



# QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

THIRTEENTH EDITION [QUARTER 2 2024]

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## NUS PACE: GAINING VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO ANIMAL WELFARE GROUPS (AWGS) IN SINGAPORE

As part of a student initiative at the National University of Singapore College of Alice and Peter Tan (CAPT), NUS students participating in the People & Animal Community Engagement (PACE) programme got their hands dirty and joined regular volunteers at MercyLight weekly for 10 weeks. We spoke to the NUS PACE team to find out more about their experience.

### Can you share more about PACE?

As part of the larger Active Community Engagement Wing at the CAPT, PACE's mission is to forge meaningful connections between students and the diverse local communities. Through PACE's engagements, we aim to make a positive and lasting impact in order to enrich our learning experiences, and grow alongside the communities we support.

PACE is dedicated to collaborating closely and supporting local animal welfare groups in Singapore, allowing us to learn about the challenges faced by animals living on the streets, as well as the dedicated individuals involved in the rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming of the animals.

### How did PACE find out about MercyLight, and why was MercyLight chosen as a partner organisation?

We reached out to several Animal Welfare Groups (AWGs), and MercyLight stood out as the most proactive and responsive AWG that we spoke to. Despite the short 10-week timeframe, MercyLight was willing to collaborate with us.

The unique kennel system in MercyLight, where dogs are kept in packs instead of individual kennels also meant that there were more opportunities for us to contribute to the shelter.

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Our mission is to improve the quality of life for stray dogs through rescue, rehabilitation, and rehoming; to increase public awareness and acceptance of stray dogs as companion animals, and to ensure they are treated with compassion and kindness.

## WHY ARE ANIMAL INTERACTIONS IMPORTANT?

The human-animal connection spans far back in human history. Often, survival depended on our closeness to animals.

In Singapore, strays will always exist, and harmony with them can be achieved through education, understanding, and structured exposure. Understanding animals promotes a community and country that prioritizes patience, empathy, compassion, and kindness.

## CONTINUED: NUS PACE ON UNDERSTANDING THE WORK OF AWGS AND CHALLENGES WITH TAL'S LOCATION

### What was PACE's key consideration in this programme?

A key consideration for us was making sure that our engagement with MercyLight was mutually beneficial. Despite the short duration of our programme, we wanted to provide meaningful support. We wanted our efforts and presence to help lighten the workload at MercyLight, even temporarily, and help re-energise regular volunteers. As much as we wanted to gain valuable insights into AWGs like MercyLight, we needed to ensure that our involvement was not a drain on MercyLight's resources or time. This required careful coordination and proactiveness on our part, including supporting each other on performing our assigned tasks, and reminding each other about crucial information (such as which dogs don't get along well with each other etc).

### Were there any challenges or logistical difficulties organising this whole engagement programme?

Managing our university commitments was a challenge, as some of us had extra classes or scheduled tests which would clash with our shelter duty. We navigated this by reassigning students weekly to maintain a consistent volunteer group size for the majority of our duty sessions.

The lack of accessibility to The Animal Lodge (TAL) compound by public transport also posed a logistical difficulty. However, we were fortunate to have our college sponsor buses to transport us to and fro NUS, and this saved a lot of time.

### What are some highlights of your volunteering experience at MercyLight? What are your favourite tasks to complete?

Walking sleepyhead Raine was very amusing. She had the tendency to lie down and snooze while everyone else was gearing up for the pack walk, and insisted on gluing herself onto the floor while we tried to put on her harness.

Some of us also enjoyed feeding Amigo, where volunteers stood like bodyguards around her while she was eating to block her field of vision so she could eat her food properly. We also found it funny when Amigo would dramatically shun her plate of food, but we soon realised the perfect tactic to feed her.

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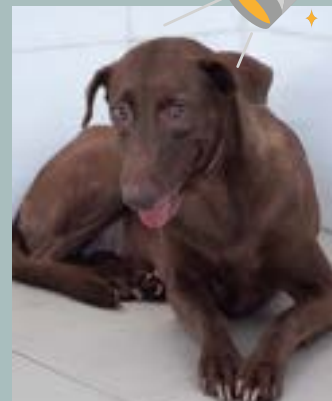


**Even in their short time, the group left a lasting impression and their support helped the dogs**

## SPOTLIGHT ON:

### (POLITE) AMIGO

Amigo was redeemed from NParks on October 26, 2022, along with Dino, Tess and Mikel. According to NParks, they were trapped because residents complained about them loitering in the HDB void decks. This situation highlights our society's intolerance toward animals and the hesitation to coexist with them in their original homes.



