

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 and 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.

I am very excited about this episode. I have a very special guest with me from the Kramer Foundation, a nonprofit dog rescue organization located in Chemung County in upstate New York. The Kramer Foundation is dedicated to fostering, rehabilitating and rehoming dogs from shelters. Many of these dogs would otherwise be euthanized in those shelters for behavior or health issues.

The organization volunteers also foster saved puppy litters until they are old enough and ready for adoption. The programs at the Kramer Foundation include fostering dogs for soldiers who are deployed with no place to leave their furry friends, fostering dogs for returning veterans while they seek any necessary treatment for mental or physical rehabilitation. They foster dogs for domestic violence victims until they can be placed in a safe home that will accept their dog. The foundation provides certified search and rescue dogs for lost and missing persons, cadaver and crime scene dogs as well as therapy dogs for educational programs, counseling agencies, schools, libraries, and any place needing a fuzzy shoulder to cry on or a warm body to comfort a wounded heart. All programs are strictly volunteer based with no cost to participants and no salaries are drawn by anybody else. Now that is quite a resume. My guest today is Miss Juli Lathrop, founder and the boots on the ground of the Kramer Foundation. Welcome to the podcast, Juli.

Juli Lathrop:

Hi Jacqui. It's nice to be here. Good to see you again.

Jacqueline Pinol:

Good to see you. We are seeing each other virtually, but hey, it's nice that that can happen. And here we are. Let's talk dog. I want to thank you first of all for everything you and your volunteers do and have done for so many amazing homeless dogs. I follow you on social media. I stay up to date with what's happening with the Kramer Foundation. And by the way, for our listeners who don't know, Kramer was a Rottweiler and he was the reason you began the foundation. Juli, you have run a very successful nonprofit foundation for how many years now. What brought you to the level of expertise in dog behavior evaluation and training that you now have?

Juli Lathrop:

Well, we actually started in the schools back in 1999 when I had Kramer and we ended up pairing with the SPCA to help kids and dogs rehabilitate behaviors together, so to speak. And it kind of grew to a point where we became a not-for-profit end of 2002 into beginning of 2003, because the expenses for the programs and the dogs that we were now fostering was greater than my salary. Somebody kind of talked me into doing the not-for-profit. And we've just kind of grown from there. The expertise, I guess I don't know how to define expertise. I don't have the fancy ABCs that you get at the end of your certificates that you get for however training that you do. It's kind of the School of Hard Knocks but it's just by having thousands of dogs of different breeds, different drives, different mindsets, and having the opportunity to train with some really great trainers and learn a combination really of different varieties so that we could touch no matter what kind of dog came in there. We were able to flex what we had and I've learned really to listen to them how they want to learn and what they want to do.

Jacqueline Piñol:

You do provide the search and rescue dogs and therapy dogs and cadaver dogs for police enforcement agencies. From my perspective, I'm thinking you have this level of knowledge and experience that allows you to prepare these dogs for such a thing. How did that come about?

Juli Lathrop:

That came about by having so many different diverse dogs that needed things to do. We found dogs in shelters that were there because of what they were bred for, breed specifics that made them get lost in their mind, get lost in their nose, have to have jobs that were being trained kind of a one system fits all and it didn't fit them. As I looked for stuff to do, I started reaching out to different trainers and different options. I looked at the successes that people had. The Southern Tier Police Canines has been an absolute gold mine for us because they're so diverse in their training and they bring in people from all over the country with different mindsets, different training techniques. We've been able to flex that into our certifications that we do through the International Police Work Dog Association, which I think has the highest standard of a lot of the certification programs. It's known everywhere so it gives us a chance to say that even though these are rescued dogs, they're meeting the standards of some of our highest paid for and trained dogs. We sought out where the successes were and where we thought that we would be challenged the most and the dogs could meet their biggest potential.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That brings up a point. I've noticed through social media posts in the rescue world that a lot of times the Belgian Malinois who are these majestic beautiful dogs usually had been bred in past decades to be police work dogs, but now people are getting them as family pets or they want just a cute, beautiful puppy and the Belgian Malinois are so beautiful. And when they're about a year old, you see a lot of them need to re-home, need to rehome, or in shelters. Is that where your organization would step in and save these dogs? Why do you think that's happening so much now?

