

HALF THEIR SIZE PETS!

Losing weight saved the lives of these two dogs—and got their tails wagging again

By **Stephanie Emma Pfeffer**

Buddy, the Australian shepherd

➔ Buddy was 180 lbs. when he came to Hull's Haven Border Collie Rescue in Winnipeg, Man., in March 2015. His elderly owners had become too ill to take care of the 6-year-old dog. "Buddy could only walk about five feet before his tongue would start to turn purple," says Samantha Gagnon, a volunteer who fostered Buddy for 10 months. "We were very concerned about him having a heart attack." Gagnon put him on a strict diet of high-protein dog food with raw veggies for a snack and encouraged him to walk around her backyard. After losing nearly 100 lbs. he got skin-removal surgery. Meanwhile, Valerie and Alex Dewar were looking for a companion for their miniature Australian shepherd and had started following Buddy on Facebook—where he has more than 1,800 followers—since they saw him on the local news. "His story broke our heart," says Valerie, 61. In January 2016 the Dewars adopted Buddy, who is now 58 lbs. and enjoys walks with his brother and playing in the dog park. "He fits in perfectly," says Valerie. "It's a happy ending."

Before becoming his forever family, Valerie and Alex Dewar followed Buddy's weight-loss journey on Facebook.



Half / Their Size



WAS
180 lbs.
NOW
58 lbs.



What He Eats Now

BREAKFAST, 6 A.M.
1½ cups of Performatrin Ultra dog food (grain-free, gluten-free Ocean Recipe); Flexadin Plus chew for joint health

DURING THE DAY
½ cup of cut-up carrots, cucumbers or cherry tomatoes or a combination of all three

SUPPER, 6 P.M.
1½ cups of Performatrin Ultra dog food

Once or twice a week he gets half of a cut-up banana, pear or apple



After losing nearly 40 percent of his body weight through PDSA Pet Fit Club, Oscar has a new leash on life.

**WAS
47 lbs.
NOW
29 lbs.**

Oscar, the King Charles spaniel

→ “Before Oscar’s weight loss, he couldn’t even jump on the sofa,” owner Karen Allen, 57, says of the cuddly and affectionate dog who was a constant companion to her late parents. “My dad spoiled him rotten and treated him like a person, giving him Sunday roasts on his own plate.” When Oscar’s weight ballooned to 47 lbs., the Wolverhampton, England-based dog was entered into a national pet-slimming competition organized by the charity the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA). Beginning in April 2016, he shed nearly 40 percent of his body weight in six months by eating only twice a day, at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., walking around the block and to local parks, and attending hydrotherapy sessions. He ended up winning the Pet Fit Club contest—“but really what we have won is a healthy Oscar,” says Allen, who is committed to helping the 10-year-old dog keep the weight off. “We have learned not to leave half-eaten packets of biscuits around for him to sniff out,” she jokes. And the new habits have paid off. “Oscar is a completely different dog now, like a puppy again,” says Allen. “There is nothing he cannot do.”



Swim to Slim

In addition to long walks, Oscar’s fitness routine included hydrotherapy sessions. At first he could be in the water for only 15 seconds before needing a break, but now he swims for 10 minutes at a time. “He cannot wait to get in the pool when we arrive,” says owner Karen Allen (above left).