

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

The Canine Condition. Come, sit, stay. Welcome to the Canine Condition podcast. My name is Jacqueline Pinol. I am an actor, documentary filmmaker, and animal rescue advocate. The Canine Condition podcast is a platform to bring awareness to dog adoption and to provide all dog lovers and pet owners with information and resources on how to raise a healthy well-balanced dog. If you are thinking about getting your first dog, or just want to know where and how you can help a dog in need, this is also a place for you.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

I like to buy things, don't you? Treating ourselves makes us feel good. But when you buy something, anything, do you give a second thought as to where it comes from? Or how it got to be what it is when you're holding it in your hand and about to buy it? Or when you click the purchase button online? We are a consumer based society. There is no denying that. As consumers, we drive the market. Companies want to please us and compete for our business, but it is no secret that many of the products we buy, for need or for pleasure, get tested on animals before they are considered safe for human use.

Toothpaste, soap, shaving cream, lotion, what about household cleaning products? We have to buy them. How many of us ladies love makeup? I know I do, lipstick, mascara, eye shadows. Men buy shaving cream, hair gels, cologne, you name it.

There are so many products that get tested on animals, and don't just take my word for it. Do an internet search and type in, "What companies test their products on animals?" Or type in the company names of the products you use, see what comes up. And does it suck to have to think about all this? Yes, it does suck that we have to think about these things, and consider them, when all we want to do is buy things that we need every day to make our own world go round. But the thing is, if we turned a blind eye to this aspect of the canine condition, the torturing of animals continues. And for what? I will have you know, as we found out in episode seven of this podcast, companies can do other types of testing, such as human skin cell testing, to safely manufacture consumer products.

So why do they test on animals? Just for our safety? For our benefit? No.

Do not be fooled. It's also for profit. Money talks. Besides the creators and manufacturers of these products, there's a whole industry that profits off of animal testing. The laboratories, the research companies that provide the studies, the labs that breed the animals used in the testing, the people whose job it is to lobby our elected officials to allow for animal testing so they can go convince corporations that they need to get these tests done, to guarantee their consumers safety. Making changes and decisions that are more conscious does not mean that we won't get to have those instant gratifications that we all love when we get the products we use. But what if we stopped buying all the products from companies that do animal testing? Oh, you better believe those companies are going to take notice, and start changing the way they do business.

They are going to find a way to formulate products in ways that do not practice cruelty to animals. The ball's in our court. And in the meantime, we can buy products we need and want from cruelty-free companies. In 2021, there are, thankfully, many smaller companies that sell wonderful products that are safe for us to use and where no dogs, bunnies, nor other living sentient beings, have had to suffer for us

to get those products. You can do an internet search on cruelty-free products, and you'll see what I'm referring to. No one is telling us what to do or taking away any of our freedoms. It is quite the opposite. We, as consumers and citizens, are empowering ourselves enough to say, "I want to buy my makeup, my

toiletries, my cleaning products, my office supplies, but I don't want the companies they come from to practice cruelty to animals by testing and torturing the animals."

When we stand together, and we stand strong, we will see a shift in how corporate America and other countries in the world formulate our goods.

Freedom is getting to decide how we want things made and where. Necessity is the mother of invention. Let's make the animal testing companies do the right thing while still getting the products we all love.

Changing with the times is important. Not only so that we have an easier time understanding and living in the world that surrounds us today, but also to avoid that generational gap that will exist with our own children. How many of us think our parents are so old school? The world was different when they were young, and now I think of my son who is only five years old, and I ask myself, "Will he distance himself from me, or feel that I'm so old school one day, that he won't be able to relate to me if I refuse to change with the times?" He's growing up in a world where his generation does need to be more conscious of how and why they consume certain products because of the overuse and misuse of the planet's resources today.

Those of us that remain unwilling or unyielding to change will miss out on opportunities to grow closer and bonded to our children who are growing up in this time. One of the greatest gifts we can give our children, or leave behind for loved ones and friends who will be here after us, is to live by example. At the end of the day, if we can say we put good out into the world, and we can sleep at night knowing that our actions benefit us and others, then we're headed in the right direction. I would love for my son to grow up in a world where he'll look at me and say, "Oh my gosh, you guys used to do animal testing for your products? What was wrong with you? We don't do that anymore."