Juli Lathrop:

It's happening because actually what they see of these dogs is usually on a movie screen or in a video or something where somebody has not realized the extensive training the dogs have gone through to get to that point. They just see these wonderful, obedient, well-behaved, absolute protectors and guarders and perfect house dogs. They don't realize the literally thousands of hours that go into training. Boy, they are cute puppies. They are cute, cute puppies. I can tell you that in the last couple of months, I've had people reach out that have had 8 and 10 week old puppies, and they're already over them. They don't call them Maligators for nothing. They are all teeth and energy. Usually between eight months and a year is when they end up at the shelters because that's their tolerance, the families are just done with it now. They usually reach out and say, we've done absolutely everything we can. No, otherwise the dog would be a successful member somewhere. Then they get dumped at the shelters and then all that energy has nowhere to go and it turns into aggressions and then they get euthanized.

Jacqueline Piñol:

I'm glad to hear you explain a little bit more of that for any listeners who love these breeds. I love the breed, but I would never get a Belgian Malinois because I can see it is a lot of daily work. There are certain breeds that are working dog breeds, so unless you're able to provide that level of exercise and daily attention, would you say it's better to maybe not get a puppy if you have two kids or other dogs.

I'm just trying to get listeners to understand how to find their match, not just what their eyes see and like.

Juli Lathrop:

Absolutely. It's that spur of the moment thing that they fall in love with the puppy and the looks of it and have to take it home. I tell everybody when they reach out to me, before you say this, I want you to research totally the breed that you're asking me to find for you. Actually, most dogs are in shelters or dropped off or euthanized because of stuff that is their character, that's what they're bred for. If I hear one more person say, I got it because he's a stubborn dog, and I can guarantee you almost every time, it's a beagle or a hound or a hound mix that's lost in their nose. They really don't want to flip you off. They're lost in their nose, that's what they're bred for. If you don't want a dog that gets lost in their nose and you become nothing really to them because they're more about the scent that they're following, don't get a beagle, don't get a hound. Research your breeds before you make a decision to bring a puppy home.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That is a very good message. Can you think of or share a story with us about a dog who had a miraculous save from a shelter or one where both the human and the dog were saved and changed for the better?

Juli Lathrop:

Oh boy, there's so many of them. Honestly, in the position that we're in because of the dogs that we get in, almost every one of ours can fall under that category. But some of the standouts are a little shepherd that came into our local shelter. Literally, I got a call from the dog control officer and the assistant on different phones at the same time that said, we have a dog for you. I said, where is he? He said, on the other side of my desk trying to eat me.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Sorry. I don't mean to laugh. I'm picturing this scenario and I'm thinking this call is not a good call.

Juli Lathrop:

Yeah. He'd just been a chained out dog who had no socialization and just turned into a nuisance in the neighborhood. The people brought him in to relinquish him. He came in there going after the dog control officer. When he told the guy, just throw me the leash, so he threw him the leash and the dog instantly turned and started going after what was the owner. He clearly had no indication of what he was here for. To make a very long story short, this dog just passed recently in his new owner's home, but he left the Kramer Foundation a certified therapy dog, already started tracking, obedience and scent work. He went on to be a titled AKC, titled obedience, rally, tracking. She did her own therapy dog certification herself. The best thing was that his entire life, one of the criteria she had is that the dog had to love to be hugged, and he could hug. Samuel P. ended up just an absolute star with his new owner who understood the breed and understood him and turned him literally from a junkyard dog into an absolute fabulous, just stunning performance dog, because she tapped into what he was bred for.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That's fantastic to hear that there is the potential to turn around a dog's behavior and entire life and give it opportunity if you know how to read the signs and work with them, which is what I've seen you do so beautifully. Let me take you back in our DOGumentary series interview. You said something to me but I wanted you to expand on for our podcast listeners. In regards to the programs that you led in the middle

schools in Chemung County Sheriff's department, you said there wasn't anything that Kramer said that the kids would forget. Why was that a good thing?

