).



Top: Praise poses. Above: the full litter. Left: Volunteers needed an axe to create an opening in the hollow tree.

# GIDEON'S RESCUE

In December, neighbours reported seeing a dog around the nearby nurseries. What made the sighting unusual was a rope tied around the dog's body.

Over the course of 3 weeks, witnesses saw the dog getting skinnier and tearing of the skin from the rope. Volunteers responded on a rainy day to a reported sighting and set up a trap. After about half a day, the dog was caught and taken immediately to the vet. The dog was given the name "Gideon" which means "great warrior" in Hebrew. Gideon is estimated to be about three to five years old, and is a suspected abandonment case.

The rope left Gideon's skin red and raw. Despite the pain from the rope, Gideon displayed no signs of defensive behaviour even when pressed down and examined at the vet. Gideon spent some nights at the vet for recovery and observation. During that time volunteers regularly visited and hand fed him to help him rebuild his strength.

Gideon has slowly opened up to us, and is healing well. He is getting used to the environment and friends at the shelter. He is a shy, sweet, and extremely gentle dog. Gideon usually slept alone but in March he began sleeping in the middle of Shepherd pack meaning the pack has welcomed him and his trust in others is rebuilding. 🐾



A sighting of Gideon before the rescue with the rope tied around his body



The rope had to be carefully removed since it had been on Gideon for more than 3+ weeks



Gideon remained patient and gentle through the rescue and he's been accepted by Shepherd pack

Mercylight is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming stray dogs, so that they may get a second chance in life. Rescue efforts require a great amount of time, effort and manpower, but we believe that every single dog rescued makes it worthwhile.

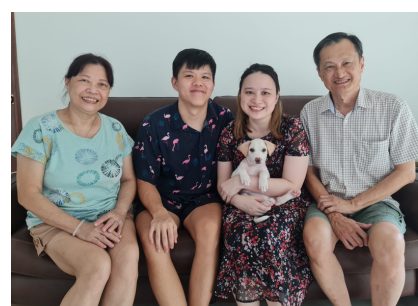
## 11 NEW ARRIVALS Continued from page 1

As all puppies usually are, they are a curious, cheeky and mischievous bunch who has been entertaining everyone with all their little antics.

Home trials and orientations to match the puppies have begun with adopters. Check out some of the new families!



Lilo adopted by ML volunteer Lechelle & Family



Praise adopted, renamed Mochi



## MEET THE ADOPTERS: ROXIE

**RESCUED IN 2020 AS A YOUNG PUP IN A FORESTED AREA, ROXIE IS NOW SETTLED IN WITH LOTS OF LOVE**



**Charmaine, Roxie, Pauline, Cedric & Timothy**

### How have your daily lives changed?

My daughter has taken up a lot of responsibility since adopting Roxie, and she's doing a very good job. I find that having a dog in this period really keeps you active as you have to walk the dog 3 times a day. You have no choice but to be active.

### Why MercyLight?

The big thing that differentiated MercyLight for us was that the website was very detailed, and included individual profiles of the dog and a short biography. MercyLight was also very upfront about everything, and very well-organised. When we visited the shelter, we observed that the shelter was very clean and the dogs were very well-treated.

### Why adopt?

The main reason was because our children have always wanted a dog. We have a lot of pets in the house (fishes, turtles, birds), so getting a dog was just a matter of time. In addition, we wanted companionship.

### Can you run us through your decision making process?

We needed to get the whole family's agreement when we made that decision. Initially, we were looking at other dogs such as Olive and Yoshi, but while visiting the shelter, Kelly suggested for us to walk Roxie.

### How was the adoption process like for you?

Three weeks for us, and an additional 3 week-long home trial which was the important phase when we had to really decide if we really wanted to do it. We think it is a very good period that allowed us to consider how sincere and serious we were. Kelly created a chat group, and answered our questions and offered us advice - the process was very organised and systematic. We really liked that it was a no-obligation trial, MercyLight provided everything we needed, from food to shampoo so we did not have to worry about any of that.

### How is Roxie settling in?

She has definitely been slowly opening up to us. Initially she was really scared and hid in the room a lot, but we can tell that she is a lot more comfortable now. She even comes to the door and welcomes us home now. 🐾



“

...having a dog in this period really keeps you active

”



# MEET THE ADOPTERS: SCRAPPY (ALSO KNOWN AS TED)

## RESCUED IN 2020 AND NOW BRINGING HIS FAMILY CLOSER TO THEIR COMMUNITY



**Jacklyn, Scrappy & Yiwen**

### What led you to adopt?

I have always contemplated getting a dog for a long time, but I was not allowed to adopt one when I lived with my parents. My husband and I had been married for 3 years, and decided that we wanted a change in our lives.