But until then, we have a lot of work to do. And on today's podcast episode, we will get to learn and hear more about that work from a representative of the Beagle Freedom Project. Since its inception in 2010, Beagle Freedom Project is a non-profit animal rescue and advocacy organization, and the world's leading organization for rescuing and re-homing animals used in experimental research. This dedicated group of individuals rescue and rehabilitate animals used in testing that are also subjected to other forms of unique cruelty, abuse, and neglect. Beagle Freedom Project strives to end this cruelty through its educational programs, campaign initiatives, and lobbying efforts to make the world a better, safer, and healthier place for both animals and people.

It is my pleasure to welcome Beagle Freedom Project volunteer, Lori Cohen, to the episode. Lori is also the director of the organization's new Canada chapter. Welcome to the Canine Condition podcast, Lori.

**Lori Cohen:**

Hi Jacqueline. Thank you for having me, and of course, Beagle Freedom Project. We appreciate it.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yes. Thank you for being with us. I'm so curious and interested in so much about the Beagle Freedom Project. So I'm going to jump right in.

**Lori Cohen:**

Okay. Sounds good.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Before we address the question that, to me, is the big elephant in the room, and I'm going to save that, I'd like to know how you got involved with the Beagle Freedom Project.

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, I had a precious beagle walk into my life over 10 years ago now, and I knew nothing about beagles. So as crazy as this is, I Googled, "What do I do with this beagle? What's the personality of beagles? What do I have to look out for?" Et cetera. And when I did that Google search, Beagle Freedom Project came up, and at the time, and still, I own a cosmetic company, a cruelty-free cosmetic company, and I just started supporting them through that. So that's how I found out about Beagle Freedom Project.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And why is the organization named the Beagle Freedom Project?

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, Beagle Freedom Project is named because beagles are the number one breed used in testing. We do rescue all sorts of animals and different breeds of dogs, of course, that are used in testing, but beagles are the number one breed used in testing.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So, now here's that question that I was going to ask earlier.

**Lori Cohen:**

Okay.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Why are we, and by we I'm saying American companies and laboratories, still testing on animals in the United States in 2021? Why does this still exist?

**Lori Cohen:**

Essentially, the bottom line is money. They're testing on animals all over the world, it's not just the US. The facilities that test on animals don't want to pay the money to make the change. And there's other ways that you can go about testing using computer modeling, et cetera, but they really don't want to spend the money to make the change.

And on top of that, a lot of the grants that some of these facilities get are based on data. So essentially, if they can generate a certain amount of data out of that animal testing, they're going to receive the grants that they need to carry on. And again, we all know about the pharmaceutical world, it is a huge money making venture, and it's sad to say that it boils down to money, but it really does. And in fact, the National Institute of Health put out a press release a number of years ago, I believe, making recommendations and stating that there wasn't enough data that was acquired from animal testing to even benefit humans, and still questioned the ethics. And it's just that there's no laws in place that mandate these facilities to stop doing so.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So it's a big answer, but I see that the bottom line is simple, money.

**Lori Cohen:**

It really is.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yes. As I stated in my introduction, behind the scenes, it's a lot darker than just, "Hey, we're doing this to make sure humans can use our products safely."

**Lori Cohen:**

Exactly. It really is.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So you said that this is done worldwide, this isn't just a United States problem. There are other countries guilty of it.

**Lori Cohen:**

All over the world.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So who is making progress and who isn't?

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, great question. Countries all over the world are still testing on animals. And it's sad to say, as you had mentioned, the first world, that the US and Canada are in the top 10 countries that are still testing on animals. Primarily we think about cosmetics, we hear a lot about banning testing on cosmetics, et cetera. So recently India, Norway, off the top of my head, Israel, have stopped. It's now illegal, testing on animals for cosmetics. So, that's progress, absolutely, but we're in first world nations, and the fact that we're in the top 10 is really quite disappointing.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So let's talk about the goals and the efforts of the Beagle Freedom Project. Let's discuss the legislation. Tell us what Lennon's Law is, which is also, I saw on the website, the Pet Blood Bank Modernization Act?