Juli Lathrop:

Well, there's several things about that. The messages fall on deaf ears a lot of times when we say it. Kids are kids just the same way we are. If our parent tells us something, we have a tendency to kind of blow it off. If a teacher tells us something, we have a tendency to take it in. But we listen to our peers more and they have more influence to our age group. But there's just something about a dog and how they touch a soul. Many of the dogs that we had in these programs shared a lot of the same stories that our kids were going through. The abandonment, the abuse, the feelings of not fitting in, the bullying, the just absolute I can't talk, I can't say anything, I can't do. The dogs were something that they could relate to. There just was such a connection with the dogs that we will never get as humans, that'll never happen. It's a depth that we will never be able to reach. When they taught a lesson, they could repeat years later. Kramer said, and that would be in there for whatever reason, we can't explain it. It just is a thing.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yeah. I remember when I was a kid, they had that program, D.A.R.E.

Juli Lathrop:

Yes.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Say no to drugs. There were cartoon characters associated with some of the lessons that they taught you. Those were either the phrases or the things you would remember as a kid. Tell us, what was it about Kramer and so many of the other dogs you chose to put through the program that made the program successful?

Juli Lathrop:

The biggest thing about Kramer was he was a Rottweiler. As a society, there were so many preconceived notions about what the breed was, what they did, what they stood for. In a day and age where we want people to judge somebody by their actions and by their accomplishments rather than by what they look like or what you've heard, Kramer was a perfect specimen for that. And so were his 11 children that followed in his footsteps and continued with the programs. But the breed itself is a perfect example of how something can be bashed and somebody has an absolute knowledge, I'm putting that in quotes, of what an animal is like that turns out to be the total opposite. In picking these breeds that have these stigmas to them, we were able to show kids exactly how to get to know somebody and how to look at what they've accomplished. Look at who they are rather than listen to what you see in the newspaper or you hear on the news or a blanket statement about a certain breed.

You can't say every dog of this breed because it's this is this way, and every dog because of its breed is this way. It's an absolute, you have to get to know them. You have to get to know them. You have to train them. You have to do what you're supposed to do on your end. But Kramer was successful mostly because of that and the character education that he was able to instill.

Jacqueline Piñol:

In the dog working programs, I know that there have to be breeders who look for specific bloodlines and behaviors and traits, so these dogs can be the result of a qualified candidate, right, for training.

Juli Lathrop:

Yes.

Jacqueline Piñol

But also, you said Kramer Foundation started 20 plus years ago. It might have been okay to have more breeding then. But given the overpopulation of homeless dogs today, what do you think based on your experience, why do communities have such an influx of homeless and abandoned or unwanted dogs these days?

Juli Lathrop:

The majority of it I can bring down to two words, spay and neuter. The lack of that and the acknowledgement, I do believe there have to be good breeders because of just that you have to have specific traits for specific things. However, comma, I don't believe that the overpopulation is really based on one thing other than the fact that fixing your dog will go a long way. People get these dogs and you get the ones who say, I just want one puppy out of her because we love her so much. And so they'll breed a dog to get that one puppy with no concern what happens to the other 11 that came in the litter. People get dogs and then they move, and now they aren't allowed to have that pit bull in their new apartment. Or they're tired of the pit bull or the pit bull got pregnant and they dump it now because they can't get rid of... We literally answered a call one time where there was a sign on the door for pit bulls. They were two days old and they were giving them away.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Oh my gosh.

Juli Lathrop:

Two days old. People were getting them because they figured a bottle-fed puppy would be more inclined to be really close to them then. The biggest overpopulation and homeless comes from the overbreeding and then not fixing. But it's emphasized or increased now because clearly the situation of people losing their housing, people not being able to get in places breed-specific bans in different places. When you do move with that perfectly wonderful little pit bull or shepherd or doberman, you're not allowed in the next place with it.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yes. I have seen that a lot actually. We're going to cover those topics specifically in other episodes. Having spoken about that, why do you think it's so hard to convince some people that adopting a homeless dog is better than buying a puppy from a breeder or a pet store?

