



Finding Reba

It had been over six months since our little dog Shyanne passed away due to complications of a brain tumor. After witnessing the little champ soldier on, caring for her daily needs and the struggle that we all went through, it was difficult to imagine considering another addition to our family. Shyanne was permanently in our hearts and it just didn't feel right to move on.

Until we saw the Beneful commercial on television. I watched it online at <http://www.beneful.com/commercials/default.aspx> over and over again. It is so adorable, with the little terrier and the man lying on the floor looking up at the bag of Beneful, "Have you ever seen anything like it?" the man asks the dog as they both turn over at the same time and then run through the house together.

Unbeknownst to me my husband had launched a full scale crusade to find us a Beneful dog. There were none to be found until one night my husband was searching online at Petfinder.com and called me over to take a look at something. As soon as I saw Reba, I exclaimed, she's the one! That's her. That is absolutely her. And look, she's even got her own web site!

Reba was at a rescue center called Mutt Matchers in Kingman Arizona. So I emailed Mutt Matchers and got an immediate response from Judy Torgerson. We had many questions about Reba. Because Reba was estimated to be about 2 ½ years old, we wondered if we would still be able to bond with her. Oh, Reba bonds with everybody Judy assured us. This turned out to be the understatement of the year. What an amazing experience we were about to undergo.

Judy answered all of our questions quickly and encouraged us to submit our application if we were interested so that we could secure a spot for Reba. Since we were out of state, we had to agree to a yard investigation to make sure that we could provide a secure fenced environment for Reba to thrive in. We were fortunate that our local Humane Society was nice enough to accommodate us all and provide the on site inspection.

After we were approved, it was off to Kingman, Arizona to meet Reba. We had to take Riley, our 13 year old cocker mix, which was a challenge due to his age and since he isn't accustomed to traveling. But apparently you CAN teach an old dog new tricks and Riley was triumphant and proudly made the trip to meet his prospective new sister.

What an experience! The drive from Salt Lake City to Kingman, Arizona was long, but we were so excited to meet Reba we almost broke into Mutt Matchers the night before our appointment (I made that last part up) But we did drive by. When we arrived the next morning we were immediately greeted by the Mutt

Matchers gang. It happened to be the day that the monthly board of directors meeting was held so we got to meet everyone on the board, which made it that much more special. We felt such a kinship with the Mutt Matchers gang, Judy, Sandy, Karen, Mary, Charlene, Teresa, Tina, Andraya, and Pam.

I had not mentioned anything about the Beneful dog to Judy, but when we walked in to meet Reba they shouted, "get ready to meet the Beneful dog!" It was a sloppy kisses party for everyone. We spent about 2 ½ hours getting acquainted with Reba and she and Riley even had an Alpha Dog moment when he set her straight about who the top dog was. It happened again when we got home . and then he went back to sleep.

We were so touched by the dedication, commitment and charity demonstrated by everyone at Mutt Matchers. Their love for the dogs runs so deep and it is returned by these canine companions who clearly feel loved and enjoy being there. Mutt Matchers is truly a family atmosphere and everyone adores these dogs and it shows in what they do. What a generous way to give back to an unfortunate group that can not speak for themselves. Mutt Matchers gives these fantastic devoted animals a voice that they otherwise would not have. In speaking for the dogs, they are given another chance at life and end up giving back much more than they receive. You are either part of the solution or you are part of the problem. Mutt Matchers gets it. They are truly "dog people" and as we continued to express during our visit, they have so much to be proud of, all that they have accomplished and will accomplish and their wonderful acts of kindness. Giving another chance to these loving animals actually gives people like us another chance at happiness.

We were able to tour the Mutt Matchers facility and see how the entire process takes place. It is indeed a well oiled machine, from the heated and air conditioned sleeping kennels to the outdoor play area that is covered with a shade in the summer heat. Thanks to donations, Mutt Matchers supports their community by offering programs such as Stop Pet Overpopulation Together (SPOT), a service to spay and neuter dogs of people who could not otherwise afford to have this procedure performed, and the Care 'N'Share program that allows Mutt Matchers to donate dog and cat food (which has been donated to them by the public and local merchants) to pet owners that have fallen upon hard times. These well behaved dogs also get to give back to their communities by participating in a program called Pound Pals visiting nursing homes and schools. This truly gives them a sense of purpose. And as an added bonus, Mutt Matchers will also assist dog owners by providing information and guidance on dog care, behavior problems, etc. They also administer some of their own vaccinations. This is truly an amazing place.

I couldn't stop myself from crying as we prepared to leave. I could see how much Reba adored everyone there and the feeling was mutual. But the gang assured us that these were happy tears because they had found Reba her "forever" home and that is what they do. So we promised to send photos and keep in touch with the Mutt Matchers gang.

As far as we are concerned, we can't help but feel that Reba was meant to be ours. She fits right in like she's been here for years. We are completely smitten with her and her constant antics keep us entertained. She's always got something going on. She adds a new purpose to life and keeps us grounded in the real world with what is truly important to appreciate. Who needs cable with Reba! And to think what we might have missed out on if Mutt Matchers had not been there to rescue her and we hadn't found her.

Reba is a cartoon dog for sure. Looney Tunes we think. She keeps telling people that her parents got her "online"! She makes us laugh constantly and has brought so much joy to our lives.

- and as it turned out, she is exactly what we needed.

The Gulls of Taylorsville, Utah
Happy Parents of Reba