



Companion Animal Protection Society



**Beatrice
CAPS Spokesmodel**

Although I no longer chew on some of my mother's possessions (like her pretty shoes, shiny cell phone, and pink lace bra), I am still a puppy at heart. I've come a long way to be the princess I am. Before I arrived at the doorstep of my true home, all I knew was neglect and wire cages. My name is Beatrice, my fans call me Bea, and my story began more than eight years ago in a puppy mill.

I was only four months old when Companion Animal Protection Society (CAPS) investigators saved me from a horrible place in South Dakota back in 2003 in a USDA-licensed puppy mill that bred Basset Hounds, like me for the pet shop industry. I was neglected and the humans in that hellhole didn't really seem to care for our wellbeing. I remember overhearing them talk about us. They said that because of my deformed elbows they couldn't use me for breeding; they didn't want my 18-month-old mama because she had produced a dog with deformities. And they no longer had any use for my grandma because she wasn't having large enough litters. As if that was the only thing we would ever be good at – producing litters at a dog factory! Boy, how we proved them wrong!

My biological mom, Grace, tried her best to keep me safe and well fed, but she was also a victim of the puppy mill trade, just like her mamma, Millie (may she rest in peace). The only humans that embraced me there were from CAPS, a national non-profit organization that investigates puppy mills and pet shops to protect companion animals like myself from animal cruelty.

When the CAPS investigators drove us halfway from South Dakota to meet up with Kansas City-based Mid America Basset Rescue, I knew it couldn't get any worse so I wagged my tail in anticipation. Even my mama and grandma were getting out of there! Thanks to my foster folks, Jim and Chris Bly, who took care of me for nearly eight months at their Basset refuge in Kansas, I eventually found my way to the loving home of CAPS President Deborah Howard, aka Mother, when I was about a year old. Mama Basset moved in with Eric Whitaker and Rebecca Goodvin in Lincoln, Nebraska and Grandma Basset joined Tim and Lori Sanders' household in Tonganoxie, Kansas.

Unfortunately, my troubles didn't end with the rescue. I was born in a very bad environment where they never gave me adequate veterinary care. I was sick with severe mycoplasma pneumonia. I have scarring on my lungs that still haunts me today. They also told my mother that I had congenital luxation of the radial heads of both elbows (I walk with a limp). By the tender age of four, I already had glaucoma, just like Grace and Millie, both of whom developed it later in life than me. I'm blind in my left eye. My right eye has undergone two laser surgeries. I was recently diagnosed with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy by Dr. Barret Bulmer, a cardiologist at Tufts Veterinary Emergency Treatment and Specialties in Walpole, MA. From a young age I had more problems than a senior dog – something that happens often with us puppy mill dogs.

Sometimes I feel bad for Mother and CAPS because of all they have put up with in vet bills and medications (I use four eye drops and a pill which costs hundreds of dollars a month), but they have never left me and do everything possible to get me back on my paws.

My health problems are a constant worry for my favorite human. She wants to make sure I'm comfortable and healthy. Plus, being the spokemodel for CAPS, I have to be healthy and fit. Besides my regular vet care, I've had holistic treatments. With all my health concerns, it was important to address them early. I believe CAPS and mother want the very best for me. We've tried acupuncture treatments, herbal supplements, massages, and loads of hugs. Since I'm such a trooper, I never complain, especially when they give me hugs and my favorite – tummy rubs.

Because of my condition, it's not easy for me to exercise like other dogs, but I'm becoming a great swimmer! My favorite treatment is the pool at the Sterling Impression Animal Rehabilitation Center of New England in Walpole, MA. I'm not afraid of a little water and each session is fun. The lovely humans there bring out the heat packs upon arrival, followed by a relaxing massage and stretching. Afterwards, I get to go on a refreshing dive while strengthening my muscles. I use an underwater treadmill (my current record is 8.5 minutes! Beat that you other Bassets!) and a wobble board. I'm not a big fan of swimming because I hate wet ears, but I put up with it, especially because I know the worst are the ice packs that come afterwards! Cathy Symons, a certified veterinary technician and Canine Rehabilitation Practitioner who works at SI, found me a pink (my favorite color!) swim snood at DogLeggs, so much better than my Mother's gold lap swimming Speedo cap! I know all this is supposed to be a workout, but it feels more like pampering playtime – which a princess like me is entitled to.

Thanks to all that therapy, I'm a cheerful, normal pooch. Like I said before, I've come a long way. I know that thanks to CAPS, Mid America Basset Rescue, Sterling Impression, and all the vets and professionals who have treated me throughout the years, I can run around the yard chasing squirrels (I mostly leave that to my cattle dog mix brothers), sunbathe on decks, or go up the stairs to snuggle in a blanket when it's cold outside. In many ways, I think I'm much better now than when I was a puppy. I'm stronger, smarter, and happier than ever.

Now I'm the face of rescued puppy mill dogs. I help CAPS expose those scary, horrible places to put an end to all the suffering. I never want what happened to me to repeat itself. I know that's a lot to wish for, but all dogs deserve a family like mine. When I'm not campaigning against dog breeding facilities and pet shops, I'm cheering and supporting Mother and the people behind the CAPS organization while they address the abuse and suffering of dogs like me through investigations, education, media relations, legislative involvement, rescues, consumer assistance, and pet industry employee relations. I often blog about my comfortable life on “Bea's Beat” and help Mother by making guest appearances in shows such as FOX News' “Strategy Room” with Rick Leventhal (if I could hold a pen, they would've all asked for autographs, maybe a paw stamp will do for next time). I was a Companion of the Month for Dogleggs. I posed with beautiful, successful models, just like me, for the CAPS ad campaign, Models Against Pet Shops and Puppy Mills, in Fort Worth, Texas. The work never ends, but I love it!