

National Borzoi Rescue

Foundation, Inc.

2021 Holiday Issue



18

Rescued (U.S.)!

10

Rescued Internationally!

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Your Borzoi can do that!

Hommage to Boris

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Celebrating 2021 Achievements, Movers, and Shakers!

by Lesley Ohmann

Let's showcase our achievements! We successfully rescued and placed 28 Borzoi. We significantly expanded the NBRF team by creating new positions and filling them with the right volunteers to expand our outreach capabilities. We strengthened our partnerships here and abroad, and we launched an E-newsletter.

New to the team: Tamara Cantwell joined us this summer. She serves as the administrative coordinator supporting all functions of our operation. No matter the challenge presented, her involvement has been instrumental in achieving positive outcomes. Although Edna Hanley has been supporting NBRF for decades, she officially joined us as a placement coordinator this year. With 34 years in the breed, extensive experience with rescue, and work with Animal Welfare League, she is a wealth of information and an enormous asset to this organization.

Lesley Ohmann joined NBRF as our Communications Coordinator. She would say "she has the gift of gab with a good vocabulary" but we say she has an uplifting way of viewing and then sharing our news with readers. With her assistance, we launched our new Borzoi Bulletin, a bi-monthly digital newsletter, which has already grown to more than 1,000 subscribers. We recognized the need to deliver news, events, and updates directly to your email inbox. The Borzoi Bulletin is a quick snapshot of the current news, latest happenings, and a fun way to celebrate our beloved breed.

Sharon Haugen has transitioned into a newly created position, that of our Borzoi Guardian. It is NBRF's belief that there is so much more to rescue than a successful placement. We know it is very important to stay in contact with our network of people, to maintain those relationships, and to follow the lives of all the dogs who were entrusted to our care.

(continued on page 2)

NBRF and NBRF International

by the Numbers...

The numbers below reflect the period spanning from January 1, 2021 through November 2021.



N.B.R.F.

The total number of Borzoi taken into rescue by NBRF is to date (12/1/2021) **18 dogs!**

INCOME, includes but not limited to:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Donations: | \$37,277.89 |
| Amazon Smile: | \$ 903.78 |
| Fundraisers: | \$ 1,067.23 |
| Network for Good: | \$ 200.00 |

EXPENSES, include but not limited to:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Veterinary: | \$21,481.34 |
| Insurance: | \$ 1,383.00 |
| Toll free Number: | \$ 266.02 |
| Rescue Supplies | \$ 1,191.82 |

Tentative profit \$ **15,126.72**



N.B.R.F. International

The total number of Borzoi taken into rescue by NBRF International is to date (12/1/2021) **10 dogs!**

INCOME includes but not limited to:

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Donations: | \$46,189.46 |
| Fundraisers: | \$ 2,332.59 |

EXPENSES include but not limited to:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Veterinary: | \$ 6,624.74 |
| Shelter/ Boarding: | \$ 2,223.49 |
| Transport, Fuel, Airline Fees: | \$27,091.03 |
| Rescue Supplies | \$ 1,686.20 |

Tentative profit \$ **10,896.59**

Movers and Shakers...

(continued from page 1)

Sharon has spent the summer and fall reaching out to every home that has adopted a NBRF Borzoi over the years – to check in, to answer questions, to offer support, guidance, and to share in the ups and the downs that go with opening our hearts and homes to these beautiful Borzoi.

As of the printing of this publication, NBRF has rescued 28 Borzoi in 2021; 18 domestic and 10 international Borzoi have begun new lives with their new families. Of course, every rescue presents its own unique challenges. That said, this year we had a large forfeiture of 10 adolescent dogs in the U.S. and some high stakes international rescues prior to the enforcement of the CDC ban. Both endeavors involved exceptional coordination, expedited actions, unforeseen expenses, and admittedly, some nail biting... and WE DID IT! You will find more information about these monumental feats, along with updates, on the following pages.

By nearly every measure, it's been a very good year

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The Boston Pups: The Finale

by Lesley Ohmann

You may recall a featured story in which we detailed a sizable rescue of 10 dogs ranging in age from nine months to two years. Within moments of receiving the initial call, our team went into action. We were unsure of exactly how many dogs we would be collecting, but sensed the urgency to move swiftly. Because of the region, our executive director suggested we refer to them as “The Boston Pups”, a clever play on the renowned symphony orchestra’s moniker. Each team member shared in the responsibility of securing transport, lining up fosters, and composing fundraising requests to help cover the expenses of emergency and general veterinary care, spays/neuters, flea and heartworm preventatives, collars, leashes, microchips, transportation, and of course food for this pack.