### How was the adoption process like for your family?

We initially found the process of having to go down to MercyLight for about 8 times a bit of a drag, but as time went by, we realised why this process was put in place. Not only could we gradually introduce ourselves to Scrappy, it was also a test of how serious and committed we were.

In retrospect, it was a good introduction period and gave us sufficient time to seriously consider whether we wanted to get a dog. We were also worried about getting the supplies, but the support that MercyLight provided was really good.

We received training on things like bathing a dog so that at the end of the 2 month period, we already knew the basics.

“

We were not really involved with our neighbours and community previously, but now because we are always bumping into the same people on our walks, there is that sense of community that we appreciate a lot.

”

### Why adopt a shelter dog?

We decided that we wanted to do something useful for society and get a dog out of a shelter. I was browsing on several websites when I saw a picture of Scrappy (then Ted). I decided upon seeing him that I wanted to adopt him specifically.

### How has Scrappy adapted to his new environment?

The first few weeks with him, he used to tug the leash very tightly. In the parks as well, he used to be very afraid of us, he went into the bushes and was very resistant to come out. But now he is not as scared anymore.

It's on and off, and we are still in the development stage, so every improvement is a win.

### Can you run us through your decision making process?

We are both first time dog owners and I was not sure if my husband would be agreeable at first, but he has been very supportive. We kept going to MercyLight to see Scrappy, after being shown around the different packs as well. We had a 3-week long trial, which was not completely smooth, but we found that Scrappy was very human-like and really like that about him.

### How have your daily lives changed?

It has definitely been a routine change for us. We are fortunate to have a community in our area with other dog owners, owners of Singapore Specials. We were not really involved with our neighbours and community previously, but now because we are always bumping into the same people on our walks, there is that sense of community that we appreciate a lot. 🐾





# MEET THE ADOPTERS: DILIGO

## ON COOKING MORE, RECEIVING AFFECTION AND LEARNING HIS FUN HABITS



**Michelle, Diligo & Jia Hwa**

### Why did you decide to adopt a dog?

M: Both of us love dogs a lot, and before we got married, I had a dog with my family (he's still there). After we moved out, we both worked and felt it wasn't right to get a dog because we can't give him enough attention and time. So, the biggest push was actually Circuit Breaker, since we started working at home and felt it was the best time. We started looking and chanced upon MercyLight!

### Why did you decide to adopt from a shelter?

We don't think it was ever in our minds to buy a dog, and our family dog (Cairo) was also a Singapore Special from SPCA (was on the list to be put to sleep).

### Can you run us through your decision?

M: My husband says I have a soft spot for dogs that look very 'ke-lian' (sad/woeful). We weren't very set on a particular dog, but from the very first walk/when we first met him, I was very convinced that Diligo was the one.



JH: We also walked Cairo (from MercyLight, not our family dog)! Actually, Cairo was also okay, but we wanted a slightly older dog because if it was a puppy, we may not be able to give him the time and energy he needs, or train him in time before going back to work.

### How has Diligo been settling into your family?

When Diligo started claiming his spot on the sofa, we started to just let him be on the sofa, and wanted to draw the line (not allow him on the bed!), but then he started to come on the bed, and we didn't know how to feel. But that's one of his quirks – he completely changes when he's on the bed! He's extremely affectionate and comfortable on the bed compared to when he isn't. So that made me okay with letting him on the bed. He kind of gave us a few nights of bad sleep because he would sleep horizontally and take up a lot of space on the bed! So, we got a footstool for him and he stayed near that spot, but now he sleeps on his own new bed.

He also didn't go through the homesick phase of not eating, so we were relieved. For a few weeks, he ate kibbles by himself, then started eating in batches – first eating a little at 12pm, then leaving the rest for 2pm (it's the same in the evening). He's now starting on new kibbles, so we hope that works out. We're also trying to get him to play with toys so we can interact with him more.

### How was the adoption process?

M & JH: We both appreciated the fact that it took a while, because we wanted to make sure we were really ready, and it gave us a lot of time to think. So, having that process – going down to bond with Diligo, spending 2 to 3 months with him, bringing him back for staycations (4 in total, 2 with Kivi, who wavered us a bit!), and the home trial, was good for us. But I don't think Diligo appreciated that process! He drools a lot and throws up on the car ride, since we live especially far away.