**Lori Cohen:**

Yes, Lennon was a Greyhound we rescued, and Lennon's Law is the phasing out of closed colony blood banks, only in the State of California. All the other states do not have closed colony blood banks. The goal is, the same as us as humans would donate blood on a volunteer basis, that's what we want the State of California to do, so that responsible pet owners, that have healthy pets want to help out other animals, can just bring their dogs in and donate blood on a volunteer basis. As opposed to having these horrific closed colonies, where basically, if your dog is getting blood, another dog is living a horrific life and/or dying for your dog to get that blood, and I don't think any pet owner feels good about that. So Lennon's Law serves to phase out these closed colonies, and California is the only state that still does this. I just think California can do better.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And I am living in California, I'm so ashamed that that happens in this state. That is one of the most progressive and forward-thinking states in the country.

**Lori Cohen:**

I know it's amazing. This, too, is on our website, so you can always go on our website under legislation and check that out.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

How can more of us, who are not in that world and just have our lives going on with work with family, but we have a heart, and we want to help, or we want to do something, how can we help the Beagle Freedom Project advance its mission in legislation?

**Lori Cohen:**

Okay, that's a great question. My answer to anything in terms of changing the government is always to call your local politicians, but also just to share information. Sometimes I think, in our first world countries, we forget that the government works for us. I think, in a way we take for granted that they're doing their jobs, and there's a billion things for the government to do, and so the louder we are and the more people that speak to their local representatives, et cetera, about the things that matter to them, is really going to make the difference. And that's a lot of what Beagle Freedom Project does is educate people so that they can be a voice for the voiceless.

People are going to help in different ways. We don't always expect people to be a foster or an adopter. Sometimes that doesn't work for you, but there's just so many other ways that you can do it, and calling your representatives, knowing the facts, and just making your voice known to the people that can change the laws goes a long way.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

It's actually something that seems so simple, and yet, even to me, who would do anything to help an animal, I think, really? All I have to do is call and they're going to care. They're going to listen? Like, what am I going to leave a message? And they're going to listen to it? And, I'm told over and over again, by different people in different states, even through my journey filming the documentary series, that yes, it makes a difference for us to simply leave a message, send an email or call and speak to somebody if they answer the phone.

**Lori Cohen:**

Absolutely. I think it does, and I think the more people that do it, nobody can ignore the masses when you're all saying something. Essentially, the Beagle Freedom Project is an advocacy organization that happens to rescue. So, it's very unique in the fact that our goal is really to end animal testing. And Shannon Keith, the founder and president, puts it very to the point in that rescue is simply a band-aid. And as much as we love rescuing animals, and of course, it means the world to us to see the joy in the fosters and adopters, and to know that those animals thrive even after coming out of conditions that are deplorable. Rescue really is a band-aid. We would like to end this entirely. So, the only way to do that is legislation because as we were saying before, these companies, unless they're forced to do so, they're going to continue to do so. Even when the ethics are questioned, they're going to carry on doing it. So the legislation is very important because laws need to be changed. For instance, with our Federal Beagle

Bill. Right now, 11 states mandate facilities to release animals after they've done their quote unquote service.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

That's what they call it, service?

**Lori Cohen:**

Yes. So they are then mandated to release the animals. Right now, we're hoping the Federal bill would change that so that all the states would have to ensure that these facilities release the animals after they're used. That's just one example. And in terms of Our Georgie's Law, we have a petition right on our site that we're taking signatures and presenting them.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Tell us about Georgie's law.

**Lori Cohen:**

Georgie was a beagle that ended up in a shelter. We got a call to help. He was 11 pounds. He was just emaciated. He was shaking uncontrollably. He was truly what the shelter, what anybody would deem, a dying dog. He was going to die. We were called in.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

When was this?

