

# Finding the next four-legged Broadway star

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**(New York - WABC, June 13, 2007) -- To find the actors for a Broadway show, producers and directors hold casting calls. But what if you need stars of the four-legged variety?**

Eyewitness News reporter Lauren Glassberg takes a look at the dogs who make it to the Great White Way.

There's always something to see in Times Square, including lights, billboards and, if you're lucky, a star sighting. We met several dogs who are Broadway stars.

They lounge around before showtime, along with their owner, Bill Berloni.

"We own 17 dogs," Berloni said. "So here are five, and we have 12 at home."

Berloni got into the dog training business when he was 19 years old, as a fluke.

"I had the opportunity to train the original Sandy in the original production of "Annie" in exchange for a part in one of the shows at the theater where it was produced," he said. "So I was doing it just to be in the show. Little did I know that "Annie" would leave the opera house and come to Broadway. And at the age of 20 I was a famous animal trainer."

His dogs are on TV, in films and often on Broadway. Right now, Chico plays Bruiser in "Legally Blonde." He is Elle Woods' sidekick.

BooBoo and Teddy are Chico's understudies. And Chloe plays Rufus in the show. Zizi is her backup. And believe it or not, Berloni rescued all the dogs from shelters.

"All five of these dogs were at risk of being euthanized, and nobody was going to adopt them," he said. "But there was nothing wrong with them. They may a little baggage here and there, but a little love and kindness and positive reinforcement, you know, you could fix these dogs."

And turn them into stars. Berloni and Rob Cox train each dog for about a year to get them stage ready.

Chico sometimes falls asleep on stage, and Chloe has been known to cough. But through priming and costume changes, these dogs seem to really enjoy their stage lives.

Broadway certainly beats being in a shelter, and that's something Berloni hopes audiences take away with them.