### (SLEEPYHEAD) RAINE

Raine was redeemed from NParks on October 4, 2022, along with Abby and Skylar. Similar to Amigo, they were trapped because residents complained about them loitering around the HDB void decks.

### (CUDDLY) MIRACLE

Miracle was named as such because her existence is indeed miraculous. Before she was captured by NParks, there was an incident where she was hit by a car on her hind leg, causing her to limp. Soon after, she disappeared for three long weeks. When she reappeared, she was emaciated. We thought she was going to die, but she survived and thrived. Even her limping hind leg was completely restored, and we could not see any abnormality in her walking. Her life is a miracle indeed!





## CONTINUED: NUS PACE

### SHARING MORE ABOUT THEIR TIME WITH THE BLESSINGS AT MERCYLIGHT

Another highlight was watching Nugget recover from his surgery and began to walk again. Many of us had the opportunity to help out with Nugget's exercises on the peanut ball. It was fulfilling to watch his progress and see for ourselves that our help had contributed to his recovery.

**What are some challenges you guys faced during your sessions? What are your least favourite tasks to complete?**

The noise level in the shelter with all the dogs barking was initially overwhelming, and definitely took some getting used to. We also found it a struggle at the beginning to recognise each dog, as some of them look very similar.

The least favourite task for some of us was cleaning up the poop accidents at the kennel, especially when multiple puppies poop at once. One time, three puppies pooped at the same time, and we all jumped into action like a cleaning crew. One volunteer picked up the poop, another rinsed the area with water, and another mopped the area. We realised that we worked well together and made a very systematic team.

**Which are some of your favourite dogs?**

Some of us really like Miracle, who had the tendency of sticking out her tongue when we scratched below her chin. Merlin, Macy, and Choco were very docile and cuddly as well. Stitch, as he was really strong and energetic, and Amber with her cool-looking sun goggles.

**After going through this 10-week programme, what do you think is the greatest challenge faced by AWGs?**

There are numerous challenges AWGs face, including the lack of a conducive environment to care for the dogs. TAL was built specifically for animal-related activities, and yet, we had to walk the dogs multiple times daily on the road where cars and trucks pass.

The location of TAL at Sungei Tengah, and lack of accessibility by public transport is also a barrier and deterrent to potential volunteers, who may be keen to volunteer but do not have the resources such as a car to get to the shelter. 🐾



# SPOTLIGHT ON:

## (STRONG) NUGGET

**Nugget was rescued on August 4, 2023. He had a severed tail that was badly infected with maggots, and the infection had spread inward. He was admitted to the A&E with the likelihood of needing his remaining tail amputated. Thankfully, the infection cleared over the following days, and no amputation was needed. However, his body posture seems to be injured as well, as he walks bow-legged like a crab.**





<< The peanut ball is a tool used in rehab. Volunteers are briefed and trained to help guide dogs through their assigned exercises to help them regain strength after their injuries

Special mention of Amber (with her cool-looking sun goggles >>





# CUDDLY CREW





**Macy**  
Gentle and affectionate



**Stitch**  
Likes laps and is very playful



**Choco**  
Happy and confident



**Merlin**  
Good family dog potential

# VOLUNTEERING AT MERCYLIGHT



**PACKER/FEEDER**

Packers assist in sorting and preparing foods for feeders. These two roles, through their patience and persistence, offer hope for many strays



**KENNEL VOLUNTEER**

Walking, cleaning, bathing and administering medication to dogs - this is a very fulfilling on-the-ground role with a committed and fun team.

**>> INTERESTED OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO MAY BE KEEN?**

**Visit: [mercylight.org.sg/get-involved/](https://mercylight.org.sg/get-involved/)**

## NEW RESCUES: EMMA

### CASES LIKE EMMA'S ARE REMINDERS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF POLICIES ENCOURAGING STERILISATION, RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIPS AND EDUCATION

At just one year old, Emma was subjected to breeding for Singapore Special puppies by individuals who opposed efforts like Singapore's "Trap-Neuter-Rehome/Release-Manage" (TNRM) program. TNRM aims at managing the free-roaming dog population.

