

## *Kadi's Story*

Kadi came to me from the Seattle area in the middle of August 2014. I was on my way home from a Canada trip. A Vancouver rescue friend brought her to me.

Kadi's owners had purchased her from a breeder when she was 6 weeks old and kept her in a run in their back yard since then. She was so unsocialized with other dogs that she'd attack to kill. The owners wanted to buy another puppy so were going to euthanize Kadi. She was 5 years old by this time.



*Left: with previous owners. Center: leaving previous owners with Tara. Right: with Marilyn on the "way home".*

We had a nice drive home. Kadi was wonderful in her crate - after all she'd spent most of her life in some kind of a cage. She was so loving and slightly needy so I thought, "How bad can this be?" HAH! Famous last words.

When we got home after our 2 day (16-hour) drive I tried introducing her to my current pack and discovered yes, it was bad. At the time I had Misty and Jax (mine), Tama a very timid English Pointer foster who came to me in January 2012, Chloe a 9-year old English Pointer foster who arrived in March 2014 and took awhile to warm up to new dogs, and little man Tate who'd been with me for a month after nearly dying from a blood clot that had lodged in his lower lumbar spine that left him paralyzed. Kadi made number 6 in our merry band of current three "special" dogs and my two stable ones. Kadi was definitely in the "special" category.

I took her into the back yard on a leash and let my dogs out one at a time to meet her. It wasn't good. Fortunately I use a very secure slip leash and my dogs are very good about giving newbies their space to get acclimated. Of course that doesn't include Tate who has no sense of personal boundaries and assumes everyone in the world wants to be his new best friend. Kadi stiffened into a board and lunged at anyone who came near her. I held Kadi close to me on her leash and used a leg to keep Tate out of range of her teeth. It was pretty obvious she wasn't going to be a daycare kind of girl. Chloe gave her the Elvis Lip and the stink eye and wandered off. Misty and Jax could tell she was unstable and went off to chase birds. Tama watched her from afar. And Tate.... well, he was sure she wanted to be his friend and I spent most of the time balancing on one leg and fending him off with the other one.

The first three days were challenging. I brought up the large wire crate and positioned it in the living room so she could watch everyone and see how civilized dogs interacted. She drooled a lake. I spent most of the time shuffling 5 dogs outside, bringing them in and then having them lie on their beds while I walked Kadi past them so she could go out. Fortunately she didn't seem to care about the cats.

After 4 days of juggling dogs and being pretty tired, cranky and at my wit's end I decided to try a muzzle. It worked! I put it on her and she flung herself on the floor and tried to get it off with her hind feet. When that didn't work she stuck a front toenail between the side of her face and the muzzle. That worked so I had to keep a close eye on her. Then I tossed her outside with the other 5 dogs.

They ran into her, over her, around her and through her. She hated them. She hated the muzzle. And she wasn't that fond of me. For the next two weeks when she wasn't in her crate watching everyone she was outside with them wearing her muzzle. I wish I could say it was a magical transition but it wasn't. I couldn't trust her alone with the other dogs in case she wedged her muzzle off. And there was still a lot of growling and clicking of teeth going on under that muzzle.

August 2014 was a very long month. Tate was improving by the day and galloping around like a loveable dingbat and only required 1/2 hour of dedicated time 3 times a day to wrap and re-wrap his feet. By the end of the month I was able to have the 5 sociable dogs strategically stay on their beds and keep Kadi on her bed (with a leash) to get her used to being close to them in a controlled situation. I spent a lot of time holding my breath. As long as the other dogs didn't get too close to Kadi or move too quickly she was fine on her bed beside them and it became a regular practice that this is where she ate and was only in her crate when I couldn't watch them or the others were playing. She still couldn't handle the play stimulation.