**Lori Cohen:**

This is in the middle of 2020, off the top of my head, it was just last year. We got called in and we took Georgie out and we got him medical care. And during such time, the owners of Georgie showed up at the shelter. So animal services came to the vet and because of the Good Samaritan Law in California, they were able to pull Georgie out from medical care and take him home. Legally, he was theirs.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Okay, so, was he lost? And he ended up at the shelter? Had he been missing for a long time? Because, I mean, if he's 11 pounds, I'm sure he didn't leave his house the day before. Or did he?

**Lori Cohen:**

As far as we know, he was gone for a number of days, we weren't entirely sure how many, of course. I do believe he had a medical condition, but 11 pounds is 11 pounds, right?

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yeah, no dog that is 11 pounds came from a wonderful home, and I'm sorry to be that blunt.

**Lori Cohen:**

And that's what we thought, we didn't even think he had owners. We thought he wandered off, we thought he was a stray. It never occurred to us that there were owners out there. We took him, we got him medical care. When he was handed over to animal services, even the vet was heartbroken and had said, "This dog isn't going to make it. We need to continue with the medical care."

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Why did the family want to pull him from medical care? Why weren't they just extremely grateful and overjoyed that you were saving their dog's life and paying for it on top of that?

**Lori Cohen:**

Questions I absolutely can't answer, of course, and we wish we could.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Wow.

**Lori Cohen:**

But what happened with Georgie's Law is that, that came into effect when we realized that there was somewhat of a disconnect with the Good Samaritan Program. So Georgie's law basically is a new program that if a dog ended up in a shelter or ended up in the care of somebody else, a Good Samaritan, that if it appeared or seemed that that dog was abused or neglected, that the Good Samaritan would have the opportunity to adopt. And if it was found, after investigation, that the dog was not abused or neglected, the owners could take the dog back or the animal back, but would still be responsible for the medical care that the Good Samaritan provided. And then of course, animal services, or whichever faction was in charge, would then do followups and wellness checks to make sure that that animal was okay. So that's what Georgie's Law proposes after we realized that the program, in our opinion, failed because Georgie was released from veterinary care against veterinary suggestion and opinion.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And the family wanted that?

**Lori Cohen:**

They did.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Oh, wow. I had no idea that, A, that was allowed to happen, and B, what kind of people are we dealing with who would want to do that to their dog? So that's unfortunate. You had to relinquish Georgie back to the owners and let go and move on?

**Lori Cohen:**

We did, we did. And it was heartbreaking for all of us. It was heartbreaking for all of our supporters that watched. And it was heartbreaking for our team to have to let that happen.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And I'm sure the veterinary care provided was, A, not cheap, and B, did you raise funds for it? Or did the organization provide veterinary care?

**Lori Cohen:**

We provided up to \$6,000 worth of veterinary care for Georgie.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And the owners were not responsible for paying any part of that?

**Lori Cohen:**

Under law, not at all.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

All right. To my listeners, if you're hearing this, I urge you to find a way to sign this petition on Georgie's Law, because it seems like a very important cause. I have seen many dogs in horrible conditions relinquished by their owners, but I had not heard that an owner would want to come back to take their dog against veterinary advice, or not let their dog at least heal in good hands and work with the rescue to provide that care. So I'm sorry to hear that about Georgie.

**Lori Cohen:**

It was upsetting.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And in order to make this change in this law, you would have to get how many signatures, and what would be the next step to see this program adopt that change you're proposing?

**Lori Cohen:**

I will say that if you would like to sign the petition to have the Good Samaritan Act changed into Georgie's Law Program, then go to [bfp.org/georgieslaw](http://bfp.org/georgieslaw). You'll see it under legislation on [bfp.org](http://bfp.org), and we're just getting signatures so that we have enough signatures to present it, and therefore it will go through, and the program will be changed.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Is that how you have to start every program that you want to change? For example, even with animal testing, petitions, calls, proposals, what does it take to make actual change happen?

**Lori Cohen:**

I think it truly starts with education, and the founder and president, Shannon Keith, is an attorney, so she's got a fantastic amount of knowledge, both in the animal activist world and as well as an attorney. So needless to say, Beagle Freedom Project is really run by somebody who knows what they're doing, and knows their way around the law, which is fantastic, and we're blessed for that, of course, as are the animals blessed for that.