Despite her young age, Emma is estimated to have undergone two to three reproductive cycles before her rescue. Emma's life changed when authorities raided the breeders, leading to Emma's rescue and subsequent placement under MercyLight's care after redemption from an independent rescuer. Emma's story highlights the importance of prioritising policies and public education on animal welfare through:

- Educational Campaigns: Support responsible, life-long pet ownership and supplement with community, trainings and resources for pet owners
- Regulation: Strictly control the sale of bred animals for financial gain
- Adoption Support: Promote the adoption of rescued animals
- Humane Stray Management: Such as TNRM (Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage)

Through education and community involvement, we strive to create a safer and more compassionate environment for all animals in Singapore. Emma's rescue serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of these efforts in safeguarding animal welfare. 🐾



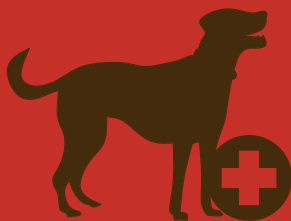
**LOOKING FORWARD TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE - Emma was rescued and is adjusting to her new life. She walks well on a leash and is well-behaved.**

## TRAP, NEUTER, RELEASE & MANAGE

The TNRM program, implemented by the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVS) and supported by animal welfare groups, aims to address these challenges through a science-based and humane approach:



**Humanely Trap:** Collaborative efforts are made to trap free-roaming dogs for sterilisation, which helps control the population of stray animals.



**Neuter & Vaccinate:** Veterinarians perform sterilisation procedures to prevent further reproduction and reduce the number of free-roaming dogs.



**Rehome/Release:** Animal welfare groups work tirelessly to find homes for the sterilised animals. Those that cannot be rehomed are released into suitable locations where they can live out their lives naturally.



**Manage:** AVS and animal welfare groups actively monitor the situation on the ground, encouraging public participation in reporting incidents and issues related to free-roaming dogs.



## MEET THE ADOPTERS: BUBBLES (PREVIOUSLY ASTREA)

### INSPIRED BY STRAY DOGS IN ASIA, BUBBLES' FAMILY CHOSE TO ADOPT A RESCUE

#### Why did you decide to adopt?

We bought our first dog in 2013 from a breeder, and we absolutely adored her. However, after moving to Asia, we became more aware of the numerous stray dogs in need of homes - this inspired us to make the next addition to our family a rescue dog. A friend recommended MercyLight when we began our search, and we were immediately impressed by the shelter and the team's dedication to the cause.

#### Can you run us through your decision making process when you decided to adopt Bubbles? What factors did you consider?

We felt that a puppy would be safe and suitable as we have very young children at home (aged 6, 4 and 1 years old), and we wanted to ensure we didn't adopt a dog who had a past history of aggression or other behavioral issues. In terms of size, we were hoping for a dog under 20 kilos. Upon learning that there were puppies at MercyLight, we visited right away. Although we initially selected a different puppy from the website, when we met them in person, we immediately connected with Bubbles, making the decision an easy one.

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

The adoption process was very smooth but also quite intense. We visited the shelter several times, including once with our children, and then had Bubbles in our home for a two week trial stay before we could finalize the adoption. Balancing young children and a new puppy can be logistically challenging but it's also very rewarding; our children already feel that Bubbles is an integral part of the family.

Kelly and the MercyLight team were incredibly helpful, providing plenty of tips and always being available to answer any questions. This wasn't our first dog so we had an idea of what to expect from a puppy at home, but every dog is different and we did encounter new challenges that required guidance - it was wonderful and reassuring to know that Kelly was available for advice when needed.

#### How has Bubbles been settling into your family? Have you noticed any changes?

Bubbles has settled in very well with the family! She adores the kids, and they love to play and run around together. Everyone enjoys taking her out for walks and throwing the ball for her. However she does like to steal the fluffy toys from the kids, so that is sometimes a (cute and funny!) point of contention.

