



## Rescued dogs often make the best pets

As a dog trainer, kennel owner and breeder with a travelling show called the Bad Dog Tour, I have encountered almost every dog breed and every type of mutt combo in the world.

But once in awhile I meet an ordinary dog that is anything but ordinary, and usually I find it's a rescued dog.

Bebe, a shaggy, long-eared, seven-year-old mutt came to camp for the first time on an extended two-month holiday stay while his owner worked overseas. Bebe was rescued as a pup when his new owner was driving a busy highway and saw a sack get thrown from a speeding truck. Bebe survived the fall and lived to



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### CAMP GOOD DOG

become one of the most loving dogs I've met in ages.

Rescuing a dog means you get an animal that knows life without love. An animal that shows you he is happy you are in his life. An animal that greets you at the door, knows your moods and matches your needs. A pet that thinks the sun rises and sets on your head and will treat your children with maternal care.

Bebe gently kissed my three-year-oldm stretching his

tongue through the bars of the fence, not able to wait until we entered the dog's yard.

I realize some people need to buy dogs and cannot rescue them. At Camp Good Dog, we breed Golden Doodles to help families with allergies or asthma get sweet, reliable family dogs that hardly shed. I understand why these families must sign up and wait for specialty dogs, but most families, even

Golden Doodle families, could find dogs of their choice in need of rescue if they are willing to select an older dog or pup. In fact, there are entire websites devoted to purebred dog rescue of every type if you're willing to surf and wait for the right type of dog.

For those of you who don't need a specific breed to fill the

dog spot in your family, try to use your head and your heart (not your eyes) and visit local shelters and ask your local Vet. Chances are there is your perfect doggie match sitting and waiting for you right now.

Take the dog for a walk and make sure it really is a match for you (listens to you, rides well in your car and listens or respects the other members of your family). This is the bonus of adopting an older dog that you can meet and visit. You know what you get and you can choose by personality and temperament. If you like being with the dog and want your test-walk to last forever, this is the dog for you. If the dog looks cute, but is a royal pain, try again.

If you've got a house full of kids, choose the dog without

them by borrowing a cousin or nephew or other same-aged kid for the interview process. You can also make sure your test-walk includes walking by a busy playground to check the dog's reaction to kids at a distance, but do make sure you try it

with kids other than your own, then bring the new dog home. Kids will be happy with any pup or dog but don't let them choose. Chances are they'll choose by spots, or blue eyes or some other meaningless characteristic and you'll have a dog that doesn't suit you on your hands and in your house, on your carpets and sofa for ten to fifteen years, perhaps long after those same kids have grown up and moved on.

Exercise is the most impor-

tant factor in creating a good match. Check to see if your potential pup or dog is a fetcher, since that is the easiest way to exercise any dog and a kong or Frisbee or tennis racket can be used for long-distance fetch once the dog is over two.

Keep in mind, extra tiny and extra giant dogs need less exercise than the middle-weight peppy dogs.

Instead, go very big or very small (or older) if you want to avoid the most active dogs. Look for retriever characteristics like webbed feet and a "U" shaped rounded mouth for dogs that are part retriever, making them easy to train and likely to enjoy kids and other pets.

See RESCUE, Page 13