Juli Lathrop:

Because they advertise, and now these little designer breeds they call them, when we were kids, they were mutts. Straight up, they're mutts. Now mutts are designer breeds and they're getting 22, 24, \$2,600 and it's become a status symbol to have it. Then we also have a mindset that people think, well, I know that there are puppy mills that supply these stores but I figured that if I buy one, then that'll at least save one dog. It doesn't save one dog. It makes a market. I can't get them to understand that that puppy that's for adoption in the SPCA were the ones that couldn't sell in the store. If you adopt from there and stop the market at the stores, you're going to stop the spread of the puppy mill.

Jacqueline Piñol:

I had mentioned that in a previous episode wondering what happens to the dogs that pet stores don't sell or that breeders have and are imperfect. I have heard they get passed on to rescues or shelters, don't they?

Juli Lathrop:

They do, if you're lucky. There are many who just take them out in the backfield to shoot them.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Wow.

Juli Lathrop:

If you're lucky, they get passed off to a rescue or end up in a shelter with some kind of chance. But the overpopulation in the shelters tells us that the likely chance of them being euthanized is pretty high as well.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yes, I would like our listeners to get more informed on finding the breed they want, puppy or not at a shelter or a rescue because they're available. You can do just as much work to adopt and save a dog that is a perfect match for you as the amount of work you do to find a breeder or a puppy store and buy it from there.

Juli Lathrop:

Absolutely. A lot of these, there are rescues that are specific-breed rescues. There are breeders who will, when they're done breeding with their dogs will contact a rescue and say, come and take this dog. Do you have a home for it? They don't live out their lives after giving of them for all of these years. But then there's a part of me that says I would rather they do that because a breed-specific rescue usually has a list of people waiting for that specific breed. They're already approved homes and they know how to deal with that breed. I like the rescue part of it because in a good rescue, you're likely to find a better match the first time and you don't have a return, return, return.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That is a good piece of advice there for anyone looking to find a breed-specific dog. They're out there, you just have to look.

Juli Lathrop:

They sure are.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Let me take you to Kody.

Juli Lathrop:

Oh, Kody. He hit the jackpot.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Right? Since you and I met, we've collaborated in saving, I don't know, at least half a dozen dogs together. I want to bring attention to the story of Kody. I want to let our listeners know where that hashtag it takes a village comes into play in the rescue world. After having traveled through the South, filming my documentary, I befriended many rescue volunteers. One of which was a sweet lady named Elizabeth. She contacted me one day and said there was this dog on a chain that was tied so high up on the fence, he couldn't sit down. This was during the time that hurricane Michael swept through Georgia. He survived the hurricane tied to this fence. She could no longer stand to see this go on. She cautiously knocked on the homeowner's door one day. She offered to buy the dog from them. They literally said, you can take him for \$20. When she reached out to me for help homing him, I went to Georgia. I met him. He's an incredibly friendly and loving dog. I remember messaging you Juli and saying, help. Are you interested in helping this beautiful, I thought he was a Rhodesian Ridgeback mix. You said yes. You had room at the time and he came to you. I will let you take it from there.

Juli Lathrop:

Actually, I didn't have room at the time but I couldn't tell Jacqueline no.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Oh gosh, guilt trip.

Juli Lathrop:

I've always said for years that you can change your dog's behaviors, you can't change their heart. It was instantly recognizable that he had a heart of gold. He really, really wanted to be a good guy. He just had no social skills and absolutely no obedience whatsoever, but his zest for life left him what would be considered un-adoptable in many places because of his jumping, leaping, knocking things over, just crazy out of control behaviors. It became very apparent very quickly that this guy was a special dog. Actually, he was in training to be one of my program dogs. My program dogs are aging out. I only have actually at this point right now, two left in my therapy dog group. They are 12 and 13 years old. I've been on the look for a long time for some nice program dogs to work with the kids and be certified therapy dogs.

He was on line for it. However, coming up to a fundraiser we were doing, we had a news interview. I took him to the station. One of my longtime friends who had just lost her shepherd that she had adopted years before, and she had lost her husband. She was a cancer survivor and just really going through a tough time. She texted me and said, who is that magnificent dog? Is he available? Kody had eyes that just the most soulful eyes.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Oh, I remember.