At the owner’s request, only one member of the NBRF team was invited onto the property to accept the relinquished dogs. While this is not out of the ordinary for a single dog, the surrender of such a large pack made this a challenging recovery. Careful coordination with transport volunteers was essential. Photos were taken once we had a headcount, an approximate age, and the gender of each dog. Following our theme, we made a list and names were assigned. Then Bach, Mozart, Ruska, Solo, Sonata, Gigi, Viola, Melody, Vivaldi, and Rachmaninoff were officially welcomed into the NBRF family. A total of 10 dogs were surrendered, moved off property, transported, transferred, and safely delivered to their foster homes within 36 hours of that call! The NBRF team collectively breathed a sigh of relief when the last dog made it to the foster. But the work was far from over.

The 2nd Movement, or Phase 2 of the operation, was already in full swing. We remained in close contact with the wonderful folks caring for these lovely dogs now in NBRF care. We received daily updates as to each dog’s medical well-being. Three dogs required emergency medical care due to injuries that were sustained prior to the surrender. All 10 Boston Pups were treated, evaluated, and, of course, loved beyond measure in their foster homes. Once we were sure they were ready – physically, mentally, and socially – it was time for Phase 3.

The 3rd Movement, or Phase 3 was finding their perfect forever homes. Our placement coordinators really shined. They received a flood of adoption applications. Qualifying applications were submitted to the board of directors for approval. Once every “i” had been dotted and every “t” had been crossed, those adoption applicants were notified of their approval and transport was arranged. They may have begun in New England, but The Boston Pups were placed in forever homes from the North East to the Pacific Northwest.

And as the Finale we are pleased to report they all are doing FABULOUSLY!

Gigi (Hannah): “She’s made herself quite at home: inside, outside, pretty much everywhere! Grace, our 8- year old Borzoi was accepting but not really welcoming. Ezra, on the other hand, was ecstatic! Within minutes, Ezra and Hannah were smitten with each other. They’ve been pretty much connected at the hip since. Hannah absolutely loves to go for rides in the car. She loves to go to coffee on Thursday mornings with our veteran friends and loves being fawned over. Hannah is loving, sweet, very inquisitive, and has added so much joy to our home. We’re looking forward to years of adventure.”





"Ruska (Lady) is living her very best life in Indiana. She has completed Basic Obedience, and become a member of the Midwest Borzoi Club. She is an avid hiker and is well on her way to becoming a BARK Ranger! You can follow this busy gal on her adventures on Instagram @ Lady.Birdzoi She's become quite the mascot at our picture framing shop. Our whole family loves her and she has brought us so much joy!"

Sonata (Annie): "Annie has settled into her home in Vermont with her Galgo brother Tiggy and Galgo sister Tica. She is super nosey and enjoys hanging in the yard watching the neighbors work their gardens and watching the horses at the neighboring farm. But mostly, she likes to torture her brother Tiggy, knowing if she simply bats him once with her paw, he will engage in a round of bitey face. Annie just had her spay surgery as she went into heat shortly after arrival. Still in her Terrible Twos, she finds trouble pretty easily but mostly her antics are simply amusing. Thank you for keeping us laughing, Annie!"



Bach (Boris) is doing great and is definitely still a puppy! He loves his new pack and, whether it's racing, chasing, or just chilling, he is right beside his brothers. On the occasion when no one is interested in play, Boris goes in search of something he knows he is not supposed to have. He will come over to show us what he has taken and then runs off so we will chase him. He can not be caught. I tempt him with a treat and then race him back to the stolen item. He is always loving and often ornery.



Solo (Neva): "I have always been a sighthound lover, makes sense when one runs a Galgo rescue, but I have shared my life also with Greyhounds, a Whippet, and an Afghan and several Lurchers. Whenever possible you could find me with my camera taking pictures of sighthounds lure coursing. So I had met my fair share of Borzoi. I had never planned to adopt a Borzoi, but sometimes you don't get to choose.

Solo is now Neva, a name I picked since they work in both Russian and Spanish: Russian for river and Spanish for snow.