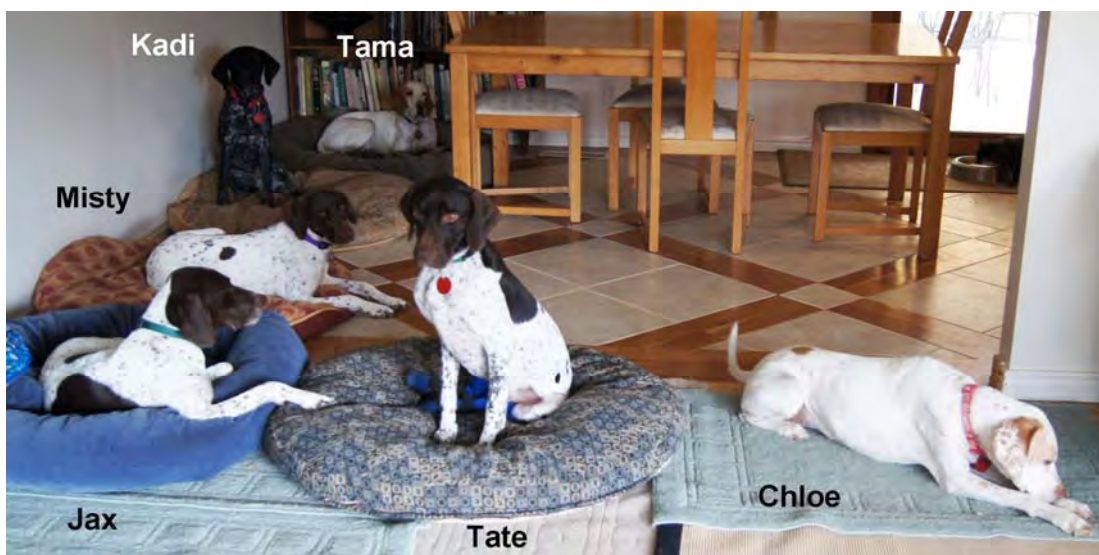
August 2014. Left – learning to “sit and stay” on her bed near the other dogs. Center – alone outside without the muzzle. Right – in my office with Tequila. No muzzle needed with cats!

September was more of the same. Kadi was good on her bed beside the other dogs so I decided it was time to get her to learn to sit next to them and not move. Yep! The muzzle was on during this uncomfortable period. This was also the month that we started Tate on physiotherapy sessions with Anthony Woerner so Kadi got to meet him and watch him work with Tate (and was included in the treats).



September 2014. Left: Kadi watching Tate's physiotherapy session (Tama helping). Center: whole pack waiting for supper. Right: Kadi learning how to “sit/stay” beside other dogs.

By October Kadi could go outside *sans* muzzle - as long as I was right there to yell, throw something, or run and grab her. What I was really doing was keeping her from getting overstimulated when the other 5 wanted to race around. November was similar but a little bit easier for all of us behaviorally. On the other hand my Jax was diagnosed with an insulinoma on his pancreas and was having seizures. Rob Bagley at Cottonwood removed it but we knew it would grow back so he had recovery care for a couple of months and joined the rank of "special" dogs. At the same time foster Chloe was diagnosed with osteosarcoma of the rib cage. November through March were pretty tough months at the UPP homestead.



*October 2014. Top left – outside after birds with the other dogs and no muzzle! Top center – learning to sit/stay with another dog and not chomp on it. Top right – variation on the sit/stay theme. We did a lot of this! Bottom – changing position in the pack while waiting for supper.*

Kadi continued to improve from November 2014 through February 2015. My major issue was the house training skills (or lack thereof). Now that she was able to wander around the house more and I didn't have to monitor her movement every second I'd find wet spots on my carpet. I knew it wasn't the other dogs so paid a bit more attention to Kadi's cues. I noticed that she'd come to me while I was on my computer and put her head in my lap. I'd absent-mindedly stroke her head and tell her to go lie down - whereupon she'd head for the carpet, pee on it, and then come back and lie down. It took this poor girl forever to get me housetrained!

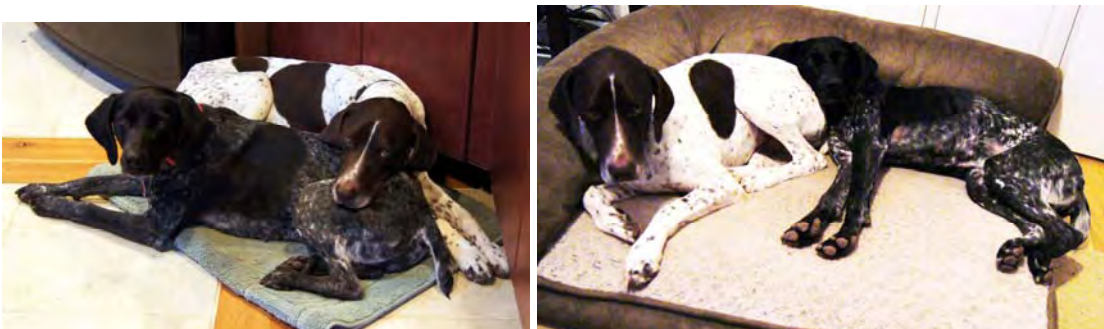


*November 2014. Top: Kadi was comfortable going to sleep on her bed near the other dogs and cats.  
Bottom: No muzzle needed when helping me work in my office!*



*December 2014. Kadi had a blast running in the snow with the other dogs. It was all about her discovering freedom. She loved it!*

Dear Chloe died in February just before 8-year old Phoebe arrived and needed an amputation. This was the first "new" dog in our home since Kadi arrived and I held my breath. Fortunately Phoebe is one of the most amazing dogs I've met - temperamentally stable, good with all animals and people as well as cats. What's not to love!