Juli Lathrop:

Oh boy, they reach right into your heart. She came that weekend and met him. I still was torn at the time. Do I let him go? Because he's an absolute in for a program dog. I mean, there was no doubt in my mind, that's what he was going to be. It was apparent. She walked in. He saw her. Leaned in and smooched his head right into her chest and they had a moment together and I knew. Kody is right now living the good life. She actually paid to drive through our Christmas lights. There's a mile long Christmas light display, and Kody loves to see Christmas lights. She pays to have him drive through so he can look at all the Christmas lights. He is an absolute doll living the life.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That warms my heart so much. Those are the stories that I live for because I know there are so many dogs to rescue. Obviously, we would prefer that there not be, but since there are and we're on this mission, when I hear those stories, that's what keeps me going. It keeps me looking for more people like you, Juli, who are willing to take a chance, an educated chance on saying, I can help this dog and we will find it the right home. I wanted to mention something real quick since you were talking about the Christmas lights and everything. Has the current COVID-19 crisis caused more problems for your organization's mission? Have you had to make some changes and shifts in how things are done? Or has it brought more adopters and opportunity for people to adopt dogs from you?

Juli Lathrop:

It's affected us in kind of a little bit different way than you'd expect. We work with other rescues here and there. A lot of times a rescue will reach out to us and say, hey, listen, I've got this dog in and I think it's got potential, but it's not going to go anywhere with us. We can't find a foster that can do the behavior modifications or rehabilitations that it needs. During the COVID crisis, one of two things happen here. One is that a lot more people had time to go and adopt dogs, but then they also had time to spend with their dogs and realize the behavior problems that they had that they've just been ignoring or crating a way when they weren't home. Because we have limited room here and our goal really is to keep dogs in the homes, it has allowed us to reach out to other rescues for people who are looking to adopt. Most of the families are who's reaching out to us.

A lot of these dogs that I bring in, they aren't ready for family yet, or they will never be a family dog. They have to be a working dog. We go everything from pet to military and law enforcement search and rescue, everything in between. But because we have really very limited dogs that are ready to just go in a family, it's allowed us to help other rescues home dogs at a bigger rate because we have so many more families that are reaching out. These rescues have family dogs or puppies that are ready to go into a family and learn how to be a house dog and a member. But it also has allowed us or brought us, I should say, a lot more home visits for some behavior modifications and assistance in helping people keep these newly acquired dogs in their homes rather than get dumped back into shelter or re-homed somewhere else. Every time a dog gets returned, a little piece of them is missing. We really try to keep them in their original or in their first adopted homes if we can.

Jacqueline Piñol:

That's really wonderful to hear just because the message to families out there who think, oh, I got to give up on my dog or this just isn't the right dog for us anymore. I can't give it what it needs. Yes, you can. It's just about finding the formula and the proper combination of support in training, education, schedule, exercise. There's a bunch of things we can always do to not give up on our dog.

Juli Lathrop:

There is. The biggest thing is almost every time I get a call that somebody is looking to re-home their dog, they said, we have tried absolutely everything. There is no such thing as absolutely everything. There's always something else that you can tweak that you can try. Absolutely everything means that you talked to the neighbor or you talked to the local animal behaviorist who is not set up for this breed or who has not had experience with this. Or you've looked on ABC and this is how it says it is that every dog will work that way. Every dog doesn't work that way, just as people don't learn the same way. You have to be flexible. You also have to know the breed. Yeah, the I've tried everything just is not realistic. I've had literally thousands of dogs, probably close to 3,000 dogs through my hands in the last 15 or 20

years. Over a thousand of them have come through my home. We just took in our number 1,028 and that's what I can remember.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Wow.

Juli Lathrop:

The few years into it, I started keeping track and then I had to go back and try to remember the names of all the ones that had come before that. That's just in tracking and that's not counting the probably 30 plus that were keepers that were bred for it, Kramer kids or my working dogs. Those weren't counted as fosters unless they started out fosters and ended up in our program. I think that trying everything means that you have to look at as many different trainers and as many different techniques and talk to trainers that are knowledgeable in the specific dog you have in your hand.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yes. There's always resources. I can't reiterate enough the idea that today with social media, with just an internet search, we can find and we should interview and do our research and do our homework. Not just go for the first one that comes up on the list when you do a search. If you look, it will be found.