She is now approaching 70 pounds and is still growing. Yet she still is a lapdog. Every morning she greets me by giving me a Borzoi hug. If she gets the chance, she will lick my eyeballs. She's the best leaner and cuddler ever. She has gotten used to the fact that we always have fosters. And she and the little one get along really well. She plays chase with her Galgo sister and adores her new brother, a confident, calm Galgo male.

She's a joy to have around and makes me smile every day."

Melody (Zelda): "She's doing extremely well. Her true puppy has come out with the introduction of her puppy Borzoi brother, Groot. Zelda loves her morning bunny hunt in the yard, cuddling with her human sister, the car line at school drop off and pickup, joining Zoom meetings with Mom throughout the day, and just being an overall goofball. We love everything about her!"



Vivaldi (Skye) "Just wanted to give you an update on my new home. I am living in Maine on a Homestead known as The Some Day Farm. My foster sister Brava is a really tough gal. She loves to hunt and watch over the farm. She is a great role model for me and I hope to learn so much from her. I also have a few farmyard pals that I share the Homestead with including eight chickens and Scottish Highland Cattle. The cows are cool, they are bigger than me but really friendly."



Mozart (Sergei): "Sergei and his greyhound sister, Bossy, became best buddies soon after his arrival. They love to play and roughhouse together. They're both eager to engage with most other dogs, whether they've previously met or not. At the dog park, there was an 18-month old Afghan who was very shy and would scarcely leave the side of the owner. Our happy pair ran and frolicked in the field, periodically running over to the Afghan to entice him with play. It took a few such attempts, but soon he couldn't resist and joined them briefly, before realizing he was no longer near mama. Over the ensuing half hour, the breaks grew in length. His eventually relaxed enough that his owner remarked how great it was that he's finally broken his shyness (at least for that day). Sergei is indeed hard to resist, for humans and dogs."

Viola (Phoebe) "She has been a wonderful addition to our family. We absolutely love her! She has really bonded with her canine sister, Ethel, and they love to play together. Phoebe regularly reminds Ethel how much faster she is while playing chase in the backyard. This loving girl has settled in beautifully and is doing very well in her new home."



Rachmaninoff (Rocky) "We have so much fun stuff to report about our Rocky. He has so much personality and is a vibrant guy. He is the most loving and such a smart fellow. Every time he hears the garage sensor, he runs to the back door to greet Rob getting home from work. That is all fine until "mowing day" when the sensor goes off every minute until the front yard is mowed - very confusing for him. Rocky loves to have something in his mouth, whether it is a rope toy, your hand, or the leash when he is walking himself. He is one of the most athletic dogs I have ever had. He bounces straight up in the air - easily having all four paws 5ft off the ground! We are so happy that he has adopted us."



A Lifetime of Regret

by Anthony Vanderlinden

Years ago, we had a beautiful Great Dane - Lab mix. He loved swimming and was a skilled escape artist. It did not take him long to discover our nearby lake. Neighbors reported seeing him jumping off the bridge into the lake and then walk home sopping wet. We did not worry too much when he disappeared one day, assuming that he would resurface any moment as he had done so many times. But he didn't, searches yielded nothing, and days turned into weeks.

It was about 18 months later, when we attended our local community watch meeting, that our police chief announced that they had made multiple arrests relating to a large dog fighting ring. A very uneasy feeling came over me when he said that hundreds of k-9 remains had been found, mostly stolen pets. All the sudden all the pieces clicked together: that Airborne Express delivery driver that always showed up so late on Fridays, often in a pick up truck, often with another male in the passenger seat... As I listened to the police chief, I realized that my beautiful dog had been killed to train fighting dogs.

That was 30 years ago, and still I think of him and how I failed to protect him. Naïve, like so many people, I did not know that large dogs are targeted and stolen to train fighting dogs. A simple padlock would have stopped them, instead they just drove up the driveway and stole our dog unchallenged. Dog theft is one of the most unreported crimes. Most people think that dogs are stolen for resale or to be somebody's pet, those may be the lucky ones, reality can be a lot more gruesome. As a Borzoi owner you know the attention they receive on the street but also in your yard. Most people just admire them for their elegance, but they also attract the attention of the criminal element. It does not matter how safe your town or neighborhood is, those criminals may not live in your area but they sure target you!

Never allow your dogs to be unsupervised without being secure outside, use a lock, padlock, or whatever device that will stop an intruder from entering their area. It only takes seconds for a skilled thief, the area should be secure even if they are unattended for only minutes!