But from the standpoint of an advocacy group and organization, I think education is the key. And really just asking people to speak up, asking people to share information, really, along with our Cruelty Cutter app. I mean, again, I'm going to bring it back to money a little bit, because as I was saying earlier, some people can't foster, some can't adopt and some people maybe don't have the financial means to donate, but that does not mean that you can't make a difference. That doesn't mean that you can't help Beagle Freedom Project or help the animals. And the Cruelty Cutter app that we've got is the perfect example.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Oh, tell us about that. What is it?

**Lori Cohen:**

So it's an app that basically scans products to tell you whether they are cruelty-free or not cruelty-free, you download the app, it's on your phone. Every time you go to the drug store, every time you go to the grocery store, you can check out household products, cosmetics, et cetera.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Really?

**Lori Cohen:**

It's fantastic. It'll come up right on your phone. It'll show you, "This product is not cruelty-free," or "It is cruelty-free."

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Wow. I'm going to write that down. Cruelty Cutter.

**Lori Cohen:**

If you go to cruelty-cutter.org, you'll see it, you can download it. The extra cool thing about that is that it's got what we call the bite back. So as soon as you find a product, if it says that it is not cruelty-free, you can hit the bite back option. It'll automatically post to whatever social media platform you want, so you can tell people, "Hey guys, this is not cruelty-free."

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Really?

**Lori Cohen:**

And then, conversely, you can do the same if you want to promote what is cruelty-free, what products are cruelty-free.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

That's fantastic.

**Lori Cohen:**

It's fantastic, and if the legislations aren't in place to stop these companies from testing on animals, at the very least, we can do it.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yes, that's exactly what I was talking about in my introduction.

**Lori Cohen:**

Right. Like if we're not spending money out of pocket to these companies, something's got to give, so that is a huge way that people can support Beagle Freedom Project.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Oh, that is so great. You know what I'll be doing when we hang up from this call.

**Lori Cohen:**

Downloading that app.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

I am downloading Cruelty Cutter.

**Lori Cohen:**

Perfect.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Absolutely. So let me ask you this question, because when I was preparing to interview you, and I'm so moved by the work that is done because there's a lot of images and videos and things that I'm sure you see that are really hard to take. Have you ever met anyone, or have you heard of anyone at the organization Beagle Freedom Project, that has met somebody who worked in one of these laboratories or bred dogs used for testing, that basically said, "I repent. I can no longer do this. I want to be on the other side and advocate for these innocent dogs."

**Lori Cohen:**

I do you know that Shannon said that, overall, she's only met one person that had worked for Revlon and they stepped out and said, "I simply can't do this anymore," and now advocates and talks openly, and speaks about it, but-

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

One.

**Lori Cohen:**

One.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Okay. And you do have something on your website, the whistleblower button.

**Lori Cohen:**

Yeah.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

When I saw that I was very intrigued, so I'm going to let you talk about that. What exactly is the whistleblower tab on your website?

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, the whistleblower tab is for people who are either in the biomed industry, they work at a facility that tests on animals, they're a relative of somebody who works at a facility, they have direct knowledge

and experience with somebody working in the lab, or they're working in the lab themselves. And they can either email or call on absolute confidential phone number and confidential email that goes only to the president. So nobody else knows who they are and what their correspondence is. It's really important to us because we've uncovered a lot of information from facilities all over the US, and of course subsequently saved many animals lives because of it. But the bio-med industry, people are reluctant because that industry is very secretive in terms of the public. As well, people are not only afraid of losing their jobs, they're afraid of being injured and killed.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Oh my gosh.

**Lori Cohen:**

It's a very, very dark and secretive world, and so the confidentiality is key, and we stand by it. And honestly, though, it is so unbelievably helpful and necessary, so that's something that we really count on.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Right. I mean, I can understand that people working in these jobs would be fearing for their lives if there is fear of retaliation. I guess the one question we can't really answer is, who can sleep at night knowing that that's what they do for a living? That's really hard for me to take.

**Lori Cohen:**

Yeah. I agree. We ask ourselves that, and then we just carry on.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

You have to take action, right?

