

MEET THE VICKTORY DOGS

The Washington Post tracked down all 47 dogs rescued 12 years ago to learn the details of the rest of their lives

**Alf****Rescue**
Richmond Animal League
Adopted by
Mary Gibb**Died September 2009**

Gibb said Alf evolved from victim to survivor to thrive. "He, like me, was just my family dog and my companion," Gibb said. "And yet he was also America's dog."

**Audie****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Linda Chavakis**Died April 2017**

Audie competed in the 2015 American Kennel Club Championship. As he grew more comfortable around strangers, Chavakis brought him to libraries.

**Bonita****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died February 2009**

Bonita arrived at Best Friends shy, but she opened up. Bonita would "get the bucking tonics," John Garcia said, and gallop around in her run.

**Cherry****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Paul and Melissa Fiaccone**Still alive**

Paul Fiaccone saw Cherry on a documentary. "You just kind of wanted to reach through the TV screen ... and let her know that everything was going to be okay," he said.

**Chuckie****Rescue**
GSPCA
Adopted by
Warren Anderson**Died May 2019**

On Chuckie's grave, Anderson created a mosaic silhouette of a dog and etched the word Vicktory. "It's been a hard few years for me," he said. "Chuckie was my bright spot."

**Curly****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Still alive**

Curly earned the nickname "Nugget" thanks to his endearing habit of getting into trouble in the Best Friends offices. Staffers have nicknamed a bit less mischievous as he has aged.

**Denzel****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died January 2017**

Denzel battled health issues throughout his life. Denzel, Tag and another dog were involved in an overnight fight after one dog escaped his run. The other dog died in the incident.

**Ellen****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died June 2012**

John Garcia remembers Ellen leaping off a picnic table, all four legs outstretched, and bounding off her well-fed stomach. She earned the nickname "Elen Bait."

**Ernie****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Donna Best, Peter Schmidt**Died May 2019**

Ernie's history was "not something I advertised," Best said. "I really resented with this idea of, 'Wow, Ernie, you've been through so much. I would love for you to just be able to be a dog.'"

**Frodo****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Kim and Toby Ramirez**Died May 2019**

Kim Ramirez soothes Frodo at night by turning the TV to a music channel or leaving the fan on. "He held to someone, rearrange my life in a way for Frodo," Ramirez said. "And he's worth it."

**Georgia****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Amy Egger**Died December 2013**

"The most beautiful, soulful eyes" drew her to Georgia, Egger said. "Despite all she endured, her broken tail, her broken jaw and all, her spirit couldn't be broken," Egger added.

**Ginger****Rescue**
SPCA for Monterey County
Adopted by
Stacy Dubuc**Still alive**

In honor of Ginger, Dubuc adopted a brick at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis. The two recently drove to Wisconsin, visiting natural places and other adopters of Vick dogs on the way.

**Grace****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Susan (last name withheld)**Died January 2018**

For two years, Susan browsed the internet looking at dogs as a "balm to my grief" as her dog's health declined. Only much later did the Vick Grace came from the Vick case.

**Gracie****Rescue**
Richmond Animal League
Adopted by
Sharon Cornett**Died January 2015**

"One would have expected her to be afraid of this environment with eating furs and television and cats," Cornett said. "No, she jumped right up on the sofa."

**Halle****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Traci Madson**Died October 2018**

Sometime when Halle stole her spot in bed, Madson said, the dog closed her eyes. "Trying to tell her she was asleep, but her tail would be wagging. Of course, I would let her keep it."

**Handsome Dan****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Heather Gushall**Died July 2018**

Handsome Dan grew to love and trust Gushall and would sleep under her daughter's crib. His legacy lives on through Handsome Dan's Rescue, founded by Gushall.

**Harriet****Rescue**
Recycled Love
Adopted by
Paul and Sarah De Santos**Died March 2017**

Harriet lived on a farm. Paul De Santos has a long career with agribusiness, but he said, "The night might have been as big of a couch potato as he was an athlete."

**Hazel****Rescue**
Out of the Pits
Adopted by
Sara Quinn**Died March 2011**

It was clear Hazel had been bred many times, but emotionally she was well-adjusted. Hazel became a service dog for Quinn, helping her deal with anxiety attacks.

**Hector****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Roo and Clara Yuli**Died October 2014**

Roo Yuli already had adopted four pit bulls and knew the Vick case "was going to be a unique situation that I agreed we needed to capitalize on as best as we could."

**Iggy****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Nicole Ratay**Died September 2013**

Iggy was "hyper-vigilant" about burrowing and "loafing of anything outside his home, Ratay said. The two recently drove to Wisconsin, visiting natural places and other adopters of Vick dogs on the way.

**Jhumpa Jones****Rescue**
Out of the Pits
Adopted by
Kathleen Porco**Died September 2017**

For about a year, Porco kept "talking to the public eye." "But then I realized the potential of telling her story," she said. She published an outreach of articles related to the Vick dogs.

**Jonny Justice****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Cris Cohen and Jennifer Long**Still alive**

Jonny's family channeled his love for the Vick dogs still living at the sanctuary. "The least we could do would be to give back," Cohen said. "Because somebody took the effort to save him."

**Lance****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Unknown**Died May 2015**

Photos of Lance were posted on a public Facebook page about his life. After he died, it featured the message, "Please remember the love and happy times in his life and not the bad."

**Layla****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Tessa Ruchton**Died June 2019**

Layla was the sanctuary's "dog who saved what all other dogs at Best Friends could." "I was like, 'Oh, my God,' love was in my eyes," she said.