Tip: Missing dog posters on utility posts or at your vet's office, may be an indicator of a gang operating in your area.

While Borzoi are trainable, it is naïve for people to assume they can walk off-leash. It is not a matter of trust or even training, their (prey) drive is instinctual, like a reflex. It is foolish to assume that we, as humans, can control their environment, what they are thinking, and their reflexes. As a professional dog trainer, I can confirm that it takes years of training and even then it is always a calculated risk. Those few that successfully get to that training level know to scout the surroundings first and read the dog: the mood, energy level, etc. before releasing a Borzoi. The distance a Borzoi can travel in just seconds makes it almost always vulnerable to traffic.

Your dogs depends on you to protect them.
Don't make a foolish mistake and
regret it for years.





The Spouse of a Rescue Goddess

by Scott Burge

Liz



Scott



I am one of the unsung heroes of the rescue world: I am Kennel Help, I am Sounding Board, I am “is this trip too monumental to make in a weekend?” advisor. I am also known as the Spouse of a Rescue Goddess.

For more than 23 years I have been the one that watches the hours on the phone, the miles on the road, the hours socializing, bathing, and providing medical care to Borzoi in need, that my wife does, endlessly, tirelessly, and to the detriment of our marriage at times. But she does it unapologetically and has given her heart and soul to those dogs in need. I am proud of her, when I am not worrying about her lack of sleep, or where she is, what stress she is dealing with, how she will get it all done, and where are we going to put another rescue as we are still fostering two, or three, or more. But she tells me not to worry, she’s got it, and she always does.

I keep pretty much to the shadows and am not a face of rescue. I do not go on the rescue runs, someone has to stay home and take care of our own dogs, cats, goats, and cows. However, we regularly have transport volunteers, board members, and key volunteers stopping on their rescue adventures and stay a night or two at our farm. That is when I shine! Nothing like breaking out a good Scotch, or some beer, firing up the grill and letting everyone relax after a long or stressful trip/transport while I do the cooking and the story telling... I can be quite loquacious!

Some of the rescue stories I could tell! I have sacrificed my sanity and olfactory senses for rescue! One time the Rescue Goddess arrived home well after dark, our truck and stock trailer full of rescued Borzoi in crates. She just kept handing the next dog to me... I still remember the awful smell of these poor dogs. However watching them realize they were getting a good meal, then a chance to run and play in clean bedding was all worth it once I saw their joy and grins! I remember asking how many dogs she had with her and she said don’t worry about it, and they just kept coming; that night the count was 22 Borzoi.

Another time I sacrificed my comfort for rescue! When the Rescue Goddess came home from work she wanted to know why I was asleep on the floor and the rescue was asleep on the couch. He got on the couch with me and slowly pushed me off so he could stretch out fully, and the floor wasn’t that bad after all.

I have sacrificed my physical safety and broke a few ribs for rescue! Three dogs were brought in after a long transport from the east. They were to stay overnight before moving further west. The Rescue Goddess thought the three rescues should be let off lead in one of our large secure paddocks to decompress and relax, even though the transport volunteer warned they would be hard to catch. They tried to catch them the next morning and finally I was called in as a third person and as “Kennel Help”!

My cat like reflexes and innate certainty that I had Superman flying powers did not work out, I missed the catch but broke some of my ribs on the landing, much to the laughter of the Rescue Goddess and transport volunteer. After that, all three dogs pretty much sat down to laugh and they were easily apprehended.

Over the years we have had numerous rescues at our home, as I am sure many of you who help with fostering and transport have. I apologize that I can never remember all the names of all the rescues we have fostered, many look alike to me and there have just been so many. I have realized though through my countless hours of feeding, holding, petting, and helping the Rescue Goddess with each rescue that they each have their own personalities, at times are playful and humorous, but all are deserving of the time and devotion provided by those who volunteer for NBRF.

A shout out to all you Kennel Help spouses out there! Tonight is a great night to sing our praises! Stop what you are doing, thank us for not always getting to eat dinner with you because you are on the phone for rescue, not always able to tell you about our day because you are busy with rescue. Take those Kennel Help spouses out to dinner and tell them how much you appreciate them for being there, to let you do what you do, so well for rescue.

