

OLDDOG HAVEN

Foster and Final Refuge home information

Thanks for your interest in caring for a senior dog! Providing a wonderful home for a dog that would not otherwise have one may start out as an act of kindness, but we believe you will soon feel that the rewards you receive in love and satisfaction have more than repaid you.

OldDog Haven is able to care for senior dogs by using Foster and Final Refuge homes. We depend upon two types of homes:

- Those who are willing to take one of the oldest dogs that may not be adoptable because of their age or health. Whether for a few weeks, months, a year or more, Final Refuge homes care for one of these dogs for the rest of their days: what we call "doggie assisted living and hospice". We provide support and help with end-of-life decisions but you are committing to be with him to the end.
- Guardians for the adoptable ones, who will foster them until an adoptive family can be found (usually 1-3 months, occasionally more). We depend on you to make an assessment of the dog's personality and need, to better match them to prospective adoptive homes, and to carry out the adoption process.

Foster and Final Refuge care: how are they different?

Foster families provide much-needed loving care to adoptable senior dogs rescued from animal shelters and from owners who can no longer care for them. Very often these dogs come to us in poor condition and very anxious from their abandonment. Part of the foster family's job is to help bring the dog back to good health and let him feel comfortable, thus ready to go on to a permanent home. Foster families generally care for the dog for 2 to 12 weeks until he is adopted. The foster family will be very involved in choosing the adopter.

It is important to keep in mind that these senior dogs may have medical issues that are unknown when they are placed in foster care. We try to evaluate the dog before we make the decision to send him to a foster family, but it is possible that a dog in foster care may not be adoptable after all or may even die in your care. You should be prepared for that possibility, even if it is unlikely. While it is always sad to lose one of our dogs, our mission is to give an old dog the loving home that they so deserve for their final days and you will find it greatly rewarding.

Final Refuge care is for dogs who are too old or fragile for normal adoption and need a safe loving home in the last months or years of their lives. This home will provide a loving final refuge and keep the dogs comfortable and safe so they do not have to spend their last days afraid in a shelter or alone in a backyard. If you can see them through to the end you will find that the rewards far outweigh the pain of losing a friend.

Whether foster or final refuge, you provide the loving home, care, food and transportation as needed and Old Dog Haven pays the veterinary costs. We provide initial flea treatment and supplements, and as much advice as needed.

If you are thinking of either, please consider carefully the following:

- If you currently have dogs, are your dogs good at accepting others?
- Are your dogs up-to-date on vaccinations including kennel cough/bordatella?
Shelter dogs often arrive with kennel cough which is easily transmitted to other dogs; in younger dogs it's no worse than a cold, in older dogs it can lead to problems. We can't guarantee your dogs won't pick up a respiratory bug.
- If you have cats, are you prepared to keep them safe until you know how the dog will react?
- We seldom have cat problems with these older dogs, but once again, we can't guarantee it. If there is a serious problem we would of course find another home for the dog but that usually won't be immediate.
- Facility factors: Do you have a way to get the dog outside for breaks during the day at least until you know how long he is comfortable in the house? We generally don't like to leave these old guys outside all day, even with shelter, and for many 8+ hours inside is too much to ask at least in the beginning. Do you have a lot of stairs? Some of our dogs will have trouble negotiating a flight of stairs.
- Are you willing to deal with the adjustment period, usually brief but can take some working through?
- Could you deal with the possible problems of a dog who has been traumatized by losing his family: anxiety, restlessness, not eating well, likely potty problems at first? If the dog is coming from a shelter, there is no guarantee that s/he is housetrained, so you might have to do some supervision and be prepared for accidents.

- Are you comfortable giving medications, brushing, clipping nails, cleaning ears, all the things that often are needed with older dogs? Can you take the dog to veterinary appointments?
- Foster home applicants: Would you be willing to take some pictures and to introduce the dog to potential adopters? We would do the "marketing" and screen potential adopters, but you would be responsible for the introduction and for judging the suitability of personalities and how well the dog liked the adopter. We have an adoption agreement and an outline of procedures, you would be responsible for paperwork completion and collecting the adoption fee.

If you would consider being a "final refuge" home for one of the oldest dogs OR would be willing to provide temporary foster care for a dog that we hope will be adoptable, we would love to have as part of our team. Our foster application is attached, just complete it and email back to olddoghaven@verizon.net to let us know your interest and your situation and preferences. The more homes we have, the more dogs we can help. There is nothing like the feeling that you were able to make the last few months or year of a dog's life the very best s/he ever had.

OldDog Haven
Judith and Lee Piper
9016-99th Ave NE
Arlington WA 98223

360.653.0311
fax 360.653.0311
olddoghaven@verizon.net
www.olddoghaven.org

OldDog Haven Foster & Final Refuge Care Application

These questions will help us (and you) assess how appropriate your home would be for a senior dog and what dog would be most appropriate. All information is treated as confidential.