Juli Lathrop:

It will, but you have to be very careful too because there's some awesome information on the internet. There's also some horrific information on the internet.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Right.

Juli Lathrop:

There are still trainers out there who are teaching you how to choke your dog out and hang them, and improper use of different tools. It can be a curse as well as a blessing.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yes. I mean, when you're in a situation where you're looking for someone, I really believe in trusting your gut. I feel like if you see something with a trainer or you get a sense of their energy or their vibe and it's just not vibing with you, that's probably not the person for you. Really listen to your gut instinct. Even if 10 other people are like, this guy is amazing. This woman is the best trainer, but maybe she's not the one for you. I really try to listen to that because I have to get along and understand and communicate well with the trainer or he can't or she can't pass along to me what I have to keep doing with my own dog.

Juli Lathrop:

Absolutely. I'll use one point. In fact, I watched a video of a guy who was teaching. I don't know if you've seen the new bonker training method?

Jacqueline Piñol

No.

Juli Lathrop:

Where they wrap up a roll of towels and they hit the dog over the head for everything. He'll hit them for nothing just to show them what that feels like. I watched this seminar, people paid to bring their dogs to the seminar. One after the other after the other kept bringing their, and watching these dogs get fearful and shut down and get hit and now they're hiding behind the trainer. They now won't go to their owners. One after another after another, they kept standing up. You could see people cringing in the audience and then stand up and hand their dog to this man to get hit.

Jacqueline Pinol:

Oh no. Oh no.

Juli Lathrop:

That mindset, the first bonk he did, I'd have my dog out the door. I don't care what I paid for the seminar.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Of course.

Juli Lathrop:

You really do have to. When you say stick to your gut and follow your gut, it is an absolute. That sense is there for a reason.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Yeah. I agree with you. Before we wrap it up, I do have a few more questions. I don't want to lose you yet. This is too good. I'm learning so much. I love it. Let me just for our listeners who haven't known about the Kramer Foundation or are just hearing about the Kramer Foundation for the first time, in 2016, the foundation was on the verge of closing. The facility was not able to sustain harsh weather conditions. It wasn't suited to safely keep the 35 to 50 dogs that you had at any one time. Things turned around in the last couple of years. Can you share with us how the Kramer Foundation was saved and why it is so important to continue to advocate for communities to support programs like yours?

Juli Lathrop:

I can tell you that. I think probably Kramer was my biggest push for that, my biggest advocate, because through him, we had made such connection to the community. I mean, literally, we were in schools and libraries and senior homes and counseling agencies. We did interviews with the police departments for young abused victims who would talk to nobody but the dogs. We went to family's funerals. We went to graduations. I mean, we were embedded in the community so there was a huge support to begin with. When we announced this and the TV station kind of got ahold of it, people called and they did a story on that. As they interviewed people, they said, this can't happen. This just can't happen. It became a grassroots. We didn't qualify for a lot of the great big grants and stuff that would have allowed us to have this up in a year or two. This was three years of bake sales and raffle tickets and spaghetti dinners and chicken and biscuit dinners.

By the grace of God, we came in contact with the community foundation who has been an absolute savior for us. There's a couple of local organizations here that we've gotten grants through, some nice grants, but ultimately it was the community who continues to this day. I mean, the building is up. We still have some stuff to do, but I've got a 50 by 130 kennel radiant floor heating with overhead fans and

covered outdoor pens and fenced fields for the dogs to run. We're working now on what was the existing building, which was 24 by 40.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Oh, what a difference, this is great.

Juli Lathrop:

Yeah, which will now be a training building. I don't have to now carry scent boxes somewhere and set them up and come back and put crates in and carry dogs down to training. Then back and forth doing different dogs. Then come back down at the end of the day and pick all my training equipment up and bring that back home. Everything will be right there on site. And so when I take my dogs out, it will be for very specific training for obedience classes so that they can be socialized in class the way that they should be. Boy, for the first time in 20 years, I'm not hand walking dogs. The last two years, the building was up but the outside pens weren't done. I still was literally hand walking 40 dogs every day.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Wow. And in snowy winters, because I know what it's like up there.