Kennel Help

International Rescue Continues Despite CDC Ban

by Lesley Ohmann

In July 2021, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) imposed a ban on the importation of dogs from more than 100 countries. We were successful in getting those dogs that had been scheduled for transfer out prior to the ban going into effect. And we are happy to report that these dogs are now settled in their forever homes.

It is important to note, NBRF International has always followed the letter of the law. We not only meet, but exceed, the requirements in place for safe importation of dogs. Dogs in our care abroad receive veterinary attention, are evaluated, vaccinated, quarantined a minimum of 30 days, prior to leaving their country of origin. The same is true once they enter the U.S. with the additional measure of quarantine. We work with our international partners and go to great lengths to import healthy and disease free dogs.

It appears we have some allies in Congress that recognize this crisis and the importance of international rescue. There is a currently a bipartisan effort to overturn the ban imposed by the CDC. Obviously, NBRF monitors the situation closely.

The lives of thousands of dogs are still at risk in foreign nations. Dozens of American animal welfare groups, including NBRF International, have dogs in the pipeline for rescue, relocation, and placement in the U.S. Many of the nations affected by the ban have undeveloped animal care programs, U.S. rescue efforts are a lifeline for tens of thousands of dogs every year.

Even with the ban in place, NBRF's rescue efforts have not diminished. We continue to secure safe passage for those Borzoi in truly deplorable conditions. We are working in conjunction with other international rescue groups to transfer at-risk dogs to countries unaffected by our government's ban. It is an ever-evolving situation that requires constant communication and significant effort. At time of printing our first two Russian rescues have successfully been transported to our rescue partner in Italy and have already been placed in their forever homes.

Please look for the complete story and photos in our digital newsletter, The Borzoi Bulletin.

Andre's Journey

by Lesley Ohmann



Andre as found in China tied to a truck

We sleep a little less soundly each time a rescue is moved thousands of miles. This situation meant we were left, on several occasions, holding our breath, crossing our fingers, and hoping for the best. But we did it!

When his flight landed on July 8th, we honestly did not know if Andre had ever lived a day without fear and stress. Now we can say with absolute certainty, he is healthy and relaxed and is living a happy life! He has been placed in a wonderful forever home and is surrounded by love. He has friends and a "sister" to run and play with. It is a beautiful thing to watch unfold.

We cannot thank Plush Bear enough, not only did they contribute food, boarding, and medical care, they spent \$1,000 for a private taxi to rush Andre to Beijing airport, 600 miles away! Timing was critical to get him out of China before the CDC ban went into effect. We are so appreciative to Flying Dog Rescue who contributed \$3,000 to help offset the exorbitant \$10,500 cost of Andre's last-minute transport. Together, we changed the world for this Borzoi!

Andre was discovered in China in May of 2021 by protectionists with Plush Bear Rescue. His leash was tied to a truck at a market. He was being sold for breeding or for meat. He was one of five dogs on that truck and all five were rescued by Plush Bear. That day, each was put on a path to a better life and Andre began his long journey to America.

We were in the final stages of securing transport to the U.S. when the CDC ban was announced. Suddenly, the clock started ticking. Rescue teams on both sides of the world went into high gear. There are several requirements that need to be fulfilled before a rescue dog can be moved internationally. Strategic planning includes veterinary care, permits, certificates, approvals, booking flights, etc. We were facing an unanticipated deadline and challenges rose as other rescue groups were facing the same situation. Resources quickly became scarce and expensive.



Andre on his way to America



A happy Andre exploring the forest

Please consider making a donation to help dogs like Andre reach their forever home.

(Note: NBRF's combined expenses for Andre were \$11923.58 and NBRF received \$4958.50 in donations)



Andre relaxing on his bolster bed surrounded by his favorite toys

The Three Musketeers

by Lesley Ohmann

It is said, a journey of a thousand miles (or 8,000 in this case) begins with a single step.

Three borzoi were found in poor condition on a remote farm in Kamchatka, a very rural part of Russia's Far East. It is a level of remoteness that, for most Americans, is nearly unfathomable. The road system we take for granted in the U.S. is simply non-existent. There is no railway and the only paved roads are in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky city. The area is home to over 300 volcanoes, dozens of them still active. As a matter of fact, the Kamchatka Peninsula has the highest concentration of active volcanoes on Earth.

Our story begins in Vilyuchinsk, a closed-city in the Kamchatka Peninsula. The area has travel and residency restrictions and authorization is required to visit or stay overnight.