### How has Diligo changed your daily lives?

M & JH: We are a lot more active now, wake up a lot earlier (first walk: 7am), and ended up making a lot of friends because there are many dogs around the area. He also brings us to places we wouldn't have discovered. We cook a lot more now, for Diligo only (we even cooked steak for the first time), ended up getting a pressure cooker, and watch a lot of Youtube to cook meals for him. We also learned a lot more about how to better take care of a dog, down to the basic details. 🐾

## HABITS OF DILIGO



Really likes landed properties - refused to leave our parents' place



Strange with cats - he's terrified! Will refuse to walk past our lobby, and after a while he started wagging his tail, but still doesn't know how to play with them



Likes to chase after birds too!



# MEET THE ADOPTERS: JIREH

## FOSTER → ADOPTION

### How did you decided to adopt?

I volunteered at an animal sanctuary in high school and later while working in Hong Kong. I knew that if we were to open up our home, it would be to a shelter animal. In August 2020 I began volunteering at MercyLight. I enjoyed getting to know all the dogs' personalities and after a few months I asked the team leaders more about fostering.

### You fostered and then adopted?

Jireh was a top fostering candidate since her vet (Dr. Kitty) thought a home environment would help with her allergy treatment. We intended to foster but were not closed to the idea of adoption.

My husband Jordan was patient and supportive through the process. He would meet me after my volunteer shift and we'd walk Jireh. At first she was timid and difficult to walk. When this happened we would sit down on the sidewalk and chat to get her used to our voices. After about 1 month, Jireh completed a whole walk with us. She home trialed and then came to stay for longer. Before we knew it Jireh intertwined in our lives. When imagining our future, we began to see Jireh with us in each scenario.

## WHAT IS IMMUNOTHERAPY?

Allergen immunotherapy are regular doses of allergens, usually in the form of injections. It is meant to desensitize and decrease the body's reactions.

While at MercyLight, Jireh did an ALLERCEPT to "test for 36 allergens, including specific species of house dust mites, insects/fleas, yeast & mould spores, grass pollens, weed pollens and tree pollens." Based on her results immunotherapy was recommended as a way to manage her allergies.



**Nina, Jireh & Jordan**

### Jireh was quite shy, how has she adapted?

Jireh was most playful while being towel-dried according to other volunteers. We used this post-bathing time as a way to bond with her. Routines we learned in obedience training with Ricky Yeo, the Dog Listener Consultant, helped Jireh feel more comfortable, especially with food and play. A licked-clean plate is a regular sight at the house and she is up about 1.5kg.

I was a bit hesitant to give Jireh the immunotherapy injections on my own. With support from Kelly, Dr. Kitty and other volunteers, we became comfortable giving the periodic injections. A combination of the treatment, vacuuming and a bit of extra love has reduced her scratching and now the hair on her belly, neck and tail has regrown.

### How have your daily lives changed?

Jireh had a whole life before us and it's been fun to discover it. For example, another volunteer Rhyen took extra special care of her and trained her. When we joined obedience class, that reignited what she learned. Now Rhyen is in N.S. and on his free days we try to all meet up.

We love that Jireh is a "middle aged" dog because she is very chilled and relaxed. Through Jireh we have developed stronger friendships with our neighbours and feel more connected to our community. When making plans with friends, we often prioritize dog-friendly places. Everyone seems relaxed and at ease when a dog is around, especially with a lovely gal like Jireh. 🐾





# TRAINING: MEET KIMBERLY & TASHA

## WE HAD A CHAT WITH KIMBERLY, WHO IS IN THE MIDST OF HER COURSE ALONG WITH TASHA (RESCUED 2020)

### How does the training work?

Different objectives are practiced in the weekly 1.5 hour class and focus on consistency, repetitions and of course lots of treats and praises. Extra practice is done at the shelter. Over the course of eight weeks, Tasha increased reliability for cues to sit, down, stand, stay, recall and to watch me. Most importantly, we worked on heel work and impulse control.

### How is Tasha's progress?

Tasha is intelligent and can do ANYTHING as long as she sets her mind on it. That means I've got to have lots of irresistible treats on hand all the time. One of the main focuses is managing Tasha's leash reactivity.

### What made you decide to train?

I love every dog in MercyLight and want to give them a better chance to get adopted! As a volunteer that the dogs are familiar with, I get to see their true personality and how sweet and lovable everyone is. I decided to take part in these training sessions in hopes of helping the dogs to build up their confidence and come out of their shells. These trainings certainly have a great impact on the dogs, as they come to know what is good behavior and how to be a model citizen. You can see the boost in confidence once they come to know what is expected of them!

### What challenges have you faced and how have you overcome them?

Although Tasha is usually confident and playful in the kennel, she started out as a rather timid dog when outside. The main challenge was bringing out that personality that I know she has!