**Leo****Rescue**
Recycled Love
Adopted by
Maritina McColl**Died December 2011**

Leo became a therapy dog. "He gave such a loving care to people, and he gave them hope," McColl said. "I just remember he gave them what he probably didn't get."

**Little Red****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Susan Weid**Died April 2017**

A photo of Little Red hung in his owner's home for about three years. Little Red finally passed the Canine Good Citizen test and could head home to Wyoming.

**Lucas****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died June 2013**

Lucas, one of two dogs courted to remain at Best Friends, was "the easiest dog out of all of them by far," Garcia said. The staff kept him safely away from other dogs, but he loved humans.

**Makaveli****Rescue**
GSPCA
Adopted by
Brandon Bond**Still alive**

"Makaveli is the hero of our lives," Garcia said. "Through his adversity, his heart explodes with love for our other dogs and our son, and he loved humans."

**Mel****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Richard Hunter**Died August 2019**

Mel lived with two other dogs and four cats. 20 Hunter joked that he had "two pit bulls, one from the most infamous dogfighting ring in history, and the house is run by an old cat."

**Meryl****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Still alive**

Believed to be 16, Meryl is one of two Vick dogs still living at the sanctuary. She enjoys slow walks, golf cart rides and naps.

**Mya****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died August 2019**

Mya was so great with other dogs that the Best Friends staff enlisted her help to teach puppies socialization skills. Until her recent death, Mya lived with Curly, another Vick dog.

**Oliver****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
David Sprinkle and Erik Weber-Sponkie**Died February 2013**

"After seeing what all Oliver had been through, I couldn't handle the anger," Erik Weber-Sponkie said. "Oliver taught me to love."

**Oscar****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Rhonda Tucker**Died January 2017**

Early on, Oscar trembled in the corner. Johnson learned enough to teach him to support. They told her "to give him time, give him space, and he would come around," she said. "He did."

**Piper****Rescue**
Animal Rescue of Tidewater
Adopted by
Miaa Wilson**Died January 2017**

Tucker would take Piper to schools, libraries and churches to teach him to support. They told her "to give him time, give him space, and he would come around," she said. "He did."

**Ray****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Kevin and Jacque Johnson**Died May 2015**

The Johnsons decided to adopt Ray once he passed his Canine Good Citizen test. The greatest hurdle for Ray was his reactivity toward other dogs. When Ray died, Jacque cried at the news.

**Red****Rescue**
SPCA for Monterey County
Adopted by
Leticia Lim**Died June 2008**

Seven, known as Artha at the shelter in Virginia, was moved to the Georgia SPCA. She did not long after the adoption when she was hit by a car.

**Seven****Rescue**
GSPCA
Adopted by
Susan and Harold**Still alive**

Seven, known as Artha at the shelter in Virginia, was moved to the Georgia SPCA. She did not long after the adoption when she was hit by a car.

**Shadow****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Susan and Harold**Still alive**

Shadow had "terrible nightmares," Susan said. After nearly two years, the nightmares stopped, and now "he has dreams and ... he's wagging his tail."

**Squeaker****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Adopted by
Annick Moussier**Still alive**

Squeaker, whose tongue frequently flops to the side, staff enlisted her help to teach puppies socialization skills. Until her recent death, Squeaker lived with Curly, another Vick dog.

**Stella****Rescue**
SPCA for Monterey County
Adopted by
Annick Moussier**Died November 2018**

After Red died, Moussier adopted Stella, another Vick dog. "They were no longer Michael Vick dogs," Moussier said. "They were my dogs. That's how I wanted people to see them."

**Sweet Jasmine****Rescue**
Recycled Love
Adopted by
Candice Strick**Died August 2009**Jasmine was on the cover of *Star Illustrated* in 2008, with "challenged millions of people to question the treatment of animals, to evaluate their own prejudices," the rescue said.**Sweet Pea****Rescue**
Recycled Love
Adopted by
Miaa Wilson**Died July 2017**

"Her emotional scars ran deep and never truly healed completely," the rescue said. "... Her small world consisted of a few of us, but it was the world where she would always be safe."

**Teddles****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Cindy Houser**Died April 2017**Ted was named by his friend, a toddler named Sam who helped Watson live in his home for faster care. He married with his adopter in several *Foxes* and wanted to marry the *Ballers* of thousands of spectators who were aware of his former life.**Tug****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died April 2019**

Tug's name seemed fitting to Garcia, who spent a year trying to teach him how to walk better on a leash. Garcia remembers Tug's grin and his face that said, "I'm the happiest dog in the world."

**Uba****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Leticia Lim**Still alive**Uba was energetic early on but too nervous to go for a walk. He became a *Now Walk*, an activity where dogs search for scents. Uba enjoys eating peanut butter and lying in the sun.**Willie****Rescue**
Best Friends Animal Society
Never adopted**Died August 2017**

Willie became more selective with people while he lived at Best Friends for almost 10 years. "To help him feel the most secure, what we could give him was a good routine," Michelle Weaver said.

**Zippy****Rescue**
BAGAP
Adopted by
Bonnie Hernandez**Still alive**

When Hernandez brought Zippy home, the dog would jump around the house and leap over furniture. Zippy has slowed a bit, but she still loves sunshine and finding sunny spots for lounging.

**Rose****Rescue**
Animal Farm Foundation
Adopted by
Beth Connolly and staff**Died February 2006**Rose died of untreated *leishmaniasis* when she was transferred to her rescue group. She was said to be a *big smile*, despite her suffering. She inspired a new *Cruelty-free dog* new movie *can care* they are *reborn*.