The Three Musketeers were discovered fending for themselves on a farm. They were removed and relocated to a shelter. NBRF-International's partners, whom we admirably refer to as Team Russia, learned about the trio. Team Russia reached out to the NBRF Board of Directors, and planning commenced. To say there were "logistical challenges" would be an understatement: the 9-hour time difference between Moscow and the Kamchatka Peninsula complicated communication.

The Three Musketeers (continued)

Arranging transportation was very difficult. The gravel roads in that area are only navigable when weather permits. The volcanic landscape is picturesque but travel is typically planned outside of the snow season and always with weather in mind. There are two ways into and out of that remote area: plane or boat. The only viable option was to transport them by cargo plane. Our Russian Operation was assured that, if the plane can make it into the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky International Airport, they would fly out, regardless of weather. Until the very last minute, we didn't know if the plane would land because of a looming snow storm. Fortunately, the weather cooperated enough for the plane to safely land and take off the same day.

The Three Musketeers, Aramis, Athos, and Porthos, were airborne and en route to Moscow. They were accepted into foster where they were bathed, received veterinary care, and were assessed on general well-being, and temperament. Stateside, NBRF was working to find them families that would be a perfect match. It was determined that Athos and Porthos were bonded and would require a home placement where they could remain together. Aramis was more independent and could be placed separately.

Aramis was first to make the trip across the Atlantic with New York City as his final destination. One would think that, coming from such an isolated area, he would have trouble adjusting to life in the Big Apple. Not the case! Now called Pushkin, he walks on city streets amidst the hustle and bustle, enjoys outdoor cafes, and loves to greet people in the park. He sincerely enjoys lounging on his favorite red couch. Having effortlessly made such a monumental transition, his adopter often questions us as to his humble beginnings.

The brothers, Athos and Porthos, remained a bit longer in Russia while we sorted out the perfect home for the pair. Background checks and interviews completed, the placement team was confident they had found the perfect family. As their adoptive family prepared to accept the Russian duo, the CDC ban was announced. Getting the brothers into the U.S. before the ban went into effect became our main priority. Thankfully, through our team's efforts on both sides of the world, we were able to secure travel. The brothers arrived safely in the U.S. and continued their journey to their new home in Wisconsin.

Athos and Porthos, now called Otrada and Nikoli, are thriving! Their owners report, "Otrada is so very gentle. He has the sweetest disposition and brown fawn eyes. Otrada means joy of life. It suits him. Nikoli is all personality. He has more character than we have ever seen in a pup. He is mischievous, loving, playful, and charismatic. This boy captures our heart with his huge, full smile."

"Nickoli has a high prey drive. We have a feeling we know who the hunter was for the family. One time we came out of the fenced area to go into the garage. There is a tree there with a squirrels' nest. A squirrel was going up the tree and Nickoli went right up after it. He literally climbed the tree! We'd never seen a dog use his paws to climb. The squirrel was as surprised as we were!" They also stated that neither has ever forgotten an area from whence a chipmunk, squirrel, or woodland creature has emerged and both frequently check each area.

These interesting observations from his adopters provides an excellent segue to share an exchange I had with our team in Russia. I asked, "What is one thing you would like Americans to know about Russian Borzoi culture?"



Pushkin posing on his favorite red coach in NYC

“Russian Borzoi culture is a hunting culture. The ideal Borzoi temperament is the temperament that allows the Borzoi to hunt: aggressive, furious to prey with swift, immediate reaction. In other words, a Borzoi is not a pet. At the same time, Borzois are always friendly to people”.

In Russia, a Borzoi is often a tool and a means by which to support a family. Dogs who can no longer fulfill this function, or lack the temperament to be efficient hunters, can be considered a burden which often leads to abandonment. Here in the U.S., working breeds often get to practice those task which they were bred for, but this is for sport and entertainment and is typically healthy for the dogs.

It’s remarkable that these dogs, as demonstrated by The Three Musketeers, are able to assimilate into Western life. These majestic and amazing dogs are so resilient.

Special mention: Nancy and Garrett, who adopted Otrada and Nikoli, are writing a children’s book detailing the epic journey of The Three Musketeers. They gracefully plan to donate all proceeds from book sales to the National Borzoi Rescue Foundation. Stay tuned for updates...