#### How has adopting Bubbles changed your daily lives?

After our first dog passed, we were so sad to come home to a quiet house. We really missed having a



**BUBBLES WITH HER FAMILY**

**Bubbles, now a cherished member of the family, seamlessly integrated as a beloved playmate and companion. Her presence has filled the home with warmth, reminiscent of the companionship they missed after their first dog passed away.**

companion on our walks. Bubbles has brought the unconditional love of a dog to our family again - she's always extremely happy to see us when we get home, even if we've only been away 15 minutes. She is a very happy dog and instantly lifts our moods with a few pats or a lick.

#### Do you have any advice for others?

If you are seriously considering adding a dog to your family, then we would absolutely recommend adopting. If you've got very young children, a good shelter such as MercyLight will be able to assist you with recommending a dog that aligns with your family dynamics. Of course, a puppy or a new adopted dog is always a lot of work initially, but the immense joy they bring once integrated into your family makes it all worthwhile. We're delighted with Bubbles and we look forward to adopting more dogs in the future! 🐾

“ Balancing young children and a new puppy can be logistically challenging but it's also very rewarding... ”

## NEW RESCUE: PRINCESS

**PRINCESS BLESSING'S RESILIENT JOURNEY FROM BEING A STRAY ON THE STREETS TO FINDING SAFETY AND CARE AT MERCYLIGHT EMBODIES HOPE AND TRANSFORMATION, SHOWCASING THE PROFOUND IMPACT OF COMPASSION ON THE LIVES OF STRAY DOGS.**

Princess Blessing's journey embodies a story of resilience and hope. After being sterilised at a young age by an independent rescuer and subsequently released back onto the streets, Princess endured more than five years navigating the harsh realities of life as a stray. Recently, she would often be found lying in the middle of the road outside the Animal Management Centre, seemingly unaware of the danger posed by passing cars. Our volunteers, after shelter sessions at MercyLight, frequently encountered her in precarious situations.

Kelly, one of our dedicated volunteers, took it upon herself to gain Princess's trust. After each shelter session, Kelly would feed Princess, gradually building a connection with her. However, one day Princess disappeared, only to be discovered in the custody of the SPCA. Despite the intention to release her back into the wild, MercyLight intervened, offering Princess a safe haven within our shelter walls.

Princess's physical condition upon arrival at MercyLight told a tale of her difficult past. Her body posture, with a sloped spine, suggested years of struggle to find adequate nourishment and care. We suspect that Princess's health suffered during her time on the streets. Now, Princess is guaranteed a future filled with nourishment and care, ensuring that she receives the love and attention she deserves.

Princess's journey exemplifies the resilience of stray dogs and the transformative impact of compassion. At MercyLight, we are committed to providing Princess—and dogs like her—with a second chance at a life filled with love, comfort, and security. 🐾



**PRINCESS GETTING SOME SUN ON THE PATIO AT MERCYLIGHT - when Princess arrived at MercyLight, it was clear from her body's condition that she had had a difficult past. With care, attention and patience by volunteers, she is starting to blossom.**

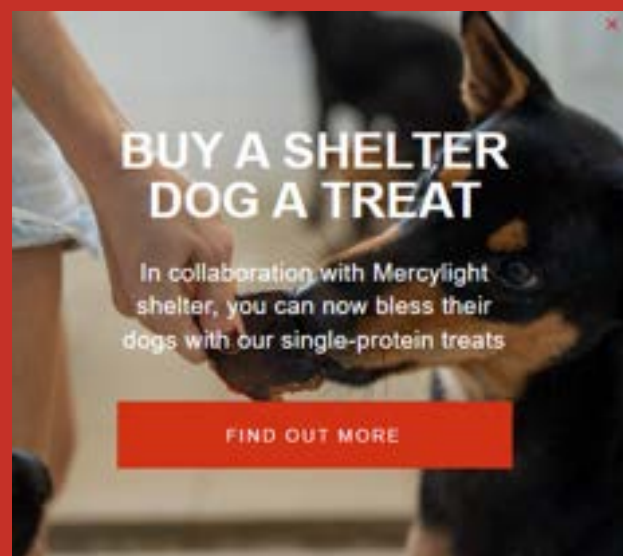
**BigBrownDog - a treat company started by adopters of Kara**



BIG BROWN DOG

"BigBrownDog is inspired by our very own adopted Singapore Special, Kara. Blessed with a playful nature, boundless zoomies and a starry glint in her eye, she unfortunately has food allergies. Many commercially produced food triggered itchy woes, giving rise to bald patches of fur on her body and a poor appetite.