**Lori Cohen:**

Yes, exactly. We have a mission, we go with it, and trying to figure out the logic of the human mind is, you know, we'll drive ourselves crazy.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

You're right. Can you tell me, why are beagles the chosen breed? Why do they have to be bred and suffer these consequences?

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, number one, they are very, very forgiving creatures. They're very sweet. They're very gentle. They are very easily kept in cages. They don't cause a fuss. They usually won't fight back. All the traits that we love about beagles is exactly why they're used in testing.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Can you tell me a story about one, among the many I'm sure, that sticks out about a beagle who had a rough time, a rough beginning, but a beautiful new beginning because of the Beagle Freedom Project.

**Lori Cohen:**

Yes. And there are many, but I'll tell you my own experience is with a little beagle named Hazel.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yes, please.

**Lori Cohen:**

And Hazel is special to me because the very first rescue that I attended, Hazel was rescued. That was back in September, she was rescued from a US laboratory, and on the day of the rescue in California, she had a seizure. So she was unable to go off with her foster, and we had to immediately get medical attention for her. And as it turned out, whatever was tested on her caused a tumor that, basically, she required insulin daily, like a diabetic, but the tumor continued on. So essentially with Hazel, when we researched, she was pretty much given six months to live, maybe a year. It was suggested that she have surgery, but she might die, and we just didn't know which way to go. So Hazel was just adorable, and she actually spent the first night with me.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Were you able to know her age? Or if she was tested on her whole life? What kinds of details do you get? Or do you just get handed the dogs, and Hazel comes to you, and you know nothing?

**Lori Cohen:**

It depends. Sometimes we know definitively date of birth, et cetera. A lot of times we do, a lot of times we don't, we get an estimate. In this case, many of these dogs, in this particular rescue, the dogs were older than what we would normally see. So they were in the six, seven, eight range, they were quite a bit older, which means that they were in the laboratory-

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So Hazel was in that group?

**Lori Cohen:**

Right. They had been in the laboratory for what would be considered a good amount of time, six to seven, eight years.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Gosh.

**Lori Cohen:**

So there was a lot of testing going on. Yeah, and she was so sweet, very scared, as you can imagine. She didn't really know what a dog bed was, so we had to coax her into a dog bed. Thankfully, the second night she slept on the bed with me, and it was just so beautiful that I got to touch her and she could have human touch and sleep. As it turns out, though, she is with wonderful, wonderful people who are taking care of her. She's got a fantastic prognosis.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Really?

**Lori Cohen:**

Yeah. I mean, she may not live what we would all want our dogs to live, of course, the length of time.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Of course.

**Lori Cohen:**

But she's enjoying her cat buddies, her human buddies, her dog buddies, she's playing, and she sleeps in her bed, and she's just a joy. And she is truly-

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

She knows what it's like to be a dog.

**Lori Cohen:**

She absolutely does, and she knows what love is, and she knows what play is. And it's just, from the prognosis of six months, to know that it's already been six months and she's doing better than ever, is beyond amazing.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

That is wonderful to hear. And I know that's what we want for all of them. So, at the very least, if all we can do is keep supporting programs like the Beagle Freedom Project, we are making progress.

**Lori Cohen:**

Absolutely.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

At least I have to find some hope in that, to keep me going, and saying, "Hey, if we see the outcome of our efforts is positive, and we're actually seeing change, don't stop." You guys are heroes, truly.

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, thank you. It's exactly that, and you know what, Jacqueline? In the very beginning, all of the facilities that tested on animals, one of the reasons that they stated that they didn't want to release the animals is that they said that they were unfit for homes with families, that they would never be okay in a family situation, that basically they were damaged and they were not, essentially, dogs that could live a normal life. And you have no idea how blessed every day we feel when we see our fosters and adopters, and they share the stories of the progress of these dogs and how these dogs have become the love of their lives, and these dogs are happier than anything.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Stop, you're making me want to adopt one, and I already have six.

**Lori Cohen:**

I know, you'll be downloading the Cruelty Cutter app and putting in a foster application at the same time.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Exactly. You bet.