*January 2015. Kadi relaxing with her buddy Jax.*



*February 2015. Enter Phoebe, our little amputee who charmed everyone.*



*March 2015. Mallory (black top) and Magali (blue top) working at integrating Kadi at Utah Dog Park, a daycare/boarding facility in Salt Lake City. There was a lot of teeth clicking under that muzzle.*

April through most of June were amazingly good months for all of us. We had new fosters come through one at a time and after the first couple of days in a muzzle while she got used to them, Kadi did so well. I was able to leave her alone uncrated with the regular four she'd known since she arrived and not worry about an altercation. I was so proud of her. She'd made huge progress. I realized she'd never be a dog that can be in a daycare situation because of overstimulation but that's OK. A lot of dogs don't do well in packs of 40. Utah Dog Park kindly worked with her several times very early in the morning in a muzzle but it just wasn't going to be part of her future. As long as she was manageable with other dogs in a home I was so happy.



2015. Left: April – totally happy Kadi. Center: May – lovin’ my cats! Right: bedtime with new boy, Waski.

Then the end of June came and things started to go downhill. I was mystified. She'd been so good with all my dogs for so long I was surprised to see her start looking "edgy" again. It wasn't all the time and I couldn't tell what the stressors were. She was afraid of fireworks so we'd go downstairs where it was quiet and she seemed fine.



July 2015. Left: little Tate, friend to all the world, comforting Kadi after the fireworks. Right: Kadi accompanying Tate on his physical therapy swim session. She wasn't at all thrilled.

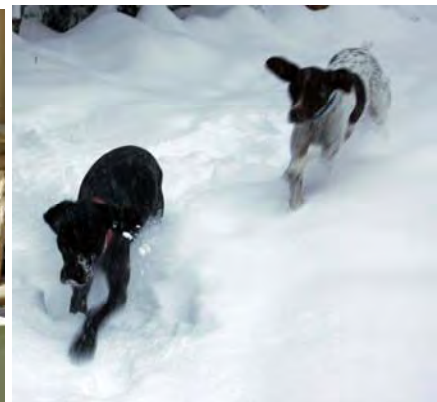
By September she wasn't fine. Utah has this unique cultural need to shoot off fireworks from about the middle of June until the middle of September. By the end of September Kadi wasn't comfortable in her own skin. It didn't matter that the fireworks weren't happening every day. What mattered was that she didn't know when they were going to occur so she could never relax. It was my amazing husband who realized the problem. Like the potty training, which took me forever to figure out, I really didn't understand how serious this was for Kadi until she bit foster Tama on the leg just for walking past her. It's the only bite that's ever occurred in my home and I was dismayed. All that time and all that work. I honestly didn't know what to do. I had to keep my other dogs safe.

So we started all over again. Crating. Muzzle. Added fluoxetine to the mix. Total monitoring. Fortunately this was all pretty familiar to her except the fluoxetine and I was able to ditch the crate and muzzle within a couple of weeks of fireworks cessation. I weaned her off the fluoxetine slowly for the next 6 weeks.



September 2015. Left: with new foster, Remi. Center: chasing birds in the yard. Right: supper with the crew and new foster Luna. This was at the end of the two-week major muzzle period and as long as I watched her she could be out of the crate unmuzzled.

Of course foster dogs were still coming and going. She did well with fat little Shyla who had pneumonia and enthusiastic Winter who almost developed pneumonia. By December she was back to "normal" and we were pretty comfortable again.



November 2015. Top left – helping me work with new foster Shyla. Top right – ignoring Tate and Winter wrestling next to her. Bottom left – enjoying the warm sun in the living room. Bottom right – December 2015 – running with Jax in the first snow. Life Is Good!

Just before Christmas the founder of AZ GSP Rescue called to see if I had a dog that was good with cats for one of their board members. <Smile> I did! We emailed. We talked. She's experienced. She's knowledgeable. She's tenacious. She loves her GSP's. We met in Kanab on December 31 and Kadi left me to become the last adoption of 2015 and start her new life in 2016.

We loved her. We miss her. We wish her and her new family all the happiness in the world.



*December 31, 2015. Left – meeting her new mom in Kanab. Center – at home in Phoenix. Right – January 2016: keeping one of her new cats warm.*