Determined to unleash her inner goofball, we whipped up single-protein treats so fresh and yummy, we'd sneak a bite ourselves! BigBrownDog isn't just about treats, it's a promise to every fur kid that they deserve healthy, human-grade food with no fillers and additives."



>Discount code to all ML alumni: **BLESSING10OFF40** (10% off \$40 purchase)

>Purchase at [www.bigbrowndog.sg](http://www.bigbrowndog.sg) or on Shoppe

>Treats are delivered to MercyLight each month. On the website, select "Shelter."



## SPECIAL: ADOPTION CORNER (CONTINUED)

MEET THE BLESSINGS LOOKING FOR THEIR FOREVER HOME!



**Ooh, my turn to introduce myself... Hi guys, I'm MACY!** 

**Birthdate:** 28 Feb 2020

**Gender:** Female

**Personality:** Mega cuddler, mega drooler when there's food, all round sweetie pie!

**Time in Shelter:** ~1.5 years

**HDB Approved:** YES!



Woof! Hi everyone, I'm Macy, and I'm here to share my story with you. Merlin (my big brother!) and I were rescued on 9th January 2023, thanks to Mercy. It's no coincidence that our names both start with M—we were named intentionally in honor of Mercy. You see, Mercy got lost, and when the humans were searching for her in Lim Chu Kang, they stumbled upon us. We were two skinny dogs, (I'm way thicker now, and I love my curves!) seemingly without a feeder, just trying to survive.

On our first encounter with the humans, we were so hungry that we ate like we hadn't had a decent meal in ages, wagging our tails in gratitude for whatever food was offered.

My name, Macy, means "gift of God" or "Yahweh." I like to think it suits me well because I'm gentle, affectionate, and love being around people. I've been told I'd make a great family dog!

If you're looking for a furry companion who's sweet, friendly, and ready to be a part of your family, that's me—Macy! Let's create beautiful memories together. Woof!

**ADOPT  
ME!**

Ooo yeah,  
belly rubs!



## Long-term fosterer needed for Jalen



**Jalen, our beloved, energetic, three-legged senior doggo urgently needs a new home! His current fosterer may be leaving the country soon. Returning to the shelter will not be an option for Jalen since he has already adjusted to a home environment. Jalen has come a long way from when he was rescued by Mercylight in 2021, where he was found in poor condition from a difficult life as a stray. Jalen now wears a prosthetic leg that will require periodical changes at Keyshoe (Parkway) when the sole wears off. He also sees a chiropractor occasionally. Jalen is HDB-approved and enjoys exploring new places, adventuring and swimming. He thrives in a home environment and will be a perfect addition to any family with kids or other fur babies or those just looking for a loyal and steadfast companion.**

**If you have the heart and home to welcome Jalen for the long term or even permanently, please indicate your interest by filling up the e-adoption form at our website <http://mercylight.org.sg/adoption-form/>**

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.

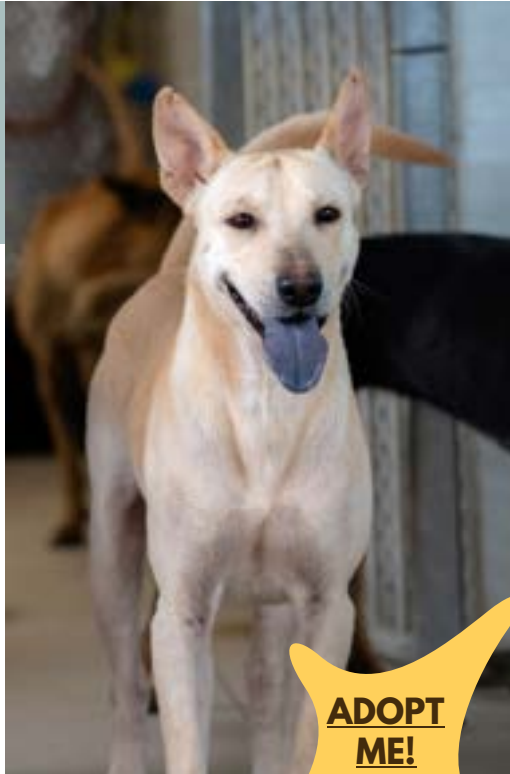


Catch the next issue in July 2024!