Name:

Address:

City, state, zip:

Phone:

Cell phone:

email address:

Work phone:

1. Are you interested in: Fostering Final Refuge care Both

2. When would you be available to take a dog?

3. How long could you keep the dog?

4. Have you volunteered/fostered for a rescue/shelter before?

5. Dogs in your home (gender, age, breed/size)

Are the dogs vaccinated according to our suggestions above?

6. Cats or other pets?

7. How many adults live in the household?

8. Are there children in the household/visiting regularly? Ages:

9. Name of your vet clinic?

10. Could you take the dog for vet visits?

11. Do you have a fenced yard?

12. How long would the dog be left alone during the day?
Indoors / indoors with dog door / outdoors?

13. If alone for more than 4 hours, what arrangements for potty breaks can you make?

14. Do you own or rent? Are dogs welcome?

11. Do you have stairs the dog would have to climb?

12. Could you give medication or baths?

13. Are you prepared for losing the dog? Please think about this carefully. We offer support but the grief & the rewards will be yours.

14. Any other preferences or restrictions we should know about?

Thank you for your time and interest!

When you have completed the application, you can get it to us several ways (choose what's best for you):

1. ***Mail***

Print the completed application & mail to:

**OldDog Haven
PMB A4
621 SR9 NE
Lake Stevens WA 98258**

2. ***email***

- From the File menu within Word
- select **Send To | Mail Recipient (as attachment)**
- Address the email to **olddoghaven @ verizon.net**

3. ***Give us a Call***

Call OldDog Haven at **360.653.0311** and discuss your application answers with Judith

4. ***Fax***

To 360.653.0311

INTRODUCING A "NEW" OLD DOG TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD

An old dog coming to a new home is most likely shell-shocked, will withdraw for a while and then slowly figure out that it's OK and will then be quite needy for a while. Here's some guidelines:

- For at least two days keep him on a leash (see below about dog introductions) except in a VERY securely fenced yard. Remember that a frightened or confused dog may bolt from a strange place. Keep him on a leash even in the house if he seems agitated or wants to pace (or confront the cats or mark his territory!).
- As soon as you have him home, show him the acceptable potty place. Take him out there first thing in the morning, last thing at night, before or after meals, midday. Presume that he may have forgotten his training, or that he may be so stressed that he can't help it, and keep a close eye on him. Praise him for going in the right place, don't correct an accident unless you catch him IN THE ACT. Often a well-housetrained dog in your family will just show him the ropes, given a bit of time. Use Nature's Miracle or some enzyme cleaner on any accident spots or the smell will attract him back.
- Next, show him around the house (on a leash). If he doesn't see or hear well, go slowly and let him sniff. Then, try to sit down quietly and read or watch TV and let him absorb it all for a while.
- At night, use a crate if you wish (placed in the bedroom or right outside it so he feels part of the pack) or show him his bed and tether him there for the first night unless you're SURE he will sleep through the night and not have an accident. After the first 1-3 nights just let him pick a spot.
- Feed small amounts for the first day or two, using any food that came with him and gradually mixing in whatever you choose to feed. He's likely to vomit from nerves, don't panic. Loose bowels for the first day are very common too – stress and change of diet.
- Wait 2-3 days to begin the beauty treatment; however, if nails are very long start on those as soon as he seems comfortable. Don't bathe yet except for emergencies (= you can't stand to be in the room with him). Avoid unnecessary stress until he feels safe with you.
- What takes patience is letting him get used to a new routine, showing him what's expected without putting too much pressure on. DON'T HOVER or shower him with attention, let him relax and work his way into the family. You still need to be the leader and he will find his place with time. Don't be surprised if he sleeps a great deal once he relaxes.

***INTRODUCING TO THE OTHER DOG(S)**

- If you have a dog that tends to be territorial, it's best to let the dogs meet in a neutral place (not in your yard or home). It's often good to just put them both on a leash and go for a brisk walk together, 5-10 minutes should do. Put one on either side of you or get help.
- If your dog is good with others, it works to let them meet WITHOUT LEASHES in a very safe spot, not too small – leave room for maneuvering. Don't worry if they play-skirmish a bit, they have to work out who is higher status.
- After the meeting, the most important thing is: PAY MOST ATTENTION TO THE RESIDENT DOG, pretty much ignore the new old fellow. This is the best way to avoid jealousy and let the new old fellow work into the pecking order. It's tough but it's very important!! and will go far to keep the new old fellow safe from bullying.
- Remember that you don't have to treat all the dogs in your family alike. Each may have some different privileges. Take some with you, take walks with some, let some on the bed, etc. As long as each KNOWS ITS PLACE IN THE ORDER it will be fine. Don't let those eyes make you feel guilty!

This all takes some effort for the first 2-3 days, but most old dogs very easily slip into the family and routine, asking little but to sleep and eat and be near you. You'll feel how happy they become.