Juli Lathrop:

Oh yeah. Everybody's in one place with heat and running water and it is just like a whole different world.

Jacqueline Piñol:

I'm so happy to hear that. I hope to visit you guys again. Congratulations on that.

Juli Lathrop:

Thank you.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Let me ask you, what advice do you give to anyone who has adopted a dog or is looking to adopt their first dog?

Juli Lathrop:

Especially adopting a dog or coming out of rescue, you can't love the hurt out of them without boundaries. You can't just bring a dog home, turn them loose in a house and think that regardless of what their past is, that they're just going to adjust. Just because you love them, they're just going to fit right in. And that you can just love them and hold them and the whole world will go away and they'll be perfect. You have to give them time. So many people within a day to a week give up on a dog and say, he's not going to fit because you've just brought him in, set him down. It's like turning a teenager loose in New York City and say, find your way. And think that everybody's going to get along and they're always going to make the right choices. Give it time. They need time to adjust. You have to have boundaries right away. How you bring them into your house day one is how you are going to live for the rest of their life there, so make it count.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Hear that, people? Make it count. Juli, what does the love of your dogs mean to you?

Juli Lathrop:

Oh boy, sanity, peace. It's a world that I can leave the rest of the craziness behind. They're there no matter what. Not only what they give me but what they allow me to give or how they allow me to reach others in need is just, oh boy, you just can't even describe it. You just can't even describe it. But at the end of the day, it's me and the dogs and the world goes away.

Jacqueline Piñol:

I hear that. I can relate. Okay. If you could hear an episode on this podcast on any topic related to dogs, what would you like to hear more about?

Juli Lathrop:

Actually, what we just discussed in how to introduce your dog successfully to your house. The time given, the steps taken to make it successful. Right now, we are thankfully, we've got dogs right now in 29 states and 3 countries. We have a less than 1% return rate. That's usually because, I'm going to tell you that the return almost always has come, for the few that have been returned, came from a working home or an agency who tried to manipulate the dog into how they train instead of going with the successes that they had, which is why the dog was placed with them. I would really, really like to have people emphasize the need for proper introduction, boundaries, and how to incorporate a dog into your home not putting the human emotion into we can love it all the way and they'll be fine.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Gotcha. Yeah, that's something to think about. I will definitely pursue getting that topic on this podcast and may have you back as a guest, if you don't mind to enlighten us with more of that knowledge and direction for dogs and people.

Juli Lathrop:

Oh, you know I'm always happy to talk to you, Jacqui.

Jacqueline Piñol:

Okay. If people want to get in touch or help the Kramer Foundation in any way, where do we send them?

Juli Lathrop:

We've got a Facebook, the Kramer Foundation, or we have thekramerfoundation.org is our website there. Email is kramerfoundation@aol.com. Yes, some of us still use AOL. I'm simple. You know, Jacqui, technology is not my thing. I'd rather face a rabid dog.

Jacqueline Piñol:

You crack me up. Our listeners should know also that I am not getting paid to advocate for any organization on this podcast. I choose organizations that I know are doing the good work for dogs and people across America. Kramer Foundation has The Canine Condition seal of approval from me. Juli, thank you for hanging out with us virtually today. Congratulations on the new facility. We wish you many more years of success stories. You are welcome to come back to the podcast anytime and share more stories with us.

Juli Lathrop:

Jacqui, thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate what you're doing on there, bringing light to the plight of our homeless and abandoned dogs and rescues and shelters. The predicament they're in right now is just incredible. I hope this reaches a lot, a lot, a lot of people.

Jacqueline Piñol:

So do I. Thank you. If any of our listeners out there would like to see and hear more about the Kramer Foundation, please check out our YouTube channel or website at The Canine Condition to see the newly released documentary footage at the Kramer Foundation. I hope you will join me in my next episode as I virtually hop onto New Jersey and visit with a rescue organization there named Sammy's Hope. Until next time. Hang onto those leashes!

The Canine Condition. Come. Sit. Stay.

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