



Volunteer Tails

By Wesley Ayers

Over the last seven years my family and I have had the pleasure of fostering 14 dogs to their 'fur-ever homes'. All this time, our home has been full of energy and love with our three GSDs – Jolt and Apollo we adopted from GSRNC, Rootbeer, plus a GSRNC foster dog Allie that forms the pack.

Sometimes I'm asked which of the volunteer activities that cut into my family time bring me the greatest reward. Among these are the Moraga Orinda Fire District; 'Cal eSAR' (a state search and rescue team); Yosemite Search and Rescue; and most recently the Department of Health, Education and Welfare 'Medical Reserve Corps' delivering several hundred COVID vaccinations.

While these volunteer efforts are very gratifying as they help people in need, I often reflect how every day begins with four wagging tails, four dogs to pet, four dogs to play with and walk, and four dogs to welcome you home. Every day they share their love through the looks in their eyes, the warmth of a lick, the wagging tails that follow you around, and how they respond when you talk to and pet them. Helping dogs like these brings me the greatest joy.

My other volunteer efforts are rewarding and I enjoy helping the community, but often I'm helping people who may be making poor decisions, don't consider their actions, and aren't aware of how they affect themselves, others and the volunteers who may put themselves in harm's way to help them. These people have the option to make decisions - good decision, bad decisions, and sometimes no decision (which is a decision.)



In contrast, our GSDs don't have the ability to make decisions about where and how they live. They make one simple decision: love someone with all their hearts. Right now I've got two GSDs curled up under my feet and the other two are running around in the back yard with ears back, tongues hanging out and pure joy all over their faces.



I'd love to have more people focus on being a foster family; it helps us retrieve dogs from shelters, it gives the dogs a chance to rebuild their trust in human beings, it provides them the opportunity to love, and be loved.

If you'd like to see the world we cherish please view our video '[I dream](#)'. This is a composite of the love we've received. I'm sure you would want to share in this love as well.