# SPECIAL: ADOPTION CORNER

MEET THE BLESSINGS LOOKING FOR THEIR FOREVER HOME!



**ADOPT ME!**

## Hi there, my name is HONEST!

**Birthdate:** 12 June 2020  
**Gender:** Male  
**Personality:** Sweet, playful, calm  
**Time in Shelter:** ~1.5 years  
**HDB Approved:** YES!



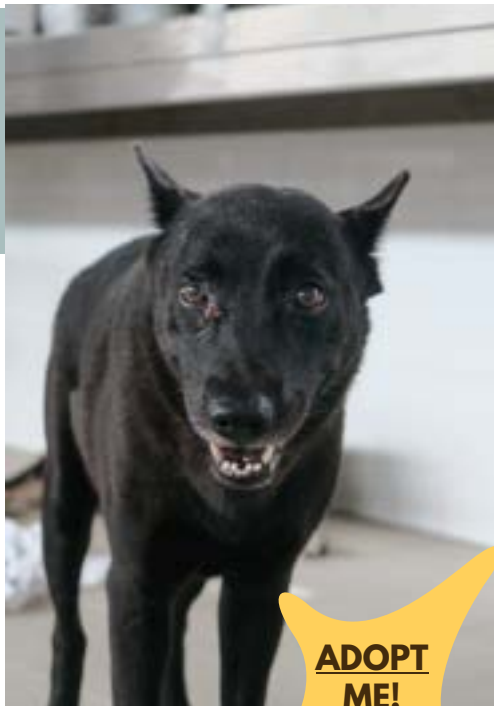
Woof! Hi everyone, I'm Honest, and I'm here to share a bit about myself! I'm what you might call a professional joy spreader—I've got a tail that wags on its own and a heart full of happiness.

Here's a fun fact about me: my favorite feature about myself is my purple tongue! It's pretty unique, don't you think?

Being rescued was the best thing ever! I bounce around like a pup because, well, I missed out on my puppy days and I'm making up for lost time. When I first got here, I didn't really know how to show my love properly. I used to say "Hi" by playfully grabbing a leg or a thigh — hey, I thought humans were just big dogs too! But I've learnt fast and now I'm all about the gentle approach, making sure my hugs and hellos are friendly and pain-free for everyone.

When I'm at the shelter, you'll often spot me lounging in my favorite spot, eagerly awaiting mealtime. Oh, and let me tell you—I absolutely LOVE food. I mean, really love it! If I could, I'd happily munch on all my friends' meals too!

I'm on the lookout for a forever family who gets my zest for life and is ready to keep up with my playful spirit. Let's meet and see if we're a perfect match for each other's happiness!



**ADOPT ME!**

## They call me... KODA!

**Birthdate:** 1 May 2018  
**Gender:** Male  
**Personality:** Gentle, affectionate, looks tough but a big softie!  
**Time in Shelter:** ~1 year  
**HDB Approved:** YES!



Hi everyone, I'm Koda, and I've got a tale to tell! I used to roam the streets where kind humans would leave food out for me. However, I went missing for a couple months and when the kind humans found me again in March 2023, I was in bad shape — there was this huge, painful wound across my lower back. It was red, raw, and infected. I couldn't have survived much longer out there like that.

The humans knew they had to act fast to save me. They brought in a trapper, and luckily, they succeeded in bringing me to safety on 12th March 2023. Waking up in that strange hospital was quite bewildering, let me tell you!

Through it all, I've kept my chill and loving nature. Back in my stray days when they fed me, I was always friendly and laid-back. Some things never change! What really makes my tail wag is my friendship with Amigo. I absolutely adore her and get super excited every time she returns from a short walk—it's like she's been gone for ages!

Sure, I've had a rough patch, but I'm bouncing back stronger than ever. If you're looking for a loyal companion full of love and positivity, look no further—I'm your guy, Koda! Let's make new adventures together. Woof!



Koda's best friend, Amigo! >