

## Bowie Profile:

### - Background

- o His Name is Bowie - Bowie Larsen officially, but he most often goes by "Bubba". He is four and a half years old. He weighs about 20kg.
- o He is a fluffy Australian Shepard-Border Collie mix with one blue eye and one brown eye. He was born on a farm in Kamloops BC.
- o Bowie is a friendly, loving dog, and has many very positive attributes. However, he does require some special care and attention due to issues with fear and anxiety. Bowie is very sensitive to his surroundings and becomes anxious and fearful when there are sudden changes to his environment. Unfortunately, this can lead to fear-reactivity and aggression if he encounters a situation that causes him to go over his stress threshold.
- o Unfortunately, there have been two occasions where Bowie was surprised by strangers (to him) entering the home and they were bitten. The first bite occurred when we opened the door to an acquaintance who was wearing full rain gear and a hood, and Bowie didn't recognize them. Bowie was not leashed or with his harness on. The acquaintance bent over to pet Bowie while he was agitated and afraid, and was bitten once on the arm. The bite did not break the skin but did cause some bruising and tenderness. The second bite occurred when an acquaintance surprised us and Bowie by unexpectedly entering the home by a side door during dinner. Bowie was startled and afraid, and we were not prepared to manage the situation. Bowie ran up to the person and bit them twice, once on the hand and once on the arm. The bite to the arm caused a puncture wound and bruising. In both cases no trip to the hospital or stitches were required. It is important for Bowie that introductions to new people and people entering the home are well-managed so that Bowie knows there is nothing to fear. Fortunately, in a controlled environment, Bowie is very relaxed, friendly, loving, and docile.
- o Bowie is a cherished member of our family, however we have a newborn child and with Bowie's bite history and his reactivity, we feel we have no choice but to find him a new home. We are currently managing the home environment, and Bowie has been very resilient. We love him dearly, and this is an impossibly difficult decision for us to have to make. We want Bowie to live his best life, and with the management required around a small child, we worry that he won't get the attention and the freedom he deserves. In addition, we would be devastated to be faced with making a very difficult decision should a bad interaction occur. We want what's best for Bowie, even if it means we can't be with him, as difficult as that seems.

### - Personality Traits

- o Bowie LOVES training and is very quick to learn new things. He is a very enthusiastic learner, and enjoys being taught new games, words, and activities. Actually, anything we've tried to teach him he has learned and retained! He particularly enjoys food dispensing toys for meal times, mental problem-solving games, scent-work and training games. He knows the names of his favourite objects, and loves finding hidden toys.
- o He loves attention and is very affectionate. He will cuddle if you allow him on the bed or couch, and even sneak a kiss or two if you're within reach. He is very respectful of the rules and will not join you on the furniture if he is directed otherwise.
- o He is patient and observant and will only take a treat or food if he is directed to do so, or if is hand fed to him. He is not a beggar, and not an opportunist. However, he does know the sound of his favourite foods being opened and will investigate the scene.
- o He is very friendly and affectionate with adults and older children that he is familiar with. He is generally fearful of strangers, but under the right circumstances can be introduced to new people, and very quickly will trust them in his space as long as the introduction is done in a controlled, well-managed way. He has a lot of human friends that he adores, and that adore him.

- o Bowie is ONLY friendly with dogs that he has been introduced to in his younger years. It is possible to introduce him to new dogs, but he is very fearful of stranger dogs and a cautious and well-managed introduction is important.
  - o Bowie will resource-guard with other dogs if they approach his coveted toys, people, and his spaces (home, car, safe areas). He has never shown signs of resource-guarding with adults. His food, toys, etc. can all be handled by any adult and taken away from him without issue. However, from our limited experience with his interactions with our infant, we expect him to resource-guard with small children as well.
  - o Bowie is not particularly vocal, and does not bark for attention or out of excitement. He will bark if he is alerted to something scary, and can cry or whine if he is anxious, stressed, or afraid.
  - o He loves walks in the forest and secluded areas, and has no problem wearing a harness and leash. Bowie's recall is good when there are no distractions or stressors in his environment, however his emergency recall training should continue to be worked on. Mushroom picking and exploring nature are some of his favourite activities. He is a very capable swimmer and enjoys it, especially if he is swimming after a stick.
  - o He adores his toys; stuffed animals, tug ropes, and of course his favourite: the ball. Like other dogs, he loves chasing sticks and balls. He will return a ball but will often leave a stick.
  - o His favourite foods (high value treats) are cheese, ham, and kongs full of peanut butter. However, like most dogs, will eat pretty much anything that is handed to him except spinach or mushrooms. His regular diet includes a combination of kibble and wet food. Twice a day, right after he goes outside.
- Training & Medication
- o Bowie has been working with a certified professional dog trainer and behaviour modification program using positive reinforcement, desensitization, and counter-conditioning techniques with great success. Continued behaviour modification training is encouraged to help manage and improve his stress, fear, and anxiety related issues.
  - o He is a very good listener and follows directions MOST of the time. He will *always* follow directions if he knows there are tasty treats available. He knows a lot of commands, both verbal and non-verbal. He is a very fast learner and loves to do tricks, puzzles, and brain games. He is very intelligent, and loves to train.
  - o He is generally okay being left alone at home but has exhibited separation anxiety in the past. He has undergone separation anxiety training to help him cope with this and Bowie has been so resilient and worked hard at overcoming this issue. He is not comfortable being left alone in the car, however he is undergoing crate training and is getting better. This will likely require maintenance to ensure he continues to be comfortable with his people coming and going, and with the big change of adapting to a new home. He is well behaved and relaxed while he is alone.
  - o He is in the process of being muzzle and crate trained, and results are very promising.
  - o He is currently on a daily dose of Fluoxetine (anti-anxiety - 30mg a day) to help with his anxiety, and prevent escalation of stressful situations and to allow him to relax. He also has a prescription for Trazodone that is used situationally, such as on visits to the vet, travel, and for separation anxiety training.
- Finding his Fur-ever Home
- o The ideal home for Bowie is with a person or couple that enjoy spending time relaxing at home in a calm, predictable environment. Access to a quiet, fenced yard, or a secluded area where Bowie can play fetch and be outside without the stress of noisy neighbours.
  - o Bowie loves to train and play games, and his ideal home will be with a person or people that have the capacity and interest in learning how to train and manage a dog with his special needs.

- o Bowie has shown signs of being uncomfortable with small children, and because of the unpredictable nature of kids and the unacceptable risk of even a minor bad reaction Bowie needs a home without infants or small children. Older children might be ok as long as they are able to understand and adhere to Bowie's boundaries and special needs at all times.
- o Bowie is not good with other dogs (or cats) in his house, and would be happiest without any other animals in his home. He is very fearful of stranger dogs and can be quickly pushed beyond his threshold and become reactive.