Otrada (left) and Nikoli on the lookout for pesky squirrels in Wisconsin



Training Tips: Your Borzoi can do that!

by Anthony Vanderlinden

There is a common misconception that sight hounds, like Borzoi, are impossible to train. But nothing could be further from the truth, Borzoi can excel in obedience, even advance to become registered therapy dogs. Borzoi can enjoy agility and other sports, all it takes is consistency, patience, and the right trainer.

No matter what your goal is, training should start with (basic) obedience. There are two good training environments: private (in home) training and classroom training. Both have advantages. Private lessons can focus on specific challenges, while classroom environments are better for socializing and familiarization of new spaces.

It is crucial that the owner and canine work together. We call it dog training, but in fact 60% of training focuses on the human: how to be consistent in communication, how to handle the dog, leash, etc.

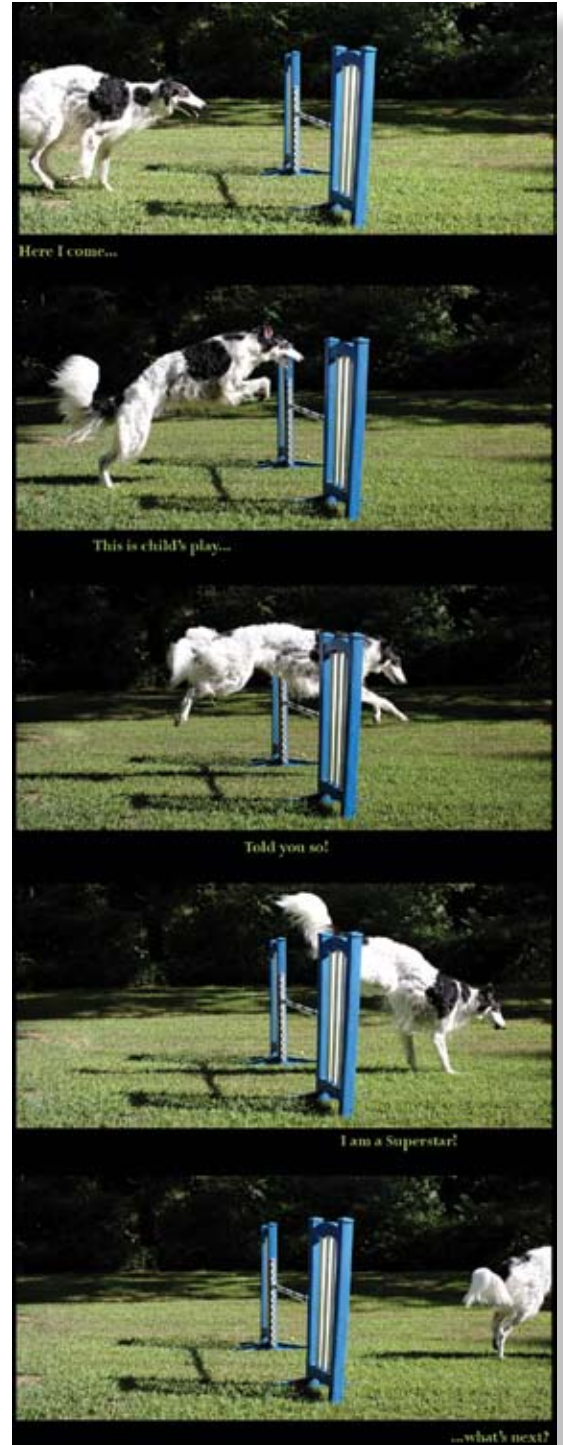
Board and training environments should be avoided. Dumping a dog at a training facility and expecting someone else to train the dog for you and fix the problems is just ludicrous and damaging. A dog may feel abandoned and who knows how a dog gets treated after the owner leaves. Pet supply stores also offer lessons, but the staff is usually inexperienced and the setting is far from ideal.

The biggest challenge may be finding a good trainer! A good trainer has a bag of tricks. If one method does not work, the trainer should be prepared with another, and another... Avoid cookie-cutter trainers who practice one method and who are knowledgeable of only a few breeds. Be proactive! Ask the trainer if he/she has worked with sight hounds and listen to the answer. If the trainer is negative or lacks enthusiasm, you are probably talking to the wrong person. Do not be fooled by trainers who have won numerous prizes, competing does not make for a good trainer! E-collars (shock collars) are not training aids and should never be used for this purpose.

