



# BUDDY

## AMERICA'S FIRST GUIDE DOG



by Meish Goldish

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# BUDDY: AMERICA'S FIRST GUIDE DOG



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# A Deadly Crossing

In June 1928, a German shepherd named Buddy stood at a corner on West Street in New York City. Cars and trucks zoomed by, but the dog stayed calm. Buddy was about to lead her blind owner, Morris Frank, across the busy road. Nobody in America had ever seen a dog guide a person who could not see.



Buddy guides Morris into West Street.



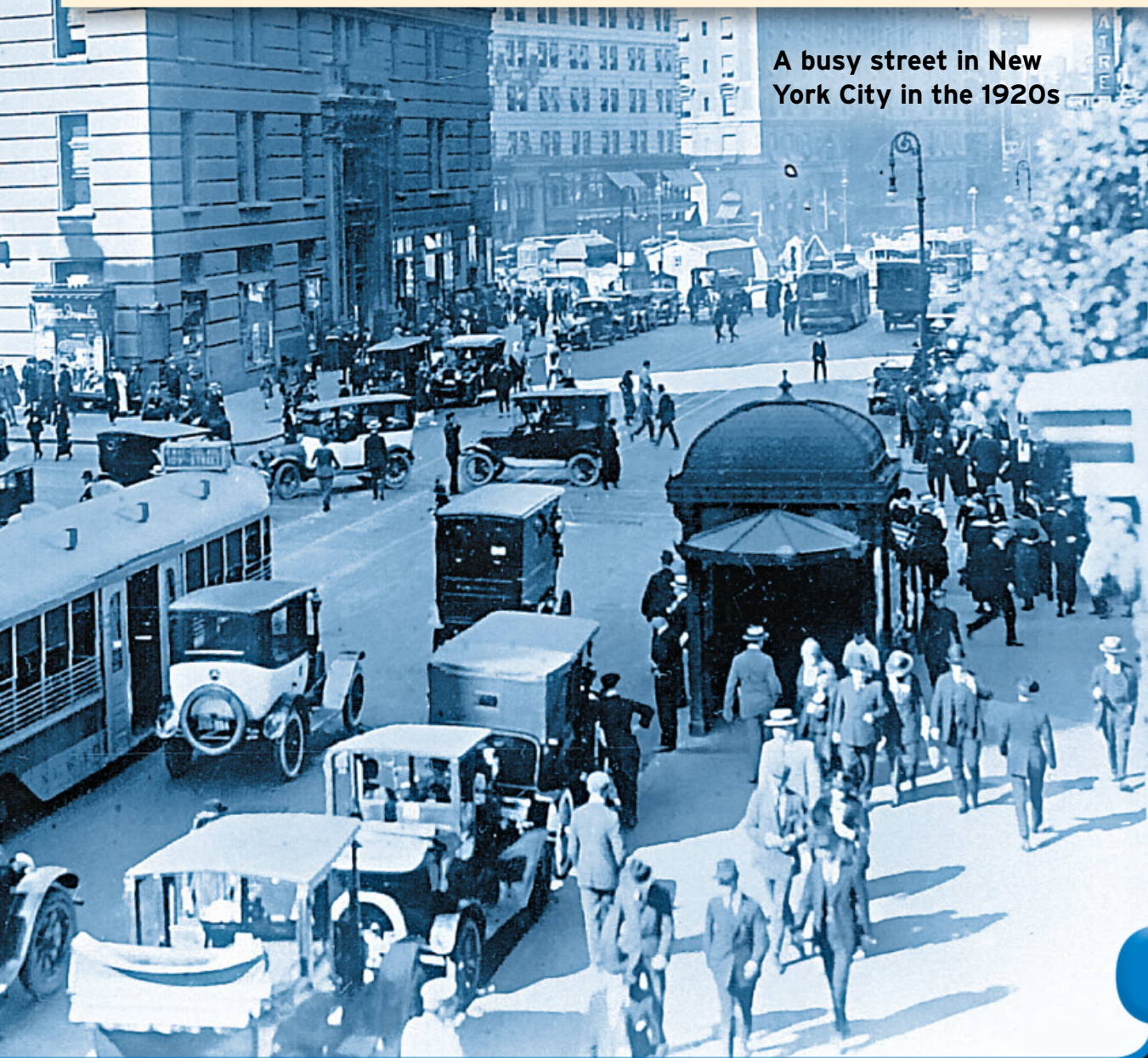
In 1928, most of New York City's streets, including West Street, had no traffic lights to tell drivers and **pedestrians** when to stop or go. Therefore, crossing streets was very dangerous and sometimes deadly.



A crowd of people, including newspaper reporters, gathered to watch the **historic** moment. Many people doubted the **canine** would succeed. West Street was the widest and busiest road in the city. It was so dangerous for pedestrians to cross that it was nicknamed "Death Street."

Stepping into the street with his dog, Morris started to worry. What if the noise and traffic were more than Buddy could handle? Would they reach the other side safely?

A busy street in New York City in the 1920s





# Losing Sight

Before meeting Buddy, Morris had led a difficult life. He was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1908. At age six, Morris was blinded in one eye in a horse-riding accident. Ten years later, he lost sight in his other eye in a boxing match. Even though he could not see, Morris went to college. He also worked as a door-to-door salesman. However, human guides had to help him everywhere he went.

**This human guide (right) is helping a person who is blind, similar to how Morris was helped by guides.**





Morris didn't want to depend on other people to get around. His human guides were not reliable. Sometimes a guide would suddenly walk off the job, leaving Morris alone and in danger of falling or getting run over by a car. Morris wished he could be more **independent**.



In the early 1900s, it was much harder for people who could not see to get around than it is today. There were no **guide dogs** or other forms of assistance, such as **braille** lettering on signs.

Braille letters and numbers are printed with raised dots that people can feel and read with their fingers.