

One year ago when we filled out an adoption application to adopt a “rescue” dachshund, we had one stipulation: we wanted a dachshund about the same age as our beloved boy Nathan. After DARE carefully screened our credentials and checked our home for safety, we were shown a little dog that had only been with DARE for a day. Although she was not the dog that caught our attention on the DARE website, she was shown to us based on our application profile and her disposition. She was delivered to us on the night of her surgery and handed to us in a white fleece blanket. At that moment we both knew she was the one. We welcomed into our home a wonderful little girl, whom we named Merlin, and since that night we became a part of the DARE family.

After adopting Merlin, DARE kept in touch and placed us on their “email list” which kept us in the loop of all the local dachshunds looking for homes. It broke our hearts and we were aghast at the number of dogs that are given up and treated unfairly. We were ignorant as to some of the ways we could actually help, so we wrote a check and took a collection from friends and co-workers. Even though our small donation was appreciated and sorely needed, somehow it just didn’t feel like we did enough. After adopting Merlin we thought our lives could not be touched in such a special way and later found we were both wrong in that assumption.

It must have been fate, because my sister knew of a dachshund in Tampa that was about to be surrendered to a local pound. His name was Jack and he was heartworm positive, grossly underweight and sequestered in a backyard. We took a chance and asked my sister to visit for the weekend and bring Jack to us. We kept him for two days before finding enough courage to call DARE for help. We told them, “We have a dachshund and he has heartworms. Can you help him?” DARE helps all dachshunds, and they responded, “of course we can help, but we do not have enough foster homes, especially long term foster homes, in our area for heartworm positive dachshunds.” Without hesitation, that was the day we became foster parents.

In becoming foster parents, several important things were realized. First, not only was a dog’s life spared, but in the process, as Jack’s foster parents, we were able to witness a frightened, emaciated, and heartworm positive dog grow into a healthy, loving companion. Even though nursing Jack through his heartworm treatment was a very serious matter, he brought so much joy into our house that sometimes we felt as though Jack was actually doing more for us than we were doing for him. Because of DARE’s help, Jack’s fate was not to end up euthanized as the result of an irresponsible pet owner who decided that Jack was not worth the trouble. In fact, Jack’s life was worth the trouble and as his foster parents we know first hand of the joy he will bring his next home. We also know that Jack’s worth will never be weighed again, at least not in any measurement beyond that of fond memories.

While our monetary contributions to DARE benefit and help dachshunds a great deal, we also realize that there are many ways in which to help dachshunds in need and that our biggest contribution was becoming foster parents. Jack was lucky, through DARE’s endless fundraising efforts and our work as foster parents, Jack was placed in the perfect forever home with the most loving parents.

Throughout our experience as DARE foster parents, we were always given reassurance that we were never alone. The support of all the DARE volunteers and the teamwork that is demonstrated by this group was tremendous. We are completely fulfilled and appreciate the confidence and support from DARE in allowing us to be a part of a wonderful group of people and dachshunds. We encourage everyone with a love for dachshunds to become a foster parent, it is one of the most rewarding and easy jobs with rescue and the only sacrifice that you have to make is a huge chunk of your bed and covers. We look forward to the opportunity to do it again and implore everyone to foster an amazing dachshund.

Our involvement which started out as seemingly simple gesture, turned out to be our biggest and best contribution to ourselves, DARE, and most importantly, Jack.

Sincerely,
Angela Beem and Isaac Colegrove

