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TLC can bring out the good in abused pit bull

By **Cindy Wolff**
[Contact](#)

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Patrick Bettendorf called from Minneapolis last week to tell me about Ruby, his brindle pit bull.

He heard I was working on a story about the breed and wanted to tell me about his. I usually keep my column to local dogs, but I loved the story about Ruby, so here's the exception to the rule.

She was found in 2003 abandoned in a house, starving. After some time at a veterinary clinic and with Bettendorf, Ruby came to life. She goes to work with Bettendorf, who has a radio talk show.

She became a certified therapy dog that visits seniors in a nursing home. Sometimes when the person is especially sad, Ruby will curl up next to them and snuggle.

She auditioned for a part in a local stage production of "Cheaper by the Dozen." While she performed well, they rejected her because of her breed, Bettendorf said.

But after the other dogs didn't work out, they called Ruby back and everyone fell in love with her.

She's been nominated as an "Extraordinary Animal" for the Minnesota Animal Hall of Fame.

All around Memphis there are other pit bulls living happy lives as family pets. They weren't the ones I wrote about on Sunday.

Those are the ones trapped on chains in back yards, the ones with sad, haunted eyes, pleading for someone to intervene and save them from this life in the mud, in the cold.

If I were going to write about happy dogs, I would write about Brad Pitt, whose official name is now Bradley. He was found as a puppy off Yates near Walnut Grove. I fostered him for about four months.

He liked to sleep on top of my pit mix Tommy. He scampered and played at my house, and when I took him to his new home, my heart broke.

But my boy landed in the honey pot at the home of Crystal Gilbert and Chris Vitullo of Cordova. This dog has a big basket of toys. He sleeps with them on the bed at night. He goes to the pet store each week to pick out his treats. He wears an Old Navy rain slicker when it's wet outside, and he regularly goes to Shelby Farms to play with other dogs.

He has become one of the dog greeters at the lake. That's the dog that comes over to welcome the new ones that are walking up.

He has a squeaky little yawn that will make you melt and he's slowly getting used to swimming in the pool.

There's Buddy, the one that I fostered for a local rescue group.

He was found starving. I used him in an ad for the paper for Pets on My Mind (my blog) because I wanted to show a happy, friendly rescued pit bull. There are thousands of them.

I could go on and on about the great pit bulls I've met, wonderful dogs that live in loving homes. They are easy to write about.

It's the other ones that are living the miserable lives that keep me up at night.

Adoptions

All animals are spayed or neutered and current on vaccinations.

Dogs, puppies, cats and kittens: Desoto Animal Rescue Society, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Petco, 205 Goodman Road. Dogs and puppies: \$90. Cats and kittens: \$75. Visit desotopetlovers.org or call (662) 342-9448.

Dogs, cats, puppies and kittens: Fayette County Animal Rescue, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, PetSmart, 7941 Winchester, \$95. Visit fayettefcar.com.

Dogs and cats: Save 1 Pet, 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Petco Germantown, 7680 Poplar. Dogs, \$95; cats, \$65. Visit save1pet.org.

Dogs and puppies: Good Dog Rescue, 12-2 p.m. Saturday, Germantown Hollywood Pet Star, 7685 Farmington Blvd. \$125. Visit gdrescue.petfinder.com or call 276-7751.

Greyhounds: Mid-South Greyhound Adoption, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., Saturday, Petco in Cordova, 1250 N. Germantown Pkwy. and Petco in Memphis, 3468 Poplar. \$250. Go to midsouthgreyhound.com or call (870) 735-7317.

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