

# ABC Rescue Update

## Kara Staroski

Do you think some things work out for a reason? Some days in rescue things go smoothly, dogs are adopted into their perfect homes right away and live happily ever after. Some days we hit roadblocks at every corner. We had a case recently where a beautiful Beauceron ended up in our rescue program, this is Abby's story.

I first heard about Abby via email several months ago. Abby's owner was an experienced dog person, someone who had even put obedience titles on her Dobermans. She acquired Abby secondhand through a back yard breeder. She had owned Abby since she was a puppy and had done an incredible amount of training with her. Abby's owner poured her heart out to me, admitting that with health issues and not being as young as she once was she wasn't able to meet Abby's needs. As I reassured her that we match the dogs to their perfect homes (NEVER first come first serve) I could hear the relief in her voice. She really loved Abby and truly wanted the best for her. As we worked out the details I learned Abby lived in Idaho. Perfect, I thought to myself, I already knew the perfect foster.

Sidney Wilcox, the Region Four Director, has fostered over a dozen Beaucerons since I have known her. I knew she would be a great fit for Abby, to evaluate her and help figure out the next step in her life. Sidney responded immediately that she and her family would be able to take Abby in. Over the next few days arrangements were made and Abby went to live at RiverRim Ranch. My first emails about Abby were all positive, she was everything her first owner said, sweet, intelligent, and VERY well trained. Sidney told me if she entered her in a Rally trial she could get her Rally Novice title on her that

weekend. We got pictures and videos of Abby posted and waited for applications to come in.



One of the hard parts about being rescue chair is disappointing people. Often for every dog we post we may have a dozen people (or more!) apply. Some people are eliminated from the running rather quickly, their landlord doesn't allow dogs over 50 lbs, their veterinarian tells me something along the lines of "Wow, I'm surprised they want another dog, we haven't seen their current dog in several years and they would only let us do a rabies vaccine." Once we eliminate those folks then we move to step two, Googling and checking Facebook profiles of the applicants. One applicant had multiple ads in classified groups for various dogs. Red flag. Another had a Go-Fund-me set up to get a knee surgery on a dog she forgot to mention she owned on her application. As I moved through the applicants there were several good ones. But were they the right fit for our perfect Abby? Abby is VERY smart. She needs

a job, so we wanted her to go to a home where she could possibly do a performance sport, or at the very least be an active companion. Finally, Sidney and I found what we considered the best home possible for Abby. Our little Idaho lady was heading to the Pacific Northwest! The family's application sounded wonderful. They had researched the breed and even attended shows to meet up with breeders and other adult dogs. They were looking for an active hiking buddy and possibly a dog to try agility and barn hunt with. This was perfect!

We gave the family the great news, and then Covid-19 started sweeping across the USA. Everything came to a screeching halt when Sidney's entire county was put into a mandatory stay-in-place order until June; over two months away. I gave the hopeful family the bad news. They were understanding, and asked me to keep them in mind for a future dog. So what to do with Abby? She was safe and sound at Sidney's of course, but she really deserved a family of her own. Sidney came to me with an idea. She knew of a family local to her who had asked her about training a dog for them to be their hearing assistance service dog. They were experienced dog folks who lived close enough to Sidney that she could be there to support and educate them as needed. I am the last person to recommend a Beauceron as a service dog. We all know that they are slow to mature and their failure/washout rate is very high. It didn't take much to convince me as Sidney and her friend Gabby began sending me videos of them training Abby. Abby was such a fast learner! Within a week she was alerting to the sound of a telephone ringing, and a fire alarm going off. I was incredibly impressed! Once the family submitted their application they took Miss Abby on a trial run. This brings us to present day. Abby is thriving and now, officially, has her forever home! I think of all the twists and turns in her road of life. There are so many different ways her story could have gone. As I go through the photos her new family has sent me, and I hear about how Abby not only is

bringing them joy, but a little more piece of mind I know we have given them both a happy ending.

*Kara*, ABC Rescue Chair