**Lori Cohen:**

But, so it's amazing, and we know that these dogs are resilient. They're really a lesson for humanity in the fact that they are forgiving of the very humans who committed these acts of violence against them. They teach us so much daily, on forgiveness, on resilience, on just moving forward, on experiencing joy. They're just a lesson to us all, every day.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Yeah. Yeah. They are the inspiration.

**Lori Cohen:**

They really are.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Does the Beagle Freedom Project only focus on saving those beagles? Or if owner surrenders come to you, or like you we're talking about Georgie, there's a dog in a shelter in need, will the organization step up and say, "We'll take that dog too." Or like you said, sometimes you take other breeds. How does that part of the BFP organization work?

**Lori Cohen:**

Well, we do take owner relinquished dogs. Primarily, we would like to stay within our mandate, which is animal testing survivors.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Of course.

**Lori Cohen:**

But that being said, we do have a senior program that we will absolutely try to find a home for seniors, a forever home, as well as any special needs. So the answer to that is yes.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

And I did see that you have several programs on the site, you have Sponsor a Survivor, and the senior programs, what are those programs like?

**Lori Cohen:**

Okay. So the Save Our Seniors program is actually a foster program in which somebody becomes a forever foster, and sometimes those dogs are an owner relinquishment or from the shelter, but basically they're usually requiring intense medical care, the usual geriatric problems, some of them are diabetic. So, that is one of our foster programs. And we do have so many supporters who just jump on that, and really want to help out with an older or more mature dog, and that's just their thing. It's really a special, I mean, all of our fosters and adopters are special, but I think it takes a very special person to spend the end years of a life with an animal.

We also have our Sponsor Survivors. So that's something that we do for medical transport, housing. It's like a donation made and you can choose whichever dog you want to contribute to, and they're all listed on our website. So that's just for the general needs of the dog during the rescue.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Oh, that's nice.

**Lori Cohen:**

Yeah. It's got the dog story and everything and the photo, so you can look at each dog and what their story is, and what the rescue is about. And then we have the Rescue Warrior Club, and that's a monthly donation. So that's something anywhere from 25 to a hundred dollars that you are choosing to donate monthly, and contributing anywhere from treats and food and transport, right up to the entire rescue rehab and that. So it's just kind of a tiered system, and then we have a membership card, you get discounts to our shop. So that's the Rescue Warrior monthly donation program.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So on that note, tell us how our listeners can reach out to BFP, or follow the Beagle Freedom Project on social media, and stay up to date with all of your programs and your mission.

**Lori Cohen:**

We have our website, of course, so you can always go to [bfp.org](http://bfp.org). And that's where you'll go to the legislation tab if you want to sign for Georgie's Law. And then of course, you'll see all of our programs on that site, but on social media, Beagle Freedom Project on Facebook and [beaglefreedom](https://twitter.com/beaglefreedom) on Twitter, and on Instagram, and TikTok, you can stay up-to-date all the time with everything. And of course, [cruelty-cutter.org](http://cruelty-cutter.org) is where you're going to download the app so that you know exactly who's testing on animals and who is not.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

Perfect. Thank you so much, Lori. And our listeners should know that I am not getting paid to advocate for any one person or organization on this podcast. I choose to interview people from organizations that are doing the good work for dogs and for people across America and around the world. The Beagle Freedom Project has the Canine Condition Seal of Approval from me.

All of the live links that Lori has talked to us about in this episode will be in the show notes of the podcast episode when you scroll down on your podcast channel. Thank you, Lori, for joining me on this podcast episode. Your advocacy for this cause is so important, and I hope we can bring more people on board BFP's mission.

**Lori Cohen:**

Thank you, Jacqueline. And thank you so much for what you're doing. It is so appreciated.

**Jacqueline Piñol:**

So I have a little challenge for our listeners. The next time you buy a product you love or need, try to look up the company name and see if they do animal testing. Or download the Cruelty Cutter app to get the information faster. Whether you decide to buy it or not, you will at least have more information about the product, and that may help you make a decision that could save a dog's life.

Thanks for tuning in. Until next time, hang onto those leashes.

The Canine Condition. Come, sit, stay.