For the first two sessions, Tasha was too nervous to train effectively. She would get jumpy by anything moving. It was key that I had to remain perseverant and patient throughout the difficult times. Through consistent reassurance and the bond and trust built between Tasha and me, I was able to get through to her that she had nothing to worry. Each training session has since been fruitful as she is able to focus on learning. I am very proud of my girl, Tasha!



The course by Pawsitive Furkids utilises positive training and covers a range of exercises that include sit, down, stand, stay come and heel work.

Tasha has decreased her charging tendencies through training that emphasizes ways to redirect her focus back to her handler. Some strategies include:

- Varying walking pace when distractions approach
- Using voice to assure and redirect Tasha's attention
- Rewards and praise when Tasha focuses her attention on her handler instead of another dog

Some of Tasha's most recent improvements:

- Sit and wait while picking up after her
- Walking side by side with other dogs like Wonder (a dog from Twinkle pack)

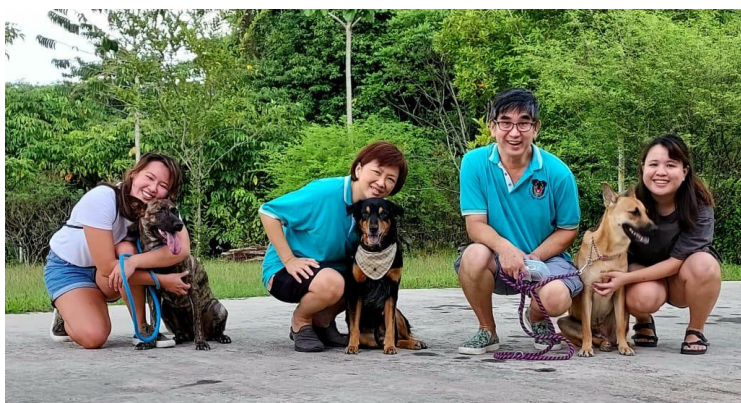
MercyLight engages our own volunteers to take part in an eight week long basic obedience course. At the end of the course, dogs should be able to walk beside handlers with minimal pulling of the leash, and also obey in the midst of distractions.



Kimberly & Tasha take a course with Pawsitive Furkids

### How has the training sessions benefitted both you and Tasha?

The main take away for Tasha would be the new found confidence. She is no longer hesitant to leave the kennels for walks or to go for training. In fact, she is excited to go. She is definitely still a work in progress and I can tell that she is aware and working on her impulse control. I am very pleased with Tasha's progress and super thankful to Pawsitive Furkids for their guidance. As for myself, it has helped me to become more understanding and how to communicate more effectively with dogs. It never ceases to amaze me how intelligent dogs are and my heart is full whenever I see the dogs smile!! 🐾





## GREAT LOSSES: MOCHI/DAWN

On November 24, 2020, we redeemed a dog from National Parks Board (NParks) who was found to be Leishmania positive. She was caught by Nparks in August 2020, however she was kept for three months. She was redeemed with the reason that the disease was in the dormant stage and she had no clinical signs. At MercyLight, she was given the name "Dawn" meaning "new era" and "new beginning."

Her fosters, Sulin and Ameer, affectionately called her "Mochi." Mochi was scheduled for sterilization on January 11, 2021, but prior to the surgery CBC and Chem10 tests showed that she had kidney disease which was likely due to a progression of her disease. The sterilization was called off. Mochi's health deteriorated very fast and she left us in late January.

Mochi/Dawn is a tragic case of delayed and inadequate treatment that could have extended and elevated her quality of life. 🐾



**WHAT IS LEISHMANIA?** Leishmania is an infection that is caused by a protozoal (single celled) organism which lives in host bodies and is spread by female sandflies. Once a dog has been diagnosed with leishmaniasis active infection it is not possible to cure the infection and long term medication and monitoring is usually required to control the clinical signs and maintain good quality of life. Active infections if left untreated can be fatal.

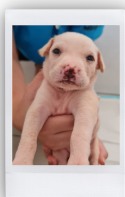
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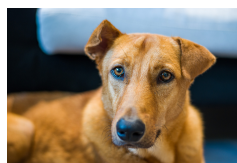
## KEEP UP WITH THOSE IN THIS ISSUE...



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@sawadeemochi



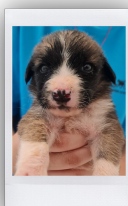
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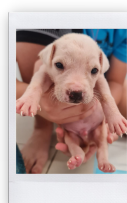
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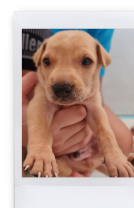
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