Sight hounds are not difficult to train, they are just different. Good trainers will do an evaluation before starting lessons. This is a great way for the trainer to assess dog and owner. It is also the perfect time for you to see if you feel comfortable with the individual. A trainer should never be insulting or demeaning, this may sound obvious, but it is very common for bad trainers to make excuses and blame the handler, dog, or breed.

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers' website is a great place to start your search... And remember training should always be fun!

Danya on the agility course



Hommage to Boris

by Lesley Ohmann

There is sadness and grief and there is also joy in sharing the memories of the mundane, the everyday things. There's comfort and healing in talking about the silly situations. As a matter of fact, those random, goofball, seemingly insignificant memories that pop into your mind when you're telling a story, more oft than not, are the best bits! Like, discovering the missing box of pumpkin spice donuts in the guest room, or when you hear yourself make the noise you normally make to get your dog's attention and think "why do I even do that"? When you explain the ridiculousness of sending your husband inside to grab the bread so you can shake the loaf and coax your stubborn but white-bread-loving dog into the house for the night. Life is a collection of these teeny-tiny moments. The giggles that bubble to the surface can take a little sting out of that hurt that's way down deep.

When you really think about it, when all is said and done, all we are is a story. We are a special moment, a poignant memory, a significant event, a hilarious happening, a remarkable circumstance as told by someone who thought we were special. I am a storyteller and I'd like to share a story about a beloved Borzoi named Boris.

Pat and her husband always had multiple dogs. "Four at a time, always. That's just how it always seemed to work out." Her quartets were collies. Being a "collie person", she was familiar with collie rescue. She was working with a group who knew of a new litter looking for a home. Pat adopted a beautiful rough-coated collie boy from the litter. They named him Hunter. As it turned out, this beautiful rough coated collie was half Borzoi. Surprise! Pat is convinced, the part she fell head-over-heels in love with was the Borzoi. "The looks, the eyebrows, his beautiful smile" When Hunter passed away in 2014, she knew she had to look for another Borzoi. Her heart was broken and only another Borzoi would do.

"They're not dogs. They're Borzoi. I tell everyone that. Some people look at you like you're crazy, but it's true. Only another Borzoi person can understand." She told me during our conversation. I nodded my head in agreement.

Where would she even begin? Pat knew nothing of Borzoi. She didn't know any Borzoi people. But she was on a mission, on a self-described crash course into all things Borzoi. She reached out to a few breeders. She found National Borzoi Rescue Foundation and had a conversation with Liz Duncan Burge. A month later, a handsome 4-year old male was available that Liz thought would be a great fit. The approval process began. Long story short, Boris from Nebraska was delivered to Pat's front door.

"I never could have known when Boris, a white Borzoi with black spots, walked over the threshold of my front door, my life would change forever. He filled the void left by my Hunter's passing. I was his caretaker and he was mine. This breed is not for everyone but for the right people, they are everything. They are truly special. They teach us as much as we teach them, you know? Boris would challenge me and then, an hour later bring me to my knees in laughter. I'm talking about belly-buster laughing. He was my healer. We've added two more borzoi since Boris came to us. I used to tell him he was my Number 1... and he was. He had social graces and knew commands. He could open doors with round handles! He was the glue that kept everything together. He will be greatly missed."

Before we ended our onversation, Pat told me again, "They're not dogs. They're borzoi. They're angels. We have been extended a special honor in sharing our lives with them." Again, I nodded my head in agreement.

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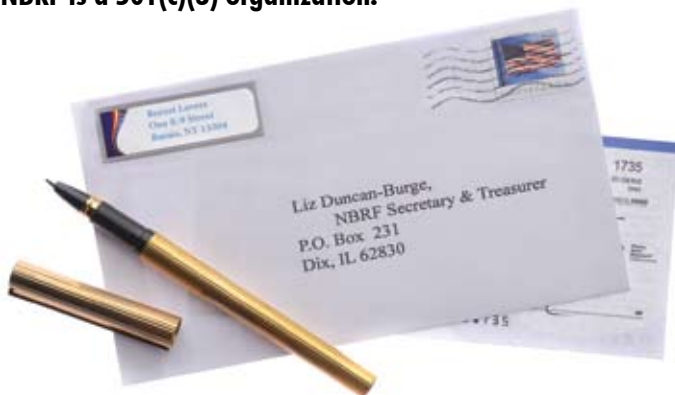
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